



District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

2019 STATE TITLE III ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Summary Report (External)

Oct. 30, 2019

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Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities executed by the 2019 State Title III Advisory Committee and plans for the 2020 cycle. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) convenes stakeholders annually in a State ESEA Title III Advisory Committee to support OSSE in carrying out its responsibilities under Title III of the ESEA for the District of Columbia.

The 2019 State Title III Advisory Committee was made up of 17 members including one parent, two representatives of institutions of higher education, one representative from an English learner (EL) education organization, and both public and public charter teachers, EL coordinators, and local education agency (LEA) level representatives. The committee addressed four priorities:

- Home Language Survey (recommended by 2018 committee)
- EL exit criteria review (recommended by 2018 committee)
- Transition planning and monitoring exited ELs (identified by 2019 committee)
- Features of high-quality EL services (identified by 2019 committee)

The committee's work has led to the creation of several new resources. A new OSSE Home Language Survey will be released in fall 2019. Guidance documents and workshops on EL program models have been past year. Guidance and workshops on progress monitoring, and monitored exited ELs are in the process of being created in response to the committee's input.

Based on the 2019 activities, outcomes and recommendations, the proposed priorities for the 2020 committee are:

- Review exit criteria with 2018-19 data
- Provide input on guidance and training on monitoring exited ELs
- Provide input on staffing considerations for EL program models
- Provide input on resources for families and family engagement

Introduction

Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) provides funding to ensure that English learners attain English proficiency and achieve at high academic levels and can meet the same challenging state academic standards that all children meet. Title III requires that each state education agency in developing its Title III state plan consult with LEAs, teachers, administrators of Title III programs, parents of English learners, and other relevant stakeholders.

To that end, the OSSE convenes an annual State ESEA Title III Advisory Committee which consists of stakeholders from a range of perspectives: school and LEA administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, educators from institutions of higher education, and members of community organizations. The committee also serves as an advisory body supporting OSSE in its responsibilities under Title III of the ESEA for the District of Columbia.

The overarching goals are for the committee to:

- Provide expertise in identifying strengths and most salient needs and concerns of the children who are English learners, including immigrant students in the District.
- Analyze strengths and gaps in existing Title III-related policy, guidelines, and technical assistance.
- Contribute to OSSE’s guidelines for educational programs, administration, and accountability to support LEAs in ensuring that immigrant children and English Learners attain English proficiency and meet state academic achievement standards.

The committee met six times, from 4-5:30 p.m. at OSSE, 1050 First Street NE:

- Jan. 23, 2019
- Feb. 27, 2019
- May 22, 2019
- June 26, 2019
- Aug. 28, 2019
- Sept. 25, 2019

The 2019 committee consisted of 17 members including one parent, two representatives of institutions of higher education, one representative from an EL education organization, and public and public charter teachers, EL coordinators, and LEA-level representatives.

Committee Members	Affiliation	Perspective/Role
Sheila Lo Monaco	Parent	Parent
Alicia Passante	Center City PCS	LEA-level EL coordinator
Eleanor Davis	Capital City PCS	School-level EL coordinator
Sarah Fiore	Capital City PCS	School-level EL coordinator
Ivette Cruz Leon	LAYC Career Academy PCS	LEA-level EL coordinator
Joseph Egan	Bridges PCS	LEA-level EL coordinator
Phelicia Kebreau Taylor	Mary McLeod Bethune Day Academy PCS	School-level instructional coach
Regina D'Alessandro	City Arts PCS	EL teacher
Hannah Cousino	DC PCSB	Equity specialist
Leidy Navarro Nicole Suzanne Ugel Rosanna DeMammos	DCPS – Language Acquisition Division	DCPS central office
Ernest Cotton	DCPS – Phelps ACE HS	EL teacher
Wendy Thomas*	DCPS	EL teacher
Nikeitha Brown*	English Learner Success Forum	Curriculum and instruction dean
Lottie Baker	George Washington University	Assistant professor of ESOL
Megan Sands	Relay University	Assistant professor of practice

*Relocated during the year and left the committee

Priorities Addressed by the Committee

Home Language Survey

Purpose

Under ESSA, Title III requires LEAs to take several steps to screen, identify and provide language instruction and assessment for EL status. The purpose of the Home Language Survey (HLS) is to identify if a student needs to be screened for eligibility for EL services. LEAs must administer the OSSE HLS to **all** students enrolling in a DC school for the first time. Below are the questions included in the HLS.

1. Is a language other than English spoken in your home?
2. Does your child communicate in a language other than English?
3. What is your relationship to the child?

If Yes for 1 and/or 2, LEAs must administer an OSSE-approved screener within 30 days of enrollment to determine whether a student is eligible for EL services.

