

Georgia's ESOL Language Program - English to Speakers of Other Languages

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 [OCR 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 English Learners (ELs) to access grade-level core curriculum to succeed in the general education classroom.

Therefore, the core ESOL language program is a civil right offered by all 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 School Law Code 1981, §20-2-156, enacted In 1985) Various researched-based program models are used across the state to provide scheduled English Language Development (ELD) courses, collaborative in-class ELD instruction with language-differentiated supports, digital language resources, sheltered content courses, and dual language instruction to the 122,887 EL students in Georgia. The goal of the ESOL language program for English learner students to increase both English language proficiency (ELP) and academic language proficiency in content-area classrooms. Successful ESOL language programs should focus on collaboration and shared accountability for the success of all EL students.

ESOL language programs are an integral part of the **Coherent Instruction** system within Georgia's System of Continuous Improvement. The process of continuous improvement 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 or as a supplemental language program; and, finally, examining EL students' progress on a continuous basis. In participating Districts, Georgia's Title III, Part A language programs provide supplemental language instruction to select EL students who need additional language instruction and support beyond ESOL.

English Language Development Standards (ELDs)

Since 2006, the core ESOL language program in Georgia is based on the WIDA ELD Standards. In 2012, WIDA released the Amplification of the WIDA ELD Standards to support college and career-ready state content-area standards and is currently refreshing these for release Spring 2021. The WIDA ELD Standards serve as a resource to support ESOL and regular education teachers in:



- Understanding the linguistic needs and abilities of ELs;
- Creating successful language learning experiences for ELs; and
- Monitoring the ELP and academic success of ELs as they progress through levels of language development.
- [More Information on the WIDA ELDs](#)

The Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), integrated with the WIDA ELD standards, should guide teachers' instructional practices and strategies with EL students. A successful ESOL language program will ensure that all administrators, general education teachers, and other educators of ELs understand the WIDA ELD standards and how they may be integrated with existing instructional frameworks. Sharing effective evidence-based practices across classrooms and schools and establishing methods to evaluate EL students' progress to proficiency are other elements in the ESOL language program.

ESOL Program Resources

- GaDOE's [ESOL Language Program](#) website (This site has links to federal & state laws, state EL Entrance/Exit Procedures, Common Acronyms, EL/SWD resources, and much more.)
- [EL Language Programs – State Guidance](#)
- [GaDOE's Assessment Accommodations for ELs](#)
- [EL Accountability in GA's ESSA state plan](#)
- [USDE English Learner Toolkit](#)
- [WIDA's ELP Assessment – ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0](#)
- [WIDA Professional Learning opportunities](#)

ESOL Instructional Resources

- Crosswalk WIDA Resources to Teach GA Standards (*Coming Soon in SLDS*)
- [WIDA ELD Standards in Action \(videos\)](#)
- [Center for Applied Linguistics & Project EXCELL: Go-To-Strategies](#)
- [TESOL's 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners](#)
- [Colorín Colorado's Strategies for ELs](#)
- [Stanford University's Understanding Language resources](#)
- [University of Georgia's Center for Latino Achievement and Success in Education Instructional Conversations resources](#)

Evidence-based Resources

- [IES-WWC Practice Guide Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School, April 2014](#)
- [CEEDAR Center, Innovation Configuration, Nov. 2016](#)
- [The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures, Feb. 2017](#)

For more information, contact ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us

[Whom to Contact with ESOL-related Questions](#)