



# English Learner Identification Procedure Grades K-12

---

*(See Pre-K identification guidance for Pre-K students)*

- STEP 1:** Review the Home Language Survey.
  - If the HLS indicates a language other than English for **any** question, **proceed to STEP 2.**

*NOTE: Pidgin and creole variations of English (e.g. English spoken in Liberia or Cameroon) constitute a language other than English for identification purposes.*

- STEP 2:** Conduct family interview to determine if the student is potentially an EL. Use an interpreter if necessary.

## Family Interview

**Conducted by district-trained enrollment personnel - not to be completed by the parent/guardian**

Interviewed:

Date:

Phone:

Name of Student:

PASID:

Students Date of Birth:

Age:

Student's Date of Entry to U.S. (if born in the U.S., then same as DOB):

Parent Country of Origin:

Student Country of Origin:

Parents' Primary Country of Education:

Complete the following table for the student. Indicate if the student moved schools, states, or countries during a school year.

Grade	State (City & School if PA)	Country	Primary Language of Instruction
Pre K			
K			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

- Is this student a Native Alaskan, Native American, or Native Hawaiian?  
 YES       NO
- Is this student's language influenced by a Tribal language through a parent, grandparent, relative, or guardian?  
 YES       NO
- When at home, how often does this student hear a language other than English?  
 Always       Occasionally       Never
- When at home, how often does this student speak a language other than English?  
 Always       Occasionally       Never
- When interacting with their parents or guardians, how often does this student hear a language other than English?  
 Always       Occasionally       Never
- Within the last 12 months, when interacting with caregivers other than parents/guardians, how often did this student hear a language other than English?  
 Always       Occasionally       Never
- When interacting with siblings or other children in their home, how often does this student hear or use a language other than English?  
 Always       Occasionally       Never

**Review of the family interview must be conducted by an ESL professional.**

Based on the answers to the interview questions, determine if the second language exposure/use is significant and tied to the national origin of the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) or is superficial in nature. Ensure that the parent/guardian understands the HLS and has completed it accurately during the parent interview. The HLS cannot be completed again at a later date. If the student's development of English may have been impacted by exposure to another language in any way, then **proceed to STEP 3**

**Comments:**

- STEP 3:** If the student has an IEP or is suspected of having a disability (e.g. the parent states that the student has a disability), then see [Appendix A](#) before proceeding.
  
- STEP 4:** Conduct a review of the student's academic records from previous schooling if available. Look for compelling evidence that the student has sufficient English proficiency to benefit from instruction in English without specialized supports or accommodations. Acceptable evidence might include scores from standardized summative or interim tests in English, passing grades for core content classes conducted in English, and/or work samples. If the academic records are not available, or they do not contain compelling evidence of English proficiency, then **proceed to STEP 5**.

**NOTE:**

*A newly enrolling student who has an ACCESS overall composite proficiency level score from the previous school year (even from another state) that does not meet or exceed 4.5 may not be re-screened for the purpose of identification. In this case, **skip to STEP 6**. If a student has an ACCESS overall composite proficiency level score from the previous school year that meets or exceeds 4.5, then the student may be reclassified if the additional criteria from the state-defined reclassification guidance are met (i.e. language use evaluations can be conducted prior to October 1).*

*If a newly enrolling student has an ACCESS overall composite proficiency level score from a previous district that is more than one year old (i.e. two or more years prior to the current year), then **proceed to step 5** (screening) to determine the EL status. If the student exceeds the cut score for identification as an EL, then the student may be coded as never-EL and the identification process is complete.*

- **STEP 5:** Screen the student for English language proficiency using the K Screener, K MODEL, WIDA screener (online or paper), or WIDA MODEL screener. Record the screening scores below. See Appendix C for information about the appropriate test form to administer.

Listening PL	Speaking PL	Reading PL	Writing PL	Literacy CPL	Oral CPL	Overall CPL

If the student’s scores meet the criteria for identification as an EL on the following table, then **proceed to STEP 6**. If not, then the student is not an EL and you do not need to proceed.

