Greenwood International School

English Language Learners Policy

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English Language Learners Policy

ELL Vision:
To allow ELL students to feel like an equal member in the classroom and minimize the language barrier that hinders their academic and social progress across all curricula.

ELL Mission:
To allow ELL students to reach their full potential in an inclusive, student-centric environment across curricula and to ensure that both instructional and assessment strategies are adapted to fit the educational needs of ELLs.

Aims and Objectives:
- **Language Proficiency:** The primary objective of an ELL Department is to help non-native English speakers achieve a high level of proficiency in the English language. This includes improving their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

- **Effective Communication:** The department should focus on enabling students to communicate effectively in various real-life situations, both formal and informal. This includes improving their ability to understand and convey ideas, opinions, and information accurately.

- **Cultural Awareness:** The ELL program includes teaching about the cultural aspects of English-speaking countries. The objective here is to help students understand the cultural nuances and context behind the language they are learning.

- **Language Acquisition Strategies:** Another important objective is to equip students with effective strategies for language learning. This involves teaching them how to learn vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and develop their language skills autonomously.

- **Integration and Inclusion:** The ELL Department aims to help students integrate seamlessly into English-speaking environments, whether it's for academic, professional, or social purposes. This objective includes assisting students in adapting to the culture, norms, and expectations of English-speaking communities.

- **Academic Support:** The ELL Department aims to prepare the ELLs for success in their academic pursuits; this includes helping them understand academic language, write research papers, and participate in class discussions.
- **Language Assessment:** The ELL Department aims to accurately assess students' language proficiency levels and progress. This involves using standardized language assessments to measure growth and identify areas that need improvement. The ELL Student Support Plans(SSPs) use the NWEA student profile to find key areas that need further improvement for each student.

- **Tailored Instruction:** An important goal is to provide instruction that is tailored to individual students' needs and language levels. This involves offering different levels of instruction to the learners in each class and providing personalized support to address specific challenges.

- **Multimedia and Technology Integration:** The ELL Department aims to incorporate modern technology and multimedia resources to enhance language learning. This includes interactive online platforms, and digital resources such as Level-Up, Waggle, and Achieve3000.

- **Professional Development:** For educators within the ELL Department offers workshops to the teachers across the school to provide ongoing professional development opportunities. This helps teachers stay updated with the latest teaching methods, linguistics research, and technological advancements in language education. It also helps guide the teachers on how to use the recommended accommodations and procedures given by the ELL Department in an efficient, applicable way that doesn't hinder their curriculum progress.

- **Proficient Students Enrichment:** The ELL Department also aims to provide enrichment to strong readers across the school. Strong readers who are scoring high in their standardized tests in the school are selected by the ELL Department to be enrolled in the Reading Mentors program. They conduct morning reading sessions with elementary students and teach them reading skills to be applied while reading to accomplish comprehension.

- **Proper Recruitment:** The ELL teachers are skilled at assessing individual students' language proficiency levels and designing instructional approaches that meet their specific needs in their pull-out sessions. This personalized approach facilitates more effective learning and faster progress.

ELL Accommodations:

English/ Social Sciences/ Humanities:
- Give instructions/directions in writing and orally and ask ICQs after giving the instructions to test the learners' understanding.
- Use CCQs after introducing new academic/target vocabulary words.
- Highlight key vocabulary and provide glossaries when applicable.
- Assess comprehension through demonstration or other alternative means (gestures, drawings, visuals, etc.)
- Rephrase questions, directions, and explanations for the ELL students.
- Use basic vocabulary ex: point the difference between instead of differentiating between.
- Use group projects rather than individual work when applicable.
- Pair ELLs with strong readers to help guide them in reading activities.
- Provide audio-visuals on the subject taught.
- Allow extended time for assessments/ projects if needed.
- Provide hands-on activities and explanations for the ELL students and encourage them to use hands on papers, sheets, drawings to show understanding of the topic taught in class.
- Use dictionaries for support and keep a grade-level suitable dictionary attached on the LMS/ used electronic platform for the students. Encourage the learners to look up words and their meanings.
- Use and model read aloud and think aloud.

