Bilingual Education/ESL Monitoring System

LEA Public Meeting Script

Background Information from LEA Public Meeting Guidance Document
(for use by facilitator—not to be read to participants)

The public meeting generally will begin in a general session with introductions and opening remarks made by representatives of the LEA. It is important to make clear that the meeting is being conducted as part of the state system for monitoring bilingual education/ESL programs and that the efforts are a partnership between LEAs and the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The TEA encourages the LEA to open the meeting by sharing the LEA's commitment to the process and its desire to improve LEA programs based on community feedback.

In opening remarks, the LEA will briefly describe the purpose of the meeting and how comments are used in the continuous improvement process. Explain that the request for information will be focused around predetermined questions and comments and feedback should not be limited to areas in need of improvement, but also should focus on areas that are working well. It will be important to emphasize that the purpose of the meeting is to gather system-level input, rather than feedback on individual concerns related to specific students.

Script Language

Opening Remarks

- *Welcome participants*
- *Include any logistical information if necessary, (e.g., location of restrooms, telephones).*
- *Request that participants turn off or set their phones/pagers on vibrate.*
- *Ask to see if everyone has a copy of the public meeting handouts (agenda, questions, ground rules, etc.).*

Introduction to Discussion Questions

The Texas Education Agency (known as the TEA) and school districts in Texas must ensure that English language learner (ELL) students receive appropriate educational services and supports based on state requirements. State requirements are found in state law (the Texas Education Code) and administrative rules. State laws require that the TEA monitor school districts to ensure the effectiveness of bilingual education/ESL programs.

Recent changes to state law have required the TEA to make changes in the way it monitors school districts. Under the new system, the agency will focus on **how well students are doing** and **how well**

programs are working. In order to get information on student performance and program effectiveness, data must be gathered at the school district level from people who know how programs are implemented on a day-to-day basis.

This public meeting is being conducted as part of the state system for monitoring bilingual education/ESL programs, and the <district or charter school name> is working in a partnership with the TEA to gather information from schools around the state. This meeting will allow an opportunity for school and community stakeholders, including parents of ELL students, to share information regarding the effectiveness of the bilingual education/ESL program required by the state and the performance of LEP students in the <district or charter school name>. The <district or charter school name> is committed to this process and will use information gained from the meeting to improve school programs based on your feedback. The information gained from the meeting will be reported to the TEA, in addition to being used by the <district or charter school name> to plan for continuous improvement.

A series of questions will be asked <today/tonight> that relate to the goals and overall purposes of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). The LPAC plays a pivotal role in the education of LEP students. Texas Administrative Code, 19 TAC Chapter 89, Subchapter BB, Commissioner's Rules Concerning State Plan for Educating Limited English Proficient Students establishes the responsibilities of the LPAC in determining the best instructional programs for ELL students. It functions as a link between home and school in making appropriate decisions regarding placement, instructional practices, assessment, and special programs that impact the student. Each member of the LPAC understands:

- that training is necessary to carry out his/her responsibilities;
- the instructional and support programs available to the student;
- the timeliness of meetings and documentation;
- the decision-making process that needs to be followed at meetings;
- the need to maintain confidentiality and respect for student language and culture;
- that each student is considered as an individual.

The legislation was intended to encourage practices that lead to improved teaching and learning experiences for LEP students that result in productive, independent adult lives, including employment.

In this public meeting, we will ask for feedback on four general questions developed by the TEA related to programs for LEP students. The questions that we'll be asking <today/tonight> are in keeping with the spirit and purposes behind the LPAC. The questions also are in alignment with the ongoing efforts in Texas to continuously improve programs for ELL students. You should have a list of the discussion questions in a handout.

Before we begin discussing the questions, we want to explain the process we will be using <today/tonight> to gather your input. The discussion will be led by a facilitator and your input recorded by a note-taker. Once a discussion question has been stated, you will be asked to provide your input. When you are ready to speak, please raise your hand so the facilitator can recognize you. Having people speak one at a time will help ensure that you can share your input clearly and effectively, and you can hear input from others. The facilitator will ask you your connection to bilingual education/ESL, for example, parent, and then ask you to share your thoughts. In providing your input, you should do so with the goal of offering your "bottom line" in a sentence or two. Remember, we will be recording your input, so the more quickly you can get to the point, the more time we will have to gather everyone's input.

We will have approximately 30 minutes for each of the four questions we will be discussing <today/tonight>. We will be timing the discussion to ensure we allow enough time to cover all four questions. We will take a short break after the first two questions.

To make sure we get the most out of our time together, we'd like to follow a few ground rules which are included in the handouts you received at registration.

1. Wait to be recognized by the facilitator before speaking – Again, speaking one at a time will help ensure you have an opportunity to provide your input effectively, and hear input from others.

2. Be concise and focus on the **Bottom Line** – We want to understand the main point of the input you're sharing and also hear from as many today as possible.

