**Equitable Grading**

*\*\*****Fairness*** *is* ***NOT******sameness****.* ***Fairness*** *is being able to access learning. Different students have different needs \*\**

Our English Language Learners are all at varying degrees of English Proficiency. It typically takes students 7 – 10 years to become proficient in a new language. Their struggles are not just in learning a new language, but in adjusting to a new life in the US. Everything is new to them – language, culture, procedures, and routines. There may also be difficulties with leaving behind family, friends, and a familiar way of life.

Conversational English is different than Academic English and be acquired long before Academic English. Some students may seem more advanced due to their conversational English, but they still struggle with academic content.

Many of our ELLs are missing large chunks of their education due to persecution or war in their home country or having to travel through several countries before arriving in the US. These are all factors that we cannot control. So, our goal is for students to gradually learn conversational English and learn content area vocabulary through exposure within the classroom focusing on materials that are appropriate for them.

Then comes the challenging task of assessing and grading our ELLs. For some, ‘Credit/No Credit’ may be appropriate. For some, traditional grading is appropriate. And for others, somewhere in between or a combination of the two is best.

**What guides grading for our ELLs?**

* English Language Proficiency standards
* District and state standards
* Effort recognition to encourage participation and growth
* Revision opportunities to improve work quality
* Performance-based assessments
* Appropriate rubrics
* Scaffolds by English Language Proficiency Level
* Emphasizing progress rather than perfection

**Equitable grading fosters open dialogue to promote understanding. How do we set up equitable grading for ELLs?**

* Identify success criteria for ELLs – refer to WIDA “Can Do” statements located on the WIDA Individual Student Report in students’ CA-60s. The Can Do statements will be a rough guide of what students may be able to accomplish.
* **Incorporate scaffolding to support ELLs in achieving the standards**
  + **Use scaffolding materials, instruction, and strategic grouping to remove barriers for ELLs.** Examples include:
    - graphic organizers
    - word banks and word walls
    - sentence and paragraph frames and stems
    - visuals
    - English and/or bilingual glossaries or dictionaries
  + **Select scaffolding based on individual ELL strengths and needs**
    - Pre-identify and pre-teach vocabulary
    - Make instruction of background knowledge concise
    - Reduce linguistic load
    - Use repetition, paraphrasing, and modeling
  + **Set expectations for gradual removal of scaffolding as appropriate**
    - Use structured pair work
    - structured small group work
    - teacher led small group work
* **Support ELLs progress towards mastery**
  + Provide sufficient time and opportunities for learning
  + Focus on student achievement
  + Support ELLs’ late work
  + Use homework as non-graded practice
* **Assess ELLs equitably**
  + Assess for mastery
  + Scaffold assessments for ELLs based on individual ELL strengths and needs
  + Provide separate scores by ***progress, process, and performance***
    - Include most of the work completed in a course when calculating an ELL’s grade
    - ELLs should not receive zeros for missing work
    - ELLs should be given extra time for assignments
    - ELLs should be allowed to re-do assignments and tests
    - Participation and effort should be included in an ELL’s grade