

WASHINGTON LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNING CONTENT AREA GRADES TO ELL STUDENTS

Students who are English Language Learners (ELL) may be evaluated through an alternative grading system. A “Pass”/“Fail” grade may be assigned for any or all subjects. A student is determined to be an ELL if he/she qualifies for ESL services through the Ohio Department of Education assessment process.

“Pass” is determined by:

- coming to class prepared, such as being on time and bringing proper materials
- the effort made in the content area
- demonstrated progress in the content area
- progress shown when using modifications while completing assignments

“Fail” is determined by:

- coming to class unprepared
- lack of effort to learn
- no demonstrated progress in the content area
- unwillingness to complete modified assignments
- lack of passing grade on modified assignments

Modifications might include:

- shortening assignments
- using easier reading materials
- progress shown when using modifications in evaluation procedures
- allowing open-book tests
- providing vocabulary lists for short-answer tests
- allowing a longer time to take tests
- allowing the use of bilingual dictionaries as needed

Even though a student may be given “Pass”/“Fail” grades on his or her report card, letter and/or number grades should still be given on class assignments. This will help the student understand the American system of grading and will provide the teacher with a record of student progress.

Every effort should be made to develop a student’s language skills so that he/she can participate successfully in the regular school curriculum. **When the English Language Learner is able to fulfill all of the demands of the regular course requirements, the normal district grading system should be used. The decision to assign regular grades in some or all classes will be determined by the appropriate staff members. In making the decision on which grading system to use, the primary goal shall be the maximization of student learning.**

Disclosure of Consequences

Counselors should notify ELL students annually of consequences that may arise from their participation in the Pass/Fail grading system. For example, participation in the Pass/Fail grading system in grades 9 through 12:

- could negatively impact the student's athletic eligibility at the collegiate level, as determined by the NCAA Clearing House.
- may hinder a student's chances of being admitted to some colleges or college programs.
- may make the student ineligible for some scholarships to colleges or other post high school programs.
- may prevent the student from qualifying for some school or department academic honors, such as admission to the National Honor Society.

ESL/ELL Retention and Promotion

No child of limited English proficiency is allowed to be retained based on a deficiency of language. Students who do not acquire enough credits or passing grades to be promoted to the next grade will be placed in the next grade, for purposes of designating the student's grade level. Teachers need to make appropriate modifications and accommodations to ensure success for English Language Learners as they transfer from their native language to English.