

WHEATON WARRENVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR A CENTURY OF CHANGE



The Program for English Language Learners

District 200 offers a comprehensive program for students whose primary language is not English. The goal of the program is to prepare students speaking native languages other than English to be successful in a regular classroom setting. Approximately 1,000 students receive direct service each year through English as a Second Language and/or bilingual programs. More than 500 additional students are monitored as they sharpen their English skills in the regular classroom. The students served by the English Language Learners (ELL) program speak more than 50 languages, with Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian and Bosnian/Croatian being the most frequent.

How are students identified for the program?

When a student enrolls in a District 200 school, the family is asked to complete a Student Information Form. Information on this form identifies the language(s) spoken by the student and the student's family. Students who indicate a language other than English is spoken in the home are given a language proficiency test to determine their placement in a District 200 program.

What programs are available for English language learners?

The District offers support to English language learners through several programs. Depending on their skills, students may be in a program all day or only a portion of the day. All students participate with English speaking students for such classes as physical education, art and music.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

ESL classes are designed for children who have difficulty speaking, reading or writing English. These classes are taught in English and are designed to help children learn to speak, read and write in English.

Bilingual Classes

These classes are taught in the student's native language while they are learning English. The focus of instruction may be on reading, language arts, social studies, science or math. Bilingual classes are offered when 20 or more students with the same native language are enrolled at the same school.

Monitoring Services

Students who are not eligible for ESL/ bilingual classes or have exited the direct serve program, but need some support in developing their English language skills are 'monitored' by the ELL staff. Staff may meet occasionally with the student and also works with his/her teachers to help them plan teaching activities for students who are still learning English.

What schools offer ESL and bilingual programs?

Elementary Schools

All the District's thirteen elementary schools offer ESL programs and eight of those also have transitional Spanish bilingual programs. The elementary schools that offer an ESL and transitional Spanish bilingual program are: Bower, Hawthorne, Johnson, Lincoln, Longfellow, Pleasant Hill, Sandburg, and Washington.

Middle Schools

District 200 has four middle schools. Each middle school offers an ELL Program. Franklin and Hubble also have a transitional Spanish bilingual program.

High Schools

Wheaton North and Wheaton-Warrenville South High Schools offer an ELL Program that includes ESL and Spanish transitional bilingual courses. Students earn credits toward graduation for the ELL high school courses.

Are teachers required to have special training to teach in the ESL and bilingual programs?

Teachers in both programs (ESL & bilingual) must be certified by the State of Illinois as qualified teachers and must also have an ESL or bilingual approval or endorsement which they earn by taking additional coursework. Bilingual teachers who are fluent in the language they teach are given up to eight years to earn their certification.

What services are offered to parents of ESL and bilingual students?

Parent Advisory Committee

A committee of ELL parents, community members, and District 200 staff meets to discuss issues of importance to families with English Language Learners. The committee has addressed such topics as adult ESL classes, immigration laws and regulations, transitioning from the middle schools to the high schools, and course expectations.

Interpreters and Translators

The District has employed several individuals who are bilingual in English and another language to help communicate with families during parent meetings, at parent/teacher conferences and through phone calls. A special phone line is available for Spanish speaking parents to contact if they are seeking information or have questions. The parent leaves a message at 630/462-3656 and a Spanish-speaking staff member will respond to the message with a follow-up call.

How do I enroll my child in a District 200 school?

Enrollment procedures for ESL and bilingual students are the same as for all other students. Families should contact the District Office at 630/682-2000 to determine the school the student will attend. Families should then go to the school and present the following information:

- Proof of birth date (birth certificate, I-94 or passport)
- Proof of residency in District 200 (utility bill, apartment lease, tax bill).
- A written record of required immunizations and a physical examination performed within the year preceding enrollment.
- A copy of school records from any school the child previously attended. (The child's official school records from a school within the United States will be requested by the school after the parent completes a release form.)

More information about enrolling in District 200 can be obtained by calling the District Office at 630/682-2000, the school the student will attend, or visiting the District's web page at www.cusd200.org. Rental offices in most apartment complexes also have enrollment information.