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

Chapter 1: EL Entrance & Exit Procedures

Part II – EL EXIT PROCEDURES Only

ESOL Language Programs

Supplemental Title III, Part A Language Programs
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

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Part II: English Learner Exit Procedures

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2. EL Exit Flowcharts
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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 2.0, & 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**
      i. Must exit all Kindergarten EL students who score CPL \( \geq 5 \), and Listening, Speaking, Reading \( \geq 5 \), and Writing \( \geq 4.5 \) on the Kindergarten ACCESS.

   b. **Grades 1-12 EL Exit Flowchart**
      i. Must exit all EL students who score Overall CPL \( \geq 5 \) on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0
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ii. 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.

iii. 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.)
   - 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)

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
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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)

Annual ELP Assessment
It is a federal and state requirement that school districts administer the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 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® 2.0 are permitted to administer the annual proficiency assessment. GaDOE Assessment and Accountability division requires annual WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 certification for all certified personnel who will administer the assessment and provides the LEA System Testing Coordinators with information regarding access to the WIDA training website.

GaDOE Assessment Division – ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0
- ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 is administered, annually, to all English learners in Georgia. It is a standards-based, criterion referenced 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 2.0 meets the Title I mandate to evaluate the English language proficiency progress of all Grades K-12 EL students.
- All students identified as EL students must take the ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 assessment, including students whose parents have waived ESOL services.
- Students who have formally exited language assistance services are not administered the 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).
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- 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.

English Learners with Disabilities 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.

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.
- In order 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.
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- 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.

**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.

**Receiving Exit ed 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 and convene another EL Reclassification Team to review documentation and evidence, when applicable.

When LEAs share their EL Exit Criterion with the state, these Exit Criteria will be posted on the GaDOE ESOL website as a Master List of LEA’s Reclassification Criteria.

**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. In order to participate in the Alternate ACCESS, a student must be eligible to participate in the GAA 2.0...
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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 has 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. In order 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.

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.
- 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
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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.
2. For each language domain test not administered, clearly mark **Do Not Score** with a reason code of **SPD** in the student test booklet or in WIDA AMS.
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 district with an ACCESS **Designate Composite Proficiency Level (D-CPL)** for each one of these EL students.
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® 2.0 Exit Criteria**

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**)
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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. In order 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.

**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’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'1'</td>
<td>ACCESS for EL proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'2'</td>
<td>Language Assessment Conference (LAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'3'</td>
<td>exited out of state or from a non-public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'4'</td>
<td>EL Reclassification Team Decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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Data Reporting for Exitd ELs
ELs who have met the standardized statewide EL Exit Procedures Criteria will be coded in SIS, after July 1, as EL=1. Each year, after July 1st, the student’s post-EL Exit Code will change as depicted in the chart below.

- During the 2-year monitoring period Exited EL 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) and remain as such if they are enrolled.

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EL-1</strong> 1st year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers &amp; reported to state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EL-2</strong> 2nd year post-exit – student progress is monitored by teachers &amp; reported to state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EL-3</strong> 3rd year post-exit – student progress is reported to state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EL-4</strong> 4th year post-exit – student progress is reported to state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EL-F</strong> 5 or more years post-exit – student progress in no longer monitored</td>
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</tbody>
</table>