

VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE PLAN

PURSUANT TO TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LOWELL, MA

Approved by the Lowell School Committee on November 9, 1988

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STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Lowell Public Schools adopt this Voluntary LAU Compliance Plan as a consent agreement between the School Department and linguistic minority parents and students intended to insure continued compliance with legal obligations under federal and state law and regulations, including the U. S. Constitution; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Federal Equal Opportunity Act; G.L. Chapter 71A, the State Transitional Bilingual Education Act; and related Federal and State provisions regarding compensatory, special, and vocational education. This Plan updates and modifies the previous LAU Plan adopted and last revised in April 1980 and the Voluntary Desegregation Plan adopted on June 11, 1987 in light of current circumstances, evolving educational practices and legal standards. Final responsibility for implementation of this Plan rests with the Superintendent of Schools.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

OBJECTIVE 1

All students in the Lowell Public Schools shall be assigned in a manner which assures equal educational opportunity regardless of race, national origin, sex, language background, or residency in a desegregated, multicultural, pluralistic learning community.

Task 1.1

Bilingual and special education program students are to be assigned to appropriate clusters at appropriate settings, followed by the assignment of all other students by means of centralized enrollment in such a way that each school reflects the percentage of majority and minority in the school system (plus or minus 10%) inclusive of bilingual programs. This percentage is revised on an annual basis to reflect the current percentages of the school system. Bilingual student assignments are subject to provisions of the Voluntary Desegregation Plan not otherwise modified by this revised LAU Compliance Plan.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

OBJECTIVE 2

To assure system-wide compliance with Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations, and policies regarding equal educational opportunity for linguistic minority students.

Task 2.1

The Project Director (Desegregation Coordinator) will have direct line authority over the Bilingual Program Supervisor and other program staff, and with the responsibility of assuring appropriate coordination of services among bilingual, monolingual, compensatory, and special education programming.

Task 2.2

The Project Director will have responsibility for reporting directly to the Superintendent regarding linguistic minority equity compliance issues, and will continue to serve as the Superintendent's representative to the Mayor's Bilingual Education Sub-committee of the Lowell School Committee.

Task 2.3

There shall be convened a Mayor's Bilingual Education Sub-Committee (BESC) to the Lowell School Committee. The members shall include representatives of the School Committee selected by the Mayor and will meet with representatives of minority parent plaintiffs on a monthly basis. To assure compliance with linguistic minority equity requirements, membership in the Master PAC for Transitional Bilingual Education will be expanded to include:

- 1 Representative of Citywide Parent Advisory Committee
- 1 Representative of bilingual program teachers
- 1 LAU Testing and Assessment Specialist
- 1 Citywide Guidance Director (as needed)
- 1 Director of Special Education (as needed)
- 1 Director of Chapter I (as needed)
- 1 Representative of Northeast Regional Office,
State Department of Education (as needed)
- 1 Representative of Teachers' and/or Supervisors' Union (as needed)

The Composition of the new Master PAC for Transitional Bilingual Education will be all of the above in addition to the present composition:

- Designee of Lowell School Committee
- Transitional Bilingual Education Supervisor
- Project Director
- Officers and elected representatives of each Sub-PAC
- Minority representative from University of Lowell
- Minority representative from Middlesex Community College
- Representative from City of Lowell Bilingual Library
- Bilingual Department Head
- Bilingual Program Facilitators

The Officers of the Master PAC will be elected annually. The Project Director will be responsible for assuring that the above described members and representatives are designated by June 1st of each year and that the PAC meets at least once per month throughout the year to plan and assure implementation of equitable linguistic minority programming. Any future changes in the Master PAC membership will take into consideration needed input from varied sectors of the school system, broader community and region. Meetings of the Master PAC shall be open public meetings, and may be expanded to include invited guests and speakers. This newly organized Master PAC shall meet for the first time within 30 days of this Plan's adoption.

Task 2.4

The Sub-committee purpose shall be to monitor and evaluate and advise the School Committee regarding all aspects of the planning and implementation of this Agreement. Mayor's Sub-committee will also receive suggestions and complaints from parents, students, staff and community regarding compliance issues, and direct these to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools accompanied by suggestions for appropriate action. The Superintendent's consideration will be the first step in process of dispute resolution if and/or when disagreements arise regarding implementation. Final resolution of said disagreements shall be determined by the School Committee.

Task 2.5

The Deputy Superintendent of Personnel will review and monitor the effectiveness of staff development and in-service training efforts on both a systemic and individual school basis, each year.

