



Serving English Learners During Distance Learning: FAQs and Provisional Identification Procedure

July 27, 2020

Welcome and Introductions

OSSE Office of Multilingual Education/English Learner (EL) Supports

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Agenda

- Five frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- Provisional EL identification procedure
- Continuous education principles

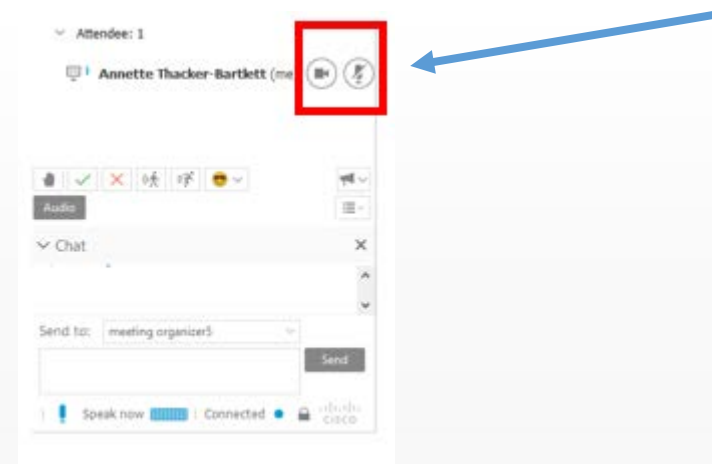
Our Norms

Agreements

- Stay engaged
- Speak your truth
- Assume positive intent as others share
- Be kind to one another... we are all in this together!

Virtual Engagement

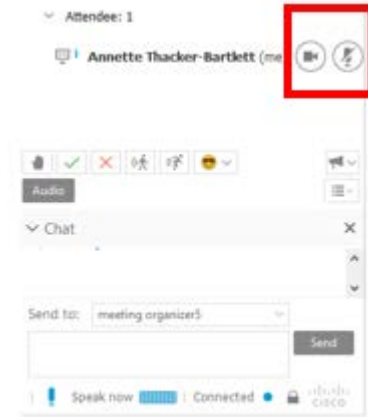
- Participate in chats and polls
- Keep mic on mute unless speaking to the group



Practice Using WebEx and PolEv

Microphone & Video

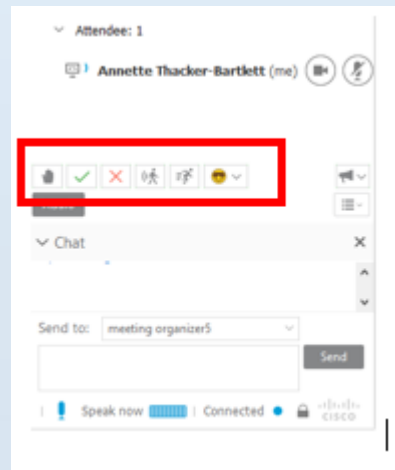
By default, your microphone and camera are turned off. Find the participant panel on far left and select the camera or microphone icon next to your name.



In the chat box, introduce yourself, your school, and your role

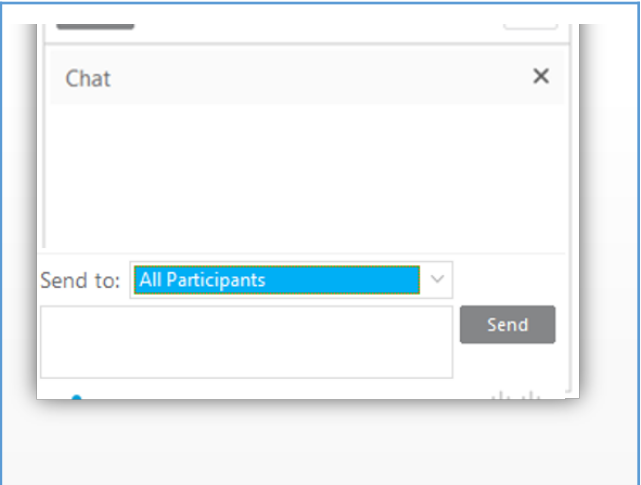
Participant Controls

Participant controls at the bottom of your participant panel.



Chat Box

Type in the chat by selecting "all participants" from the drop down. Press "send" to share your chat.



Which dessert would you choose?

Ice cream sundae with all the fixings

A

Chocolate cake

B

Pecan Pie

C

Total Results: 0

What is your main goal for the start of the school year?

