

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

Complete EL Entrance & Exit Procedures and Post-Exit Information



ESOL and Title III, Part A Language Programs

Introduction

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

It is expected that local education agencies (LEAs) in Georgia will have LEA-specific written guidance regarding their EL Language programs and that their guidance will align with state guidance. If you have questions, please contact the GaDOE ESOL and Title III, Part A Language Programs office.

Resource Guide Update Tracking

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

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4.8.2019	Alternate ACCESS Exit Procedures	p. 31
4.8.2019	EL Exit Procedures for ELs with Disabilities who IEP precludes assessment in one or more language domains	p. 32
4.26.2019	EL=I Code Procedures (Incorrect HLS)	p. 11
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5.9.2019	Clarified definition of “disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domain”	pp.16 & 31
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10.12.2019	Timeline considerations for IEP teams considering EL/SWD for exit when student has met ALTERNATE ACCESS criteria.	p. 33
10.12.2019	Clarification on Timeline for Reverse-Reclassification Procedures	p. 37
10.12.2019	Chart Added: 2019 EL Exit Criteria by LEA	p. 62
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8.15.2020	Chart Added: ACCESS 2020 EL Exit Criteria by LEA	p. 66
8.15.2020	Notice that K-WAPT Screener will be retired at the end of the 2020-2021 – and new WIDA Screener for Kindergarten will be used at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year	pp.15 &18
8.15.2020	ELP Assessment Participation Rates	p. 29
9.16.2020	Notice that potential EL/SWD may have accommodations on WIDA Screeners	p. 16-17
9.27.2020	Clarification on timeline for EL identification and timeline for parent notification.	pp. 9 & 23
4.12.2021	New WIDA Screener for Kindergarten Eligibility Criteria	p. 18
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General Information

State Language Program Name

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

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

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

Rationale

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

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

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

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Program

The core ESOL language program is a civil right offered by all public schools in Georgia to K-12 students with a home language other than English who qualify based on a state-approved language screener. (See Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-5-.02.) Various researched-based language program delivery models are used across the state to provide scheduled English Language Development (ELD) courses, collaborative ELD services with language-differentiated supports within content classrooms, language instruction computer software programs, sheltered content courses, and dual language instruction to more than 120,000 EL students in Georgia.

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

Goal

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

Framework for EL Programs: Systems of Continuous Improvement



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

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

Georgia's Standardized Statewide EL Entrance & Exit Procedures per ESEA/ESSA

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4. LEA Flexibility
5. Data Collected at Registration
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3. Transfer Students
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4. Students with a J-1 Visa (Foreign Exchange)
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4. ELP Assessment List by State
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Enrollment/Registration Processes for All Students

Federal Laws

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

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

State Guidance

All public-school systems in Georgia are required to use a **Home Language Survey (HLS)** at the time of enrollment to identify the primary (home) language(s) of all Kindergarten - Grade 12 students enrolled in the public-school system. If the students are new to U.S. schools, i.e. Kindergarten students and newly arrived immigrants, then the original HLS serves as a trigger to determine which students should be administered the ELP screener to identify whether they are or are not English learners entitled to English language instructional programs.

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

All students enrolling in a U.S. school for the first time must answer the state-required three HLS questions in order. However, the EL records of all transferring students must be used to identify whether the in-state or out-of-state transfer student is an EL or not. (For more information on transfer student procedures, go to pg.10.)

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Home Language Survey Questions

The state-required three questions on the *Home Language Survey* is found at [GaDOE ESOL website](#).

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

Given that the HLS process must be standardized statewide, LEAs may not use different questions or other questions, such as the data collection question about parent's preferred language for school communication.

For students new to U.S. schools, including Kindergarten students and recently arrived immigrants, the answer to [any of the three state-required questions](#) indicates a language other than English, the student has a Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE) and, as such, is considered a **potential English Learner** and must be administered the state-required grade-level appropriate ELP screener. Since this is part of a school's legal obligation to potential EL students, parent permission is not required to administer the ELP screener.

If the answer to all three questions is English, the student is NOT a potential English learner and **should not** be administered the ELP screener. Transfer students' original HLS (signed, dated, and in a language parents understood) and prior EL documents take precedence in this process.

If the answers to all three questions are several languages, the school must interview the parents to determine which language is the child's primary or dominant language, or to determine if the family is multilingual, multiliterate, and multicultural and the student is simultaneously or concurrently developing of two or more languages and is just as proficient in one language as the other(s). (See HLS multilingual/multiliterate addendum process on pg.12.)

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

NOTE: The Home language Survey (HLS) is a one-time document. It must be signed and dated by the parents and maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative file. As part of the enrollment packet, it is possible that the HLS is administered more than once. Receiving local education agencies (LEAs) will make every effort to obtain the original HLS from transferring LEAs. In absence of the original HLS, schools will maintain a copy in the student's records that hopefully mirrors the original one that triggered the ELP screening.

The following languages should be accepted as English languages and would NOT trigger the need to screen the student for English proficiency.

1. English, other than Standard English (Language Code 51) – This language code was discontinued in July 2020.
2. American Sign Language (ASL)

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If the child has a disability that precludes assessment of one or more language domains or an established IEP/504 plan, please refer to the section on **EL Entrance Procedures for Students with Disabilities**, pg. 16.

Timeline

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

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

Pre-Kindergarten Students

If students are screened prior to the start of Kindergarten, the 30-day window starts the first day of Kindergarten. Although all students enrolled in a Pre-Kindergarten program will most likely use the 1st day of Pre-Kindergarten as the U.S. school start date, the 1st day of Kindergarten, not Pre-Kindergarten, is considered by the US Department of Education (ED) as the official **start date** for EL eligibility (and/or Immigrant eligibility). Since an LEA must administer the ELP assessment annually to all ELs in schools served by the state in all grades in which there are EL students, Kindergarten through Grade 12, an LEA should only include students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 for all EL student and Immigrant student reporting requirements under Title III, Part A. [See 34 C.F.R. §200.5(a)(2).]

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

LEA Checklist for Home Language Survey (HLS) Process

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

- Is the HLS part of our school's initial enrollment processes?
- Is it only administered once to parents during their child's initial U.S. enrollment?
- Is it maintained in the student's permanent /cumulative file?
- Is it in a language parents have indicated they understand?

