

ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRAM HANDBOOK

School System & Charter School
Administrators



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DEPARTMENT of
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Louisiana Believes

CONTENTS

PURPOSE & INTRODUCTION	2
CHAPTER I: IDENTIFYING ALL ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELS)	3
CHAPTER II: ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6
CHAPTER III: PROVIDING ELS WITH A SPECIALIZED LANGUAGE PROGRAM	12
CHAPTER IV: PROVIDING MEANINGFUL ACCESS	14
CHAPTER V: ADDRESSING ENGLISH LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES	15
CHAPTER VI: MONITORING AND EXITING	16
CHAPTER VII: ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH EL PARENTS	17
CHAPTER VIII: TITLE III REQUIRED SUB-GRANTEE ACTIVITIES	18
RESOURCES	21

PURPOSE & INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

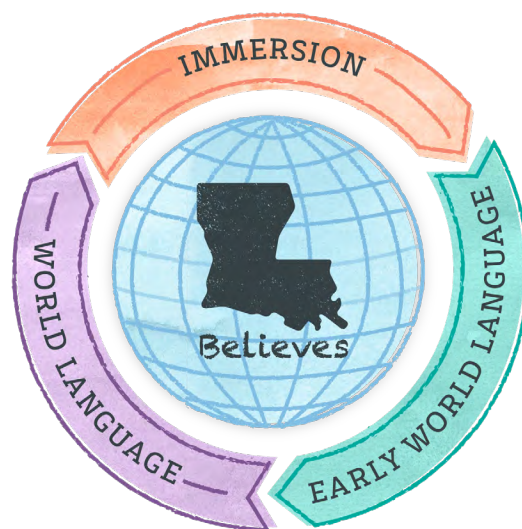
The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) supports the efforts of school systems to assist English Learners (EL) to learn English while simultaneously meeting challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards.

Federal legislation¹ requires every school system to have a plan in place to serve ELs, regardless of whether they have students who meet this classification enrolled. The plan must ensure that, immediately upon enrollment, the student has access to a specialized language instructional program. The plan for meeting the linguistic needs of ELs must provide resources to support the specialized language instructional program and the academic achievement of ELs using state and local funds. This plan is referred to as a “Lau Plan”, named after the landmark *Lau vs Nichols* U.S Supreme Court Decision of 1975. In the plan, each school system (LEA) outlines how it will:

- identify English Learners;
- design an effective program reflective of the needs of English Learners;
- employ appropriate English-as-a-second-language or bilingual personnel (or both);
- align the instruction of English Learners to state and local content standards; and
- provide ongoing authentic assessments to monitor student progress toward English language proficiency and comprehension of academic content.

This handbook is designed to help LEAs create their Lau plan. In conjunction with the [EL Toolkit](#), it presents a picture of the legal obligations LEAs have in regards to the ELs attending their schools. The structure of this handbook follows that of the EL Toolkit to the extent applicable. Users should use the links to the EL Toolkit and other applicable resources at the end of each chapter for more information.

The LDOE is grateful for the assistance of the education practitioners and the South Central Comprehensive Center who helped in the development and revision of this handbook.



¹ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA)

CHAPTER I: IDENTIFYING ALL ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs)

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL ELs

A Local Educational Agency (LEA) must establish an effective and systematic procedure to identify all ELs. The identification, assessment, and placement procedure must include:

1. for all parents and/or guardians registering children in school, a survey that is designed to determine a student's dominant language and potential for being an EL;
2. timely administration of the state approved English Language Proficiency Screener (ELPS) that measures proficiency in each of the four language domains, listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and
3. a system to notify parents of a child who has been identified as an EL (see page 9).

All of these steps must be completed within thirty (30) days of enrollment.

EL DEFINITION

A student in Louisiana is classified as an English Learner (EL) according to Louisiana BESE [Bulletin 741](#). A student identified as an English Learner must:

1. be between the ages of 3 through 21;
2. be enrolled in an English-speaking elementary school or secondary school;
3. not have been born in the United States or has a native language other than English; and
4. have difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language such that such challenges may be sufficient to deny them:
 - a. the ability to meet the state's proficient level of achievement on state assessments;
 - b. the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or
 - c. the opportunity to participate fully in society.

A student identified as an English Learner may be:

- a. a Native American, Alaska Native, or a native resident of outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on his or her level of English language proficiency; **OR**
- b. migratory, having a native language other than English, and come from an environment where a language other than English is dominant.



HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY (HLS)

All schools in the state are required to survey each parent and/or guardian who registers a child in school to determine if the student is eligible to be identified as EL and must ensure that responses to the survey are kept on file in the student's cumulative file (CUM folder).

*The **Home Language Survey** must include the following:*

- *the language first learned and used by student,*
- *the language student uses most often at home, and*
- *the language student uses most often with other students/children.*

If the answers to the HLS questions indicate a predominant language other than English, the child should be screened for English proficiency (see Chapter 2). However, to ensure bilingual/bi-literate students are not identified as ELs, school systems can use the optional **Family Interview Questions** to assist in making the screening determination. If the Family Interview Questions reveal the student's English proficiency is on par with an English-only peer, documentation is filed in the cumulative file (CUM folder), and the screening process is stopped.

Native American students can be considered for EL program services if the student's Home Language Survey responses indicate that a language other than English is spoken in the home, but they should not be identified solely on the basis of being Native American.

The survey should also be used to determine what language to use for communications with the parent and/or guardian.

[Louisiana's HLS template](#) is available in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic.

PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED ELS/TRANSFER STUDENTS

In-state transfers: If a student in a Louisiana school system transfers to another Louisiana school system and the HLS indicates that a language other than English has influenced the student's English language development, an attempt should be made to obtain documentation from the sending school regarding the student's EL status. The receiving system should attempt to get a copy of the student's English Language Proficiency Screener (ELPS) results and/or any available English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) results. Receiving systems can also access a student's prior ELPT results by conducting a search via the [CAI Reporting System](#) on the [ELPT Portal](#).

If documentation confirms that the student is an EL, the student should be identified as an EL (flagged in SIS) and enrolled in a language assistance program by the receiving school system. If documentation confirms that the student has been reclassified and exited from EL status, the receiving system should pay close attention to the year of exit. Students who achieve the state's exit criteria are un-flagged as EL from school information systems (SIS) but should be placed on monitoring rolls for 2 consecutive years immediately following the exit year.

Out-of-state transfers: If a student from another state transfers to a Louisiana school system and the current HLS indicates that the child's dominant language is other than English, the receiving school system must screen the student using ELPS and follow the initial identification process outlined in this chapter.

The law requires identification and screening to be accomplished and parental notification of eligible students within 30 days of enrollment (BESE [Bulletin 741](#), ESEA Section 112(e)(3)(A), 112(e)(3)(B)). Documentation must be obtained within the mandatory time frame for parent notification of identification and placement in a language assistance program. If the receiving school system is unable to obtain proper documentation within the required timeframe, or cannot locate results conducting a search via [TIDE](#) or [CAI Reporting System](#) on the [ELPT Portal](#), then the receiving school system must screen the student using the ELPS screening instrument and follow the initial identification process outlined in this chapter.

GUIDELINES FOR ENROLLING AN EL

On May 06, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights released a [“Dear Colleague Letter”](#) to help school systems eliminate any possible chilling effect on enrollment. For example, questions regarding immigration status (e.g., country of origin, date of US entry, years of U.S. schooling, etc.) and questions regarding pre-determining educational services (e.g., Has your child taken ESL courses?) may cause parents/adults to associate the survey with a determination of citizenship. The Office for Civil Rights is clear about removing or revising practices and policies that cause a chilling effect.

There is also guidance on what kinds of documentation a school system can require for enrollment. Students cannot be turned away from a school if they lack a birth certificate or social security card or if the parent does not have a driver’s license or passport. See [Fact Sheet: Information on the Rights of ALL Children to Enroll in School](#).

REVIEWING FOREIGN TRANSCRIPTS

Students new to U.S. schools may enter the country with transcripts from a foreign school. It can be challenging to align these courses with those offered in a Louisiana school, but school systems should have a process in place to remain consistent and to make sure students receive credit for classes they have successfully completed. School systems do not have to rely on a transcript translation service, but guidance should be created and made available if that student transfers to another school system in or out of state.

Ideally, a school system should enlist an individual with knowledge of schooling and course descriptions of the countries from which most ELs will come. This individual should be able to communicate with the student or parents/guardians (or have access to others who can) to gain any additional insight that might be needed to make the best decisions about transferring credits. This may also entail contacting the transferring school to speak to personnel there (if feasible).

If a student receives credit for a class that has a Louisiana statewide assessment, they will not be required to take the assessment for that course. A list of these assessments can be found in the [Grades 3-8 Assessment Fact Sheet](#) and [High School Assessments Frequently Asked Questions](#).

STUDENTS WITH INTERRUPTED FORMAL EDUCATION (SIFES)

ELs who are newcomers and have little to no documentation of prior education may also be classified as [Students with Interrupted Formal Education](#) (SIFEs). SIFEs may require additional support to acclimate to formal schooling. These students may also need supplemental instruction to fill-in their educational gaps. This should be considered when scheduling them for classes and interventions.

To be identified as SIFEs, students must meet the following criteria:

- identified as English Learners,
- age 13 or older,
- have two or more years of education interrupted in their native country, and
- are two or more grade levels behind in reading and mathematics (when able to assess).

[State placement tests](#) are available in grades 4 and 8 in ELA and mathematics and may be used to assess a student’s grade level readiness in those subjects. Mathematics placement tests are also available in Spanish.

School systems may want to use assessments in the student’s native language to assess their proficiency and to determine their overall level of literacy. More information about these tests can be found in the [Louisiana World Languages Compendium](#) (page 11).

CHAPTER I RESOURCES

For more details, see [Chapter 1](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

- [Moving Toward a More Common Definition of English Learner](#); Council of Chief State School Officers
- [South Central Comprehensive Center Knowledge Bases](#)
- [English Learner \(EL\) Identification Flowchart](#)
- [ELPS Assessment Guidance](#)
- [EL Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [State Placement Tests Overview](#)

CHAPTER II: ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

INITIAL ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE EL STATUS

Once a student has been identified as eligible to be determined an EL through HLS responses and the Family Interview Questionnaire, when applicable, LEAs are required to test the student with the state approved English Language Proficiency Screener (ELPS). The school system must ensure that designated system and school staff members administering the screener are fully trained in the administration of the screening instrument so that accurate results are obtained. Local education agencies (LEAs) are not required to obtain permission or inform parents of placement testing.

The law requires identification, screening, and parental **notification of eligible students be completed within 30 days of enrollment** (*BESE Bulletin 741*, *ESEA Section 112(e)(3)(A)*, *112(e)(3)(B)*).

ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

- [ELPS Test Administrator Overview and Training Webinar](#)
- [ELPS Test Administrator Overview and Training Presentation](#)
- [ELPS Assessment Guidance](#)
- [EL Frequently Asked Questions](#)

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION: INITIAL NOTIFICATION

School systems are required to inform parents of their child's qualification for initial placement into a language development program. If the student scores less than proficient on the ELPS, then a letter must be provided to the parent or guardian, in the primary language of the home (if possible), indicating that the child was identified as needing specific English language development services. The parent must be given an opportunity to waive any English language development services. If the student does not qualify for services, then the school system is not required to inform the parents.

