

Fall
Quarterly
October
2015



THE PMSD ESL CONNECTION

A Message from Dr. Catherine Sweeney

Pocono Mountain School District Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year. We hope you had a wonderful, restful, and rejuvenating summer break.

Children in the United States on average spend far more time watching TV or playing video games than they do completing homework or other school-related activities. Internet use is also becoming increasingly common. Banning these kinds of media from children's lives isn't the answer, however, as they can spark children's curiosity and open up new worlds to them.

Here are some suggestions for helping your child to use TV and video games.

Parent Tips for TV and Video Game Use

- **Look for age-appropriate programs and games.** Think about your child's age and choose the types of things that you want him to see, learn, and imitate.
- **Look for TV shows and video games that:**
 - teach your child something
 - hold his interest
 - encourage him to listen and question
 - help him learn more words
 - make him feel good about himself
 - introduce him to new ideas and things
- **Limit the time your child spends watching TV and playing video games.** Keep a record of how many hours your child spends watching TV and playing video games each week, as well as what he is watching or playing. For example, some experts recommend that children limit their TV watching to no more than 2 hours a day. Remember that watching TV and playing video games are not substitutes for activities, such as reading, playing with friends, spending time outside, making projects, and talking with family members, which are important to his development.
- **Learn about current TV children's programs, DVDs, and video games, and help your child to select good ones.** Many good children's television programs are available on public television stations and on children's cable channels, and many of those programs also offer related educational video or computer games.
- **Look for educational shows and games.** There are many children's programs, movies, music performances, and games that emphasize reading, language, and math skills.
- **Talk to your child about what interests him.** After selecting programs or games that are appropriate for your child, help him decide which ones interest him. When watching television, turn on the TV when one of these programs starts and turn it off when the program ends.
- **Watch TV and play the games with your child, so that you can answer questions and talk about what he sees.** Pay

special attention to how he responds, so that you can help him to understand what he's seeing. Try to point out the things that are part of your child's everyday life.

- **When you can't watch TV with your child or monitor his video game use, spot check to see what he's watching and playing.** Ask questions after the program ends. See what excites or troubles him. Find out what he has learned and remembered.
- **Go to the library and find books that explore the themes of the shows and games he's enjoying.** Help your child to use his drawings or pictures cut from magazines to make a book based on the programs and games he is using.
- **Follow-up TV viewing or game playing with activities.** Have your child tell you a new word that he learned from a TV program. Together, look up the word in a dictionary and talk about its meaning. Have him make up his own story about one of his favorite characters from his video games.
- **Make certain that TV and video games aren't used as a babysitter.** Instead, balance these forms of entertainment with other enjoyable activities for your child.
- **Model good TV viewing habits.** Remember that children often imitate their parents' behavior. Children who live in homes in which parents and other family members watch a lot of TV is likely to spend their time in the same way. Children who live in homes in which parents and other family members have "quiet" time away from the TV when they read (either alone or to each other), talk to each other, play games or engage in other activities tend to do the same.

DATES TO REMEMBER



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| ☉ October 12th: NO SCHOOL—Columbus Day | ☉ November 26th-30th: NO SCHOOL for Thanksgiving Break |
| ☉ October 14th: First ESL Home School Connection @ SEC | ☉ December 1st: School Reopens |
| ☉ November 12th: 5:30-8:30 K-12 Parent/Teacher Conferences | ☉ December 23rd: 2-hour Early Dismissal |
| ☉ November 13th: 8:00-2:30 K-12 Parent/Teacher Conferences—NO SCHOOL | ☉ December 24th-January 3rd: Winter Recess—School Closed |
| ☉ November 25th: 2-hour early dismissal | ☉ January 4th : School Reopens |



A Glance at ESL Around PMSD

SECONDARY NEWS

WJHS: Welcome back 8th graders and a warm welcome to 7th graders! We are settling in and getting ready for an exceptional year. We have new topics to learn, old ones to expand and new novels to read and explore!

PMWHS: Welcome Back All! As we embark upon another journey of learning and fun, we would like to wish everyone success for the 2015\2016 school year! May this be one of the best!



EJHS: It's been great getting to know the new EJHS ESL students. What a great group! We have been reviewing classroom expectations. Our classes will focus on vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing. We will start our first novel shortly! I'm looking forward to a great year with the 7th and 8th graders

PMEHS: The EHS is up and running! It has been a busy month with CDTs, physicals, and photos! We continue to focus on vocabulary building, reading and grammar. We will soon start our first novel of the year!

ELEMENTARY NEWS

SIS: In September 2015, Swiftwater Intermediate School welcomed staff and students in grades 4-6. The ESL teachers at SIS are Ms. J. Malinowski and Ms. J. Menendez.

The beginning of the school year is always an exciting time to reconnect with old friends and to meet new friends, too! We are happily settling into a routine that includes practicing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Also, we are in the process of planning many new and exciting events to promote our new "COOL" school-wide positive rewards program.