Background

As a part of the District's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OSSE has provided a document of frequently asked questions on the responsibilities of states and local education agencies (LEAs) to English learners (ELs) and their parents during extended school closures and distance learning.

This document contains guidance on LEA responsibilities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), other federal laws related to ELs, District Municipal Regulations 5-E3101, the DC Language Access Act, and state EL policies and procedures. This document does not impose any additional requirements beyond those included in applicable federal and local laws and regulations.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are LEAs required to provide language instruction services to ELs during distance learning? If so, what are the expectations?
2. During distance learning, must the LEA provide ELs content area instruction and provide language accommodations to EL in those classes?
3. If a student does not receive an ACCESS score due to suspended testing this spring, can the student exit from EL status?
4. How should LEAs ensure meaningful communication with parents of ELs in a language they can understand?
5. If schools are operating fully or partially remotely, are LEAs still required to screen new students to determine EL status within 30 days of the first day of school (two weeks if enrolling after the beginning of the year) and use the same screener assessments during distance learning?

1a. Are LEAs required to provide language instruction services to ELs during distance learning?

Yes. The LEA must provide language instruction services to ELs during distance, in-person and hybrid settings.

1b. If so, what are the expectations?

- Physical school closures or social distancing schedules may affect the way services are provided to ELs. For example, EL services may be provided virtually, online or via telephone.

Develop a plan for serving ELs

Use multiple data sources to develop English language proficiency goals for each EL student

Determine EL program placement and services to support progress towards those goals.

EL, general education, specials/enrichment, and special education teachers, as well as related service providers, school leaders and parents, should collaborate to continue to meet the needs of ELs.

2. During distance learning, must the LEA provide ELs content area instruction and provide language accommodations to EL in those classes?

- Yes. ELs must have full, equitable access to all educational programs. The LEA must provide language accommodations for content classes that are held remotely.

Numerous educational technology features may be leveraged as accommodations that provide ELs access to grade-level content.

Examples include extended time, graphical supports, and online dictionaries.

EL, general education, specials/enrichment, and special education teachers, as well as related service providers, school leaders and parents, should collaborate on effective uses of technology to provide equitable access to grade-level content.

3. If a student does not receive an ACCESS score due to suspended testing this spring, can the student exit from EL status?

- No. The LEA may not exit an EL from EL status without an ACCESS score that meets the minimum exit criteria.

For students whose 2019-20 school year ACCESS score met the exit criteria and are now exited from EL status, schools should closely monitor these students to ensure they do not need additional supports.

For students without a SY19-20 composite ACCESS score, use all other available data to inform EL supports and services for the coming year.

The spring distance learning and summer period may cause some temporary regression in proficiency, thus requiring more language supports and services upon return to school than previously necessary.

4. How should LEAs ensure meaningful communication with parents of ELs in a language they can understand?

Reminder

The LEA must ensure meaningful communication with parents of ELs in a language they can understand and adequately notify parents with limited proficiency in English of information about any program, service, or activity that is also called to the attention of English-proficient parents.

For more information, refer to the joint guidance from U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, the Language Access Act of 2004, OSSE EL policy, and the DC PSCB EL monitoring policy.

4. How should LEAs ensure meaningful communication with parents of ELs in a language they can understand?

Example Strategy	Resource
Include families' preferred language of communication in attendance/engagement trackers to help ensure language access.	Sample tracker
Use skilled interpreters and translators to provide language access.	Example communication and translation apps
Leverage technology to provide language access.	Tips for working with an interpreter

5. If schools are operating fully or partially remotely, are LEAs still required to screen new students to determine EL status within 30 days of the first day of school (two weeks if enrolling after the beginning of the year) and use the same screener assessments during distance learning?

- If possible, the LEA should conduct screening for EL eligibility in person using state-approved English proficiency screeners and make every effort to do so in a timely manner.
- However, if in-person screening is not possible, the LEA should conduct provisional EL screening.

5. If schools are operating fully or partially remotely, are LEAs still required to screen new students to determine EL status within 30 days of the first day of school (two weeks if enrolling after the beginning of the year) and use the same screener assessments during distance learning?

- This is a temporary, provisional EL identification method that does not replace the requirement to conduct full EL identification using state-approved EL screener assessments once in-person screening is possible.
- The purpose is to ensure that students who are ELs begin receiving the necessary English language supports and services without delay.
- When using the provisional EL identification procedure, an LEA may explain to parents orally the information required to be in the parent notification letter to start providing EL services remotely to those students.

