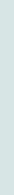# RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
ESOL PROGRAM NEWS

WHAT IS THE ESOL PROGRAM?

Richmond County's ESOL program provides English learners with support for English language acquisition. The program specifically focuses on developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing through content based instruction.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL DETERMINE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ESOL PROGRAM?

Richmond County School System is required by law to identify and screen students who may qualify for the ESOL program. The process begins by having parents complete a home language survey. If the results of the survey show that another language is used in the household or that the student speaks another language, the student is eligible to take the Kindergarten W-APT or the WIDA Screener. The results of the screeners will be analyzed to determine eligibility for the ESOL program. If the student does qualify for the ESOL program, parents will be notified of the eligibility and will be provided with copies of the screener results.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE ESOL PROGRAM?

Most English learners learn to communicate for social purposes rather quickly. However, they often struggle with academic language found in content area classes. The ESOL program helps students acquire both social and academic language in English.

WHAT IF I DO NOT AGREE THAT MY STUDENT NEEDS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ESOL PROGRAM?

Parents/guardians have the right to refuse ESOL services. To do so, a Parental Waiver Form must be signed on a yearly basis. However, please understand that language deficits may increase and have a negative impact on the student's academic performance in school. Particularly, learning reading and writing skills is often more difficult without ESOL classes. Should parents/guardians change their minds about waiving services, they have the right to cancel the waiver and ESOL classes will resume as soon as possible.

Waivered students are still English learners and must take the annual ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Based on the test results the student will either continue to be eligible to receive services the following year or will exit the ESOL program.

WHAT DO ESOL SERVICES LOOK LIKE?

In kindergarten through 3rd grades students will receive ESOL instruction for 45 minutes/day or a total of 225 minutes/week. Students in 4th-8th grades will receive ESOL instruction for 50 minutes/day or a total of 250 minutes/week. Students in 9th-12th grades will receive ESOL instruction for 55 minutes/day or a total of 275 minutes/week. Students will either receive a pull-out or a push-in class model.

In a pull-out model, students are taken out of general education classes to receive English language instruction in a small group setting.

In a push-in model, students remain in the general education classes where they receive instruction from the content teacher. The ESOL teacher comes into the general education class to provide English language services.

WHAT SPECIAL TESTS WILL MY STUDENT HAVE TO TAKE?

Students enrolled in the ESOL program will take all regular classroom assessments. In addition, English learners will take the ACCESS for ELLs test in the spring. The ACCESS for ELLs test measures growth in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, the scores are used to determine eligibility to exit the ESOL program.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD?

Allow your child to speak both his/her native language and English.

Ensure your child gets plenty of rest at home.

Ensure your child eats a healthy breakfast.

Ensure that your child attends school regularly.

Use Infinite Campus Parent Portal to monitor school attendance and grades. https://campus.rcss-k12.org/campus/portal/richmond.jsp?status=portalLogoff&lang=en

Communicate and collaborate with teachers, counselors, graduation coaches, and principals.

Attend parent/teacher conferences, school events, and activities.

Know the expectations and consequences for students outlined in the district's Code of Conduct.

Encourage your student to participate in extra-curricular activities such as clubs, sports, band, etc.