DELIVERING EDUCATION SERVICES TO ENGLISH LEARNERS

A Guidebook for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia

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INTRODUCTION

All staff, including principals, instructional leaders, teachers, and other school personnel, are responsible for ensuring that students learning English are supported in school. State and Local education agencies (LEAs) have an obligation to ensure English learners (ELs) both develop English language proficiency and meet the same challenging state academic standards as their native English-speaking peers. In their daily work with ELs, teachers are at the forefront of direct services and instruction for students who are learning English as well as students who have recently exited the EL program. Additionally, by developing effective program models and ensuring adherence to required federal activities, school leaders play a critical role in guaranteeing that ELs have equal access to a high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential. This guidebook serves to aid LEAs and schools in building programs that yield the best educational experience for English learners across the city.
KEY SCHOOL YEAR EVENTS:

**Summer:** School/LEA receives ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 score reports for most recent test administration

**Summer and ongoing:** LEA data managers check SLED for historical ACCESS for ELLs scores for new and transfer students, then export the scores and share with the EL Coordinator. If students are in early pre-k or kindergarten and transferred from another DC school, contact former school or LEA central office for EL status. EL Coordinator determines the appropriate language instruction education program for the student.

**Beginning of school year:** Screen new students who have been identified through the home language survey and have no prior English language proficiency screening or assessment history.

**October 5th:** All LEAs make corrections to enrollment data in LEA student information system (SIS) to ensure accuracy of the universe of students on the audit enrollment roster by 5 p.m.

**Late fall through winter:** School/LEA prepares for upcoming ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 administration

**Spring:** Administer ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alt ACCESS for ELLs, if applicable

**Spring:** Begin re-screening 2nd semester Kindergarteners who were proficient (fluent) on the Pre-Idea Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT) Oral English screener, with an OSSE-approved grade appropriate screening tool (see page 8, Table 1) to determine if these students are eligible for EL services

**TIP:** Remember to update your school/LEA’s EL Point of Contact with OSSE to ensure timely notification of EL program-related activities
WHO ARE ENGLISH LEARNERS?

In the District of Columbia, English learners in elementary and secondary programs are classified according to the federal government definition. As described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), this definition classifies as an English learner any student:

A. Who is aged 3 through 21;

B. Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;

(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant

OR

(ii) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of outlying areas; AND

C. Who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency;

OR

Who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; AND

A. Whose difficulties speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual;

(i) the ability to meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on State assessments (e.g., PARCC, DC Science);

(ii) the ability to achieve successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

As described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), an eligible individual including an adult English learner is someone who:

A. Is 18 years of age or older;

B. Is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and

C. Has basic skill deficiencies (includes adults with a high school diploma or any other credential but who are determined to have deficiencies by a Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) pre-and/or post-test; an adult who does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education based on CASAS; or an adult who is an English Learner.
EL PROGRAM ELEMENTS AND PROCESS

There are affirmative steps, as described in this guidebook, which LEAs and schools must take to ensure ELs are provided equal access to educational opportunities. Summarized below, these steps are required activities outlined by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) to ensure ELs can participate meaningfully and equally in all educational programs.

STEP 1: Educational Approach

The LEA or school must select a sound educational approach for providing English language services through a meaningful Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) for its ELs.

STEP 2: Identification

The LEA or school must follow the uniform identification procedures for identifying all students potentially eligible for language support services. Identification must happen within 30 school days of enrollment if the student is enrolled at the beginning of the year, within two weeks if enrolled during the school year. Parents must be notified of the results.

STEP 3: Placement and Services

Students identified as ELs must immediately receive English language support services based on the chosen educational approach.

STEP 4: Staffing and Resources

The LEA or school must provide the necessary resources and qualified staff to implement its educational approach. The LEA or school must also provide language development training to all teachers.

STEP 5: Parent Engagement

Students identified as ELs must immediately receive English language support services based on the chosen educational approach.

STEP 6: Assessment

Students identified as ELs must participate in the annual assessment of English language proficiency.

STEP 7: Exiting, Reclassification, and Monitoring

The LEA or school must use criteria set by OSSE to determine if a student has reached English language proficiency and, if so, exit him or her from the EL program and reclassify the student as EL monitored (ELm). The LEA or school must monitor former ELs for four years after exiting to ensure academic progress.

STEP 8: Program Evaluation

The LEA or school must evaluate the success of its language instructional educational program periodically and, as necessary, make modifications.
STEP 1: Educational Approach

Each LEA should first select at least one of several different educational approaches. There are many approaches to delivering language assistance to ELs. Under federal law, language instruction programs to educate children with limited proficiency in English must be: (1) based on a sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported so that the program has a realistic chance of success; and (3) periodically evaluated and revised, if necessary. In the District of Columbia, five program models are commonly used, each of which is considered effective by experts in the field. These models have been designed to meet the varying needs and grade levels of students across English proficiency levels and include:

- **Two-Way/Dual-Language Bilingual Program**: In this model, all students develop communication and literacy skills in their native language while simultaneously learning a second language. Students are expected to master academic content and language in both languages. Research shows the benefits of such programs are students are more successful in English and develop an understanding of another culture.

- **Inclusion/Collaborative Teaching**: In this model, the bilingual/EL teacher and the general education teacher collaboratively plan instruction based on students’ strengths and needs. Instruction predominately takes place in the general education classroom, with both professionals present and participating. On some occasions, students may be taken to a different classroom for instruction (also called “pullout”). In other situations, the teaching team may adopt co-teaching to deliver instruction.

- **Content-Based EL**: In this model, academic content and English language skills are learned simultaneously. Research shows second language acquisition is successful when language learning is in engaging and meaningful contexts as opposed to learning a language in isolation.

- **Newcomer Oral Language and Literacy Program**: This model is designed for students with limited formal school experiences and promotes the development of language skills necessary to function in the new culture of the U.S. school and society. The emphasis is on helping newly arrived students develop basic English skills, learning content in a developmentally appropriate manner, and developing literacy in their native language.

- **Sheltered Content Program**: In this model, ELs learn content and English alongside their native English-speaking peers. Teachers use clear English and scaffolding strategies to present students with skills and concepts that are equivalent to those taught in mainstream content courses. Instruction is adapted to ELs’ English proficiency level, spirals through the curriculum, activates prior knowledge, and promotes classmate collaboration.

Whatever the chosen approach, it is essential that school leadership and staff are prepared to implement the selected model once students are identified, and are capable of adjusting services based on individual student needs and levels.
**STEP 2: Identification**

Once an educational approach has been selected, the next affirmative step LEAs must take to provide adequate services to ELs is to identify all students who are potentially eligible for such services. To identify potential ELs, the LEA or school must have structured procedures in place.

**Newly Enrolled Students**

**Home Language Survey**

For all students who have enrolled in a DC school for the first time, schools must begin with administering the OSSE Home Language Survey (HLS), a questionnaire completed by parents of all students at the time of enrollment. The OSSE HLS can be found on the OSSE Website at osse.dc.gov/publication/osse-home-language-survey and is available in English, Spanish, French, Amharic, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

The HLS includes three essential questions:

- Is a language other than English spoken in your home?
- Does your child communicate in a language other than English?
- What is your relationship to the child?

