

E. Title III, Part A, Subpart 1, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement

1. Entrance and Exit Procedures

(ESEA section 3113(b)(2)):

Describe how the SEA will establish and implement, with timely and meaningful consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State, standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures, including an assurance that all students who may be English learners are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State.

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) established, through timely and meaningful consultation with Alaska LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the state, the standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for identified English learners in the state. Before Alaska completed its first draft of the ESSA Consolidated State Plan, DEED met with the Title I Committee of Practitioners at DEED's annual ESEA Federal Programs Workshop on April 18, 2017. The Committee of Practitioners (COP) acts in an advisory capacity to DEED in carrying out their responsibilities under Title I. Membership of this Committee includes representatives from local school districts, administrators, teachers, principals, parents, members of local school boards, private schools, and specialized instructional support personnel and paraprofessionals, and is structured to represent the geographic diversity of the state. In addition to the COP members, a number of other district representatives were present at the meeting. The COP discussed topics including, but not limited to, statewide entrance and exit procedures for English learners. The COP was supportive of the changes proposed in the exit criteria.

In addition to the consultation with the COP, DEED gathered stakeholder input through each draft of Alaska's Consolidated State Plan. DEED created ESSA feedback forms and encouraged stakeholders to comment on proposed revisions to statewide entrance and exit procedures at the time each draft was open for public comment. The feedback received indicated that the majority of the respondents were in favor of the proposal, and no changes were made to the proposed entrance and exit criteria as a result of stakeholder feedback.

Entrance Procedures

- ~~• Determine which students might be identified as an English learner (EL) as defined in Alaska Regulation 4 AAC 34.090 (2) and ESEA as amended by ESSA section 8101(20).~~
- ~~• Before a student is screened for English language proficiency (ELP), the district must determine if the student is included in one of the categories of students eligible to be identified as an English learner as defined as:
 - ~~○ Student who is not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English.~~
 - ~~○ American Indian, Alaska Native, or resident of the outlying areas where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency.~~~~

- ~~▪ Parents of students who are eligible to be identified as an English learner complete a Home Language Survey to determine if a language other than English has a significant impact on the student's level of English language proficiency.~~
- The first step to determining eligibility is completion of a Home Language Survey. All parents complete a Home Language Survey for each child, which is kept on file at the attending district, to determine if a language other than English has a significant impact on the student's level of English language proficiency and if further screening is required.
- Additional evaluation of the responses to the Home Language Survey may be necessary to ensure that students meet the definition of an English learner (EL) as defined in Alaska Regulation 4 AAC 34.090 (2) and ESEA as amended by ESSA section 8101(20).
- Teacher observations should be taken into consideration in the identification process. The Language Observation Checklist may be used if the Home Language Survey indicates that English is spoken at home but the student meets the criteria for which a language other than English may have impacted the student's level of English language proficiency.
- ~~▪ Before a student is screened for English language proficiency, the district must determine if the student is included in one of the categories of students eligible to be identified as an English learner and the Home Language Survey or teacher observations indicate that the student's level of English may not yet be proficient.~~
- Once a student is determined to be a potential English learner based on the above initial screening, the district must administer one of the State-approved ELP screening assessments (either the W-APT, WIDA Screener or the WIDA MODEL).
 - Students who fall below the minimum score are identified as an English learner, are eligible for EL services, and must take the annual ELP assessment (ACCESS for ELLs ~~2.0~~) during the current school year.
 - Students entering school March 1 or later that have not been identified may be screened, but are not required to take the ACCESS for ELLs ~~2.0~~ until the following spring.
 - Students who score **at or above** the minimum score for English language proficiency are not identified as EL and are not required to be assessed further.
- Incoming kindergartners and older students new to the district from another state or country who are potentially English learners must be screened and identified as soon as possible after enrolling in school, and within 30 days after the beginning of the school year if enrolled at the beginning of the school year.

Exit Procedures

- A student will be exited from EL status at the end of the school year in which the student meets the exit criteria based on scores earned on the ELP assessment taken in the spring of that school year.
- Alaska's exit criteria on the ACCESS for ELLs has been a minimum of ~~5.0~~ **4.5** overall composite proficiency level score for all domains, and a minimum score of 4.0 for each domain (reading,

writing, listening, and speaking) and a minimum score of 3.8 in writing. This exit criteria will remain in place for the ~~2016-2017~~ 2019-2020 school year.