Task 2.6

The Project Director, Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education, LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist and Master PAC shall ensure that the following data be compiled and be available by June 30th of each year:

- a. number of linguistic minority students in each Lowell Public School program and type of program;
- b. results of academic testing including curriculum-referenced, basic skills, English and/or native language proficiency testing;
- c. absentee rate;
- d. drop-out rate;
- e. promotion rate;
- f. suspension and expulsion rates;
- g. graduation data and rate of matriculation at institutes of high education;
- h. academic progress in monolingual programs following existing from Transitional Bilingual programming;
- i. number of students serviced by native or ESL tutors;
- j. for special education students that data specified in special education section, infra, as well as data regarding movement in program by prototype;
- k. names, national origin, native language and cultural background of all transitional bilingual, Two-Way and ESL professional and paraprofessional staff including their certification and waiver status and levels and/or subjects taught by each.

TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL, TWO-WAY, DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL PROGRAMMING FOR LITERACY

OBJECTIVE 3

The Lowell Public Schools provide a Transitional Bilingual Education Program for Spanish, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese and Portuguese limited English-proficient students, and will initiate Transitional Bilingual Education programs for other language groups as numbers (20 of a particular linguistic group systemwide) warrant.

Native language and ESL tutors provide services to students of low incidence populations (under 20 systemwide). Students in the Transitional Bilingual Education Program develop literacy in the home language as well as in English, and study their people's culture and history as well as that of the United States, in compliance with Mass. GL Chapter 71A. Programs intended to provide meaningful opportunities to develop literacy in English as well as a

second language shall include transitional bilingual education as required by state law. Native language and English as A Second Language (ESL) tutors will provide services to linguistic minority students whose total enrollment is less than twenty in the Lowell Public Schools.

Multilingual/Multicultural programs shall be open to all students on the basis of both racial and linguistic criteria broadly consistent with systemwide equal education opportunity concerns. Courses shall be scheduled in such a manner as to accommodate these students' needs to take other required courses in English.

Multilingual/Multicultural programs shall be developed according to the following schedule:

1. The Robinson School's Two-Way program (Spanish-English) for grades 5-6 will be expanded to include grades 7-8 by September 1989.
- 2.. A Two-Way pilot program (Spanish-English) for grades 1-4 will be established at the Reilly School to begin in September 1988.
3. A Demonstration School, grades Pre-K-3 will be established in conjunction with the College of Education of the University of Lowell. The Demonstration School will be a city-wide magnet, located on the grounds of the University of Lowell and managed by its College of Education. The Demonstration School will have Hispanic and Cambodian students and perhaps others and will expose the students to Khmer, Spanish and English languages and respective cultures. It will open in September 1989 contingent on implementation by the University of Lowell.
4. Multilingual/multicultural programs will be established at other schools by the Principal, staff, parents, consistent with the principles of the central enrollment plan.
5. However, in all such cases, the Principal and staff shall have the final decision in adopting and/or retaining said program.
6. All newly constructed schools under the State reimbursed construction plan shall be designated multilingual/multicultural schools with Transitional Bilingual Education programs provided in a manner consistent with desegregation requirements.
7. A newly constructed school under the state-reimbursed construction plan shall be designated a multilingual/multicultural school with a two-way multilingual/multicultural program. One of the language components of this school will be a Spanish-English curriculum.
This school will be planned in a manner consistent with desegregation requirements, as well as involvement of the respective parental representatives and staff.

Task 3.1

The Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education programs shall coordinate Transitional Bilingual Education programs which shall be located throughout the Lowell Public Schools in appropriate desegregated environments.

Task 3.2

The Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education will coordinate the planning and development of multilingual/multicultural programs that may be instituted in the Lowell Public Schools.

Task 3.3

The Master PAC shall be consulted throughout the school year as part of the above-described community-based program planning process.

Task 3.4

Any new Two-Way Bilingual programs will have as their fundamental objective the development of literacy through various approaches including the whole language-based approach utilizing children's interests and experiences, as well as quality children's literature, in both English and one other language.

Task 3.5

In-service training in multilingual/multicultural whole language techniques shall be provided prior to, and during, each program's implementation.

Task 3.6

All Lowell Public Schools are developing multicultural programs as part of their Chapter 636 proposals to the extent that these funds are available.

Task 3.7

All linguistic minority students served by the Lowell Public Schools shall be entitled to curricular offerings in any program in which they are enrolled which are equal and comparable in size, scope, sequence and quality to those provided in the standard monolingual program. The Superintendent shall within the first three months undertake a needs assessment in this area of program implementation and make appropriate recommendations to the School Committee.

