

PROCEDURES FOR TESTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A. Assessing English Proficiency

1. English Language Learners (ELLs) shall be assessed to determine their English language proficiency using a Department of Public Instruction approved English proficiency assessment instrument. The assessment shall be administered by bilingual-bicultural program staff. The District may also use information such as the following when assessing a student's English proficiency: prior academic records from within or outside the United States, information on everyday classroom performance, and course grades which, in relation to the student's grade level, indicate that lack of progress is due to limited English language skills.
2. English Language Learners who are assessed shall be classified according to their English proficiency level as outlined in state rules and described below.
 - **Level 1 – Beginning Preproduction** if the student does not understand or speak English with the exception of a few isolated words or expressions.
 - **Level 2 – Beginning Production** if all of the following criteria are met:
 - (a) the student understands and speaks conversational English with hesitancy and difficulty,
 - (b) the student understands parts of lessons and simple directions, and
 - (c) the student is at a pre-emergent or emergent level of reading and writing English, significantly below grade level.
 - **Level 3 – Intermediate** if all of the following criteria are met:
 - (a) the student understands and speaks conversational and academic English with decreasing hesitancy and difficulty,
 - (b) the student is post-emergent, developing reading comprehension and writing skills in English, and
 - (c) the student's English literacy skills allow the student to demonstrate academic knowledge in content areas with assistance.
 - **Level 4 – Advanced Intermediate** if all of the following are met:
 - (a) the student understands and speaks conversational English without apparent difficulty, but understands and speaks academic English with some hesitancy, and
 - (b) the student continues to acquire reading and writing skills in content areas needed to achieve grade level expectations with assistance.

- **Level 5 – Advanced** if all of the following conditions are met:
 - (a) the student understands and speaks conversational and academic English well,
 - (b) the student is near proficient in reading, writing, and content area skills needed to meet grade level expectations, and
 - (c) the student requires occasional support.
 - **Level 6 – Formerly ELL Now Fully English Proficient** if all of the following criteria are met:
 - (a) the student was formerly limited-English proficient and is now fully English proficient, and
 - (b) the student reads, writes, speaks, and comprehends English within the academic classroom setting.
3. Student English proficiency assessment records shall be maintained by the District in accordance with state and federal laws and district student records policies and procedures. Reports regarding English Language Learners shall be made to DPI as legally required.

B. Assessing Academic Achievement

1. Decisions regarding academic performance assessment shall be made and documented on an individual basis for each ELL student. Assessment decisions shall be made by the classroom teacher or English as a second language teacher and communicated to the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s). All communications to parents/guardians of ELL students shall be given in such manner as to provide understanding of the information. They should be provided in English, the parent/guardian’s native language or any other means to convey the required information.
2. An ELL student may not be exempted from academic assessments based on their ELL status. The District shall administer a state-required test to an ELL student unless a determination has been made that the results of the test, with allowable accommodations made for the student as needed, will not be a valid and reliable indicator of the student’s academic knowledge and skills. If an ELL student is exempted from taking a state-required test, he/she shall be administered a DPI approved alternative assessment.
 - (a) Except as specified below, students at English proficiency levels 1 or 2 as outlined above shall participate in an alternative assessment even if they participate in a state-required test.
 - (1) Students at English proficiency levels 1 or 2 who have attended school in the first grade or any higher grade in the United States, not including Puerto Rico, for three or more full consecutive school years shall participate in academic assessment of reading or English language arts using tests written in English.
 - (2) The District may continue, for no more than two additional consecutive school years, to assess a student described in (1) above with an alternate assessment, rather than the state required tests, if the District determines

that the student has not reached a level of English language proficiency sufficient for the tests written in English to yield valid and reliable information about what the student knows and can do. This determination shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

- (b) Students at English proficiency levels 3 through 5 as outlined above shall participate in a state-required test but may also participate in an alternative assessment.
 - (c) If an ELL student participates in a state-required test, the District shall provide testing accommodations for the student if they are needed. Any accommodations made shall maintain the validity of the test. Testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to the following: providing the assistance of a qualified translator to translate instructions or read items from tests that do not assess English language competency; providing small group or individual testing opportunities; providing more practice tests or examples before the actual test is administered; allowing ELL students to use dictionaries or other educational aids while taking the test unless this use would invalidate the test; and allowing ELL students as much time as necessary to complete the test.
3. Student test/alternative assessment results shall be communicated to the student's parent/guardian and to the DPI as required by law.
 4. ELL student test results shall be used consistent with District policies when making instructional, promotion, and graduation decisions. Test results shall not be used as the sole criterion in exiting ELL students from a bilingual-bicultural education program or in determining grade promotion, eligibility for courses or programs, eligibility for graduation or eligibility for postsecondary education opportunities. Exemption of an ELL student from taking a state-required test may also not be used as the sole criterion for making such determinations.

With parent/guardian permission, an ELL student will be provided educational program assistance and/or services as appropriate and necessary to help the student improve his/her English language skills and academic performance.

Legal Ref.: Sections 118.13 Wisconsin Statutes
118.30
Chapter 115
PI 13 of Wisconsin Administrative Code
No Child Left Behind Act 2001