



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LEARNER DISTANCE LEARNING TOOLKIT



OKLAHOMA
Education



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➤ INTRODUCTION

The Office of English Language Proficiency at the Oklahoma State Department of Education supports school districts in educating students who are English learners (EL). We believe in the assets English Learners bring to the learning environment and work with districts to honor those assets while preparing students for future education and the workplace.

➤ SHARE YOUR STRATEGY FOR ENGLISH LEARNER SUPPORT!

Please share what your district has implemented for continuous learning strategies, instructional tools, or best practices that have been particularly effective in working with ELs during this period of continuous education. OSDE would love to hear about it! Please take a moment and [share your thoughts](#) with us. All responses will be anonymized and collected in a resource document to be made available to educators statewide.

➤ CONTINUOUS EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LEARNERS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The OSDE has developed this section in response to questions received regarding English learner (EL) requirements during the period of school closure and continuous education. The OSDE will continue to provide EL-specific policy updates as the COVID-19 situation evolves. The OSDE would also like to remind districts of their responsibility to provide appropriate modifications and accommodations to EL students within their distance learning model. These efforts ensure EL students have access to learning despite the significant disruption of school closures and changes to instructional delivery. If specific supplemental EL services cannot be provided during the period of continuous instruction, the LEA must consider whether and to what extent compensatory services may be required once traditional education resumes. These determinations must be made on an individual student basis.

For the purposes of this document:

- **Period of school closure** is defined as the period of time from March 11, 2020 to April 3, 2020.
- **Period of continuous education** is defined as the period of time from April 6, 2020 until the final day of instruction, per the district calendar.

HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY (HLS) AND WIDA SCREENER

What is the status of the Home Language Survey during the period of continuous learning?

Upon resumption of educational services on April 6, 2020, a completed HLS will be required as part of the enrollment process for any new district enrollment.

During this period of continuous education, is there a requirement to administer the WIDA screener to potential ELs upon enrollment in the school district?

After **April 6, 2020**, if upon enrollment the student HLS is submitted in a manner that indicates screening is required, and the student does not enroll with existing information regarding their English language proficiency, the school should refer to the **EL Distance Identification Guidance** document and review the process for **provisional** EL identification without the use of the WIDA Screener.

How should potential ELs be screened for EL status during the period of school closure?

Please refer to the **EL Distance Identification Guidance** document and review the process for **provisional EL** identification without the use of the WIDA Screener.

WIDA ASSESSMENT WINDOW

As the Oklahoma WIDA assessment window was closed early and will not be re-opened, what should districts do with paper ACCESS materials?

If district staff can safely manage the shipment of ACCESS materials back to DRC, while still operating under CDC best practices for COVID-19 mitigation, they may do so at their convenience (please review guidance immediately below). There is currently no final ship date for ACCESS materials.

Guidance for returning ACCESS materials is as follows:

- **Incomplete ACCESS Paper booklets:** Please mark “ABS” (Absent) for any domain a student was unable to complete due to the early closure of the assessment window. Please ensure that a record of this information is kept at the local level.
- **Incomplete ACCESS Online Domains:** In WIDA AMS, please mark “ABS” (Absent) for any domain a student was unable to complete due to the early closure of the assessment window. Please ensure that a record of this information is kept at the local level.
- **Unused ACCESS materials:** Please return to DRC all unused secure materials.

When will the pre and post data validation window dates change on the Oklahoma member page of the WIDA website?

A request has been made to WIDA to remove the initial 2019-2020 ACCESS scoring timelines from the Oklahoma member page of the WIDA website. When a final ship date for ACCESS materials can be safely and reasonably set, the new validation windows and final score report timeline will be set accordingly.

WIDA ASSESSMENTS

If a student already completed their testing before spring break, will their test be scored?

Yes. All WIDA ACCESS assessments from this year will be scored, although the data correction windows and final score report delivery dates are now pending per safety concerns regarding the final ship date for paper materials.

If students tested and demonstrate proficiency, will they be able to move out of EL status?

Yes. Students will still be able to exit EL status if they demonstrated proficiency on the 2019-2020 ACCESS assessment. But please note that final scores may not be available at the outset of the 2020-2021 year, so students that may ultimately be moved to proficient status based on their 2019-2020 ACCESS score may start the 2020-2021 year as identified ELs.