Grade Level	Screener	Criteria for identification as an EL
Kindergarten	K MODEL	<p><i>1<sup>st</sup> semester K: <b>Assess oral language</b></i> Oral language composite below <b>5.0</b></p> <p><i>2<sup>nd</sup> semester K: <b>Assess all 4 domains</b></i> Oral language proficiency level below <b>5.0</b> <b>OR</b> Literacy Composite below <b>4.2</b></p>
Kindergarten	K Screener	<p><i>1<sup>st</sup> semester K: <b>Assess Oral Language</b></i> Oral language composite below <b>5.0</b></p> <p><i>2<sup>nd</sup> semester K: <b>Assess all 4 domains</b></i> Oral language proficiency level below <b>5.0</b> <b>OR</b> Literacy Composite below <b>4.2</b></p>
1 <sup>st</sup> semester 1 <sup>st</sup> grade	K MODEL	<b>Assess all 4 domains</b> Overall composite proficiency level below <b>5.0</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> semester 1 <sup>st</sup> grade	K Screener	<b>Assess all 4 domains</b> Overall composite proficiency level below <b>5.0</b>
1-12	WIDA Screener	Overall composite proficiency level below <b>5.0</b>
1-12	MODEL Screener	Overall composite proficiency level below <b>5.0</b>

*NOTE: If a student is unable to complete the full screener (e.g. because of a disability or refusal), then the determination of EL status must be made based on the remaining available evidence gathered from the HLS, parent interview, and academic records review. If reasonable evidence of English proficiency cannot be established based on those sources along with the incomplete screener results, if any, then the student should be identified as an EL.*

- ❑ **STEP 6: OPTIONAL** - Screen the student for native language proficiency if a screening instrument is available. Record the score(s). If no screening instrument is available, then **proceed to STEP 7**.

Name of screener	Score(s)	Score descriptor

- ❑ **STEP 7:** Determine if the student has **limited or interrupted formal education (LIFE)** using the criteria below:
  - Is enrolling after grade two, AND
  - Has a Literacy score of less than 3.5 on the W-APT, MODEL Screener, or WIDA Screener, AND
  - Has at least two fewer years of age appropriate schooling than peers **or** has disenrolled from U.S. schools to enroll in schools in other countries (including Puerto Rico) more than two times in the past four years, AND
  - Has limited encoding/decoding skills in native language (as indicated by family interview and/or native language measures and/or review of academic records and/or local measures)

**Does this student have limited or interrupted formal education?**

YES (the student should be coded as 06 in PIMS)

NO

**Proceed to STEP 8.**

- ❑ **STEP 8:** Determine the most appropriate language instruction educational program (LIEP) based on the student’s English language proficiency and native language proficiency if available.

*NOTE: If the student has an IEP, then EL and Special Education personnel MUST collaborate to determine program and academic placement.*

**Program Placement:**

**Proceed to STEP 9.**

- ❑ **STEP 9:** Provide the parent with a detailed program description and explain the identification and placement decision. The parent has the right to refuse placement in a specialized, separate LIEP. See [PDE guidance concerning parental right to refuse services](#). **Proceed to STEP 10.**

- **STEP 10:** The parent accepts or refuses placement in part or in whole in the LIEP. If, after the district notifies the parent of their option to refuse specialized LIEP services, the parent does not respond, then the district may proceed with the recommended program placement. **Proceed to STEP 11.**
  
- **STEP 11:** If your district participates in Title III, explain the services offered and their right to opt out of all of some of those services. If, after the district notifies the parent/guardian of their option to opt out of Title III services, the parent does not respond, then the district may proceed with enrolling the student in the Title III services. **Proceed to STEP 12.**

*NOTE: This applies to discrete services/programs (e.g. after-school tutoring, summer school programs, the use of technology purchased with Title III funds, etc.). If, for example, Title III is being used for professional development for staff working with ELs, then there is no discrete service of which parents may opt out.*

- **STEP 12:** Notify the receiving school of student's identification and placement. **Proceed to STEP 13.**
  
- **STEP 13:** Initiate an active service record in the district SIS. If the student has limited or interrupted formal education, then ensure that LIFE is identified. If the student will participate in Title III funded services, then ensure that the student is identified as participating in Title III. *NOTE: Not all ELs in a district that receives Title III funds are participating in Title III.* **Proceed to STEP 14.**
  
- **STEP 14:** Schedule the student based on program placement and English language proficiency.