While waiting for parental permission, the child should be scheduled for appropriate language assistance services, and services should begin immediately.

OPTION TO WAIVE SERVICES

If parents choose to waive English language development services for their child, it is recommended that the school system/school discuss the benefits of English Language Development instruction and address any misconceptions or questions parents have about the program. If a parent still opts to waive services, the school system/school should place the signed letter and any notes from the conversation in the student's cumulative file (CUM folder). Parents should also be informed that a refusal of services does not exempt the student from taking the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT).

ELPT: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT TO MEASURE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROGRESS

The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) is designed to assess the English proficiency of students who meet the participation criteria for ELs as they progress through their K-12 education. In pursuit of this, the ELPT draws upon emerging technologies and innovative methods to measure progress, encourage reclassification relative to grade-appropriate performance, and determine which school systems are meeting accountability goals for ELs.

The ELPT items are designed to gather evidence that demonstrates how students are progressing toward full English language proficiency and meeting the skills measured through the [LA Connectors for ELs](#). The standards describe how language is used to meet the rigorous content demands in each grade through the integration of academic language and content. The test presents a range of items in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and results are reported individually for each category. The ELPT measures increases in:

- the amount or sophistication of words or ways of combining words;
- repertoire of use and expansion of the types of relationships students can construct between ideas (e.g., additive, causal, conditional, contrastive) and the number of ways students are able to construct those relationships between ideas;
- accuracy in constructing precise meanings;
- contextualization, the ability to tailor the use of language functions to fit a variety of sociocultural contexts; and
- autonomy, which is observed by the need for fewer language supports and scaffolds as proficiency increases.

Grade-appropriate language tasks are presented to measure the proficiency level of students of all ranges—from those who are just beginning to learn English to those who are fully English proficient.

All identified ELs in grades K-12 will take ELPT each year until the criteria to exit are met; [Bulletin 111: Chapter 40](#).

PARENT NOTIFICATION: ANNUAL NOTIFICATION

Notification of continuation of services must be sent to parents on an annual basis (ELPT Individual Student Report) for as long as the child is classified as an EL. As with initial notification, the annual notification to parents must be in the primary language (if possible) spoken in the home.

As in the initial screening notification, parents have the right to waive services annually. If parents choose to waive English language development services for their child, it is recommended that the school system/school discuss the benefits of English Language Development instruction and address any misconceptions or questions parents have about the program. If a parent still opts to waive services, the school system/school should place the signed letter and any notes from the conversation in the student's cumulative file (CUM folder). Parents should also be informed that a refusal of services does not exempt the student from taking ELPT.

If the parent waives services, LEAs are still required to:

- *provide necessary supports to ensure curriculum is accessible to the student;*
- *administer ELPT until student achieves reclassification criteria, ([Bulletin 111; Chapter 40](#)); and*
- *provide the same eligible accommodations that are available to their non-EL peers.*

A sample [Parent Notification Letter](#) is available in Spanish, Vietnamese and Arabic.

Parent refusal of services does not waive a child's right to appropriate accommodations.

CODING AND DATA ENTRY

School systems are required to compile data regarding EL enrollment, specialized language service placement and programs, assessment, exiting, and monitoring in order to satisfy accountability requirements and to receive Title I and Title III funding. The state's Student Information System (SIS) has been designed to facilitate school system efforts to record data on ELs who have been offered language development services, have received EL support, and have been exited from EL programs.

Students identified as EL are reported in SIS with an English Proficiency Code: 01 [Proficient] or 02 [Limited]. When students are reported with an English Proficiency Code: 02 [Limited], an EL Funding Source Code is also reported. This code indicates the title of the program which is the primary funding source for instructional language services for students identified as an EL.

SIS will track students previously identified English Learner (ELs) for two years following their last reported EL status. This is done to comply with state and federal reporting requirements. If a student qualifies as an EL but the parent or guardian refuse services, they are reported with code 13 [No instructional language program provided].

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) ELP INDICATOR REQUIREMENT

ESSA requires all states to hold schools responsible for the progress of English Learners. State accountability plans must include a measure or assessment of English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, accountability plans must set goals with timelines for attaining proficiency. English Learners are also measured as a subgroup indicating the percent of students who meet academic goals on state assessments (LEAP 2025), graduation rates, and other accountability measures included in accountability plans.

LOUISIANA'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

The state's accountability formula includes a measure of English proficiency progress as part of the assessment index. A progress level is determined by using a combination of the scores from the four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The overall progress of students is measured yearly using a baseline score, which is the first ELPT test taken by each student (the measure does not use prior years' ELDA test scores) and the number of years between their current overall proficiency level and the baseline overall proficiency. Points are awarded to the school for EL students based on their progress toward an expected target, and the points are averaged to create the index.

The assessment index includes weights for each subject test. In grades 3-8, LEAP 2025 English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, subject test scores are weighted by 2. Science and social studies subject test scores are weighted by 1. The scores from a student's measure of EL progress is weighted by 6, making it equal to the combined subjects included in LEAP 2025. See [Example 1: Steps to Determine EL Progress Measure for Grades K-5](#).

In high school grades, all subject tests are weighted equally by 1. Because the weights of high school assessments vary depending on which subject tests are taken by a student each year, the measure of EL progress will be weighted by 2. See [Example 2: Steps to Determine EL Progress Measure for Grades 6-12](#).

Example 1: Steps to Determine EL Progress Measure for Grades K-5

1. **Determine a baseline of proficiency.** The baseline proficiency is determined by the combination of scores that were earned in listening, speaking, reading, and writing using the table below. Yesin, a fourth grade student, earned the following scores on his first administration of the ELPT: Listening-3, Speaking-2; Reading-2; Writing-1. Based on the table below, Yesin is Progressing 1 (P1).

OVERALL PROFICIENCY LEVEL	COMBINATION NEEDED FROM 4 DOMAINS
Emerging	All domain scores are 1s and 2s.
Progressing 1 (P1)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 1.
Progressing 2 (P2)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 2.
Progressing 3 (P3)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 3.
Transitioning	All domain scores are 4s and 5s.

2. **Determine how much progress a student made toward the required target.** Compare the overall proficiency level demonstrated by the student in year 2 to the overall baseline proficiency level. The table below illustrates the progress needed toward proficiency each year in grades K-5. In Year 2, Yesin earns the following scores on the four domains of ELPT: Listening-3; Speaking-3; Reading-2, Writing-2. This combination of scores indicates that Yesin has progressed to Progressing 2 (P2).

TRAJECTORY TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: STUDENTS FIRST IDENTIFIED IN GRADES PK-5				
INITIAL ELPT PROFICIENCY LEVEL	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5 & BEYOND
Emerging (E)	P1	P2	P3	T
Progressing 1 (P1)	P2	P3	T	T
Progressing 2 (P2)	P3	T	T	T
Progressing 3 (P3)	T	T	T	T
Transitioning (T)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Note: Grades 6-8 will use the trajectory table for high school students in Example 2)

3. **Determine the progress that was made by the student and identify the points that are awarded to the school for the student.** The table below provides the points awarded per student for one of four levels of progress. Based on the table below, Yesin met his trajectory target and will earn 100 points toward the progress index for the school.

ELPT PROGRESS ASSESSMENT INDEX POINTS	
OUTCOME	ELP INDEX POINTS
ELPT level exceeds trajectory	150
ELPT level meets trajectory	100
ELPT level is at least one above the prior year	80
ELPT level is the same or lower than the prior year	0

4. **Multiply the points awarded for EL progress by 6.** Add the points for Yesin's progress to the points that he earned from the LEAP 2025 subject tests.

TEST TYPE	LEVEL EARNED	POINTS AWARDED TO LEVEL	WEIGHT IN ASSESSMENT INDEX	TOTAL POINTS IN INDEX
LEAP 2025 ELA	Approaching Basic	0	2	0
LEAP 2025 Math	Basic	80	2	160
LEAP 2025 Social Studies	Basic	80	1	80
LEAP 2025 Science	Approaching Basic	0	1	0
EL Progress	Meets Trajectory	100	6	600

Example 2: Steps to Determine EL Progress Measure for Grades 6-12

1. **Determine a baseline of proficiency.** Use the combination of scores that were earned in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to locate the student's overall baseline proficiency level using the table below. Teresa, a tenth grade student, earned the following scores on her first administration of the ELPT: Listening-3, Speaking-2; Reading-2; Writing-1. Based on the table, Teresa's overall proficiency level is Progressing 1 (P1).

OVERALL PROFICIENCY LEVEL	COMBINATION NEEDED FROM 4 DOMAINS
Emerging	All domain scores are 1s and 2s.
Progressing 1 (P1)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 1.
Progressing 2 (P2)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 2.
Progressing 3 (P3)	The highest domain score is 3 or higher and the lowest score is 3.
Transitioning	All domain scores are 4s and 5s.

2. **Determine how much progress a student made toward the required target.** Compare the overall proficiency level demonstrated by the student in year 2 to the baseline overall proficiency level. The table below illustrates the progress needed for proficiency each year in grades 6-12. In Year 2, Teresa earns the following scores on the four domains of ELPT: Listening-3; Speaking-3; Reading-2, Writing-2. This combination of scores indicates that Teresa has progressed to Progressing 2 (P2).

TRAJECTORY TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: STUDENTS FIRST IDENTIFIED IN GRADES 6-12						
INITIAL ELPT PROFICIENCY LEVEL	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7 & BEYOND
Emerging (E)	P1	P2	P2	P3	P3	T
Progressing 1 (P1)	P2	P2	P3	P3	T	T
Progressing 2 (P2)	P2	P3	P3	T	T	T
Progressing 3 (P3)	P3	T	T	T	T	T
Transitioning (T)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

3. **Determine the progress that was made by the student and identify the points that are awarded to the school for the student.** The table below provides the points awarded per student for one of four levels of progress. Based on the table below, Teresa met her trajectory target and will earn 100 points toward the progress index for the school.

ELPT PROGRESS ASSESSMENT INDEX POINTS	
OUTCOME	ELP INDEX POINTS
ELPT level exceeds trajectory	150
ELPT level meets trajectory	100
ELPT level is at least one above the prior year	80
ELPT level is the same or lower than the prior year	0

4. **Multiply the points awarded for EL progress by 2.** Add the points for Teresa's progress to the points that she earned from the LEAP 2025 high school subject tests.

