

Baltimore City Public Schools ESOL Program

Guidelines for Placement, Assigning Course Credits, and Promotion for English Learners (ELs)

Like other school-based staff, counselors should be aware of federal and state requirements regarding immigrants and limited English proficient students as outlined in federal and state regulations. This document has been prepared to explain implications for high school counselors and schedulers.

Key Points According to State and Federal Regulations:

- Citizenship status information **must not** be requested of enrolling students and is **not required** to proceed with enrollment.
- Information for parents must be provided in an accessible format. Documentation of school efforts must be recorded and kept for reporting purposes.
- Verify that students have been properly assessed using the ESOL assessment and are then placed in appropriate classes for their language proficiency.
- It is possible that immigrant students may not have transcripts or may not have attended school in their home country. Regardless of the age of the student, it is **not** recommended that these students be referred to an alternative setting which may not have ESOL services.
- For high school aged students with interrupted education and/or those with no prior school records; placement in 9th grade is recommended until documentation can be provided to suggest otherwise.

Guidelines for Transcript Evaluation prior to grade placement

- Determine the language and country of origin of the transcript. Consult with teachers in your school who are familiar with the language of the transcript and/or the ESOL teacher. If you are unable to determine the language of a transcript or the country of origin, contact the ESOL Program.

Guidelines for Placing and Translating Credit for incoming students from out of country

If a student comes with a transcript:

- Transcripts need to be evaluated immediately, using the intake form, in order to ensure proper scheduling.
- Student should be placed in the grade that corresponds to the number of transferable credits the student has earned at the time of enrollment.
- There are Baltimore City Schools courses available for various English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL or ESL) classes, For example, ESL 1A, ESL 1B, ESL 2A, etc.
- Any English credits on the transcript should count towards grade level English credits. (i.e. if a student is placed in tenth grade, he/she should receive English I credit from the English class in his/her home country)
- Students should be given appropriate foreign language credit for their native language classes taken in the home country (e.g. Chinese, Swahili, etc.). Check the course catalog to determine whether Baltimore City Public Schools offers the students native language as a class. If they do not enter Lesson Common Language 1 & 2 for their native language coursework.
- Students should be given foreign language credits for two levels of ESOL classes where applicable.
- If applicable, history classes taken in the home country may count as World History credit.
- Integrated courses in science and social studies should be given appropriate credit. For example, a World History credit for what is called social studies would be appropriate.
- If the transcript does not name specific mathematics classes (algebra, trigonometry, etc.), student should be given end of year course assessments and should be placed according to the test results. Credit should be given for required classes that would occur prior to the placement, as indicated by the test results. For example, the student may receive credit for Algebra I, if he/she successfully tests on the Algebra I end of course assessment.
- Students should be given elective credit for their religion classes, civics, business education, literature etc.

- Fine art, Found of Tech and Physical Education credits should be awarded as indicated on the transcript.
- Students can receive credit for any course if they can pass the end of year course assessment. Course assessments can be interpreted by a bilingual para-professional or school staff member.

If a student comes without a transcript:

- No credit should be given without proof or a passing score on the end of year course assessments.
- Eighth grade placement should be considered, in consultation with the ESOL office or ESOL teacher, for 14- and 15-year-old students who enroll during the second semester of the school year.
- Students should be placed in 9th grade even if they are older than 15.
- Students should receive basic ESOL classes and appropriate accommodations while they are learning English and earning high school credits.

Procedures for Promotion and Granting of Credits for Students with Limited English Proficiency

Because of their limited English proficiency, English language learners may need to follow a different sequence of courses than their English-speaking peers. They may need to postpone certain required courses until their English proficiency has increased to the point where it is likely that they will succeed. Ultimately, they are required to take and pass the same courses as their English-speaking peers to earn a diploma. State regulations do not indicate a specific set of courses to be passed to be promoted from one grade to another in high school. The requirements of City Schools specify that students must pass certain classes to be promoted and are more stringent than the state requirements. Consequently, high school students with limited English proficiency following an irregular sequence of courses should be allowed to pass from grade to grade based solely on the number of credits that they successfully complete.

English language learners in grades 9 through 12 should be promoted according to the following criteria:

1. To be promoted from grade 9 status to grade 10 status, a student should have had successfully earned a minimum of four (4) Carnegie units/credits.
2. To be promoted from grade 10 status to grade 11 status, a student must earn five (5) Carnegie units/credits (bringing his/her cumulative total to nine (9) credits).
3. To be promoted to the grade 12 status, a student must earn five (6) Carnegie units/credits (15 cumulative) and have attained at least three years of attendance.
4. To earn a diploma and graduate from high school, English language learners are ultimately required to take and pass the same courses as their English-speaking peers (see Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Policy IKED for full explanation).