

# **Rosslyn Academy**

## **English as an Additional Language Handbook**



2024-2025

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## Program Philosophy & Objectives

### Who Is an English Learner?

English learner (EL) at Rosslyn Academy is the label given to a student working to acquire proficiency in English as a new, additional language. The English as an Additional Language (EAL) Department exists to empower and equip our ELs to successfully navigate the transition to learning academic content in English and to work with our students' teachers to create access to grade-level content.<sup>1</sup> Research shows that:

1. The process of second language acquisition (SLA) is different for every student and can be affected by various factors including (Collier, 2015):
  - a. The student's full profile: personality, age, learning disabilities, and motivation
  - b. The level of support the student receives at home
  - c. The student's acculturation process
  - d. The efficacy of the language instruction the student is provided with
  - e. The student's literacy level in their mother tongue
2. The academic achievement of the EL is additionally linked to the comprehensibility and accessibility of the academic content they encounter (Fenner & Snyder, 2017).
3. The EL's first language is a rich resource from which to learn English, and Rosslyn empowers the use of the first language (L1) appropriately throughout the learner's school day. Though we use an English-medium program, we continue to learn how best to support bilingual evidence-based practices such as translanguaging. Additionally, we advocate for the student to continue to develop literacy skills in their L1 (Dormer, 2016; Wright, 2019).
4. Every teacher is a language teacher, and our ELs are the responsibility of all teachers (Wright, 2019).

### Our Philosophy, Role, and How We Ensure Best Student Outcomes

"Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...'" (Genesis 1:26). At the heart of our vision lies the belief that each of our students is a reflection of this divine image, imbued with unique gifts and strengths bestowed by our Creator, including the gift of multilingualism. We believe multilingualism is intended to unite diverse peoples, deepen mutual understanding, and enhance lives. Our mission is to empower English learners to unlock their God-given potential through culturally responsive and sheltered instruction that encourages intellectual integrity and best student outcomes. We endeavor to provide a nurturing and inclusive educational environment that fosters linguistic excellence, discerning wisdom, and a sense of global stewardship. Embracing the rich tapestry of languages and cultures within our school community, we seek to nurture individuals who communicate with confidence, collaborate with empathy, and pursue intellectual virtues and lifelong learning. Together, we strive to contribute to the realization of God's kingdom on earth, where every voice is cherished and every language glorifies His name.

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<sup>1</sup> *EAL teachers* and *EAL specialists* will be used interchangeably due to the fact that they act as both instructors and experts in determining and providing multiple appropriate services for the school's ELs and their teachers.

Rosslyn Academy’s mission is to inspire and equip each of our students to develop their God-given gifts to serve the world they live in. Inspiring and equipping each one of our ELs to develop their God-given gifts means that we, the Rosslyn faculty and, in particular, the EAL department a. strive for students to receive comprehensible input at every entrance level and across all content areas while fostering multilingual practices that support meaning-making, b. diligently support growth in their expressive and receptive English language skills using evidence-based strategies, and c. always use an asset-based approach that recognizes the rich resources our students’ mother tongues are and capitalizes on their personal cultures and experiences, as well as their strengths and current capabilities.

### **Basic Program Objectives**

1. EAL specialists will assist ELs and their families in their acculturation process and as they acclimate to the Rosslyn Academy school culture.
2. ELs will develop their English and progress toward acquiring grade-level social and academic English in speaking, listening, reading, and writing through meaningful and carefully planned English language instruction. Additionally, EAL teachers will assist teachers to differentiate and scaffold instruction in and out of class. To this end, EAL specialists will offer support for ELs through any of the following services, as needed:
  - a. Elementary School (ES): targeted English language instruction, sheltered English instruction of a core class<sup>2</sup>, in-class support and co-teaching, reading groups, intervention groups, content modification
  - b. Middle School (MS): targeted English language instruction, sheltered English instruction of a core class, in-class support and co-teaching, guided study halls, content modification
  - c. High School (HS): targeted English language instruction (HS EAL & English for Academic Purposes), sheltered English instruction of a core class, in-class support and co-teaching, guided study hall, content modification
3. EAL specialists will provide additional support to teachers of ELs through
  - a. the provision of Individualized Language Plans (ILPs) that contain all relevant personal and educational background and English proficiency information on students
  - b. checking Google Classroom regularly to help students understand teacher expectations and assist students as needed
  - c. maintaining open, collaborative communication with teachers regarding the progress of ELs, offering support and problem-solving strategies when teachers are concerned
  - d. keeping current records of ELs’ language levels
  - e. deciding on accommodations for standardized assessments such as MAP

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<sup>2</sup> The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is an educational framework designed to help teachers “plan, teach, observe, and evaluate effective instruction” for English learners (Wright, 2019). English learners acquire proficiency in English while simultaneously learning content from core subjects. This method "shelters" the content to make it more comprehensible to students who are still developing their English language skills.

