



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

English Learners (ELs): General Information



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Topics

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Who are Connecticut's ELs?

- Approximately 36,000 ELs in CT (6% of K-12 school population)
- Approximately 150 languages
- Approximately 77% of ELs are eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- Over 60% of ELs are in grades K-5

An Overview of Connecticut's English Learners (ELs) Grades K-12, 2014-15:

- There were 34,833 ELs in 173 public LEAs.
- There were 143 different dominant languages among ELs and Spanish accounted for 72.4 percent of ELs.
- 96.6 percent of ELs received English language services.
- Over 60 percent of all ELs were in Grades K-5.
- 18 percent of ELs were also identified for special education.
- 76.8 percent of ELs were eligible for either free or reduced-price meals.
- Connecticut received \$5.05 million in Title III funds for English language services.
- In the 2013-14 school year, 97 percent of EL students took the annual English language proficiency assessment; 59.4 percent made progress from their prior assessment, while 25.9 percent demonstrated English proficiency.
- In the 2013-14 school year, 1,918 ELs (5.9 percent) met the CSDE's English mastery standard and exited EL status.
- The 2014 four-year cohort graduation rate for ELs was 63.0 percent compared with 87.9 percent for non-ELs.
- The CSDE designated bilingual education and TESOL as certification shortage areas for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years.

[2014-15 English Learner Data Bulletin](#)



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Identification Process

Primary Requirements for English Learner (EL) Identification:

STEP 1: Administer the [Home Language Survey](#) (HLS)

STEP 2: Review HLS results

STEP 3: Administer English language proficiency assessment if the HLS indicates the student may have a primary or home language other than English

STEP 4: Inform parents if the results from the ELP assessment indicate the student is an EL



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Identification: Step One

Administer the Home Language Survey

- A Home Language Survey (HLS) **must** be administered to all new* students.
- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires consistent statewide entrance and exit procedures for EL services. The HLS must contain the following questions:
 - 1) What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?
 - 2) What is the language most often spoken by the student?
 - 3) What is the language that the student first acquired?



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*Important note from pages 10-12 of **English Learner Programs & Services in Connecticut Public Schools: A Resource Handbook for Administrators (2nd Edition)**

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/bilingual/el_admin_resource_handbook.pdf :

A student transferring from another Connecticut public (or private) school, who was previously identified as an EL in that district at the time of his/her unenrollment or move, must continue as an “EL” in the new Connecticut public school district. Connecticut ELs must remain identified/ labeled as ELs until the time that they achieve all EL exit criteria as set by the CSDE2. Therefore, an EL student from one Connecticut school district who moves into a new Connecticut school district must be identified as an EL immediately in the new district, and the student’s dominant language should be the same one that was reported by the previous district. The most recent assessment that the student was given in the former district may serve as the initial assessment in the new district. However, the new district may also choose to administer its own initial assessment to collect more current data. Parent notification and permission procedures in the student’s new district also must be followed.

A student with a dominant language other than English who is transferring into a Connecticut public school from out-of-state, including a student who was already identified by the previous state as an EL and who has not yet achieved the exit criteria in the previous state, should continue as an English Learner in the new Connecticut public school. The most recent assessment that the student was given in the former district may serve as the initial assessment in the new district. However, the new district may also choose to administer its own initial assessment in order to collect more current data, as well as to obtain baseline data on the student’s English language proficiency. Parent notification and permission procedures in the student’s new district also must be followed.

Identification: Step Two

Review HLS Results

If **ONE or more answers** indicate a language other than English, the student must be screened to determine if he/she is an EL.

- See the [Home Language Survey Recommendations](#) document for more information.



Identification: Step Three

Administer English language proficiency assessment

After reviewing the HLS and determining that the student may have a primary or home language other than English, administer:

- the state-mandated English language proficiency screener (the English language proficiency screener is currently being determined for SY 17-18)



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A native language proficiency test may be administered but is not required.

