What is an *English as a Second Language (ESL)* program?

- ESL is intensive English language instruction by teachers trained in effective language acquisition strategies who work with English Language Learners.
- ESL instruction shall be commensurate with the student’s level of English proficiency and academic achievement.
- An ESL program provides intensive instruction that develops competency in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing of the English language.
- An ESL program uses the academic and cultural background of the student as a platform to provide the appropriate instruction in English.

What is the purpose of an *ESL* program?

- An ESL program develops competence in English.
- An ESL program prepares the students to be successful in all academic subjects.
- An ESL program emphasizes the mastery of English language skills, as well as, mathematics, science, and social studies, using research-based methodologies appropriate for second language acquisition.

Who is eligible for an *ESL* program?

- Students in prekindergarten through high school who speak or hear a language other than English in their home and who are learning English are eligible.
- Students will be assessed in language proficiency and based on their results, a recommendation for placement will be made by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), and parent permission will be required for participation.

Will my child be taught the same subjects and learn the same skills as students in the regular program?

- Yes, all students in an ESL program will receive instruction in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in English with linguistic accommodations based on their English language proficiency level.
- Yes, language arts, reading, mathematics, science and social studies are integral parts of the state mandated curriculum.
- Yes, students will have a meaningful opportunity to participate in art, music and physical education which are part of a balanced curriculum.

Who is responsible for teaching an *ESL* program?

- Teachers, who are highly qualified, specially trained, and certified to teach in ESL settings/classrooms/programs in a manner or approach that meets the special language needs of the students.

How is an *ESL* program different from English language arts instruction?

- The focus is on learning social and academic English within the context of all content area subjects.
- State-adopted ESL materials and ESL certified teachers support students become proficient in English, learn the knowledge and skills in the TEKS, and reach their full academic potential.

How can parents help their child learn by participating in an *ESL* program?

- Parent approval is required to allow their child to participate and benefit from the program.
- Parents can participate as a member of the LPAC that helps determine how students are identified, placed, instructed and assessed.
- Parents can become involved at home by encouraging their child to achieve, providing him/her a place to study and showing interest in his/her schoolwork.
- Parents can volunteer and help in classroom activities.

*Texas Education Code§29.051 – State Policy*

Public Schools are responsible for providing a full opportunity for all students to become competent in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending the English language. The mastery of basic English language skills is a prerequisite for effective participation in the state’s educational program.