

PERIODIC EVALUATION

Schools have an affirmative obligation to periodically evaluate their EL program to determine whether, after a reasonable period of time, the program has resulted in EL students overcoming language barriers. What is “reasonable” should be based on research and may be specific to the particular model of instruction utilized for the EL program. In conducting this evaluation, schools must understand their EL program model and what progress is to be expected based on the research that has gone into that particular model. “Research indicates that EL students require 3 to 5 years to achieve oral fluency and 4 up to 7 years to develop grade-level academic literacy skills in a second language.”¹⁵

The evaluation must include input from a variety of stakeholders, such as teachers, students, parents, and other staff involved in development and implementation of the EL program. The evaluation must include a review of performance data of current EL students, former EL students, and students who were never in the EL program. Such data should include academic assessments, language proficiency assessments, grades, attendance, graduation rates, participation in school programs, etc.

Based on review of that information and stakeholder input, the evaluation must consider the following:

- Is the EL program being implemented?
- Is the EL program effective?
 - Is the EL program achieving its established goals?
 - Are EL students developing English language skills at the rate that is reasonably expected?
 - Are EL students able to participate meaningfully in the school’s programs?

Schools should document the evaluation process and outcome and must make changes to the program if the evaluation reveals deficiencies. These changes should also be documented and then evaluated again after they have been implemented for a reasonable period of time.