3. Provide constructive feedback – In some cases, the input you have to share may be about a negative experience. We ask that you take this opportunity to offer constructive feedback related to that experience. For example, if you know something's not working as well as it could be, please also share how you think it might be improved (offer improvement ideas).

4. Please respect others' opinions and experiences – This is a forum for providing broad input – there's no right or wrong answer, just different perspectives. If you have specific concerns, comments, or complaints regarding services your child has received, there are formal processes to follow—either contacting the bilingual education/ESL director or contacting the TEA.

5. Adhere to time limits – Please respect the time limits that have been established so we can cover all of the topics we're scheduled to address. We'll let you know when we're nearing the time limit for each question.

6. Focus on meaning, not wording – In the interest of time, we want to spend our time hearing input from as many as possible, not fine-tuning wording.

We now will begin to discuss specific background information related to the questions that we'll address <today/tonight>. These questions are designed to bring out information related to state bilingual education/ESL requirements and information about how programs are performing in the <district or charter school name>. These questions are intended to focus on the many aspects of a <district's or charter school's> educational program that contribute to positive teaching and learning. These include systems that are in place prior to students being identified as eligible for special language services, as well as other aspects related to the effective functioning of the bilingual education/ESL program once a child is identified as in need of bilingual education/ESL. These questions address topics ranging from access to program information and parent involvement in the bilingual education/ESL process to those targeted to the post-school results of the bilingual education/ESL program. Other critical issues along the spectrum also are addressed, such as what supports a district has in place for teaching and learning and how districts monitor the results of teaching and learning to improve student performance over time.

Let's begin with the first question that we'd like to address: <read first question>.
Note to Facilitator: *With each question, utilize the Questions and Follow-Up Probes chart at the end of this document to encourage a comprehensive discussion lasting approximately 30 minutes. The follow-up probes should be used as appropriate to elicit desired information not gained through responses to the initial question.*

The second question that we'd like to address is: <read second question>.

BREAK TIME (approximately 10 minutes)

The third question that we'd like to address is: <read third question>.

The final question that we'd like to address is: <read fourth question>.

Conclusion:

That concludes our discussion <today/this evening>. One final announcement before we close the meeting. We want to share some information about one of the handouts you received. It's called "Making Connections…Who to Contact and When." One of the recurring themes at state-level public meetings is that parents do not always know who to contact when they need technical assistance. <show handout>. This handout shows who to contact when you need specific types of assistance. You can fill in the appropriate teacher and principal information in the blanks provided.

We very much appreciate your participation in the public meeting. The information will be helpful to our school in making plans for improvement, and your participation and feedback will help the TEA know how to plan for future monitoring activities. In the future, the TEA will continue to work with schools, parents, and others interested in the educational process to refine and implement performance-based monitoring systems that promote improved results for all students.

Thank you again for your attendance.

Bilingual/ESL Education Monitoring System

LEA Public Meeting Questions and Follow-Up Probes

Question	Desired Information *(to be Elicited)*	Follow-Up Probes *(If desired information is <u>not elicited</u> based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)*
1. The bilingual/ESL education program is most successful for students when those involved in the students' education are well-informed about the bilingual/ ESL education process and its focus on results for individual students. Where do you get most of the information you receive regarding bilingual/ESL education?	Methods and scope of information dissemination; availability of information in the native language of parents; primary sources of information (could be school personnel, advocacy groups, websites, ELL student organizations, etc.); information resources available in the district/ charter school; scope of parent training supported by the district/ charter school; level of understanding of LPAC requirements.	▪ How is information on bilingual education/ESL shared with parents, school staff, and other community stakeholders and to what extent is the information available in the native language of the parent? ▪ What resources are available to provide information regarding the bilingual education/ESL program? ▪ What training is available for parents of ELL students? ▪ Who is the contact in your district when you need additional information about bilingual education ESL? ▪ To what extent is information on parents' rights and responsibilities available to and understood by parents of ELL students?

Question	Desired Information (to be Elicited)	Follow-Up Probes (If desired information is *not elicited* based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)
2. One purpose of the LPAC is to strengthen the role of parents and ensure family participation in the education of their children. Within the context of your district, how are parents involved in the educational process for their children?	Leadership roles that all parents play in the district/charter school and the role of parents of ELL students within the broader context of the school system; methods of including parents of ELL students in planning for their child's education; degree to which parents feel they are meaningfully involved in their child's education; the involvement of parents of ELL students in the overall school system; whether parent participation patterns reflect the overall demographics of the district.	▪ What leadership roles do parents serve in the district? ▪ How are parents of ELL students included in planning for their child's education? ▪ How are parents of ELL students included in the overall activities of the school district and/or campus? ▪ To what extent are all parent groups involved in the educational process? Do participation patterns reflect the demographic makeup of the district/charter school?

