

Frequently Asked Questions about Identifying English Learners – EL Entrance Procedures in 2020-2021

Note: The questions and answers provided in this FAQ are based on the available information as of the date below. As new information is available or GaDOE procedures are revised and changed, this FAQ will be updated.

Questions about the Home Language Survey

Question	Answer
Will the Home Language Survey be changing for FY21?	No, please continue using the posted generic Home Language Survey template in 15 languages. Please add the LEA's letterhead to the template.
May we include the HLS in our online registration process?	Yes, all students must have a Home Language Survey on file – preferably the original one when they first enrolled in a U.S. school, and which may have triggered screening. Files could be digital.
How can the online HLS be provided to families in a language they understand?	Schools could use interpreters to interpret both the HLS and the entire enrollment packet to families who have indicated they do not understand English. The school would need to ask parents when they enroll (either online or in-person) if they need an interpreter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the process is online, one of the first questions could be about language. Several online services offer website translations as well.
Could our online registration process auto-notify us via email when the responses are languages other than English?	Yes! Or registration personnel could send the ESOL director a copy as well.
The Home Language Survey should only have the three (3) questions listed - my district adds a question at the bottom about what language the parents prefer to receive school communications... is that OK?	The question to parents about which language they prefer school communication is NOT part of the three-question <i>Home Language Survey (HLS)</i> . LEAs should not use it to determine whether to screen the student. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See EL Language Programs - State Guidance, pg. 9 and the information at the top of pg. 12. If the LEA places the Parent Language Question on the HLS document, please ensure it is visually separated and is not used to trigger the screening process.
So, we only have to give the HLS to new students? If we conducted HLS on students last year we do not need to one this year on the same students?	Correct, the HLS process does not need to be repeated each year for the same students. It is only intended for students new to U.S. schools and all incoming Kindergarten students. However, many schools include the HLS in their enrollment packet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original HLS may have triggered an ELP screening process. This is a one-time process. The original HLS should be maintained in the student's permanent file. See EL Language Programs – State Guidance, pg. 8-9.

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<p>We are beginning online registration and are using an Infinite Campus add-on but we're having a few issues. Some parents are choosing <i>English – other than Standard American English</i>, instead of English, Standard American. Do we have to screen these students if we determine that English is the first language</p>	<p>The Data Collections Language Code 51 ("<i>English, other than Standard American English</i>") is discontinued. Click on this link to see a list of Language Codes. Please note the information in the EL Language Programs – State Guidance, pg. 9 regarding when to screen students.</p>
<p>For multilingual families who do not want their child screened but are unfamiliar with the MLHLS, how do we determine that this is indeed their concern and not just "they don't want services"?</p>	<p>Typically, if the family is multilingual/multiliterate, they would approach school officials to express their concerns about the ELP screening process for their child who is developing two or more languages simultaneously. Please see the information in the EL Language Programs – State Guidance, pg. 14.</p>

*This document uses the acronym LEA for Local Education Agency.

TO SCREEN OR NOT TO SCREEN?

Question	Answer
<p>If the HLS indicates English for all three (3) questions, but the family speaks another language at home with their parents, what do we do?</p>	<p>The LEA may only screen a student who is new to U.S. schools or in Kindergarten and the family has indicated a language other than English on the three (3) HLS questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parent or guardian should complete the HLS. • The "home language" is "self-reported". • Ensuring the parents understand the purpose for these questions is important.
<p>A student just enrolled in Kinder and the parent put English/English/English on the HLS. The student transferred to several different schools. When the family re-enrolled in the original district, the mother who now lives a Spanish speaking person and the new HLS indicates Spanish on one response. What do we do?</p>	<p>The original HLS is the one that may trigger screening for English language proficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to note that learning Spanish as a second language in the home after a child is English proficient, does not indicate the child is a potential English learner in need of ELP screening and language instruction services. • Ensuring the parents understand the purpose for these questions is important.
<p>Out-of-state transfer Question: Parents answer English, English, English on the HLS. When the records arrived, we found ACCESS scores. But it was after the 30 days from the beginning of school.</p>	<p>Sometimes, the LEA's best attempt at securing records will fall short of the information needed. All LEAs will strive to ensure the student is provide equitable participation in all school programs, and if a language barrier exists, the student is taught English. Guiding questions during for enrollment personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do the parents understand the purpose for the HLS questions? • Has the LEA explained to the parent the reason behind the questions? • Has the LEA asked the parent about any ESOL services or ELP testing in the prior schools? • What grade is the student in now? Is it evident that the student had been in U.S.

	schools for some time, but may have been an EL during his first years in schools?
A student transfers from another GA district and completes an HLS in the new district. The HLS from the sending district and the receiving district have different responses.	The original HLS is the one that will trigger an ELP screening process, not subsequent surveys.
A student enrolls from a school in another GA school. The school administers the HLS and learns that the student could be a possible English learner. The school then administers the Screener and the student scores 3.6. Did the local school follow the correct process?	No! Before screening the school should have “claimed” the student in GUIDE to see if the student has an EL History in GUIDE . The school should only screen students <u>new to U.S. schools or in Kindergarten</u> – i.e., students that have not been previously screened.