5. If schools are operating fully or partially remotely, are LEAs still required to screen new students to determine EL status within 30 days of the first day of school (two weeks if enrolling after the beginning of the year) and use the same screener assessments during distance learning?

- The LEA must keep track of all students who are screened using the provisional method and record the results as “Provisional EL” (PEL) or “Provisional Not EL” (PNEL) in the LEA’s student information system (SIS).
- As soon as it is possible to do so, the LEA should (1) conduct full screening using state-approved screeners for all students with PEL and PNEL status; (2) provide formal parent notification according to state policy and procedures for all students who were screened provisionally; and (3) record the resulting formal EL status in LEAs’ SIS.
- See pages 7-14 of [Delivering Education Services to English Learners Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders and Teachers in the District of Columbia](#)

When poll is active, respond at Pollev.com/jennifernort119

Text **JENNIFERNORT119** to **22333** once to join

How are you doing with plans for EL screening?

I'm ready, planning for in-person, socially distanced screening.

I'm in the process of figuring it out.

I have no idea and would love to learn from others.

I'm probably going to have to use the provisional procedure for at least some students.

Total Results: 0



Provisional EL Identification Procedure During Distance Learning

Provisional EL Identification Overview

1. For transfer students, review the student's previous school records, if available.
2. Review the Home Language Survey results.
3. Conduct a virtual/phone interview.
4. Make a provisional identification and determine EL program placement.
5. Notify the parents of eligibility for EL services.
6. Notify the student's teachers of provisional EL identification and placement. Begin EL services.
7. Document the provisional identification.
8. As soon as possible, complete formal screening for all students who were provisionally screened.

1. For transfer students, review the student's previous school records, if available.

If the student arrives with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and will need EL screening:

- Determine the appropriate accommodations for the student interview (STEP 3); and
- Interpret screening results in consultation with special education personnel.
- If the student is suspected of having a disability but a determination cannot be made prior to completing this procedure, complete the provisional screening with administrative considerations or accommodations that the EL and special education educators deem necessary.

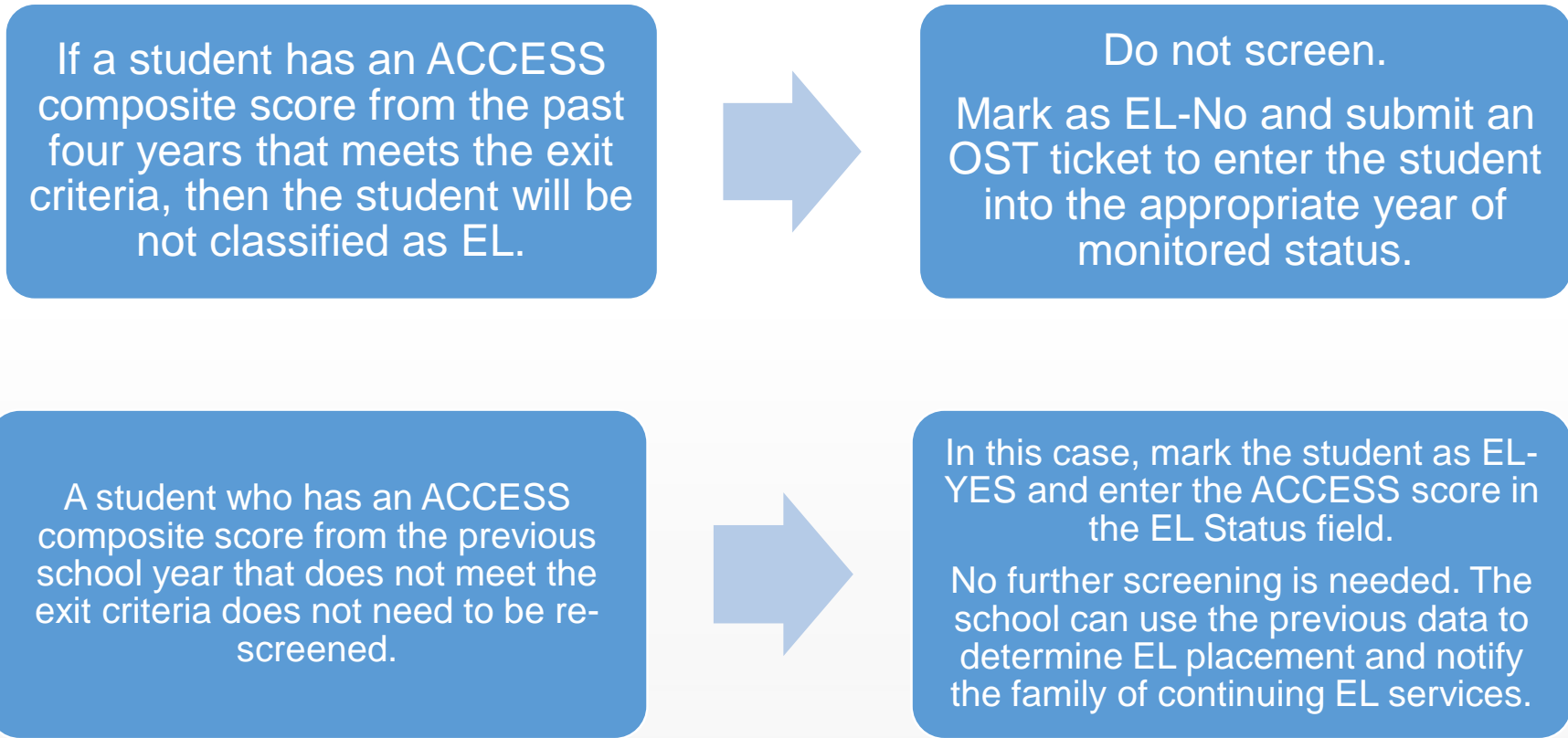
1. For transfer students, review the student's previous school records, if available.

