

A Resource Guide to Support School Districts' English Learner Language Programs

***Complete EL Entrance & Exit Procedures
and Post-Exit Information***



Updated July 2024

ESOL and Title III, Part A Language Programs

Introduction

This living document is designed as a reference for district and school personnel working with English Learners (ELs). The content of this Resource Guide represents a compilation of information, examples, and resources to support school systems' ESOL language programs. This Resource Guide will be continuously updated to provide further clarity, information, and update on federal or state legislature or guidance. The electronic format provides access to recent updates and web-based resources.

It is expected that local education agencies (LEAs) in Georgia will establish local written guidance for their EL Language programs aligned to state guidance. If you have questions, please contact ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us.

Resource Guide Update Tracking

Updates made to this Resource Guide will be organized in this chart.

Date	Topic	Page
4.8.2019	Alternate ACCESS Exit Procedures	p. 32
4.8.2019	EL Exit Procedures for ELs with Disabilities who IEP precludes assessment in one or more language domains	p. 33
4.26.2019	EL=I Code Procedures (Incorrect HLS)	p. 11
4.26.2019	Foreign Exchange Student Visitors (J-1 Visa)	p. 23
5.9.2019	Clarified definition of “disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domain”	pp.17 & 33
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10.12.2019	Timeline considerations for IEP teams considering EL/SWD for exit when student has met ALTERNATE ACCESS criteria.	p. 34
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11.20.2019	Clarification on EL Exit Date	p. 35
8.15.2020	Notice that K-WAPT Screener retired at the end of the 2020-2021 – and new WIDA Screener for Kindergarten will be used at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year	pp.16 & 20
8.15.2020	ELP Assessment Participation Rates	p. 28
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9.27.2020	Clarification on timeline for EL identification and timeline for parent notification.	p. 25
4.12.2021	New WIDA Screener for Kindergarten Eligibility Criteria	pp. 20
6.1.2021	Updated information regarding accommodations for screening Potential ELs with disabilities or suspected disabilities.	pp.16-18
6.1.2021	Individual English Language Development (ELD) Plans	p. 25-26
7.20.2021	Clarification and resources for Screening Potential ELs with suspected or identified disabilities	pp. 16-18

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Date	Topic	Page
7.20.2021	Removal of <i>Historical EL Exit Criteria by LEA</i> Charts to separate document posted on the website. See ESOL Language Program webpage - EL Exit Procedures section.	N/A
7.20.2021	Clarification on procedures when parents report another language after the initial HLS	p. 10-11
8.8.2021	Guidance on WIDA Screener for Kindergarten test security procedures	p. 19
9.30.2021	Documenting ELP screening irregularities	pp. 19-20
10.6.2021	Updated information on where to find sample post-exit monitoring forms	p. 37
11.5.2021	Post-exit re-screening decision-making process for EL = 3 and EL=4 students returning to US schools after multiple years in non-English school environments	pp. 39-40
7.28.2022	NEW: WIDA Screener Certification Year Updates	p. 18
7.1.2024	Update HLS section to reflect Georgia's 2024 Home Language Survey (HLS)	pp. 8-15
7.1.2024	Add <i>2024 HLS Educator Decision Making Guide</i> to Appendices	pp. 52-55
7.1.2024	Remove reference to immigrant students in guidance on identification of potential English learners in pre-kindergarten.	p. 13
7.1.202	Update name of assessments: <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> and <i>WIDA Alternate ACCESS</i>	throughout
7.1.2024	Update WIDA Screener Training & Certification year	p. 18

General Information

State Language Program Name

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Language Instruction Program

The ESOL Language Instruction Program is the state-funded language instruction educational program for eligible English learners (ELs) in Georgia public schools, Grades K-12. The ESOL Language Program was first established in 2002 by the Georgia General Assembly (State Board of Education Rule 160-4-5-.02). The purpose of the ESOL language program is to provide English language development instruction and language support services to identified K-12 English learners (ELs) in Georgia's public-school systems for the purpose of increasing their English language proficiency and academic achievement.

The responsibility for educating the **whole English learner child**, both in language development and academic content, is shared by regular classroom teachers and English language specialist teachers alike. Classroom teachers, ESOL teachers and other support staff collaborate to determine instructional scaffolds and language-focused activities needed to make language and content as comprehensible as possible for ELs throughout the entire school day. As such, all teachers function as academic language teachers when EL students are enrolled in their classes.

Rationale

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), public schools and State educational agencies (SEAs) have a legal obligation to remove barriers and ensure that students who are not fully proficient in English can meaningfully participate in their educational programs and services. (See also, [Office for Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter of January 7, 2015](#)). These federal expectations require schools to develop and implement an evidence-based language instruction educational program (LIEP) that has a reasonable chance of success, and which allows EL students access to grade-level core curriculum to succeed in the general education classroom.

According to *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), public schools comply with their legal obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) by taking affirmative steps to ensure that students with limited English proficiency can meaningfully participate in educational programs and services. In addition, the *Equal Educational Opportunities Act* (EEOA) requires public schools and State educational agencies (SEAs) to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation of students in their instructional programs. Finally, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education and the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) share authority for enforcing Title VI in the education context. (See OCR & DOJ *Dear Colleague Letter: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficiency Parents*, January 2015.)

Recognizing the universal importance of education, the federal government assumed a larger role in financing public schools with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965. Through subsequent reauthorizations, ESEA has continued to assist the states in establishing accountability for results and improving the inclusiveness and fairness of American education.

ESOL and Title III, Part A Language Programs

Program

The core ESOL language program is a civil right offered by all public schools in Georgia to K-12 students with a home language other than English who qualify based on a state-approved language screener. (See Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-5-.02.) Various researched-based language program delivery models are used across the state to provide scheduled English Language Development (ELD) courses, collaborative ELD services with language-differentiated supports within content classrooms, language instruction computer software programs, sheltered content courses, and dual language instruction to more than 157,000 EL students in Georgia.

ESOL language instruction is focused on developing EL students' academic English proficiency in each content area of *Georgia's Standards of Excellence (GSE)*. The WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, resources aligned with the GSE guide the work of ESOL teachers. Differentiated instructional practices, both in ESOL and general education classes, ensure that the language development needs of Georgia's EL students are met. In ESOL language programs it is appropriate, when practicable, to use the student's home language as a means of providing limited English-proficient (LEP) parents with school-related information.

Goal

The goal of the ESOL language instruction educational program for EL students is to increase both English language proficiency (ELP) and academic language proficiency in content-area subject matter. Successful ESOL language programs focus on collaboration and shared accountability for the success of all EL students.

Framework for EL Programs: Systems of Continuous Improvement



Georgia's System of Continuous Improvement frames the work of EL Language Programs. First, daily English language instruction for EL students takes place within a **Coherent Instruction System**. Professionally qualified ESOL teachers and school leaders teach and assess EL students as part of the **Effective Leadership** and **Professional Capacity Systems**. Schools reach out to engage EL parents and their families within the **Parent & Family Engagement System**, and EL students are provided with wrap-around, culturally responsive services within the **Supporting Learning Environment** of schools.

The process of Continuous Improvement is framed as a problem-solving cycle around these five systems. It includes identifying the needs of EL students, selecting appropriate language-focused interventions, planning to implement and then implementing such interventions, either within the core classroom instruction (ESOL) or as a supplemental language program (perhaps federally funded); and, finally, examining EL students' progress on a continuous basis to make the necessary changes to the language interventions or programs as applicable. In participating local education agencies (LEAs), Title III, Part A Language Program funds provide supplemental language instruction to select EL students who may need additional language instruction and support beyond the core, OCR-required state-funded ESOL language program.

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Enrollment/Registration Processes for All Students

Federal Laws

Under Section 3113(b)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), each State educational agency (SEA) is required to establish and implement standardized statewide procedures for English learners (ELs) to enter and exit from EL status and language instruction educational programs (LIEPs). (*Sept. 23, 2016, Non-Regulatory Guidance Addendum: English Learners and Title III of the ESEA/ESSA*) This means the procedures must be consistently applied across the State. Statewide procedures for entrance include: the home language survey questions that local education agencies (LEAs) must use, the specific English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener LEAs must administer, the scores on the ELP screener that qualify the student as an English learner (EL), and the timeline for implementing the process.

According to the *OCR Dear Colleague Letter* (Jan 2015), all public schools must have procedures in place to accurately and timely identify potential English learners and then determine if they are EL students through a valid and reliable ELP screener.

State Guidance

In Georgia, all public schools are required to use the statewide standardized *Home Language Survey (HLS)* during enrollment. This helps identify the primary or home language spoken at home for students in kindergarten through Grade 12. For students new to U.S. schools, like kindergarten students and newly arrived immigrants, the original dated/signed HLS helps decide if these students should take the English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener to see if they qualify for English learner (EL) status and English language instructional program services.

- Registration staff must administer the HLS **at the time of enrollment** and not thereafter.
- Parents may not decline to complete a Home Language Survey. (The generic use of the term “parents” in this guidance document refers to any legal guardians and primary caregivers enrolling students.)
- Per OCR and ESEA Title I, Part A requirements, the HLS must be in a language and format the parents can understand, to the extent practicable.
 - State translations of the [HLS](#) are available in several languages at the GaDOE ESOL language Program Forms Bank.
 - If written translations are not practicable, LEAs must offer limited English proficient (LEP) parents’ free oral interpretation of the written information (See *OCR Dear Colleague Letter, Jan 2015, Section 10.*)

All parents enrolling their child for the first time in a U.S. school must answer the state-required three HLS questions and when multiple languages are used in the home they must choose one primary language use statement for their child. (See *Georgia Home Language Survey 2024* on page 52.)

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Home Language Survey Questions

You can find these state-required *Home Language Survey* questions on the [GaDOE ESOL website](#).

1. Which language does your child best understand and speak?
2. Which language does your child most frequently speak at home?
3. Which language do adults in your home most frequently use when speaking with your child?

Since the Home Language Survey (HLS) process needs to be the same across the state, schools must use these three specific questions exactly as written.

Response Scenario #1: English Home Language or ASL Only

If all three answers are English or American Sign Language (ASL), the student is not considered a potential English learner (EL) and does not need the English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener. For transfer students, schools prioritize student's original HLS (signed, dated, and in parent's preferred language) and previous EL documentation.

Response Scenario #2: Non-English Home Language Only

For students new to U.S. schools, including kindergarten students and recent arrivals, if all of the three state-required questions are answered with a language other than English or ASL, the student is considered a potential EL and must take the appropriate grade-level ELP screener. This is a legal requirement, so parent permission is not needed for the ELP screener.

Response Scenario #3: Multiple Home Languages, including English

If any answer includes both English and a non-English language, this indicates a multilingual home environment. In this case, multilingual parents or guardians are asked to provide additional information about their child's primary language use at home.

Additional Information from Multilingual Parents or Guardians

Parents and guardians reporting a multilingual home environment select one of five statements that best describes their child's primary language use at home. This statement helps educators decide if the student is a potential EL or not. Just like the three HLS questions, schools must use these exact statements without any changes.

The additional primary language statements and the required steps for ELP screening are on the next page. See also the complete *Educator Decision-Making Guide for Home Language Survey Responses* on pp. 52-55.

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Questions	Screening Decision
<i>Parents choose only one sentence that best describes their child's primary language</i>	<i>Educators make the decision to administer the ELP Screener based on parents' choice.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses only the home language and no English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener*
<input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses mostly the home language and a little English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener*
<input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses the home language and English equally .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not a potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. (LEAs have the option to require an "acknowledgement statement" from parents.)
<input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses mostly English and only a little of the home language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not a potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener.
<input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses only English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not a potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener.

*For students with identified or suspected disabilities, provide accommodations when administering the ELP Screener.

When Parents Report a Multilingual-Multiliterate Home Language Environment

If parents of a multilingual child feel that the ELP screening process was discriminatory, they can request a [Multilingual Home Language Survey \(MLL HLS\) Amendment](#) within the first year of reporting their child's EL = 'Yes' status to the state. This amendment guides parents through the process of changing the student's primary home language to English. With this change, the student will be reported to the state as EL = 'No'.

School districts must have written procedures for this process either in their Federal Programs Handbook and/or ESOL Program Handbook. These procedures align to the state MLL HLS Amendment guidelines and indicate how documentation is maintained in students' permanent records.

