

## English Language Learners in Nebraska School Districts

***Question: How do school districts help children learn English when English is not their first language?***

Under the law, schools must help the children learn English. This can be done by providing special programs such as:

- English Language Learner Programs:
  - Students may be in special classes to help them learn English for everyday language and to help them in their classes.
  - Classroom teachers may be using special teaching strategies to help the students learn English while they are also learning their classroom subjects.
- Bilingual or Dual Language Programs:
  - Students may be in classes where the subjects are taught in English and the child's first language. This helps the children continue to learn their first language while they also learn English.

***Question: How do school districts know if the students are learning English?***

- Teachers will continue to assess how students are learning English using classroom assignments, grades, quizzes, tests and so forth.
- The school district must also give an English language test to make sure English learners are making progress in becoming fluent in the English language. This test determines how well students can read, write, speak, and understand English.

***Question: After the students are given the English language tests, what kind of information is reported?***

- The school district receives the testing results for each **individual** student. This is one way that helps them keep track of how each student is progressing in learning English. It also shows how the district is doing in helping **all** children who are English language learners.
- In addition, the Nebraska State Department of Education sets yearly goals (Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives; which are also called AMAOs) for English language learners in the following areas:
  - The number of students making progress in learning English
  - The number of students becoming proficient in English
  - The number of English language learners scoring as proficient on tests of Reading and Mathematics

***Question: What happens if school districts do not meet these language goals?***

- If the goals have not been met for one year, the school district must tell the parents.
- If the goals have not been met for two years in a row, the school district must tell the parents and develop a plan to help meet these goals.