Task 3.8

All linguistic minority students served by the Lowell Public Schools shall be placed according to age/grade appropriate norms. Students who are eligible shall receive supplemental instruction and supportive services regardless of English proficiency.

Task 3.9

By April 15 of each year, the Project Director and Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education shall initiate a review of the scheduling and structure of programming for all linguistic minority students so as to eliminate inequities related to student transportation, insufficient staffing, inadequate facilities or other factors disproportionately impacting such students.

Task 3.10

At Lowell High School, language minority students are received in 2 categories:

- a. Through the normal promotion process (i.e., 8th Grade to 9th, etc.). These students are in a continuous assessment mode through their classroom and are the beneficiaries of the Student Support Team mechanism or direct intervention by teachers, counselors, MICAS staff, and administrators.
- b. As new entries into the school system and Lowell High School, these students will be subject to the following steps:
 - i) check documents for completeness and relevancy;
 - ii) complete LAU form, language dominance testing;
 - iii) have prior academic records assessed;
 - iv) take placement tests regarding native language, English language, math;
 - v) GUIDANCE - DESIGNS program based on input from prior steps and implements placement.

Task 3.11

These plans shall call for a range of appropriate programming from standard curriculum placement to alternative and/or work-study arrangements including college-oriented or community college courses, and supplemental language developmental support or tutoring as well as an ongoing relationship with adult counselors.

Task 3.12

Linguistic minority students with limited English proficiency shall be entitled to satisfy High School graduation requirements through satisfactory completion of native language and ESL content area courses substantially equivalent to those offered in the monolingual standard curriculum. Such students' previously attained secondary level credit for courses taken in their home country and/or in their native language or via ESL content area instruction shall also be taken into account towards the satisfaction of these graduation requirements.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

OBJECTIVE 4

The delivery of educational and supportive services to linguistic minority children shall be coordinated throughout the school system, and shall include equal access to all programming as well as appropriate multilingual/multicultural and Transitional Bilingual Education programs.

Task 4.1

Overall delivery of coordinated educational and supportive services for linguistic minorities, inside and outside bilingual programming, shall be overseen by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Services. Direct supervision of bilingual and other language programming services shall be the responsibility of the Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education.

Task 4.2

In addition to the Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education, supportive staff shall at minimum include one (1) Facilitator for the Spanish component; one (1) Facilitator for the Khmer component; one (1) Curriculum Coordinator for the Southeast Asian component; one (1) half-time Facilitator for the Portuguese component; a LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist; Home/School liaisons for Spanish, Cambodian and Laotian; one (1) Parent Advisory Council Coordinator for the Transitional Bilingual Education program, and one (1) Khmer Liaison assigned to the Guidance Department.

Task 4.3

Each Facilitator, Curriculum Coordinator, Department Head for each major program component at the elementary and secondary level shall be primarily responsible for curriculum development and implementation, and shall report regularly to the Supervisor for Transitional Bilingual Education regarding such efforts.

Together this personnel will be responsible for coordinating and monitoring bilingual materials procurement and development and will assure the development, acquisition and use of culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional materials which positively reflect Lowell's multi-cultural characteristics. All such materials shall avoid negative stereotypes of members of any ethnic or racial group. The personnel will report to the Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education regarding this issue on a regular basis.

Task 4.4

Each school Administrative staff will ensure that all necessary services for linguistic minority students in their school be provided.

Task 4.5

Each new position in the Bilingual program's administrative structure shall be filled within three months of this Plan's adoption pursuant to the overall recruitment and hiring guidelines set forth in the Plan. In the case of bilingual program administrator positions, the Personnel Selection Advisory Committee shall include at least two parent representatives named by the Master Parents Advisory Council. In the case of school-based administrative positions in schools having bilingual programs, the Personnel Selection Advisory Committee shall include at least one parent representative from the language(s) served in the bilingual program(s) of that school. For other central administrator positions effecting all students, the Master PAC shall nominate one representative. The Personnel Selection Advisory Committee shall continue to consist of two teachers, two administrators, two parents, two experts from outside the school system, and one community representative.

OVERALL STAFFING CONCERNS**OBJECTIVE 5**

The overall goal of personnel recruitment, hiring and training in the Lowell Public Schools shall be to obtain a fully qualified and trained professional staff. A determined effort will be made to obtain qualified minority staff personnel and/or administrators. The Lowell School Department is an equal opportunity employer.

A. RECRUITMENT AND HIRING**Task 5.1**

No local requirements for hiring additional to those imposed by state law shall be applied for personnel in the bilingual programs by the Lowell Public Schools. Reliance on the National Teachers Examination for bilingual teachers will cease immediately. Bilingual teachers placed in non-permanent status upon hiring because of reliance on the NTE shall be granted permanent status and accorded retroactive seniority and prospective pay at the permanent

employee level so long as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools and they have passed the State Tests, provided that the above does not contravene any collective bargaining agreements.