CRIS: Mrs. Garrett, Mrs. Gonzalez, and Mrs. Haggerty are excited to be working with their students now that ESL classes have begun. Fall is a busy time as we get to know our students and help them learn and develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills through classroom activities and projects.

CREC: Clear Run Elementary Center is off to a great start. While we sadly had to say good-bye to our principal Mrs. Regina Schank, we are happy to welcome Mrs. Heidi Donohue back home to Clear Run Elementary Center. We just held our Super Paw Carnival and it was a great success. The students were able to enjoy lots of fun activities. Many classes have been reading about Johnny Appleseed and participating in fun fall activities. We are looking forward to a wonderful school year.

TEC: Welcome back to school! Hope everyone had a great summer. Ms. Yarashas is looking forward to working with the students in the ESL program.

SEC: Greetings all! Here at SEC Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Davis, Ms. Menendez, and Ms. Yarashas are busy bees getting our classrooms ready, screening, and preparing ourselves for another fabulous school year. We can't wait to start classes and fill our bulletins boards with all of our students beautiful work.

State Required Exit Criteria for Pennsylvania's English Language Instructional Programs for English Language Learners

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has revised the State Required Exit Criteria for Pennsylvania's English Language Instructional Programs for English Language Learners (ELLs) to make exit decisions **for the 2015-16 school year based on 2014-15 data**.

Performance level scores for the new 2015 Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) resulted in significant drops in student performance across the state. PDE wants to ensure that ELL students have the opportunity they deserve to exit the program and that the criteria by which they are being measured are fair and accurate indicators of achievement. Therefore, the following revised criteria should be applied by Pennsylvania local education entities (LEA) to ELLs to determine LEP status for the 2015-16 school year.

Every LEA must include the State Required Exit Criteria for Pennsylvania's English Language Instructional Programs for ELLs in the LEA's program for ELLs. The exit criteria represent valid and reliable evidence of a student's English language proficiency to exit from an English language instructional program. These required exit criteria ensure consistent measures across LEAs for exiting ELLs from English language instructional programs.

Assurance of implementation of the exit criteria by LEAs will take place within the Federal Programs' Monitoring/Consolidated Program Review and the LEP System Review.

Program exit from the Pennsylvania English language instructional program for English language learners takes place annually between June and September. LEP status of students for the current school year must be determined by September 30 and reported in the PIMS October District and School Enrollment Collection. Students reported as current ELLs in the PIMS October District and School Enrollment Collection cannot exit the English language instructional program from October until June.

To meet the required state exit criteria for Pennsylvania's English language instructional programs for ELLs, LEAs must ensure that students meet **both required exit criteria** listed below and meet **one additional exit criteria** listed below to exit from an English language instructional program:

Required Exit Criteria:

Score of 5.0 on an ACCESS for ELLs Kindergarten assessment (accountability score) or score of 5.0 on a Tier C ACCESS for ELLs assessment.

Cutoff score flexibility is available in the following *Special Circumstances*:

Following the grade and score criteria in the table below, the W-APT may be administered between June and September to students who scored below the minimum cutoff for program exit on the January administration of the ACCESS in order to demonstrate sufficient progress to justify exit.

NOTE: The W-APT may only be administered to a student once in any school year.

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>ACCESS Score</u>	<u>Required W-APT Scores*</u>
K	Cut-off score flexibility is not allowable for Kindergarteners	
1-5	4.6-4.9	5.0 in each domain
6-8	4.7-4.9	5.0 in each domain
9-12	4.8-4.9	5.0 in each domain

NOTE: A student must score 5.0 in each domain (listening, speaking, reading and writing). A composite proficiency score will **not** be used.

A score of PROFICIENT on the English Language Arts PSSA or Literature Keystone assessments can be used along with the other required criteria outlined in this policy (Required Exit Criteria #2 and Additional Exit Criteria #1 or #2) to justify exit for students who achieve a composite proficiency score of 4.5 to 4.9 on the January administration of the ACCESS. In this case, W-APT scores are not necessary to demonstrate progress from the time of ACCESS administration to the end of the school year.

Score of BASIC on the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) math or Algebra I Keystone AND English Language Arts PSSA or Literature Keystone.

NOTE: PSSA and Keystone exam scores must be from the most recent academic school year.

Cutoff score flexibility is available in the following *Special Circumstances*:

For students that were administered a PSSA math and/or PSSA English Language Arts assessment in school year 2014-15 and did not score BASIC or higher, each of the remaining exit criteria must be met to exit (Required Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit criteria #2).

For students that are in a grade that is not assessed with a PSSA or Keystone assessment, each of the remaining exit criteria must be met to exit (Required Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit criteria #2).

For students that were opted out of participation in a PSSA or Keystone assessment due to a religious objection or conflict, each of the remaining exit criteria must be met to exit (Required Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit Criteria #1, Additional Exit criteria #2).

For students transferring from other states, the results of academic achievement assessments used for accountability in other states may be considered when the academic proficiency level is comparable to BASIC on the PSSA/Keystone assessments.