- f. offering workshops on Second Language Acquisition, Differentiation, etc.

## Eligibility

Any student with limited English language proficiency may be eligible for participation in the EAL program when first admitted to Rosslyn Academy or after an admitted student has been referred for language support. To determine the English language proficiency (ELP) of a potential English learner, the EAL department will administer a World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English language proficiency screener which assesses speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Depending on the testing results, in-person interviews, and input from parents/guardians and teachers, a student may be eligible for admission and participation in the EAL program. If the results are below the recommended levels for admission and participation in the EAL program (listed below), they may be denied admission until their English levels have improved. The following table is the department's recommended criteria for admission.<sup>3</sup>

### Admission Guide

Descriptive and Prescriptive WIDA Levels for Admission at Rosslyn Academy	
Level 1: Entering	Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grades PK-3
Knows and uses minimal social language and minimal academic language with visual and graphic support.	
Level 2: Beginning Level 2.5: Beginning +	Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grades 4-5 Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grade 6
Knows and uses some social English and general academic language with visual and graphic support.	
Level 3: Developing Level 3.5: Developing +	Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grades 7-8 Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grade 9
Knows and uses social English and some specific academic language with visual and graphic support.	
Level 4: Expanding	Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grade 10
Knows and uses social English and some technical academic language.	
Level 5: Bridging	Recommended minimum for Rosslyn entrance: Grades 11-12

<sup>3</sup> Though Rosslyn Academy seeks to follow these recommendations as closely as possible, we acknowledge that when personnel is adequate and supports are already in place, some exceptions may be made, in particular when a group of siblings or the children of missionaries are being considered.

Knows and uses social English and academic language working with grade-level materials.	
Level 6: Reaching	Students at this level do not require EAL services.
Knows and uses social and academic language at the highest level measured by this test.	

## Evaluation of Students

### Grading

In Elementary School, ELs will receive EAL teacher comments on their report card related to effort and progress in English language development (ELD). Typically, English learners in MS and HS will receive a grade in all classes, including the EAL Instructional class. Students placed in an MS or HS EAL study hall will be awarded a Pass (P) or Fail (F) grade at the end of each semester.

### HS Credits and Transcripts

At the HS level, 0.5 credit is given for the semester for an EAL Instructional course, and 0.25 credit is awarded for a semester of work in an EAL-guided study hall.

### Assessment

While working with the EAL specialist, students receive an evaluation of their progress toward English proficiency through immediate or timely feedback. This primary feedback is accompanied by feedback on written work, and feedback on report cards to the parents in the comments section.

### Accommodations and Modifications

In core classes and electives, English learners may be eligible to receive accommodations and/or modifications based on their ELP levels. *Accommodations* are additional language supports and scaffolds the student receives to achieve the same learning objective as their peers (e.g. extra time, translator, etc.). *Modifications*, by contrast, are given when a student cannot achieve the same learning objective of a particular unit, even with accommodations, and needs a new goal. If, by the end of the semester or year, the course content and assessments have been modified between 30%- 50% of the time, the course teacher and EAL specialist will inform the guidance office to denote the course as *Modified* on the student's report card or transcript.

### Annual ELP Benchmark Assessment

Typically, during the 3rd quarter of each school year, each EL takes a benchmark WIDA assessment in order to gauge ELP growth over the past year. Growth is typically expected to be between 0.5-1.0 points annually in each language domain on the WIDA scoring scale.

## Standardized Tests (MAP)

All students in grades 3-10 are expected to complete the standardized MAP test twice per year. Specific accommodations can be implemented to assist English learners during these assessments (found in the ILP). Depending on their stage of ELP, ELs might be exempt from taking, or be given extra time and support for, MAP tests intended for native English speakers. These accommodations aim to ensure that all students are assessed fairly, without the language barrier hindering their ability to participate and show what they know. Students who are just beginner ELs are exempt.

## Services & Considerations

Rosslyn Academy offers a variety of methods to promote the EL's success academically and linguistically. Some of these programs are well established while others are being developed.<sup>4</sup>

***EAL Instruction (in the EAL classroom):*** students receive targeted English language instruction for the purpose of English language development.

***Co-teaching (in-class):*** EAL and content specialists work collaboratively through various co-teaching models to serve ELs in an inclusive, accessible learning environment. We aim to embed language objectives within content objectives using the sheltered instruction approach.

