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Subject **MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS AND LEARNING**

References [Policy 4190 - Multilingual Learners and Learning](#)
[Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary English Language Learners, ESL and ELD Programs and Services Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2007](#)
[Growing Success Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010](#)
[Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum 2016](#)
[STEP Initial Assessment \(2012\)](#)

Contact School Services - Student Services

1. Purpose

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) supports students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in achieving academic success and well-being. Educators are responsible for responding to the needs of multilingual learner (ML) so that they can meet curriculum expectations while building their confidence, sense of belonging, and proficiency in English.

The SCDSB uses the term ML to be inclusive of a wide range of students, recognizing that for some students, English is not their first language and that they require language supports regardless of their place of birth and/or number of years in Canada.

2. Definitions

2.1 English as a second language (ESL) learner: a student whose first language is a language other than English, or a variety of English that is significantly differed from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools, born in a qualifying country, and has entered Canada for the first time within the last four school years.

2.2 English literacy development (ELD) learner: a student whose first language is a language other than English and has limited prior schooling. They did not have the opportunity to attend school on a regular and consistent basis or may not have had school at all. They therefore have significant gaps in their learning and have had limited opportunities to develop age-appropriate language and literacy skills in their first language.

2.3 ML: a student with language skills/assets who is learning curriculum (content) where their primary language(s) is/are different from the primary language of instruction (English or French). This is an umbrella term to include ESL and ELD learners.

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- 2.4 Steps to English Proficiency (STEP): a framework for assessing and monitoring the language acquisition and literacy development of an ML across the Ontario Curriculum.

3. ML guidelines

- 3.1 Students who may require ML support:
- 3.1.1 a Canadian-born ML:
- 3.1.1.1 Indigenous learners whose first language is other than English (e.g., Anishinaabemowin); and,
- 3.1.1.2 students who were born in communities that have maintained a distinct cultural and linguistic tradition, who have a first language that is not English, and who attend English language schools.
- 3.1.2 Newcomers from other countries:
- 3.1.2.1 students who have arrived in Canada with their families as part of a voluntary, planned immigration process;
- 3.1.2.2 students who have arrived in Canada as a result of a war or other crisis in their home country, and who may have left their homeland under conditions of extreme urgency; and,
- 3.1.2.3 international or visa students who have paid fees to attend school in Ontario and who may plan to attend a Canadian post-secondary institution.
- 3.2 Programs to support ML:
- 3.2.1 An ML student may receive support in one of the following two distinct programs designed to meet their emotional, social, and academic needs.
- 3.2.1.1 **ESL programs** are intended for students whose first language is a language other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs have age-appropriate first-language literacy skills and educational backgrounds.
- 3.2.1.2 **ELD programs** are intended for students whose first language is a language other than English or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs are most often from countries in which their access to education has been limited, so that they have had limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Schooling in their countries of origin may have been inconsistent, disrupted, or even completely unavailable throughout the years that these children would otherwise have been in school. As a result, they may arrive in Ontario schools with significant gaps in their education.
- 3.2.1.3 ESL and ELD sections will be determined based on the number of students that are identified as ML and their current STEP levels. Students at STEP level three or below should have access to appropriate literacy resource supports to maximize language development and access to the

curriculum.

- 3.3 School registration:
 - 3.3.1 A Canadian-born ML shall be registered directly at the school in the same manner as other students. The principal, or designate, will check the 'Identified as ML' box within the Student Information System (SIS).
 - 3.3.2 Newcomers to Canada within the last four years must attend the Newcomer Welcome Centre prior to being entered in the SIS. The principal, or designate, will check the 'Identified as ML' box within the SIS if the student's primary language is a language other than English, or significantly different from the variety of English spoken in Ontario schools, and considering the level of the STEP assessment.
 - 3.3.3 An ML attending the Newcomer Welcome Centre will have an initial STEP assessment completed by staff at the Newcomer Welcome Centre, in the areas of language and math. Results will be inputted and forwarded to the school from the Newcomer Welcome Centre through the SIS program.

- 3.4 Student placement – elementary:
 - 3.4.1 A class placement for an ML will be age-appropriate.
 - 3.4.2 During the establishment of classes for a given school year, principals shall consider the needs of any MLs.
 - 3.4.3 Where available and applicable at specific elementary schools, elementary student success teachers (ESST) will connect with the families of the Grade 8 ML students to advise them of the secondary school ESL and ELD courses in advance of the course selection process.
 - 3.4.4 Elementary school administrators or their designates shall ensure that ML student STEP data is entered in the SIS concurrently with the reporting period for the school.

