



Summary of
Settlement Agreement
between
The United States of America
and
The Clay County School District



Overview

On October 30, 2023, the United States and the Clay County School District entered into a Settlement Agreement to resolve an investigation into the District's program for English Learner students. The United States Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida jointly investigated under the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. The District cooperated fully with the Department's investigation and, after receiving the results of the investigation, committed to improving its services for English Learners.

This document summarizes the Settlement Agreement. You can read the entire Agreement on the Department of Justice's [website](#).

This summary is intended to increase awareness of the Settlement Agreement and share with the Clay County community the steps the District is taking to better serve its English Learners and their families. The summary is designed for those who do not have a legal background.



English Learner Program

The District will develop an English Learner program. Through the program:

- Students' English language skills will be assessed promptly.
- If the students qualify, the District will offer them English Learner services.
- English Learners will be taught English by qualified and trained teachers.
- Teachers will use instructional strategies so that English Learners can progress in their math, science, social studies, and English/Language Arts classes while they are learning English.
- Trained and specialized English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Coaches will ensure English Learners are receiving the services they need so they can learn English in a reasonable time.
- The District will regularly assess whether the English Learner program successfully helps students overcome their language barriers in school.



ESOL Coaches & Teacher Training

To support the English Learner program, the District will:

- Implement a professional development plan that will give teachers and school leaders adequate training on teaching English Learners and the agreement's requirements.
- Hire qualified and trained ESOL Coaches to review student progress and help teachers of English Learners use special instructional strategies.
- Assign ESOL Coaches and school leaders to make sure English Learners get the support they need in class and to help teachers improve how they teach these students.





Identification & Placement of English Learners

If a student speaks another language, if another language is spoken at home, or if the student seems to struggle with English, the District will assess that student to see if they qualify for English Learner services. The District will offer to enroll all qualifying students in the English Learner program.

If a current student was improperly assessed or improperly removed from the District's English Learner program and does not receive English Learner services:

- The District will find the student and re-assess them.
- If the student qualifies for English Learner services, the District will offer services to them.



If a student enrolls in school at the start of the school year:

- The District will assess if the student qualifies for English Learner services within 28 days and, if they do, will offer services within 14 days of assessment.

If a student enrolls in school mid-year:

- The District will assess if the student qualifies for English Learner services within 14 days and, if they do, will offer services within 14 days of assessment.



English Language Instruction & Making Content Accessible to English Learners

The District will provide English Learners with English language instruction.

- Qualified, trained teachers will provide all English Learners with **at least one period of English language instruction daily**.
- English Learners who need more help will receive **at least two periods of English language instruction daily**. For students who need this extra help and are in grades 3 through 6, they will receive at least 60 minutes of English language instruction daily and, where possible, 90 minutes.

Teachers will help English Learners continue to learn in their math, science, social studies, and English/Language Arts classes, even while the student is learning English.

- Teachers will use special instructional strategies for English Learners—like modifying their word choice or pace of speaking, providing additional materials to aid in school and home learning, using bilingual glossaries and dictionaries, and changing how they assess whether a student understood the material—to help them learn in their classes.





Access to Exceptional Student Education Services for English Learners

The District will not let language barriers hinder an English Learner's access to academic and behavioral supports.

- If an English Learner has academic or behavioral challenges in school, the District will use its Multi-Tiered System of Supports, called MTSS, process to identify whether they are struggling because of a language barrier or another reason and, where appropriate, use proactive interventions.
- The District will not delay evaluating an English Learner for Exceptional Student Education services just because the student does not understand or speak English.
- When evaluating an English Learner for a potential disability, the District will use valid and reliable assessment practices that reflect students' language needs and cultural norms.

English Learners with a disability will receive both Exceptional Student Education and English language services.

- Individualized Education Program teams will consider the language needs of English Learners with disabilities and how those needs relate to the student's Individualized Education Program.

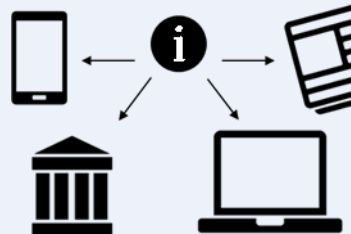




Parent Communications

The District will provide language assistance to parents who are not fluent in English so that they know about their child's educational opportunities. This includes:

- Asking parents to identify their preferred language and providing important information from schools and the central office in the languages spoken by most parents.
- Providing parents with an interpreter or translations upon request and posting clearly, in multiple languages, how parents can ask for language assistance.
- Hiring a service to interpret over the phone so that employees can quickly and accurately communicate with parents who are not fluent in English.





Program Monitoring & Evaluation

The District will ensure that schools are properly serving English Learners and will evaluate the effectiveness of the English Learner program. This includes:

- Using data to understand whether the program helps students learn English and empowers them with equal access to the District's educational opportunities.
- Surveying parents, in a language they understand, each year to get feedback on the English Learner program.
- Speaking with teachers of English Learners to see if they need more support to provide effective English language instruction.






Contact Information

Clay County School District

If you have **concerns about discrimination** in any Clay County District school, please contact Treasure Pickett, Chief of Secondary Education, using the information below.

 (904) 336-6918

 Treasure.Pickett@myoneclay.net

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Educational Opportunities Section

If you have **concerns about discrimination** in any Clay County District school, or any other relevant information, please contact the Civil Rights Division's Educational Opportunities Section, using the information below.

 (202) 514-4092 or 1-877-292-3804

 Community.CCSD@usdoj.gov

You may also submit a complaint through the [Civil Rights Division Complaint Portal](#)