Task 5.2

Where there are two or more equally qualified candidates for a professional position in the bilingual programs, that candidate shall be selected which contributes the most to assuring the overall staff representativeness described above.

Task 5.3

In hiring multilingual/multicultural or transitional bilingual staff, there shall be a preference for hiring bilingual/bicultural staff fully proficient in the language and cultural background of the linguistic minority groups served by the program at issue.

Task 5.4

Bilingual program staff shall be interviewed for the school level by personnel selection committees composed of the Deputy Superintendent for Personnel, Principal and PAC representatives of the linguistic groups to be served (and Master PAC representative in the case of multilingual/multicultural programs). The Deputy Superintendent for Personnel shall supervise such interviews.

Task 5.5

Recruitment procedures for linguistic minority personnel shall be developed by the Deputy Superintendent for Personnel in conjunction with the Transitional Bilingual Education Supervisor and Master PAC with maximum participation by linguistic minority parents and community organizations. Such procedures shall assure specific outreach to linguistic minority communities, media, network, and if feasible, to the home countries of linguistic minority students.

B. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Task 5.6

Each year, by February 1, the Deputy Superintendent for Personnel in conjunction with the Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education Program and Master PAC shall undertake a Personnel Needs Assessment of the multilingual/multicultural and transitional bilingual programs, as well as of supportive services programming to determine:

- a. number of staff available compared to number of staff needed in light of changes in student population served, broken down by each instructional program or supportive service provided, and by school;

- b. said staff shall also be classified by certificated or non-certificated status, nature of qualifications, and extent of need for additional training;
- c. results of this needs assessment will be incorporated into next school year's budget request in terms of specific hiring objectives, inservice training, in light of projected enrollment estimates which shall be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the summer and school year.

This procedures is an on-going process.

Task 5.7

Questionnaires and meetings regarding bilingual program implementation, staff needs assessment, and training needs shall be conducted among linguistic minority parents, classroom teachers, and personnel each January and June, as part of overall program evaluation and monitoring.

Results of these questionnaires and consultations shall be taken into account and incorporated into the Personnel Needs Assessment and budget request process described above.

Task 5.8

Each February prior to the submission of the budget requests for the district's bilingual programs, there shall be a special meeting of the master PAC to review overall program implementation and needs for the following school year.

C. TRAINING AND IN-SERVICE

Task 5.9

A systematic, carefully planned summer and year-round in-service training program will be developed in conjunction with appropriate institutes of higher education and offered during 1988, 1989, 1990, and 1991 and thereafter as necessary. This program will provide participating personnel with the coursework credit necessary for certification. This program will be planned and conducted in conjunction with the University of Lowell, Middlesex Community College, and other available sources of outside expertise in bilingual education and English as a Second Language instruction. The Lowell Public Schools shall contract with appropriate institutes of higher education to provide the supervision necessary to satisfy student teaching and other professional internship requirements under state certification standards.

Task 5.10

This in-service program shall take into account the annual Personnel Needs Assessment conducted pursuant to this Plan. The program offered shall be open to all school personnel and required for all waived or grandfathered personnel in bilingual education or ESL. This program shall be offered by the University of Lowell, College of Education, or by other qualified expert higher education personnel. It should have the following minimal components:

1. improvement of teachers' language skills in the appropriate language;
2. knowledge about the cultural backgrounds of those students with limited proficiency in English, and cultural issues related to the appropriate handling of student conduct;
3. instructional methods for meeting the needs of those students with limited proficiency in English;
4. adaptation and utilization of curriculum to meet the needs of those students with limited proficiency in English;
5. assessment of students with limited proficiency in English for purposes of identification and educational diagnosis;
6. methods of working with the parents of students with limited proficiency in English and methods of improving school-community relations;
7. advancement of knowledge about legal requirements concerning Bilingual/English as a Second Language education;
8. theory and practice of transitional bilingual and multilingual/multicultural education;
9. whole language approaches to literacy.

Task 5.11

The only teachers who may be exempted from the above-described training program are those who by the beginning of the 1988-89 school year submit evidence of a plan to otherwise obtain the course work credit necessary for certification in their area by 1991-92. Substantial weight shall be given to demonstrable experience and competence as the equivalent to academic study requirements in developing systemwide and individual training programs and the measurement of significant progress towards their completion.

Failure to make appropriate progress towards completion of either the in-service training program or an individual plan shall result in termination from employment, absent a showing of good cause.