- 3.5 Student placement –secondary:
 - 3.5.1 Placement in a grade or in specific courses will depend upon the student's prior education, background in specific subject areas, and aspirations. Where possible, age-appropriate placements should be prioritized.
 - 3.5.2 Course types for an ML should be selected based on cognitive ability (not current English language proficiency), student interest, and desired pathway (e.g., apprenticeship, college, university, workplace).
 - 3.5.3 Secondary school administrators shall select a designate(s) who shall connect with incoming ML students and their families to ensure that the appropriate courses, based on the student's latest STEP assessment, student interest, and pathway have been selected, including registration in an ESL or ELD section if needed.
 - 3.5.4 Secondary school administrators shall select a designate(s) who shall administer the STEP assessment for the ML students for consistency and accountability in charting student progress.
 - 3.5.5 Secondary school administrators or their designates shall enter the STEP assessment data for ML students into the SIS yearly.
 - 3.5.6 The inputting of the STEP assessment data is a requirement as part

- of the Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario's Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 document expectations.
- 3.5.7 When a Grade 8 student is transitioning to secondary school, the elementary school should ensure that the ML student is taking an ML-appropriate level course (such as ESL A01 A-D) based on their mid-year STEP assessment level.

4. Instruction and assessment

- 4.1 Educators who work with an ML will use assessment data from the STEP continua to support programming and planning decisions, implement responsive, differentiated instruction and assessment, select appropriate resources, and track language proficiency/literacy development using the STEP continua.
- 4.2 An ML who is assessed using the STEP continua may have their curriculum expectations accommodated and/or modified. Students at STEP level three or below may need to have modifications to the curriculum, while students above may require accommodations only. The Curriculum Modification Tracking Form, Multilingual Learner (ML) (FORM A1410 - 1) will be used to document any program modifications. A copy of this form should be included in the student's OSR.
- 4.3 Schools will develop a process for:
- 4.3.1 entering STEP assessment data into the SIS, at least two times per year (elementary), and once per semester (secondary);
 - 4.3.2 updating the STEP data in the SIS by the end of December;
 - 4.3.3 filing a hard copy of the completed STEP continua in the student's OSR, if a student moves to another school board; and,
 - 4.3.4 sharing STEP assessment data with student/parent(s)/guardian(s).

5. An ML and special education needs

- 5.1 Schools are to gather information from the student's home country, family, or initial and/or ongoing STEP assessment, and consult the [ML and Special Education Flow Chart](#) to determine if the student may have special education needs.
- 5.2 If a school is considering a special education placement for an ML that does not include a formal identification of exceptionality, the decision should be made in consultation with their superintendent of education.

6. Reporting

- 6.1 An ML for whom learning expectations have been modified shall have the ESL box checked on their report card.
- 6.2 An ML for whom accommodations are in place shall not have the ESL box checked on their report card.

7. An ML and participation in large school assessments

- 7.1 An ML should participate in the Grade 3 and Grade 6 provincial assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics, in the Grade 9 provincial assessment in mathematics, and should take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) when they have acquired the level of proficiency in English required for success.
- 7.2 An ML should participate in national and international assessments when they have acquired the level of proficiency in English required for success.
- 7.3 An ML who is 18 years of age and over is not required to write the OSSLT prior to enrolling in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course.
- 7.4 Decisions about exemptions or deferrals will be made according to the requirements articulated in the EQAO administration guide.

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Curriculum Modification Tracking, Multilingual Learner (ML)

Effective date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Student name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Grade: Click or tap here to enter text.

STEP Assessment Data

Assessment date	Oral language		Reading			Writing		
	Listening	Speaking	Meaning	Form and style	Fluency	Developing and organizing content	Form and style	Language conventions
Click or tap to enter a date.	Pick	Pick	Pick	Pick	Pick	Pick	Pick	Pick

Modifications to learning expectations.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Signatures

Click or tap here to enter text.
Parent/Guardian/Student Name
(Student when over the age of 18)

Signature

Click or tap to enter a date.
Date

Click or tap here to enter text.
Principal Name

Signature

Click or tap to enter a date.
Date

Copies: OSR, Parent/guardian/student (over the age of 18)

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