Additional Exit Criteria:

Final grades of C or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies).

Scores on district-wide or local assessments that are comparable to the BASIC performance level on the math PSSA or Algebra I Keystone AND English Language Arts PSSA or Literature Keystone assessments.

Questions may be directed to Linda Long (lilong@pa.gov), Tami Shaffer (tshaffer@pa.gov) and Anne Scoufalos (ascoufalos@csc.csiu.org).

Parent-Teacher Conferences Are Near!!!

Elementary *AND* Secondary* Conferences

On Thursday, November 12th, Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held from 5:30PM to 8:30PM at your child's building. Conferences will also be held from 8:00AM to 2:30PM on Friday, November 13th.

There will be NO school for students in grades K-12, November 13th.

***Secondary conferences are available again during the day this year!**

General Conference Tips

1. If needed, please ask the school to provide an interpreter/translator.
2. Be prepared. Write down some things you may want to talk to the teacher about.
3. Be on time. Arrive on time or even a few minutes early. Be Patient.
4. Stay Positive. Be Patient.
5. Stay on track.
6. Listen to what the teacher has to say.
7. Ask questions if you do not understand.
8. Stay calm.
9. Stay within your scheduled conference time, other conferences are waiting after yours.
10. Share information from the conference with your child.
11. Leave the conference on a good note. Before heading home, parents should let teachers know the best way to be contacted.

<http://www.thelearningcommunity.us/resources-by-format/tips-for-parents/parent-teacher-conferences.aspx>

Secondary Conferences*

Junior High and High School

Parents need to contact their child's guidance department secretary to schedule appointments to meet their child's teachers.

(570)839-7121

EHS Guidance ext.:80460

EJHS Guidance ext.: 50460

*****NOTE*****

To the Parents of college-bound 12th grade students:

Please be sure your child has applied to the college of choice.

Follow up should occur with assigned guidance counselor.



Homeschool Connection News!!!

Our last Homeschool Connect for 2014-2015 was a hit! Michele Mascia reviewed some tips for continued language learning during the summer months and shared some local library information. Next, the excitement kicked up with Zumba! Attendees worked up a sweat with Chad from Elevations instructing the moves with great music, preparing us all for the summer wardrobes! Finally, a refreshing snack of watermelon and freeze pops ended the night!



SAVE THE DATE!!!

Please join us for our first HSC night of the 15-16 school year: October 14th at Swiftwater Elementary. This night will host a round-robin of informational booths based on ESL - from reading the Access test scores to "parent night" information, it will all be here!! For the kids, we plan a movie and snack to keep them entertained while parents visit the different stands. Hope you can save a couple of hours to join us!

ESL STAFF SPOTLIGHT

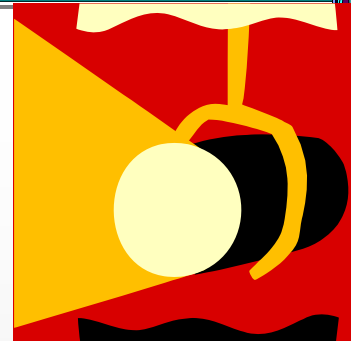
We continue last year's feature in the quarterly newsletter this school year, an interview of one of the ESL teachers around the district. Mrs. Denise Hernandez is featured in this issue. Mrs. Hernandez is an ESL Program Specialist at Clear Run Elementary Center where she works with students in kindergarten, first, and second grade. We were so happy she agreed to be interviewed for the newsletter! She had a few of her 2nd grade students interview her for this piece.

Below is their work.

Mrs. Hernandez is married and her husband's name is Bill. She has 4 dogs and 2 cats. Her favorite ice cream is strawberry ice cream. She likes red better than pink, and her favorite color is blue. Her favorite foods are lobster and crab legs.

Mrs. Hernandez was born in New York City. Her favorite thing to do is go on the computer. When she was a kid she always wanted to be a teacher. When she was 15 years old, she traveled to Morocco. Mrs. Hernandez loves happy endings.

Interviewed by Brandon Escalante and Marving Dienhoue.



Pocono Mountain School District

Mission & Vision Statement

**To prepare all students for tomorrow's challenges and opportunities.*

**To create a culture of achievement, improve student performance, maintain safe schools, and promote strong character.*



Home Help Tips for Parents of ESL Students

- Establish specific routines for your child to follow.
- Practice vocabulary daily with your child using household objects.
- Read to your child daily in your native language or English.
- Practice good study habits daily. Set aside a time for your child to study on a regular basis.
- Have family meetings where your child is the leader of the discussions. Allow your child to speak in either English or the native language.
- Visit the ESL resource site at the PMSD main web page. Plentiful resources for parents to use at home are available.
- www.pmsd.org

The Pocono Mountain School District's ESL Program is a regular education program that is aligned with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's ESL standards.

A specialized, certified ESL teacher works with students in large or small groups.

A program designed to assist students with the reading, speaking, listening, and writing of the English language.

ESL is NOT a bilingual program.