Process: When Parents Report an Incorrect HLS

According to the *Jan 2019 Addendum to September 23, 2016, Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, the following state guidance is provided to LEAs regarding procedures to establish when a parent reports an incorrect Home Language Survey.

An erroneously identified EL is a student who was identified as an EL but should not have been because the student does not in fact meet the definition of "English learner" in ESEA section 8101(20). An erroneous identification of an English learner (EL = 'Y') student may have occurred as part of the initial identification process, e.g., due to a parent's inaccurate completion of the Home Language Survey (HLS), administration of an ELP screener without providing for appropriate accommodations for a student with disabilities (see note on next page), inaccurate scoring on the annual ELP assessment, or other reasons.

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Note: Schools and school systems should use caution when following these procedures with parents, making sure that a student's proficiency in his home language is the contributing cause of the student's limited academic proficiency in English, and not necessarily a student's disability or suspected disability.

To change a student's incorrect EL = 'Y' status, each LEA must have established written procedures in the Federal Programs Handbook, Title III Handbook, and/or ESOL Handbook that align with the following steps:

1. A parent notifies the LEA that the original Home Language Survey answers are not correct.
2. The LEA deems the request plausible, and the parent is given the opportunity to complete a *Home Language Survey Addendum*. (See HLS-Incorrect Addendum on [ESOL Form Bank](#).)
Note: The addendum requires the parent's signature to be notarized. Both the original HLS and the HLS Addendum should be in a language that parents have indicated they understand.
3. The ESOL Coordinator approves the new HLS Addendum, after which the school proceeds to take the next steps based on the new HLS.
4. When the next steps require a status change, the LEA reports the student as EL= Incorrect (EL = I) in Data Collections, with an explanation, for the remainder of the school year.
 - a. Contact the ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us for the explanation verbiage to use. Share the following information with ESOL Program staff:
 - i. Student's Name
 - ii. Student's Grade-Level
 - iii. Parent's Reason for Change
 - iv. Name of Administrator or ESOL Coordinator who approved the Status Change
 - v. Former Status
 - vi. New Status, and
 - vii. Date Status Change Effective
 - b. The student is reported as EL= 'N' the following school year.

Note: There is no requirement to provide an explanation in Data Collections for correcting an erroneous EL = 'N' code. If the LEA has discovered that the EL = 'N' code was incorrect, the statewide, standardized EL entrance procedures (i.e., HLS and possible ELP Screener criteria) would then be applied.

5. DATA COLLECTIONS ALERT:

- a. Using the EL = 'I' code will lead to an error flag which needs an explanation in Student Record. The error is relievable with the explanation obtained from the ESOL Language program office staff: ELProgram@doe.k12.ga.us.
- b. **Question:** *How long do we report the student as EL = 'I'?*
Answer: The LEA should only report the student as EL = 'I' for the remainder of that school year. Subsequently, after the EL = 'I' year, the student should be coded as **EL = 'N'**, even if the student has transferred to another LEA.

6. ASSESSMENT ALERT:

- a. Provide the System Testing Coordinator an explanation for changing a student's status from EL = 'Y' to EL = 'I' code when the change occurs after the *WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS* testing I.D. tickets are issued.

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7. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL MONITORING (CFM) ALERT:

- a. The Title III CFM process reviews whether an LEA follows statewide standardized EL entrance and exit procedures.
- b. LEAs on the CFM cycle will submit selected student records for a thorough review.
- c. Former and/or current EL = 'I' student's records may be reviewed during the CFM process.
- d. The CFM process also includes a review of the state's Data Collections EL = 'I' Student Report.

Q: What happens if a student's Home Language Survey (HLS) answers differ from year to year or between states?

A: Even if other states' HLS questions are different from Georgia's, our HLS is a valid document for determining if a student needs ELP screening. However, it can be challenging for schools when parents give different answers each year. Sometimes, a student might have English-only answers on one school's HLS and non-English answers on another's. Schools in Georgia must try to find the first or initial HLS responses parents completed when their child first enrolled in U.S. schools. Additional assessment records can help indicate what those initial responses were.

Q: What if a parent first reports English-only on the Home Language Survey but later decides to update the HLS to reflect another home language because their child speaks that language?

A: Parents can ask to complete a new Home Language Survey if they need to report a student's primary language as something other than English or provide additional information for multilingual families. This request must be made willingly and with full understanding. ESOL program leaders must ensure that teachers do not influence this request. The new HLS may lead to the ELP screening process. LEAs must keep written, signed, and dated records of any changes to the HLS.

Staff Training

Enrollment personnel must be trained on the importance of using enrollment forms in a language parents understand (to the extent practicable) and securing interpretation supports so that non-English-speaking parents understand all aspects of the enrollment process, including the intent and purpose of the *Home Language Survey*. Extensive training of school personnel who are assisting parents in the enrollment process could lead towards the reduction of students incorrectly identified as potential English Learners and/or erroneously screened for English proficiency.

NOTE: The Home language Survey (HLS) is a one-time document. It must be signed and dated by the parents and maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative file. As part of the enrollment packet, it is possible that the HLS is administered more than once. Receiving local education agencies (LEAs) will make every effort to obtain the original HLS from transferring LEAs. In absence of the original HLS, schools will maintain a copy in the student's records that hopefully mirrors the original one. Students whose primary language is reported as English or ASL, when they first enrolled in a US school, do not need ELP screening.

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Timeline

Under **ESEA/ESSA Sec. 3113(b)(2)**, a student who may be an English Learner must be assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the state. A SEA should also have procedures in place to identify in a timely manner EL student who may not have been identified during this initial identification period. A SEA should make every effort to identify students who are EL students as soon as possible to provide timely support for students who may need language services. (See *September 26, 2016, Nonregulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III, Addendum Selected Topic 2.*)

Under **ESEA/ESSA Sec. 1112(e)(3)** parents must be notified within 30 calendar days after the beginning of the school year that their child was placed in a language instruction educational program (LIEP), and if this occurs during the school year, two weeks after placement in a LIEP. Therefore, for students that enroll after the beginning of the school year, there are 30 days for identification and placement into an EL language instruction program and two weeks after the placement to provide parent notice, consistent with the statute.

Pre-Kindergarten Students

If students are screened prior to the start of kindergarten, the 30-day timeline starts the first day of kindergarten. Although all students enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program will most likely use the 1st day of pre-kindergarten as the U.S. school start date, the 1st day of kindergarten, not pre-kindergarten, is considered by the US Department of Education (ED) as the official **start date** for EL eligibility.

In addition to following the federal timelines for potential EL identification and parent notification, LEAs establish ongoing procedures and processes for ensuring all students have an HLS on file in case potential EL students are inadvertently overlooked. It is recommended that LEAs establish periodic student record checks to ensure all potential ELs have been identified as applicable.

LEA Checklist for Home Language Survey (HLS) Process

Since the parents' answers to the *HLS* questions provide evidence that the LEA followed federal and state EL entrance procedures to screen or not to screen a student, LEAs may want to use the following questions as a checklist:

- Is the HLS part of our school's initial enrollment processes?
- Is it only administered once to parents during their child's initial U.S. enrollment?
- Is it maintained in the student's permanent /cumulative file?
- Is it in a language parents prefer?
- Has it been completed, signed, and dated by the parent enrolling the student?

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has identified compliance issues in schools and school systems that do not have a process to initially identify the primary or home language of all enrolled students and those that use an inadequate HLS that fails to identify a significant number of potential EL students.

Note: When students transfer from out-of-state U.S. schools, parents' HLS responses on the receiving school's online enrollment may require LEAs to contact the transferring LEA to obtain the **original** Home Language Survey responses. Decisions regarding the screening process will then depend on the transferring school's records.

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LEA Flexibility

LEAs have flexibility to incorporate the HLS in their registration process, whether online or in paper format. Registration personnel should ensure that parents understand the intent and purpose of the HLS, even in an online environment. When choosing an online registration option, LEAs will ensure the following:

- When a written translation is not available, and the parents have indicated they do not understand English, the HLS is orally interpreted in the parents' primary language.
 - The LEA must maintain documentation evidence that the HLS was interpreted in a language the parent has indicated they understand.
- Parents understand the intent and purpose of the HLS questions.
- If the online enrollment process requires a parent signature and date for all the information, including the embedded HLS, this documentation must be maintained in the student's permanent records in case of an OCR request for review.

Data Collected at Registration

Student Primary Language - indicates the student's primary spoken language if other than English.

- STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE must be entered when the student is coded EL= 'Y'.
- STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE cannot be BLANK (English) if the student is an ENGLISH LEARNER (EL).
- A STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE is required for all students.

Parent Communication Language - indicates the language preference of the parent for written communication between the school and the family.

Beginning in 2019-2020, the following question is required under ESEA/ESSA Title I, Part A as part of the Registration and Data Collection Processes and could be placed at the top or bottom of the HLS required questions, *per local decision*. This question is not part of the HLS required questions and is not used to identify a potential English learner.

<i>In which language would you prefer to receive school communication?</i>
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Part I: EL ENTRANCE PROCEDURES

ELP Screening for Eligibility

Three ways to decide if the ELP Screener should be administered:

Is this the student's first-time enrolling in a U.S. school?	Has the student been enrolled in a GA school before? (In-state transfer)	Has the student been enrolled in a U.S. school in another state?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the HLS Follow the instructions on pp. 9-10 for three different parent responses and which require ELP Screening. Administer the grade-level appropriate ELP Screener to potential ELs. Use applicable accommodations if the potential EL student has an established IEP/504 plan. Follow the state's ELP screener eligibility criteria to determine whether the potential EL qualifies for English learner (EL) status. <p><u>EL Entrance Procedures Flowchart: Kindergarten to 1st Semester Grade 1</u></p> <p><u>EL Entrance Procedures Flowchart, 2nd Semester Grade 1 – Grade 12.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Report the student accurately in the Student Information System (SIS). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Check the state's Data Collections' GUIDE system to verify if the student has been identified with an EL code in Georgia. Review the student's past enrollment history in the SLDS. Examine SLDS records to locate any previous WIDA ACCESS test results. Compare these results against state or LEA entrance/exit criteria for that year. If applicable, access the SLDS EL Tab to check if the student has undergone prior screening. Even if the SLDS EL Tab isn't in use, it can still be opened to view information from the transferring LEA. Make every effort to obtain previous EL records and confirm EL status within 30 days of enrollment. Review records from the transferring LEA, original Home Language Survey (HLS), initial screener, or the most recent WIDA ACCESS assessment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the previous school or LEA to request: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The original Home Language Survey, Screening documents, and/or English Language Proficiency (ELP) testing results. Follow-up with the previous school or school system. Follow-up again with the previous school or school system. Make every effort possible to obtain prior EL records to determine EL status within 30 days of enrollment. Contact ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us for support as needed. Determine if the student is an English learner based on records from the transferring LEA.

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Statewide Standardized ELP Screeners

Since 2006, Georgia is a member of the WIDA Consortium. Therefore, LEAs only use the following WIDA ELP screeners to identify the EL status of a potential EL student enrolling for the first time in US schools.

WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (First used in school year 2021-2022.)

- All *WIDA Kindergarten Screener* test administrators must complete WIDA training and certification. You can find the training and certification quizzes on the WIDA Secure Portal.
- The *WIDA Kindergarten Screener* is administered to potential EL students enrolling in kindergarten (1st or 2nd semester) and in the 1st semester of Grade 1.

Grades 1-12 WIDA Screener

- The WIDA Screener assesses English language proficiency (ELP) for potential EL students in Grades 1 through 12, administered from 2nd semester Grade 1 onward.
- For Grades 1 to 12, the WIDA Screener is typically administered online. Paper ELP screeners may be used for students with disabilities or those who are newly arrived and lack computer skills.
- The WIDA Screener for grades 1-12 is divided into specific grade clusters: Grade 1; Grades 2-3; Grades 4-5; Grades 6-8; and Grades 9-12. Guidelines on which grade cluster screener to use are provided in the WIDA Screener Test Administration Manual, and administrators should follow these procedures accordingly.
- Access to administer the Grades 1-12 WIDA Online or Paper Screener can be obtained through the LEA's System Testing Coordinator via the WIDA AMS site.