Will districts receive final score reports for WIDA ACCESS tests so that the student growth can be determined?

All 2019-2020 WIDA ACCESS assessments that were completed and had paper materials returned to DRC will be scored. Final report dates for scores have yet to be finalized.

Will there be a consideration made for those students who took the Alternate Access for the third year? If their score remains the same (third consecutive year), will this still allow the student to exit?

Yes. A composite score earned on the 2019-2020 Alternate ACCESS may be used to move a student out of EL status in the same manner as an Alternate ACCESS composite score earned in a previous year would be used to do so, per state policy detailed in the EL FAQ document.

Will we still be able to exit students via the ELP Band (without using state test criteria)?

Pending. OSDE is currently researching the viability of the band exit process based on 2019-2020 ACCESS scores as no corresponding OSTP scores will be available to supplement the WIDA ACCESS score. Additional guidance will be released as available.

Will students who were unable to complete their assessment due to the early close of the testing window be able to complete their assessment?

Pending. OSDE is currently collaborating with WIDA/DRC and internally researching potential options to allow those students who were not able to complete one or more domains of the 2019-2020 ACCESS assessment an opportunity to show proficiency upon the resumption of traditional instruction. Additional guidance will be released as available.

MEDICAL EXEMPTION DOCUMENTATION

Given that the state was awarded a waiver for 2019-2020 site accountability measures, is it still necessary to complete the medical exemption documentation for students who were unable to take the ACCESS assessment for medical reasons?

No. As the purpose of the medical exemption is to remove the student from site accountability within the ELPA indicator, and no ELPA indicator will be calculated for the 2019-2020 year, submission of exemption paperwork is no longer required.

MONITORING INFORMATION FOR FORMER ENGLISH LEARNERS

Are districts still required to monitor first and second-year proficient students during the period of school closure?

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that Former English Learners (FELs) in their first or second year of proficiency are able to demonstrate academic success without the additional support of supplemental English Learner services and interventions. In the context of continuing education, districts should have a formal process in place to ensure monitored students have the opportunity to move any failing grades to a passing level prior to the end of school.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACADEMIC PLAN (ELAP)

What is the expectation regarding student ELAPs during the period of continuous education?

For existing ELAPs, no changes will be required due the change in instructional delivery, but districts should be intentional in ensuring teachers are providing appropriate modifications and accommodations for EL students.

For students provisionally identified as EL during the period of continuous education (see **EL Distance Identification Guidance**), ELAPs will not be required, but they may be completed at district discretion given the limited information provided by the EL Distance Identification process.

Parental notification letters and completed ELAPs will not be required for students awarded provisional EL status during the period of continuous education.

THE DISTRICT LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (LIEP)

Will districts be required to formally amend their district LIEP, given the shift to a distance model of instruction?

No. As long as the district Distance Learning Plan addresses how EL students will be served, no formal amendment to the district LIEP will be required.

➤ GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR EL DISTANCE LEARNING

Communication is vital to engagement. Communication between parents and the teachers of English learners may be made via telephone, email, text, Skype, etc. To ensure effective communication, districts should ensure parent contact information is consistently updated in the local student information system (SIS).

Make staying connected with students a priority. Regardless of the continuous learning scenario, educators should make it a priority to connect with students via phone, text, or live video on a routine basis to check in and provide an outlet for support and discussion. Many English learners rely on school as a safe haven, both physically and emotionally, and this disruption to routine will be particularly challenging for some.

Set reasonable expectations for home literacy and language learning. Students and families will be juggling a new reality and priorities at home, so it is not reasonable to expect that an adult (English speaking or otherwise) be consistently available to provide academic support. Reassure EL parents that continuing to read, discuss texts, and teach their child in their home language is perfectly acceptable.

Consider what students can do independently and what requires supervision of a teacher or other adult. When possible, prioritize instructional activities that students can complete relatively independently, while providing parent-friendly guidance (in the parent's native language, if possible) for how best to support the learning needs of their EL student.

Consider a hybrid model for at-home learning to ensure equity of access (virtual learning and/or assignment packets). Many districts have compensated for limited digital instructional capacity by providing paper packets that allow learning to continue.