Within-State Transfers

- Use the [Early Access to EL Data Application](#) to verify whether the student has been identified as EL or monitored-EL, has been previously screened, has an ACCESS score, or is dually-identified as EL and having an IEP.
- In this case, if a student's records indicate that they are EL, then no further screening is needed. The school can use the previous data to determine EL placement and notify the family of continuing EL services.
- For students in prekindergarten (prek) and kindergarten (K), follow the re-screening procedures outlined on pages 8-10 of [Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia](#).

1. For transfer students, review the student's previous school records, if available.

Out-of-State Transfers



2. Review the Home Language Survey results.

- If the Home Language Survey indicates a language other than English is spoken in the home to or by the student, the student must be screened for possible identification.

3. Conduct a virtual/phone interview.

Grade Band	Family Interview	Student Interview Speaking	Student Interview Reading and Writing
Grade PreK	X		
Grade K		X	
Grade 1		X	X
Grades 2-3		X	X
Grades 4-12		X	X

PreK Family Interview (Appendix A)

- An EL professional should conduct the family interview virtually or by phone and review the results. The interview may not be mailed to or completed independently by a student, parent or guardian.
- Use an interpreter if necessary. Providing oral interpretation helps ensure meaningful communication with families whose preferred language of communication is a language other than English.
- Students, siblings, friends, or untrained staff should not be relied upon as interpreters.

Record as Provisional – EL:	Record as Provisional – Not EL:
Family interview responses about the student’s exposure to and use of English indicate that <u>English is used sometimes or never</u> and the student will most likely be eligible for EL services upon full screening.	Family interview responses indicate that <u>English is always or almost always used</u> with family and caregivers and the student will most likely not be eligible for EL services upon full screening.

Grades K-12 Student Interview: Speaking

- Interviewers must have strategies in place to:
 - Ensure students are comfortable during the interview, especially given that students may not have experience interacting with someone through a screen; and
 - Communicate with the parents so the student answers the questions independently.

Start with introductory, beginning level questions that are developmentally appropriate. For example, a 5-year-old may not know how to answer, “Where are you from?”

Ask probing follow-up questions to give the student the opportunity to provide extended responses.

Ask increasingly higher level questions, if the student’s responses show they may be able to answer more linguistically demanding questions.

Stop at the level where student has difficulty responding. If the student has difficulty responding at a given level, ask easy closing question to end on a positive note.