TEST TYPE	LEVEL EARNED	POINTS AWARDED TO LEVEL	WEIGHT IN ASSESSMENT INDEX	TOTAL POINTS IN INDEX
LEAP 2025 English II	Approaching Basic	0	1	0
LEAP 2025 Algebra I	Basic	80	1	80
LEAP 2025 Biology	Basic	80	1	80
EL Progress	Meets Trajectory	100	2	200

CHAPTER II RESOURCES

Chapters [7](#) and [10](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

- [Accountability Policy Update: Measuring Progress of English Learners](#)
- South Central Comprehensive Center [Knowledge Bases](#)
- [Moving Toward a More Common Definition of English Learner](#); Council of Chief State School Officers



CHAPTER III: PROVIDING ELS WITH A SPECIALIZED LANGUAGE PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

In determining whether a program for ELs complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, USDOE Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has used the standard set forth in *Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F. 2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981). Under this standard, a program for ELs is acceptable if:

- The school system is pursuing a program informed by an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or, at least, deemed a legitimate experimental strategy [A Sound Approach];
- The programs and practices actually used by [the] school system are reasonably calculated to implement effectively the educational theory adopted by the school [Reasonable Implementation]; and
- The school's program succeeds, after a legitimate trial, in producing results indicating that the language barriers confronting students are actually being overcome [Evaluate for Outcomes] Id. at 1009-10.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Statute does not mandate or forbid any specific type of program. It does, however, define scientifically-based research as research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to educational activities and programs (ESEA section 9101(37)). The EL must also have access to all additional services and programs available to other students.

Although school systems are permitted flexibility in the types of educational programs that they may offer an EL, each system must use the standard procedures described in Chapter 1 for determining EL placement. Depending on each school system's program(s), English and content-area instructional programs may be concurrent or sequential. The plan must be comprehensive and provide ELs with appropriate English language development services, full access to subject matter content, and other generally available resources, including all other educational programs and extracurricular activities.

As detailed in [Chapter 2](#) of the EL Toolkit, the following EL approaches/programs are considered educationally sound in theory, **meet the Castañeda** standard, and align with the broader academic strategy outlined by the Louisiana Department of Education. The following options should be considered based on the needs of ELs in each school system:

- **English as a Second Language (ESL):** This approach is designed primarily to teach ELs English language skills. The program may also teach study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. The medium of instruction is English with little or no use of native language.
- **Content-Based English as a Second Language:** This approach uses academic content areas as the “vehicle” for developing English language skills. English instruction is concurrent with subject matter instruction. English is used as the medium of instruction.
- **Sheltered English Instruction:** An instructional approach similar to content-based ESL programs with the focus of

making academic instruction in English comprehensible to ELs. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, learning strategies, and other methods and resources to teach academic language and concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects.

- **Dual Language:** Also known as Two-Way Immersion, the main goal of this type of program is for students to develop proficiency in English and another language. Students receive significant instruction time in both languages. Classes that participate in dual language programs are usually comprised of roughly equal numbers of native English speakers and ELs.
- **Newcomer Program:** Newcomer programs are essentially separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed primarily to meet the needs of newly arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs for a set period of time before transitioning into other specialized language programs.
- **Structured English Immersion Program:** The goal of this type of program is to teach English skills in a progressively complex way so that ELs can succeed in the general education classroom. Instruction is entirely in English, although teachers and/or paraprofessionals have specialized training in meeting the needs of ELs, hold ESL certification, and may possess at least some communication skills in the primary language of the EL.
- **Transitional Bilingual Education Program:** This type of program, also known as early-exit bilingual, mainly uses the EL's primary language as a medium of instruction early on. Students receive instruction in the native language so that they may access content as much as possible while acquiring English. The program maintains and develops the student's primary language while developing English proficiency, gradually transitioning from a bilingual to all-English instructional program. Note that teachers must be highly qualified in any content area(s) taught.

INSTRUCTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

All ELs should receive daily instruction using high-quality core curriculum.

STAFFING AND SUPPORTING AN EL PROGRAM

A detailed discussion of staffing is in [Chapter 3](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#). Key points regarding staffing of an EL program include:

- LEAs must provide the personnel necessary to effectively implement the selected EL program(s); necessary personnel include teachers who are qualified to provide EL services, core-content teachers who are highly qualified in their field as well as trained to support EL students, and trained administrators who can evaluate these teachers;
- LEAs must provide adequate professional development and follow-up training in order to prepare EL program teachers and administrators to implement the EL program effectively; and
- LEAs must ensure that administrators who evaluate EL program staff are adequately trained to meaningfully evaluate whether EL teachers are appropriately employing their training in the classroom in order for the EL program model to successfully achieve its educational objectives.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All school systems with a population of one or more EL students are required to provide professional development to teachers and administrators regarding research-based programming on how to serve EL students. It is the school system's responsibility to ensure that all teachers are implementing strategies to serve EL students successfully during instruction using a high-quality curriculum. LDOE has created a [PD vendor guide](#) to help guide school systems in selecting recommended PD providers who will ensure that both EL and general education teachers are able to meet the needs of their ELs. This professional development can be funded by federal grant dollars, including Title II and Title III.

GRADING ENGLISH LEARNERS

Although school systems decide how an EL should be graded, ELs should not receive a failing grade in their content classes if their lack of English proficiency is keeping them from fully accessing the content ([EL Toolkit](#)). If an EL is receiving all accommodations and/or classroom modifications and is still unable to access the content, the student should be referred to the School Building Learning Committee (SBLC) for evaluation.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Instructional programs must be regularly evaluated, modified, and replaced as needed in order to meet legal requirements stipulated by the [Civil Rights Act](#). Evaluation on an annual basis is strongly recommended. Data on academic achievement and retention, dropout, and graduation rates of students who have exited EL status should be comparable to the data for their non-EL peers. The data should be used to evaluate and modify programs if necessary. The following are the key points highlighted in the [EL Toolkit](#):

- Successful EL programs enable EL students to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time.
- LEAs should collect longitudinal data to monitor and compare the performance of current ELs, former ELs, and never-ELs in the LEA's standard instructional program. Data should not be limited to English proficiency growth.
- When EL programs do not produce both English proficiency and parity of participation within a reasonable period of time, SEAs and LEAs must modify the EL program.
- LEAs should consider the following data when evaluating their EL program: ELPS/ELPT results, LEAP 2025 and other assessment results (as appropriate).

CHAPTER III RESOURCES

Guidelines and resources for developing programs for ELs can be found in [Chapters 2](#) and [3](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

See [Chapter 9](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#) for more information on evaluating the effectiveness of a school system or charter school EL program

More information on providing meaningful access is found in [Chapter 4](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

- [English Learner Guidebook: Changing Educational Outcomes for English Learners](#)
- [LA Connectors for English Learners](#)
- [EL Instructional Support Plan](#)
- [Two-Way Immersion Programs One Pager](#)
- [Developing a School System PD Plan](#)
- [Louisiana Academic Content PD Vendor Guide](#)

CHAPTER IV: PROVIDING MEANINGFUL ACCESS

In Louisiana, all ELs must participate in statewide assessments ([Bulletin 118, §3307](#)) and have access to the same educational opportunities as their non-EL peers. This means that ELs should be participating 100% of the time in high-quality content and instruction with appropriate language supports selected according to the student's individual needs. A list of suggested EL accommodations for classroom and assessment can be found in the [EL Accommodations Checklist](#).

In addition, both Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) require that all ELs take an annual assessment of English language proficiency that measures a student's reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in English. Louisiana administers the [English Language Proficiency Test](#) (ELPT).

ASSESSMENT WAIVERS

The School Building Level Committee (SBLC) has the authority to waive the state's grade promotion policy for an EL student. A student who was granted a waiver at the fourth grade level is ineligible for a waiver at the eighth grade level ([Bulletin 111](#)).

FULL ACADEMIC YEAR STATUS

The test score of every student who is enrolled in any school in a school system (LEA) on **October 1** of the academic year and who is eligible to take a test at a given school within the same school system (LEA) shall be included in the LEA's district performance score (DPS).

The score of every student that will count in the DPS will be counted at the school where the student was enrolled on February 1 for SPS and subgroup performance scores.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students classified as English Learners **may receive accommodations during state testing if they are used routinely in the student's classroom instruction and assessment**. Providing testing accommodations for ELs may increase the accuracy of results regarding mastery of content. An accommodation is a change in setting of test administration, timing, scheduling, presentation format, and/or method of response to the assessment. Use of EL accommodations will be determined by the classroom teacher and EL teacher or other individual providing language services.

Testing Accommodations include:

- Extended time
- Provision of English/Native Language Word-to- Word Dictionary
- Tests read aloud (on math, science and social studies)
- Math assessment in Spanish
- Test administered by EL teacher or by individual providing language services
- Directions in Native Language.

Individual or small group administration must be used if the accommodations will interfere with the testing of other students (e.g., test read aloud). All provided accommodation(s) must be selected during test set-up. The accommodations should not compromise test security or confidentiality. Any assistance in test administration must not give away the answers. All conditions that pertain to test security and the returning of test materials after the test is administered still apply.

Accommodations for the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) should be documented on a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Academic Plan (IAP) no later than 30 days prior to the opening of the testing window ([Bulletin 111](#)).

CHAPTER IV RESOURCES

More information on providing meaningful access is found in [Chapter 4](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

- [The EL Instructional Support Plan \(ISP\)](#)
- [LEAP 2025 Accommodations and Accessibility Features User Guide](#)
- [ELPS/ELPT Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)
- [EL Accommodation Checklist](#)

CHAPTER V: ADDRESSING ENGLISH LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 address the rights of students with disabilities in school and other educational settings. If an EL is suspected of having one or more disabilities, the student should be referred to the SBLC for consideration of possible special education evaluation. Evaluations may not be delayed because of a student's language proficiency or the student's participation in a language instruction educational program. Also, a student's classification as EL cannot be the basis for determining if the EL has a disability.

In order to address EL students who may have disabilities, a school system must:

- identify, locate, and evaluate ELs with disabilities in a timely manner;
- consider the English language proficiency of ELs with disabilities in determining appropriate assessments and other evaluation materials;
- provide and administer special education evaluations in the child's native language, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, to ensure that a student's language needs can be distinguished from a student's disability related needs;
- not identify or determine that EL students are students with disabilities because of their limited English language proficiency; and
- provide EL students with disabilities with both the language assistance and disability related services they are entitled to under federal law.

CHAPTER V RESOURCES

For more information regarding serving ELs with special needs, see [Chapter 6](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

- [Bulletin 1508: Pupil Appraisal Handbook](#)
- [LDOE Students with Disabilities Website](#)



CHAPTER VI: MONITORING AND EXITING

In order for ELs to be reclassified and exited from a specialized language assistance program, they must attain levels of English proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing so that they are able to meaningfully participate in core academic classes and reach levels of academic achievement commensurate with that of their English-speaking peers. The student will retain EL coding status in the Student Information System (SIS) until the criteria, established in [BESE Bulletin 111](#), Chapter 40, have been met.

PROFICIENCY DEFINITION

ELs who achieves a score of Proficient on ELPT have demonstrated that they have attained a level of English language skills necessary to independently provide, interpret, collaborate on, and succeed in grade-level, content-related academic tasks in English.

To be considered English proficient and exit English Learner (EL) status, an EL student must score level 4 (Early Advanced) or level 5 (Advanced) on all four ELPT domains including speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Once a student has achieved overall proficiency on ELPT, the student is no longer classified as EL and should be reclassified as Fully English Proficient. LEAS must notify parents through a [notification letter](#) and update their student information system with the student's new, non-EL status.

RECLASSIFYING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are unable to meet the above exit criteria after four years or more in EL status, and whose disability impacts language acquisition, may be reclassified and exempt from future ELPT participation but will still be required to take statewide assessments. In such cases, if the IEP team determines that the student's disability directly impacts language acquisition, then the student's exit is decided by consensus of the members of the SBLC. Students who meet the participation criteria for LEAP Connect may exit sooner until such time as an alternate ELPT is available ([Bulletin 111](#)).

STUDENT MONITORING

After students have exited the specialized English language program(s) and no longer require services, LEAs must have a plan for tracking their academic progress for two years following their last reported EL status. Staff responsible for monitoring exited ELs must be provided with clear, detailed instructions in order to:

- ensure that students formerly classified as EL can meaningfully participate in the school's general education program;
- monitor students who seem unable to participate meaningfully in the school's general educational program as seen in poor academic achievement in order to determine the reasons for this; and
- document classroom grades, assessment scores, attendance, and any other related evidence needed to measure the student's continual progress.

School system staff members must be familiar with the standard procedures and documentation that will be employed throughout the monitoring process.

A former EL may be reclassified as EL if they meet all of the following criteria:

- It is 3 years or less from initial classification to Fully English Proficient.
- There is documentation in the form of assessment scores, classwork, or observations that the student is struggling with the language demands in numerous content areas.
- All other classroom interventions have been unsuccessful.
- The SBLC determines that there is still a need for specific types of language supports.

Once a student has been identified as needing to be rescreened, the school system will administer ELPS again and make placement decisions based on the student's most current proficiency levels. If there are any questions about this process, contact assessment@la.gov.

CHAPTER VI RESOURCES

For more information on exiting and monitoring ELs, see [Chapter 8](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#)

CHAPTER VII: ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH EL PARENTS

Successful communication provides parents with the school-related information they need to participate in and make informed decisions about their children's education. This essential information includes, but is not limited to, information regarding language assistance programs, special education and related services, IEP meetings, grievance procedures, notices of nondiscrimination, student discipline policies and procedures, registration and enrollment, report cards, requests for parent permission for student participation in school system or school activities, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, gifted and talented programs, magnet and charter schools, and any other school and program choice options.

School systems must develop and implement a process for determining whether parents of non-English proficient students need documents in language other than English (see [Home Language Survey \(HLS\)](#)) and must participate in parental outreach activities in order to provide parents opportunities to:

- Be involved in the education of their child.
- Be active participants in assisting their child with:
 - » learning English;
 - » achieving at high levels in core academic subjects; and
 - » meeting the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet.

CHAPTER VII RESOURCES

See [Chapter 10](#) of the [EL Toolkit](#) for more information and [The English Learner Family Toolkit](#) for resources, tips, and parental rights.

- [A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders](#)
- [Home Language Survey Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese, Urdu, French, Mandarin](#)



CHAPTER VIII: TITLE III REQUIRED SUB-GRANTEE ACTIVITIES

The obligations detailed in above chapters pertain to each of the state's local education agencies. This chapter addresses the additional requirement for LEAs that receive funds under Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Immigrant Students.

TITLE III FUNDING FORMULA

The LDOE receives a formula Title III allocation that is determined by the USDOE on an annual basis. The portion of the annual allocation designated for school systems is allocated based on a per-pupil amount. To receive an allocation a school system must:

- a. Have an EL population large enough to generate an allocation of at least \$10,000; or
- b. Join a Title III consortium with other systems to have enough ELs within consortium to generate a cumulative total of \$10,000. See Attachment 5 for consortium guidelines.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS UNDER TITLE III

Under Section 3115(c) of Title III, a school system (LEA) receiving funds shall use them to:

- a. Provide effective language instruction educational programs that demonstrate effectiveness in increasing:
 - » English language proficiency and
 - » Student academic achievement (ESEA Section 3115(c)(1))
- b. Provide effective professional development to:
 - » Improve instruction and assessment;
 - » Enhance the ability of teachers to understand and implement curricula, assessment practices, and instructional strategies; and
 - » Increase English language proficiency or substantially increasing knowledge of sufficient intensity and duration (ESEA Section 3115(c)(2)).
- c. Provide and implement other effective activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for ELs, which shall include parent, family, and community engagement activities, and may include strategies that serve to coordinate and align related programs (ESEA Section 3115(c)(3)).

IMMIGRANT INFLUX FUNDS

To receive Title III Immigrant Influx funds, a school system must experience an average increase of at least 10 percent in its number of immigrant students over the two preceding years. A school system does not need to qualify for regular Title III funding to review immigrant influx funds.

Who are Immigrant Students? Immigrant students:

- are between the ages 3 and 21;
- were not born in any U.S. State (or Puerto Rico); and
- have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than 3 academic years [Title III, section 3301(6)].

The new student does NOT necessarily need to qualify for the school system/charters LIEP program and services; however, most new immigrants will. For example, a school system could receive an immigrant student from India who is already fluent in English but that could still be counted for Immigrant funds.

Under the statute, a school system (LEA) must use the immigrant sub-grant to provide enhanced instructional opportunities for immigrant children and youth (ESEA Section 3115(e)). Activities may include:

- family literacy, parent and family outreach, and training activities designed to assist parents and families to become active participants in the education of their children;
- recruitment of and support for personnel, including teachers and paraprofessionals who have been specifically trained, or are being trained, to provide services to immigrant children and youth;
- provision of tutorials, mentoring, and academic or career counseling for immigrant children and youth;
- identification, development, and acquisition of curricular materials, educational software, and technologies to be used in the program;
- basic instruction services that are directly attributable to the presence of immigrant children and youth in the LEA, including the payment of costs of providing additional classroom supplies, costs of transportation, or such other costs as are directly attributable to such additional basic instruction services;
- other instruction services that are designed to assist immigrant children and youth to achieve in elementary and secondary schools in the U.S., such as programs of introduction to the educational system and civics education; and
- activities coordinated with community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, nonpublic sector entities, or other entities with expertise in working with immigrants, to assist parents and families of immigrant children and youth by offering comprehensive community services.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

A school system (LEA) receiving Title III funds must consult with appropriate nonpublic school officials during the design and development of the Title III program and, after timely and meaningful consultation, provide educational services to EL children and educational personnel. (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title IX, Part E Secs. 9501-9506). During the consultation, the school system (LEA) must discuss with appropriate nonpublic school officials the design and development of the Title III program on issues such as:

- how English Learner needs will be identified,
- what services will be offered,
- how, where and by whom the services will be provided,
- how the services will be assessed and how the results of the assessment will be used to improve those services,
- the size and scope of the services to be provided to the nonpublic school children and educational personnel,
- the amount of funds available for those services, and
- how and when the school system (LEA) will make decisions about the delivery of services, including a thorough consideration of the views of the nonpublic school officials on the provision of contract services through potential third-party providers.

In addition:

- Title III services provided to children and educational personnel in nonpublic schools must be equitable and timely and address their educational needs.
- Funds provided for educational services for nonpublic school children and educational personnel must be equal, taking into account the number and educational needs of those children and the funds provided for participating public school children.
- Title III services provided to nonpublic school children and educational personnel must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological.
- LEAs may serve nonpublic school ELs and educational personnel either directly or through contracts with public and nonpublic agencies, organizations, and institutions.
- The control of funds used to provide services and the title to materials and equipment purchased with those funds must be retained by the LEA.
- Services for nonpublic school children and educational personnel must be provided by employees of the school system (LEA) or through a contract made by the school system (LEA) with a third party.
- Providers of services to nonpublic school children and educational personnel must be independent of the nonpublic school and of any religious organization, and the providers' employment or contract must be under the control and supervision of the LEA.
- Funds used to provide services to nonpublic school children and educational personnel must not be commingled with nonfederal funds.

REPORTING NONPUBLIC CONSULTATION IN EGMS

Information regarding consultation with nonpublic schools is recorded in the Nonpublic/Title III tab under the Administration Section of the SuperApp. The total amount available for services goes in the “Title III Section” under the Nonpublic tab.

Overview	ESSA Transfers	Title I	Title IV	IDEA	Nonpublic	Allocations	Submit	Amendment Description	Application Functions
ESSA Proportionate Share		Title III	IDEA Proportionate Share		Nonpublic Consultation		Nonpublic Budget Detail		

Title III Reservation for Nonpublic

Enter the amount to reserve from Title III and Title III Immigrant funding for nonpublic budgeting

Title III Total Amount Available:	<input type="text" value="11657"/>
Title III reservation:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Title III Immigrant Total Amount Available:	<input type="text" value="10605"/>
Title III Immigrant reservation:	<input type="text" value="0"/>

The amount available for and services provided to each individual nonpublic school is recorded in the chart under the Nonpublic Consultation tab.

Private School Allocation	Equitable Share by Title				
	Title I	Title II	Title III English Language Acquisition	Title III Immigrant	Title IVA SSAE
(A) Equitable share amounts from the Program Detail pages	697,002	511,763			335,817

IMPORTANT NOTE: School systems must document the result of its consultation with nonpublics regarding services under Title III even if the nonpublic declines the services. If a nonpublic refuses services, there must be a statement in the comment section of nonpublic consultation page stating that Title III services were offered and declined. If refusal was due to no English Learners (EL) being enrolled in the nonpublic school, a note must be entered in the comment section that the school was informed about process to receive services should an EL enroll in the nonpublic.

DATA REPORTING

Title I requires that states and LEAs annually report on ELs’ progress in achieving English language proficiency, attainment of English language proficiency, academic achievement, and high school graduation rates. (ESEA Section 1111(h)(1), (h)(2)). Under Title III, there are additional reporting requirements. LEAs must report to their states on:

- Title III programs and services provided to ELs by grade;
- number and percentage of ELs making progress toward English language proficiency. This must be disaggregated by ELs with disabilities;
- number and percentage of ELs who attain proficiency and exit LIEPs;
- number and percentage of former ELs who meet academic content standards (for 4 years). This must be disaggregated by ELs with disabilities; and
- number and percentage of ELs who have not exited LIEPs after 5 years as an EL.

CHAPTER VIII RESOURCES

[Nonpublic School Participation in Title III Programs](#)

Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

RESOURCES

- [Bulletin 111: The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System](#)
- [Bulletin 118: Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices](#)
- [Bulletin 741: Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators](#)
- [Bulletin 1508: Pupil Appraisal Handbook](#)
- [Developing a School System PD Plan](#)
- [EL Accommodation Checklist](#)
- [EL Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [English Learner Guidebook: Changing Educational Outcomes for English Learners](#)
- [English Learner \(EL\) Identification Flowchart](#)
- [EL Instructional Support Plan](#)
- [ELPS/ELPT Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)
- [ELPS Assessment Guidance](#)
- [ELPS Test Administrator Overview and Training Webinar](#)
- [ELPS Test Administrator Overview and Training Presentation](#)
- [ELPT Portal](#)
- [A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders](#)
- [Louisiana Academic Content PD Vendor Guide](#)
- [LA Connectors for English Learners](#)
- [LDOE Students with Disabilities Website](#)
- [LEAP 2025 Accommodations and Accessibility Features User Guide](#)
- [Moving Toward a More Common Definition of English Learner](#)
- [Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)
- [OELA EL Toolkit](#)
- [Nonpublic School Participation in Title III Programs](#)
- [South Central Comprehensive Center Knowledge Bases](#)
- [State Placement Tests Overview](#)
- [Two-Way Immersion Programs One Pager](#)