Task 5.12

This in-service program shall be conducted for the number of days and hours per day necessary to provide the basis for certifiability by participants by 1991-92. The Lowell Public Schools will request extension of the current waived status of teachers in the bilingual program pending completion of this in-service program as soon as is possible.

Task 5.13

The Lowell School Department will be conducting nine in-service, citywide staff development workshops during the 1988-89 school year. Six of the nine will be at the school level and addressing the needs assessment of each individual school. The remaining three will be addressing systemwide concerns. It is anticipated that staff development will be conducted annually. Individual school plans for such training shall be submitted in advance to the Professional Development committee and Deputy Superintendent for Personnel who shall ensure that they are properly coordinated with overall systemic efforts.

Task 5.14

The Deputy Superintendent for Personnel shall plan and ensure the delivery of coordinated training to system administrators and principals regarding linguistic minority issues.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**OBJECTIVE 6**

To assure effective linguistic minority parental, student, and community involvement in providing support to, and in decision-making, regarding linguistic minority services and concerns.

Task 6.1

Full compliance with Federal and State requirements governing parental involvement in linguistic minority programming; support and funding of Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) as currently provided; involvement of other community organizations such as mutual assistance associations; and understandable communication in native-language with these parents, Advisory Councils, and community organizations.

Task 6.2

All School Department communications to linguistic minority parents from those groups to which Bilingual services are provided shall be in English and in native language by way of written translations and/or oral interpretation. For linguistic minority parents of mainstream students, there shall be a good faith effort to provide such translation into languages in which Bilingual services are provided.

Task 6.3

At all School Committee meetings attended by non-English proficient linguistic minority parents, there shall be provided the necessary translation and interpretation services by establishing a pool of voluntary translators, without compensation, to insure maximum effective participation by speakers of languages in which services are provided by the Lowell Public Schools. The Master PAC shall make arrangements to provide the above.

ACCESS TO EQUAL FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**OBJECTIVE 7**

Linguistic minority students are entitled to be placed in facilities equal in quality to those utilized for monolingual students, and shall at no time be segregated in separate, unequal facilities. Facilities utilized for linguistic minority educational programming shall be adequately sound-proofed and otherwise appropriate for instruction. No hallways or portions of hallways shall be used for providing services to such students. Each bilingual class up to the maximum student-teacher ratio permitted by State law shall be housed in a separate classroom. No two bilingual or ESL classes shall simultaneously share a single classroom, although team-teaching is permissible when appropriate.

Task 7.1

The Project Director, Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education and Master PAC will regularly monitor program implementation to assure compliance with the above-described objective.

Task 7.2

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Services, Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education Programs and Master PAC shall also monitor to ensure that linguistic minority students have equal access to computer-assisted instruction in both English and their native language as appropriate and as needed. Such instruction shall not be limited to remedial purposes, but rather should reflect whole language and other pedagogical approaches. This shall include positive efforts to develop, adapt, and procure necessary software and additional hardware.

Existing computers and software shall be equally distributed throughout the school system.

Transitional bilingual and multilingual/multicultural programs shall have a fair share of such technological resources throughout the School System.

PROGRAM LOCATION**OBJECTIVE 8**

Programs serving linguistic minority students shall be placed in locations chosen as a result of planning by the Superintendent of Schools, the Project Director and the Transitional Bilingual Education Supervisor.

Task 8.1

Locations shall be chosen which assure: a) compliance with desegregation requirements; b) maximum access for effective parental involvement, and c) implementation of system's overall equal educational opportunity objectives.

Task 8.2

Location of all classes must be approved by the Lowell School Committee

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS TO BE SERVED**OBJECTIVE 9**

All students of linguistic minority origin with limited English proficiency entitled to native language instruction under Federal and State law and regulations shall be promptly and appropriately identified and served.

Task 9.1

No student entitled to such services shall be placed on "waiting lists" nor in any other manner deprived of their right to appropriate services.

Task 9.2

All students entitled to services shall be identified as in need of services upon registration through centralized enrollment at the Parent Information Center by trained staff proficient in their home language, as well as by means of the Home Language Survey required by State law.

This staff shall fully inform each such students' parents of their right to appropriate services and shall refer them in contact with the bilingual program liaison or other bilingual personnel.

Task 9.3

Students in need of appropriate language services shall be tested for their English proficiency upon registration and thereafter, placement by appropriately trained staff, on valid measures. Native language proficiency will be assessed by classroom teachers within a reasonable time after placement. These measures shall be monitored by the LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist for their appropriateness.