- Ask questions that promote text-text, text-world, text-self connections.
- Use word maps, graphic organizers when introducing new vocabulary that is essential to the concept being taught.
- Use annotations, circle important and key words and underline or mark words learners find difficult or unfamiliar.
- Before putting thoughts to paper, engage students in a discussion to talk through their ideas.
- Modeling writing before any written tasks (sample written text of the given topic).
- Encourage students to ask questions and provide opportunities for them to clarify their understanding.
- Use portfolio of work as a form of assessment (ex: instead of an exit slip, make the ELL student work on a list of the new words he/she learned and match them to a drawing or a quote to show knowledge)

Math:
- Use visuals such as pictures, graphs, tables, and charts to convey mathematical concepts.
- Provide additional time to complete math assignments and assessments.
- Use manipulatives, such as blocks or counters, to teach math concepts.
- Use real-life examples and problem-solving scenarios to help students see the relevance of math concepts.
- Simplify math vocabulary and use visuals to help illustrate new terms.
- Provide written instructions and examples of math problems.
- Use bilingual dictionaries or translation tools to help with word problems.
- Have students read math problems aloud in order to understand them better.
- Allow students to explain their thinking and reasoning in their native language.
- Use scaffolding techniques, such as breaking down a complex problem into smaller parts or steps, to help students build their understanding.

Science/ STEM:
- Use visuals, such as diagrams, photographs, and models, to help students understand science concepts.
- Use hands-on activities, experiments, and labs to engage ELL students and make science concepts more concrete.
- Provide extra time for learning and assessment to allow ELL students to fully understand and express their understanding of science concepts.
- Simplify science vocabulary and use visuals to help illustrate new terms.
- Use real-life examples and problem-solving scenarios to help ELL students see the relevance of science concepts.
- Provide written instructions and examples of science concepts.
- Use bilingual dictionaries or translation tools to help with scientific terms and concepts.
- Have students read science passages aloud to understand them better.
- Provide opportunities for ELL students to work in pairs or small groups with their peers so they can collaborate and learn from each other.
- Use scaffolding techniques, such as breaking down a complex concept into smaller parts or steps, to help students build their understanding.
- ELLs should be consistently reminded of DARTs (Directed Activities for Reading Texts) OR (Active Reading Strategies). Teachers can simply follow up on their text markings, marginal notes, and brainstorming techniques in writing.

ELL Support/ Services

- The ELL department provides support lessons that happen within the school week in parallel with reading/writing/phonics/English classes across the school. There are two forms of classes that are: push-ins and pull-outs.
- Pull-out classes happen during Library periods and Push- in classes happened during English periods.
- The ELL teacher mainly works on reading skills with the students. In the elementary stage.
- The ELL teacher works on reading, phonics, handwriting, writing, and critical thinking skills. In middle school, the teacher focuses more on the application of active reading strategies in multiple genres of literary and informational texts.
- The ELL support extends to all ELLB students and some ELLA students who are at risk of falling in the ELLB category.
- Learners flagged as ELLB receive a Student Support Plan (SSP).
- Morning Reading Time: The Highschool and Middle School students actively engaged in a Reading Mentors Program where they help flagged students in the Elementary section to read and use active reading strategies on various types of books.

ELL Filtration/ Identification Process:
ELL students across grades 1-10 are flagged based on 3 categories of data which are triangulated; the categories are:

- CAT4 Verbal Deficit

- MAP Reading RIT

- IReady SAS

Grade Level	ELL A	ELL B
G KG2	*KG 2 > MAP RIT lower than 145*	*MAP RIT Lower than 135*
G1	*MAP Reading:* Learners falling more than one grade level below the norm. Below RIT(below 153) *NGRT:* *Scoring an SAS of 80-89* *CAT4 Verbal Deficit*: Verbal deficit of 15 or higher	*MAP Reading:* Learners falling more than one grade level below the norm. (below KG RIT 137) *NGRT:* *Scoring an SAS of 79 or below* *CAT4 Verbal Deficit:* Verbal deficit of 30 or higher
G2	*MAP Reading:* Learners falling more than one grade level below the norm. (RIT of 170 and below) *NGRT:* *Scoring an SAS of 80-89* *CAT4 Verbal Deficit*: Verbal deficit of	*MAP Reading:* Learners falling below KG (RIT 153 and below) *NGRT:* *Scoring an SAS of 79 or below* *CAT4 Verbal Deficit*: Verbal deficit of 30 or higher

	15 or higher	
G3	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling more than one grade level below the norm. RIT below 184 ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 80- 89*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **15 or higher**	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling more than two grade levels below the norm. (below G1 RIT) RIT or below 170 ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 79 or below*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **30 or higher**
G4-5	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling two or three grade levels below the norm. ***G4 > below 185*** ***G5> below 197*** ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 80-89*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **15 or higher**	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling more than three grade levels below the norm. ***G4 below> 171*** ***G5 below> 185*** ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 79 or below*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **30 or higher**
G6-12	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling three grade levels below the norm. ***G6> below 197*** ***G7> below 204*** ***G8> below 210*** ***G9> below 215*** ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 80-89*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **15 or higher**	***MAP Reading:*** Learners falling **more than four grade** levels below the norm. **G6> below 185** **G7> below 197** **G8> below 204** **G9> below 210** ***NGRT:*** ***Scoring an SAS of 79 or below*** ***CAT4 Verbal Deficit***: Verbal deficit of **30 or higher**