A record of the scores from the English language proficiency screener should be recorded as a reference in the student's file.

Observations and recording of observations and/or interviews can provide additional information about the student's speaking and listening skills.

ESSA requires standardized entrance procedures. Currently, the Connecticut State Department of Education is determining that English language proficiency screener that districts must use to assess the English language proficiency of students.

Identification: Step Four

Inform Parents

- If a student is identified as an English learner, a [parent notification letter](#) must be sent.
- Districts must implement English learners services for all identified students.



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Parent must be informed of child's identification as EL. A sample letter is available at www.ct.gov/sde/EnglishLearners

Parent may choose a program for the child and may remove him/her child at any time, but the student **MUST** continue to take the mandated annual assessment until he/she has met the state exit criteria for English learners. Parent must be informed annually of student's performance.

EL services may vary based on the student's level of English language proficiency and academic and instructional needs.

Annual Federal Assessment Mandates

- All English learners enrolled in public schools must be assessed annually during the testing window using the state-mandated English language proficiency assessment.
- Students can only exit EL status if they meet all [EL exit criteria](#).
- A [parent notification letter](#) must be sent for students who have met exit criteria.



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Students who exit EL status must be monitored for two years.

Districts must implement programs to develop English language proficiency. These programs should incorporate reading, writing, listening, speaking and comprehension skills.

Parent can remove a student at any time from EL services, but until the student meets exit criteria, he/she is still annually tested and reported as an EL (regardless of EL programming or parental refusal).

Exit criteria=Overall score of 4 or 5 on LAS Links **and** score of 4 or 5 on the reading **and** writing subtests .

There is no exemption for recently arrived students.



Dianna Wentzell
Commissioner

- Teachers & Administrators
- Parents & Community
- Students
- Adult Education
- School & District

English Learners

Position Statement

The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) believes that high-quality, comprehensive and effective English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education programs are essential to acquire English language proficiency and academic proficiency for students who are English Learners (ELs). The Board believes that research-based instructional practices that support ELs in general education classrooms are essential while they are acquiring English and well after they have exited the intensive programs. Read the [CSBE Position Statement and Guidelines](#).

English Learners and Bilingual Education Statutes

- [Connecticut Legislation that pertains to ELs from June 2015 Special Session](#) [PDF]
 - [Senate Bill No. 1502, June Special Session, Public Act No. 15-5](#)
- [Bilingual Education Statutes: Section 10-17a-j, Inclusive, of the CGS](#)
- **NEW:** [Request for Extension of Transitional Bilingual Services Beyond 30 Months](#) [PDF] [DOC]
- [Statutory requirements for educating ELLs not served in required programs of bilingual education](#)
- [Programmatic Requirements and Best Practice Recommendations for Implementation of Section 10-17e-j, Inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes](#)

Title III

- [Title III Legislation](#)
- [Questions and Answers Regarding Inclusion of English Learners with Disabilities in English Language Proficiency Assessments and Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives, Addendum, Cover letter and Q & A](#)

Supplement Not Supplant Guidance

- [Supplement Not Supplant Provision of Title III of the ESEA](#) [PDF]
- [FAQ's for Supplement Not Supplant Provision](#) [PDF]



English Learners Webpage

www.ct.gov/sde/EnglishLearners

- Position Statement
- English Learners and Bilingual Education Statutes
- CELP Standards
- Identification and Exit Procedures
- Handbooks
- Professional Learning Opportunities
- Educator and Family Resources



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There is a page devoted to English Learners on our website, and there are many resources that can be accessed there. The EL page was reorganized recently and continues to be updated. The bullets show some of the resources that can be accessed. Not only do many of our districts rely on these resources to stay current, but they can also reference federal resources, such as the recently released English Learner Toolkit, Dual Language Learner Toolkit (for early childhood), and the Newcomer Toolkit.

Contact Information

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