

The Iowa City Community School District English Language Learner Program

The mission of the English Language Learner (ELL) program is to produce language learners who are socially and academically prepared to be successful in the ICCSD and a global society.

We believe:

- Language acquisition is developmental and acquired in stages
- Rate of acquisition is unique to individuals and is influenced by multiple factors
- Use of the first language in the home facilitates second and additional language acquisition
- First language literacy development can facilitate English language literacy development
- ELLs need to develop both BICS (social) and CALP (academic) language
- Vocabulary development and the teaching of strategies for learning new vocabulary are critical components of literacy instruction
- Cultural and linguistic diversity enriches the lives of the entire school community

The linguistic, social, and academic goals of the program are to:

- Support the acquisition of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and the development of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency)
- Help students become proficient in the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Provide research-based strategies and instructional practices that are designed to meet the unique needs of ELLs
- Educate ELLs to meet the same challenging academic content and achievement that all children are expected to meet
- Assist successful participation in classroom learning situations and other school activities while maintaining a positive attitude toward self, school, and community
- Promote understanding, respect, and appreciation for the cultural and linguistic diversity of our student population.
- Collaborate with the school community to increase the sensitivity of staff to the unique educational needs of ELL students and their families
- Facilitate opportunities for parents of ELL students to develop home-school partnerships and encourage involvement in their child's education