



<p>1. What is English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); how and why was it established?</p>	<p>Following the filing of a lawsuit against the state by a multiracial/ethnic coalition, a consent decree (known as the "META agreement") was entered into in 1990 by the State Board of Education, the Department of Education (DOE), and Governor Bob Martinez. The consent decree was intended to prevent significant and onerous involvement by the Federal Office of Civil Rights in the school districts' endeavors to teach students whose native language is not English.</p> <p>The consent decree establishes Florida's ESOL program, with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) committees and plans, and provides for student identification and assessment, and equal access to appropriate programs, among other features.</p> <p>Without the consent decree, each of the 67 districts could be participants in frequent and costly court battles. This could result in the problem other states have had with being forced to offer bilingual education. These states must hire teachers who speak every conceivable other language from Arabic to Urdu.</p>
<p>2. Is ESOL the same as bilingual education?</p>	<p>ESOL is NOT bilingual education. ESOL classes are taught in English. In August 2000, two years after Californians voted to end bilingual education and move to ESOL, student test results indicated startling improvement in test scores of students who switched from bilingual education to ESOL.</p>
<p>3. Why has it been important to refrain from changing the law in this area?</p>	<p>Under the consent decree, DOE's legal staff and its Office of Multicultural Student Language Education annually work with the attorneys from the Federal Office of Civil Rights to be sure the state is viewed as being in compliance. This protects the school districts from immense time and expense, and supplies the uniformity necessary to safeguard the equal protection rights of this vulnerable population of students.</p> <p>Since the consent decree, the view has been that any major change to Florida's ESOL program risks putting the state back into Federal court, and could end up costing a tremendous amount of money and imposing huge new requirements on the districts and the DOE.</p>

English for Speakers of Other Languages

	<p><i>However, as studies such as those from California document the superiority of ESOL over bilingual education, the risk of being forced into bilingual education by the court is reduced. If new experimentation within English language immersion courses proves successful, Florida may find it worthwhile to revisit the 1990 consent decree.</i></p>
<p>4. Is there a difference between teacher training and certification requirements in Florida vs. bilingual states?</p>	<p>Yes. Mandated bilingual states like Texas and New York require teachers to have bilingual certification and ESOL certification, which means they have to be able to teach in the child's native language.</p> <p>Florida's requirements are ESOL endorsement and inservice training, which is provided to the districts by training tapes from DOE. Only 18 hours of ESOL training are required for art, music, and P.E., 60 hours for social studies, history, and math. For language arts studies, 300 hours of ESOL training are required.</p> <p>The ESOL training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) • ESOL Curriculum and Materials Development • Cross-cultural Communication and Understanding • Testing and Evaluation of ESOL • Applied Linguistics <p>State-approved teacher preparation programs must incorporate appropriate ESOL instruction so that program graduates will have completed the requirements for teaching LEP students in Florida public schools during their preservice preparation.</p> <p>Florida teachers who do their ESOL training inservice can bank their inservice ESOL training hours, and include them with other required training, such as Sunshine State Standards and multicultural training.</p>
<p>5. What are some of the other features of the ESOL program?</p>	<p>The ESOL consent decree features parental involvement, student classification and reclassification, student tracking, program outcome measures, and district monitoring. Weighted FTE funding is provided. The ESOL budget includes parent training as well as teacher training. All schools in the state get copies of all program materials, consent decree requirements, and program strategies.</p> <p>Under Florida's education accountability system, s.</p>

English for Speakers of Other Languages

	<p>229.57(3)(b)7., F.S., requires that all students participate in the statewide testing program, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner. Pursuant to the A+ Education Plan enacted in 1999, schools are now graded on the basis of letter grades (A-F). According to DOE, all students' test scores are included in a school's grade, including limited English proficient (LEP) students who have been in an ESOL program for <i>more than two years</i>. LEP students who have been in ESOL programs for <i>less than two years</i> are exempted from the testing requirements. (See the Testing Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>6. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 228.2001(2)(c), F.S. -- Educational Equity Act Section 229.57(3)(6)7., F.S. -- Test modification for LEP students Section 231.24, F.S. -- ESOL inservice points Section 233.058, F.S. -- English language instruction for LEP students Section 236.081(1)(c)4., F.S. -- Weighted funding for ESOL students 240,529(2), F.S. -- ESOL requirements for state approved teacher prep programs</p> <p>Rule 6A. 4.0244, F.A.C. -- Teacher certification specialization in ESOL Rule 6A. 6-0900, F.A.C. -- Programs/exemptions for LEP students</p>
<p>7. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Department of Education Office of Multicultural Student Language Education (850) 922-7294</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Council for Lifelong Learning (850) 414-6694</p>