***Content-based English Language Development aka Sheltered Content Area Instruction<sup>5</sup> (in-class or in the EAL classroom):*** An EAL specialist teaches content areas in English, tailored to ensure understanding for ELs while also enhancing their English language skills. Such instruction may occur either in the classroom or, if students are at the Beginning or Developing levels of English language proficiency, in a separate class (Wright, 2019).

***Teacher Collaboration / Inclusion Support (in-class):*** EAL specialists and content teachers work together to ensure ELs are receiving the support they need to access the content and achieve the best outcomes in their classes. Such support may include:

- a. Scaffolding and differentiation of lessons & assessments, content modification, and provision of texts in the student's L1 as needed
- b. Short-term targeted intervention as needed to practice and strengthen a specific area of challenge
- c. Reading support in a small group within the structured classroom's reading class (ES)

***EAL Study Hall / Writing Support (EAL classroom):*** This class aims to provide targeted support for ELs to enhance their English language skills, particularly literacy skills, and to develop effective self-scaffolding strategies. It offers structured one-on-one or small group guidance with new content and assignments, along with resources to help students navigate academic tasks and achieve success in other classes.

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<sup>4</sup> Please refer to the exiting & services guide to learn more about which services apply to which levels.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote #2 for definition.

**Exiting EAL:** Ongoing evaluation, which includes teacher observations and language proficiency benchmarking tests, will determine when a student may be ready to be exited from the EAL program where ELD support is thoughtfully planned for. See *Exit Criteria and Process* below for more information.

**Monitor (in-class):** Once exited from the EAL program, students are monitored for two years. EAL specialists check with content teachers to ensure students are making adequate progress and do not need further language support.

### **At-risk and Long-term English Learners**

The EAL department seeks to address the needs of at-risk ELs before they become long-term ELs. In the U.S., at-risk ELs are defined as those students not making sufficient progress to exit the EAL program by their sixth year (Wright, 2019). Once they have reached their sixth year in the EAL program, these students become long-term ELs.

At Rosslyn Academy, we aspire to use all of the data at our disposal (assessments, progress monitoring, class observations, teacher recommendations, and a close professional relationship with each student) to unearth obstacles and barriers standing in the way of the student and keeping them from achieving appropriate linguistic and academic outcomes in a timely manner (this process may begin as early as their second or third year at school). Students may struggle to make adequate progress due to a number of internal or external factors which the EAL department will explore in collaboration with teachers, student support team members, school administrators, external providers, and parents. A guiding document will be provided.

### **Exit Criteria & Process**

Students are recommended for exiting from the EAL Program by their EAL teacher. Teachers use the following language proficiency criteria when considering reclassification and a transition out of EAL: WIDA levels, MAP scores, performance in core classes and on report cards, and classroom observations. Students should be at a composite WIDA level for monitoring as indicated in the chart below. The EAL department aims to follow the following *Placement & Exiting Guide* when determining students' individual programs.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, EL's writing level should be at least 4.0 on the WIDA unless they are in the process of being referred through the RTI model due to an additional learning challenge which may be the cause for impeded ELD growth (and will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis). EAL teachers may evaluate additional student writing to see if a more comprehensive writing sample exhibits a level 4.0 if the student did not achieve this through the annual benchmark assessment but demonstrates this level of writing on a normal basis.

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<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Dormer, Jan. *What School Leaders Need to Know about Language Learners*, 108



Students typically exit at the end of a semester or academic year. When students exit the EAL program, an EAL specialist sends a letter to their families indicating their change of classification. The students are then monitored for another two years.

### Placement & Exiting Guide<sup>7</sup>

	<b>Level 1</b> Starting Beginning	<b>Level 2</b> Emerging (High Beginning)	<b>Level 3</b> Developing (Intermediate)	<b>Level 4</b> Expanding (High Intermediate)	<b>Level 5</b> Bridging (Advanced)
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Regular (teacher collaboration / monitor)				
<b>Grades 1-2</b>	Tier 3: all services as needed; heaviest support	Tiers 1/2: In-class services, partial pullout for EAL/ELA instruction & intervention		Regular (teacher collaboration / monitor)	
<b>Grade 3</b>	Tier 3: All services as needed; heaviest support	Tiers 2/3: In-class services, SIOP <sup>8</sup> , partial pullout for EAL / ELA instruction, intervention	Tiers 1/2: In-class services, partial pullout for EAL / ELA instruction, intervention	In-class services	Regular (teacher collaboration / monitor)
<b>Grades 4-5</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 2</i>	Tier 3: All services as needed; heaviest support	Tiers 2/3: In-class services, SIOP, partial pullout for EAL / ELA instruction, intervention	In-class services	Regular (teacher collaboration / monitor)
<b>Grade 6*</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 2.5</i>	Tier 3: All services as needed; heaviest support	Tiers 2/3: In-class services, SIOP, partial pullout for EAL / ELA instruction, intervention	Tiers 1/2: In-class services, partial pullout for EAL / ELA instruction, intervention	Tiers 1/2: In-class services as needed, EAL study hall
<b>Grades 7-8</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 3</i>		Tiers 1/2: In-class services (according to personnel availability), EAL / ELA / other <sup>9</sup> instruction, and/or EAL study hall		

<sup>7</sup> Rosslyn EAL Department uses the composite WIDA Level for these categories.

