



English Learner Entrance and Exit Procedures

Identifying which students in Arkansas are English Learners is critical to the success of these students. To facilitate consistent identification of English Learners, reclassification to Former English Learners, and monitoring of Former English Learners, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures effective in the 2018-19 school year. These standardized entrance and exit procedures were developed after consulting with 51 English for Speakers of Other Languages Coordinators throughout Arkansas and gathering feedback from English for Speakers of Other Languages Coordinator groups at several education service cooperatives, as well as in collaboration with the Arkansas English Learner/Title III Advocacy Group representing districts of various sizes throughout the state.

Entrance Procedures

Timeline: All Arkansas students who may be English Learners will be assessed, placed, and parents/guardians notified of the placement within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter.

Identification of Language Minority Students

Language Minority Students are those who truly have a language other than English present from birth to an extent that potentially impacts a student's English language development. The purpose of the Home Language Usage Survey (HLUS) and the Home Language Usage Verification Form (HLUS-VF) is to determine which students in Arkansas have a language other than English present to an extent that potentially impacts a student's English language development. Those who are identified as "Language Minority Students" must be screened for English language proficiency and placed as either an "English Learner" or a "Former English Learner."

Home Language Usage Survey (HLUS):

A common Home Language Usage Survey will be administered to all Arkansas students initially enrolling in each Local Education Agency (LEA). LEAs will include the HLUS in the student's permanent/cumulative folder. (Cumulative folders may be maintained in hard copy or electronic copy. Electronic copy must be able to be printed or emailed to other districts in Arkansas if/when the student transfers to another Arkansas district.) For those students whose Home Language Usage Survey responses indicate a language other than English, LEAs will:

1. Code the student as a "Language Minority Student" in the State Information System (SIS) (eSchool=ESL box checked);
2. Record the language other than English as the student's "Home Language" in the SIS; and,
3. Screen the student for English proficiency.



Home Language Usage Survey Verification Form (HLUS-VF) Word version *NOTE: The HLUS-VF is ONLY needed when a student's Language Minority Status is in question.*

Occasionally, responses on a student's Home Language Usage Survey may not correctly reflect the student's Language Minority Student status. The Home Language Usage Survey Verification Form (HLUS-VF) was created for Arkansas schools to document when this occurs. There are only two reasons to complete the HLUS-VF:

- 1) To refer a student with ALL English on his/her HLUS for English Language Proficiency screening **or**
- 2) To document why a student with a response other than English on his/her HLUS is NOT a Language Minority Student

If a student or his/her family demonstrates usage of a language other than English, even though their responses on the Home Language Usage Survey were all English, the student IS a Language Minority Student. Examples of behaviors that may indicate usage of a language other than English include, but are not limited to:

- needing an interpreter to converse with parents/guardians
- student speaking another language with peers
- parents/guardians interacting with their child in another language
- student mixing English and another language in their writing
- prior Home Language Survey indicates usage of another language

If it is determined that a student IS a Language Minority Student based on observed behaviors, LEAs will:

1. Document the observed behaviors and language on the HLUS-VF
2. Code the student as a "Language Minority Student" in the State Information System (SIS) (eSchool=ESL box checked);
3. Record the language other than English as the student's "Home Language" in the SIS; and,
4. Screen the student for English proficiency
5. Attach the completed "Home Language Usage Survey Verification Form" to the student's "Home Language Usage Survey" and keep in the student's cumulative folder.

Once in a while, responses other than English on the HLUS may result in a "false positive" identification as a Language Minority Student because the other language was added later in life or is only used by some members of the family outside the home setting. Examples of when a response of when a language other than English on the HLUS may be a "false positive" include, but are not limited to:

- a step-parent who speaks Spanish joins the family when the child is in 3rd grade
- the family is learning French to go on vacation in France
- the child is learning Italian through Duolingo and other online language learning tools
- a parent/guardian teaches Arabic at a university

If it is determined that a student is NOT truly a Language Minority Student, LEAs will:

1. Document the reason why the student is not a LMS on the HLUS-VF,
2. NOT code the student as a "Language Minority Student" in the SIS,
3. Record "English" as the student's "Home Language" in the SIS (currently eSchool), and
4. NOT screen the student for English proficiency. If screening has already occurred, the LEA will NOT place the student as an English Learner.
5. Attach the completed "Home Language Usage Survey Verification Form" to the student's "Home Language Usage Survey" and keep in the student's cumulative folder.



