

Procedures for Oral and Written Academic English Language Proficiency Support

These materials serve to support coordinators, advisors, and instructors in the identification and referral of students who exhibit difficulty in oral and written academic English. The following information includes:

- A summary of procedures
- A letter from the Teacher Education Committee
- Referral forms for faculty members
- Three information resources providing referral examples

Summary of Coordinator Procedures for Oral and/or Written Language Proficiency

A. Identification

- Early identification: Advisors may fill out referral forms. Students may request advisors to refer them for evaluation. If the advisor agrees that the student's concern is justified, s/he may refer the student for evaluation.
- Identification during the Professional Development Sequence: Anyone working with the student (except the field supervisor), including instructors, coordinator, and cooperating teacher, may make the initial referral by filling out the form and giving it to the cohort coordinator or Language Review and Support Committee.
- Coordinators must make a classroom observation of the referred student.
- The cohort coordinator then requests referral forms from everyone who has official contact with the student.
- While the field supervisor may not fill out a referral form, the coordinator's referral form may include input from the field supervisor.
- All faculty and associated professionals (though not field supervisors) fill out forms and return them to the coordinator or the Language Review and Support Committee.

B. Language Support Review Committee

- The Director of Education Services schedules a meeting of the Language Support Review (LSR) Committee, consisting of the Director of Education Services, the Associate Dean for Teacher Education, a faculty member from a language-related field in education, and a faculty member at large, appointed by the Dean.
- The committee reviews the evidence and determines whether support is in order and the nature of that support. An interview with the student may be necessary.

A letter from the Teacher Education Committee

Dear Teacher Education Faculty Colleagues,

As you know, we occasionally have students whose spoken or written English causes us to anticipate that they may have difficulties communicating with students and parents. Considering the fact that they have been admitted to college and have completed many courses before we ever meet them, students with serious language difficulties are relatively rare. However, there are times when one may feel that someone should carefully review a student's abilities to determine whether her or his academic English language use will be a problem in the teaching context. Additionally, the State of Texas now requires that we ensure that all of our preservice teachers are competent in oral and written academic English.

The following is the procedure for identifying and supporting such students. First, anyone working with a student may identify him or her for evaluation, including an instructor in any class, a cooperating teacher, or a cohort coordinator. Any of those individuals may fill out the attached referral form and submit it to the cohort coordinator. You will also be asked for evidence-based documentation (e.g., written assignments, feedback on oral presentations in class). The cohort coordinator will submit the referral form(s) and documentation to the Director of Education Services.

The Director of Education Services will then convene the Language Review and Support (LRS) Committee. This committee consists of the Associate Dean, the Director of Education Services, a faculty member in a language-related field of education, a teacher education faculty member at large, and the cohort coordinator. The LRS committee will review and make recommendations for language support for the referred student. While support is the first course of action, and is usually adequate, another possible outcome of the recommendations may be the development and implementation of an Individual Performance Plan (IPP).

Thank you for all your competent and hard work in helping to create the best-prepared teachers in the country.

Language Review and Support Committee

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Letter to the Cooperating Teachers

Dear Cooperating Teacher Colleagues,

Most of the preservice teachers in the College of Education at UT Austin will have excellent oral and written academic English skills. Occasionally, though, a preservice teacher might be able to function well in a university environment, but not so well as a teacher in a public school. If you ever have a preservice teacher whose oral and/or written language seems inappropriate for a school setting, or you think your students are having trouble understanding her or him, you should implement the following procedure.

A referral form is attached to this letter. To initiate a referral, complete this form, providing as many observable, performance-based behaviors as you can. Submit this referral form and all other related documentation to the UT cohort coordinator who works with that preservice teacher. Your referral will be part of a process wherein other people working with the preservice teacher will provide documentation of language use.

You are an extremely important part of our new teacher preparation. The education of future students of the teachers from our program depends on our commitment to high standards. Thank you so much for all that you do.

Teacher Education Committee

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