Screening Potential English Learners with Disabilities (or Suspected Disabilities)

Students with disabilities established in an IEP or 504 Plan whose home or primary language is not English, must be administered the appropriate WIDA ELP Screener with the appropriate accommodations as established in the IEP. Accommodations must be documented in the Go-IEP or other IEP platform the school system is using. Please contact the Special Education department to ensure the accommodations on the ELP Screener are appropriate to the disability.

Resources:

- *GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook and Accessibility & Accommodations Manual* on the Assessment webpage: [For Educators](#).
- *Table of Allowable Accommodations on WIDA Assessments* in the GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook.

A potential EL entering school with a suspected disability may require an evaluation for special education before administering the WIDA ELP Screener with accommodations, especially if the suspected disability would impact the results of the screener. Making an eligibility determination for EL status when there is a suspected disability that has not been addressed could impact the eligibility determination. Please contact the Special Education department prior to administration of the WIDA ELP Screener.

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Students with Identified or Suspected Disabilities that Preclude Screening of One or More Language Domains

Even with accommodations, WIDA ELP screeners may not be valid screeners for making EL eligibility determinations for students whose IEP precludes the assessment of one or more language domains. Students who are deaf, blind, and non-verbal would be considered as having a disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domains. Beyond these reasons, the Assessment Director should seek counsel from the GaDOE Assessment Division who would consult with Special Education and EL Learner Programs. Caution should be exercised with potential ELs in Kindergarten, whose ELP screener only assesses two language domains: Listening and Speaking.

To determine whether the student qualifies as an English Learner, the IEP team should be convened to discuss how to determine EL eligibility when one or more language domains are missing. The IEP team's review of all information and data serves as the initial screening process for students whose disability precludes the assessment of one or more language domains. The IEP team should include an ESOL language specialist with experience identifying English learners. The IEP team's EL eligibility decision must be maintained in the student's cumulative record along with evidence supporting the team's decision. If the student cannot be assessed with any portion of the ELP Screener, it is the obligation of the IEP Team to revisit the EL eligibility decision at least annually.

- If the IEP team determines that the administration of the WIDA ELP Screener with accommodations is not appropriate to identify this student as an EL, the IEP meeting minutes suffice as documentation of this decision.
- The committee meeting minutes must be maintained in the student's cumulative record along with notes supporting the committee's decision.
- A flag or note could be placed with the Home Language Survey in the permanent record to alert any reviewer to see the IEP minutes dated XXXX for decision regarding screening.
- Student's EL status would be reported to the state in SIS as EL=Yes or EL=No. If this status were to change, an explanation must be included in the Data Collection submissions.

If the student cannot be assessed with any portion of the ELP Screener, it is the obligation of the IEP Team to revisit the EL eligibility decision at least annually.

Students with Identified Significant Cognitive Disabilities

WIDA ELP screeners may not be valid screeners for making EL eligibility determinations for students who have been identified as having a significant cognitive disability. To determine whether the student qualifies as an English Learner, the IEP team should be convened to discuss how to determine EL eligibility when one or more language domains are missing. The IEP team's review of all information and data serves as the initial screening process for students whose disability precludes the assessment of one or more language domains. The IEP team should include an ESOL language specialist with experience identifying English learners.

- If the IEP team determines that the administration of the WIDA ELP Screener with accommodations is not appropriate to identify this student as an EL, the IEP meeting minutes suffice as documentation of this decision.
- The committee meeting minutes must be maintained in the student's cumulative record along with notes supporting the committee's decision.

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- A flag or note could be placed with the Home Language Survey in the permanent record to alert any reviewer to see the IEP minutes dated XXXX for decision regarding screening.
- Student's EL status would be reported to the state. If this status were to change, an explanation must be included in the Data Collection submissions.

If the student cannot be assessed with any portion of the ELP Screener, it is the obligation of the IEP Team to revisit the EL eligibility decision at least annually.

ELP Screener Costs

ELP Screener costs must not be funded using Title III, Part A funds, since the obligation to identify all EL students is part of an LEA's civil rights obligations (*Lau v. Nichols, 1974*). "Because of the Title III supplanting prohibition in ESEA Title III Sec. 3115(g), which was not changed by ESSA, Title III funds **may not be used to** satisfy an LEA's civil rights obligations to ELs. The legal obligations of an LEA under the civil rights laws are independent of the amount or type of state or federal funding received.

An LEA may not use Title III funds for identification of ELs, including costs of administering a screening assessment, home language survey, or related tools (See *Title III Non-Regulatory Guidance Addendum*, Topic 4). In addition, an LEA may not use Title IIIA-funded staff to administer ELP Screeners or assessments. If staff are split-funded with local or state fund sources, the local/state portion may be used to fund the administration of ELP Screeners or assessments. On the other hand, private schools participating in Title III may use Title III funds for English language proficiency screener and assessment costs.

Certification to Administer WIDA Screeners

Test administrators and examiners must annually complete the required WIDA training and certification for all WIDA Screeners they will be administering. In addition, all test administrators/examiners must hold a valid GaPSC certification. Only GaPSC certified personnel who have completed the required WIDA training for the WIDA Screeners can administer the screeners.

- All WIDA Screener training is housed in the WIDA Secure Portal, Assessment Training pathway.
- To complete the training modules, educators must obtain a WIDA secure portal login and password from the LEA's System Testing Coordinator or ESOL Coordinator.
- Test administrators/examiners must certify for the grade level and language domain screener they will be administering.
- Teachers must obtain a *WIDA Certificate of Completion*.
- LEAs must maintain documentation of test administrator/examiner annual certification. In collaboration with System Testing Coordinators, ESOL Coordinators monitor WIDA Screening administration information in DRC and WIDA AMS.

WIDA's Test Certification Year is July 1 – June 30. After July 1, all test administrators/examiners will renew their WIDA Screener *Certificate of Completion* annually for the current school year.

LEAs may establish an annual process for test administrators/examiners to refresh their understanding on how to use the WIDA Rubrics to score students' speaking and writing skills when administering the screeners. In addition, LEAs may establish internal procedures where these test administrators or examiners could review the training closer to the screener administration date.

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Grade-Appropriate WIDA Screeners & Language Domain Subtests

Kindergarten Screener		Grades 1-12 Screener	
Students enrolling during kindergarten registration - 1 st semester Kindergarten.	Students enrolling in 2 nd semester Kindergarten – 1 st Semester Grade 1	Students enrolling in the 1 st semester of the lowest grade in a grade-level cluster.	Student enrolling in the 2 nd semester of the lowest grade in a grade-level cluster.
Administer only the Listening and Speaking tests of the Screener.	Administer all four language domain tests	Administer a lower grade cluster WIDA Screener. Example: A 4 th grader enrolling 1 st semester 4 th grade will be administered the Grades 2-3 WIDA Screener.	Administer the current grade cluster WIDA Screener. Example: A 4 th grader enrolling 2 nd semester 4 th grade will be administered the Grades 4-5 WIDA Screener.

WIDA Screener for Kindergarten Assessment (Test) Security Procedures

The *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten* is a secure assessment. The security of the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten* must follow local school system guidance.

All personnel in contact with secure materials, to include System and School Test Coordinators, ESOL Department personnel, and personnel administering the WIDA Screeners, must follow standard assessment procedures to ensure the security and integrity of the WIDA Screener assessments.

1. All WIDA Screeners must be administered by a GaPSC-certified educator who has successfully completed the WIDA training and passed the certification quizzes.
2. Personnel administering the screener assessments are directly responsible for the security of screener assessment materials and must account for all materials within their custody.
3. Screener materials must **always** be kept secure.
 - a. While in the Screener Test Examiner's custody, secure Screener materials must be kept in a locked storage area when not being used for actual administration to students.
 - b. During Screener administration, materials and students must always be supervised.
 - c. At no time should the Screener Test Examiner or other personnel keep test materials in a classroom or other unauthorized storage area overnight.
 - d. Screener Test Examiners must account for all Screener materials before dismissing students from the testing room.
 - e. At the conclusion of each Screener administration, Screener Test Examiners are responsible for immediately returning all screener materials to the School Test Coordinator.

Documenting ELP Screening Irregularities

LEAs may discover that a testing irregularity occurred during the ELP screening process. Examples of these irregularities are:

- Incorrect grade-level screener administered
- Incorrect language domain subtests administered
- Screener administered by non-WIDA certified or untrained staff

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- Screener administered without appropriate accommodations to a student with disabilities or with suspected disabilities
- Screener administered to an English-only student
- Screener administered to a transfer student with existing EL status, such as EL = 'Y', EL = '1', EL = '2', EL = '3', EL = '4', and EL = 'F'.

The LEA's ESOL and Assessment Departments collaborate closely throughout the ELP screening process. However, ultimate responsibility for staff training on screener administration, ELP screener security, administering accurate grade-level screeners, and understanding EL eligibility criteria lies with the LEA's ESOL program. Therefore, each school system must establish local procedures to document any irregularities encountered during ELP screening.

A local *ELP Screener Irregularity Form* may include student demographics, details of the irregularity, history of the irregularity, supporting documentation, and steps taken by the LEA to verify the accuracy of the student's EL identification. It is important for staff to be trained on local procedures to prevent future screening irregularities. Documentation of ELP screening irregularities must be kept within the LEA and should not be submitted through the GaDOE assessment portal.

EL Eligibility Criteria: Students in Kindergarten -1st Semester Grade 1

Test administrators must enter the student's ELP Screener score results into the [WIDA Score Calculator](#) to generate a WIDA ELP [Screener Score Report](#) of the English language proficiency level indicated by the student's responses.

See [EL Entrance Procedures Flowchart: Kindergarten to 1st Semester Grade 1](#)

For students enrolling in 1st Semester Kindergarten:

1. Administer only the Listening and Speaking sections of the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten*.
2. If the student's Oral Language Proficiency Level (Listening + Speaking) is < 5.0, the student qualifies and is identified as an English learner and is coded EL = Yes in the LEA's Student Information System (SIS).
3. If the student's Oral Language Proficiency Level (Listening + Speaking) is ≥ 5.0, the student Does Not Qualify (DNQ) as an English learner and is coded EL = No.

For students enrolling in 2nd semester Kindergarten to 1st semester Grade 1:

1. Administer all four components of *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten*: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
2. If the student's Overall Composite Proficiency Level score is < 5.0, the student qualifies and is identified as an English Learner and is coded EL = YES in the LEA's Student Information System (SIS).
3. If the student's Overall Composite Proficiency Level score is ≥ 5.0, the student Does Not Qualify (DNQ) as an English Learner and is coded EL = No.

NOTE: Although WIDA recommends that Kindergarten Screener proficiency level scores be considered as one of multiple data sources to inform EL identification, Georgia state procedures only use WIDA

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Screener scores for EL identification purposes. Since 2018, local school systems may not use other evidence sources. For historical kindergarten EL eligibility criteria in Georgia, see p. 49.

EL Eligibility Criteria: Students in 2nd Semester Grade 1- Grade 12

The *WIDA Screener for Grades 1-12* is the only screener administered to potential EL students enrolling in 2nd semester Grade 1 through 2nd semester Grade 12. Use the following process and screener results to determine EL eligibility.

1. Administer all four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
2. If the student's Grade Level Adjusted Overall Composite score is < 5.0 on the **WIDA Screener**, the student qualifies as an English learner and is coded EL = YES in the LEA's Student Information System (SIS).
3. If the student's Grade Level Adjusted Overall composite score is ≥ 5.0 on the **WIDA Screener**, the student does not qualify as an English learner and is coded EL = No in the LEA's Student Information System (SIS).

See [EL Entrance Procedures Flowchart, 2nd Semester Grade 1 – Grade 12](#).

Recording Date of ELP Screener & ELP Screener Results

Screener Results

The state recommends the use of the EL Screener Tab in SLDS to maintain vital ELP Screener information for all school districts in Georgia to access as needed. The GaDOE SLDS Department offers training for all LEAs on how to use the EL Screener Tab.

DATE OF ELP SCREENER

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, all LEAs are required to record the *Date of ELP Screener* in the Student Information System.