English Language Proficiency Screening

Statewide initial English proficiency screener—Arkansas adopted the usage of the ELPA21 Language Proficiency Screener as the statewide English Language Proficiency screener beginning with the 2017-18 school year with full implementation of the ELPA21 Screener statewide effective 2018-19.

Table 1. Criteria for Initial Placement of Screened Students

	English Learner		Former English Learner, Year 1	Former English Learner, Year 2 and beyond
Evidence of Other Language	Home Language Usage Survey/HLUS-VF Indicates a language other than English			
ELPA21 Screener	“Emerging” or “Progressing”	“Proficient”	“Proficient”	LEA obtains copies of prior placement/exit documentation from another LEA and verifies placement based on Arkansas criteria
Professional Judgment Rubric	N/A	“Not Proficient”	“Proficient”	“Proficient”
Other Factors	Recent prior placement as an English Learner in a school that uses the ELPA21 Screener or one of Arkansas Legacy Screeners as long as LEA obtains copies of prior placement decision made by a Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC).		Completed “Professional Judgment Rubric” indicates student is “Proficient” (see exit criteria for more information).	Year of monitoring (up to 4 years) based on time elapsed since Exit Date on prior LEA documentation and student maintaining exit status as per monitoring.
Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee	Recommends appropriate English Learner services, classroom accommodations, assessment accommodations		Recommends Former English Learner status	Recommends appropriate monitoring status/Former English Learner
Parent/Guardian Notification	Initial identification as English Learner (see “Initial Notification of Parents/Guardians”)		Former English Learner status and to be monitored for four years to ensure continued success	Former English Learner status and appropriate monitoring year or, if beyond 4 years, monitoring completed



Documenting Initial Placement Decisions

1. Placement decisions are made by a site-based Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC) consisting of at least three educators, one from each category:
 - a. Building administrator (principal, assistant principal)
 - b. English for Speakers of Other Languages Designee (Teacher who is English as a Second Language-endorsed and/or trained to work with English Learners)
 - c. Certified educator familiar with the student's data and performance in the classroom.
2. The LPAC will meet within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter to review assessment results and other available data and determine an initial placement along with any recommended classroom and assessment accommodations.
3. Placement into specific English Learner services remains a local decision. LEAs are expected to offer appropriate English Language Development services and meaningful access to content area instruction to English Learners.
4. The LPAC must also determine the appropriate classroom and assessment accommodations to be provided to the student due to their English Learner needs, if any.

Sample Initial or Annual LPAC Placement Form (District responsible for ensuring that elements of form match what is offered in district.)

Annual Notification of Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/guardians must be notified of their child's identification as an English Learner or Former English Learner within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter.
2. Notification must include the following elements and be provided in a language and manner the parents/guardians can understand:
 - a. The reasons for the identification of their child as limited English proficient and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program;
 - b. The child's level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement;
 - c. The methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is, or will be participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and a native language in instruction;
 - d. How the program in which their child is, or will be participating, will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child;
 - e. How such program will specifically help their child learn English, and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
 - f. The specific exit requirements for the program, including the expected rate of transition from such program into classrooms that are not tailored for limited English proficient children, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school for such program for children in secondary schools;
 - g. In the case of a child with a disability, how such program meets the objectives of the Individualized Education Program of the child;
 - h. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance —
 - i. detailing —
 1. the right that parents/guardians have to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request; and
 2. the options that parents/guardians have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available; and



- i. Assisting parents/guardians in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

Sample Parent Notification Letter—Initial or Annual Identification with ELPA21 (district responsible for ensuring that elements of form match what is offered in district.)