Identify existing materials (sets of student texts, workbooks, etc.) and resources. Determine if the current district curricula have supplemental digital or traditional ELD/ESL components. If so, ensure these tools are included to the greatest extent possible in continuous learning for Els. Best practice would also include a review of current district supplemental instructional platforms (e.g., IXL, Achieve3000, Read180) and integrating into instruction any EL-specific features they may contain. This would also be an opportune time to re-purpose materials teachers may no longer need for use as at-home instructional materials. Districts may allow parents to pick up these materials, or send them home with students (per CDC recommendations) through the local packet delivery process.

➤ INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDANCE FOR EL DISTANCE LEARNING

Keep Students at the Center

Intentional outreach should be used for building relationships, maintaining connections, and helping students feel safe and valued. At a minimum, educators should plan to do the following:

- **Plan for Student Learning:** Build on each student's strengths, interests, and needs and use this knowledge to positively impact learning.
- **Develop a Weekly Plan and Schedule:** Offer consistent routines and structures that balance think time, work time, and playtime for student health and well-being.
- **Contact Families:** Partner with families to support student learning through ongoing communication and collaboration. Remember that this partnership will not look the same for every student, and safety should always be the priority.

Design Learning for Equity and Access

Plan and deliver content in multiple ways so that all students can access learning.

- **Teach Content:** Set goals using appropriate learning standards, a knowledge of each student, and an understanding of educational goals.
- **Deliver Flexible Instruction:** Consider how to deliver content depending on tools and resources accessible to each student. Delivery of instruction may include paper and pencil, phone contact, email, technology-based virtual instruction, or any combination that meets the diverse needs of students.
- **Engage Families:** Communicate with families about engagement strategies that support students as they access learning. Remember that families are critical partners in distance learning.

Assess Student Learning

Manage and monitor student progress and plan what's next for learning.

- **Check Student Learning:** Use a variety of strategies to monitor, assess, and provide feedback to students about their progress.
- **Make Instructional Adjustments:** Use formative assessment results to guide student reflection on the effectiveness of instruction and to determine the next steps for student learning.
- **Engage families:** Communicate with and seek input from families about assessment results to inform next steps.

➤ DISTANCE LEARNING ONLINE AND OFF-LINE ACCESSIBILITY

Instructional Needs Delivered Online

Providing proper supports to English Learners in online and blended learning environments requires a comprehensive approach and the attention of all involved in the planning and execution of the student's educational program. Attention to sound instructional strategies that differentiate learning opportunities, expected learning outcomes, student-specific supports, and student voice can help to maximize success.

Distance learning services can occur through both synchronous and asynchronous frameworks.

- **Synchronous Instruction.** Synchronous frameworks are defined by the exchange of information in real-time (i.e. live) interactions between student and provider via audio and/or video. Advantages include a greater educator awareness of student engagement and the ability to address learning challenges as they arise. Disadvantages may include privacy, security, confidentiality concerns, expense and requirements of infrastructure, sound or image quality issues, and challenges with student access to the necessary devices and connectivity.
- **Asynchronous Instruction.** Asynchronous frameworks are defined by resources the student can access at their convenience, such as store-and-forward data transmission, video clips, digital images, virtual technologies, and other forms of electronic communications. Within asynchronous frameworks, the provider and student are not connected at the same time. Advantages include generally more consistent success in students accessing learning materials and the ability to easily scale instruction to larger groups. Disadvantages include a limited ability to monitor student engagement and a greater emphasis on self-directed and individual initiative for those engaged in learning.
- **Hybrid Instruction.** Hybrid frameworks are defined by a combination of synchronous, asynchronous, and/or in-person services. When creating a distance learning model, LEA's should consider their available resources and draft a plan that can be realistically implemented and offers both consistency and structure for the students.

Best Practices for Success within a Synchronous, Asynchronous, or Hybrid Model

- Examine the needs and abilities of each child and provide appropriate support at home.
- Provide specific materials for students, as appropriate, to support progress on their language goals, and ensure English Learners have equal access to the same opportunities as their native-English speaking peers.
- Foster collaboration between general education teachers and English Learner teachers regarding lesson planning and execution.
- Create highly motivating, content-based activities.
- Work with families to generate ideas that can help reinforce student goals and benchmarks.
- Establish a consistent routine for communicating with EL families.

Instructional Needs Delivered Offline

Some students and families may have limited or no access to technology when normal school operations are suspended. In these cases, providing instruction and instructional materials may need to take place via alternatives, such as emails, phone calls, or teacher-developed packets.

Teacher-developed packets can be distributed via email or through other district push-out initiatives. Packets may include items such as print materials, games, school supplies, books, and manipulatives. Schools should consult their local city or county health department policies and procedures regarding safe distribution practices prior to implementing any packet delivery plan. Districts should also institute a formal practice for cleaning and sanitizing items prior to pick-up, as well as health screening protocols for individuals entering a school building. This process may include scheduling school visitation times for students to pick up items through curbside pickup, or allowing limited numbers of students to come on site to retrieve or return items.

It is imperative that any packet management processes or site visitation procedures be conducted within CDC-approved guidelines regarding social distancing and COVID-19 surface contamination.

➤ ONLINE LEARNING SYSTEMS

To support learning from home during continuing education, the vendors below have services available to educators at no cost. The Oklahoma State Department of Education recommends a detailed review of all terms of use prior to engaging with any service provider.

[Microsoft Teams](#) is a unified communication and collaboration platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration. Teams is currently free to use, but does require a Microsoft Office 365 account.

[Cisco WebEx](#) offers video conferencing, online meetings, screen share, and webinars. Services are temporarily free to use for educators.

[Zoom](#) provides remote conferencing services that combines video conferencing, online meetings, chat, and mobile collaboration. Services are temporarily free to use for educators.

[Edmodo](#) enables teachers to share content, distribute quizzes, assignments, and manage communication with students, colleagues, and parents. Core platform services are free to use.

[Loom](#) captures your screen, voice, and face and instantly share videos in less time than it would take to type an email. The basic version is free to use.

➤ COMMUNICATION TOOLS

[Talking Points](#) is a communication platform that allows schools to communicate via text message with families in their home language. System provides human and machine translation into over 100 languages.

[Remind](#) is an educator-focused messaging platform with EL messaging and communication support.

[Google Translate](#) is an application that allows real time translation of short text or voice (mobile application) or documents (desktop application) into multiple languages.

[Seesaw](#) is an online portfolio management platform with EL messaging and communication support.

➤ ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Oklahoma Resources for Distance Learning Page](#): OSDE webpage containing guidance and resources concerning the development of district distance learning plans.

[OSDE Instructional Support](#): OSDE Office of Curriculum and Instruction webpage containing multiple resources and instructional materials developed and collected for support in distance learning.

[Distance Learning for Special Education Students](#): OSDE Office of Special Education homepage listing multiple resources regarding the delivery of services to special education students during the period of school closure.

[OSDE Counseling Resources](#): OSDE Office of Counseling homepage with multiple resources related to supporting students engaging in distance learning.

OETA Distance Learning at Home: OETA webpage detailing the network’s educational broadcast schedule and associated parent and teacher resources. PBS Learning Media is a free digital curriculum service that builds on the strength of public media and is designed to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Resources are aligned to national and state standards and include videos and interactives, as well as audio, documents, and in-depth lesson plans. Visitors can browse by standards, grade level, and subject area. Services are free for students, teachers, and parents, however personal accounts are required. Most activities and lessons are available in multiple languages.

School Responses to COVID-19: ELL/Immigrant Considerations: Colorin Colorado’s plans for E-learning, best practices for interacting with EL families, and links to additional resources.

Making the Connection: Communicating with ELLs and Their Families During School Closures: Learn more about steps educators can take to reconnect with English learners and their families during school closures.

WIDA Guide to Teaching Multilingual Learners Online: Resources and best practices compiled by WIDA to address online EL instruction.

Technology Support for Families: Resources and best practices for supporting families with access to technology.

Providing High-Quality EL Online Instruction: Resources and best practices for supporting EL online instruction.

Best Practices and Resources for Supporting ELs During School Closure: Best practice and teacher resource document created by TNTP.

5 Things Districts and Educators can do to Support Instruction for English Learners During COVID-19: Resource to Support EL Instruction: Five high-leverage practices for districts and educators that best ensure EL success in distance learning.

➤ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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