Grades K-12 Student Interview: Speaking

Examples of beginning level questions	Examples of probing follow-up questions (for all levels)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My name is _____. What is your name?” • “I’m from Washington, DC. Where are you from?” • “How old are you?” • “I like to _____. What do you like to do?” • “Tell me about your family.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tell me more.” • “Can you say more about that?” • “Why do you like/think/feel that?” • What else can you tell me about that?” • “What details can you add to that?”
<p style="text-align: center;">Examples of intermediate level questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What do you like at school?” • “What kinds of food do you like?” • “Tell me about your favorite sports team/game/toy/hobby)” • “What would you like to do when you graduate from high school/grow up?” • “The weather is ____ today. Tell me what weather you like.” • “If you could do something special, what would you do? Why?” • “Who is your hero and what makes that person special?” 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Examples of high level questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What is your favorite subject in school and why?” • “Let’s pretend that I am a friend. Tell me why I should like your favorite (sports team, video game, toy, or hobby).” • “Tell me about a time when you solved a problem. What was the problem and how did you solve it?” • “What activity is the best to do when staying home? Give 2-3 reasons why you think that.” 	

Grades K-12 Student Interview: Speaking

To reflect developmental differences of younger learners, separate language use inventory rubrics are provided as follows:

- Grade K
- Grade 1
- Grades 2-3
- Grades 4-12

Speaking		(Grades 2-3)
Beginning	Intermediate	High
Can use short phrases and/or simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics.	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms and some content-specific vocabulary about familiar and academic topics.	Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using content-specific vocabulary, as appropriate for the grade-level.

Grades 1-12 Student Interview: Reading and Writing

- Provide the student a passage or short book (electronically) in English that is both grade-level appropriate and within range of the student's apparent proficiency, as shown in the listening and speaking portion of the interview.
- It is recommended that LEAs use a text from their curriculum or a website such as www.newsela.com or www.readinga-z.com, along with accompanying questions, to elicit understanding of the student's comprehension of the text.

If a student appears to be in the beginning levels of English proficiency based on the interview, then choose an easier reading passage that is also suitable for the grade-level.

If a student appears to be in an intermediate or high English proficiency level, then choose a reading passage of corresponding difficulty that is also suitable for the grade level.

Grades 1-12 Student Interview: Reading and Writing

- Ask the student to read the passage out loud. If the student is unable to read the passage at all, switch to an easier passage or end the reading portion of the interview. Then ask 2 or 3 relevant comprehension questions. LEAs can use the example questions below or other relevant questions for the grade and text.

Example questions

- What is this book/passage about?
- Who is the main character?
- What happens first in the book/passage?
- What is the problem in the story/passage?
- What happens at the end of the passage?
- What did you learn from this passage?
- Did you like the book/passage? Why did/didn't you like it?

Grades 1-12 Student Interview: Reading and Writing

To reflect developmental differences of younger learners, separate language use inventory rubrics are provided as follows:

- Grade 1
- Grades 2-3
- Grades 4-12

Reading		(Grades 2-3)
Beginning	Intermediate	High
Can read very short, simple texts and find specific, predictable information with illustrations. Limited understanding of words/phrases with multiple meanings.	Can understand grade-level fiction and non-fiction texts on unfamiliar topics with some support. Use grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding. Begins to understand words/phrases with multiple meanings.	Can understand grade-level fiction and non-fiction texts on unfamiliar topics. Use grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding. Begins to understand idiomatic expressions and words/phrases with multiple meanings.

Grades 1-12 Student Interview: Reading and Writing

- Next, ask the student to respond to a writing prompt.
- If the student's reading was rated at intermediate and/or high levels, use a prompt about the passage.
- If the student was unable to complete the reading portion, use a prompt that is not tied to the passage.
- Written directions and a word bank or sentence starter may be provided.
- The student may complete the writing in the meeting or on their own and submit it by email.
- Rate the student's writing using the writing rubric.

Example prompts

- Write about your family.
- Write a paragraph that tells what the passage is about.
- Write a summary of the book/passage.
- Write about what you like to do for fun. Give details about who, what, when and where.
- Write a paragraph about the best day you ever had.

Grades 1-12 Student Interview: Reading and Writing

Writing Cohesion

(Grades 2-3)

Beginning	Intermediate	High
Can produce groups of words with little to no structure and little to no use of organizational patterns.	Can produce linear sequence of sentences in writing with limited structure. Shows some use of organizational patterns, and simple connectors like “and”, “but”, and “because”.	Can produce clear, structured language, showing some use of a range of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices (such as causal, sequential or comparative).

Writing Word-Phrase Accuracy

Beginning	Intermediate	High
Can use basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases and groups of a few words to communicate limited information in familiar situations.	Can use more varied vocabulary that extends beyond the everyday to include some content-specific vocabulary. Can express him/ herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions.	Can select language to express him/ herself clearly using content-specific vocabulary.