- The **DATE OF ELP SCREENER** is the testing date a student is screened for the EL program and is determined to be an English Learner (**EL** = 'Y') student.
- The date must be in the format yyyyymmdd where 'yyyy' is the complete year (e.g. '2002'), 'mm' is the month (01-12), and 'dd' is the date (01-31). (See [Data Collections Student Record Detail](#))

Note: For transfer EL students, indicate the date the ELP Screener was administered in the previous LEA. *This is NOT the date the EL student enrolls in the LEA's ESOL Language Program.*

ELP Screener Date Unavailable for Out-of-State or In-State Transfer EL Students

When an LEA is unable to determine with certainty the Date of ELP Screener for Out-of-State or In-State Transfer EL Students, the LEA will construct this date as follows:

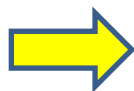
1. Determine the school year for which you have the earliest ELP assessment results.
2. Use the first day of school for that school year, as the Date of ELP Screener.

Out-of-State errors in Data Collections for missing Date of ELP Screeners will be relievable with an explanation.

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Infinite Campus Users –

The Date of ELP Screener is called “**Identified Date**” in IC, and appears on the first page of the EL Information Tab. Please indicate the Date the ELP Screener was administered in the “Identified Date” section.



Active EL Record		Census Information	
*Program Status: EL		**To update read only fields, please go to Census->People->Identifies	
Identified Date	02/05/2014	Home Primary Language:	30: Vietnamese
Expected Exit Date		First Entered US School:	No Data Available
Program		Birth Country:	Vietnam
Exit Date			
Exit Reason			
First Year Monitoring:			
Second Year Monitoring:			
Third Year Monitoring:			
Fourth Year Monitoring:			
Parent Notified			
Parent Declined Date			
Comments			
Student transferred from Clayton County, Ga. Through SLDS it appears that he was identified in the 2013-2014 school year. Last ACCESS Score of 2.7 was recorded in the 17-18 school year.			
- Modified by: [redacted] 03/08/2019 11:04			

Power School Users – The Date of ELP Screener is called “Date of ELP Screener” in Power School, and appears on the State/Province Georgia, General Information TAB, **not** on the EL/ESOL Programs tab.

Active Military Parent/Guardian	
Military Reserve	Student EL Military Parent
Residential Environment Code	
Homeless Primary Night Shelter	
Immigrant Status	(Y) Yes
Migrant	
Date of Entry to U.S. School	10/10/2018
Less Than 3 Years Total in US Schools (36 months)	(Y) Yes
City of Birth	
State of Birth	
Place Of Birth	(0940) Guatemala
Country of Origin	
Priority For Service	(N) No
Date of ELP Screener	10/16/2018
Primary Language (Cannot be blank if EL = "Y")	(026) Spanish Current EL = Y
Parent Communication Language (Default is English for non-EL students and Blank for EL students)	(026) Spanish Current EL = Y



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ASPEN Users –

The “Date of ELP Screener is called “**ASSESSMENT DATE**” as noted in the Screenshot below:

The screenshot shows the 'Qualification Summary Tab' in the ASPEN system. Three numbered arrows point to specific fields:

- Arrow 1 points to the 'EL Ed Plan' field in the 'Documents' section.
- Arrow 2 points to the 'Qualification Summary' tab in the top navigation bar.
- Arrow 3 points to the 'Assessment Date' field in the 'Assessments' section.

The form includes sections for 'Details', 'Contacts', 'Attendance', 'Conduct', 'Transcript', 'Assessments', 'Schedule', 'Membership', 'Transactions', 'Documents', 'Journal', 'IEPs', and 'Ed. Plans + Details Meetings'. The 'Assessments' section contains a dropdown for 'ESOL Qualification Method' (set to 'W-APT Kindergarten') and a date field for 'Assessment Date' (set to '8/3/2016'). Below this, there is a red instruction: 'Based on the Selection Above, Enter Data in the Appropriate Section'. The 'W-APT Kindergarten (1st Semester 1st Grade)' section contains fields for 'W-APT Listening + Speaking' (25.0), 'W-APT Writing' (5.0), and 'W-APT Reading' (5.0). The 'WIDA Screener' section contains a 'Score' field (0.0). The 'Assessment From a Non-WIDA State' section contains a 'Non-WIDA Score' field.

Identification of Out-of-State Transfer Students

ELs who transfer from another LEA within the United States or from a Department of Defense school and there are official records to support their pre-determined eligibility and services within the past year, the school must accept these records and place the child accordingly in language assistance programs.

If ELP Screener or ELP assessment records are not available for a potential EL student who has transferred from out-of-state, or records cannot be obtained within the federal timeline, it will be necessary for the LEA to take steps to ensure that it meets the appropriate deadlines for notifying parents of child's placement in a language instruction educational program.

- If a student was screened in a **WIDA state** and **Did Not Qualify (DNQ)** as an English learner, the student may not be screened again at a future date for reconsideration of eligibility without prior state approval. (See list of WIDA states at www.wida.wisc.edu.)
- If a student was screened in a non-WIDA state and **Did Not Qualify (DNQ)** by that state's eligibility criteria, the LEA may consider rescreening the student using the appropriate WIDA eligibility assessment if there is evidence that the student's level of English language proficiency will be/is a barrier to meeting Georgia's Standards of Excellence.

However, LEAs may **not consider re-screening** when the DNQ non-WIDA transferring student:

- Was screened more than 24 months (or the equivalent of two academic years) prior to enrollment in the current LEA; and
- Was enrolled and was successful in the general education program in the previous school; and
- Performed at the met or exceeded level on that State's content assessments (if such assessments were required and administered in the enrolled grades).

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J-1 Visa, Foreign Exchange Students

According to CFR22§62.10 Program administration, J-Visa student sponsors are responsible to “establish and utilize a method to screen and select prospective exchange visitors to ensure that they are eligible for program participation”, and that the foreign exchange visitor “possesses sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, successfully to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis.” A sponsor must verify an applicant's English language proficiency through a recognized English language test, by signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school, or through a documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in-person or by videoconferencing, or by telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option.

Thus, it is expected that all J-1 exchange visitors are proficient enough in English to participate successfully in their exchange program and to function on a day-to-day basis in U.S. schools. Whether to follow statewide, standardized EL Entrance Procedures and possibly provide English language services or not to exchange students can be a local decision if sponsors provide the LEA with evidence of English proficiency in one of the following ways:

- Results of a recognized English language test
- Signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school
- A documented interview conducted by the sponsor

EL Entrance Summary

- Under Section 3113(b)(2) of the ESEA, every State Education Agency (SEA) that receives a Title III, Part A State formula grant must establish consistent statewide procedures for identifying and supporting English learner (EL) students. These procedures, applied uniformly across the state, include how ELs are identified, the timeline for assessment, the Home Language Survey (HLS) used by LEAs, the specific English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener administered, and the criteria for determining EL status based on screener scores.
- In establishing these procedures, SEAs must ensure compliance with Federal civil rights obligations under Title VI. The HLS, completed by parents or guardians in their preferred language, helps schools identify potential ELs who require ELP screening.
- In Georgia, LEAs use a standardized HLS with three required questions, available on the GaDOE website and provided in multiple languages to accommodate diverse families. The HLS is a legal document that initiates the process of assessing a student's English proficiency. The original HLS, signed and dated by parents, must be maintained in the student's permanent records along with any necessary oral interpretation records, ensuring compliance with statewide standards and federal guidelines.
- For newly enrolled students whose primary language isn't English, screening with the appropriate WIDA screener is necessary. However, for transfer students, LEAs should first review prior school records to determine if an ELP screener has already been administered.
- According to ESEA/ESSA Section 3113(b)(2), EL identification must occur within 30 days of enrollment, regardless of the time of year a student enrolls.
- LEAs are responsible for maintaining important EL documentation in each student's permanent file to facilitate accurate data transfer between LEAs.

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Required EL Student Records

1. HLS (original, signed, dated, in a language parents understand)
2. ELP Screener Score Report, dated
 - o *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten* includes a Score Report and Score Sheets.
3. OCR Parent Notification for ESOL Language Program services (dated, one copy for each year student is in ESOL program)
4. EL/TPC (updated each year)
5. Parent Waiver (one for each year parent has waived ESOL – signed, dated, in parents' preferred language)
6. Annual ELP assessments results
7. EL Reclassification Form or IEP EL Reclassification, when applicable
8. Two years of post-exit monitoring records

Parent Notification for ESOL and Supplemental Title IA or Title IIIA Language Program Services, when applicable

The OCR and Title I, Part A require LEAs to notify parents regarding their child's EL status and placement in a language instruction educational program. GaDOE EL Language Programs provides LEAs with a form for initial eligibility and continuing eligibility. Please see the ESOL website [Parent Notification Forms](#) for this requirement. These forms are provided in several languages. (See additional guidance on the *Family Engagement System for EL Families*, when available on the ESOL Website.)

ESEA/ESSA Sections 1112(e)(3)(A) and (B) specify that the parents must be notified of the student's placement in an EL program 30 days after the beginning of the school year or within ten days of being placed in the EL program if the student enrolled after the beginning of the school year. Please see the Title I, Part A Parents of English Learners website for the required forms in several languages. For more information, please contact a GaDOE Family Engagement Specialist whose contact information is available at <http://www.gadoe.org/Pages/Support.aspx>.

Individual English Language Development (ELD) Plans

Some school systems and charter schools may require teachers of English learners to establish an individual English language development (ELD) plan for each EL, whether in remote or in-person learning environments. These plans may include language learning goals, linguistic scaffolds, differentiation strategies, classroom assignment modifications, and summative assessment accommodations as identified in the EL/TPC.

It is a best practice to establish language learning goals for ELs that focus on the development of academic English at the next higher level of English language proficiency (ELP) than indicated by the Screener or ACCESS score results. [WIDA's ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#) resources (K-12 Key Language Uses, Language Expectations, and K-12 Proficiency Level Descriptors) can support teachers as they identify language goals for each EL student and collaboratively plan for content and language integration in mainstream classrooms.

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ELD plans may specify teachers' **instructional practices** that support students' development of academic English, such as linguistic scaffolds and differentiation strategies. Teachers of ELs may also decide to modify classroom assignments for EL students who are at WIDA's *Entering* and/or *Emerging* levels of language proficiency. These and other instructional practices should be personalized and proficiency-tiered to provide ELs with an individual learning pathway.

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 Reaching
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ELD plans may also specify **testing practices**, such as assessment accommodations for ELs to use during formative or summative assessments. These must directly align with the state-approved accommodations as established in the student's EL/TPC. (See GaDOE *Student Assessment Handbook*.) Teachers must provide EL students the opportunity to use these test accommodations on formative and summative assessments throughout the school year.

The following examples of assessment accommodations, assignment modifications, and instructional scaffolds do not represent an exhaustive proficiency-tiered list, but rather, are provided here, in alphabetical order, as a conversation starter for teachers who are collaborating to ensure EL students receive personalized and tiered support both in instruction and testing environments, which can lead to the development of academic English language proficiency and of academic content-area proficiency.

Testing Practices	Instructional Practices	
Test Accommodations	Classroom Assignment Modifications	Scaffolds or Learning Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction read aloud • Small group testing • Test administered by familiar teacher • Word-to-word dictionary • Time extensions (See GaDOE <i>Student Assessment Handbook</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept drawing, copying and labeling in lieu of grade-level writing • Adapted grade-level or ELP-tiered assignments • Assignments presented in 1st language (L1) • Assignments weighted according to students' ELP level • Culturally & linguistically appropriate assignments • ELP-differentiated (tiered) writing checklists & rubrics • Gesture or total physical responses (TPR) to demonstrate understanding (pointing, drawing, matching, mimicking, copying, sequencing pictures or realia, categorizing objects, etc.) • Highlighted portions of assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic sentence frames / paragraphs • Buddy reading/working • Building background experiences • Charts • Cloze paragraphs • Cooperative writing/learning • Demonstrations • 1st language materials • Gestures • Graphs • Graphic novels • Graphic organizers • Illustrated dictionary • Language wall with sequencing words & key sentence structures • Manipulatives • Models • Modeling

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matching vocabulary word-to-picture instead of matching word-to-definition• Oral response in 1st language• Oral or visual assignments• Partner assignments• Reduced DOK level• Reduced Lexile level (high quality, age appropriate)• Shortened assignments• Shortened spelling word list for test• Students copy words & sentences• Test orally allowing individual words or language chunk responses.• Visually supported assignments• Etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Music• Oral or visual text• PALs reading/mathematics• Paragraph frames• Pictures• Re-teach vocabulary• <i>Realia</i>• Rebus• Sensory support• Simulations• Specific, level-appropriate feedback• Storytelling and retelling with visuals and props• Teacher or student Think-alouds• Videos• Visual supports• Word Bank or Word Wall• Etc.
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Ideas adapted from various ESOL teacher professional learning resources including Fairbairn, S. & Jones-Vo, St. (2010), *Differentiating instruction and assessment for English language learners: A guide for K-12 Teachers*, Philadelphia, PA: Caslon, Inc.

