



## ESL at Lynchburg City Schools

Dear Parent/Guardian,

First, let us say “Welcome” to Lynchburg! You received this letter because your child is new to Lynchburg City Schools, and we understand English not is his or her first language. We desire your child to succeed at school and we offer assistance with learning English. Your participation in your child’s education is important, so we need permission to enroll your child in our English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The accompanying form is an enrollment request.

Before completing the form, let us explain our program. ESL students are enrolled in regular classrooms with students their age – five-years-old – kindergarten, six-years-old – first grade, etc. Then ESL students receive additional English instruction in a daily half-hour ESL class. This is in addition to language arts within the regular classroom. Students are grouped according to ability and age. Before new students are assigned a class, the ESL specialist meets and tests students to determine their English level.

There are four (4) English levels as determined by the State of Virginia Department of Education. Each level shows ability in listening, speaking, reading and writing of English. Levels are explained as follows.

**Level 1** – Students begin to understand basic vocabulary, respond to basic commands, answer with word phrases, recognize most sight words, begin to understand reading, and write the alphabet (upper and lower case).

**Level 2** – Students begin to understand verb tenses, understand short conversations, respond with short sentences, begin to understand short stories, understand some context clues, recognize a main idea, begin to write short narratives and journal entries, and write verb tenses and more complex sentences, even though some errors occur.

**Level 3** – Students begin to understand a wide range of language forms, vocabulary, idioms, and structures; can communicate in most situations; can carry on longer conversations; can comprehend text independently; can understand context clues; can write paragraphed narratives; can write in correct tense; and can organize ideas on paper.

**Level 4** – Students begin to understand social and academic English equally, engage in regular conversation with minimal mistakes, understand a variety of texts that are grade appropriate by using reading strategies like their English-speaking peers, and are approaching fluency in writing that is equal to their English-speaking peers.

We believe your child will benefit from being in an ESL class. Our goal is to help your child learn English. Your child can then interact with fellow classmates and teachers and succeed in school.

You can help by encouraging your child. Continue using your primary language at home and encourage reading in that language. Literacy in the first language leads to literacy in the second. Research shows children can succeed in two languages simultaneously. However, learning a second language takes time. Research indicates, on the average, it may take five to seven years for a student to become comparable to a native speaker of English. We are here to help.

Sincerely,  
The Lynchburg City Schools’ ESL Staff



**Permission to Test and Enroll  
Limited-English-Proficient Student into ESL**  
(This form is to be placed in the student's Permanent Records Folder.)

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

What language, other than English, is spoken at home (child's first language)?

---

**Please check to allow testing of your child's ability in English.**

- ( ) I give Lynchburg City Schools permission to test my child's ability in English.
- ( ) I do not want Lynchburg City Schools to test my child's ability in English.

**Please check if you would like to have your child receive ESL help.**

- ( ) I would like my child to receive help with English outside the regular classroom.
- ( ) I do not want my child to receive tutoring in English outside the regular classroom.  
I understand, by declining ESL help, my child's regular classroom teacher is NOT obligated to make any accommodations for my child that are not made for the native-English-speaking students.

---

**Sign** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**