# ELE PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:Newcomer or SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) Program

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## Contact Information

**District Name and Address:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Name, Role, and Email of Person Completing Program Submission:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  **First Submission: Due by November 15**

[ ]  **Final Submission: Due by January 1st**

The questions outlined in this program proposal are designed to guide the thoughtful and comprehensive planning of new English Learner Education programs. Each section is aligned to the Castañeda Three-Pronged Test and reflects key legal requirements and best practices to help create programs that are educationally sound, equitable for all students, and compliant with state and federal laws.

Your district’s responses should describe how you are planning to address each question below as part of your program design. This information will support both program quality and compliance with applicable legal requirements and will help your district develop a program that is designed to meet the educational needs of the student population it serves.

There are three sections in this program proposal submission, each of which aligns with one of the three Castañeda prongs:

* [Prong 1 Identification of New Research-Based ELE Program and Rationale for Alignment to Student Demographics and Needs](#Bookmark1)
* [Prong 2: Description of Proposed Program Implementation and Resources](#Bookmark2)
* [Prong 3: Proposed Program Evaluation](#Bookmark3)

Please note:

* Districts that wish to start new ELE programs specifically for newcomers and/or SLIFE in which they will spend *the majority* of their day in a self-contained program or classes must complete the new ELE program proposal process, while districts that educate newcomers/SLIFE with additional supports *within* an existing ELE program do not.
* Every public school in Massachusetts must meet the [student learning time (SLT) requirements](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html?section=all) outlined in state regulations. Applying for and receiving approval for an alternative ELE program does not satisfy the requirements of an SLT waiver.

All completed proposals (first and final submissions) must be emailed to el@doe.mass.edu and CC sibel.hughes@mass.gov and allison.e.balter@mass.gov). Starting in school year 2025-26, proposals will no longer be submitted via the web-based monitoring system (WBMS).

## Prong 1: Identification of New Research-Based ELE Program and Rationale for Alignment to Student Demographics and Needs

**Castañeda Prong 1**

Each district is required to select a specific educational approach, or ELE program, to meet the needs of its particular EL student population. The proposed program must be research-based and rooted in sound educational theory. Regardless of the ELE program selected by the district, in Massachusetts, a two-fold inquiry is required: (1) whether the ELE program provides for English language development (ELD) for ELs in both content and English as a Second Language (ESL); and (2) whether the approach provides for meaningful participation of EL students in the district's educational program.

### Legal Requirements

According to M.G.L. Ch. 71A and 603 CMR 14.04, all ELE programs must be research-based and all new program proposals are required to explain the following:

“(a) the new instructional program selected, its objectives, and research basis as it relates to the student population to be served;

(b) how the new program will meet the needs of the student population to be served as compared to any existing program; […]

(d) the student population to be served, including the number of students, their grade level, native language, and English proficiency levels.”

According to M.G.L. Ch. 71A, “a district that intends to offer a new sheltered English immersion or alternative instructional English learner program in the next academic year shall submit, not later than January 1 of the current academic year, to the department and the district's parent advisory council, on a form prescribed by the department [a description of the proposed program].”

### Type of New ELE Program Proposed for English Learners in the District

Please select the type of new ELE program the district is proposing. Note: If the district is proposing a new Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) program, a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program that is not designed for SLIFE, or an Other Bilingual program, please use the ELE Program Proposal Submission form for Bilingual Programs.

[ ]  **Newcomer program -** a short-term program designed for students who are new to the U.S. school system, usually in their first year. These programs help students learn English, adjust to school in the U.S., and get ready to transition into other English learner education programs in more inclusive settings, such as sheltered English immersion or dual language, after a specified period of time, generally within a year. (See section on “ELE Programming for Newcomers” in DESE’s [Guidance on English Learner Education Services and Programming](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/services-programming.docx) for more information.)