Task 9.4

All students in need of appropriate language services shall be tested for academic achievement in their native language within 10 days of placement, by means of valid written and/or oral measures administered by appropriate trained staff.

Task 9.5

Every reasonable effort will be undertaken to promptly fully document the prior schooling experiences of newcomer students by means of school records as well as evidence of school work in their family's possession. Special efforts will be undertaken to identify the nature of such prior schooling experiences in the case of refugee children and of children from Puerto Rico. In the latter instance, requests for records and other appropriate information will be vigorously pursued through the island's Department of Public Instruction, and by means of available computer communication and information networks.

Task 9.6

The nature of prior schooling will be taken into account in assigning newcomer students to appropriate programming, and in providing additional supportive services as necessary.

EXIST AND POST-EXIT MONITORING**OBJECTIVE 10**

No student shall be exited from the transitional bilingual program until a Bilingual Pupil Study Team has been convened with appropriate notification to and opportunity to attend by the child's parent and/or representative. These Teams' proceedings shall be fully documented, signed by all those present, and placed on file in the Bilingual office. The testing results and recommendations are placed in each student's cumulative folder. In all cases, 603 CMR 1405, paragraph 3, shall prevail.

Task 10.1

Exiting from the program shall be overseen by the LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist, based on multiple criteria to be discussed at the Bilingual pupil Study Team meetings. These criteria include valid measurements of: a) English and native language proficiency and academic achievement; b) recommendations by teachers, guidance counselor, and Chapter I staff, as needed; and c) parental input. Students readiness for exiting pursuant to these criteria shall be reviewed on at least an annual basis. Specific criteria shall be reviewed and modified as appropriate by Transitional Bilingual Education Supervisor and LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist on a regular basis.

Task 10.2

Data regarding each student exited or partially integrated from the bilingual program each year shall be compiled and reported to the Project Director by the Transitional Bilingual Education Supervisor in January and June of each year.

Task 10.3

Each student exited from the bilingual program is entitled to the controlled choice process under the Voluntary Desegregation Plan, either to be assigned to a school where he/she had been receiving Transitional Bilingual Education services as described in the Voluntary Desegregation Plan as amended, or another school of their choice.

Task 10.4

Exited bilingual program students will receive follow-up tutorial and other supportive services such as Chapter I and/or remedial reading, if needed.

Task 10.5

No transitional bilingual program student shall be held back or placed in lower grade or the same grade upon exiting or lateral mainstream without convening of a Bilingual Pupil Study Team with the opportunity for parental participation, at which basis for such recommendation is fully presented. If the parent disagrees with the decision of the Bilingual Pupil Study Team, they have the right to appeal to the Superintendent for review of the decision.

Task 10.6

Bilingual Pupil Study Teams shall be convened for exited students experiencing difficulty in the mainstream. Such monitoring teams shall be convened at minimum within one year of initial exiting. Parents shall be given the opportunity to participate in these meetings. The LAU Testing & Assessment Specialist monitors the progress of all exited students.

Task 10.7

Comprehensive standards for integration of students shall be developed together with appropriate transitional programming by Principals and the Bilingual Education Supervisor. These standards and program recommendations shall be implemented beginning with the 1988-1989 school year.

DROP-OUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY SERVICES**OBJECTIVE 11**

Each linguistic minority student has the right to be identified as in need of drop-out prevention services where the student exhibits a pattern of a) excessive absences; b) consistent under-achievement in native language and/or English; and c) identification as "at risk" for grade retention and other reasons by teacher, parent, self, or other staff referral.

Task 11.1

Each school serving linguistic minority students shall develop effective plans to provide students identified as "at risk" with linguistically and culturally appropriate regular and alternative instructional and supportive services to encourage continuing attendance in school.

Task 11.2

In compliance with 11.1 above, each individual preventive instructional and supportive services plan shall be developed with parental and student (if age 12 or above) participation, as well as representation from among the student's teachers, and other staff involved (guidance, bilingual, special, compensatory, and vocational education, as appropriate).

GRADES 9-12**Task 11.3**

At Lowell High School, Bilingual Guidance Staff and other support staff such as MICAS and SPED provide counseling services to linguistic minority students at grades 9-12.

ELEMENTARY K-8 GRADES**Task 11.4**

School Administrators will continue to seek drop-out preventative measures for all at risk students in their school. Native speaking liaison staff from the Transitional Bilingual Education office continuously are called upon to assist at the K-8 school.

Task 11.5

During the 1988-1989 school year, all School Department Staff (Administrative, teaching, paraprofessional) will participate in nine staff development workshops. The Deputy Superintendent for Personnel is responsible for assuring that new personnel receives the necessary information prior to assignment.

