

Every Language Matters:

A Family Guide to English as a New Language in NYC Public Schools



To better support our English Language Learners, especially those at the beginning of their English language journey, NYC Public Schools has launched a new English Language Development (ELD) curriculum in grades K–5.

This builds on the amazing work of NYC Reads and reflects our commitment to helping every child become confident in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English — while continuing to value their home language and culture. It introduces a consistent curriculum for Stand-alone English as a New Language (ENL) instruction. This is a dedicated, protected time for multilingual learners to learn about the English language itself, designed to accelerate their language skills in connection with what they are learning in their other classes.

What is Stand-Alone ENL?

In classes like science or math, your child learns in English. In Stand-alone ENL, your child has a dedicated time with a certified teacher to learn about the English language.

This is not "extra help" or homework time. It is a core, rigorous part of your child's instruction, designed to build their confidence and skills with academic English, including grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

How Will it Help Your Child?

The main purpose is to provide clear and structured instruction to help your child:

Listen

Understand spoken English in academic and social settings.

Speak

Clearly express ideas, participate in discussions, and present information in English.

Read

Develop the skills to understand and analyze grade-level texts in English.

Write

Learn to build clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs in English.

Why Multilingualism Matters?

Multilingualism is a Superpower. Children who grow up speaking more than one language have unique strengths:

- They are often better problem-solvers and flexible thinkers.
- They can connect with more people and cultures.
- They have an advantage in future careers and global opportunities.

This pilot is not about replacing your child's home language. Instead, this pilot is designed to enhance the quality of English language instruction, helping your child strengthen their English proficiency and literacy skills.

What Does Stand-Alone ENL Look Like?

A high-quality ENL class is active, challenging and supportive. You will see a classroom that has:

Lots of talking and teamwork.

The classroom is alive with students talking to each other! Your child will be actively using English in structured discussions, debates, and group projects, not just doing worksheets alone.

Challenging and high-quality work.

Your child will work on challenging, grade-level tasks that meet New York State's learning standards, with the support they need to succeed.

Connections to their other subjects.

The class will build on topics your child is learning in their other classes. They will learn the specific vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures needed for literacy, science, and social studies.

Using your home language as a tool.

The program sees your child's home language as a powerful tool for learning. Teachers will help your child see connections between their home language and English to build their skills.

Questions to Ask Your Child's School

How is my child's Stand-alone ENL class different from their other classes?

How does the teacher use my child's home language as a strength in the ENL classroom?

How will you keep me updated on the goals of the program and my child's progress?

How Can You Help at Home - No Matter What Language You Speak?

Your home language matters! Speaking, reading, and learning in your home language builds strong language skills that help your child learn English faster and better.

Here are a few simple things you can do:

- Read and talk in your home language - this builds vocabulary and strengthens overall literacy.
- Ask your child to explain in any language what they are reading - understanding comes first.
- Build vocabulary - talk about new words in English and your home language.
- Share your family's stories and experiences - this helps children connect school learning to their own lives.
- Make reading a habit - try 20 minutes a day, whether your child reads alone, with you, or to a younger sibling.
- Become familiar with reading applications frequently used by your school, including online resources like SORA. Ask for help to learn how to navigate resources or curriculum if you feel you need more support.
- Attend your child's Annual ELL Meeting to learn more about and inform your child's learning plan and progress throughout the year.

Need More Support?

Visit the NYCPS family site (www.schools.nyc.gov/ELD-curriculum) or talk to your school's ENL teacher (English as a New Language) or parent coordinator.

Let's work together to help your child grow as a confident multilingual learner.