NCDPI Guidance for Provisional English Learner Identification During Periods of Blended and Remote Instruction

Grades K-12

This guidance is intended to be used during blended and remote learning. When regular schooling resumes, any student where a final determination was made that the student has a primary home language other than or in addition to English, based on a review of the Home Language Survey, will need to take the approved North Carolina State Board of Education English learner identification assessment.

Rationale

Under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) sections 3111(b)(2)(A) and 3113(b)(2), each state must have a standardized process in place to identify English learners (ELs).

According to the process outlined in ESSA, EL status is determined in two steps:

1. Students with a Home Language Survey (HLS) indicating a primary home language other than English proceed to step 2.
2. Qualifying students take the SBE approved screener. Students who are not yet proficient in English based on the screener results, qualify as English learners.

State Board of Education (SBE) policy TEST-011 requires that all local education agencies (LEA) administer newly enrolled students an HLS to determine whether students need to be screened for identification as an EL. To be identified as an EL, students indicating a language other than English on the HLS must be assessed using the state EL identification screener at initial enrollment. The W-APT™ is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in kindergarten and in the first semester of grade 1. The WIDA™ Screener Online is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in the second semester of grade 1 through grade 12. Initial assessment of the W-APT and the WIDA Screener is required within thirty (30) calendar days of enrollment.

Due to the continuation of circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in more than one school opening option, an addition to the State Board of Education Policy, *TEST-011 - Identification of English Learners Participation in the Statewide Testing Program, Eligibility for Testing Accommodations, and Exit Criteria* was approved by the State Board of Education on August 6, 2020. The requirement that the "initial assessment of both the W-APT and the WIDA Screener is required within thirty (30) calendar days of enrollment" as stated in TEST-011 is amended as follows for the 2020-21 school year only:

For schools operating as prescribed in Plan B, the W-APT and the WIDA Screener are required within forty-five (45) calendar days of enrollment. Public school units operating

under Plan C for the 2020–21 school year (virtual instruction) are also required to complete an initial assessment using either the WIDA Remote Screeners or Family/Caregiver Interview within forty-five (45) calendar days of enrollment. All students who receive services as ELs under the provisional WIDA Remote Screeners or Family/Caregiver Interview must be screened using the W-APT or WIDA Screener within forty-five (45) calendar days of schools returning to Plan A or Plan B.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), public schools must ensure that EL students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs. EL programs must be reasonably calculated to enable EL students to attain English proficiency and meaningful participation in the standard educational program comparable to their never-EL peers - https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap4.pdf The provisional pathways outlined in this document allow students identified as potential ELs to receive services during blended and remote learning.

Purpose
The purpose of this guidance is to provide clarity regarding expectations for Public School Unit (PSU) staff when identifying students for EL programming while blended and remote learning is in place in North Carolina until the SBE approved screener can be administered when regular school resumes. After the blended and remote learning periods have ended, this guidance is no longer valid. At that time, the appropriate W-APT or WIDA Screener will need to be administered within 45 days to ***all*** students screened through this provisional process.

This guidance is subject to change.

The chart below provides an overview of what pathways PSUs can choose to use when in Plan A, B, or C.

NCDPI Pathways to English Learner Identification			
	State-Approved W-APT/Screener	**WIDA Remote Screeners** [1]	**Family/ Caregiver Interview** [2]
Plan A Minimal Social Distancing All students in school at the same time Enhanced Health Protocols	**Yes**	N/A	N/A
Plan B Limit student density in facilities to no greater than 50% occupancy Moderate Social Distancing with enhanced health protocols	**Yes**	N/A	N/A
Plan C Remote Learning No students in schools	N/A	**Yes**	**Yes**

[1] Students screened with the WIDA Remote Screeners who qualify as ELs will be recognized by NCDPI ESL/Title III and Accountability until the student can be administered the state approved W-APT/WIDA Screener.

[2] Refer to Appendix A: Guidance for Family/Caregiver Interview. Students screened with the guidance for family/caregiver interview, who qualify as ELs, will be recognized by NCDPI ESL/Title III and Accountability until the student can be administered the state-approved W-APT/WIDA Screener.

EL Screening for Plan B

For PSUs operating under Plan B, use of the W-APT and WIDA Screener should continue, with safety and health protocols in place, based on Department of Health and

Human Services guidance. Students who continue to be remote, even when a PSU has moved into Plan B, should be treated as a student in Plan C, unless the student can come to the school at an appointed time to take the grade appropriate screener, with safety and health protocols in place. For students considered in Plan C, who are unable to come into school at an appointed time, PSUs have the option of screening with the WIDA Remote Screeners or the family/caregiver interview pathway.

EL Screening for Plan C

For PSUs operating under Plan C, NCDPI is offering two alternate screening options to include the WIDA Remote Screeners and a family/caregiver interview pathway. PSUs can choose which option works best under their current conditions. PSUs must determine if a newly enrolling student will benefit from temporary EL programming until EL status can be determined with the SBE approved screener. Students identified as potential ELs via the provisional process should receive services during remote learning.