Writing Sentence Accuracy

Beginning	Intermediate	High
Frequent grammatical errors that may hinder the meaning of the writing.	May produce errors in grammar that do not hinder the meaning of the writing. Mostly writes frequently used grammatical patterns (S-V-O or “I ...”).	Maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy (capitalization, punctuation, simple tenses, and simple subject-verb agreement). May use a variety of sentence structures.

4. Make a provisional identification and determine EL program placement.

- Use the family interview responses or the language use rubric ratings to make a provisional identification of *Provisional - EL* or *Provisional – Not EL*.

Grade	Record as Provisional – EL:	Record as Provisional – Not EL:
Prek	Family interview responses about the student’s exposure to and use of English indicate that <u>English is used sometimes or never</u> and the student will most likely be eligible for EL services upon full screening.	Family interview responses indicate that <u>English is always or almost always used</u> with family and caregivers and the student will most likely not be eligible for EL services upon full screening.
K-12	<u>Any rubric ratings are “Beginning” and/or “Intermediate”</u> , indicating the student will most likely meet the criteria for EL status upon full screening.	<u>All rubric ratings are “High”</u> , indicating that the student will most likely not meet the criteria for EL status upon full screening.

4. Make a provisional identification and determine EL program placement.

- **The LEA must keep track of the status of all students who are screened provisionally, whether identified as *Provisional – EL* or *Provisional – Not EL*, so that they can be screened according to the full procedure as soon as possible.**
- Regardless of whether a student is provisionally identified as *Provisional – EL* or *Provisional – Not EL*, the formal identification process must be completed once school resumes and face-to-face screening is possible. This includes students screened as *Provisional – Not EL*.
- If a student is unable to complete the interview process, e.g. due to a disability or refusal, provisional EL status must be determined based on academic records review. If reasonable evidence of English proficiency cannot be established based on those sources along with the incomplete screener results, if any, the student should be identified as *Provisional-EL* until screening can be completed.
- The language needs of ELs must be met during distance learning.
- If the student has an IEP, then EL and Special Education personnel must collaborate to determine program and academic placement and supports.

5. Notify the parents of eligibility for EL services.

- Requirements for appropriate notice to parents of EL students regarding their child's screening results, the EL services provided by the LEA, and the expected results of participation in a language instruction program, are described on pages 13-14 of [Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia.](#)
- [Sample parent notification letter templates](#) are provided as resources to help LEAs provide parent notification letters that meet the necessary requirements.
- When using this provisional EL identification procedure during full distance learning, an LEA may explain to parents orally the information required to be in the parent notification letter in order to start providing EL services remotely to those students. **Full screening and formal notification must occur upon re-opening of physical school buildings.**

6. Notify the student's teachers of provisional EL identification and placement. Begin EL services.

- The school is responsible for ensuring that all teachers have English language proficiency information for their students who are ELs.
- Provide all the student's teachers with information available about the student's current proficiency in English and begin to provide EL services and supports.
- Students must have formal EL status in order to take ACCESS, the annual summative English proficiency test.

7. Document the provisional identification.

- File the Home Language Survey and provisional EL screening documentation according to your LEA's security procedures. The EL Indicator field (yes or no) must match the provisional status (PEL or PNEL) in the EL Status field. In your LEA's SIS, record the following:

Data Field	Value Options
Home Language Survey date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MM/DD/YYYY
EL Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If EL: YesIf not EL: No
EL Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provisional – EL (PEL)Provisional – Not EL (PNEL)
Screener Score	Leave blank until after formal screening is completed
Screener Date	Leave blank until after formal screening is completed

Must match



8. As soon as possible, complete formal screening for all students who were provisionally screened.

- As soon as it is possible, complete a formal screening for all students screened provisionally during distance learning, including students whose provisional screening indicated *Provisional – EL* and those whose results indicated *Provisional – Not EL*.
- After completing full identification, update the following fields in your LEA's SIS as soon as possible:
 - EL Indicator: Yes or No (**must** be updated based on the full identification process)
 - EL Status: Screener status (see value options in SIS)
 - Screener score
 - Screener date
- **PEL and PNEL statuses must be resolved within 10 days of return to school and no later than March 1, 2021.**