Task 11.6

Every student who has left school prior to graduation for any reason other than departure from Lowell, since the 1986-87 school year, shall be identified within 14 days of the adoption of this Plan by the Guidance Department, and shall be contacted personally and appointments scheduled to review their status. The entire staff, including the Bilingual Liaison staff, will be utilized by the Guidance Department to personally communicate with these students. The Citywide Director of Guidance will be responsible to carry out this task. A list of students identified and then of those contacted (indicating by whom, how, and when), broken down by group and last school of attendance, shall be compiled and submitted to the Superintendent's Office. This list shall indicate which students are willing to return to school.

Task 11.7

The Citywide Director of Guidance will notify the various organizations, agencies and media of the above mentioned initiation.

Task 11.8

Each student contacted pursuant to the above-described task shall be encouraged to return to school. Those interested in returning to school shall participate in the development of an effective learning plan to continue their schooling. They shall be entitled to equal access to all educational programs provided by the Lowell Public Schools and to specially funded and designed programs as necessary suited to their needs. Guidance or other personnel shall coordinate the development of their effective learning plans. These plans shall be reported to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

CHAPTER I**OBJECTIVE 12**

Linguistic minority students shall have equal access to Chapter I and other compensatory education services.

Task 12.1

Instructional Services in Chapter I Reading and Mathematics will be provided in English and the native language.

Task 12.2

Through uniform criteria, children are selected for participation on the basis of educational deprivation, not on the basis of English speaking proficiency alone. The referral/selection process ranks students according to greatest need. A system-wide rank order eligibility list identifies students in greatest need. Students in greatest need will receive instructional services in English as a Second Language, Reading and Mathematics. Reading and mathematics instruction will be provided in English and the native language.

Task 12.3

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructional Services, the Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education and the Master PAC shall monitor the equal provision of remedial services to linguistic minority students on a regular basis.

Task 12.4

Two full-time Parent Liaisons have been added for the 1988-89 school year to work under the Parent Coordinator. These positions will employ a native Khmer or Hispanic speaking person.

BILINGUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**OBJECTIVE 13**

Each newly constructed or renovated school site shall attempt to provide bilingual early childhood educational programming.

Task 13.1

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Services, Supervisor of Transitional Bilingual Education and the Early Childhood Director shall coordinate the planning of bilingual early childhood programming.

SPECIAL EDUCATION**OBJECTIVE 14**

The Lowell Public Schools shall ensure that adequate and appropriate bilingual special education services are provided to students of limited English proficiency who require special education. No student whose primary or home language is other than English shall be placed in a special education program until appropriate assessments of linguistic proficiency and academic achievement are completed. (The administration of such tests shall not delay placement in bilingual special education programs nor in any way extend the time for completing a special education evaluation under the Chapter 766 Regulations.) All students who are eligible for enrollment in a bilingual program who are also found to be in need of special education services shall be provided with bilingual special education.

Task 14.1

All psychological testing and evaluation of students whose primary or home language is other than English shall be conducted by persons who are fluent in both languages, or at minimum proficient in the cultural background of the student tested.

Task 14.2

All psychological testing and evaluation of students who are eligible for enrollment in the bilingual program shall be conducted in their own language. Caseloads for bilingual psychologists shall not exceed the ratios for those of non-bilingual psychologists, and whenever it is determined on this or any other reasonable basis that a bilingual psychologist's workload is excessive, additional bilingual personnel shall be hired or contracted for immediately as necessary. Priority in the provision of psychological services shall be on linguistic and cultural background related to that of the students to be served, and professional experience and training regardless of citizenship.

Task 14.3

Special Education evaluations shall be completed within thirty school days of the date when parental consent for an evaluation is received. A request for parental consent shall be sent to a student's parents in the primary or home language within five days of a referral for an evaluation (as provided in Section 317 or the Chapter 766 Regulations). A written request by a parent for special education services or a special education evaluation shall constitute parental consent to proceed with an evaluation.

Task 14.4

Bilingual personnel (teacher, counselor and/or administrator) shall participate as a member of the evaluation team for each child whose primary or home language is other than English at each stage of the special education process (including the pre-referral, referral, assessment, placement, and periodic review stages).

Task 14.5

The Lowell Public Schools shall hire and train at least one full time Cambodian, one full time Hispanic, and one part time Laotian bilingual community liaison interpreter in special education. These persons shall work in the area of bilingual special education, and shall provide assistance to the bilingual evaluation team chairpersons and parents.

At least one Cambodian and one Hispanic clerk shall be hired to work out of the central special education office on a full time basis. These community liaisons and other central office supportive services personnel will be appropriately trained in special education assessment, evaluation, placement, compliance, and community outreach issues upon hiring.