- ~~Due to the change in scoring for the new ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 ELP assessment,~~ Based on research, careful analyses of statewide data, and stakeholder feedback, Alaska will propose new exit criteria in state regulation to take effect for the ~~2017-2018~~ 2020-2021 school year. The exit criteria under consideration are:
 - Minimum overall composite score of 4.5 with no additional domain requirements
 - ~~Minimum domain scores~~
 - ~~Reading 4.0~~
 - ~~Writing 3.8~~
 - ~~Speaking 4.0~~
 - ~~Listening 4.0~~
- After meeting exit criteria, a former EL student will be in monitoring status for four years.
- During the monitoring period of a former EL student, if the student continues to struggle academically after one semester of exit from EL status, the school may consider whether the student should be re-identified as an English learner. Before re-identifying the student as an EL, a body of evidence should be collected and maintained in the student's file, which may include interim assessment results, statewide assessment results, teacher observations, student work samples, or any other information the school and/or district determines appropriate. The school then must administer a state-approved screener. If the results of the screener indicate that the student is not fully proficient in English, the student may be re-identified as an English learner.
- Students with disabilities whose disability precludes assessment in one or more domain on ACCESS for ELLs would be eligible for alternate scoring. Alternate scoring redistributes the weighting of the remaining domains in order to calculate an overall composite proficiency level. Districts will apply to DEED on behalf of the student and DEED will determine if the student is eligible. With an overall composite proficiency level, these students can be included in calculations of EL Progress for accountability, demonstrate growth from year to year, and possibly exit EL status. The student would need to meet the above criteria to be eligible to exit English learner status.

2. SEA Support for English Learner Progress

(ESEA section 3113(b)(6)): Describe how the SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting:

- i. The State-designed long-term goals established under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii), including measurements of interim progress towards meeting such goals, based on the State's English language proficiency assessments under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G); and
- ii. The challenging State academic standards.

To help districts and schools meet State-designed long-term goals and challenging academic standards, DEED provides technical assistance and support on English language proficiency standards and

professional development support for instruction of English learners both in learning English and in achieving academically. Alaska adopted the WIDA English Language Development Standards as the state's English language proficiency standards in 2011, and uses the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs as its English Language Proficiency assessment. Alaska also has access to professional development resources through the WIDA Consortium. The WIDA English Language Development Standards and materials provide a research-based framework for English language instruction. This framework also aligns to Alaska's challenging academic standards by integrating language development with the appropriate academic content matter.

DEED offers training opportunities to Title III districts annually. These are most often WIDA-sponsored or other professional development opportunities that focus on instructional strategies that specifically address the needs of ELs and intentionally support the WIDA English Language Development Standards. Districts may choose to participate in specific opportunities based on their needs. DEED also works with Title III districts to co-sponsor professional development or encourages Title III districts to offer the opportunity for staff from other Title III districts to participate in their EL training.

DEED provides guidance to schools regarding English learners for the administration of the Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP), Alaska's Kindergarten Readiness tool. DEED also provides guidance in the use of the results of the ADP for EL students.

DEED will develop strategies to provide guidance to LEAs on how to target and provide inclusive family involvement to meet the needs of EL students. Strategies could include building family engagement in screening and assessment tools, and development of activities that are geared towards meeting the needs of families.

3. Monitoring and Technical Assistance

(ESEA section 3113(b)(8)): Describe:

- i. How the SEA will monitor the progress of each eligible entity receiving a Title III, Part A subgrant in helping English learners achieve English proficiency; and
- ii. The steps the SEA will take to further assist eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective, such as providing technical assistance and modifying such strategies.

The DEED Title III-A program specialist is responsible for monitoring the progress of districts receiving a Title III-A subgrant. Monitoring and technical assistance strategies include:

- Review of Title III-A grant applications as part of the consolidated online federal grants application.
- Review of district data and school level data on the percentage of ELs that are making progress and attaining proficiency.
- Monitoring Title III-A with other federally-funded programs and providing technical assistance that address outcomes and accountability.
 - DEED formally monitors districts on a five-year cycle. Desk audits are performed as needed and are determined by a risk assessment process.
- Recommends policies that promote best practices for meeting the needs of English learners.

- Districts with more than eight English learners are required to submit a Plan of Service outlining the identification and exit procedures for ELs as well as details regarding how the district determines the needs of their EL population and services provided. This is a five-year plan that is updated when the needs of the students or services change. A current copy of the Plan of Service is also included in the district Consolidated Application.
- A DEED team that includes the ACCESS for ELLs assessment program manager, Title III-A program manager, and data management staff meet on a regular basis to discuss EL related topics that include assessment scores and district programs. This team strives to gain insight into the overall progress of English learners.
- The Title III-A program manager provides support to Title III-A districts, as well as other districts with schools with more than eight English learners. Support includes:
 - Updates and information regarding English learners in a weekly newsletter
 - Support and technical assistance in creating Plans of Service
 - Connecting districts with similar programs and/or challenges
 - Focused technical assistance during monitoring visits or desk audits
 - Updates on any policy or procedural requirements
 - Creating guidance to support districts and schools
 - Scheduled informational webinars
 - Providing information regarding WIDA materials and trainings
 - Acting as a liaison between other Title programs and the assessment team
- Technical Assistance for Supporting Early Learners that are ELs
 - Alaska will coordinate technical assistance and other related activities with the Early Childhood team and Head Start Collaboration Office.

If the strategies funded with Title III-A are not found to be effective, the Title III-A program manager will provide targeted technical assistance, and may require changes to the district's Plan of Service and/or activities funded with Title III-A in order to increase the effectiveness of the support for ELs.