8. As soon as possible, complete formal screening for all students who were provisionally screened.

- Supplemental EL UPSFF funds will be provided for students with PEL status as of the enrollment audit. PEL and PNEL statuses must be resolved within 10 days of return to school and no later than March 1, 2021.
- The April LEA quarterly payment will include reconciliation for resolved PEL and NPEL statuses, based on EL statuses as of March 1, 2021.
- The LEA will return EL funds for (a) students with unreconciled PEL status after March 1, 2021, (b) students with PEL status who then withdraw after audit without completing formal screening, and (c) students designated as not EL as a result of full screening using state-approved screeners.
- If it is not possible to conduct full EL identification screening for a student by March 1, 2021, due to special circumstances, the LEA should submit documentation to OSSE by February 15, 2021 to provide evidence that a) EL services are being provided, e.g., letter from EL coordinator or teacher and b) why the screening cannot be completed, e.g., letter from the parent or health care provider. Documentation must be submitted through the OSSE Support Tool (OST).



Q&A



Continuous Education Guiding Principles and LEA Plans

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CONTINUOUS EDUCATION



THE THREE PILLARS OF CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

**High
Expectations**

**Equity and
Access**

**Family
Engagement**

Resources on OSSE Website

[Guiding Principles for Continuous Education Overview](#)

[Continuous Education Resources for LEAs](#)

[Continuous Education Resources for Educators and Families](#)

2.C. English Learners

English learners (ELs) retain all rights consistent with the law and should have their unique instructional and language needs met.

- ❑ Within the first two weeks of the school year, LEAs should plan for and **communicate to families** about how they will shift their resources, policies and practices to identify and support ELs across remote and in-person learning environments while complying with federal civil rights and education law and state policies.
- ❑ LEAs should prepare to **identify ELs** in a timely manner, including re-screening all students who were screened provisionally while in a remote learning environment using state-approved English proficiency screeners as soon as possible once the student is able to attend school in person.

2.C. English Learners

English learners (ELs) retain all rights consistent with the law and should have their unique instructional and language needs met.

- ❑ LEAs should **implement their EL program plans with fidelity** across both remote and in-person learning environments to advance the linguistic and academic goals of ELs and have a system in place that draws upon multiple data sources to evaluate and refine their EL program.
- ❑ LEAs should **communicate with families in a language they understand**, to the extent practicable, in compliance with Title I and the Language Access Act.

2020-21 School Year LEA Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan Application

LEAs' obligations to serve the District's ELs are outlined in [U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet](#), [District Municipal Regulations 5-E3101](#), [OSSE's state EL policies and procedures](#), and [DC PCSB EL Services Assurance Letter](#), and [OSSE's Serving English Learners During Distance Learning FAQ](#).

Describe the LEA's plan to serve ELs, including:

- A description of the EL program model and how it will maintain fidelity across in-person, distance learning and hybrid learning environments;
- The manner in which the LEA will set language goals across the four language domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to advance your EL students' English proficiency;
- The manner in which the LEA will provide language instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking to EL students during distance learning/hybrid learning environments by grade and by proficiency level; and
- The manner in which the LEA will provide EL students access to academic content by grade and proficiency level.



Q&A



Next Steps: Register for Upcoming Sessions

Re-Entry to the 2020-21 School Year: Strategies and Tools for Supporting English Learners

- *Part 2: Partner with English Learners' Families* Tuesday, July 28, 2020, 10-11:30 a.m.
- *Part 3: Provide Language Development and Academic Instruction Programs to English Learners* Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2020, 10-11:30 a.m.
- *Part 4: Use Multiple Data Sources to Support English Learner Students and Programs* Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020, 10-11:30 a.m.

Landscape of English learners in DC and Vision for Success

- Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020, 1-2:30 p.m.

Next Steps: Use Key Resources

- [OSSE guidance and resources for COVID-19-related closures and recovery](#)
- [Continuous education guiding principles](#)
- [2020-21 School Year LEA Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan Application](#)
- [Provisional Pre-K-12 English Learner Identification Procedure During Distance Learning](#)
- [Serving English Learners During Distance Learning Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Strategies to Support English Learners During Learning at Home Presentation](#)
- [Strategies to Support English Learners During Learning at Home](#)

Next Steps: Use Key Resources

- Register for upcoming trainings [here](#)
- Subscribe to the monthly [Teaching and Learning PD Bulletin](#)
- Reach out for support; we are here to help:

EL policy and programs: Jennifer Norton Jennifer.Norton@dc.gov

EL instruction and PD: Anika Harris Anika.Harris@dc.gov

Dual language programs: Santiago Sanchez Santiago.Sanchez@dc.gov