**Screening for English language proficiency**

Identification of a student as an EL is not automatic simply because another language is spoken in the home or routinely used in other settings. If the HLS indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home to or by the student, the student MUST be screened for possible identification as an EL using the appropriate screener (See Table 1, below). Identification should happen within 30 school days of Stage 5 enrollment if the student is enrolled at the beginning of the year, and within two weeks if enrolled during the school year.

Screeners can only be used to identify students as an EL. Once a student is identified as an EL and provided services, a screener may not be used to exit the student from EL status.

A student should only be administered a screener one time to identify him or her for EL services. An exception to this is if a pre-kindergarten (pre-K) or Kindergarten student has demonstrated exceptional oral language proficiency (both Listening and Speaking), but has not demonstrated proficiency in all four language domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing). If a student demonstrates oral language proficiency on pre-K or early Kindergarten screeners, but is too young to demonstrate proficiency on all four domains, the student should be re-screened on all four domains using one of the OSSE-approved valid and reliable screeners, as appropriate (see Table 1) to ensure that all students who may require EL services receive these services.

Based on English language proficiency screener results, students who do not receive the minimum scores for proficiency are eligible for EL services. These screener results indicate the student’s proficiency in each language domain assessed and should guide the appropriate program placement and level of service needed.

To determine the appropriate program placement and level of service, LEAs must administer one of the OSSE-approved screeners.

**How to Access EL Screener Materials**

For students in pre-K 3 and 4 (up to age 5), the screener is the Pre-IPT Oral English, available for purchase at ballard-tighe.com. The certification testing for Pre-IPT administrators can also be found on the website.

For students in kindergarten, LEAs can utilize the K W-APT or the Kindergarten MODEL screeners. Those schools administering the K W-APT can download all materials from WIDA.us at no cost to the LEA. Those LEAs that choose to administer the MODEL screener must purchase the necessary kits directly from WIDA on their website. OSSE recommends all LEAs utilize the K W-APT as the primary kindergarten screener.

The primary screener for grades 1-12 is the new WIDA Online Screener which can be accessed through WIDA’s website. As of the 2017-18 school year, the WIDA Online Screener will replace the W-APT (see table 1 below). Prior to administering the online screener, test administrators must complete the training course modules at WIDA.us and identify, download, and print the necessary printed test materials. The WIDA paper screener is also available for eligible students with a disability that impacts their ability to take the online screener or for schools that do not possess the required technology. Only students with disabilities are eligible to take the WIDA paper-based screener. Criteria used to determine eligibility for the PARCC paper-based accommodation applies to WIDA paper-based screener accommodation.

**Newly Enrolled Students with Previous Enrollment in DC Schools**

For students who have previously been enrolled in a DC school, schools are required to review a student’s historical EL status and ACCESS for ELLs history. The current state-
recognized criterion for exiting EL status is that a student must receive a composite score of 5.0 or higher on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment (See “Exiting, Reclassification, and Monitoring” on page 40 or more information).

If one of the following conditions apply, the current school must identify the student as EL and provide EL services to the student until the state-recognized exit criteria to exit EL status is met:

1. The student was previously identified as EL by another LEA in DC using one of the following sources:
   a. Enrollment Audit,
   b. Supplemental Payments, and/or
   c. Demographic Certification,
   AND
   The student has not met the state-recognized criterion for exiting EL status since their most recent identification as an EL in one or more of these sources.

2. The student’s most recent ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 composite score indicates that the student has not yet met the state-recognized criteria to exit EL status.

Students’ historical EL status and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment history may be viewed in the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data system (SLED) at sled.osse.dc.gov. Additionally, beginning in the fall of the 2017-18 school year, Unified Data Errors (UDEs) will include data errors and anomalies which identify for LEAs instances when a student’s current EL status conflicts with the student’s historical EL status and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 history.

The table below lists OSSE-approved screeners. In order to administer screeners appropriately, test administrators should complete training for the selected screener(s).

### Table 1: OSSE-Approved Screeners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELP Screener</th>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Considered Proficient (does not qualify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool IDEA Oral Language Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT Oral) English)</td>
<td>PK3-PK4 (ages 3-5)</td>
<td>Fluent*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (K W-APT)</td>
<td>K, 1st semester (listening and speaking only)</td>
<td>Combined listening and speaking score of 29 or higher*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K, 2nd semester (all four domains)</td>
<td>Combined listening and speaking score of 29 or higher, AND reading score of 11 or higher, AND writing score of 12 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIDA Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL)</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>Composite Score of 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIDA Screener (Primary OSSE Screener for 1-12)</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>Composite Score of 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASAS**</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Reading/listening/math test scale score above 235 and writing test scale score greater than 260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA-Selected Adult Screener***</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Screen-specific proficiency level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: A ‘fluent’ score on the Pre-IPT or a score of 29 or higher on the K W-APT (listening and speaking only) indicates oral English language proficiency, but does not include reading and writing. In the second semester of kindergarten or first semester of first grade, students should be rescreened in listening, speaking, reading and writing with the K W-APT, Kindergarten MODEL, or WIDA Screener (1st).

**Grantees receiving the Adult and Family Education Grant are required to use the OSSE-approved CASAS as a screener tool.

***In addition to the CASAS, Adult Programs not receiving Adult and Family Education Grant funds may choose LEA-selected adult English language proficiency screeners. Examples of LEA-selected adult screeners include but are not limited to: Tests of Adult Basic Education — Complete Language Assessment System — English (TABE CLAS-E), Best Literacy and Best Plus, Placement Test Scoring Sheet, and TEAAL. Adult Programs should refer to guidance from respective screener developers to determine appropriate cut scores for English Proficiency. For more information on OSSE Adult and Family Education programs and policies, or to contact OSSE staff, please visit [http://bit.ly/2k3TcL](http://bit.ly/2k3TcL).
NEW STUDENT ENROLLS

School administers the Home Language Survey

Do responses on the Home Language Survey indicate a primary language other than English?

Did the student transfer from another public school in DC?

YES

NO

Grade 1-12: School checks SLED for EL status and ACCESS history

Pre-K and K: Contact prior school for EL status

Does SLED include EL status or ACCESS information for the student?

YES

NO

Has the student been identified as EL in any previous Enrollment Audit, Supplemental Payment or Demographic Certification AND received a composite score lower than 5.0 on ACCESS since most recent identification?

YES

NO: ACCESS score is 5.0 or higher

Student is no longer eligible for EL services and programs. If reclassified within 4 years, must be monitored.

NO

K-12: The student is identified as EL and participates in an EL program. The student takes ACCESS for ELLs in each spring until meeting the state-recognized criteria for exiting EL status. Students will continue to be identified as EL until the student participates in ACCESS and receives a composite score of 5.0+.

