

[Delaware Department of Education: COVID-19 English Learner Guidance](#)

The guidance provided below is intended to support Delaware districts/charters in meeting the needs of English learners during the COVID-19 school closures. Delaware Department of Education guidance will be updated as additional guidance is received from the US Department of Education and/or the current situation evolves.

The [May 18, 2020 US Department of Education Fact Sheet Providing Services to English Learners During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) provides answers to many questions regarding entrance, exit and service requirements for English learners.

Additional English learner programmatic, instructional and/or compliance questions may be directed to Maria Paxson, Maria.paxson@doe.k12.de.us or Cary Knight, Cary.knight@doe.k12.de.us.

Additional ACCESS assessment questions may be directed to Theresa Bennett, Theresa.bennett@doe.k12.de.us.



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Identification of English Learners:

Q: How should districts/charters handle enrollment of English learners during school closures?

If new students enroll during the remote learning period, the district/charter should continue to administer the Home Language Survey. If a language other than English is indicated on the survey, the following steps should be followed:

1. District/charter should complete an electronic records review in the DDOE English Learner Database.
2. If the student is not already identified as an English learner, the district/charter must contact the parent/guardian to explain how remote supports are being provided to English learners.
3. The student should then receive English learner support services until it is safe for the student to be appropriately screened in-person.

The student's Home Language Survey information should be entered into the DDOE English Learner Database. While the student will receive support services, the student should NOT officially be designated as an English learner until the appropriate screening tool is administered.

These temporary entrance procedures are only in place for the 19-20 school year during extended school closures.

Monitoring English Learners

Q: How should a district/charter monitor exited English learners during school closures?

Due to school closures, the process for monitoring students who have been exited from English learner services may be impacted. The district/charter should make every attempt to complete the monitoring process in a virtual format. If contact cannot be made, the district/charter must complete monitoring upon the return to school.

Exiting (Reclassifying) English Learners

Q: Will a district be able to exit English learners using the 19-20 ACCESS scores?

A: Yes. All reported scores will be used to exit students who meet the minimum attainment target.

Q: What will the minimum attainment target or “exit” score be for the 19-20 school year?

A: The U.S. Department of Education has approved the Delaware Department of Education’s amendment request to adjust the attainment target (exit target) for active English learner (EL) students from an overall composite score of PL 5.0 to PL 4.7. The approval of this amendment request goes into effect beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, meaning any student who scored an overall composite score of PL 4.7 in 2019-2020 may exit active EL status.

Q: What happens to an English learner who did not complete ACCESS testing prior to school closures?

A: Students who were enrolled in Delaware public schools during the 19-20 ACCESS test window but were unable to complete all or part of the assessment due to school closures AND may have reasonably exited English learner status this year, will be given the opportunity to complete the assessment in a paper/pencil format during Fall 2020.

Q: Will a student who has completed three out of four domains of the ACCESS assessment be eligible for exit (reclassification) in the 19-20 school year?

A: The US Department of Education has indicated in the May 18, 2020 *USED Fact Sheet – Providing Services to English Learners During the COVID19 Outbreak*, that “An LEA may not exit an EL from EL status unless the student has demonstrated proficiency on a valid and reliable assessment that includes the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.” Currently, all four domains are required unless a disability precludes a student’s ability from meaningfully participating in a particular domain of the assessment.

Q: When will ACCESS score reports be available?

A: Score reports will be available on WIDA AMS on June 30, 2020 for all materials returned by May 15, 2020. Printed score reports will arrive at districts/charters on July 13, 2020.

Forms & Parent Notifications

Q: How should district/charters handle the completion of English learner service discussion form?

A: Districts/ charters should make every attempt to complete these forms and discussions remotely. If the district/ charter is unable to complete the forms, they should be completed as soon as possible upon return.

Q: What should a district/charter do with regard to annual parent notifications?

A: Parent notifications for English learners, as required under Title I, A will be modified to accommodate for the impacts of COVID-19. All timelines for parent notifications should still be met by districts/charters.

Title III Funds

Q: Can districts/charter use Title III funds during school closures?

Title III funds may be used to support your English learner students during school closures. This may require an amendment to your initial plan. The DDOE has applied for a waiver that will extend the Title III FY18 funds for an additional year. Please be aware of areas where expenditures will not be feasible due to COVID-19 and submit any appropriate amendments using the [form](#) found on the DDOE website.

Services for English Learners During Remote Learning

Q: What services should a district/charter be providing to English Learners?

It is the responsibility of the district/charter to make every attempt to support English learners during remote instruction. Services should include both support with increasing

English language development and support in accessing the content instruction. The structure of these services will be unique in each individual district/charter.