Concerns had been raised from stakeholders that the current HLS questions could be improved. OSSE's current Home Language Survey questions are different from the questions recommended by the U.S. Department of Education. Examples of scenarios where the HLS was not effective include:

- When parents indicate Yes for question 1 or 2 because a child care provider speaks a language other than English to a child, but the child actually speaks English as their first language; is not an EL and does not need to be screened.
- When a family is bilingual and the student speaks in more than one language fluently.
- When a student is exposed to a language other than English but speaks English as their primary language.

In the 2017-18 school year, OSSE clarified that LEAs should use OSSE's HLS, not their own. OSSE revised the instructions to make purpose and procedures more clear to both families and LEA staff.

In the 2018-19 school year, OSSE sought to increase training, gather feedback on the revised instructions, and review the current questions, in order to increase consistency and avoid false positives and false negatives.

Activities

The committee reviewed the current HLS questions, described member concerns about their effectiveness and provided input on new questions. All members were invited to assist with outreach to families and HLS administrators to gather input on the proposed changes. Two committee members conducted outreach with seven parents of ELs, six parents of non-ELs, and three HLS administrators. They gathered data using an interview protocol. The committee reviewed the feedback and the final revisions to the questions. The

questions were then put into layout and the committee reviewed the new layout and provided suggestions to make the HLS appearance even more user-friendly.

Results

The new HLS is in final layout and in the process of being translated. It will be released in fall 2019 in advance of the next enrollment season. The changes to the HLS will be disseminated through the 2020 EL policies and procedures document, a webinar, in-person enrollment training, and OSSE Start of School initiatives. OSSE will seek feedback from LEAs on its effectiveness when it is implemented.

EL Exit Criteria

Purpose

As stated in Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), states must have standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for ELs. The exit criteria serves as an indicator that a student has attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without language assistance program support. In DC, the exit criteria is achieving a composite score of 5.0 on the ACCESS 2.0 test. Under WIDA's original achievement cuts in the 2015-16 school year, 1,291 students received a composite 5.0 or above and exited services. As a result of WIDA's ACCESS 2.0 standards alignment process in summer of 2016, WIDA adjusted the "achievement cuts" for the ACCESS performance levels to increase the rigor of the assessment. Now, students must demonstrate higher language skills to achieve the same overall composite proficiency level scores (1.0-6.0). In the 2017-18 school year, based on the adjustment in achievement levels and increase in rigor, significantly fewer ELs (330 students) met OSSE's exit criteria.

In response to the adjustment in achievement levels, some WIDA state members have changed their exit criteria. Of those members, some decided to use additional objective criteria related to English proficiency in their exit procedures in addition to overall composite level. The 2018 committee was in favor of reviewing DC's exit criteria.

Activities

The committee reviewed data that demonstrated the impact of the achievement level adjustment. The shift in score distribution was reviewed using the past four years of ACCESS data. Performance on ACCESS and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) were examined by students' EL proficiency level. The impact of potential adjustments to the exit criteria were shown.

OSSE presented the committee with three options for a revised EL exit criteria, as well as pros and cons for each option, which were discussed and debated in small groups and then in a whole group discussion. Ultimately, the committee recommended to not make a change at that time. The recommendation was made to review the exit criteria again with the 2018-19 school year data.

Results

The committee made its recommendation to keep the current exit criteria until another year of data are available and then reevaluate. Given that no change was made, and that the exit criteria will be reviewed again, this will reappear as a topic for the 2020 committee.

Transition Planning and Monitoring Exited ELs

Purpose

LEA have indicated a need for guidance on best practices in monitoring exited/reclassified ELs. After receiving a 5.0 or higher on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, students exit the EL program and are reclassified from EL to EL monitored (ELm). As described in the US Department of Justice and US Department of Education “Dear Colleague” letter (2015), students exited from EL status must be monitored for four years to ensure that:

- The student has not been prematurely exited;
- Any academic concerns are addressed; and
- The student is meaningfully participating in the standard program of instruction comparable to their non-EL peers.

LEAs must have processes for monitoring ELm students which include documenting how often they will be monitored and what information will be reviewed to measure success. If a student is not successful, the LEA should determine whether the cause is due to language proficiency or other factors, and have procedures in place to assist these students. However, LEAs report a lack of processes and samples for effective monitoring practices that would meet federal requirements.

Activities

Committee members conducted the following activities to address this topic:

- Reviewed guidance and guiding questions from the Office for Civil Rights and US Department of Education to provide input related transition planning and monitoring ELm students
- Provided insights on how they understand and define transition planning and monitoring, what it should entail ideally, who should be involved, what documentation should look like, and what communication and outcomes should occur as a result;
- Identified gaps in transition planning, goal setting, progress monitoring and monitoring for ELm students based on their experiences; and
- Reviewed drafts of potential forms for capturing progress monitoring and ELm monitoring data.