[ ]  **SLIFE program -** designed for students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). To be identified as SLIFE in Massachusetts, a student must meet the following criteria:

* The DOE25 SIMS field indicates the student is an English learner.
* The student is 8 to 21 years old.
* The student enrolled in a school in the United States after grade 2 or exited the U.S. for 6 months or more and did not attend school during that time.
* The student’s prior exposure to formal schooling is characterized by **one of the following:**
	+ No formal schooling;
	+ Significant interruptions in formal schooling; or
	+ Consistent but limited formal schooling.

SLIFE programs are specially designed to meet the needs of these students by providing additional support to accelerate learning while helping SLIFE integrate into the broader educational program and have equitable opportunities to engage with grade-level content alongside their peers. SLIFE programs may provide intensive support to strengthen students’ foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and other areas, as well as provide them with social-emotional supports and, in some cases, home language support. For more information about SLIFE supports and programming, see:

* Section on “ELE Programming for SLIFE” in DESE’s [Guidance on English Learner Education Services and Programming](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/services-programming.docx), and
* [Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE): Guidance for SLIFE Identification, Services, & Supports — June 2024](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/slife/guidance.pdf)

### Summary of Current ELE Program(s)

Check all ELE programs currently operating within the district.

[ ] Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)

[ ] Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE)

[ ] Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)

[ ] Other research-based program (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

Will the proposed new ELE program affect the number of students enrolled in the current program(s)? Please specify.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Did the district’s most recent ELE compliance review include Castañeda’s Three-Pronged Test for each of the ELE programs it operates?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

### Proposed Program Location and Timeline for Implementation

*Please identify the specific school, grade span(s), and implementation timeline for the proposed program.*

Name of school to house proposed program: Click or tap here to enter text.

Grade span proposed:

[ ] Gr. K-5 (Please note that SLIFE programs cannot start before Grade 3)

[ ] Gr. K-8 (Please note that SLIFE programs cannot start before Grade 3)

[ ] Gr. 6-8

[ ] Gr. 9-12

[ ] Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

School year to commence: Click or tap here to enter text.

Will the program start at full capacity across all identified grades, or will it roll-up one grade at a time? If it will roll-up, please indicate the timeline for full roll-up.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Student Demographic Information

Districts should select and implement an ELE program based on the needs of their EL population and the interests of their community. Therefore, an analysis of a district’s **student demographics** needs to be considered to determine the type of ELE program that the district will implement with fidelity. Please respond to the following questions to explain how the proposed program is designed to meet the needs of the district’s and/or school’s specific EL population.

Describe the student population to be served, including the number of students, their grade level, home language, prior education, amount of time in U.S. schools, and language proficiency in English and/or partner language, as available. It may be helpful to reflect on demographic trends over the past three years.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please describe how the proposed program meets the legal requirement that programs be research-based and meet the needs of your student population. Cite literature and evidence, as appropriate, to support the proposed model.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Enrollment and Identification Process

Newcomer and SLIFE programs should have clear processes for identifying and enrolling eligible students and communicating with families about program options. Please respond to the questions below to describe your proposed program’s enrollment process, including student identification protocols, family communication, and criteria for program eligibility. (For more information and resources about SLIFE identification, see Steps 1-3 of the Four Steps for SLIFE Identification, Services, and Supports in [Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE): Guidance for SLIFE Identification, Services, & Supports — June 2024](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/slife/guidance.pdf).)

Please describe your planning related to the following questions:

* Who will be responsible for conducting and monitoring the enrollment process?
* What procedures are in place to identify SLIFE and/or Newcomer students (e.g. intake interviews, transcript review, academic screening, grade placement, etc.)?
* What information about their children’s educational background will be gathered from families at enrollment?
* What criteria will be used to determine eligibility for the program?
* What assessments will be used to determine eligibility for and initial placement in the proposed program?
* How will information about the proposed program be communicated to families and the community (e.g. language access, translated materials), and how will the district inform families that placement in the program is optional?