*NOTE: The school is responsible for ensuring that all teachers with whom ELs are scheduled have English language proficiency information for their ELs. This includes general education teachers.*

**The procedure is complete. Attach the HLS form and parent refusal acknowledgement form (if completed) to this form and file them in student's record. Copies of this form should be given to ESL and general education teachers who will be working with this student.**

## Appendix A

### **Students who have or are suspected of having a disability**

If a student arrives with an IEP or is suspected of having a disability (i.e. parent informs enrollment personnel that the student has a disability), then enrollment personnel must coordinate with Special Education staff to complete this procedure. *NOTE: The identification process must be completed within the timelines prescribed in this procedure.*

#### **If the student arrives with an IEP:**

Screening, if required, must be completed with appropriate accommodations and the test results must be interpreted in consultation with Special Education personnel.

#### **If the student is suspected of having a disability but a determination cannot be made prior to completing this procedure:**

Screening, if required, must be completed with any administrative considerations, universal tools, or accommodations that the ESL/SPED educators deem necessary. This procedure must be completed in accordance with the outlined guidelines and the student must be placed in the appropriate language instruction educational program (LIEP) based on the information available at the conclusion of the identification procedure.

If, after the student is placed in the LIEP, the student is determined to have a disability that may have affected the screening (e.g. requires a testing accommodation that was not offered), then the student must be re-screened using the appropriate accommodations. If the student does not meet the criteria for identification as an EL based on this subsequent testing, then the district must contact PDE to remove the EL identifier and the student should be removed from the LIEP.

#### **If a student cannot complete all domains of the screener due to a disability:**

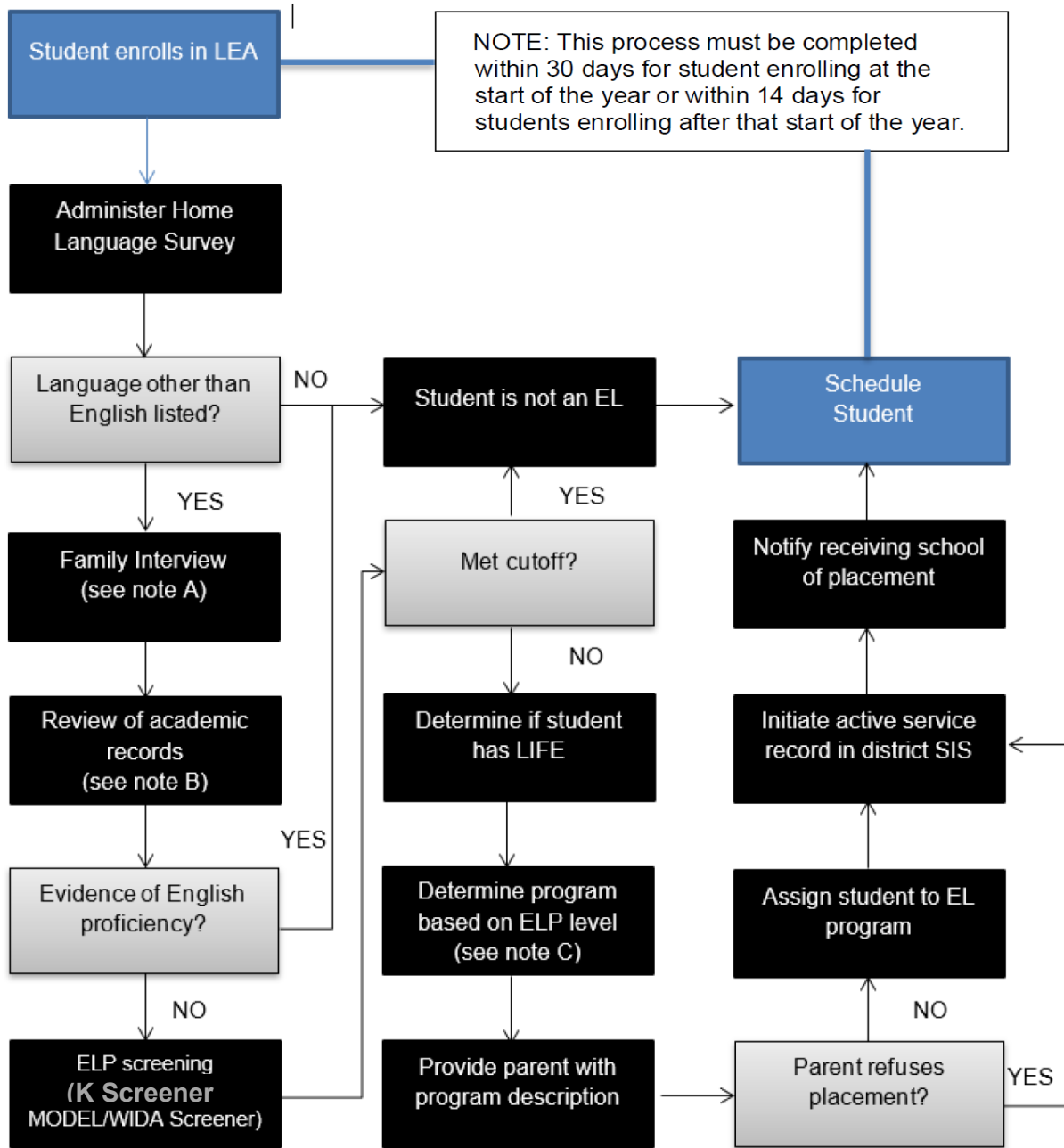
The determination must be based on the domains that can be completed by applying the appropriate cutoff score to all completed domains individually. For example, if a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student can only complete the reading and writing domains, then he/she must achieve a proficiency level of 5.0 or above in both reading and writing to exclude them from identification as an EL.