Pre-K: The student is identified as EL and participates in an EL program. In the spring of Kindergarten, student takes ACCESS for ELLs and participates annually until he/she receives a composite score of 5.0 or higher.
Step 2: Identification (continued)

Table 2: Required Activities for Pre-K, K, and Opt-Out students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Group</th>
<th>Screener Result</th>
<th>Required Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K and 1st Semester Kindergarten</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Do not designate student as EL. <strong>Re-screen on all four domains</strong> (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) using age-appropriate screener in spring K or 1st semester first grade.¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K and 1st Semester Kindergarten</td>
<td>Non or Limited English Fluent</td>
<td>Designate student as EL and <strong>immediately deliver services</strong>. Administer ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 annually beginning spring Kindergarten until student is English proficient.²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K – 12 (all students)</td>
<td>Non or Limited English Fluent - parent opts-out of services</td>
<td><strong>Designate student as EL but do not deliver</strong> formal EL services. Administer ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 annually (beginning spring Kindergarten) until student is English proficient.³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transferring Schools: Previously Identified EL Students with Missing Historical Information

It is common for previously identified EL students who have yet to meet the state’s exit criteria to transfer between DC schools. If the home language survey indicates a newly enrolled **transfer student** should be screened, the school or LEA personnel must **first** check SLED for student ACCESS history and/or **make a reasonable attempt to contact the former school** to confirm the student’s current EL status before administering screeners. The latter is especially important for pre-k and k students who have yet to participate in ACCESS for ELLs. If, due to lack of historical information, the student is re-screened and removed from EL status at the LEA based on screener results, the student will still be designated as an EL by OSSE until meeting the state’s exit criteria of 5.0 on ACCESS for ELLs. Once student status is confirmed by the school or LEA (e.g. due to Unified Data Errors in the Qlik application), the student must be placed back into services until meeting the state’s exit criteria on ACCESS for ELLs. In summary, any student identified as an English learner at any point must remain in EL status until meeting the state’s exit criteria.

STEP 3: Placement and Services

Students who are assessed and determined to not have full English language proficiency are considered ELs. By law, these students are entitled to language support services. Students should be placed in a language instruction education program (LIEP) based on data collected during the identification process (Step 2).

Parent Notification

Immediately following identification, LEAs must have a formal procedure in place to ensure parents have been informed of their child’s screening results, the EL services provided by the district, and the expected results of participation in an LIEP.

Within 30 days of the start of the school year, or within two-weeks of placement if not identified at the beginning of school, LEAs are **required** to notify parents their child was identified as needing EL services. This must be done in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent(s) or guardian(s) can understand. LEAs should develop a procedure for tracking the issuance of parent notification letters and for documenting parental consent for services.

The parent/guardian notification must include:

- The reasons for their child’s identification as an EL and for placement in an LIEP;
- The child’s level of English proficiency and how it is assessed, and the status of the child’s academic achievement;
- The method of instruction used in the child’s program;
- How such programs will help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- Specific exit requirements for such programs, expected rate of transition, and expected rate of graduation, if Title III funds are used for children in secondary school;
• How such programs align with the language goals of the child’s IEP (in the case of a child with a disability); and
• The rights of parent(s):
  - To remove their child from such programs upon their request;
  - To decline to enroll in the program or choose another program, if available; and
  - To be assisted in selecting from among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered.

Students may be placed in the LIEP upon identification. It is not necessary to receive parental consent to begin EL services. If the LEA has made a good faith effort to notify parents, then non-return of the parent notification letter to the LEA implies parental consent for placement in an LIEP.

Opt-Out

In accordance with federal law, parents have the right to decline, or opt their child out of the LEA’s language instruction educational program. Opting out of EL services occurs only after eligibility has been determined.

The parent(s) decision to opt-out does not change the status of the student. If services are refused, LEAs should work directly with the parents to ensure they understand the purpose of the service. If the parent(s) understands the service, yet still prefers to opt-out, then the refusal of services must be documented in writing and the student can be removed from services.

An English learner who is ‘opted out’ of all EL programs and services must be monitored regularly to ensure academic progress, be provided adequate support (including accommodations) to reduce any language barriers, and participate in the annual ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment until meeting the exit protocol requirements. After meeting the exit protocol requirements, the student who has ‘opted out’ is formally exited and is monitored for four years.

Regardless of their participation in EL programs and services, once students are identified as English learners they must have their English language proficiency assessed with ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 annually until they meet minimum proficiency to exit.

Program Models

Consistent with its educational approach, LEAs must provide a language instruction educational program to students who are identified as ELs. The chosen program model must be recognized as effective and sound by experts, and services should meet individual student needs. Additionally, the LEA or school must determine who will provide services, when services will be rendered, and how often services will be provided. In all program models, the LEA must ensure that ELs are held to the same high standards as all students.

Whatever the chosen program model, school staff must work together to continuously monitor each EL student’s progress while receiving services to:

• Assess the student’s ongoing progress and achievement in English language proficiency and content areas in order to plan and modify instruction accordingly; and
• Promote the student to different instructional levels within the EL program on the basis of growth in English language skills.

Accommodations

Any student identified as an EL, including those students whose parents have opted-out of the LIEP, is eligible for accommodations during instruction and on any statewide assessment. Additionally, advanced English learner students who have been exited from an LIEP in the past four years based on English language proficiency levels (ELP) or higher, in “EL Monitoring” status, are eligible for certain accommodations (as needed), detailed in the most recent Testing Accommodations Manual, available at http://bit.ly/2x0Ovl7.

During instruction, some ELs may benefit from the use of accommodations to assist them in accessing the curriculum. The OSSE Testing Administration Guide, Part 2 (ELs) describes accommodations that may be used in both instructional and testing settings. ELs who are prescribed testing accommodations should be allowed to use the accommodations during instruction so that they gain familiarity and learn how to approach academic material with them before the test administration window.

Accommodations are available on content based assessments. The District of Columbia offers PARCC mathematics assessments in grades 3-8 and high school in Spanish. PARCC mathematics assessments have been trans-adapted into Spanish for the computer based tests, paper-based tests, text-to-speech computer-based tests, and large print paper-based tests. For all PARCC assessments (ELA/literacy and mathematics), general test administration directions are provided in the following languages: (1) Spanish; (2) Arabic; (3) Navajo; (4) Chinese
Mandarin; (5) Vietnamese; (6) Portuguese; (7) Polish; (8) Haitian Creole; (9) Urdu; and (10) Russian. If needed, test administrators may clarify general administration directions in a student’s native language. Test administrators, or other qualified interpreters, providing this accommodation should ideally be literate and fluent in English as well as in the student’s native language. In addition, in the 2016-17 school year, DC began offering a Spanish trans-adaptation of the paper-based DC Science assessment in grades 5, 8, and biology.

Supporting Students with Disabilities

LEAs must also provide appropriate special education services to ELs with identified disabilities, also known as dually-identified students, who are found to be eligible for both EL and special education services. Supporting ELs with identified disabilities requires the collaboration of multiple professionals in the school setting. EL teachers and special education teachers should ensure the student is receiving both set of services during the school day. It is the role of both teachers to inform classroom teachers and specialists of the student’s needs and how best to support the student socially, emotionally, instructionally, and with assessments.

