

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACTION REPORT
ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES III CURRICULUM
March 18, 2025

Background Information:

The Office of Multilingual Instruction (OMI) is seeking Board of Education approval for the implementation of a dedicated English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) III curriculum for high school English Learner (EL) students. As EL students progress in their language development, an ESOL III course is essential for bridging the gap between basic English language skills and academic proficiency. This course will provide targeted support to EL students scoring between a 3.0 and 3.9 on the language screener tool, the WIDA Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS), enabling these students to succeed by developing critical language skills necessary for intermediate level academic tasks. The ESOL III course will be an important step in supporting the academic success of English Learners.

Discussion:

ESOL III is designed to develop students' general and content specific language knowledge, while also building their ability to create expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs. Creating an ESOL III curriculum for high school ELs is crucial for academic success and long-term integration. At this English language level, students are transitioning from basic language acquisition to academic proficiency, so a tailored curriculum can help bridge the gap between conversational and formal English. This course provides the necessary scaffolding to develop critical thinking and academic writing skills, which are vital for high school graduation and college readiness. An ESOL III curriculum ensures that EL students are equipped with language tools to engage in complex subject matter, fostering deeper comprehension and the ability to fully participate in classes. Additionally, this course supports college, workplace, and career readiness by promoting cultural understanding and building confidence in language abilities.

Teaching ESOL III positively impacts core curriculum areas by enhancing English Learners' ability to understand and engage with academic content. As students develop their language proficiency, they gain the skills needed to access complex texts and participate in discussions across subjects like math, science, and social studies. This stronger foundation in language enables EL students to better grasp abstract concepts and express their ideas clearly. Furthermore, teaching ESOL III integrates language development with subject-specific vocabulary, helping students make connections and retain content more effectively. Ultimately, an ESOL III curriculum fosters academic success across all areas by ensuring that EL students are linguistically prepared to meet rigorous standards.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the ESOL III curriculum, a multi-faceted approach will be used, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative measures. First, WIDA ACCESS scores will be analyzed before and after the course to assess improvements in language proficiency, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains. Additionally, teachers will conduct formative and summative assessments through quizzes, writing samples, and class participation to monitor students' progress on specific language skills. Student feedback will also be collected through surveys or interviews to gauge their self-perceived growth and engagement with the curriculum. Lastly, performance in core subject areas on state tests will be tracked to determine how language development impacts academic success, with particular attention given to improvements in subject-specific vocabulary and comprehension. This data will be used to adjust the curriculum as needed to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with student needs.

Requested Action

The Office of Multilingual Instruction requests that English for Speakers of Other Languages III be approved by the Harford County Public School Board of Education for full implementation.