Questions about the Regular WIDA Screener

(See FAQs on new WIDA Remote Screener)

Question	Answer
Do we have flexibility on how long it takes us to identify English learners?	No, the federal statute timeline for notifying parents of a student’s EL status and ESOL services <u>has not changed</u> . Please see the EL Language Programs – State Guidance , pg. 8 “Timeline”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days from the beginning of the school year • 10 days (2 weeks) if the student enrolls during the school year
Do we still use the provisional screening questionnaire/interview in the fall?	No. LEAs should use the new WIDA Remote Screener, if remote screening is necessary, and all the regular WIDA Screeners, if in-person screening is possible.
Can the WIDA Screener and W-APT training be done virtually?	Please contact your STC or the WIDA secure portal to see the WIDA webinar calendar for WIDA Screener and W-APT training. WIDA does all the training through webinars, except for the Georgia-specific training. Test administrators will take the training provided in the WIDA secure portal.
Can the WIDA screener be administered virtually since it is available online? Could the teacher “proctor” virtually?	No. The standard WIDA Screeners are secure and may not be administered remotely through virtual media. Please see additional guidance on the ESOL Language Program website.
Will we need to sanitize the headphones when screening in-person?	Please adhere to your LEA’s guidelines from health officials.
What do you recommend about the use of masks when screening in-person the speaking portion?	Please adhere to your LEA’s guidelines from health officials.
We have a rising Kindergarten student with an HLS indicating Spanish and the child is Deaf/Hard of Hearing (already has an IEP). What guidance regarding screening and possible ESOL service is there?	The Kinder W-APT is not a valid and reliable screening instrument for DHH students who have an IEP and are protected by IDEA. Therefore, until WIDA can provide the state with a valid screener for this population, please follow the guidance provided

	on pg. 17 of the EL Language Programs – State Guidance .
Must we screen J-1 VISA holders, i.e. foreign exchange students?	Please follow the guidance provided in the EL Language Programs – State Guidance , pg. 23.
Have the regular WIDA Screener flowcharts on the ESOL website changed this year?	No. The regular WIDA Screener criteria and flowcharts remain the same.
Can ESOL files be destroyed after five years?	The original HLS and subsequent ELP Screener and ELP annual assessments should be part of the student’s permanent record for his K-12 school experience. Files may be maintained digitally.
Should we use the EL Screener TAB in SLDS to record student’s screening scores?	YES! The EL Screener TAB in SLDS is an excellent way to ensure the student’s Screener results follow him throughout his school career in Georgia. All transfer LEAs will appreciate having this record!

Data Collections Questions

Question	Answer
What is GUIDE?	Georgia Unique Identifier for Education Click on this link to see the GUIDE resources .
Are we supposed to identify students who did not qualify in our SIS as EL=No? There is not place in our SIS to record the Date of ELP Screener when we screen students who Did Not Qualify (DNQ).	The Student Record Data Element, pg. 14 states that all new English learner (EL) students must have a date for their ELP screener. However, it is not required to record the date of ELP screener administered to a student who did not qualify to be an EL. The screener score results could be recorded in the EL TAB in SLDS for possible transfer schools to note that the student was screened and found to be ineligible.
We received a Data Collections Error 2085 for a transfer student who had an English-only HLS. Because of this error, we discovered that the student was coded EL=3 last year and should be EL=4 this year. However, we can’t fix this when his primary language is English.	The LEA should review the student’s EL History in GUIDE which will indicate the student’s original Primary Language. Then, the LEA can enter the student’s original Primary Language in the SIS and properly code the student EL=4.
For state reporting: Does the first or second question on the HLS indicate the student’s home primary language for state reporting?	The Home Language Survey is comprised of three questions. If the answer to <u>any</u> of the three questions is a language other than English, then the <i>new-to-US-schools</i> student is a potential EL and must be screened for English language proficiency (ELP). See SBOE ESOL rule , EL Language Programs State Guidance , pg. 9, and Home Language Survey Form Bank with a HLS template provided in 15 languages. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the student qualifies for English learner status, then the student’s primary language cannot be coded as English. Therefore, the body of evidence from all three questions and the ELP screener score results are used to determine the student’s primary language. For further information, contact ELPrograms@doe.k12.ga.us