Task 14.6

The Lowell Public Schools shall employ sufficient bilingual special education teachers to ensure that appropriate bilingual special education services are provided to students of limited English proficiency in need of special education. This number shall be determined by the Administrator of Special Education, and once fixed, said staff will be recruited and hired as soon as possible, and in no case later than the beginning of the 1988-1989 school year.

Task 14.7

The Lowell Public Schools shall employ sufficient bilingual certified speech pathologists to ensure that appropriate bilingual speech and language services are provided to students of limited English proficiency in need of such services. The Lowell Public Schools shall employ at least two bilingual certified speech pathologists, one for the Southeast Asian component and one for the Hispanic component, unless maximum feasible efforts to recruit and employ such personnel are unsuccessful.

Task 14.8

The Lowell Public Schools shall employ bilingual special education personnel to provide or assist in the provision of bilingual special education services to children of limited English Proficiency who are vision impaired or hearing impaired, or in need of adaptive physical education, occupational or physical therapy, if determined necessary by the Administrator of SPED. Preference in the hiring of all such staff shall be on behalf of those with the necessary linguistic and cultural background, and representatives of each linguistic PAC shall participate in the interviewing of staff intended to serve students of their linguistic background.

Task 14.9

The Lowell Public Schools shall provide special education services to linguistic minority students in a manner that does not result in disproportionate under-enrollment or over-enrollment of linguistic minority students in individual special education prototypes.

Task 14.10

The Lowell Public Schools shall ensure that linguistic minority students of limited English proficiency are not misclassified for special education purposes due to a language barrier.

Compliance with the above-described specific tasks to assure linguistically and

culturally appropriate equal educational opportunities to linguistic minority children shall be regularly monitored by the Administrator of Special Education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE 15

The Lowell Public Schools shall ensure that all linguistic minority students are provided with equal access to all vocational and occupational courses and programs offered by or through the Lowell Public Schools. The Lowell Public Schools shall ensure the availability of adequate bilingual staff, including both teachers and counselors, as well as the availability of necessary resources in order to fulfill this obligation.

Compliance with the above-described task shall be monitored by the Citywide Director of Guidance on a regular basis.

DISCIPLINE

OBJECTIVE 16

The Lowell Public Schools shall take all necessary action to ensure that all disciplinary sanctions are applied in a manner which does not discriminate against students on the basis of race, national origin or native language, and shall take all necessary action to eliminate forthwith any racial disparities in suspension rates.

No linguistic minority students shall be subjected to any form of disciplinary action or reprimand for expressing themselves in their native language.

Task 16.1

The Lowell Public Schools shall provide for a bilingual administrator, teacher, and/or counselor to be present when any student of limited English proficiency is confronted regarding any disciplinary issue.

Task 16.2

All notices sent to parents for groups in which Bilingual services are provided regarding disciplinary matters shall be in the primary language of the home.

All notices sent to these linguistic minority parents pursuant to this provision shall include the name, title and position of the school administrator or counselor who is available to discuss the matter further with the parent. A native speaking translator shall be available to discuss the disciplinary matter with the parents.

Task 16.3¹

The Lowell Public Schools shall maintain and compile information regarding all disciplinary action resulting in a suspension. Upon request, the principal of each school shall provide the following information to the Superintendent regarding each suspension:

1. date of disciplinary action
2. length of suspension
3. cause of suspension
4. age, race and sex of student
5. primary or home language of student
6. whether student is enrolled in bilingual or ESL classes

Only the Lowell School Committee can expel a student.²

Task 16.4

All student disciplinary rules and codes (whether system-wide or promulgated by individual schools) shall be published in both English and the home language and copies shall be issued to students.

Task 16.5³

The Lowell Public Schools shall use maximum feasible efforts to ensure that students and parents can utilize the procedures for appealing disciplinary actions.

These actions shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Distribute copies of pamphlets describing procedures to each student, in English and in the primary language of the home at the beginning of each semester;
2. Describe the appeal procedure to students over the public address system in each school at least once each semester;
3. Provide a copy of the pamphlet describing the procedures, to the parent of each student who is suspended or expelled on the day that the suspension or expulsion first occurs.

¹ For further update on required disciplinary provisions and procedures see the Education Reform Act of 1993 and the resulting court decisions and policies.

² For further update on required disciplinary provisions and procedures see the Education Reform Act of 1993 and the resulting court decisions and policies.

³ For further update on required disciplinary provisions and procedures see the Education Reform Act of 1993 and the resulting court decisions and policies.