



## Provisional English Learner Identification Procedure During Periods of Extended School Closures in Grades K–12

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***This procedure provides a means of provisionally identifying English Learners (ELs) in times of extended school closures where remote learning plans have been approved by the Governor and school districts are providing a continuity of educational services online and face-to-face screening is not possible. This process may not replace the formal identification process when face-to-face screening is possible, and formal screening must take place as soon as possible once school resumes for any student who has been given a provisional status. No part of this outlined process that has already been completed will be repeated once school resumes.***

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### Rationale

Per the Governor's directive on March 24, public school closures have been extended to April 10 ([EO 3-2020](#)):

*"...a district will not be required to reschedule in-person pupil-instruction time lost because of the closure if the board of trustees for the district approves the district's plan/report that it has made up the lost pupil-instruction time through remote learning, provided for meals for students, provided for services to students with disabilities, and provided other services customarily provided to students in school. Districts will present an initial plan to the board of trustees."*

This guidance serves to support school districts in identifying English Learners (ELs) throughout the remote-learning period. The WIDA recommended guidance is a result of collaboration with other WIDA member-states and reflects best practices in identifying EL's under the current circumstances.

- **Step 1:** Review the [Home Language Survey](#) (HLS).
  - If the HLS indicates a language other than English for **any** reason, or a teacher notices a possible language barrier and requests a screening, **proceed to Step 2.**
  
- **Step 2:** Conduct a family interview to determine if the student is potentially an EL. Use an interpreter if necessary.



## Family Interview

**\*\*\*not to be completed by the parent/guardian\*\*\***

<b>Interviewer Name:</b>			
<b>Interviewer Role:</b>			
<b>Date:</b>		<b>Phone:</b>	
<b>Name of Student:</b>		<b>State Student unique Identifier (SSID):</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Student's Date of Entry to U.S. (if born in the U.S., then same as DOB):</b>			
<b>Student Country of Origin:</b>		<b>Parent Country of Origin (if different):</b>	
<b>Parents' Primary Country of Education:</b> <i>Complete the following table for the student. Indicate if the student moved schools, states, or countries during a school year.</i>			

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



1. Is this student a Native Alaskan, Native American, or Native Hawaiian?  
 YES             NO
  
2. Is this student's language influenced by a Tribal language through a parent, grandparent, relative, or guardian?  
 YES             NO
  
3. When at home, how often does this student hear a language other than English?  
 Always             Occasionally     Never
  
4. When at home, how often does this student speak a language other than English?  
 Always             Occasionally     Never
  
5. When interacting with their parents or guardians, how often does this student hear a language other than English?  
 Always             Occasionally     Never
  
6. 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
  
7. 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 should be conducted by the EL Team.**

Based on the answers to the parent interview questions, the trained EL interviewer will determine if the second language exposure/use is significant or superficial in nature. If the student's development of English has 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 Supporting EL’s with Disabilities [Appendix A] before proceeding.**
- ❑ **Step 4:** Conduct a review of the student’s academic records from previous schooling if available using the Language Observation Checklist [Appendix B]. Look for 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 robust evidence of English proficiency, then **proceed to Step 5.**
- ❑ **Step 5: Conduct a teleconference meeting with the student (e.g., telephone or online meeting software (Google Hangouts, Skype, Zoom, etc.)) and complete the speaking, listening and interaction rubrics in [Appendix B].**

**The interview should consist of questions at varying levels of meant to elicit interaction between the interviewer and the student that will make it possible to determine the student’s ability in listening, speaking and interaction.**

Below are **examples** of questions at various levels of difficulty, but interviewers must tailor the interaction as necessary based on the apparent proficiency of the student and their age.

- Start with questions at low levels of difficulty and progress in difficulty from there.

<p><b>Examples of Low level questions:</b>          “What is your name?” “How old are you?” “Where are you from?” “Tell me about your family?” “What do you like to do?”</p>
<p><b>Examples of Moderate level questions:</b>          “What do you like at school?” “What kinds of food do you like?” “Tell me about your favorite (sports team, video game, toy, or hobby)?” “What would you like to do when you graduate from high school/grow up?”</p>
<p><b>Examples High level questions:</b>          “What is your favorite subject in school and why?” “Let’s pretend that I am a friend. Tell me why I should like your favorite (sports team, video game, toy, or hobby).”          “Describe your favorite teacher/friend/family member for me.” “Describe a job that you think is useful for society and why.”</p>

- Stop at the level where student has difficulty responding.



- If the student has difficulty responding at a particular level, then ask a question or two from a previous level to end on a positive note.

**NOTE:** If a student is unable to complete the interview process (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 provisionally identified as an EL until screening can be completed.

Generally, a student who easily communicates at a “High Level” is not likely to qualify for EL status and should not be provisionally identified as an EL.

The interviewer should consider:

- **Under-identification:** students who are not English proficient but *seem* to be (false positives). In this case, set the bar high.
- **Over-identification:** students who are English Proficient but don't *seem* to be (false negatives). In this case, do not set the bar high.

**NOTE:** Regardless of whether a student is provisionally identified as an EL or not, the formal identification process must be completed once school resumes and face-to-face screening is possible. This includes students who were not provisionally identified.

**The district MUST ensure that students who are given a provisional status (identified as EL or non-EL) be tracked by some means (e.g. a special code in the local student information system (SIS) so that once school resumes, they can be screened according to the full procedure.**

- Step 6:** Determine the most appropriate academic placement and supports based on the student's English language proficiency information and the district's chosen method of instructional delivery. The language needs of ELs MUST be met in a virtual environment.

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

- Step 7:** Provide the parent with a detailed description of the academic placement and supports that will be made available.



- Step 8:** Notify the receiving teachers of student's identification and placement.
- Step 9:** Initiate an active service record in the district SIS.
- Step 10:** 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 Home Language Survey to this form along with the completed rubric and file them in the student's records.**

**Upon school re-opening, formal screening must be completed for all students who were provisionally screened during the school shutdown regardless of whether or not they were identified.**

## Resources

- [Home Language Survey](#) (Appendix A)
- [Montana's English Language Learners: Guidance for School Districts](#)
- [WIDA Early Years \(2-7\) downloadable activity booklets in English](#)
- [WIDA Early Years \(2-7\) downloadable activity booklets in Spanish](#)



## Appendix A

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

If a student enrolls 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.

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

This procedure must be completed with appropriate accommodations and the 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:**

This procedure must be completed with any administrative considerations 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 academic program based on the information available at the conclusion of the procedure.

If, after the student is placed in the academic program, the student is determined to have a disability that may have affected the identification procedure (e.g. requires an accommodation that was not offered), then the student must be re-screened in accordance with this procedure using the appropriate accommodations. If the student does not meet the criteria for provisional identification as an EL based on this subsequent testing, then the district must contact the state to remove the EL identifier.



## Appendix B

### Grade: Kindergarten

#### Rubric 1 - Interaction, Listening, and Speaking Language Use Inventory

Student:		SSID:		Date:	
Evaluator's Name:					
Observation Date(s):					

	LOW (0)	MODERATE (.3)	HIGH (.5)	Value
Interaction	Can engage in very short social exchanges, and sustain the conversation with substantial support. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities, possibly using provided language frames or structures. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use language spontaneously, flexibly, and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Listening	Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations, and educational videos. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Speaking	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar and academic topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using some content-specific vocabulary. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>				



**Grade: 1**

**Rubric 1 - Interaction, Listening, and Speaking Language Use Inventory**

Student:		SSID:		Date:	
Evaluator's Name:					
Observation Date(s):					

	LOW (0)	MODERATE (.3)	HIGH (.5)	Value
Interaction	Can engage in very short social exchanges, and sustain the conversation with substantial support. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities, possibly using provided language frames or structures. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use language spontaneously, flexibly, and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Listening	Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations, and educational videos. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Speaking	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar and academic topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using some content-specific vocabulary.	
<b>TOTAL</b>				



**Grades 2–3**

**Rubric 1 - Interaction, Listening, and Speaking Language Use Inventory**

Student:		SSID:		Date:	
Evaluator's Name:					
Observation Date(s):					

	LOW (0)	MODERATE (.3)	HIGH (.5)	Value
Interaction	Can engage in very short social exchanges, and sustain the conversation with substantial support. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities, possibly using provided language frames or structures. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use language spontaneously, flexibly, and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Listening	Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations, and educational videos. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Speaking	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics with little to no content-specific vocabulary. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms and some content-specific vocabulary about familiar and academic topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using content-specific vocabulary. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>				



**Grades: 4–12**

**Rubric 1 - Interaction, Listening, and Speaking Language Use Inventory**

Student:		SSID:		Date:	
Evaluator's Name:					
Observation Date(s):					

	LOW (0)	MODERATE (.3)	HIGH (.5)	Value
Interaction	Can engage in very short social exchanges, and sustain the conversation with substantial support. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities, possibly using provided language frames or structures. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can use language spontaneously, flexibly, and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Listening	Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations, and educational videos. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Speaking	Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can connect phrases to talk about familiar topics using simple sentences. Can briefly give reasons and explanations for reactions, opinions, and plans. <input type="checkbox"/>	Can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating subthemes, developing particular points, and finishing with an appropriate conclusion. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>				