When developing an IEP for a student who is dually-identified, in addition to required personnel, LEAs should also include a person who has specialized knowledge of language acquisition on the student’s IEP team to ensure appropriate services. Further information about this area, including the under- and over-identification of English learners for special education, can be found in the joint federal guidance EL Dear Colleague Letter located at http://bit.ly/2xQmJHe. Instructional strategies for dually-identified students can be found at http://bit.ly/2yy8pAj.

ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities can receive English language development support through the LEA’s EL program. WIDA’s Alternate Model Performance Indicators for grades 1 -12, which are aligned to WIDA’s English Language Development Standards, can serve as a framework for lesson planning, instruction, assessment, and communicating with families about their child’s English growth. The Alternate Model Performance Indicators can be downloaded at http://bit.ly/2wpGfh4.

Representation in Gifted and Talented, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Dual Enrollment Programs

English learners, as compared to non-ELs, should be equitably represented in Gifted and Talented (GT), Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual enrollment programs. When they begin the school year, gifted ELs may already know much of the curriculum content, according to the National Association for Gifted Children, ELs benefit from challenging work while developing English; exposure to challenging language yields ELs who can eventually produce and comprehend complex language. The District’s 2013-14 Department of Education survey data, as reported in www.ocdata.ed.gov, reveals that 29.6 percent of public schools students are ELs, but only 15.4 percent of GT programs are ELs. In the same survey, no ELs were reported as being enrolled in AP courses or Calculus, Chemistry, or Physics.

LEAs and schools can begin cultivating cognitive gifts as early as Pre-K. When identifying students, evaluation and testing criteria should not screen out ELs because of their English language ability; assessments in the student’s native language should be made available where needed. Extensive efforts should be made to ensure the cultural and linguistic appropriateness of the GT/AP/IB or dual enrollment programs.

Ensuring Equity in Schools for English Learners and Immigrant Youth

English learners, immigrant youth, and their families have unique, varied backgrounds and needs. School leaders must make it a priority to cultivate communities where ELs and immigrant youth are treated within an environment of acceptance, valuing, respect, support, and safety. Additionally, it is of utmost importance to ensure ELs have equitable opportunities to learn and receive the support and counseling they may need to successfully meet grade level and high school graduation requirements. This includes (a) ensuring ELs are not tracked or placed in courses and/or programs with low expectations for success, (b) providing equitable resources and adequate materials needed to reach the high standards expected of all students, and (c) working diligently to attract, retain, and sustain quality teachers to deliver appropriate services tailored to their levels and needs. Safeguarding equity in education settings for ELs also includes taking actionable measures to ensure:

• ELs are educated in equitable facilities - regarding maintenance, care, rejuvenation, upkeep, and resources.
- ELs are not represented at a higher proportion for referrals and other disciplinary actions.
- ELs are meaningfully integrated throughout the school day with non-EL students.
- ELs (and their parents) have equal opportunities to be involved in school extracurricular activities and school meetings. ELs have comparable high rates of participation in college and/or postsecondary preparation.

**STEP 4: Staffing and Resources**

To provide ELs the appropriate language instruction educational program, LEAs have a responsibility to ensure that needed resources exist and school staff have the skills and capacity to implement the program. Resources may include instructional staffing (e.g., teaching assistants), instructional equipment, and materials. Additionally, the LEA must ensure instructional staff have the educational expertise and qualifications to implement services. This includes familiarity with WIDA’s English Language Development standards. This may also include efforts to recruit and hire staff with relevant experience working with English learners, as well as efforts to identify and provide needed professional development.

Examples of professional development activities designed to meet the needs of educators who serve ELs include: induction programs for new teachers, faculty development for content teachers and administrators, career ladder programs for paraprofessionals, and certification-oriented coursework for English language development specialists.

**STEP 5: Parent Engagement**

**Involving Parents in the Process**

Educating and involving parents in the school community and LIEP program can increase student achievement, assist students in becoming English language-proficient, and make transitioning through services easier for students who are identified as ELs. By law, schools must meaningfully engage parents and families of English learners and implement an effective means of outreach to parents of ELs to:

a. Inform them on how they can be active participants in assisting their children in learning English and achieving at high levels in core academic subjects.

b. Seek parent input into the development and evaluation of the LEA’s LIEP program, including notifying parents of their right to opportunities for regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents of students participating in Title I or Title III programs.

There are meaningful ways to fulfill this requirement and to increase the engagement of parents and families of English learners in this process across a student’s academic career. In early childhood, parents are considered their child’s first teacher. Schools can support these families by introducing them to the concepts of language development in the early years. Additionally, schools can show parents how to engage with their children through books even if they are not literate.

From Pre-K to grade 12, parents should be given opportunities to learn the academic and language development goals for their child. Further, it is important to share school-wide behavioral norms and consequences, especially with immigrant parents, since behavior expectations in school vary across the globe. At the secondary school level, LEAs should design opportunities for parents of English learners to know about postsecondary options including vocational training and job-readiness, postsecondary education, the college application process, and financial aid. Across all grades, back-to-school nights, parent-teacher conferences, home visits, and surveys can all provide opportunities for schools to share information, answer questions, and gain input from parents through a continuous feedback loop.

Meaningfully engaging parents can be challenging and requires a lot of dedication. For this reason, LEAs may choose to have a Parent Liaison who can facilitate educational opportunities and communicate needs and concerns between families and schools. Getting to know more about students’ families, communities and home life can also help schools integrate ELs into the classroom and school setting. This can include:

- Identifying expectations and aspirations: Discovering what is expected by ELs, their families and their communities, in regards to education, and learning what they expect from themselves, through face-to-face conversation, can be very helpful in finding ways to support them. Having this information can help teachers avoid making generalizations and assumptions about individual students and their families. It is also good to hear directly from families and students about their aspirations.

- Understanding the families’ cultures: Teachers should
spend time understanding the culture and traditions of EL and immigrant students and their families. When schools value an EL’s native language and culture, it shows respect and promotes diversity and multicultural principles. When schools support students’ bicultural and multicultural identity and development, families will more likely feel that they are educational partners within their child’s school community.

Communicating with Families: Language Access Requirements

Pursuant to the DC Language Access Act of 2004, all covered entities with major public contact, such as schools, are required to provide interpretation services for limited or non-English proficient customers who request or demonstrate a need for assistance. The interpretation service may either be in-person or over the phone. Specifically, a covered entity may use a bilingual staff member (if there is one immediately available), or hire an in-person interpreter (for anticipated interpretation needs such as a scheduled meeting) or call the District’s contracted telephonic interpretation services. In addition, a covered entity with major public contact is required to provide translation of vital documents in all of its threshold languages, i.e., languages that are spoken by 3 percent of the total constituent population or 500 individuals, whichever is less.