#### **If a student cannot complete any domains of the screener due to a disability:**

The identification decision must be based on the available evidence gathered from the home language survey, the family interview, and the records review. If the HLS indicates a language other than English, the family interview confirms that it is tied to national origin and significant, and academic records do not supply evidence of English proficiency, then the student should be identified as an EL.

# Appendix B

## English Learner (EL) Identification Procedure Flowchart





**Note A:**

A student who comes from an environment where English is not the dominant language or who has been exposed to another language (HLS indicates other languages) is not necessarily an EL and does not necessarily need to be screened for English language proficiency if there is compelling evidence suggesting that the student is proficient in English. Parent permission to screen for language proficiency is **NOT** required; however, a parent interview must be conducted prior to screening. The parent interview should be standardized to some degree (see parent interview on pages 1 and 2) and the information gathered should be filed with the student's other enrollment documentation. The parent interview can serve to determine whether or not to screen a potential EL. If the evidence gathered during the parent interview is indeterminate, then an academic records review may be used to indicate English proficiency and preclude screening.

**Note B:**

If after the parent interview it is unclear whether or not a student should be screened for English proficiency, then a thorough review of any available academic records should be conducted to find evidence of English language proficiency. Some examples of this type of evidence are:

- Transcripts from previously attended U.S. schools with passing grades in core content classes
- Statewide assessment results from previously attended U.S. schools indicating English proficiency (may be from other states)
- District assessment results from previously attended U.S. schools indicating English proficiency (may be from other states)
- Notes and/or other less formal indicators regarding language proficiency contained in the student's academic records

NOTE: A determination of English proficiency for the purpose of precluding screening **MUST** be based on compelling and robust evidence.

**Note C:**

If the student has an IEP, then EL and Special Education personnel **MUST** collaborate to determine program and academic placement. The process must be completed within 30 days for students enrolling at the start of the school year or within 14 days for students who enroll after the start of school.

# Appendix C

## Selection of appropriate grade-level cluster test forms

See the tables below for selection of the appropriate screener to use for each grade.

### WIDA Screener Selection

Grade	1*		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12	
Semester	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Grade-Cluster Form	Grade 1 Test		Grades 2-3 Test				Grades 4-5 Test				Grades 6-8 Test				Grades 9-12 Test									

\* Districts have the option of using the grade 1 WIDA Screener, the Kindergarten MODEL, or K Screener for first semester 1<sup>st</sup> graders.

### WIDA MODEL Selection

GRADE	K		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12	
Semester	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Grade-Cluster Form	K Screener		Grades 1-2 Screener				Grades 3-5 Screener				Grades 6-8 Screener				Grades 9-12 Screener											

### WIDA K Screener

GRADE	K			1		
Semester	1		2		1	2
Grade - Cluster Form	K Screener					