

Plan for Hiring Teachers working with English Learners

All teachers of any language instruction program for English Learners (ELs) need to be fluent and competent in the four domains of language assessed by the English Language Proficiency Assessment: reading, writing, speaking and listening. If personnel has been previously hired without these skills, the district needs to offer help to build the needed fluency.

A teacher's fluency in listening and speaking could be documented and evaluated during the interview process. Perhaps one person in the interview could be responsible for noting listening mistakes, miscues, grammar and syntax mistakes, and judge the level of fluency for both speech and listening.

Reading may be evaluated through the reading and responses that show understanding of the application process. Reading may be satisfied through the college transcript if from an English speaking university. The district may also use a shelf reading comprehension assessment.

Writing fluency is more difficult to ensure. Unless the application requires a writing sample, the district might encourage a 15 to 20 minutes writing sample during the teacher interview. Ideally the topic will vary. This sample is best done on site so that the interviewee will have no outside editing.

The exact requirement from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is

“TEACHER ENGLISH FLUENCY – Each eligible entity receiving a subgrant under section 3114 shall include in its plan a certification that all teacher in any language instruction educational program for limited English proficient child that is, or will be, funded under this are fluent in English and any other language used for instruction, including having written and oral communications skills.” [3116 (c)]

The district may also have an assessment designed or contract with an outside agency for this screening. The district needs to decide if this is to be used only with English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers or with all hires.