Additional Resources for Parent Engagement

WIDA offers families of ELs a three-part webinar series that presents information in English or Spanish. The topics include EL identification and exit, WIDA standards and assessments, and monitoring a child’s English language development. LEAs and schools can direct families to the webinars or use the webinars to initiate discussions around language acquisition and the EL program. The WIDA webinars are housed at http://bit.ly/2fwgyhn.

For more information on how to ensure meaningful communication with families of English learners, and to access additional resources, see the Department of Education’s parent toolkit resource at http://bit.ly/2fVZKRp.

STEP 6: Assessment

Under federal law, all LEAs are required to assess the English proficiency of ELs annually.

In addition to an assessment for identification and program placement, all identified K-12 EL students must be assessed annually for English language proficiency in the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The District of Columbia participates in the WIDA consortium for the required assessment of English language proficiency.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment administered to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as English learners. This assessment is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students’ progress in acquiring academic English. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development Standards and assesses each of the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Students in the District of Columbia participate in this assessment in an online format for Grades 1-12, while Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs are paper-based tests. In addition, students with disabilities who are eligible for a paper-based accommodation may take the Grades 1-12 assessment on paper.

Purpose and Use of ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

- Helps students and families understand students’ current level of English language proficiency along the development continuum.
- Serves as one of multiple measures used to determine whether students are prepared to exit English language support programs.
- Generates information that assists in determining whether ELs have attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without program support.
- Provides teachers with information they can subsequently use to enhance instruction and learning in programs for their ELs.
- Provides LEAs with information that will help them evaluate the effectiveness of their ESL/bilingual programs.
- Meets federal requirements for the monitoring and reporting of ELs progress toward English language proficiency.
Test Administration Registration & Ordering

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is primarily administered online, with the exception of the writing domain in select grades and for paper-based accommodations. To fully prepare for test administration, LEAs must complete a roster verification process to ensure all eligible students are registered for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. As a part of this process, LEAs are responsible for submitting information in the Pre-ID file for Pre-ID labels and ordering materials through the WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS). Pre-ID labels eliminate the need for Test Administrators to manually bubble in student demographic information on the covers of the test booklet. To access the WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS) to order materials or administer the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment online, please contact your LEA EL Assessment Point of Contact.

Required Training for Test Administrators

Test administrators must complete required training modules prior to administering ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Following completion of the training modules, test administrators must receive a passing score of 80 percent on all applicable quizzes. Once the training has been completed, only the speaking portion of the training and its corresponding quiz must be retaken every year. Training certificates on the WIDA website portal will be updated as a record of completion. Training must be completed by the start of the testing window (http://bit.ly/2ydgeiW) and training is available online through the WIDA website: www.wida.us. The WIDA website trainings are password protected. Test administrators will need to contact their LEA EL Assessment Point of Contact to obtain login credentials or call the WIDA Client Services Center: 1-866-276-7735.

In the Test Coordinator and LEA Coordinator training site on the WIDA website, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 leads will have access to key training documents including:

- Test Administrator Manual
- District and School Test Coordinator Manual
- Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement
- WIDA AMS User Guide
- WIDA AMS User Guide Supplement Data Validation
- Technology User Guide

Scoring and Reporting

Once all scoring has been completed, score reports are available to download in the WIDA AMS (www.wida-ams.us) and score reports are mailed to the LEA central office. The parent/guardian report should be sent home to parents/guardians and can be discussed with the student for goal-setting and progress checks. WIDA provides translations of the Parent Report and a sample parent cover letter in the WIDA Download Library at http://bit.ly/2fy2e7Z). Additionally, scores are available in SLED. LEA data managers have the ability to export the EL data from SLED and provide it to the EL Coordinator so they can determine the appropriate language instruction educational program for the student.

WIDA has raised the bar for language proficiency. Beginning in the 2017-18 school year students must demonstrate higher language skills to achieve the same proficiency level scores (1.0-6.0). This change reflects the need for students to meet the language demands of college- and career-ready state standards.

More information regarding scoring and reporting for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 can be found on WIDA’s website for “Scoring and Reporting” (http://bit.ly/2yKWZKt)

Accommodations and Other Supports for EL Students with and without Disabilities

EL students with disabilities are entitled to receive accommodations on statewide tests, including ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, with a few exceptions. Accommodations, accessibility features, and test administration features are described in detail on the WIDA website. The student’s IEP team (or adults familiar with the student, in the case of a 504 plan) must determine how the student will participate in ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 testing and document this information in the student’s IEP or 504 plan. The student’s IEP or 504 plan must specify precisely which test accommodation(s) he or she will receive, or if the student will participate in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is a paper-based assessment of English language proficiency for students in grades 1 -12 who are classified as English learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. Only EL students with significant disabilities should be considered for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, particularly if they participate in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA), or are in grades K–2, 9, 10, or 12, and would likely take the MSAA in a tested grade. Students taking the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs must meet the eligibility criteria outlined by OSSE. As with ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, test administrators must complete Alternate ACCESS for ELLs training on the WIDA website.
STEP 7: Exiting, Reclassification, and Monitoring

Exiting and Reclassification

In general, English learners are no longer classified as having EL status once they have attained the language skills necessary to learn in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language and academic development without the need for additional language assistance. “Exit” is a term that is used when a student has been formally “exited” from the EL program and is no longer in need of language support services.

The decision to reclassify and exit students from EL services is based on a student’s level of proficiency on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Currently, an overall composite score of at least 5.0 on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 indicates English language proficiency and is used to signal a student’s reclassification from EL to ‘EL monitored (ELm)’. A student remains identified as an EL until achieving a 5.0 or higher on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0.

After the administration of the annual ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, LEAs review the ACCESS Score Report results to determine student placement in EL services, to exit students, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the LIEP. All English learners must receive scores in all four domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 in order to be considered for exit from EL services. Students are not exited if they do not demonstrate proficiency on this summative language proficiency assessment.

Once a student reaches a level of English proficiency that no longer prevents him or her from engaging fully in educational settings, the student may be exited from EL programs and services based on DC’s uniform exit criteria and procedures. Exiting and reclassification of ELs applies only to identified ELs per the identification procedures outlined in Step 2 above.

Exit Criteria:

- The student receives at least a 5.0 overall composite score on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment.
- Note: Parents should be notified in writing of the exit decision, the student’s English language proficiency, supporting evidence, and the right to contest the reclassification. Parental notification should be retained on file.

Monitoring

Students exited from EL status must be monitored for four years to ensure that:

- They have not been prematurely exited;
- Any academic deficits incurred have been remedied; and
- They are meaningfully participating in the standard program of instruction comparable to their non-EL peers.

Once students are exited from the language assistance educational program, they are reclassified from ‘EL’ to ‘EL monitored.’ LEAs should have processes for monitoring EL monitored students which includes 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 a lack of language proficiency, or other factors, and have procedures in place to assist these students.

Providing effective educational services for EL monitored students require the development of processes for monitoring and guiding student progress, including:

- On-going monitoring of development of content skills/knowledge as the student progresses through his/her program of instruction to ensure successful transition into the regular instructional program; and
- Periodic program evaluation to ensure that academic support services for EL monitored students, which should be aligned to the LEAs approach to monitoring, are effective.
MONITORING TIPS

The following scenarios are examples of situations where monitored EL students may need additional language support.