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- Has it been completed, signed, and dated by the parent enrolling the student?

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

Note: For students who are transferring from other U.S. school systems, if the school system has the HLS embedded in its registration packet, the parents' responses on the HLS will often cause the receiving LEA to contact the transferring LEA to try to obtain the **original** Home Language Survey. Decisions regarding the screening process will then depend on the transferring school's records.

LEA Flexibility

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

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

Data Collected at Registration

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

- STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE must be entered if the student is coded EL= 'Y'.
- STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE cannot be BLANK (English) if the student is an ENGLISH LEARNER (EL).
- A STUDENT PRIMARY LANGUAGE is required when the PLACE OF BIRTH code is not the United States (code 2310 – U.S. or 1790 – Puerto Rico).

Parent Language of Communication - Indicates the language preference of the parent for written communication between the school and the family. Beginning in 2019-2020, the following question is required under ESEA/ESSA Title I, Part A as part of the Registration and Data Collection Processes and could be placed at the bottom of the HLS 3-required questions, *per local decision*.

Data Collection Question ONLY – This is NOT part of the HLS:

In which language would you prefer to receive school communication?

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Process: When Parents Report an Incorrect HLS

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

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

A student may have also been erroneously identified as a *non-English learner* (EL=N), due to a parent’s misunderstanding and incorrect completion of the HLS or incorrect scoring of the ELP screener or annual ELP assessment, among other reasons.

To change a student’s incorrect EL=Y status, each LEA must have established written procedures in its Federal Programs Handbook, Title III Manual and/or ESOL Handbook that ensure the following steps are followed:

1. If a parent notifies the LEA that the original Home Language Survey answers are not correct.
2. If the LEA deems the request plausible, the parent will be given the opportunity to complete a *Home Language Survey Addendum*. (See HLS-Incorrect Addendum on [ESOL Form Bank.](#))
Note: The addendum requires the parent’s signature to be notarized. Both the original HLS and the HLS Addendum should be in a language parents have indicated they understand.
3. The ESOL Coordinator will approve the new HLS Addendum, after which the school will proceed to take the next steps based on the new HLS.
4. If the next steps require a status change, the LEA will use the EL= I code for the remainder of that school year to show that the student was incorrectly identified as an EL. After the June 30th Student Record sign-off is completed, the student will be coded as EL= N from then on.
5. The LEA will keep all documentation in the student’s file and report to the GaDOE via secure Portal messaging system and by **June 30th** the following:
 - i. Student’s Name,
 - ii. Student’s Grade-Level,
 - iii. Parent’s Reason for Change,
 - iv. Name of Administrator or ESOL Coordinator who approved the Status Change,
 - v. Former Status Code,
 - vi. New Status Code, and
 - vii. Date Status Change Effective.

The report should be saved with the following name: DISTRICT.YEAR.TitleIII.EL-ICodeReport (See [Sample LEA Title IIIA EL-I Code Use Report](#) on the ESOL Language Programs website.)

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

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6. DATA COLLECTIONS ALERT:

- a. Use of the EL-I code will trigger an error flag which should be explained in the year-end Student Record. The error is relievable with the explanation.
- b. *How long do we report the student as EL=I?*

The LEA should only report the student as EL=I for the remainder of that school year. Subsequently, after the EL=I year, the student should be coded as **EL=No**, even if the student has transferred to another LEA.

7. ASSESSMENT ALERT:

- a. Use of the EL=I code after the ACCESS testing I.D. tickets have been issued, will need to be explained to the System Testing Coordinator.

8. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL MONITORING ALERT:

- a. The Title III CFM process reviews whether an LEA is following statewide standardized EL Entrance & Exit Procedures according to ESSA.
- b. A spot review of student records will be used to inform this Indicator during onsite CFM.
- c. Former and/or current EL=I student's records may be reviewed during the CFM process.
- d. The CFM process will also include a review of the state's Data Collections EL=I Code Report to ensure LEA and State reports align.

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

Regardless of whether other states' HLS questions differ from Georgia's, the HLS is a valid document which triggers subsequent ELP screening or not. However, it is challenging for LEAs when parents respond differently to HLS questions year after year. It is even possible that English-only responses on a receiving LEA's HLS may have been non-English responses on the transferring LEA's HLS or vice versa. LEAs must follow the statewide, standardized EL entrance process that fulfills the intent and purpose of the definition of English learner and the purpose for the ESOL language program.

When Parents Report a Multilingual-Multiliterate Home Language Environment

When parents report two primary home languages, one of which is English, the statewide standardized procedure is to identify this student as a potential English learner and screen him or her for English language proficiency. If the student qualifies for EL status, schools usually identify the primary home language as the non-English language, since both primary home languages cannot be simultaneously recorded in the SIS.

However, some families are multilingual-multiliterate and believe their child is developing proficiency in two or more languages concurrently, and therefore, each language is just as "primary" as the other(s). Educational research literature calls these children simultaneous bilinguals or multilinguals to distinguish them from sequential bilinguals/multilinguals. With the rise in dual language programs in Georgia and the

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influx of multilingual-multiliterate families this scenario is requiring schools and school systems to develop an alternate set of HLS procedures.

If a parent of a developing multilingual child feels that the ELP screening process is discriminatory against multilingual-multiliterate families, the parent may request a [Multilingual Home Language Survey \(MLL HLS\) Amendment](#). This amendment provides guidance and describes the process to change the student's primary home language code to English. With an English primary home language, the student would not be considered a potential English learner nor would be screened for ELP.

Each school district or LEA in Georgia must follow written procedures for this process in its Federal Programs Handbook, Title III Manual and/or ESOL Handbook that ensure the MLL HLS Amendment guidance is followed as described on the [Multilingual Home Language Survey \(MLL HLS\) Amendment](#) and all documentation is maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative file.

Part I: EL ENTRANCE PROCEDURES

Process: Screening for Eligibility

Initial Questions to Consider & Summary of Related Process

Is this the student's first-time enrolling in a U.S. school?	Has the student been enrolled in a GA school before? (In-state transfer)	Has the student been enrolled in a U.S. school in another state?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administer the HLS 2. If a language other than English is indicated for any of the three state-required questions, the student is a potential English learner. 3. Administer the grade-level appropriate ELP Screener. Note: If the potential EL has an established IEP/504 plan, please screen with the appropriate accommodations. 4. Follow the state ELP screener eligibility criteria to determine whether the potential EL qualifies for the EL status. New WIDA Kindergarten Screener Flowchart Grades 1-12 WIDA Screener Flowchart 5. Code student appropriately in the SIS. 	<p>Identify if the student is an English Learner <u>based on transferring LEA records</u> and/or the original HLS, original screener, or the latest WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Claim the student in GUIDE to see if he has an EL status code in Georgia. 2. Check the student's previous enrollment history in SLDS. 3. Check the student's records in SLDS to see if there are any former ACCESS test results. Check prior ACCESS test results against state or LEA entrance/exit criteria for that year. 4. When applicable, open the SLDS EL Tab and check to see if student was previously screened. Even if the LEA is not using the SLDS EL Tab, it can be opened to see transferring LEA information. 5. Make every effort possible to obtain prior EL records and identify EL status within 30 days of enrollment. 	<p>Identify if the student is an English Learner <u>based on transferring LEA records.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact the previous school or LEA and ask for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The original Home Language Survey, b. Screening documents, and/or c. English Language Proficiency (ELP) testing results. 2. Contact the previous school or school system again. 3. Contact the previous school or school system again. 4. Make every effort possible to obtain prior EL records to determine EL status within 30 days of enrollment.

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Statewide Standardized ELP Screeners

Since 2006, Georgia has been a member of the WIDA Consortium. Therefore, LEAs must use the following WIDA ELP screeners to determine if a potential EL student is eligible for the EL status.

(NEW) WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (Begin using for 2021-2022 Kindergarten students)

- Training on WIDA’s new Kindergarten ELP Screener will begin in Spring 2021 - all teachers who will administer this screener must be trained and certified. The training and quizzes for certification are found on the WIDA Secure Portal.
- The new WIDA Kindergarten Screener must be used to identify potential EL students starting with the 2021-2022 Kindergarten class, students enrolling in 1st semester and 2nd semester Kindergarten and in 1st semester Grade 1 only.
- The K-WAPT will be retired (discontinued) at the end of the 2020-2021 school year and may **not** be used to screen rising Kindergarten students in Spring 2021.

Grades 1-12 WIDA Screener (Online & Paper)

- The WIDA Screener is an ELP screening instrument designed to measure the English language proficiency of potential EL students enrolled in 2nd semester Grade 1- Grade 12 only.
- The WIDA Screener for Grades 1-12 is an online or paper ELP screener.
- The WIDA Screener for students in grades 1-12 is divided into grade clusters: 1; 2-3; 4-5; 6-8; and 9-12. The instructions as to the appropriate grade level cluster screener to be administered to the students in grades 1-12 are outlined in the WIDA Screener Test Administration Manual; the administration procedures should be followed as indicated in the manual.
- To administer the Grades 1-12 WIDA Online or Paper Screener access to the WIDA AMS site can be obtained from the LEA’s System Testing Coordinator.

Grade-Appropriate WIDA Screeners & Language Domain Subtests

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

Retired ELP Screeners (See historical WIDA Screener Eligibility Criteria on pg. 59.)

- The Kindergarten WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (K W-APT) will be retired at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
- Beginning in 2021-2022, the Kindergarten Measure of Developing English Language (K MODEL) will no longer used as a Kindergarten ELP Screener.

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Screening Potential English Learners with Disabilities (or Suspected Disabilities)

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

Resources:

- GaDOE Student Assessment Handbook and Accessibility & Accommodations Manual on the Assessment webpage: [For Educators](#).
- Table of Allowable Accommodations in [WIDA's 2021-2022 Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#).
- ESOL Directors' Munch & Learn Webinars, July 2020, April 2021, and July 2021

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

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

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

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

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

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- A flag or note could be placed with the Home Language Survey in the permanent record to alert any reviewer to see the IEP minutes dated XXXX for decision regarding screening.
- Student's EL status would be reported to the state in SIS as EL=Yes or EL=No. If this status were to change, an explanation must be included in the Data Collection submissions.

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

Students with Identified Significant Cognitive Disabilities

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

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

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

Other Screening Scenarios

If a school system discovers that the screening process was administered to a potential EL without the appropriate accommodations, or if another screening irregularity occurred, the GaDOE Assessment Division should be contacted.

ELP Screener Costs

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

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

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participating in Title III may use Title III funds for English language proficiency screener and assessment costs.

Certification to Administer WIDA Screeners

Annual WIDA certification is required for all certified personnel who will administer the WIDA Screeners. Only certified personnel who have completed the required WIDA training for the WIDA Screeners are permitted to administer them. The annual certification period runs from July 1 to June 30.

- To complete the training modules, educators must obtain a login and password to the WIDA secure portal from the LEA's System Testing Coordinator or ESOL Coordinator.
- The passing score for the WIDA Screener training quizzes is 80% or higher.
- LEAs must maintain test administrator certification evidence.

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

Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, only the new **WIDA Screener for Kindergarten** will be used to screen potential ELs enrolling in Kindergarten and 1st Semester Grade 1. Test administrators must enter the student's score results into the **WIDA Score Calculator** to generate a WIDA ELP **Screener Score Report** of the English language proficiency level indicated by the student's responses.

See [EL Eligibility Flowchart – Kindergarten-1st Semester Grade 1](#)

For students enrolling in 1st Semester Kindergarten:

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

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

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

NOTE: *Although WIDA recommends that Kindergarten Screener proficiency level scores be considered as one of multiple data sources to inform EL identification, Georgia state procedures only use WIDA Screener scores for EL identification purposes. Since 2018, local school systems may not use other evidence sources.*

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Kindergarten W-APT Historical EL Eligibility Criteria -

Note: The K-WAPT will be retired at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. (See the Historical ELP Screener Information in the Appendix, pg. 59.)

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

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

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

A [WIDA Screener Paper Score Calculator](#) is available on the WIDA website to help educators calculate the Grade Level Adjusted Overall Composite score.

See [EL Eligibility Flowchart – 2nd Semester Grade 1-Grade 12](#).

Recording Date of ELP Screener & ELP Screener Results Screener Results

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

DATE OF ELP SCREENER

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

- The **DATE OF ELP SCREENER** is the testing date a student is screened for the EL program and is determined to be an English Learner (**EL** = 'Y') student.
- The date must be in the format yyyyymmdd where 'yyyy' is the complete year (e.g. '2002'), 'mm' is the month (01-12), and 'dd' is the date (01-31). (See [FY19 Student Record Data Collection Data Element Detail](#))

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

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

When an LEA is unable to determine with certainty the Date of ELP Screener for Out-of-State or In-State

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Transfer EL Students, the LEA will construct this date as follows:

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

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

Infinite Campus Users –

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

Active EL Record

Program Status: EL

Identified Date: 02/05/2014

Expected Exit Date:

Program Exit Date:

Exit Reason:

First Year Monitoring:

Second Year Monitoring:

Third Year Monitoring:

Fourth Year Monitoring:

Parent Notified:

Parent Declined Date:

Comments

Student transferred from Clayton County, Ga. Through SLDS it appears that he was identified in the 2013-2014 school year. Last ACCESS Score of 2.7 was recorded in the 17-18 school year.

- Modified by: 03/08/2019 11:04

Census Information

****To update read only fields, please go to Census->People->Identifies**

Home Primary Language: 30: Vietnamese

First Entered US School: No Data Available

Birth Country: Vietnam

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

Active Military Parent/Guardian

Military Reserve: (Default: No Military Parent)

Residential Environment Code:

Homeless Primary Night Shelter:

Immigrant Status: (Y) Yes

Migrant:

Date of Entry to U.S. School: 10/18/2018

Less Than 3 Years Total in US Schools (36 months): (Y) Yes

City of Birth:

State of Birth:

Place Of Birth: (0940) Guatemala

Country of Origin:

Priority For Service: (N) No

Date of ELP Screener: 10/18/2018

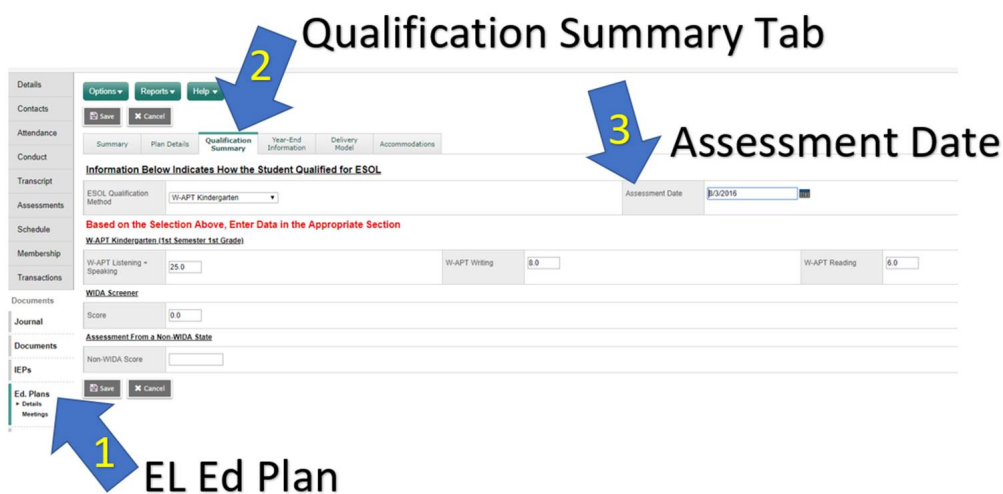
Primary Language: (026) Spanish
Current EL = Y

Parent Communication Language: (026) Spanish
Current EL = Y

(Default is English for non-EL students and Blank for EL students)

ASPEN Users –

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



Identification of Out-of-State Transfer Students

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

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

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

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

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

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J-1 Visa, Foreign Exchange Students

According to CFR 22 § 62.10 Program administration, J-Visa student sponsors are responsible to “establish and utilize a method to screen and select prospective exchange visitors to ensure that they are eligible for program participation”, and that the foreign exchange visitor “possesses sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, successfully to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis.” A sponsor must verify an applicant's English language proficiency through a recognized English language test, by signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school, or through a documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in-person or by videoconferencing, or by telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option.

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

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

EL Entrance Summary:

- Under Section 3113(b)(2) of the ESEA, each SEA receiving a Title III, Part A State formula grant must establish and implement standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for EL students. The requirement that the procedures be “statewide” means they must be consistently applied across the State, regardless of whether the LEA receives or does not receive a Title III subgrant. Statewide procedures for entrance in GA include the process for identification of ELs, the timeline for implementing that process, the home language survey the LEAs use, the specific ELP screener the LEAs administer, and the scores from the ELP screener that will result in the identification of a student as an EL.
- An SEA must ensure, in establishing the statewide entrance and exit procedures, that the procedures are consistent with Federal civil rights obligations under Title VI. The home language survey (HLS) is a questionnaire given to parents or guardians that helps schools and LEAs identify which students are potential ELs and who will require screening of their ELP to determine whether they qualify as English Learners.
- LEAs in GA use a Home Language Survey with 3-required standardized questions which can be found on GaDOE website and is provided in several languages. OCR requires that the HLS be provided to parents in a language they understand. Since it is a parent self-report of their “home” language, i.e., the student’s primary or dominant language, a parent’s signature and date is required on the document.
- The HLS is a legal document which triggers the need to screen or not to screen the student to determine his level of English proficiency. The process that follows the completed HLS is a process required by the state based on federal and OCR guidance; therefore, the ORIGINAL Home Language Survey (completed by parents of children enrolling in U.S. schools for the first time) should be maintained in student’s permanent records, along with a record of oral

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interpretation (when necessary), such as date/signature of oral interpreter. This evidence will protect the LEA if anyone (parent or OCR) questions why the child was screened. The original signed/dated HLS in a language the parent understands will provide the evidence needed by the school that statewide standardized procedures were implemented with fidelity. This document will also be reviewed by the Title III Specialists during the Cross-functional Monitoring Process as evidence that the LEA is following the statewide standardized EL Entrance and Exit procedures as required by ESEA/ESSA.

- If the HLS indicates a language other than English, the student should be screened with the appropriate WIDA screener. However, if the student is an in-state or out-of-state **transfer student**, then the LEA should **first review** prior school records to find the **original HLS** and determine whether another school/LEA administered an ELP screener or summative ELP assessment. (SLDS and the EL Screener Tab are excellent resources for this detective work.)
 - **Note:** A student's prior records will determine the EL status of the student, not any additional Home Language Surveys a parent may complete when transferring across LEAs. Transfer students should not be re-screened immediately based on information on a possible 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Home Language Survey.
- ESEA/ESSA Section 3113(b)(2) establishes the period of EL identification to be 30 days of enrollment in a school in the state, regardless of when the student enrolls during the school year.
- LEAs should maintain **core EL documentation** in an EL student's permanent file to support data clerks who are sending these documents to transfer LEAs.

Core EL documentation includes the following:

1. HLS (original, signed, dated, in a language parents understand)
2. ELP Screener Score Report, dated (initial)
3. OCR Parent Notification for ESOL Language Program services (dated, one copy for each year student is in ESOL program) (Not a Federal Programs Title IA nor Title IIIA requirement)
4. EL/TPC (one for each year)
5. Parent Waiver (applicable number of copies – signed, dated, in a language parents understand)
6. Annual ELP assessments results (annual results for each year student was tested)
7. EL Reclassification Form, when applicable
8. Two years of post-exit monitoring records

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

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

ESEA/ESSA Sections 1112(e)(3)(A) and (B) specify that the parents must be notified of the student's placement in an EL program 30 days after the beginning of the school year or within ten days of being placed in the EL program if the student enrolled after the beginning of the school year.

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Please see the Title I, Part A Parents of English Learners website for the required forms in several languages. For more information, please contact a GaDOE Family Engagement Specialist whose contact information is available at <http://www.gadoe.org/Pages/Support.aspx>.

Individual English Language Development (ELD) Plans

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

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

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



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

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

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Testing Practices	Instructional Practices	
Test Accommodations	Classroom Assignment Modifications	Scaffolds or Learning Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction read aloud • Small group testing • Test administered by familiar teacher • Word-to-word dictionary • Time extensions (See GaDOE <i>Student Assessment Handbook</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept drawing, copying and labeling in lieu of grade-level writing • Adapted grade-level or ELP-tiered assignments • Assignments presented in 1st language (L1) • Assignments weighted according to students' ELP level • Culturally & linguistically appropriate assignments • ELP-differentiated (tiered) writing checklists & rubrics • Gesture or total physical responses (TPR) to demonstrate understanding (pointing, drawing, matching, mimicking, copying, sequencing pictures or realia, categorizing objects, etc.) • Highlighted portions of assignment • Matching vocabulary word-to-picture instead of matching word-to-definition • Oral response in 1st language • Oral or visual assignments • Partner assignments • Reduced DOK level • Reduced Lexile level (high quality, age appropriate) • Shortened assignments • Shortened spelling word list for test • Students copy words & sentences • Test orally allowing individual words or language chunk responses. • Visually supported assignments • Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic sentence frames / paragraphs • Buddy reading/working • Building background experiences • Charts • Cloze paragraphs • Cooperative writing/learning • Demonstrations • 1st language materials • Gestures • Graphs • Graphic novels • Graphic organizers • Illustrated dictionary • Language wall with sequencing words & key sentence structures • Manipulatives • Models • Modeling • Music • Oral or visual text • PALs reading/mathematics • Paragraph frames • Pictures • Re-teach vocabulary • <i>Realia</i> • Rebus • Sensory support • Simulations • Specific, level-appropriate feedback • Storytelling and retelling with visuals and props • Teacher or student Think-alouds • Videos • Visual supports • Word Bank or Word Wall • Etc.

Ideas adapted from various ESOL teacher professional learning resources including: Fairbairn, S. & Jones-Vo, St. (2010), *Differentiating instruction and assessment for English language learners: A guide for K-12 Teachers*, Philadelphia, PA: Caslon, Inc.

Part II: English Learner Exit Procedures

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

In Georgia, the standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures are as follows:

1. LEAs must administer the annual ELP assessment to **all** English Learners (Kindergarten ACCESS, Grades 1-12 ACCESS for ELLs, & Alternate ACCESS, as applicable) per Title I, Part A requirement. In collaboration with Title III, Part A, Title I Part A will be monitoring each LEA's EL ACCESS Participation Rate on an annual basis. Please see [Federal Programs Monitoring Process](#).
2. LEAs must follow the standardized statewide ACCESS for ELLs[®] 2.0 Overall Composite Proficiency Level criteria as well as the Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing language domain criteria (when applicable) to identify EL students who have met the criteria to **exit EL status**. (Please see the updated EL Exit Flowcharts on the [ESOL Language Program website](#).)
 - a. [Kindergarten EL Exit Flowchart](#):
 - Must exit all Kindergarten EL students who score CPL ≥ 5 , and Listening, Speaking, Reading ≥ 5 , and Writing ≥ 4.5 on the Kindergarten ACCESS.
 - b. [Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowchart](#):
 - Must exit all EL students who score Overall CPL ≥ 5 on the ACCESS for ELLs
 - LEAs may establish written procedures an EL Exit minimum criterion within the state-approved range ACCESS CPL 4.3-4.9. An LEA may include additional measures in its standardized exit procedures that are valid, reliable, objective and applied and weighted consistently across the LEA.
 - Therefore, in order for LEA input to be applied and weighted consistently across the state, LEAs must convene an EL Reclassification Team to complete an [EL Reclassification Form](#) on **all** EL students scoring at or above the LEA-established minimum exit criterion, when this criterion is in the 4.3-4.9 range.
 - Using the [EL Reclassification Form](#), the EL Reclassification Team will decide whether to exit the EL student or not. (Federal guidance states that any additional measures used for this decision should not be measures that do not measure English language proficiency, such as the results of the mathematics content assessment.)

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- The final decision (whether to exit or not) **must be recorded on** the [EL Reclassification Form](#), which **must be maintained** in the exited EL student's permanent/cumulative file (DO NOT PURGE!).

c. [Alternate ACCESS EL Exit Procedures](#)

- d. Exit Procedures for ELs with a Disability that precludes assessment in one or more language domains (See [Less-than-Four-Domains Exit Procedures](#))

EL Reclassification Team Decision

Reclassification is a term that is used when an EL student's English language proficiency level reaches the state and LEA's definition of English proficient, and the student is then exited from EL status and the student's status is reclassified from English Learner=Yes (EL=Y) to English Learner Monitor Year 1 or EL=1.

The state mandated English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs® or Alternate ACCESS, is used to initiate a student's exit from EL status. If the LEA has chosen an EL exit ACCESS Overall Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) score between the state-flexibility 4.3 and 4.9, then an EL Reclassification Team must be convened for each EL student scoring at or above the LEA chosen criteria, up to CPL 4.9.

Notes:

- The name of the *EL Reclassification Form* may be misleading. The intent of this form is that the EL Reclassification Team **will consider** for exit **all students** whose ACCESS 2.0 scores fall within the LEA's established range up to 4.9. The team may decide to exit some EL students and not exit other EL students who may have similar ACCESS score results. Thus, the *EL Reclassification Form* provides the documentation for this decision, when communicating with parents, transferring schools, and other stakeholders. You may want to think of the form as an *EL Consideration-for-Reclassification Form*.
- An English Learner **must be exited from EL status** for ESEA purposes (i.e. for purposes of Title I and Title III requirements) when the student satisfies the state's standardized statewide exit procedures.
- The **LEA may no longer use Title III funds** for services for that exited student. However, an exited student may continue to receive English language services with **local or state funds** after exiting EL status.
 - BUT, if many exited students are needing continued language support, an LEA should verify *that ELs are not being exited prematurely due to a score of proficiency on the state ELP assessment (ACCESS for ELLs) that is set too low to ensure actual English language proficiency* and, therefore, a student's ability to succeed in the classroom. (Excerpt from the Addendum to *September 23, 2016 Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the ESEA, as Amended by the ESSA*, p. 5)

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Timeline for EL Exit Procedures

May

- Schools receive ACCESS for ELLs Score Results
- School teachers and leaders review EL students' ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS score results to determine which EL students meet the state ACCESS criteria for exit. (See Kindergarten and Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowcharts with state established criteria.)
- When school systems have chosen to “consider for exit” ELs in grades 1-12 scoring within the state’s flexibility range of ACCESS Overall CPL 4.3-4.9, then schools schedule EL Reclassification Team Meetings to determine whether the students will be exited from EL status. In the case of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities meeting the ALTERNATE ACCESS exit criteria to consider for exit, IEP teams will be convened to make the exit determinations.
- Most EL Reclassification Team meetings and final decisions will occur before the end of the school or immediately after, although the student’s EL status change **should not be recorded** in the SIS until after the June 30th Student Record Sign-Off is completed. Remember, if the EL Reclassification Team meeting is held at the beginning of the new school year, the decision is made for the end of the school year when the student received the ACCESS exit score. It is important to note that when the EL Exit Date is recorded in the SIS; **please ensure you use an end-of-school-year date or June 30.**

July – Exited EL students’ status is changed in the SIS, although the EL Exit Date must be an end-of-the-school year date or June 30. Please ensure that a July or August date is not used for the EL Exit Date. The student is only exited at the end of a school year, not the beginning of a school year.

August/September -

- If schools cannot meet the “end-of-school-year” deadline for EL or IEP Reclassification team meetings, they may convene some of these at the beginning of the school year, **but not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year.** The decision to exit a student from EL status must be made at the end of the school year or immediately at the beginning of the next school year to schedule the student for appropriate ESOL language instruction when applicable. EL Reclassification team meetings may not occur at any other time during the school year. (See important information above on recording the Date for EL Exit.)

Annual ELP Assessment

It is a federal and state requirement that LEAs administer the WIDA *ACCESS for ELLs*® annually to **all** English Learners in Georgia. See ESEA/ESSA Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(ix) and Section 1111(b)(2)(G). This assessment meets the federal requirements to measure EL students’ academic English language proficiency. It assesses social and instructional English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context and across the four language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Only certified personnel who have completed the required WIDA training for the *ACCESS for ELLs*® are permitted to administer the annual proficiency assessment. GaDOE Assessment and Accountability division requires annual WIDA *ACCESS for ELLs*® certification for all certified personnel who will

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administer the assessment and provides the LEA System Testing Coordinators (STC) with information regarding access to the WIDA training website.

LEAs must record the reasons why EL students did not participate in the annual ELP assessment, defined as not having an overall composite proficiency level. These reasons will be reported in the accountability nonparticipation application during the summer. All LEAs will have access to their ELP Assessment Participation Rate in the myGaDOE Portal *ELP Assessment Participation* application. Federal Programs, Title I, Part A and Title III, Part A oversees the monitoring of LEA's ELP Assessment participation rate. Title I, Part A has established a 95% minimum participation rate threshold.

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0

- *ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0* is administered, annually, to all English learners in Georgia. It is an English language proficiency test designed to measure English learners' social and academic proficiency and progress in English. It assesses social and instructional English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context across the four language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. *ACCESS for ELLs* meets the Title I mandate to evaluate the English language proficiency progress of all Grades K-12 EL students.
- Under the ESSA, all Grade K-12 students identified as English learners must take the *ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0* English language proficiency (ELP) assessment annually, **including students whose parents have waived ESOL services, and including EL students with disabilities.** Section 1111(b)(2)(G); 34 C.F.R. §§ 200.5(a)(2), 200.6(h)
- Federal Programs Titles I and III, Part A will be monitoring school system's EL ACCESS Participation Rates annually.
- Students who have formally exited language assistance services are not administered the ACCESS 2.0 assessment, including those who just exited EL services (EL-1 & EL-2).

WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs®

- Under the ESSA, all schools are required to assess annually the English language proficiency of all students identified as ELs, including students with disabilities. See Sec. 1111
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 2004) also mandates that students with disabilities participate in statewide and districtwide assessment programs, including alternate assessments with appropriate accommodations, when it is documented in their Individual Education Program (IEP).
- WIDA's *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs* meets federal accountability requirements and provides educators with a measure sensitive to English language proficiency growth of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities.
- EL students who are eligible for the GAA 2.0 are the **only** EL students eligible for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. LEAs assessment procedures for EL students will be monitored by Federal Programs, Titles I and III, Part A.
- **English Learners with Disabilities (EL/SWD) may use [state-approved accommodations](#) when taking the ACCESS for ELLs or the Alternate ACCESS, as applicable. The IEP Team will determine which accommodations are needed using the WIDA list of approved accommodations.**

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Exiting Kindergarten EL Students (See Kindergarten [EL Exit Flowchart](#))

- The new Kindergarten *ACCESS for ELLs*® student report contains one proficiency level for each of the four domains and four composite scores. For determining whether a Kindergarten EL student has met the requirements to exit EL=Y status, the *ACCESS for ELLs*® Overall Composite Proficiency Level scores and the individual language domain scores must all be utilized.
- To exit EL=Y status, Kindergarten EL student must score an *ACCESS* Overall Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) score greater than or equal to 5.0 with at least a 4.5 in the Writing domain and at least a 5.0 in each of the Listening, Speaking and Reading domains.
- Kindergarten EL students who score less than 5.0 Overall **or** whose Writing domain is less than 4.5 **or** Listening, Speaking or Reading domain is less than 5.0 are not eligible to exit EL=Y status.
- Note: The Kindergarten exit criteria requires a maximum writing score.

Exiting EL Students in Grades 1-12 (See [Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowchart](#))

- The student must be administered all components of the *ACCESS for ELLs*® 2.0 or *Alternate ACCESS* for ELL assessment.
- In addition, per the ESSA, LEAs will follow standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures.
 - If the student achieves an **Overall score of 5.0 or greater**, the student must be exited from the English Learner status and the ESOL language Program.
 - LEAs have the flexibility to consider EL students for exit using an EL Exit Criterion that falls within the state-approved 4.3-4.9 range. This criterion should be established in writing.
 - When exiting EL students within the 4.3-4.9 range, LEAs must use the *English Learner (EL) Reclassification Form* provided by the state.
 - Although LEAs have flexibility, in order to ensure that all LEAs are following standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures, the Reclassification Process must be applied in a uniform and consistent manner across the state.
 - Therefore, the *EL Reclassification Form* is a **required form** when considering exiting EL students who score below a WIDA *ACCESS* 2.0 Overall CPL 5.0.
 - The *EL Reclassification Form* must be used for all students scoring at or above the LEA's established exit criterion, up to 4.9. It is not necessary to use the *EL Reclassification Form* when a student meets the 5.0 criterion.
 - When making reclassification decisions, please ensure the process is implemented in a standardized manner across the LEA.
 - This form should indicate the final decision of the EL Reclassification Committee, whether to exit the English Learner or not, and must be maintained in the student's permanent/cumulative file.

Receiving Exited EL Students from Transfer LEAs

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

If the transferring LEA uses a lower EL Exit Criterion than the receiving LEA, and if the transfer occurs during the first two weeks of school, the receiving LEA may observe student performance for two weeks

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and convene another EL Reclassification Team to review documentation and evidence, when applicable. However, the EL Exit Date must be June 30 of the school year that just ended.

Please see the 2018, 2019, and 2020 EL Exit Criteria by LEA Charts in the Appendices of this document.

Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Disabilities

Since 2013, the *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs*® assessment of English language proficiency (ELP) has been used in Georgia for students in grades 1 -12 who are classified as English learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the regular *ACCESS for ELLs*® assessment. To participate in the Alternate ACCESS, a student must be eligible to participate in the GAA 2.0

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

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

Alternate ACCESS Threshold for considering EL Exit:

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

EL Exit Procedures:

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

Post-exit Procedures:

- For two consecutive school years, the exited student's progress toward IEP goals must be monitored by designated ESOL and Special Education personnel to ensure the exited student's English proficiency is not a barrier to full participation in classroom instruction and assessment in English. Monitoring documentation must be maintained in the exited student's permanent/cumulative records.

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- The IEP team with a 2nd language specialist could revisit the EL Reclassification decision during the two-year post-exit period of monitoring student's progress, if the team determines the student would benefit from language assistance services as provided by the ESOL language program.

Exiting Procedures for English Learner Students with Less than Four Domains

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

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

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

Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL).

D-CPL Process:

1. Administer the appropriate WIDA ACCESS for ELLs[®] 2.0 or Alternate ACCESS language domain tests to the EL student as established in the IEP and/or IAP (504 Plan).
2. For each language domain test not administered, clearly mark **Do Not Score** with the reason code of **SPD (Student's Program/Plan team's Decision code)** in the student test booklet or in WIDA AMS.
 - a. If the domain was not tested due to an IAP and not an IEP, please notify the GaDOE Assessment, Special Education, and ESOL offices. Thank you.
3. **NOTE:** Although WIDA ACCESS *Individual Student Report* will only show results for the language domains administered and will not include composite proficiency levels, the report should still be shared with parents in a language they understand.
4. Using WIDA-provided language domain scale score tables, the GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will assign the **lowest exit score for the missing language domain(s)** to allow an overall composite proficiency level calculation.
5. The GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will calculate a **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)** for each EL student whose WIDA ACCESS score results are missing one or more language domains.
6. The GaDOE Assessment & Accountability Division will provide the school system with an ACCESS **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)** for each one of these EL students. Typically this occurs in August.
7. After receiving the GaDOE-generated **D-CPL**, the appropriate standardized statewide EL exit criteria for the ACCESS for ELLs[®] 2.0 or the Alternate ACCESS threshold for considering EL Exit would then be applied to determine whether the EL student will exit EL status or not. (See below)

ACCESS for ELLs Exit Criteria

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An EL student with disabilities **must** be exited from EL status when the **ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 D-CPL** is **5.0** or when the **D-CPL** meets the LEA-established exit criterion within the 4.3-4.9 range along with the *EL Reclassification* Form.

Alternate ACCESS Threshold for Considering Exit

An EL student with significant cognitive disabilities may be considered for exit from EL status when the **Alternate ACCESS D-CPL** is **P2** (Emerging) for two consecutive years with IEP Team recommendation **OR** any other Alternate ACCESS **D-CPL** for three consecutive years with IEP Team recommendation. (See *EL Reclassification / IEP Team Rubric*)

Data Collections Code - EL Exit Reason:

ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 scores are generally received and evaluated before the end of the school year. Therefore, LEAs may determine that an EL has successfully met the criteria for exit from the ESOL program at the end of the school year. To ensure that LEA data is recorded correctly for accountability and for funding purposes, coding in the LEA's SIS **must not be changed for students before July 1**. The ELs' coding should remain until all state data collection has been completed and signed off.

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

EL EXIT REASON

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

Code	Description
'1'	ACCESS for EL proficiency
'2'	Language Assessment Conference (LAG) (discontinued 2017)
'3'	Exited out of state or from a non-public
'4'	EL Reclassification Team Decision
Blank	N/A

Reporting Date of EL EXIT

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

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

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

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Post-exit Monitoring Procedures

Overview

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

Rationale

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

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

If a school fails to monitor the progress of exited EL students, OCR would consider that a compliance issue as well. (See *Dear Colleague Letter*, 2015, p. 34.)

If an exited student transfers from another state or a private school during the two-year monitoring period, the LEA is required to monitor the student's academic progress for the remainder of the two years. The school system must also maintain documented evidence that the student was monitored throughout the two-year monitoring phase. Sample monitoring forms may be found in the [ESOL Forms Bank](#) on the GaDOE [ESOL Language Programs](#) website.

Accommodations on State Assessments

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

Examining Exited-EL Students' Progress

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

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

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

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- Periodic student interviews
- Parent input
- Any other locally defined data

LEAs will want to design monitoring forms and processes for ESOL teachers to use. The state provides examples of these on the [ESOL Form Bank](#). Electronic monitoring processes are acceptable as well. Other tools for examining the progress of exited-EL students can be found in [Chapter 8](#) of USDE's English Learner Toolkit.

Post-Exit Reversal of Reclassification Decisions

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

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

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

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

Questions for the MTSS or Rtl team to consider:

1. Was the exited student educated formally in his/her home country? Was schooling consistent or did the student's education have prolonged periods of interrupted schooling or no schooling?
2. What were the exited EL student's ACCESS *for ELLs* scores and sub-scores in each domain?

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3. Was the student exited from EL status based on a prior Language Assessment Conference? (**Note: The state-directed LAC protocol was discontinued in Spring 2017.**)
 - If a LAC determination had been made in the past, were the *ACCESS for ELLs* overall CPL scores at the high end of the 4.0-4.9 range or was the Literacy sub-score close to 4.8?
4. Was the student exited from English language assistance services based on English Learner Reclassification Review Committee decision? (Note: The LEA-directed Reclassification process was introduced Spring 2018.)
 - Was the student's *ACCESS for ELLs*® overall CPL score at the high end of the 4.3 - 4.9 range or at the low end?
5. Were the exited student's Georgia Milestones Language Arts/ELA End-of-Course scores borderline for meeting standards or where they significantly above the minimum requirement?
6. In the courses in which the exited student is struggling, what is her main area of difficulty?
 - a. Is she having difficulty specifically in the domain of writing, or reading, for example, or are there factors outside of language that are involved?
 - b. Is he struggling in a course in which he has always had difficulty?
 - c. Are the teachers differentiating instruction specifically to reach and support multi-lingual students?
 - d. Is it a lack of concentrated effort on the exited student's part, or does she turn in all assignments, but perhaps the quality of the work does not meet the requirements for a passing grade?
 - e. If so, would appropriate differentiation allow this student to adequately demonstrate his knowledge and comprehension of the content, or does he lack the background content information to be able to access the curriculum and fully comprehend the material?
 - f. Is this student receiving academic support to compensate for any lack of background information?

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

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

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

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

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EL Students in the State Accountability System

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

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

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

EL Subgroup for CCRPI

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

ELP Progress Points

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

Closing the Gap

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

Additional Resources

Quick References for EL Information and Resources

[Assessment](#)

[Curriculum & Instruction](#)

[English Learner Toolkit](#)

[English Learner Programs](#)

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

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

[ESOL Language Program](#)

[GaDOE ACCESS for ELLs website](#)

[GaDOE 2020-2021 Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)

[Georgia Professional Standards Commission](#)

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

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

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

[State Funded ESOL Courses](#)

[Title III, Part A Language Program](#)

[USDE Office of English Language Acquisition](#)

[WIDA Consortium](#)

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Federal Laws

Office for Civil Rights Laws

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Other Federal Laws

Constitution of the United States, Fourteenth Amendment (1868)

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

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

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

Court Rulings

Supreme Court

1982 -- Plyler v. Doe

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

Federal Courts

1981 -- Castañeda v. Pickard

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

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

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

Frequently Asked Questions

Section I: Laws and Funding

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

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

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

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

Section II: Registration Processes

Guidance for Student Enrollment & Withdrawal Rule

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

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

Section III: Screening Potential EL Students

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

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

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

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

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

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List of ELP Assessments by State

(as a reference for inter-state transfer students)

WIDA Consortium States:

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

ELPA21 States:

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

ELP Assessments in other states –

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

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

(For research purposes ONLY.)

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

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

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

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

(For research purposes ONLY.)

Historical EL Exit Criteria for Students in Kindergarten			
2006-2009	2010-2013	2014-2017	2018-2019
<p><i>The maximum Overall Composite Score that a student taking the Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs could receive is 3.4.</i></p> <p>In using ACCESS for ELLs scores as criteria in making exit decisions for kindergarten EL students, LEAs should review their students’ scores in context, paying particular attention to the Oral Language Score as well as other local criteria.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an ACCESS “Accountability” Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) \geq 5.0 <u>with no individual language domain score less than 5.0.</u></p> <p>LEAs may consider other factors, such as students’ age, grade-level, GKIDS assessment, local inventory checklists, and other local assessments.</p> <p>LEAs have the option of NOT exiting Kindergarten English Learners even if their scores reflect required criteria.</p> <p>A conservative approach to exiting Kindergarten ELs is recommended.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an ACCESS “Accountability” Composite Proficiency Level (CPL) \geq 5.0 <u>with no individual language domain score less than 5.0.</u></p> <p>All Kindergarten EL students NOT meeting this criterion may not be exited – a Language Assessment Conference (LAC) IS NOT AN OPTION anymore.</p>	<p>LEAs must exit EL students scoring an Overall Composite Score \geq 5.0 and Listening, Speaking, or Reading Language Domains are all \geq 5.0 and Writing Domain is \geq 4.5.</p> <p>LAC Decision is not allowed.</p>

* Language Assessment Conference (LAC)

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

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

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

**

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

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