ENGLISH LEARNER TOOL KIT

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The U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Justice (DOJ) released joint guidance on January 7, 2015, reminding states, local districts and schools of their obligations under federal law to ensure that English Learners have equal access to a high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential.

Now, the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA), within the U.S. Department of Education, is pleased to offer the full English Learner (EL) Tool Kit, a companion to the joint guidance from ED's Office for Civil Rights and DOJ.

The tool kit is designed to help states and districts in meeting their legal obligations to English Learners and providing these students with the support they need to attain English language proficiency while meeting college- and career-ready standards. The EL Tool Kit primarily is intended for state, district, and school administrators, as well as teachers. The tool kit also may inform other stakeholders concerned with the education and success of English Learners.

The ten chapters of the EL Tool Kit correspond to the ten sections of the joint guidance, released in January. Each chapter provides (1) explanations of the civil rights and other legal obligations to English Learners; (2) checklists that states, districts, and schools can use as self-monitoring tools; (3) sample tools that may be adopted or adapted for use in states, districts, and schools to aid with compliance; and (4) additional resources that may provide further relevant information and assistance.

The tool kit does not encompass all resources about services for English Learners, but does offer a sampling. For the reader's convenience, the tool kit is free and accessible online.

Each chapter contains tools and resources relevant to the chapter topic. The chapters include:

Chapter 1: Identifying all English Learner Students
Chapter 2: Providing English Learners with a Language Assistance Program
Chapter 3: Staffing and Supporting an English Learner Program
Chapter 4: Providing English Learners Meaningful Access to Core Curricular and Extra Curricular Programs
Chapter 5: Creating an Inclusive Environment for and Avoiding the Unnecessary Segregation of English Learners
Chapter 6: Addressing English Learners with Disabilities
Chapter 7: Serving English Learners Who Opt Out of English Learner Programs
Chapter 8: Monitoring and Exiting English Learners from English Learner Programs and Services
Chapter 9: Evaluating the Effectiveness of a District's English Learner Program
Chapter 10: Ensuring Meaningful Communication with Limited English Proficient Parents

As part of the U.S. Department of Education's mission, OELA provides national leadership to help ensure that English Learners and immigrant students attain English language proficiency and achieve rigorous academic standards, identify major issues affecting the education of English Learners, and support state and local systemic reform efforts to improve English Learners' achievement.

This tool kit, used in conjunction with the English Learner guidance, serves an important role in accomplishing these goals by helping states and districts to better understand and meet their obligations to English Learners.