• A high school student exits at the end of the school year.
• During the first two terms of the succeeding year, the student’s report cards show extremely poor grades.
• A student exited from bilingual/EL services begins to do poorly in school. Staff mistakenly attributes her low performance to a disability since they see her as English proficient.
• Truancy becomes a problem for a student who had good attendance prior to exiting bilingual/EL services.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a proven approach associated with positive outcomes for all students who are struggling, including English learners. For more information on RtI and how to effectively implement this approach for ELs, visit the RTI Action Network at: www.rtinetwork.org and http://bit.ly/2ydpkWF.

Re-Identification

If an exited student is now in ‘EL Monitored’ status and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, schools can re-test or re-screen the student to discern if the student needs additional language services. In no case should re-testing on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 be prohibited. LEAs should include parents in this decision. LEAs must inform OSSE of this decision.

If re-testing a student on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 results in a composite score of less than 5.0, the student will be reclassified as having EL status. The student will remain identified as an EL until the student is re-tested on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and meets the state-recognized criteria for exiting EL status upon re-test.

If an LEA or school otherwise re-identifies a student who has previously exited EL status in the Enrollment Audit, Supplemental Payment, or Demographic Certification, the LEA must provide documentation of the re-identification to OSSE via the OSSE Support Tool (OST). In the absence of documentation, OSSE will assume that instances where a student who was previously exited from EL status is identified as an EL through the LEA’s Student Information System (SIS) represent a data error, and the student’s EL status will default to exited from EL status. Once an LEA submits documentation to OSSE certifying that a student has been re-identified as EL, the student will remain identified as an EL until the student is re-tested on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and meets the state-recognized criteria for exiting EL status upon re-test.
STEP 8: Program Evaluation

All LEAs should periodically evaluate the success of their EL programs and make modifications as necessary. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine how the program functions relative to its stated goals. Some LEAs perform internal program evaluations — analyses conducted by staff within the program, school, or district — while others will bring in an external evaluator. Whatever the approach, it is important that the LEA and/or school perform a thorough quantitative and qualitative analysis of their chosen program model(s) and its outcomes.

Through Title III, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), supplemental resources are provided to LEAs to support English language acquisition and academic achievement of English learners and immigrant youth. Grant recipients are required to carry out an evaluation and provide to the SEA the results via a report. The report must contain a description of the activities conducted and students served, and must include:

1. A description of the programs and activities conducted by the LEA with funds received during the two immediately preceding fiscal years, which should include a description of how programs and activities supplemented programs funded primarily with State or local funds;
2. The number and percentage of ELs in the program who are making progress toward achieving English language proficiency in the aggregate and disaggregate;
3. The number and percentage of ELs in the program attaining English language proficiency based on ELP standards, as determined by the ELP assessment;
4. The number and percentage of ELs who exit the language instruction educational programs based on their attainment of English language proficiency;
5. The number and percentage of ELs meeting challenging State academic standards for each of the four years after they are no longer receiving services in the aggregate and disaggregated, at a minimum, by English learners with a disability;

The number and percentage of ELs who have not attained English language proficiency within 5 years of initial classification as an English learner and first enrollment in the LEA.

Additionally, OSSE will conduct on-site and/or desktop reviews of Title I and Title III, Part A grant recipients through its risk-based monitoring protocol. These grants have specific requirements relating to educating and servicing ELs and engaging their families.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has developed toolkit resources to aid schools and districts in performing thorough, comprehensive program evaluations. For more information on how to effectively evaluate programs and services for English learners, see the Department of Education evaluation toolkit resource at http://bit.ly/2kaqodJ.

Best Practices in Language Assistance Programs and Interventions

Although English learners come from many different backgrounds and reach varying levels of education, there are some common characteristics regarding basic principles of second language acquisition that can assist all teachers in addressing their needs.
# Stage Characteristics Timeframe Teacher Prompts and Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Teacher Prompts and Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silent/Receptive</td>
<td>Non-verbal, developing listening skills, may respond nonverbally to commands and questions.</td>
<td>0–6 months</td>
<td>Show me... Circle the... Where is...? Who has...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Speech</td>
<td>Uses single words or simple sentences (usually present tense), developing listening skills.</td>
<td>6 months–1 year</td>
<td>Yes/no questions Either/or questions One- or two-word answers Lists Labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Emergence</td>
<td>Uses language socially, responds with simple sentences, uses some academic language.</td>
<td>1–3 years</td>
<td>Why...? How...? Explain.. Phrase or short-sentence answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Understands and uses more complex sentences, speech contains few errors, understands more academic language.</td>
<td>3–5 years</td>
<td>What would happen if...? Why do you think...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Uses more fluent speech with limited errors, understands most academic language and abstract concepts.</td>
<td>5–7 years</td>
<td>Decide if... Retell...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Instructional Strategies for English Learners

In addition to implementing appropriate EL or bilingual programs, there are a number of strategies that all teachers who work with English learners can use to help ELs become more proficient in English. These strategies include:

1. **Differentiation:** All teachers of ELs, including general education, specialists, and, if applicable, special education teachers, should adapt lessons, assignments, and instructional groups to reduce language barriers and to assist ELs in participating fully in the educational program.

2. **Cultural Responsiveness:** Classrooms should foster a multicultural environment in which students feel like welcome members of the learning community.

3. **Increased wait time.** All students need sufficient wait time to formulate an answer to a teacher’s question. ELs may need some extra time to process the answer and produce the vocabulary and phrasing to express their thoughts in English.

4. **Model correct English.** Especially in the early stages of language learning, it is important not to over-correct grammar. Students may get frustrated and be hesitant to speak if they are constantly corrected. Instead, model the use of the correct English structure during lessons and informal conversations to the student.

5. **Simplify your language and use visuals.** During lessons and informal conversations, teachers should use a variety of techniques to ensure understanding. These include simplifying language, rephrasing, repeating key words/phrases, questioning for comprehension, using body language/gestures, and using visuals (e.g., pictures, drawings, maps, graphic organizers, etc.). Students need comprehensible input to build their own comprehension and speaking skills.

6. **Incorporate a variety of learning styles.** All students learn differently. Present material through a variety of learning styles (i.e., oral, visual, tactile, kinesthetic).
7. **Pair students and use cooperative learning.** For ELs at all levels, as well as for other students, pairing or grouping can be effective methods for promoting language acquisition. Consider a variety of pairing and cooperative learning activities. Some examples include (a) pairing students who share the same home language, (b) pairing students who do not share the same home language, (c) using heterogeneous groups to complete a project, and (d) using centers for small group activities.

8. **Diversify learning activities according to the stages of language development.** Students need multiple opportunities to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The teacher must relate the stage of language development to an appropriate activity depending upon the level of language the activity necessitates. For example, writing captions from illustrations for a book report is appropriate for a low to intermediate level student, however, a more advanced student should be able to write a book report from an outline that has been developed with a peer or a teacher.