See below for more information regarding integrated English Language Development (ELD) with content area classes as well as targeted ELD. In addition, review the accompanying documents that provide key considerations for supporting English learners through distance learning.

Q: How should a district/charter provide integrated English Language Development (ELD) within content classes?

Integrated ELD should be provided in the remote learning environment. Integrated ELD refers to ELD that occurs throughout all instruction and across all disciplines. It is the foundation of all learning for English learners and is therefore a shared responsibility. To ensure high-quality teaching for ELs in the remote learning environment, instruction must simultaneously develop the content-area and the language needed to engage appropriately with the material.

Educators should use the WIDA ELD Standards and resources in addition to their Delaware academic content standards to plan for, support and monitor academic progress. Educators should engage learners in tasks across all domains: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Here are some examples of how this can be accomplished:

- Virtual and/or recorded oral presentations
- Collaborative conversations
- Writing to develop proficiency
- Helping students develop disciplinary language and analytical practices that strengthen their independence to use language for diverse tasks, purposes, audiences, and text types.

Educators should create remote learning environments that leverage students' linguistic and cultural resources as valuable assets for learning. Educators should plan for simultaneous language and content development in the remote learning environment and provide ELs access to, models of, and practice in, the use of academic language.

Q: How should a district/charter provide targeted English Language Development (ELD) support to English learners?

Targeted ELD consists of planned instruction, contingent supports and daily practices that are responsive to individual students needs. In a remote learning environment an emphasis must be placed on the language needed to engage with rigorous standards-aligned content and participate in disciplinary practices. It should not be viewed as separate and isolated from any of the content areas. It is an opportunity to support ELs to develop the discourse practices and language features needed to successfully and equitably participate in all content areas and across all language domains (listening, reading, writing, and speaking).

Q: How can a district/charter provide small group support for English learners?

Small group support can be another valuable option for educators to reach out to their students, including English learners. Educators can set up groups to target both content learning and language development.

Content teachers could set up small groups via their online learning platform for English learners and students who need additional support to:

- Front-load learning
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Provide opportunities for student interaction
- Follow-up after explicit instruction to clarify misconceptions, provide additional support and feedback, etc.

English learner teachers could also support small group sessions to build authentic language production. Small group sessions can be planned to allow for:

- Intentional interaction between students
- Support of student's emotional well being
- Students to maintain their connections with both teachers and peers.
- Opportunities for students to ask questions, talk about their lives and otherwise engage in authentic language interactions
- Utilization of language across both receptive and productive domains--listening, reading, speaking, and writing

Q: Do educators need to provide one-on-one support to English learners:

If an educator typically provides one-on-one support to English learners then every effort should be made to continue this support. Teachers can work with newcomers to support early language development. Research points to teaching thematically and engaging newcomers with the context of the content. For example, if a grade level is working on moon phases, the educator could work to develop language associated with this concept. One-on-one support could allow the educator time to build background associated with this content through comprehensible input (visuals, multimedia, etc.)

Q: How should district/charters document English learner support services?

Districts/charters should keep a record of how they are supporting English learners in a remote environment. While this does not need to be documented in the English learners database or a specific platform, it is important for districts and charters to retain records of support for English learners.

Some districts have elected to use weekly communication records for educators to indicate their learning plans, their platform, student attendance in live sessions and/or participation with school work, parent/family contact, and additional comments to dictate both teacher and student level participation. For students who are logging on, interacting with their teachers, or otherwise engaging in their work, less frequent teacher to student/family contact is required. For students who are not participating in the same ways, educators should reach out more frequently to discover what barriers may be impeding their access and/or participation. In these cases, educators should work with their district/charter to develop plans to support these students and their families; perhaps in different ways than other students. Information with regard to these contacts and outcomes should also be recorded.

Parent/ Family Engagement

Q: How does a district/charter engage English learner families?

Communication with all families is essential during the COVID-19 school closures. Districts/charters should be reaching out to families in multiple languages and formats.

The [State of Delaware translation and interpretation vendor list](#) can be found on the DDOE website. Many of these vendors can provide telephonic interpretation services as well as written translation services.

The first step to ensuring that students have equitable access to remote learning is making contact with students/families. Building and strengthening relationships with our students and their families is very important during these unprecedented times. Connecting with families on a regular basis will allow educators and their schools/districts to continue providing supports based on their particular needs. Communication with families will help districts discover where they are in need of support and make plans to best meet their needs. Those who do not remain in contact with these families will be unaware of how to help support them moving forward.

