



Provisional English Learner Identification Procedure During Periods of Remote Learning in Grades K–12

This 10-step procedure provides a means of provisionally identifying English Learners (ELs) in times of remote learning where plans have been approved by trustees as traditional learning models for providing a continuity of educational services in a face-to-face format is not possible. This process does 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 in-person learning 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.

Rationale

This guidance serves to support school districts in identifying 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 ELs under the current circumstances. Montana's [policies and guidelines for identifying ELs and determining proficiency](#) apply to these provisional measures. (See also [ELP Guidance Appendix C: Criteria for Identification of English Learners](#).)

- **Step 1: Review the [Home Language Survey \(HLS\)](#) (ELP Guidance Appendix A).**
 - 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.**



Step 2: Family Interview

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

Interviewer Name:			
Interviewer Role:			
Date:		Phone:	
Name of Student:		State Student Unique Identifier (SSID):	
Date of Birth:		Age:	
Student's Date of Entry to U.S. (if born in the U.S., then same as DOB):			
Student Country of Origin:		Parent Country of Origin (if different):	
Parents' Primary Country of Education: <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			



Step 2: Family Interview Continued

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:



Steps 3–5 of the Provisional EL Identification Procedure

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](#)] before proceeding.

- **Step 4:** Conduct a review of the student's academic records from previous schooling, if available and complete the [Language Observation Checklist](#) (ELP Guidance 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:** Administer the provisional [WIDA Remote Screener](#) and complete the accompanying score sheet (available to Test Administrators through the WIDA Secure Portal) with the cooperation of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or an interpreter, if necessary. **It is recommended that only experienced Test Administrators administer this remote screener.**

Teachers and Test Administrators **must** coordinate with parent(s)/guardian(s) to deliver the required print materials and to determine how the remote screening will be conducted. The provisional WIDA Remote Screener is optimized for use with video conference software (Google Hangouts, Skype, Zoom, etc.) but can be used with a telephone only, if necessary. Teachers and Test Administrators should acquaint themselves with the test administrator manual and training videos available in the WIDA Secure Portal in order to uphold best practices when administering the remote screener.

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.

NOTE: Regardless of whether a student is provisionally identified as an EL, 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 and regular procedure.



Steps 6–10 of the Provisional EL Identification 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. ([See English Learner Placement Letter](#), ELP Guidance Appendix G)
- 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](#) and [the Language Observation Checklist](#) to this form along with the completed WIDA Remote Screener score sheet and file them in the student's records. Districts should maintain these educational student records using the district's student record policies and procedures as defined under [ARM 10.55.909](#).

Upon school re-opening, formal screening must be completed for all students who were provisionally screened during the school shutdown regardless of whether they were identified as ELs.

Resources

- [Montana's English Learner Guidance for School Districts](#)
- [Home Language Survey](#)
- [Language Observation Checklist](#)
- [Criteria for Identification of English Learners](#)
- [WIDA Descriptions of Performance](#)
- [EL Program Placement Letter](#)



Appendix

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.