

August 25, 2020

Dear _____,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! We are writing to inform you that your child will begin receiving English Language education services.

Belmont Charter School identifies students as ELL students through many ways. First, during the family interview, which included the Home Language Survey, it was determined that English is not your child's primary language used at home. Second, we take into consideration previous school records and review them for appropriate placement. Next, we review state and district assessments. Fourth, we monitor the student through our MTSS process. Finally, your child participates in the WIDA ACCESS Placement test.

According to the results of _____ Placement test, which was given on _____, they are currently performing at _____ Proficiency Level. This means _____.

The purpose of Belmont's English Language Learners program is to assure the participation is all aspects of the educational system. At the elementary level (grades K-5), all ELL students will receive enrichment instruction with their peers in their regular education homerooms. They also eat lunch and participate in recess and special activities with their homerooms. The ELL teacher will maintain communication with the general education teacher to collaborate instruction. The ELL teacher will be available in-person and through email communication to assist with modifying and adapting curriculum to meet the needs of the ELL students, using the *Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners Pre K – 12* (Pennsylvania Department of Education 2007). ELL students at Belmont Charter School should not be denied participation in any school activity, for any reason. All services provided are inclusive. Students who receive ELL services are integrated with their English language peers whenever possible.

Our ELL model is implemented by a certified English Language Learner teacher, who provides daily instruction to meet the needs of our students. Push-in instruction occurs for core subjects and pull-out instruction will be done by pulling students out of the general education classroom, and into the ELL room. English Literacy Development (ELD) is a daily part of our student's school day. ELD is embedded within non-ESL classes and is delivered by their homeroom teacher. Belmont uses Mixed Classes with English Only Support. This means that classes are taught in English only. English language skills and content are the focus of instruction. Some benefits of this model include allowing the student to be completely immersed in the English language and observation of students and teacher will help them learn English faster by looking at their body language.

Explanation of benefits include research showing that students who participate in full immersion of language, develop internal literacy, and later develop complete understanding of the English language. Students are able to develop an understanding of the relationship between spoken language and written word. Finally, students are exposed to a new culture, aiding in making friends and building connections with classmates.

Monitoring of ELL students includes teacher observation, both general education teachers and ELL teachers, parent observations, and report cards. In addition to observations and report cards, we also take into consideration state and district assessments, which include PSSAs and Belmont's predictive benchmark assessments.

A student who exits ELL must meet the following criteria:

1. For kindergarten students – overall composite proficiency level score of 5.0 on an ACCESS for ELLs Kindergarten assessment (accountability score)
2. For grades 1-12 students – overall composite proficiency level score of 5.0 on a Tier C ACCESS 2.0 Grades 1-12 assessment
3. A score of Basic on the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) math AND English Language Arts PSSA
4. Final grades of C or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies)
5. Scores on local assessments that are comparable to the BASIC performance level on the math PSSA AND English Language Arts PSSA
6. ELLs are monitored for two years after they exit the ELL program
 - a. Review of grades
 - b. Review of local assessment and state assessment
 - c. Teacher observations
 - d. Students who exit the program no longer receive supports from the ELL teacher

Parents of ELs have the right to refuse certain separate, specialized programs and services that may be part of the LIEP for their children. A parent's decision to refuse programs or services must be informed and voluntary. Attached you will find the "Parent Refusal of LIEP Programs and Services," if you choose to not have your child in the ELL program, or portions of the program. Again, some of these services include, pull-out classes and ESL tutoring.

Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Christine Quinn
ELL Coordinator/Special Education Coordinator