<sup>8</sup> Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol. See definition in footnotes (page 4).

<sup>9</sup> At times, an EAL teacher determines the need for a separate sheltered content area class for a specific EL population for a designated amount of time. In the past, this has included science, ELA, and HS CRE.

<b>Grade 9</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 3.5</i>	Tiers 1/2: In-class services (according to personnel availability), EAL instruction (regular/EAP), and/or EAL study hall
<b>Grade 10</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 4</i>	Tiers 1/2: In-class services (according to personnel availability), EAL instruction (regular/EAP), and/or EAL study hall
<b>Grades 11-12</b>	<i>Recommended entrance level 5</i>	Tiers 1/2: In-class services (according to personnel availability), EAP, and/or EAL study hall

## **Additional Practical Information for Parents**

### **Individualized Language Plans (ILPs)**

At the beginning of the school year, EAL specialists create or update new and returning students' Individualized Language Plans (ILPs). ILPs include any information that is believed to assist teachers in understanding their students and helping them achieve best outcomes in their classes. This includes adaptations to curricula and assessments that the EL is entitled to. Additional information to note:

1. New ILPs are created for newcomer students in August and these include WIDA screener data as well as non-confidential information gathered from a possible interview and the student's application file.
2. Returning student ILPs are revised in the spring or in August based on data from the most recent WIDA benchmark assessment, MAP growth scores, and EAL specialists' observations and recommendations.
3. Specialists use assessment data, knowledge of the student, WIDA Can-Do Descriptors, and knowledge of the content area to recommend accommodations or modifications for students' ILPs. Accommodations and modifications should lessen as students' English language proficiency / WIDA level increases.
4. The EAL specialists publish the ILPs by sharing them with families, principals, and content area teachers by mid-end August. ILPs are reviewed with a cluster of teachers or individual teachers to ensure teacher understanding and, by extension, the efficacy of our services.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences & Reporting**

- A. In ES, classroom teachers invite parents to parent-teacher conferences (PTCs) which specialists are encouraged to join. ES EAL specialists are also encouraged to initiate parent conferences at least once a semester or more, as needed.
- B. In MS and HS, PTCs are set up to allow parents to visit any of their students' teachers. EAL specialists are encouraged to communicate with parents in advance to:
  - a. set up a PTC between the EAL specialist and the parents during the PTC day
  - b. invite parents to request support as they visit other teachers which may include accompanying them to the meetings or seeking a translator.

Similar to ES, secondary EAL specialists are encouraged to initiate a PTC at least once a semester and more, as needed.

- C. Other formal reporting varies by school, and is as follows:
  - a. Elementary EAL teachers add a comment to the progress report each quarter.
  - b. Students in MS and HS EAL instructional classes and guided study halls receive a grade, IVLH assessment score, and a personal comment from the EAL teacher each quarter.

## **Policy Review**

This handbook was published on January 1, 2025. In order to maintain best practice and legal compliance, the handbook will be reviewed every 1-2 years (no later than Dec. 2026).

## **Data Protection**

The EAL Department is committed to ensuring the responsible management and protection of student data in compliance with applicable data protection regulations and school policies. The department is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all student information and implementing appropriate technical and organizational measures to safeguard data from unauthorized access, loss, or misuse.

## Sources

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## Appendix A

### Abbreviations Key

DTL	Director of teaching and learning
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EAP	English for academic purposes
EL	English learners
ELA	English language arts
ELD	English language development
ELL	English language learners
ELP	English language proficiency
ES	Elementary school
HS	High school
IEP	Individualized education plan/program
ILP	Individualized language plan
IVLH	Intellectual virtue learning habits
L1	First language / mother tongue
L2	Second language
MAP	Measures of academic progress
MS	Middle school
PD	Professional development
PTC	Parent-teacher conference
RTI	Response to intervention
SLA	Second language acquisition
SLD	Second language development
SST	Student support team
UDL	Universal design for learning
WIDA	World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment