

English Learners (ELs)



The FACTS:

Entry Requirements

Parents or guardians complete a Home Language Survey (HLS) when their child enrolls in an Alaska school for the first time. The HLS is a questionnaire that helps schools and districts identify which students might be ELs. If the answers on the HLS indicate that a language other than English has had a significant impact on the child's level of English language proficiency, the child then takes an approved screening assessment. The screening assessment will determine if the student is eligible for language assistance services. The following are approved screeners for the State of Alaska:

1. For kindergarteners
 - a. Kindergarten W-APT
 - b. WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten
2. For grades 1-12
 - a. WIDA Screener
 - b. WIDA MODEL

Language Assistance Services

Once a student is identified as eligible, districts are responsible for providing appropriate language assistance services. Appropriate EL services allow ELs to reach English proficiency and participate meaningfully in educational programs without EL support within a reasonable amount of time.

ACCESS for ELLs

Each spring, the English proficiency of identified English learners will be monitored using the ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency (ELP) assessment by WIDA. This assessment measures students' academic English in four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The assessment is aligned to WIDA's 5 English Language Development (ELD) standards:

1. Social & Instructional Language
2. Language of Language Arts
3. Language of Mathematics

4. Language of Science
5. Language of Social Studies

Students receive a score between 1.0 (Entering) and 6.0 (Reaching) in each domain and an overall composite score. Parents and guardians will receive score reports each year detailing their child's results.

Exit Requirements

Students are expected to transition out of EL programs and services as quickly as possible. Most students transition in four to seven years. In order to be exited from EL status, a student must meet specific criteria on ACCESS for ELLs, as set in Alaska Regulation. The student must have:

1. a composite score of 4.5 or higher;
2. a score of 4.0 or higher in each tested domain – reading, speaking, and listening; and
3. a score of 3.8 or higher in the writing domain.

To ensure that a student was not exited early, districts are responsible for monitoring former EL students' academic progress for four years after exiting.

English Learner Progress Indicator for the System for School Success

Each year, a growth target is calculated for each English learner. Growth targets are expected levels of growth in the student's score on ACCESS for ELLs from year to year.

The English Learner Progress indicator compares students' previous scores and current scores on ACCESS for ELLs. Students who meet or exceed their growth target are considered to have made progress. These results are reported in the System for School Success as the percentage of students who made progress.