Part II: English Learner Exit Procedures

Under **Sec. 3113(b)(2)** of the ESEA/ESSA, the state educational agency (SEA) must establish and implement standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for ELs. The requirement that the procedures be “statewide” means they must be consistently applied across the State. The state must ensure that these procedures are consistent with Federal civil rights obligations under Title VI (42 U.S.C.§2000d to d-7). Title VI regulations have been interpreted by case law to require that a student demonstrate proficiency on a valid and reliable ELP assessment in order to be exited from EL status (*Rios v. Read*, 480 F. Supp. at 23.)

Per Title I, Part A statute, LEAs must administer the annual ELP assessment to **all** English Learners (*WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS, WIDA Grades 1-12 ACCESS, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS*, as applicable). Title I Part A monitors each LEA’s ELP Assessment Participation Rate on an annual basis. Please see [Federal Programs Monitoring Process](#).

Annual ELP Assessment	WIDA ACCESS	WIDA Alternate ACCESS
<p>LEAs in Georgia are mandated by federal and state regulations to administer the <i>WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS</i> assessments annually to all English Learners. This requirement is outlined in ESEA/ESSA Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(ix) and Section 1111(b)(2)(G). These assessments fulfill federal standards for evaluating EL students' academic English language proficiency. They evaluate social and instructional English, as well as language skills in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies across the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing within the school environment.</p> <p>Only certified personnel who have completed the mandatory <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> training are authorized to administer the</p>	<p>The <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> assessment is administered annually to all English learners in Georgia. It is designed to evaluate their social and academic proficiency in English, aligning with the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020.</p> <p>This assessment measures proficiency in social and instructional English, as well as language skills related to language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school environment. It covers the four language domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.</p> <p>Students who have formally exited language assistance services, including those recently exited (EL = '1' and EL = '2'), are not required to take</p>	<p>Under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), all schools must annually assess the English language proficiency of all students identified as English learners (ELs), including those with disabilities (see Sec. 1111). Additionally, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 2004) requires that students with disabilities participate in statewide and districtwide assessment programs, including alternate assessments with appropriate accommodations as outlined in their Individual Education Program (IEP).</p> <p><i>WIDA's Alternate ACCESS</i> assessment meets federal accountability standards and provides educators with a tool to measure the English language proficiency growth of ELs with significant cognitive</p>

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<p>annual proficiency assessment. The GaDOE Assessment and Accountability division mandates annual <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> certification for all certified personnel involved in assessment administration. Information on accessing the WIDA training website is provided to LEA System Testing Coordinators (STC) to ensure compliance and readiness for assessment administration.</p> <p>LEAs are required to document reasons why EL students did not participate in the annual ELP assessment, specifically those who did not receive an overall composite proficiency level. These reasons will be detailed in the accountability nonparticipation application during the summer reporting period.</p> <p>Access to the ELP Assessment Participation Rate for each LEA will be available through the myGaDOE Portal ELP Assessment Participation application. The Federal Programs, Title I, Part A oversees monitoring of LEAs' ELP Assessment participation rates, with a minimum threshold set at 95%.</p>	<p>the <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> assessment.</p>	<p>disabilities. Only EL students eligible for the Georgia Alternate Assessment 2.0 (GAA 2.0) are eligible to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.</p> <p>English Learners with Disabilities (EL/SWD) can utilize state-approved accommodations when taking either the <i>WIDA ACCESS</i> or the <i>WIDA Alternate ACCESS</i>, as determined by their IEP Team. The specific accommodations needed are determined using the WIDA list of approved accommodations, detailed in the GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook.</p>
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Clear Exit and Reclassification Criteria

LEAs must follow the standardized statewide *WIDA ACCESS* Overall Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) criteria as well as the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing language domain criteria (when applicable) to identify EL students who have met the criteria to **exit EL status**. (Please see the updated EL Exit Procedures Flowcharts on the [ESOL Language Program website](#).)

1. [English Learner Exit Procedures: Kindergarten](#)
 - a. **Test:** *WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS*
 - b. **Clear Exit Criteria:** Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 , Listening, Speaking, Reading ≥ 5.0 , and Writing ≥ 4.5 .
2. [English Learner Exit procedures: Grades 1-12](#)
 - a. **Test:** *WIDA ACCESS Grades 1-12*
 - b. **Clear Exit Criteria:** Overall CPL ≥ 5.0
 - c. **Reclassification Criteria:**
 - LEAs must establish written procedures for EL reclassification with a minimum criterion within the state-approved range of **Overall Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) 4.3-4.9**.
 - LEAs may include additional criteria from reliable, objective standardized measures that are consistently applied and weighted across the LEA. Subjective factors like classroom grades, attendance, and behavior cannot be used.
 - LEAs must convene an EL Reclassification team to complete an *EL Reclassification Form* for **all** EL students who meet or exceed the LEA's minimum exit criterion. This form can be found on the [ESOL Language Program](#) webpage under *EL Exit Procedures*.
 - The EL Reclassification team will determine if the EL student meets the LEA's minimum criteria for reclassification.
 - The team's final decision will be documented on the *EL Reclassification Form* and kept in the student's permanent/cumulative file (DO NOT PURGE!).
3. [Alternate ACCESS EL Exit Procedures](#)
4. Exit Procedures for ELs with a Disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domains (See [Less-than-Four-Domains Exit Procedures](#))

Clear Exit vs. EL Reclassification

- Clear exit refers to when an EL student achieves the state's definition of English proficient moving their status from EL = 'Y' (English learner) to EL = '1' (Post-exit Year 1).
- Reclassification refers to when an EL student achieves the LEA's definition of English proficient, moving their status from EL = 'Y' (English learner) to EL = '1' (Post-exit Year 1).
- The name "*EL Reclassification Form*" may be misleading. The form's purpose is for the EL Reclassification team to evaluate all grade 1-12 students whose *WIDA ACCESS* scores fall within the LEA's established range for possible exit from EL status. The team may decide to exit some

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EL students while choosing not to exit others with similar *WIDA ACCESS* scores. Therefore, the EL Reclassification Form documents these decisions for communication with parents, transferring schools, and other stakeholders.

Federal Title I, Part A and Title III, Part A Requirements

- An English Learner **must be exited from EL status** for ESEA purposes (i.e. for purposes of Title I and Title III requirements) when the student satisfies the state's standardized statewide exit procedures.
- The **LEA may no longer use Title III funds** to provide supplemental language services for that exited student. However, an exited student may continue to receive English language services with **local or state funds**.
- If many exited students still require ongoing language support, LEAs should ensure that ELs are not prematurely exited based on a proficiency score from the state ELP assessment that may not accurately reflect their English language proficiency or their ability to succeed in the classroom. (Addendum to *September 23, 2016, Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the ESEA, as Amended by the ESSA*, p. 5).

Timeline for EL Exit Procedures

May

- Schools receive WIDA ACCESS Score Results.
- School teachers and leaders review EL students' *WIDA ACCESS* and *Alternate ACCESS* score results to determine if they meet the state's exit criteria for exiting EL status.
- LEAs that have chosen EL Reclassification criteria schedule meetings with the EL Reclassification team to decide whether students will be reclassified from EL status.
- For ELs with significant cognitive disabilities who meet the *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* exit criteria IEP teams will convene to make exit determinations.
- Most EL Reclassification team meetings and final decisions occur before or immediately after the end of the school year. However, changes in EL status should not be recorded in the Student Information System (SIS) until after the June 30 Student Record Sign-Off.
- If an EL Reclassification team meeting occurs at the beginning of the new school year, decisions made are retroactive to the end of the previous school year when the student received the *WIDA ACCESS* exit score. When recording the EL Exit Date in the SIS, ensure to use an end-of-school-year date or June 30.

July –

- EL students who have exited are recorded in the SIS with the EL Exit Date set to the end of the school year or June 30th.
- It's important not to use a July or August date for the EL Exit Date.
- Students are only officially exited at the conclusion of a school year, not at the start of a new school year.

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August/September -

- If schools cannot meet the "end-of-schoolyear" deadline for EL or IEP Reclassification team meetings, they may hold these meetings at the beginning of the school year, but no later than 30 days after the school year begins.
- The decision to exit a student from EL status must still be made either at the end of the previous school year or within the first 30 days of the new school year to ensure proper scheduling of ESOL language instruction where applicable.
- EL Reclassification team meetings are not permitted at any other time during the school year. (Refer to the important information above regarding the Date for EL Exit.)

Receiving Exited EL Students from Transfer LEAs

When a Reclassified EL student transfers to another GA LEA, the receiving LEA **must** honor the EL Reclassification decisions made by transferring LEA when the transfer occurs **after** the October FTE count.

If the transferring LEA uses a lower EL Reclassification criterion than the receiving LEA, and if the transfer occurs during the first two weeks of school, the receiving LEA may observe student performance for two weeks and convene another EL Reclassification team to review documentation and evidence, when applicable. However, the EL EXIT DATE must be June 30 of the school year that just ended.

Please see the [LEA Reported Minimum EL Exit/Reclassification Criterion, 2018-2024](#) on the ESOL Language Program website.

Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Disabilities

Since 2013, the *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* assessment of English language proficiency (ELP) has been used in Georgia for students in grades 1 -12 who are classified as English learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the regular assessment. To participate in the *WIDA Alternate ACCESS*, a student must be eligible to participate in Georgia's alternate content assessment.

The *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* aligns with the WIDA Alternate English Language Proficiency levels designed to expand upon Level P1 - Entering, by increasing the sensitivity of the measure for students who have significant cognitive disabilities. The alternate ELP levels give students a chance to demonstrate progress within Level P1.

In April 2019, the state established that a student's Individual Education Program (IEP) team may recommend reclassifying from EL status an English learner with significant cognitive disabilities who has been assessed yearly on *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* assessment when the student has reached the standardized statewide threshold as stated below. To make this recommendation, the IEP team will have documented evidence that the EL student's English proficiency is no longer a barrier to full participation in the student's individualized program of instruction with supports as established in the IEP.

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Alternate ACCESS Threshold for considering EL Exit:

Alternate ACCESS **Overall CPL P2 (Emerging)** for two consecutive years with IEP Team recommendation **OR** any other Alternate ACCESS Overall CPL – the **same score** - for three consecutive years with IEP recommendation.

- The IEP Team will serve as an *English Learner (EL) Reclassification Team* by completing the state provided **EL Reclassification / IEP Team Rubric** for English Learners with significant cognitive disabilities who have met the state's established *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* Threshold for considering EL Exit, as stated above.
- IEP teams who are considering reclassification of EL/SWD who have met the Alternate ACCESS criteria may want to finalize any possible EL status changes **within 30 days of the beginning of the school year and before the October FTE count.**

Post-exit Procedures:

- For two consecutive school years, the exited student's progress toward IEP goals must be monitored by designated ESOL and Special Education personnel to ensure the exited student's English proficiency is not a barrier to full participation in classroom instruction and assessment in English. Monitoring documentation must be maintained in the exited student's permanent/cumulative records.
- The IEP team with a 2nd language specialist could revisit the EL Reclassification decision during the two-year post-exit period of monitoring student's progress, if the team determines the student would benefit from language assistance services as provided by the ESOL language program.

Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Less than Four Domains

Under the ESSA, as determined by the student's IEP team or 504 Plan, if a student's disability is directly related to a domain for which there are no appropriate accommodations, the student may be exempt from taking that language domain assessment.

Note: Students who are deaf, blind, and non-verbal would be considered as having a disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domains. Beyond these reasons, the Assessment Director should seek counsel from the GaDOE Assessment Division who would consult with Special Education and EL Learner Programs.