9. **Use prior knowledge.** As is the case with all students, using an EL’s prior knowledge and experiences is important for inclusion and engagement in the lesson. Students may have knowledge of a subject in their home language and only lack the English vocabulary to share this knowledge. Students may have had experiences related to the story or lesson, so providing students with a variety of opportunities (e.g., drawing, pointing, providing picture cards) to make connections to their lives is a valuable instructional strategy.

10. **Incorporate the students’ languages and cultures.** Using the students’ home languages will give them a sense of pride. Teachers may incorporate the home languages in a variety of ways. Consider the “word of the week” in a different language. This word could be incorporated in various activities. Other examples of incorporating different languages include the morning greeting in different languages, parent visitors who teach a topic in the home language, outside visitors who might teach songs, poems, students who teach a song or rhyme in the home language, etc. Students’ home cultures can be incorporated through literature, poems, pictures, movies, and field trips. In our multicultural world, all students benefit from learning about different cultures. In a similar vein, restricting the use of the home language during instruction may isolate an EL, particularly if they are newcomers with little to no English skills or are trying to get academic assistance from someone who speaks the same language.

11. **Intensive reading support.** If formative assessment data suggests that the English learner may be at risk for reading problems in English, school leaders and teachers should attempt to provide him or her with opportunities to receive additional direct instruction in intensive, structured sessions with small groups of students who have similar skill levels. The types of interventions provided and the amount of time in pullout instruction should be linked to the identified gaps in student knowledge. Especially with emerging readers, interventions should address the five core reading elements: (a) phonological awareness, (b) phonics, (c) reading fluency, (d) vocabulary, and (e) comprehension.

12. **Be alert to mental fatigue.** Language learners can succumb to mental fatigue when they are acquiring a new language, even when they have advanced communication skills. This fatigue may manifest as disengagement from the academic activity. Allow an EL, who is exhibiting mental fatigue, an opportunity to refresh periodically by creating or allowing for brief breaks from instruction that require reduced English communication demands, such as a puzzle, browsing a text with pictures, or watching a video.

13. **Be aware of your communication with the student.** Refrain from speaking at an excessively slow speed or loudly. These communication styles may not only offend a student, but also distort words, potentially making the speech unintelligible to a language learner.
Interim Assessment of Student Progress

By selecting and designating assessments (i.e., rubrics, rating scales, observation checklists, norm-referenced assessments) that can authentically assess the progress of ELs and their response to instruction and interventions, school teams can continually inform and support instruction and intervention.

Assessing student progress can help make teaching more responsive by providing feedback to students, parents, teachers, and administrators in a timely manner and helping team members determine the success of the interventions. Assessments will indicate whether current interventions are sufficient for improving student performance or if a different approach and supports are needed.

Steps for Assessing Student Progress:

• Determine expectations for student progress.
• Determine if students are benefiting from the instructional program.
• Identify students not demonstrating adequate progress. Consider student data disaggregated by language, gender, race, and ethnicity.
• Build culturally responsive instruction/interventions for students in need.
• Compare efficacy of different forms of instruction/intervention and program design.

WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards

The WIDA English Language Development Framework, OSSE’s language development standards for ELs in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, encompasses:

• Social and instructional language
• The language of Language Arts
• The language of Mathematics
• The language of Science
• The language of Social Studies

The WIDA English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards are designed as a curriculum and instruction planning tool. The standards help educators determine student’s English language proficiency levels and how to appropriately challenge students to reach higher levels.
The Language Domains

Each of the five ELP Standards encompasses four language domains that define how ELs process and use them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LISTENING</td>
<td>Process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEAKING</td>
<td>Engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING</td>
<td>Process, understand, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>Engage in written communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade-Level Clusters

Each standard is organized by grade-level cluster:

- Pre-K–K
- Grades 1–2
- Grades 3–5
- Grades 6–8 and
- Grades 9–12
**The Language Proficiency Levels**

By mapping the stages of English language development onto a continuum of second language acquisition, we begin to define the six levels of English language proficiency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6: REACHING</strong></td>
<td>Specialized or technical language reflective of the content areas at grade level. A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specific grade level. Oral and written communications in English comparable to English-proficient peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5: BRIDGING</strong></td>
<td>Specialized or technical language of the content areas. A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written disclosure, including stories, essays or reports. Oral and written language nearly comparable to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade-level materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4: EXPANDING</strong></td>
<td>Specific and some technical language of the content areas. A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences or paragraphs. Oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communications when presented with oral or written discourse connected with sensory, graphic or interactive support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3: DEVELOPING</strong></td>
<td>General and some specific language of the content areas. Expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs. Oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written narrative or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2: BEGINNING</strong></td>
<td>General language related to the content areas. Phrases or short sentences. Oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one-to- multiple step commands, directions, questions or a series of statements with sensory, graphic or interactive support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1: ENTERING</strong></td>
<td>Pictorial graphic representation of the language of the content areas. Words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice of yes/no, or semantic errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suggested WIDA Information

WIDA’s ELP Standards, 2007 Edition: The ELP standards are available as two separate documents to reduce the size of the download. If you have any difficulty opening these documents, please make sure that your computer has the latest version of Adobe Reader installed, available for free at www.adobe.com.

Grade level clusters Pre-K-5 | http://bit.ly/2yxBUIk

Grade level clusters 6-12 | http://bit.ly/2hBwZx6

WIDA’s Can Do Descriptors provide information about what ELs can demonstrate along the language acquisition continuum. The Can Do documents, available for pre-K through grade 12, can support planning, instruction, and assessment, and can help initiate conversations with classroom teachers and families about language learning.

Visit http://bit.ly/2xQakDw
Resources Available to Teachers and Instructional Leaders

Books

Web Sites

**English Language Proficiency Standards-Based Resources**

World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)  
[www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)

**Instruction**

Colorin’ Colorado  

everythingESL.net  
[www.everythingESL.net](http://www.everythingESL.net)

Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol  

**Policy**

Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights Programs for English Language Learners  

New America ELs Under ESSA Article  

OSSE APPROVED ESSA STATE PLAN  

Pre-IPT Oral English Screener  
[www.ballard-tighe.com](http://www.ballard-tighe.com)

Professional Associations

National Association for Bilingual Education  
[www.nabe.org](http://www.nabe.org)

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages  

Washington Area Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages  

Programatic Support

Department of Education English Learner Toolkit  

Intercultural Development Research Association  
[http://www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org)

Language Access  

Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium  
[https://maec.org](https://maec.org)

Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West)  
[https://relwest.wested.org](https://relwest.wested.org)
ESSA FAQs

What is ESSA?
The Every Student Succeeds Act, also known as ESSA, was signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2015. ESSA amends the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. The ESEA was last amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, which President George W. Bush signed into law in 2002.

Each state is required to create a plan that outlines how it will implement ESSA. DC created an ESSA State plan that details how LEAs will be held accountable for the academic and English language development of English Learners.