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Consultation with EL Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) and Family/Community Engagement

In addition to the legal requirement to submit this proposal to the district’s ELPAC, it is best practice to engage the ELPAC and the district community in planning for a new ELE program. Please respond to the following questions to describe the district’s process of engaging with families throughout program development:

Has the ELPAC received a copy of this proposal?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

If yes, when did the ELPAC receive this proposal? mm/dd/yyyy

If no, please go back and share this proposal with the ELPAC before submitting to DESE.

Describe how and when the district’s ELPAC has been consulted during the planning process.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe how ELPAC will continue to be consulted throughout the program development process.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe school and district personnel who have the capacity to reach out and engage with non-English speaking families.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe connections with any local community organizations that may be helpful with providing additional supports or resources for newly arrived students and families.

Click or tap here to enter text.

As the program begins, describe how the school/district will proactively welcome and engage families, including but not limited to:

* Communication methods with families who speak languages other than English (In-person, phone, email, text, other)
* Outreach events and family orientation sessions
* Access to interpreters, translated materials, or bilingual staff
* Role of community organizations or cultural liaisons in outreach and support
* Examples of communication tools (e.g. brochures, flyers, videos, recorded sessions)

Note: Any district that serves 100 or more ELs or in which ELs comprise at least 5% of the student population must establish an ELPAC. Any school designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming that operates an ELE program, must also establish an ELPAC. 603 CMR 14.09.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Promoting Inclusive Environments

Newcomer and SLIFE programs should be designed as short-term programs for students who are new to the U.S. school system and need additional, specialized support. These programs help students learn English, adjust to school in the U.S., and get ready to transition into other English learner education programs in more inclusive settings, such as sheltered English immersion or dual language, after a specified period of time, generally within a year. Please respond to the following questions to explain how the district will ensure that students in the SLIFE and/or Newcomer program are not unnecessarily segregated from the broader school community and are able to access the full range of educational and extracurricular opportunities within the school.

Please describe your planning related to the following questions:

* How students will have access to grade-appropriate content and the core curriculum across content areas;
* How students will have access to extracurricular activities and school-wide events alongside their peers;
* How students will be integrated into general education settings as appropriate based on their proficiency and readiness;
* District policies or procedures in place to prevent unnecessary segregation of students based on language background or newcomer status and how these are communicated to staff;
* Systems for regularly reviewing student placement and ensuring students are not kept in separate programs longer than necessary;
* Opportunities to interact with non-EL peers in academic classes, electives, advisory periods, lunch, recess, etc.;
* Opportunities for peer mentoring, co-curricular clubs, and mixed-language learning environments;
* Communication with families to promote understanding that the program is temporary and focused on transition;
* If the program is a high school program, how it will help students earn credits toward graduation and learn about pathways to high school completion and post-secondary opportunities.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Exit Criteria and Transition Planning

SLIFE and Newcomer programs are intended to be temporary, transitional supports, not long-term English learner education placements. Thoughtful planning for program exit criteria and transition support helps students transition out of the SLIFE or Newcomer programming as soon as they're ready. Please note the process and criteria for exiting from SLIFE and/or Newcomer programs are different from exiting EL status.

Describe the criteria the district will use to determine when a student is ready to exit the SLIFE and/or Newcomer program. Include:

* Academic benchmarks and English language proficiency levels;
* Progress in foundational literacy, numeracy, and content knowledge;
* Use of multiple data sources (e.g., ACCESS scores, classroom performance, formative assessments).
* How the district’s exit criteria from the SLIFE and/or Newcomer program ensures that students are not kept in the SLIFE and/or Newcomer programs longer than necessary.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe the process for transitioning students out of the SLIFE and/or Newcomer program into other ELE programs. Include:

* How transition decisions will be made and communicated to families;
* How students will be supported during and after the transition (e.g., mentoring, check-ins, academic support).
* Ongoing monitoring of students' progress after exiting the program.