ELL Current Plan:

- **Multifaceted Language Proficiency:** Our ELL department envisions students who are not only fluent in English but also possess a deep understanding of language nuances, allowing them to communicate effectively in various contexts. From mastering academic language for rigorous coursework to confidently expressing themselves in social settings, our students will exhibit a range of language proficiencies that set them apart in a distinguished way. In GIS, we plan to help encourage our ELL get involved in extracurricular programs and events.

- **Cultural Agility:** Recognizing the importance of cultural awareness in today's interconnected world, our ELL program instills a deep appreciation for global cultures, while also nurturing a strong sense of Emirati identity. Students will embrace cultural diversity, practicing empathy and open-mindedness as they interact with peers from around the world, fostering a harmonious and inclusive environment. In Greenwood, the peer reading program takes into consideration the highlighting and enrichment of the Emirati culture.

- **Integrated Technology:** Embracing the rapid technological advancements of the era, the ELL Department seamlessly integrates cutting-edge tools and platforms into the curriculum such as Waggle, Achieve3000, and Level-Up. AI-powered (Class Companion) personalized feedback, and collaborative online projects will become integral components of the learning process, enhancing engagement and language acquisition.

Professional Development for Staff:

The ELL Department holds training sessions and professional development sessions across the year to target groups of teachers that help with the following:

1. Foundations of ELL Instruction
- Understanding language acquisition stages (BICS vs CALP, Cummins' model).
- Language objectives vs. content objectives in lesson planning through Reading Across the Curriculum section.
- Common challenges Arab ELLs face (if relevant to the subject's context).

2. Classroom Strategies Across Subjects
- **Scaffolding techniques** (sentence starters, visuals, word banks, modelling).
- **Differentiation for ELLs** (tiered tasks, adapted texts, choice boards).
- Reading strategies for ELLs across the curriculum (annotation using unified text markings across the school, skimming, graphic organizers).
- Writing scaffolds (frames, outlines, shared writing, peer feedback).
- Speaking and listening activities (structured discussions, collaborative dialogues).

3. Assessment for ELLs
- How to adapt tests/quizzes for language needs while keeping rigor.
- Using **rubrics with language accommodations**.
- Tracking progress with MAP/standardized data and classroom observations through MAP Reflection Forms.

4. Building Vocabulary & Academic Language

- Teaching **disciplinary vocabulary** across all subjects to facilitate vocabulary acquisition.
- Using morphology (prefixes, suffixes, roots) to empower decoding.
- Encouraging academic sentence stems ("The evidence suggests…", "In contrast…").
- Strategies for developing disciplinary literacy (e.g., science/ICT vocabulary).

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5. Cultural & Social-Emotional Dimensions

- **Culturally responsive teaching** (valuing students' home languages & cultures).
- Addressing bias and misconceptions about ELLs.
- Supporting newcomer students' adjustment (social integration strategies).

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6. Technology & ELLs

- Using AI, translation tools, and digital platforms to support ELLs.
- Gamification and apps for vocabulary and fluency.
- Leveraging tools like, Level-Up, Achieve300, HMH Waggle, and Read Works for differentiated texts.

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7. Collaborative Practices

- **Co-teaching models** (push-in, pull-out, parallel teaching).
- How content teachers and ELL specialists can share responsibility.
- Building a **school-wide reading culture** that supports multilingual learners.

Future Plan:

- **Collaborative Learning Communities:** The ELL Department envisions a collaborative ecosystem within the ELL department, where educators, students, parents, and the community come together to enrich the language learning experience. Regular workshops, seminars, and cultural events not only deepen language skills but also promote a sense of belonging and mutual respect. The ELL department plans to conduct workshops and events that would include students, teachers, and parents, if applicable, to target adopting a reading culture. Workshops can include the topics of:

- ✓ reading as a hobby rather than an academic burden
- ✓ maintaining positive affirmations with ELLs at home
- ✓ reinforcing reading comprehension strategies with children

- **Parent and Community Engagement:** The ELL vision extends beyond the classroom as we actively involve parents and the community in supporting students' language learning journeys. The ELL Department plans to conduct workshops, and collaborative events for parents that aim to create a holistic support network that reinforces language acquisition beyond school hours.