



January & February 2021

# ENGLISH LEARNER NEWSLETTER

## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Youngstown City Schools' English Learner Program is to promote student achievement by providing leadership and resources for the development of an appropriate curriculum that will allow English Learners (EL's) to acquire proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, thus allowing them to successfully function both socially and academically.*

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## Upcoming Test Dates

**AASD – February 2 - March 22**

**OELPA – February 1 – April 23**



## OELPA Test

### Face to Face OELPA Assessment Protocols during Covid-19

In order to ensure the safety of our EL scholars, families and YCSD staff members, the following procedure

will be implemented for scholars, teachers and support staff upon the launch of the district for the 2020-21 school year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### The following plan includes:

The materials that will be used to ensure safety for all parties during assessment. Step-by-step procedures that each teacher and/or support staff will be expected to adhere to when scheduling and conducting the OELPA assessment.

#### Materials we will provide to Ensure Safety:

- **Face masks and/or face shields.** A face shield will only be used if the scholar is hard of hearing.
- **Plexi-glass desk shields** Clear desktop protective acrylic sneeze guard panels (*to be used in the event the scholar and/or teacher/support staff is unable to wear a mask: e.g. hard of hearing scholars*)
- **Clorox wipes or equivalent cleaning solution with paper towels** to sanitize testing materials (pencils, Chrome Books, etc.) before and after assessment sessions
- **Disinfectant spray**
- **Hand sanitizer and/or access to sink with soap**
- **Non-contact infrared forehead thermometers**
- **Pencils** which the scholar can take with them after the assessment

**PARENTS:** Our EL Staff will be in contact with you to give you the date that your scholar will come to the school to be assessed.

**\*Lunch and busing will be provided.**

# Testing Tips

## Before the Test

### Be prepared.

Many teachers will send information home about testing schedules and class preparation plans. Information that you should know includes:

- What is the test and what will it measure?
- Will the test results affect your child, school, or both?
- Are there ways that you can help your child prepare for the test? (Narang, 2008).

### Help your child in areas that are difficult for her.

If your child has struggled with a particular area or subject in the past, you may be able to help her overcome some of that difficulty by providing some extra practice. Many workbooks target test preparation by offering practice exercises and questions like the ones students see on the test. Focus your practice on your child's weaknesses rather than her strengths so that she doesn't get bored with the exercises (Narang, 2008).

### Give your child a chance to practice.

If your child has trouble taking tests, try practicing test questions and studying new words. Your child's school or the library may have some samples to use. Keep the sessions short, and set small, manageable goals so that the extra practice boosts your child's confidence (Narang, 2008).

### If you have concerns about the test or testing situation, talk with your child's teacher.

Discuss your concerns with the teacher and/or school administrator. If you're not satisfied with the outcome, however, you can reach out to some other organizations that monitor testing, including your local PTA, The National Center for Fair & Open Testing or the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (Narang, 2008).

If you believe that your child's difficulty with standardized tests may be the symptom of a problem such as a language or learning difficulty, speak with your child's teacher to learn if your child qualifies for any assessment accommodations.

## On Test Day

### Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy breakfast.

Many teachers report that students who don't do well on tests haven't gotten enough sleep, and haven't eaten breakfast on the morning of the test. Doing both of these things will ensure that your child is working at full capacity (Narang, 2008).

### Make sure your child is prepared.

Some schools may supply the tools your child needs for the test, such as pencils, an eraser, paper, and a calculator. Others may require the students to bring those materials themselves. Check with your child's teacher to see if you need to provide your child with any of these materials. Also, check to see whether your child will be able to make up the test if she is sick on test day (Narang, 2008).

### Remain positive.

Staying calm will help your child stay calm. If she gets nervous about the test or is likely to experience anxiety during the test, help her practice some relaxation techniques that she can try once she's taking the test (Narang, 2008).