Question	Desired Information *(to be Elicited)*	**Follow-Up Probes** *(If desired information is not elicited based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)*
3. A goal of the LPAC is to have high expectations for English language learner (ELL) students and provide them with second language acquisition and content-based instruction that enables them to achieve in the school setting. Describe how ELL students in your district are provided with high-quality instruction that enables them to be successful in school.	The extent to which ELL students are engaged in the general curriculum; information on participation rates and patterns for ELL students in general assessments (TAKS, TELPAS, and other district-level assessments); degree to which ELL students make progress on the same standards and goals as general education students; degree to which ELL students accumulate new skills over the course of their education; the degree to which changes in the LPAC indicate progress over time; the degree to which all LEA programs are accessible to ELL students.	▪ Describe how ELL students learn the same skills as general education students. ▪ When might ELL students learn different skills than general education students? ▪ To what extent do ELL students learn the same skills as other students at their age or on their grade level? ▪ To what extent do the LPAC decisions of ELL students reflect higher targets for English proficiency over time? ▪ How do LPAC's decisions change over time to reflect new learning and new goals for students? ▪ Describe the degree to which all LEA programs are accessible to ELL students. ▪ Describe how ELL students participate in state or district testing (assessment) initiatives (such as the TAKS, TELPAS, or other district-level assessments). ▪ How does the district decide about the assessments ELL students will take? ▪ (For parents, if they have not provided feedback) Are you seeing your child make progress in meeting his/her language proficiency goals? Is he/she learning at a level that you consider to be important and appropriate?

Question	Desired Information *(to be Elicited)*	Follow-Up Probes *(If desired information is not elicited based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)*
4. The state requires that educational staff members providing instructional services to ELL students be certified and receive ongoing training. In what ways does your district ensure that all staff members serving ELL students are certified, knowledgeable, and skilled in their roles?	Degree to which bilingual/ESL education staff are certified for their areas of assignment; access of educational staff to professional development; whether bilingual/ESL education staff learn the same professional development content that general educators learn; the degree to which all educators are provided training and support in teaching ELL students; degree to which bilingual/ESL paraprofessionals receive professional development related to their job responsibilities; degree to which new teachers have established support systems (mentoring, etc.); access to joint training for parents and school professionals; extent to which effects of professional development activities are evaluated.	▪ To what degree is professional development provided and/or supported by the district on topics that promote quality instruction for ELL students? ▪ To what extent do bilingual/ESL educators learn the same professional content as general educators? ▪ To what extent are parents involved in joint training with bilingual/ESL educators on topics that promote better results for ELL students? ▪ In what ways does the district try to attract and keep certified bilingual/ESL staff? ▪ How does the district support teachers new to the classroom? What supports are in place for teachers of ELL students? ▪ How does the district track information to know whether professional development results in improved achievement for ELL students? ▪ (For parents, if they have not provided feedback) How do parents learn about training opportunities available to them? What is important for parents to know in regard to the qualifications and training of the staff members teaching their children?

Question	Desired Information *(to be Elicited)*	**Follow-Up Probes** *(If desired information is not elicited based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)*
5. An effective school program has supports in place to meet the needs of all students. What are the options available in your district to support the needs of struggling ELL students?	Support services available to ELL students, information on bilingual/ESL program benefits, information on the continuum of service options available to ELL students across grade levels; degree to which initiatives are in place to support the needs of all students (such as schoolwide positive behavior supports, 3-Tier Reading Model, culturally responsive education models, etc.).	▪ What support services are available to ELL students within the campus and district? ▪ What initiatives are in place to meet the needs of ELL students, including those struggling with behavior or instructional concerns? ▪ What kind of help do ELL students receive prior to being referred for special education services? ▪ What are the various types of English language services provided within the campus and district? To what extent are a variety of service options available to students of all ages? ▪ What different placement and/or program options are available to meet the needs of ELL students? ▪ Once a student is identified as an English language learner, is the student still able to access support services and programs in place for general education students? ▪ (For parents, if they have not provided feedback) What kinds of help does your child receive from the bilingual/ESL education program? Where is that help provided?

Question	Desired Information *(to be Elicited)*	**Follow-Up Probes** *(If desired information is <u>not elicited</u> based on the general question, choose the appropriate follow-up probes from the list below.)*
6. The goal of education is to prepare students to live productive, independent adult lives. In what ways does the district ensure that ELL students are prepared to live as productive adults after leaving school?	Extent to which ELL students graduate under the same standards and requirements as general education students; extent to which district follows up on ELL students after leaving school to determine the effectiveness of the educational program; extent to which ELL students have the same post-school options available as general education students; extent to which transition planning plays a meaningful role in determining goals and graduation plans for ELL students.	▪ To what extent are ELL students prepared to graduate by meeting the same standards as general education students? ▪ To what extent do ELL students graduate with recommended and distinguished diplomas? ▪ How does the district follow up on ELL students who have graduated to determine the effectiveness of the school program? ▪ To what extent do ELL students find competitive employment or attend post-secondary educational programs after graduation? Are students able to sustain employment or complete university, college, or technical training programs? ▪ How does the school plan for the needs of ELL students after graduation? ▪ How does transition planning improve results for ELL students in your district/charter school?