



## The LOOK Act and English Learner Parent Advisory Councils (ELPACs)

On November 22, 2017, Governor Baker signed into law the Language Opportunity for Our Kids Act (LOOK Act). The goal of this new law is to improve the education of English learners (ELs). The law has created more opportunities for input from parents and guardians of English learners in language acquisition programs.



### What are ELPACs?

English learner parent advisory councils are made up of parents and legal guardians of English learners.



### How can I get involved?

Membership is voluntary and is open to all parents and legal guardians of students who are or have been identified as English learners.



### Who is required to create and support ELPACs?

School districts or charter schools with 100 or more English learners or in which English learners comprise 5% of the student body, whichever is less, are required to establish ELPACs. Schools designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming must also establish ELPACs.



### What are the duties of ELPACs?

ELPAC duties include but are not limited to:

- Creating by-laws (rules) regarding officers and operational procedures;
- Advising the school district, school committee, and board of trustees on matters related to English learners;
- Meeting regularly with school or district leaders to participate in the planning and development of programs to improve educational opportunities for English learners;
- Advising the district or school on any new proposed language acquisition programs;
- Reviewing district and school improvement plans as they relate to English learners; and
- Meeting at least annually with the school committee or school council.

The success of ELPACs depends on building supportive and trusting collaborative partnerships among and between parents, school staff and leaders, and community members. Please go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/look-act.html> for more information on ELPACs.

# ELPAC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Parents and Guardians



## What is an ELPAC?

An ELPAC is an **English Learner Parent Advisory Council**. ELPAC members are parents and guardians of current and former ELs (English Learners). ELPACs meet regularly and can give schools and districts advice on topics that are important to ELs. ELPACs can also help parents of ELs learn more about their children's school and learn ways to support their children's education.



## Why are ELPACs important?

ELPACs can help create a strong partnership between schools and the families of ELs. In Massachusetts schools, ELs can learn English and succeed in school while keeping their unique cultural and linguistic identities. By joining an ELPAC, you can help your children achieve this goal.

## Who can join an ELPAC?

Parents and guardians of current and former ELs are welcome to join ELPACs.



## Do I have to be fluent in English to participate in an ELPAC?

No! ELPAC members come from diverse backgrounds and speak many different languages. Your school's ELPAC may offer interpretation during ELPAC meetings.

## Who leads an ELPAC?

The goal is for each ELPAC to be led by parents because schools want ELPACs to be a voice for parents and ELs. Even though parents will be the leaders of ELPACs, they will have support from their schools in scheduling meetings and planning activities.



## What do ELPACs do?

ELPACs talk about topics that are important to ELs and give schools advice to make services for ELs better, communicate effectively with EL families, and create programs and opportunities that will help ELs be successful. We recommend that you watch the course ELPACs for Parents to learn more about what your ELPAC can do in your school and community.