When a school moves into Plan B or A, any student identified as a potential EL screened during a provisional process will take the SBE approved English language proficiency screener within 45 days. These scores should be entered into PowerSchool using established protocols.

WIDA Remote Screeners

It is recommended that the WIDA Remote Screeners should be administered by a certified ESL teacher or a certified teacher who has a background as an English language educator. Additionally, administrators of the WIDA Remote Screeners must be certified to administer the WIDA Screener and score the WIDA Screener Speaking test. PSUs must also adhere to any NC state specific guidance for the WIDA Remote Screeners.

Family/Caregiver Interview

The process outlined below is guidance to be used when screening students via the provisional family/caregiver interview pathway.

EL Record in PowerSchool

Students identified as provisional ELs using the WIDA Remote Screeners or the family/caregiver interview should be given an EL Record in PowerSchool. These students will be included in the October 1 English Learner Headcount and will be part of the Pre-ID Label Pull in December.

If a W-APT or WIDA Screener test identifies the student as NEVER, the record in PowerSchool updates when scores are submitted.

STEPS IN DETERMINING LANGUAGE SERVICES VIA FAMILY/CAREGIVER INTERVIEW

During enrollment, review the Home Language Survey

1 **Does the Home Language Survey indicate a language other than English?**

- If the Home Language Survey indicates a language other than English for any question, move to next step.
- If the Home Language Survey does not indicate a language other than English for any question, no further action is needed and no language services should be provided.

Yes **No**

A designated school personnel will conduct a family/caregiver interview to determine if the student is potentially an English Learner. An interpreter should be used, if necessary. It is recommended that the interview be conducted by an ESL professional using the suggested interview format (see appendix A).

2 **Does the family/caregiver interview indicate a language other than English?**

- If the family/caregiver interview indicates that any language other than English is spoken in the home, move to the next step.
- If the family/caregiver interview does not indicate that the home language may be a language other than English, no further action is needed, and no language services should be provided.

Yes **No**

No further action is needed and no language services should be provided

3 **Are the student's academic records available?**

- If the academic records are not available, move to the next step.

No **Yes**

If the academic records are available, look for evidence that the student has sufficient English proficiency without specialized supports or accommodations. Acceptable evidence might include scores from standardized summative or interim tests in English and/or passing grades for content classes conducted in English.

Does sufficient evidence exist that the student has English proficiency?

- If sufficient evidence exists, no further action is needed, and no language services should be provided.
- If sufficient evidence does not exist, move to the next step.

No **Yes**

4 **Before beginning language services:**

- Determine the appropriate level of service placement, based on the evidence collected in this process.
- Follow local procedures to create a student's English Language Plan. Use every precaution to protect student PII when sharing documentation.
- Create a Current EL Record in PowerSchool.
- Notify parents of student identification and placement for services and available services. Notify the student's teacher(s) of student's identification and placement.

Other Considerations
If the student has an IEP or Section 504 plan, make contact with the EC case manager, EC teacher assigned to the school, or Section 504 coordinator, to determine if the student has an EL identification in the current IEP or 504.

If it is possible that the student has a disability (e.g. the parent states that the student has a disability) but no documentation has been provided or found, please consult with the EC/504 specialist for further investigation.

If a student has an IEP or Section 504 Plan and there is no indication in their plan of whether the student was identified previously as an EL student and the HLS indicates a language other than English, an ESL professional should conduct a follow-up interview with the parent/guardian to assist in making a determination. The ESL professional and EC coordinator should work collaboratively to make a determination about EL services in the best interest of the student, until a formal face-to-face screening can occur.

EL Record in PowerSchool
Students identified as provisional ELs using the WIDA Remote Screeners or the family/caregiver interview should be given an EL Record in PowerSchool. These students will be included in the October 1 English Learner Headcount and will be part of the Pre-ID Label Pull in December.

If a W-APT or WIDA Screener test identifies the student as NEVER, the records in PowerSchool will be deactivated immediately.

Appendix A

Guidance for Family/Caregiver Interview for Provisional English Learner Screening

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY: *Once completed, this document will have Student PII in it and therefore, should not be shared through email unless the document is encrypted.*

Interview completed by:	Name:	Date:
School:		
District:		

Student Name:	**Date of Birth:**
Confirm Student's Country of Birth: (Required for PowerSchool EL data record)	
Language:	
What language did your student first learn to speak?	
What language is spoken most often in your home?	
What language does your student speak most often?	
Which language do you use when talking with your student?	
Educational Background:	
What grade level did your student last complete?	
What was the language used for instruction?	
Has your student ever received English language classes in a previous state?	
If so, which state?	
Additional Comments shared by family/caregiver:	