In April 2019, the state established that an English Learner (EL) with disabilities *whose disability precludes assessment of one or more language domains* should be considered for exit from English learner status when the student has met the following state-established criteria using a GaDOE-provided **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)**.

D-CPL Process:

1. Administer the appropriate *WIDA ACCESS* or *Alternate ACCESS* language domain tests to the EL student as established in the IEP and/or IAP (504 Plan).
2. For each language domain test not administered, clearly mark **Do Not Score** with the reason code of **SPD (Student's Program/Plan team's Decision code)** in the student test booklet or in WIDA AMS.
 - a. If the domain was not tested due to an IAP and not an IEP, please notify the GaDOE Assessment, Special Education, and ESOL offices. Thank you.

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3. **NOTE:** Although the *WIDA ACCESS Individual Student Report* will only show results for the language domains administered and will not include composite proficiency levels, the report should still be shared with parents in a language they understand.
4. Using WIDA-provided language domain scale score tables, the GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will assign the **lowest exit score for the missing language domain(s)** to allow an overall composite proficiency level calculation.
5. The GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will calculate a **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)** for each EL student whose WIDA ACCESS score results are missing one or more language domains.
6. The GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will provide the school system with an ACCESS **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)** for each one of these EL students. Typically, this occurs in August.
7. After receiving the GaDOE-generated **D-CPL**, the appropriate standardized statewide EL exit criteria for the *WIDA ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS* threshold for considering EL Exit would then be applied to determine whether the EL student will exit EL status or not. (See below)

WIDA ACCESS Exit Criteria for Clear Exit

An EL student with disabilities must be exited from EL status when the *WIDA ACCESS D-CPL* \geq **5.0** or when the **D-CPL** meets the LEA-established exit criterion within the 4.3-4.9 range along with the *EL Reclassification Form*.

WIDA Alternate ACCESS Threshold for EL Reclassification

An EL student with significant cognitive disabilities may be considered for reclassification from EL status when the *WIDA Alternate ACCESS D-CPL* is **P2** (Emerging) for two consecutive years with IEP team recommendation **OR** any other *WIDA Alternate ACCESS D-CPL* for three consecutive years with IEP team recommendation. (See *EL Reclassification / IEP Team Rubric* on ESOL Language Program webpage, EL Exit Procedures Section.)

Data Collections Element: EL Exit Reason

WIDA ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS scores are generally received and evaluated before the end of the school year. Therefore, LEAs may determine that an EL has successfully met the criteria for exit from the ESOL program at the end of the school year. To ensure that LEA data is recorded correctly for accountability and for funding purposes, coding in the LEA's SIS **must not be changed for students before July 1**. The ELs' coding should remain until all state data collection has been completed and signed off.

NOTE: Student's EL Exit Date must be an end-of-school-year date no later than **June 30**; even though it is recorded in the SIS sometime at the beginning of the new school year.

EL EXIT REASON

EL EXIT REASON describes the method used to determine the student's placement in the monitoring phase. The **EL EXIT** is required when student's **EL** status is '1' or '2'.

Code	Description
'1'	ACCESS for EL proficiency

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'2'	Language Assessment Conference (LAC) (discontinued 2017)
'3'	Exited out of state or from a non-public
'4'	EL Reclassification Team Decision
Blank	N/A

Reporting EL EXIT DATE

ELs who have met the standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures Criteria must be exited from EL status. The EL Exit Date must be an end-of-the-school-year date no later than June 30. However, this date cannot be recorded in in SIS until after July 1. Each year, after July 1st, the student's post-EL Exit Status will change as depicted in the chart below.

- The first-year post-exit starts July 1st after the student has met a qualifying exit score and/or Reclassification decision at the end of a school year or June 30.
- During the 2-year monitoring period Exited ELs are coded **EL = '1'** and **EL = '2'** for post-exit year 1 and year 2.
- Once the two-year monitoring period has ended, the student's coding for Data Collections Student Record purposes will change from EL = 2' to **EL = '3'** (3rd Year Post-Exit), and then **EL = '4'** (4th year post-exit).
- Following the EL = '4' designation, the student will be coded **EL = 'F'** (Former EL).

Post Exit Data Reporting	
EL = '1'	1st year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers & reported to state
EL = '2'	2nd year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers & reported to state
EL = '3'	3rd year post-exit – student progress is reported to state
EL = '4'	4th year post-exit – student progress is reported to state
EL = 'F'	5 or more years post-exit – student progress is no longer monitored

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Post-exit Monitoring Procedures

Overview

EL students who meet the standardized, statewide criteria for English proficiency and no longer meet the definition of an English Learner **must be exited or reclassified** from EL status. They are no longer eligible to participate in the ESOL language program and assessment, nor in the Title III Part A supplemental language services. OCR considers a compliance issue if a school fails to exit EL students from EL programs after the students demonstrate proficiency in English.

Rationale

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requires that LEAs **monitor the academic progress of post-exit EL students for two calendar years** to ensure that:

- Students have not been prematurely exited or reclassified;
- Any academic deficits incurred have been remedied; and
- Students are meaningfully participating in standards-based instruction and assessment comparable to their never-EL peers.

OCR considers a compliance issue if a school fails to monitor the progress of exited EL students for two years post-exit. (See [Dear Colleague Letter, 2015](#), p. 34.)

If an exited student transfers from another state or a private school during the two-year monitoring period, the LEA is required to monitor the student's academic progress for the remainder of the two years. The school system must also maintain documented evidence that the student was monitored throughout the two-year monitoring phase.

Accommodations on State Assessments

For state assessment purposes post-exit EL students who are in the two-year monitoring period are eligible for appropriate standard accommodations as outlined on the EL/TPC form. See the current GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook on the [Assessment webpage](#). Please note, that after the two-year monitoring period ends, EL-3 and EL-4 students are no longer eligible for any EL-related testing accommodations.

Monitoring Exited EL Students' Progress

LEAs have flexibility to design how the monitoring process will be implemented and documented. It is a best practice to make an initial follow-up progress check on a recently-exited EL student within two weeks of exiting EL status and ESOL language program services.

At the end of each progress reporting period, LEAs could choose to have ESOL teachers contact each of the student's teachers to determine if the student is adjusting and succeeding academically, and to identify any academic adjustments needed based on data from:

- Periodic review of grades and formative assessments
- Periodic review of benchmark assessments
- Periodic review of standardized test scores
- Periodic review of portfolio assessments
- Periodic student interviews

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- Parent input
- Any other locally defined data

LEAs have flexibility to design their own monitoring processes and forms for ESOL teachers to use. Electronic monitoring processes are acceptable. [Chapter 8](#) of ED's [English Learner Toolkit](#) provides LEAs with a variety of monitoring form samples and vendors' tools for examining the progress of exited EL students.

Post-Exit Reverse-Reclassification Decision-Making Process for EL = '1' and EL = '2' Students

As students become proficient in English and their need for support begins to decline, their progress must be monitored regularly. This monitoring process provides a safety net to ensure that if the student should begin to struggle due to language proficiency, it is caught quickly, and appropriate support is reinstated.

In Georgia, it is the responsibility of the MTSS or Rtl team to determine whether the EL-exited student is struggling because of a lack of content knowledge or whether the EL-exited student is struggling because of a lack of English language proficiency. ESOL teachers are essential to the MTSS or Rtl review process as they understand the process and timeframe of second language acquisition, especially those ESOL teachers who have taught the exited EL in recent years. The team may want to administer a valid ELP assessment from among vendor choices, however, **the WIDA ELP assessment is not an option for an exited EL students.**

- **First**, an LEA should examine whether its locally chosen exit criteria is ensuring that EL students are proficient enough in English to be successful in the classroom. If an LEA finds that changes to locally designed exit criteria are necessary, appropriate training would be provided to teachers and staff.
- **Secondly**, an LEA should ensure that the struggling student is provided all instructional support available to all students within the school.
- The **third step** is to ensure that the MTSS or Rtl team is aware of the student's lack of academic progress and success. The MTSS or Rtl team should examine student data and determine appropriate interventions or appropriate increases in the intensity and duration of such interventions, following MTSS or Rtl protocols. Tier 2 or 3 progress monitoring processes should be implemented as for any other student.

Questions for the MTSS or Rtl team to consider:

1. Was the exited student educated formally in his/her home country? Was schooling consistent or did the student's education have prolonged periods of interrupted schooling or no schooling?
2. What were the exited EL student's WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS scores and sub-scores in each domain?
3. Was the student exited from EL status based on a prior Language Assessment Conference?
(**Note: The state-directed LAC protocol was discontinued in Spring 2017.**)
 - If a LAC determination had been made in the past, were the WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS overall CPL scores at the high end of the 4.0-4.9 range or was the Literacy sub-score close to 4.8?

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4. Was the student exited from English language assistance services based on English Learner Reclassification Review Committee decision? (Note: The LEA-directed Reclassification process was introduced Spring 2018.)
 - Was the student's WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS overall CPL score at the high end of the 4.3 - 4.9 range or at the low end?
5. Were the exited student's Georgia Milestones Language Arts/ELA End-of-Course scores borderline for meeting standards or where they significantly above the minimum requirement?
6. In the courses in which the exited student is struggling, what is her main area of difficulty?
 - a. Is she having difficulty specifically in the domain of writing, or reading, for example, or are there factors outside of language that are involved?
 - b. Is he struggling in a course in which he has always had difficulty?
 - c. Are the teachers differentiating instruction specifically to reach and support multi-lingual students?
 - d. Is it a lack of concentrated effort on the exited student's part, or does she turn in all assignments, but perhaps the quality of the work does not meet the requirements for a passing grade?
 - e. If so, would appropriate differentiation allow this student to adequately demonstrate his knowledge and comprehension of the content, or does he lack the background content information to be able to access the curriculum and fully comprehend the material?
 - f. Is this student receiving academic support to compensate for any lack of background information?

The final analysis of the team reviewing all this evidence and data is to determine whether the problem truly is a lack of language proficiency, rather than a lack of content knowledge, cognitive issues, or a disability. (See Guidance on Comparison of Language Differences vs. Learning Differences in *Supporting Learning Environment System*.)

If it is determined that the problem is a lack of English language proficiency, then the MTSS or RtI team should follow the following *Reverse-Reclassification EL Entrance* procedures

1. Conduct an EL Reverse Reclassification team meeting and document the team's decision on the *EL Reclassification Form*.
2. If the team has determined that the student's status should remain as Exited Student (EL = '1' or EL = '2'), no changes should be made in the Student Information System (SIS). All documentation should be maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative record.
3. If the team has determined that the student's status should **reverse back** to EL status, then parent's **consent must be** obtained, per OCR Guidelines.
4. **Timeline** for changing student's status in SIS from EL = '1' or EL = '2' to EL = 'Y':
 - a. If the *Reverse-Reclassification* decision is made in August or September **before** the Oct FTE count:
 - Then, change the status back to EL immediately and serve the student in the ESOL language program again.
 - b. If the *Reverse-Reclassification* decision is made **between Oct FTE** and **March FTE**:
 - Then, change the status back to EL immediately and serve the student in the ESOL language program again.

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- However, you will need to explain the Data Collections Error you receive!
- c. If the *Reverse-Reclassification* decision is made **after** the March FTE count:
 - Then, wait until **after** the June 30 Student Record sign-off to change the student's status back to EL=Y.
- All documentation should be maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative record.
- After the student's status is reversed, and is identified again as an EL student, then the *WIDA ACCESS* or *WIDA Alternate ACCESS* assessment can be administered during the state testing window.
- When the student meets the LEA's EL exit criteria for a 2nd time and is reclassified as English proficient for a 2nd time, then the two-year monitoring period must begin again – for a 2nd time.

Post-Exit Re-Screening Decision-Making Process for EL = '3', EL = '4', and EL = 'F' Students Returning to US Schools After Multiple Years in Non-English School Environments

State guidance provides LEAs with flexibility to conduct MTSS/Rtl meetings during the first two years of post-exit monitoring for reverse-reclassification purposes. (See previous section.) When students leave the country and are schooled in non-English environments, the state in essence *freezes* their EL status. When returning to US schools, students continue with the EL status they had when they left. However, state guidance does not provide LEAs with flexibility to use this same reverse-reclassification process during a student's third and fourth year post EL exit.

