

# **Sankofa Freedom Academy ELL Policy and Program for English Language Learners / Limited English Proficiency Scholars**

In compliance with Title 22, Chapter 4, Section 4.26 of the Curriculum Regulations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School will provide a program for every student who is found to be Limited English Proficient or English Language Learners. Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School is committed to carrying out its responsibility to identify, support, and service English Language Learners through the implementation of a program based on sound educational and language learning theory, implemented with sufficient resources, staffed by appropriately prepared personnel, and is periodically evaluated. Thus the Sankofa Freedom Academy ELL program includes the following:

## **1. Identification Process:**

- a. In order to identify ELL students, Sankofa Freedom Academy will administer a Home Language Survey (HLS) annually to its student body to ascertain whether there are Sankofa Freedom Academy students from homes where a language other than English is spoken or whether the student speaks a language other than English in order to determine PHLOTES (Primary home language other than English learners)
- b. As a part of the in-take process all admission applications include a question designed to identify families in which a language other than English is spoken.
- c. The results of this survey will be entered into the permanent student folder and to local and state officials
- d. Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School will check its list with the data available from the School District of Philadelphia's Database to insure that all ELL students have been identified.
- e. A list of PHLOTES students will be established, maintained, and made available to appropriate staff and reported to those state and local agencies that may be appropriate.

## **2. Proficiency Assessment**

- a. If a review of the survey data reveals a student speaks a language in addition to English (i.e. a PHLOTES student), Sankofa Freedom Academy will administer the W-APT Screening and Placement test.
- b. Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School will begin ELL instruction within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or within 14 days of the admission date of the student. Instruction for the ELL or LEP student will be dependent on the levels as indicated by the assessment in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- c. Upon completion of assessment students will be provided services based on the PA Language and Proficiency levels of: entering, beginning, developing, expanding, and bridging

### 3. Program Components:

a. As a Freedom School, which believes in culturally democracy, Sankofa Freedom Academy is committed to developing a program that encourages the acquisition of language proficiency while celebrating and encouraging the culture and honoring the language of its PHLOTES. Thus, our program will combine aspects of bilingualism, along with more traditional English language development programs with pullout and push-in services as described below

1. In the event that a critical number of students are discovered with common proficiency levels in the same language, Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School will establish a bilingual program. This is in keeping with the culturally responsive philosophy of the school, which sees language as the foundation of culture. Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School is committed to centering education within the culturally context of the student. This approach will empower the student to maintain fluency in the primary language while achieving proficiency in English.
2. In that the PHLOTES come from a range of cultural and linguistic traditions, pull out and push in ESOL / ESL/ ELL will be provided that are designed to build proficiency in oral and written communication. These services will be rendered so as to celebrate the language of the student while building proficiency in English.
3. In keeping with commonwealth recommendations daily instructional time is provided using the following guidelines:
  - a. Level 1 (Entering) — 2 to 3 hours daily
  - b. Level 2-3 (beginning/developing) — 1 – 1 and half daily
  - c. Level 3-4 (developing/expanding) -30 minutes to 1 hour daily
  - d. Level 5 (bridging) — 30 minutes or less daily.

#### 4. Student Placement and Supports:

- a. Push in ELL / ESL/ESOL services are provided for students who are deemed to be at the intermediate or advanced levels of proficiency, in keeping with recommendations of the commonwealth.
- b. To insure that ELL and LEP scholars have success across content areas, Sankofa Freedom Academy will monitor the progress of scholars across the content areas and support teachers in making accommodations for the necessary students.
- c. In keeping with its culturally responsive philosophy and in order to establish a culturally and linguistic rich environment, all Sankofa Freedom Academy classes will infuse common terms and terminology in the languages spoken in the school community. Items in classes will be labeled in languages represented in the community so as to enrich the entire community.
- d. To insure that ELL / LEP students are linked to community based organizations that provide extracurricular activities and offer

appropriate supports, Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter school will establish relationships with community and faith based organizations that serve ELL / LEP families.

**Proficiency Monitoring and Assessment:**

1. In order to determine when a student is ready to move from one proficiency level to another multiple measures will be utilized in order to provide information on the student's capacity in listening, speaking, reading and writing with proficiency.
2. Annually all students will be given the Annual State English Language Proficiency Assessment for all students receiving LEP / ELL / ESOL services.
3. ELL / LEP students will not be exempt from taking the PSSA but will be provided state accommodations as provided in state statute.

**Exit Criteria:** In order to be exited from the ESL program, students must meet either of these test criteria:

1. Score Basic on the PSSA / Keystone and 5.0 in each domain on the W-APT test
2. Score Proficient on the PSSA / Reading / Keystone Literature test and a composite of 4.5 or above on the January ACCESS test.
3. Have final grades of 70 or better in core subjects (Math, English, Science and Social Studies)

Students are monitored for two years after exiting ESL using a review of grades, benchmark tests, standardized test, portfolio assessment, and teacher feedback.

**Communication with Parents — Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School** acknowledges its responsibility to provide parents with information about assessment, academic achievement, school codes and policies in the native language of the parent or in their preferred mode of communication. To do this, Sankofa Freedom Academy will establish a list of bilingual advocates in multiple languages in order to insure that its families are served appropriately.

**Staffing —** To address the needs of our ELL scholars for whom Spanish is the primary language, a bilingual staff member will be available to provide translation services for Spanish speaking families. Similar staffing will be sought to support ELL scholars whose language is based on languages other than Spanish. Sankofa Freedom Academy will also provide ELL services by a PA certified teacher. No ELL teacher will have a caseload that exceeds 25 scholars without additional supports. Our ELL teacher will collaborate with the classroom teachers and when appropriate, co-teach with regular education teachers who serve ELL children.

**Professional Development —** In alignment with the SFA Professional Development Plan, the Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School staff will engage in professional development annually in order to build capacity among staff in creating ELL friendly environments, infusing culture and language into the culturally responsive classroom, and in strategies that will empower faculty in providing support for the academic and socialization achievement of ELL / LEP students.