



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: August 21, 2020 (Updating memo dated [March 28, 2019](#))
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: District Bilingual/ESL/ELS Points of Contact, Principals, School Business Administrator, District NJSNART Data Entry Contacts
From: Peggy McDonald, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Updated English Language Learner Guidance for the *Every Student Succeeds Act*

To assist in the continued operationalization of New Jersey's *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* state plan for schools with English language learners (ELLs), the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) Office of Supplemental Educational Programs has updated the [English Language Learner Entry and Exit](#) document as of July 2020.

All local education agencies (i.e., local school districts and charter schools) in New Jersey must follow the procedures outlined in the English Language Learner Entry and Exit document. This document provides **updated** information regarding the standardization of identification and exit of ELLs in kindergarten through grade 12. The NJDOE's standardized English language learner (ELL) identification and exit criteria, included in the document, meet the federal and state requirements in [ESSA Section 3102](#), [N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3](#) and [N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.10](#).

Document Highlights: [Entry Identification](#)

- The three-part entry identification steps are summarized (p.1).
- Home language survey questions (p.2) are mandatory and cannot be altered.

Updated:

- The indicator "a student tested proficient on both the English language arts and math New Jersey state assessment, administered in English, during the most recent administration" was removed. This indicator is no longer applicable as part of the entry identification Step 2, records review (p.3).
- The process for identification of students with disabilities who may be ELLs has been standardized (p.5-6). Districts must follow the 6-step process to determine ELL status for students who have a disability.
 - A process for calculating a composite score for students who are screened with less than four domains is identified (p.6). Students who have a composite score of less than 4.5 are identified as ELLs.
 - School districts must provide ELLs with disabilities with both the language assistance and disability-related services to which they are entitled under Federal law ([Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter, January 7, 2015](#), p.24).

Document Highlights: [Exit Reclassification](#)

- The two-part exit reclassification steps are summarized (p.7).

Updated:

- A passing score on the state assessment, New Jersey Student Learning Assessment, is no longer a valid substitute for meeting the state's cut score on the state's English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS 2.0.
- The process for reclassification for students who are dually identified as special education and ELL has been standardized (p.10). Districts must follow the process to determine a special education student's reclassification from ELL status. This reclassification does not impact the student's special education status.
- Only ELLs who may have a disability may be considered for exit without a test score in all four domains and based on the calculated composite score on the remaining domains in which the student was assessed (p.6).
 - Students who score a 4.5 and above can be considered for exit (Step 2: English language observation form (pp. 8-9)).

School- and district-level staff must take necessary steps to implement ELL entry and exit procedures as set forth in the *ESSA* state plan and operationalized through the requirements introduced in this memo. The standardized home language survey and templates of the parent/guardian entrance and exit forms are available in English and 20 other languages frequently spoken by New Jersey ELLs. These templates can be found on the [NJDOE Title III Home Page](#).

For technical questions or assistance, please email the NJDOE at ELL@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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