Ensuring Access and Engagement for Students/Parents who are English Learners (ELs)

• History
• Working Group Meetings
• Recommendations
• Proposed Timeline and Next Steps
Demographics

As of August 17, 2018, there are:

- 1,098 English Learners (ELs) in PPS
- 2,180 students who speak a language other than English
- 87 ELs with an IEP
- 226 students who speak a language other than English and have an IEP
How was the Working Group created?

- Working Group was created as a result of a private student settlement negotiated between PPS and an English Learners (EL) student and parent represented by the Education Law Center (ELC)
Purpose:

• PPS committed to convene District and community representatives to discuss and address policies, procedures and standards for ensuring that English Learner parents of students with disabilities have meaningful access to information about their child’s educational program.

Goal:

• Written document with recommendations to the District for enhancing services to students/parents who are English Learners, with particular focus on access to special education.
Working Group Participants

**District Personnel**
- Amy Filipowski, PSE Executive Director*
- Jonathan Covel, ESL Director
- Amira Wolfson, PSE Program Officer
- Isaac Tarbell, Psychological Services
- Kathy Barry, Psychological Services
- Yoli Pinizzotto, ESL Coordinator*
- Darling Garcia, ESL Translation Manager
- Dara Ware Allen, Assistant Superintendent-Student Services*
- John O’Connell, Student Services*
- Kimberly Safran, Brashear Principal
- Ruthie Rea, Arsenal PreK-5 Principal
- Aimee Zundel, Law Department
- Annemarie Harr, Law Department

**Community Group Representatives**
- Nancy Hubley, ELC
- Jackie Perlow, ELC
- Cindy Duch, PEAL Center
- Judy Berkowitz, Jewish Family & Children’s Service (JFCS) Consultant
- Rosamaria Cristello, Latino Family Center
- Bishnu Timsina, Bhutanese Community Assoc. of Pittsburgh and JFCS
- Jeni Hergenreder, Disability Rights PA
- Kristen Tsapis, Community Member

*asterisk denotes former staff title*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 27, 2016 – Initial Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 15, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 20, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 16, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1, 2018 – Focused Meeting; PPS/ELC</td>
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Recommendation 1: Foster effective general communications between English Learner parents and schools.
Training for Interpreters and Translators
(special education, discipline rights)

Evaluation System for Interpreters

Translation of Standard School Activity Documents and School Communications

Increase Staff in ESL Department
Translation/Interpretation Services

- 2,508 requests for translation/interpretation (these include the robocall requests from the Director of Communication at the board)
- 165 requests for translation of special education documents, these include PTE, NOREP, Progress Reports and Procedural Safeguard Notice and letters.
- 56 IEPs translated
- 88 IEP meetings with interpreters (K-12)
- 69 Early Intervention IEP meetings with interpreters
- 3 most commonly requested languages: Spanish, Arabic and Swahili.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requested Need</th>
<th>Return Time from ESL Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-emergency phone calls to families</td>
<td>48-72 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3-page document</td>
<td>Three Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreter for meeting or other event</td>
<td>Two Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requested Need</td>
<td>Return Time from ESL Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP at a Glance</td>
<td>Three Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP (Individualized Education Plan)</td>
<td>Three Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission to Evaluate (PTE)</td>
<td>Five Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3-page PSE document</td>
<td>Three Weeks</td>
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Additional District Supports Provided

Since the 2016-2017 school year, the ESL department has grown to include:

• Translation and Interpretation Manager
• K-5 ESL Instructional Specialist
• 6-8 ESL Instructional Specialist

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, all bilingual ESL paraprofessionals spend one day a week in central office providing district level interpretation and translation support.
EL Professional Working Group: Recommendations

**Recommendation 2**
Increase training and engagement opportunities for EL Parents and Families, as well as professional development opportunities for District staff on the rights of EL Students and EL Parents.

**Recommendation 2a**
Training opportunities for EL Parents/Families

**Recommendation 2b**
Training opportunities for District staff
Digital Warehouse of Parent/Family Training Topics

Collaborate with Community Resources (PEAL, ELC, Jewish Family Community Services)

Staff Training on Serving EL Students to be Embedded into Departmental Professional Development

Human Resources Induction Program to Provide Information Regarding Services to EL Students and Families
Recommendation 3

Improve structures in place to foster meaningful parental participation of EL parents/families in the District’s special education processes.
Adopt Board Policy or AR Setting Forth Non-Discriminatory Special Education Evaluation Process for ELs

One-Page Translated Summaries of Special Education Documents

Language Preference Form to Indicate Mode, Mean and Preferred Language

Consistent Translation of IEP-at-a-Glance and Other Special Education Documents
Recommendation 4

Increase collaborations inside the District and in the broader community to support the rights of EL families and EL students.
Review and Add Provisions around Equitable Services to ELs in Out-of-School Time Contracts

Increase Staff Knowledge of Services Available to ELs in the Community

Partner with Outside Agencies Serving ELs in the Community

Translate and Post Use of School Facilities Policy into Top 5 High Incidence Non-English Languages
EL Professional Working Group: Recommendations

**Recommendation 5**

Enhance capability of District IT Systems to provide schools with immediate access to information needed to serve EL families.
Immediate Access to a “Snapshot” of Key Information on EL Students

Maintain Confidentiality of Key Information in Compliance with FERPA

List whether a Student’s Parent/Guardian is an EL and what Language and Dialect the Parent/Guardian Prefers

Identify EL Parents in System as EL when Student is not Receiving EL Instruction
Recommendation 6

The District will maintain, monitor, and periodically assess the Recommendations set forth herein, while assuring that proper policies and procedures are adopted and maintained to ensure the commitments are put into place.
## EL Working Group: Next Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 5, 2018</td>
<td>Present to Board Education Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 24, 2018</td>
<td>Board Action → Resolution proposing acknowledgement of the EL Professional Working Group Recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Discuss structures and resources necessary to implement Recommendations</td>
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Discussion / Questions