## Coping with our "New" Norm (COVID-19)

*We understand how stressful this current worldwide pandemic can be for everyone. We would like to provide you with resources that may be helpful to you and your family. Stay safe and may you and your family stay healthy!*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

<https://childmind.org/article/supporting-kids-during-the-covid-19-crisis/>

If you or someone you know feel overwhelmed with emotions of sadness, anxiety, depression or feeling like you want to harm yourself or others, seek help immediately by calling the number below:

### DISASTER DISTRESS HOTLINE:

1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746

### NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE:

1-800-799-7233

# Testing Tips (Continued)

## After the Test

### What about the results?

Assessments vary from test to test, but the test scores should include information that helps you interpret the results. Talk with your child's teacher if you have any questions about the test results. You may also suggest that the school offer a testing information session to parents (Narang, 2008).

### Review tests with your child.

Help your child review any parts of the test that she did not understand (Narang, 2008).

## On a Daily Basis

In addition to these strategies, there are a number of ways that you can maximize your child's learning capabilities throughout the school year, which can lead to confident test-taking. Some of these strategies include:

- Assisting your child with homework and ensuring that your child is completing all homework assignments
- Helping her to develop good study habits, thinking skills, and a positive attitude towards education from an early age
- Ensuring that your child has good attendance at school
- Staying in communication with your child's teacher
- Encouraging your child to read as much as possible, and to increase her vocabulary - even reading magazines, newspapers, and comic books regularly will help improve her reading skills
- Looking for educational games and programs that engage your child
- Helping your child learn how to follow directions carefully (Dietel, 2008; IRA (2002); Narang, 2008).

Finally, remember that standardized tests and grading systems are not perfect; each format has its own limitations. As you help your child do her best on the tests she takes and in all of her schoolwork, also remind her that testing is just one part of her education. With your support and involvement, she will be well on her way to her own bright future.

### References

Dietel, R. *Helping Your Child Perform Well on Tests*. Retrieved April 2, 2008, from [http://www.pta.org/archive\\_article\\_details\\_1117835382718.html](http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1117835382718.html).

International Reading Association (IRA). (2002). *Prepare your child for reading tests* [Brochure]. Bachman, T.M.: Author.

Narang, S. (2008). *Standardized tests: What you should know before your child sharpens his #2 pencil*. Retrieved April 2, 2008, from <http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=1403>.



## 8 Things to Know about the U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program

- ✓ *The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority.*
- ✓ *COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. Two doses are needed.*
- ✓ *CDC is making recommendations for who should be offered COVID-19 vaccine first when supplies are limited.*
- ✓ *There is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, but supply will increase in the weeks and months to come.*
- ✓ *After COVID-19 vaccination, you may have some side effects. This is a normal sign that your body is building protection.*
- ✓ *Cost is not an obstacle to getting vaccinated against COVID-19.*
- ✓ *The first COVID-19 vaccines are being used under Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Many other vaccines are still being developed and tested.*
- ✓ *COVID-19 vaccines are one of many important tools to help us stop this pandemic.*

**For more information about the COVID-19 vaccine visit:**

<https://www.mahoninghealth.org/>

**Vaccine Distribution for Mahoning County School personnel begins February 1<sup>st</sup>.**

# New to our District:



**Join other District families at “Parent You” University, for a 4-part pathway series on College Awareness for scholars in Grades 8-12!**

Among the pathways/sessions available by “Parent You” University, our EL Program is introducing a **4-part College Awareness Series Program** through the “The Latino Family Literacy Project” for Parents of Scholars Grades 8-12!

**\*This session will be interpreted in Spanish.**

The first session begins on February 25, 2021, register below:

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)



**EFNEP Virtual Nutrition Classes...First Sessions on:**

**April 14th @ 5PM WEDNESDAY &  
April 15th @ 3PM THURSDAY**

**More info coming soon!**

**¡Basado en las Últimas Investigaciones!**

**MiPlato**  
Choose MyPlate.gov

- Lo que come y bebe es importante.
- Concéntrese en la variedad, cantidad y valor nutritivo.
- Elija menos grasas saturadas, sodio y azúcares agregados.
- Pequeños cambios hacen la diferencia.
- Apoye la alimentación saludable para toda la familia.

**CFAES**

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, and ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES