

English Language Learners in North Dakota: Program Exit



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Background

An English Language Learner (ELL) student, who has the linguistic ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where English is the language of instruction, is ready to exit from the ELL program. North Dakota Department of Public Instruction worked with the North Dakota ELL Program Advisory Committee to more clearly define the exit criteria in the spring and summer of 2010. This document provides guidance for school districts across the state to apply the exit criteria more consistently. Information is also provided regarding exiting ELL students from the ELL program and the procedure for recording the exited student data.

Prior to the 2010-11 school year, the method of determining the readiness for exit of an ELL student from the ELL program was based on an overall English proficiency test score and a subjective evaluation of a district team. This method allowed for inconsistency across the state in the determination of exit readiness.

In May of 2010, the State ELL Program Advisory Committee made a recommendation to implement new exit criteria. The committee looked at the ACCESS scores of approximately 50 students who fell at or above the old (4.5 Proficiency Level Overall) exit criteria. The committee members gathered input from the ELL staff in their district. The ELL teachers were asked to make an exit recommendation for each of the students on the list based on the student's readiness to perform at grade level without linguistic accommodations. When looking at all the data points, the committee noticed that some students appeared ready to exit the program, but had one subtest score that was lower than the others. The possible reasons for this could be unfamiliarity with the test administrator, testing fatigue or motivation issues.

The committee felt strongly about setting high standards for ELL students to ensure that students are ready for the linguistic load in the mainstream classroom. However, there was also discussion about not holding ELL students to a higher standard of language proficiency than their mainstream peers. The writing score was most often the lowest score of the students in the sample. Reading and Writing subtests are arguably the most indicative of future academic success, which is why they are weighed more heavily than Listening and Speaking in the Overall Composite Proficiency Level score. The compensatory nature of the Overall Proficiency Level score ensures that a student has evidence of the ability to succeed on Reading and/or Writing tasks in English.

In order to implement a uniform methodology for determining an ELL student's readiness for exit from the ELL Program across the state of ND, new exit criteria were established in August 2010. The new criteria is intended to eliminate any disparity between districts in the qualification of students to exit the program and allow for a consistent way to officially establish and record the date of exit from the ELL program.

English Language Learner Program Exit Criteria

The new criteria are based on the scores from the annual English language proficiency assessment (ACCESS). To qualify for exit from the ELL program the scores achieved must meet a minimum level in each of the following areas if assessment:

Minimum Overall (Composite) Proficiency Level Score: 5.0

Minimum Proficiency Level Scores on each of the four subtest assessments:

Reading:	3.5	Listening:	3.5
Writing:	3.5	Speaking:	3.5

Process for Exit from English Language Learner Program

The State Automated Reporting System (STARS) includes an “*Attainment Date*” field in the record of every ELL student. “*Attainment Date*” represents the date a student has attained the English proficiency level that qualifies the student to exit from the ELL program. *Note: this does not preclude the district from making special provisions or accommodations for the student to continue to improve on their English proficiency skills. However, for the purposes of North Dakota state tracking of ELL students, the student is no longer recorded as an active student in the ELL program.*

The “*Attainment Date*” is an important statistic in determining the official number of current students in the program for proper tracking and allocation of ELL program funding. Since North Dakota began using the ACCESS assessment it has been the practice of DPI to load a data file into STARS that contains the assessment scores. Districts receive printed copies of the scores from the test vendor, and some districts also choose to import the data file from STARS in order to have an electronic version.

Due to both ease and fidelity of data, DPI will populate the “*Attainment Date*” field for students who have met the exit criteria. The actual date entered into the “*Attainment Date*” field will be based on the date that the final assessment results are issued. The “*Attainment Date*” field will be centrally updated, providing a consistent and reliable means of exiting qualified students from the ELL program. An “*LEP Exit Information*” report of students who qualify for completion and exit from the program will be available for each district in STARS under the “export” area of Enrollment for the school year in which the assessment was administered. For example, the “*LEP Exit Information*” export based on the 2010-11 ACCESS test could be found in the STARS Enrollment Report for the 2010-11 school year.

A district is given 30 days from the time they receive notice that the “*LEP Exit Information*” export is available to review the data and identify any discrepancies between the list and their own records. If they identify a valid reason to add a student in the district to the “*LEP Exit Information*” or reinstate an exited student on the list back into the ELL program, the district will have the opportunity within the

30 days to communicate their issues to the DPI English Language Learner Program staff for consideration and on a case by case basis. In cases where changes are approved, the English Language Learner Program staff will work with MIS to edit the information in the “*Attainment Date*” field in order to accurately reflect the status of the student in the ELL program.

Districts are encouraged to enter the attainment date into Power School to match the date provided by DPI. Students who are exited before the new school year begins would not have the LEP/ELL checkbox marked as LEP/ELL for the following school year in STARS.

Monitoring After Exit

Districts are required to monitor former ELL students for two years after the student has exited the program. The primary purpose of monitoring a student after exit from the ELL program is to ensure that the student is not encountering difficulty as a result of English language proficiency. Exited students who are determined to be encountering difficulty as a result of language proficiency can be reentered into the ELL program if an ELL teacher, along with other staff, determines that the information collected during the monitoring period indicates a need for reclassification. Reclassification can occur during the two year monitoring period, immediately after the two year monitor period or anytime thereafter, when the student shows evidence of academic difficulty as a result of limited English language proficiency. Districts must use a uniform and comprehensive process for monitoring former ELL students. A sample monitoring worksheet can be found in Appendix A.

Students who have been exited from the ELL program are classified as “former ELL/LEP” for the purposes of Adequate Yearly Reporting (AYP) on the state assessment. Former LEP students’ scores are included in the LEP subgroup for two years after exiting the program. More information about validating former LEP student data for AYP can be found on page 5 of the Fall Assessment Report Instructions at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/instructions.pdf>.

Contact Information

For clarification or more information about the English Language Learners Program in North Dakota please refer to the contacts below.

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Appendix A

North Dakota's Sample Monitoring Worksheet

Title III & English Language Learner (ELL) Program

Monitoring Worksheet for Exited (Former) ELL Students

Student Name: _____

ELL Program Exit Date: _____

Monitor Year 1: School year 20____

School Name: _____

Grade: _____

Complete the following for items in which the student participates (use a different color for each assessment period):

AIMSWeb or DIBELS		NWEA		NDSA		Grades		Other
Test of Early Literacy or Phoneme Segmentation and Nonsense Word Fluency	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive or At Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic or Some Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark or Low Risk	Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Language Arts		
		Language Usage	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Math		
Oral Reading Fluency	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive or At Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic or Some Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark or Low Risk	Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Science		
		Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High			Social Studies		

Concerns after 1st semester: _____

Concerns after 2nd semester: _____

- After 1 year of monitoring, this student is performing successfully in the mainstream classroom.
- After 1 year of monitoring, this student is having difficulty in the following area(s): _____

It is recommended that this student:

- Is reclassified back into the ELL program
- Continues to be monitored for the second year
- Other (specify): _____

Name (printed)

Signature

Mainstream Teacher		
ELL Teacher		
Administrator		
Parent		
Student		

Monitor Year 2: School year 20 _____

School Name: _____

Grade: _____

Complete the following for items in which the student participates (use a different color for each assessment period):

AIMSWeb or DIBELS		NWEA		NDSA		Grades		Other	
Test of Early Literacy or Phoneme Segmentation and Nonsense Word Fluency	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive or At Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic or Some Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark or Low Risk	Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Language Arts			
		Language Usage	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Math			
Oral Reading Fluency	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive or At Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic or Some Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark or Low Risk	Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High	Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	Science			
		Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> High			Social Studies			

Concerns after 1st semester: _____

Concerns after 2nd semester: _____

- After 2 years of monitoring, this student is performing successfully in the mainstream classroom.
- After 2 years of monitoring, this student is having difficulty in the following area(s): _____

It is recommended that this student:

- Is reclassified back into the ELL program
- Continues to be monitored for an additional year
- Will no longer require monitoring from the ELL program
- Other (specify): _____

MODEL or W-APT Overall Score: _____

	Name (printed)	Signature
Mainstream Teacher		
ELL Teacher		
Administrator		
Parent		
Student		