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Prong 2: Description of Proposed Program Implementation and Resources

**Castañeda Prong 2**

Once the district has determined that it has an educationally sound ELE program, it must provide ELs access to the necessary resources and supports to implement its ELE program with fidelity, including the following: qualified instructional and support staff (includes hiring of new staff and training of current staff), ESL and content curricula, instructional equipment and materials, and instructional space.

### Legal Requirements

According to M.G.L. Ch. 71A and 603 CMR 14.04, all new program proposals are required to include a description of the following:

“(c) the resources the district intends to dedicate to effective implementation and ongoing operation of the new program, including the number and expected qualifications of the program's educators…”

### Program Design and Academic, Linguistic, & Social-Emotional Supports

A strong Newcomer or SLIFE program should be intentional about designing key elements of its instructional and student support model around the unique needs of its student population. For more information and resources on academic, linguistic, and social-emotional supports, see Step 4: Develop a SLIFE Services and Support Plan in [Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE): Guidance for SLIFE Identification, Services, & Supports — June 2024](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/slife/guidance.pdf)*.*

Please describe your planning related to the following questions:

* Language(s) of instruction;
* Core content instruction and foundational skills support (e.g. literacy, numeracy);
* Access to grade-level curriculum and academic scaffolds;
* ESL support and instructional model;
* Curricular materials that will be used for content and ESL instruction;
* Use of home language for content support (if applicable);
* Multi-tiered systems of supports and opportunities for intervention;
* Integration of social-emotional learning, cultural adjustment, and trauma-informed practices;
* Additional support services (e.g. counseling, wraparound services, referrals to community-based organizations).

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Program Staff and Qualifications

Newcomer and SLIFE programs should be staffed with an appropriate number of qualified staff to carry out the intended program.

Please list the school and district staff who will support the implementation and ongoing operation of the Newcomer and/or SLIFE program including the number and expected qualifications of the program's educators.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name** (if known) | **Licensure Status** [include license(s) and endorsement(s) held] | **Additional qualifications**(if relevant) |
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List program staff roles that are currently unfilled (you may be asked to provide a future staffing update to DESE if necessary):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe the plan to recruit and hire qualified staff for unfilled roles, including whether you have taken an inventory of current staff and licenses. For unlicensed and unendorsed staff that you plan to assign to the proposed program, describe the support you will provide to these educators to become properly licensed and endorsed.

Click or tap here to enter text.

NOTE: More information about licensure is available at:

* [Office of Educator Licensure – License Types & Validity](https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/academic-prek12/license-types.html)
* [603 CMR 7.00](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=04): Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval Regulations

### Special Education Services for Students with Disabilities

Describe how students with disabilities will have access to both special education services and English learner education services within the SLIFE and/or Newcomer program.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Professional Learning and Staff Development

Describe the plans for ongoing professional development related to SLIFE and Newcomer needs. Include information about how staff will be prepared to implement culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and assessment and serve dually identified students (i.e., ELs with disabilities).

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Prong 3: Proposed Program Evaluation

**Castañeda Prong 3**

It is not enough that the district’s ELE program has a sound educational theory and is resourced appropriately. It must also be effective. As a result, every district in Massachusetts must conduct periodic evaluations of its ELE program **at least every two years.**

### Legal Requirements

According to M.G.L. Ch. 71A and 603 CMR 14.04, all new program proposals are required to include a description of the following:

“(e) any current English learner program(s), including data concerning its impact on student learning and English language acquisition;

(f) how the school district intends to measure and evaluate program success over time...”

### Plan for Program Evaluation

Describe how the district will monitor the progress and effectiveness of the proposed program. Include:

* Methods for tracking student academic growth and English language development;
* Use of formative and summative assessments;
* How data will inform program refinement and instructional decisions;
* Coordination with other programs (e.g. special education, curriculum and instruction, counseling services, etc.);
* Timeline for evaluation and review.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe the process for revising the program based on student needs and demographic changes.

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Affirmations

Please include signatures of relevant school and district leadership to indicate review and support of this submission.

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Principal Name Principal Signature Date

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Superintendent Name Superintendent Signature Date