Therefore, an alternate procedure for students in this situation, can be inferred from the information provided to us in the OCR [Dear Colleague Letter](#) (2015, p. 34) and the [English Learner Toolkit](#), Chapter 8, *"If an exited EL is not progressing academically as expected and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, LEAs should re-test the student's English language proficiency with a valid, reliable, and grade-appropriate ELP test to see if the student must be offered additional language assistance services. In no case should re-testing of an exited student's ELP be prohibited. If the student is reentered into EL services, however, the LEA should document the reasons why and the parent's consent to reentry."*

LEA must consider the following factors before proceeding with a decision to re-screen an EL = '3' or EL = '4' student who has returned to US schools.

- ☐ The student demonstrated full English proficiency at an early elementary grade level, i.e., was exited from EL status.
- ☐ Following EL exit, the student was successful in U.S. schools during the first two years of post-exit monitoring and then left the country and was schooled in a non-English environment for three or more years.
- ☐ The student is currently enrolled in a grade level that has high academic English expectations; thus, a sense of urgency points to re-screening and possibly serving in the ESOL Language Program. Additional considerations would include ensuring students a pathway to graduation within a reasonable amount of time.

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Given these factors, the LEA would have flexibility to administer the ELP Screener again. The results of the ELP screener will determine next steps. OCR requires parent's consent to reentry (OCR [Dear Colleague Letter](#), 2015, p. 34).

Post re-screening steps:

- Per OCR, clear documentation must be maintained in the student's permanent records regarding the decision-making process and results. It is recommended that the LEA provide a cover letter or locally created form to accompany the new screener in the permanent records.
- If ELP screening results in a new EL = 'Yes' status, the LEA must relieve any Data Collections errors during FTE and Student Record. Please work with the GaDOE ESOL office and Data Collections to craft the justification to relieve the errors.
- If this occurs before or during the *WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS* testing window, the new EL = 'Yes' student must be administered the *WIDA ACCESS*.
- All EL = 'Yes' students must be provided with appropriate ESOL services, a Parent Notification Letter, an EL/TPC for state assessments, and accurate data reporting in the LEA's SIS.

EL Students in the State Accountability System

ESEA Section 3121(a)(5) requires that LEAs report on the number and percentage of ELs meeting the challenging State academic standards for **four years** after such students are no longer English learners. To meet this requirement, an LEA must report to the State on the academic achievement of an EL for each year of the four years after such student has achieved English language proficiency and no longer receives EL services.

Therefore, students who have exited EL status are coded in SIS for Data Collections for each year post-exit up to four years. In this manner their academic progress can be reported and monitored by LEAs and the SEA.

Post Exit Data Reporting	
EL-1	1st year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers & reported to state
EL-2	2nd year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers & reported to state
EL-3	3rd year post-exit – student progress is reported to state
EL-4	4th year post-exit – student progress is reported to state
EL-F	5 or more years post-exit – student progress is no longer monitored

EL Subgroup for CCRPI

- According to Georgia's approved [ESSA plan](#), all English learners and all exited students coded EL=1, 2, 3, & 4 are included in the EL SUBGROUP for CCRPI accountability purposes.
- Please review the [CCRPI Resources page](#) for a wide variety of information on English Learners and exited students in Georgia's CCRPI accountability system.

ELP Progress Points

- The [CCRPI Resources page](#) publishes English language proficiency targets for schools and school systems.
- The [English Learner Programs](#) website, Title I, Title III, and ESOL Language Program websites will publish each year the Number and Percentage of EL Students Attaining English Proficiency by LEA and SEA.

Closing the Gap

- The [Accountability website](#) also publishes Closing the Gap targets that include targets for English learners.

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Additional Resources

Quick References for EL Information and Resources

[Assessment](#)

[Curriculum & Instruction](#)

EL Language Programs Helpdesk - ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us

[Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 \(ESEA\), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 \(ESSA\)](#)

[ESOL Language Program](#)

[GaDOE WIDA ACCESS website](#)

[Georgia Professional Standards Commission](#)

[Georgia's State ESSA Plan approved January 18, 2018](#)

[Resource Guide: Accountability for English Learners Under the ESSA](#)

[Schools' Civil Rights Obligations to English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents](#)

[State Funded ESOL Courses](#)

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Federal Laws

Office for Civil Rights Laws

Stated below is an excerpt from the United States Code § 1703. **Denial of equal educational opportunity prohibited:**

No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by - (f) the failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.

In other words, federal law requires schools to provide language assistance services.

The United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has responsibility for enforcing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 regulatory requirements have been interpreted to prohibit denial of equal access to education because of a student's limited proficiency in English. Thus, Title VI protects those students limited in their English language skills such that they are unable to participate in, or benefit from, regular or special education school instructional programs.

During the late 1960s, the OCR became aware that many school districts made little or no provision for the education of students who were unable to understand English. In an effort to resolve this problem, on May 25, 1970, the former Department of Health, Education and Welfare issued a memorandum to clarify Title VI requirements concerning the responsibility of school districts to provide equal education opportunity to language minority students.

The May 25 Memorandum explained that Title VI is violated if:

1. Programs for students whose English is less than proficient are not designed to teach them English as soon as possible or operate as a dead-end track.
2. Parents whose English is limited do not receive notices and other information from the school in a language they can understand.

There are links to two additional OCR related documents, *OCR Compliance Guidance on Parent Communication Requirements* and *OCR's Blueprint for a District ESOL Plan*, under the Federal Resources link on the right side of the GaDOE ESOL webpage.

In the 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* case, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the May 25 Memorandum as a valid interpretation of the requirements of Title VI.

Based on the language of Title VI and the *Lau* holding, a foreign exchange student is a "person in the United States," and the *Lau* provisions would therefore apply. Also, under the ESEA, an exchange student would not be exempt from any Title I required assessment, specifically, in this case, the ELP assessment. An EL, who happens to be a foreign exchange student, would also be included in an LEA's count of ELs for purposes of allocating funds under 3114(a) of the ESEA.

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Listed below is a review of other key legislation, court rulings, and administrative regulations addressing these students and the legal responsibilities of educational agencies serving them.

Other Federal Laws

Constitution of the United States, Fourteenth Amendment (1868)

1. "No State shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."
2. Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) (1974)
"No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex or national origin, by the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs."

The Civil Rights Division, Educational Opportunities Section of the United States Department of Justice (<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/edu/types.php>) is charged with enforcement of the EEOA, and as such, investigates allegations that State Educational Agencies (SEAs) or school districts are not providing adequate services to ELs. The webpage outlines specific factors for assessing compliance and conditions that may violate the EEOA.

1. Fails to provide a language acquisition program to its EL students or fails to provide adequate language services to its EL students.
2. Fails to provide resources to implement its language acquisition program effectively (e.g., an ESOL program lacks ESOL teachers or ESOL materials);
3. Fails to take steps to identify students who are not proficient in English.
4. Does not exit EL students from a language acquisition program when the EL students have acquired English proficiency or exits EL students without written parental or guardian permission before the students acquire English proficiency.
5. Fails to communicate meaningfully with non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking parents and guardians of EL students by not providing such parents and guardians with written or oral translations of important notices or documents.
6. Fails to provide language acquisition assistance to EL students because they receive special education services, or fails to provide special education services to EL students when they qualify for special education services; and
7. Excludes EL students from gifted and talented programs based on their limited English proficiency.

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Court Rulings

Supreme Court

1982 -- Plyler v. Doe

The Supreme Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states from denying a free public education to immigrant children regardless of their immigrant status.

Federal Courts

1981 -- Castañeda v. Pickard

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals formulated a method to determine school district compliance with the Equal Education Opportunities Act (1974). The three-part test includes the following criteria:

1. "The school is pursuing a program informed by an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or, at least, deemed legitimate experimental strategy.
2. The program and practices used by (the) school system are reasonably calculated to implement effectively the educational theory adopted by the school.
3. The school's program succeeds, after a legitimate trial, in producing results indicating that the language barriers confronting students are actually being overcome." *Id.* at 1009-10.

Castañeda states that the segregation of EL students is permissible only when "the benefits which would accrue to EL students by remedying language barriers which impede their ability to realize their academic potential in an English language educational institution may outweigh the adverse effects of such segregation." In other words, the OCR will not examine whether ESOL is the least segregated program for providing language services. Instead, the OCR will examine whether the degree of segregation in the program is necessary to achieve the program's educational goals.

Frequently Asked Questions

Section I: Laws and Funding

- 1. Why is it necessary to identify language minority students? Is the LEA required to have an English-language assistance program?**

Yes, the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, requires the identification of language minority students by level of English language proficiency and the provision of language assistance services to identified ELs.

- 2. What is the correct terminology to identify language minority students?**

The language in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 identifies language minority students as *English learners* or EL students.

Section II: Registration Processes

Guidance for Student Enrollment & Withdrawal Rule

- 3. What are the first steps to take when students who do not speak any English enroll in the LEA?**

- Determine whether the student is an English learner and therefore eligible for ESOL services (See *EL Entrance Procedures*).
- Schedule the student for ESOL classes with a certified or endorsed ESOL teacher who is knowledgeable about the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards (<https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld>)

Section III: Screening Potential EL Students

- 4. The student is transferring from a non-WIDA state and was currently being served by an ESOL program in that state. Is a WIDA screener assessment score necessary to place this student in our ESOL program?**

- No. If a student is/was enrolled at the time of transfer there is no need for screening. The student is deemed eligible by virtue of his services provided in the other state and should begin receiving services immediately. However, the school should implement “due diligence” to procure the original HLS and ELP Screener scores.

- 5. The student was screened in a Non-WIDA state using that state’s ELP screener and was found to NOT Qualify as an English Learner. Should the student be rescreened with the current grade appropriate WIDA Screener in GA?**

- If the Home Language Survey indicates an answer other than English, and if the other state’s Non-WIDA Screener was recently administered (within the last school year), then the student must be screened. Please refer to the Registration and Home Language Survey section for additional guidance.

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- 6. The student was an English Learner in a Non-WIDA state and just exited EL status. Do we rescreen with the current grade appropriate WIDA Screener? Should the student be classified as monitored for two years?**
 - Do not re-screen the student.
 - The student should be considered an EL-1 and EL-2 and monitored for the two-calendar year requirement.
- 7. The student was an English Learner in another state and exited from EL Status more than two years ago. Must this student still be screened with the current WIDA eligibility assessment?**
 - No. Ensure there is documentation to support the fact the student was previously an English Learner and was exited in that state.
- 8. Does this State Guidance on *EL Entrance & Exit Procedures* replace the need for local policies and procedures?**
 - No. Each LEA must develop local policies and procedures that fully address all aspects of the school system's ESOL language program. The GaDOE *EL Entrance & Exit Procedures Guidance and Systems of Continuous Improvement Guidance* address local compliance with both State Board of Education rules and federal requirements for a language assistance program; however, it is the responsibility of the LEA to develop policies to ensure the school systems is in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- 9. What is the WIDA Consortium?**
 - The World-Class Instructional Design Assessment Consortium (WIDA) is a consortium of 39-member states, the District of Columbia, the US Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands, dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners. Georgia has been a member of the Consortium since 2005.
 - See WIDA Member states on page 40.
 - The WIDA Consortium developed English language development (ELD) standards and an English language proficiency (ELP) test aligned with those standards, *WIDA ACCESS*. A second assessment, the *WIDA Alternate ACCESS*, is an assessment of English language proficiency (ELP) for students in grades 1 -12 who are classified as English Learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the WIDA ACCESS / Alternate ACCESS assessments.
 - More information about the WIDA Consortium may be found at <https://wida.wisc.edu/>

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List of ELP Assessments by State

(as a reference for inter-state transfer students)

WIDA Consortium States:

AL, AK, CO, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MT, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NC, ND, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, UT, VT, VA, WA, WI, WY, and the Department of Defense

ELPA21 States:

Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, West Virginia

ELP Assessments in other states –

1. Arizona – AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment)
2. California – ELPAC and Alternate ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessments for California) - <https://www.elpac.org/>
3. Kansas – KELPA2 (Kansas English Language Proficiency Assessment 2)
4. Louisiana – ELPT K-12 (English Language Proficiency Test)
5. Mississippi – ELPT (English Language Proficiency Test – CTB/LAS Links Assessment System)
6. New York – NYSESLAT (New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test)
7. Ohio – OELPA (Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment)
8. Texas – TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System)

Georgia's EL Entrance Criteria Historical Changes from 2010-2021

(For research purposes ONLY.)

