

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) PROGRAM POLICY

3.207

POLICY SECTIONS

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I. Purpose.

- (1) The English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Policy provides additional details and further defines State Board Rule Chapter 0520-01-19 English as a Second Language Programs, by establishing specific assessment and scoring requirements for the Tennessee Department of Education-adopted English language proficiency assessments.

II. English Language Proficiency Screener.

- (1) Non-English language background students shall be screened using the assessments identified in the table below and in accordance with procedures listed in State Board Rule 0520-01-19 English as a Second Language Programs.
- (2) Students who attain the qualifying score for entry shall be classified as English learners.
- (3) If a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is also a non-English language background student, the IEP team may exempt the student from domain(s) that are inaccessible due to the student's disability.

Student Grade Level	Name of Required Screener	Domains Screened	Qualifying Score for Entry
Kindergarten (first semester)	ELPA21 Dynamic Screener	Reading Writing Listening Speaking	Below three (3) in any non-exempt domain
Kindergarten (second semester) through Grade 12	ELPA21 Dynamic Screener	Reading Writing Listening Speaking	Below four (4) in any non-exempt domain

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III. English Language Proficiency Assessment.

- (1) English learners shall be assessed using the assessment identified in the table below and in accordance with procedures listed in State Board Rules 0520-01-19 English as a Second Language Programs.
- (2) Students who attain the qualifying score for exit shall be exited from direct or indirect ESL services.
- (3) If a student who has an IEP is also an EL student, the IEP team may exempt the student from domain(s) that are inaccessible due to the student's disability.
- (4) LEAs and schools may provide tailored services to students in grades 1-12 who score at least a level four (4) in three (3) domains which shall include reading, writing, and either listening or speaking.

Student Grade Level	Name of Required Assessment	Domains Assessed	Qualifying Score for Exit
Kindergarten through Grade 12	ELPA21 Summative	Reading Writing Listening Speaking	Four (4) or above in all non-exempt domains

IV. Alternate English Language Proficiency Screener.

- (1) Non-English language background students who are identified as requiring alternate assessments shall be screened using the assessment identified in the table below and in accordance with procedures listed in State Board Rule 0520-01-19 English as a Second Language Programs.
- (2) Students who attain the qualifying score for entry shall be classified as English learners.
- (3) If a student who has an IEP is also a non-English language background student, the IEP team may exempt the student from domain(s) that are inaccessible due to the student's disability.

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Student Grade Level	Name of Required Screener	Domains Screened	Qualifying Score for Entry
Kindergarten through Grade 12	Alt ELPA Screener	Receptive modality (combined score for reading and listening domains) Productive modality (combined score for speaking and writing domains)	Below three (3) in any non-exempt modality

V. Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment.

- (1) English learners who are identified on their IEP as requiring alternate assessments shall be assessed using the assessments identified in the table below and in accordance with procedures listed in State Board Rule 0520-01-19 English as a Second Language Programs.
- (2) If a student who has an IEP is also an EL student, the IEP team may exempt the student from domain(s) that are inaccessible due to the student's disability.
- (3) Students who attain the qualifying score for exit shall be exited from direct or indirect ESL services.

Student Grade Level	Name of Required Assessment	Domains Assessed	Qualifying Score for Exit
Kindergarten through Grade 12	Alt ELPA Summative	Receptive modality (combined reading and listening) Productive modality (combined speaking and writing)	Three (3) or above in all non-exempt modalities

VI. Seal of Biliteracy.

- (1) To qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy as described in State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.06, students who are English learners may demonstrate English proficiency by attaining a score of five (5) on the Reading and Writing domains and a score of four (4) or higher on the Listening and Speaking domains on the ELPA21 Summative.

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- (2) Students who are English learners who attained a score of 4.5 or higher on the WIDA Access in Tennessee prior to July 1, 2024, may qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy based on that assessment score.