What changes under ESSA for English Learners?
ESSA shifts accountability for English learners from federal Title III to Title I. Previously, only public schools operating English learner programs under Title III were held accountable for educating English learners. Now, under Title I, all public schools are held accountable for the education and English language development of English learners.

Why do I need to know this?
Educators of English learners should be aware of what ELs need to succeed and what standards schools are held to with respect to the instruction of ELs. With this awareness comes choices in EL program design, assessment, academic and non-academic resources, family support, and professional development, among other areas, that will assist ELs and schools in meeting ESSA's benchmarks.

What ESSA topics do I need to know immediately to get my EL program off to a good start?
Complete coverage of provisions for ELs is within DC’s State Plan for ESSA at http://bit.ly/2yL7GN7. Topics of immediate concern include the following:

- **Standardized statewide entrance procedures:**
  Entry procedures remain the same (refer to Step 2 in this guidebook).

- **Inclusion of newcomers/recently arrived ELs in content assessments:**
  For English language arts (ELA), recently arrived EL students first enrolled in U.S. schools within 12 months from the first day of the previous year’s test window are required to take the ACCESS for ELLs assessment and are exempt from taking the PARCC ELA or MSAA ELA assessment.

- **Standardized statewide exit procedures:**
  The procedures remain the same (refer to Step 6 in this guidebook). Students will exit after reaching composite score of level 5.0 on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 summative language assessment. OSSE will continue to examine exit criteria for students enrolled in PK-12 schooling and explore potential additional criteria for exiting EL status in the future.

- **Monitoring former ELs:**
  Upon exit from the EL program, former ELs must be now monitored for four years instead of two.

- **Inclusion of monitored ELs in English learner subgroup (for accountability):**
  Monitored ELs will be included for two years in the EL student group for purposes of accountability and calculation of school and specific student group STAR ratings under the STAR framework.

- **EL Indicator in state accountability system:**
  The EL student group comprises 5 percent of the overall STAR rating for a school under the STAR framework.

- **Graduation rate for ELs:**
  The ESSA State Plan sets a goal that the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) for all specific student groups, including ELs, will be 90 percent by 2039.
Glossary of Terms

Accommodations – adjustments to the testing or instructional conditions, format, or administration that provide equitable access to students who are ELs to instructional curricula and assessments. Accommodations provide equitable access during instruction and assessments and do not reduce learning or performance expectations.

Assessment – a general term, inclusive of screeners and the annual administration of the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, referring to an evaluation of a student’s English language proficiency and determines whether or not a student can enter or exit the EL program.

Eligible – describes a student who initially meets the criteria, per the home language survey, to take an English language proficiency screener. Based on screener results and subsequent assessments in the four language domains, describes a student who meets the criteria for placement in a Language Instruction Educational Program.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) – a demonstration of skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing that shows English language ability on par with native English-speaking peers.

Exit – cessation of services through the Language Instruction Educational Program. Upon exit, a former EL enters a four year period of monitoring.

Home Language Survey (HLS) – a questionnaire that discerns whether or not a student is exposed to a language other than English at home. The HLS is used to identify students who are eligible for English language proficiency screening.

Identification – a process to determine whether or not a student is ultimately eligible for enrollment in a Language Instruction Educational Program.

Language Access – the Language Access Act of 2004, and its amendments, which provides that DC residents with limited or no-English proficiency receive language support when dealing with District government programs, departments, and services. Language support includes oral interpretation and written translations.

Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) – refers to any one of several models of instruction that allow ELs to make academic progress while they acquire the English language.

Level – a designation of an ELs ability to understand and use academic English as outlined in WIDA’s standards. Also refers to a score on WIDA’s ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. Levels range from 1 (Entering) to 6 (Reaching).

Limited English Proficient (LEP) – a family member of an EL who may have limited ability to communicate in English and requires language assistance when communicating with the school or LEA.

Local Education Agency (LEA) – a term used for a school district. In the case of some DC Public Charter Schools, a single school is its own LEA.

Long-Term EL – a student who remains in the EL program beyond the expected 5 – 7 years to demonstrate English language proficiency.

Monitoring – steps to ensure a student who has recently been reclassified meets the academic demands of the school curriculum without the support of a Language Instruction Educational Program.

Newcomer/Recently Arrived – the U.S. Department of Education defines a newcomer or “recently arrived” English learner (EL) as a student who has been enrolled in schools in the United States for less than 12 months.

OSSE – the District’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education. OSSE is the State Education Agency overseeing the activities and functions of both DCPS and the DC Public Charter Schools.

Placement – the act of placing a student in the EL program based on their English language proficiency screener and assessment results.

Proficient – refers to English language ability in an EL that is on par with his/her native English-speaking peers.

Reclassification – the act of changing a student’s designation from EL to EL monitored.

Screener – an assessment tool used to determine whether a student, whose family indicated a language other than English is spoken in the home on the Home Language Survey, is eligible for services in the EL program.

SLED – DC’s Statewide Longitudinal Education Data system. Among other data housed in SLED, LEAs can look up a student’s historical ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 scores.

State Education Agency (SEA) – a state’s governmental department of education. The SEA in DC is OSSE.

Student with (L)imited Interrupted Formal Education (S(L)IFE) – Comprising a small percentage of newcomers, these elementary and secondary students arrive with gaps in academic and first-language literacy knowledge as well as with unique socio-emotional needs.

WIDA – a research-based institution focused on academic language development for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Their work includes standards, intervention, and assessment development. DC is a member of the WIDA consortium, which promotes educational equity for ELs.
Who should I contact if I need more information on English Learner programs at OSSE?

Assessment

Michael Craig  
Assessment Specialist, Special Populations  
Division of Data, Assessment, and Research  
Michael.Craig@dc.gov

Data

Chandi Wagner  
Education Research Analyst, Office of Research, Analysis and Reporting  
Division of Data, Assessment, and Research  
Chandi.Wagner@dc.gov

Program Support and Grant Management

Gimari Jones  
Program Manager, Title III, Part A Grant, English Language Acquisition (K-12)  
Division of Elementary, Secondary, & Specialized Education  
Gimari.Jones@dc.gov

Professional Development and On-Site EL Program Assistance

Anika Harris  
Professional Development Specialist, English Language Acquisition (K-12)  
Division of Elementary, Secondary, and Specialized Education  
Anika.Harris@dc.gov

For more information on all other program services, visit osse.dc.gov.

(Footnotes)

1 Fluent pre-k or early K students must be re-screened using the K W-APT, Kindergarten MODEL, or WIDA Screener in the 2nd semester of Kindergarten (K-WAPT or K MODEL) or 1st semester of first grade (WIDA Screener); ACCESS for ELLs should not be used to re-screen Kindergarten students for EL services (Please see “Assessment” for further information on ACCESS for ELLs)

2 Students identified as EL in Pre-K or Kindergarten will remain identified as EL until they meet the state-recognized criteria for exiting EL status by receiving a composite score of 5.0 or higher on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment.

3 EL students whose parents have waived EL services MUST be assessed with ACCESS for ELLs until they are proficient in English with a composite score of at least 5.0.