Historical Kindergarten W-APT (Discontinued June 2021) EL Entrance Criteria				
2010 – May 2017		August 2017- May 2018		August 2018 – May 2021
Pre-K to 1st Semester Grade 1	Listening & Speaking (only) < 29 (at LEA discretion)	Pre-K to 1st Semester Kindergarten	Listening and Speaking (only) < 29	Listening and Speaking (only) < 29
	Listening & Speaking = 19-28 & Reading < 11 & Writing < 12 (Additional district-defined factors allowed)	2nd Semester Kindergarten to 1st semester Grade 1	All four domains Listening & Speaking 19-28 & Reading < 11 & Writing < 12 (Additional district-defined factors allowed.)	All four domains Listening & Speaking 19-28 & Reading < 11 & Writing < 12

Georgia's Historical WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten (Discontinued June 2021) EL Entrance Criteria			
2010 – 2016		August 2017- May 2021	
Pre-K to 1st Semester First Grade	Administer all 4 domains CPL < 5.0	Pre-K to 1st Semester Kindergarten	Listening and Speaking (only) < 5.0
	Listening & Speaking CPL < 5.0 (consult chart to determine)	2nd Semester Kindergarten to First semester first Grade	Administer all 4 domains CPL < 5.0

Historical GA EL Entrance Criteria Grades 1-12			
W-APT 2010 – 2016		WIDA Screener 2017- Current	
2nd Semester First Grade to Grade 12	Grade Level Adjusted Score < 5.0 (LAC consideration is allowable.)	2nd Semester First Grade to Grade 12	Administer all 4 domains Grade Level Adjusted Score < 5.0

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Georgia's EL Exit Criteria Historical Changes from 2006-2019

(For research purposes ONLY.)

Historical EL Exit Criteria for Students in Kindergarten			
2006-2009	2010-2013	2014-2017	2018-Curent
<p><i>The maximum Overall Composite Score that a student taking the Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs could receive is 3.4.</i></p> <p>In using ACCESS for ELLs scores as criteria in making exit decisions for kindergarten EL students, LEAs should review their students' scores in context, paying particular attention to the Oral Language Score as well as other local criteria.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an ACCESS "Accountability" Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) ≥ 5.0 <u>with no individual language domain score less than 5.0.</u></p> <p>LEAs may consider other factors, such as students' age, grade-level, GKIDS assessment, local inventory checklists, and other local assessments.</p> <p>LEAs have the option of NOT exiting Kindergarten English Learners even if their scores reflect required criteria.</p> <p>A conservative approach to exiting Kindergarten ELs is recommended.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an ACCESS "Accountability" Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) ≥ 5.0 <u>with no individual language domain score less than 5.0.</u></p> <p>All Kindergarten EL students NOT meeting this criterion may not be exited – a Language Assessment Conference (LAC) IS NOT AN OPTION anymore.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an Overall Composite Score ≥ 5.0 and Listening, Speaking, or Reading Language Domains are all ≥ 5.0 and Writing Domain is ≥ 4.5.</p> <p>LAC Decision is not allowed.</p>

* Language Assessment Conference (LAC)

Historical EL Exit Criteria for Students in Grades 1-12 ACCESS	
Spring/Summer 2006 – Spring/Summer 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EL students who scored ACCESS ≥ 5.0 will be evaluated for reading/reading comprehension to determine if they have the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in English for classroom success. Results from the reading/reading comprehension state assessments will satisfy this requirement. For grade levels in which there is no state assessment, students shall be assessed using approved local reading/reading comprehension tests.
Spring/Summer 2010 - Spring/Summer 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs may NOT exit any EL student who was administered ACCESS Tier A. LEAs must exit students scoring ACCESS Tier C Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 AND meeting proficiency on state reading comprehension assessment**. LEAs may refer students to LAC Decision Team if ACCESS Tier C Overall ≥ 5.0 <u>but the student IS NOT PROFICIENT</u> on state reading comprehension assessment**. LEAs may refer students to LAC Decision Team if <u>ACCESS Tier C Overall is 4.0-4.9 AND student is proficient on state reading comprehension assessment**</u>.

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Spring/Summer 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as in Spring/Summer 2012 <u>with the following exception</u> for students in Grades 1 & 2 who are not administered the state Reading assessment: “Proficiency” is an ACCESS Tier C Literacy Score ≥ 4.7. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NO LAC is permitted when using this exit criteria for EL students in Grades 1-2.
Spring/Summer 2014 - Spring/Summer 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs may NOT exit any EL student who took ACCESS Tier A. LEAs must exit EL students who scored ACCESS Tier C Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 AND Literacy sub-score ≥ 4.8 LEAs may use the LAC Decision to exit EL students who scored ACCESS Tier B or Tier C Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 AND a Literacy sub-score < 4.8. LEAs may use a LAC Decision to exit EL students who scored ACCESS Tier B or Tier C Overall CPL between 4.0-4.9 AND a Literacy sub-score ≥ 4.8.
Spring/Summer 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs must exit EL students who scored ACCESS 2.0 Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 AND Literacy sub-score ≥ 4.8 LEAs may use the LAC Decision to exit EL students who scored ACCESS 2.0 Overall CPL ≥ 5.0 AND a Literacy sub-score < 4.8. LEAs may use the LAC Decision to exit EL students who scored ACCESS 2.0 Overall CPL 4.0-4.9 AND a Literacy sub-score ≥ 4.8.
Spring/Summer 2017 <i>(Pre-ESSA and Post WIDA ACCESS Standard-setting Summer 2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs must exit all EL students who score ACCESS Overall CPL ≥ 5.0. LEAs may NOT exit any EL student who scores ACCESS Overall CPL < 4.3. LEAs were strongly encouraged to develop districtwide procedures to apply uniformly to EL students across the district.
Spring 2018 – Current <i>(GA State ESSA Plan & SBOE Rule)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs must exit all EL students who score ACCESS Overall CPL ≥ 5.0. LEAs may NOT exit any EL student who scores ACCESS Overall CPL < 4.3. LEAs may choose an EL Exit Criteria within the state-approved range of ACCESS Overall CPL 4.3 - 4.9, however, they <u>must use</u> an internal <i>EL Reclassification Review Committee</i> to make the exit or do-not-exit decision for any EL students scoring between 4.3 and 4.9. LEAs must have standardized written procedures which must be implemented with fidelity. The LAC Decision is DISCONTINUED, and LEAs <u>may not use this process</u>.

* Language Assessment Conference (LAC) Decisions must consider language proficiency, classroom performance, teacher recommendations, criterion-referenced test scores, and writing samples to make an exit decision.

**

- “Proficiency” is a score of 2 (Meets Standards) or higher on Georgia’s Reading Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) Total
- “Proficiency” is a score of “Pass” or higher on the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT) Language Arts Total
- “Proficiency” is a score of “70” or higher on a High School English Language Arts End-of-Course Test (EOCT)

Georgia Home Language Survey

Required: January 2024 | Optional: January 2023 – December 2023

Notice to Educators:

For each newly enrolled student, Georgia school systems collect parents' or guardians' responses to one question regarding their own language preference for school communication, and to three questions regarding their child's primary or home language, i.e., *Home Language Survey (HLS)*. In addition, families who report a multilingual home language environment will choose only one clarification statement regarding their child's understanding and use of English. Parents responses to these *HLS* questions during enrollment comprise the first step in Georgia's statewide standardized English learner (EL) identification process.

Purpose of Questions	Questions	Decision-Making Guidance				
Parent Communication Language Preference						
Information from this question helps schools identify which parents or guardians need documents and forms interpreted and/or translated.	Parent Communication Language (Required) <ul style="list-style-type: none">In which language would you prefer to receive school communication? _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This question is for informational purposes only. It is not used to identify a potential English learner for English language proficiency (ELP) screening.Schools provide parents or guardians with school information in a language and format they understand.¹				
Identification of Potential English Learners						
Information from these three questions help schools identify if the student is a potential English learner (EL) who must be administered the English language proficiency (ELP) screener to	Home Language Survey (Required) <ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Which language does your child <u>best</u> understand and speak? _____5. Which language does your child <u>most</u> frequently speak at home? _____6. Which language do adults in your home <u>most</u> frequently use when speaking with your	<table><tr><th>If parent or guardian's response to the question is:</th><th>Then, the required decision is:</th></tr><tr><td>Non-English language for all three questions.</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">Student is a potential English learner.Administer the grade-level appropriate ELP screener (with accommodations)</td></tr></table>	If parent or guardian's response to the question is:	Then, the required decision is:	Non-English language for all three questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student is a potential English learner.Administer the grade-level appropriate ELP screener (with accommodations)
		If parent or guardian's response to the question is:	Then, the required decision is:			
Non-English language for all three questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student is a potential English learner.Administer the grade-level appropriate ELP screener (with accommodations)					

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determine EL eligibility.	child? <hr/>		when student has an identified or suspected disability.)
		English language or American Sign Language for all three questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is not a potential English learner. • Do not administer the ELP screener.
		Non-English language(s) and English language for any of the three questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions in the <i>Additional Information from Multilingual Families</i> section.

¹ [U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, and U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 7 January 2015, *Dear Colleague Letter: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents*, p. 37.](#)

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Purpose of Questions	Questions	Decision-Making Guidance												
Additional Information from Parents or Guardians in Multilingual Home Environments														
<p>Parents and guardians in multilingual home environments must choose only one of these five clarification statements about their child's primary language use in the home. The parents' or guardians' clarification statement will support educators' identification of the student as a potential EL or not a potential EL. This statement provides parents or guardians the opportunity to clarify their child's use of English and other language(s) in the home.</p>	<p>Choose <u>only one sentence</u> that best describes your child's primary language.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses only the home language and no English.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses mostly the home language and a little English.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses the home language and English equally.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses mostly English and only a little of the home language.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My child understands and uses only English.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>If parent or guardian's statement choice is:</th><th>Then, the required decision is:</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>My child understands and uses only the home language and no English.</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener </td></tr> <tr> <td>My child understands and uses mostly the home language and a little English.</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener </td></tr> <tr> <td>My child understands and uses the home language and English equally.</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. LEA option for "acknowledgement statement" below. </td></tr> <tr> <td>My child understands and uses mostly English and only a little of the home language.</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. </td></tr> <tr> <td>My child understands and uses only English.</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	If parent or guardian's statement choice is:	Then, the required decision is:	My child understands and uses only the home language and no English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener 	My child understands and uses mostly the home language and a little English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is a potential EL. Administer the ELP screener 	My child understands and uses the home language and English equally .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. LEA option for "acknowledgement statement" below. 	My child understands and uses mostly English and only a little of the home language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener. 	My child understands and uses only English .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is not potential EL. Do not administer the ELP screener.
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Notice Regarding Parent/Guardian Signature & Date:

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- Based on parents' choosing the statement: "My child understands and uses the home language and English equally", LEA's have the option to ask parents to sign an Acknowledgement Statement:
 - *I, parent/legal guardian of _____, do hereby acknowledge that my child's home language environment is multilingual, including English, and that my child's level of English proficiency is developmentally age-appropriate as that of other English-only peers.*
- The updated HLS was designed to be uploaded into an online enrollment system. Consequently, the updated HLS and 20 language versions do not include a parent/guardian signature and date line. However, if school systems use paper enrollment processes, please ensure that parents or guardians sign and date the HLS, in a language and format they understand.
- LEA must maintain all HLS documentation in the student's permanent records.

Notice Regarding HLS One-Time Administration:

- Although schools' enrollment packets contain the HLS, it is intended that parents/guardians only complete the HLS one-time during student's initial enrollment in a U.S. school.
- Unless the student is newly enrolled in a U.S. school, please review students' transfer documentation, since only the parents/guardians' responses on the original HLS are used to identify a potential EL who must be administered the ELP screener.
 - The parents/guardians' original HLS responses determine whether the student is identified as a potential EL or not.
- See [EL Language Programs – State Guidance](#), pp. 8 and 14.

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205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE

Atlanta, GA 30334

www.gadoe.org



@georgiadeptofed

Richard Woods, State School Superintendent

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