Results

The input revealed that progress monitoring was a critical need, and educators are requesting tools and resources to make progress monitoring a concrete, do-able, and impactful task. Rather than framing guidance and transition planning for ELs close to exiting, progress monitoring tools and resources that could be used for all levels of ELs are needed. Forms were perceived as too constraining and the committee's feedback demonstrated that LEAs will benefit from training and resources related to progress monitoring and formative assessment as a process, rather than a form to fill out. Any samples of forms would need to be provided with more than one version in order to make it clear that the forms were samples rather than expectations.

Guidance documents are currently in draft format and will be used to develop a workshop for EL coordinators and teachers on best practices and options for progress monitoring and monitoring ELM students. Progress monitoring will leverage the WIDA proficiency levels and performance definitions to provide teacher- and student-friendly rubrics for assessing classroom tasks through the lens of language development. The rubrics will complement PARCC content-focused rubrics. Materials will be developed for a meeting for EL Coordinators.

Features of High-Quality EL Services

Purpose

The current OSSE EL policies and procedures document provides a list of the five common EL program models in DC and outlines the civil rights requirements that an LEA's program must meet; but currently, OSSE provides little guidance regarding the features of these models, how they differ from one another, and considerations for ensuring they are implemented effectively. Schools must provide EL services and programs that meet civil rights requirements and best meet the needs of their EL population. Within those parameters, LEAs have the flexibility to select an EL program model, yet LEAs report lack of clarity surrounding the different program models. EL coordinators have discussed the need for guidance from OSSE to help advocate for more robust EL services and staffing in their schools. OSSE staff have observed differing interpretations by LEAs of what constitutes a program model, and there is a need for LEAs to be better equipped to select, implement, and evaluate their EL services.

Activities

Committee members conducted the following activities:

- Provided feedback on common challenges in determining a school's EL program model;
- Identified key information needed by schools needed in order to advocate for and deliver quality EL services;
- Reviewed drafts of one-pagers on EL program models; and
- Provided ideas for guidance on high-quality EL services.

Results

Based on the committee's input, OSSE has developed and delivered an in-person and webinar training on EL program models as part of the OSSE Start of School initiative. OSSE also created one-pagers on program models that can be translated into multiple languages for parents and expanded into more detailed guidance in the coming year. The recorded webinar will be included in OSSE's growing EL Toolkit. OSSE will work to disseminate the one-pagers to LEAs and parents.

Recommendations for the Next Committee

At the conclusion of the 2019 State Title III Advisory Committee meeting cycle, a survey was provided to all members to elicit their feedback on the experience and their recommendations for the next cycle of convenings. Respondents were asked to rank the three most important EL program/policy elements (from the eight sections of OSSE's EL policies and procedures document) for the STAC to address in the year ahead. The top four were:

- Guidance on EL staffing and resources
- Guidance on exiting, reclassification and monitoring
- Guidance on assessment
- Resources for families and family engagement

2020 State Title III Advisory Committee Plans

OSSE received more applications than could be accommodated, accepting 20 applications that represent a diverse representation across charters and DCPS, educators and LEA-level staff, returning and new members, and IHE and policy/research experts.

Due to low participation at the meeting at the end of June after the school year had ended, the six meetings have been rescheduled to occur during the school year, from November to June:

- Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019, 4-5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019, 4-5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020, 4-5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 18, 2020, 4-5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 22, 2020, 4-5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 3, 2020, 4-5:30 p.m.

Based on the 2019 activities, outcomes and recommendations, the proposed priorities for the 2020 committee are:

- Review exit criteria with 2018-19 school year data
- Provide input on guidance and training on monitoring exited ELs
- Provide input on staffing considerations for EL program models
- Provide input on resources for families and family engagement

Each of these proposed priorities presents a deeper engagement with the topics addressed by the 2019 committee. The objective will be to go deeper rather than broader with the examination of these topics. Given the potential that the EL exit criteria will be lowered, having robust guidance and resources available for monitoring ELM students will be timely. The request for a focus on staffing considerations for EL program models will be applicable across both preK-12 and adult-serving schools, with an understanding that staffing varies by program models and that OSSE would be providing guidance not requirements. Although the committee recommended focusing on the ACCESS assessment as a topic, it will be reflected in the exit criteria discussion, and separately, OSSE will work internally to provide additional training and resources to help students be more prepared for ACCESS. Additionally, OSSE will raise LEAs' questions with WIDA and seek solutions through the consortium.