Arkansas Sample Parent Waiver Letter

Please note that parents/guardians are notified of a student’s placement and informed of how to waive services. Districts do not ask permission or approval to place a student as an English Learner, nor do they obtain permission to begin services. Parents/guardians may waive English Learner services at any time and may request their child return to English Learner services at any time. English Learners whose parents/guardians have waived services must continue to participate in the annual ELPA21 summative assessment until the student meets the exit criteria. LEAs are still obligated to meet the linguistic needs of English Learners whose parents/guardians have waived services. The date the parent/guardian signs the waiver letter shall be recorded in the SIS (eSchool) as the “ESL/ELL Waived Date”. All other data related to the student’s LMS, EL, or FEL status must also be entered.

Exit Procedures

Timeline: LEAs will annually review every identified English Learner’s progress in acquiring English.

1. This review will be conducted by a site based Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee.
2. Annual reviews will include a committee analysis of ELPA 21 summative assessment scores and other available student performance data.
3. Exit/placement decisions must be made by and documented in eSchool no later than September 30th of each school year for continuously enrolled students.

Table 2. Criteria for Annual Review Placement of English Learners

	English Learner		Former English Learner, Year 1
ELPA21 Summative Overall Score	“Emerging” or “Progressing	“Proficient”	“Proficient”
<u>Professional Judgment Rubric</u>	N/A	“Not Proficient”	“Proficient”
Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee	Recommends appropriate English Learner services, classroom accommodations, assessment accommodations		Recommends exit to Former English Learner status
Parent/Guardian Notification	Continued identification as an English Learner		Exit from English Learner status to be monitored for four years to ensure continued success



Commissioner’s Memo LS-18-093 “Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric/Exit Criteria Guidance”

DESE Language Minority Student Exit - Monitoring Form ([PDF](#)) ([DOCX](#)) The Language Minority Student (LMS) Exit-Monitoring Form is completed when determining whether a student is a Former English Learner for the following three purposes:

1. Initiating placement as a Former English Learner
2. Documenting a prior exit that was not documented
3. Monitoring a Former English Learner

Sample Parent Notification of Exit Letter

Monitoring Former English Learner Procedures

1. Language Proficiency and Assessment Committees will at least annually review Former English Learner performance and progress for four years. To continue as a Former English Learner, students must demonstrate academic performance comparable to English-only peers as indicated on the “Professional Judgment Rubric”.
2. Schools will monitor Former English Learner performance as they do all other non-English Learner students and respond appropriately should the student begin to struggle academically or otherwise.
3. If the LPAC determines that a Former English Learner has not been able to perform at a level comparable to English-only peers on at least two pieces of evidence as described in the Professional Judgment Rubric, then the student would benefit from returning to English Learner services. The student should be returned to English Learner status, the parent/guardian is to be notified of the student’s reclassification and placement as an English Learner, and eSchool data is to be updated to remove the “ELL Exit Date” and check the value box to indicate the student is now an English Learner.
4. If the LPAC determines that a Former English Learner has been able to continue performing at a level comparable to English-only peers (as described on the “Professional Judgment Rubric”), then the student should progress to the next year of monitoring for a total of four years. Once a Former English Learner has successfully completed four years of monitoring, then the student will no longer be monitored and the monitoring status removed in eSchool. All other LMS data shall remain in eSchool (ESL box checked, home language, ELL Entry Date, ELL Exit Date).

Table 3. Criteria for Annual Monitoring of Former English Learners

	English Learner	Former English Learner, Year 2-4	Former English Learner, Monitoring Completed
<u>Professional Judgment Rubric</u>	“Not Proficient”	“Proficient”	
Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee	Recommends appropriate English Learner services, classroom accommodations, assessment accommodations	Recommends next year of monitoring status	Recommends completion of monitoring status
Parent/Guardian Notification	Reclassification to English Learner status	Ongoing monitoring for four years to ensure continued success	Monitoring completed



[Sample Monitoring Continued Parent Letter](#)

[Sample Monitoring Completed Parent Letter](#)

[Sample Parent Notification of Return to English Learner Status](#) (District responsible for ensuring that elements of form match what is offered in district.)

Transfer Students

Transfer students should complete a new Home Language Usage Survey as part of the district’s enrollment packet. If there is a discrepancy between the new HLUS and the HLUS completed at the sending district, program eligibility determinations should be made based on the HLUS that indicates a language other than English.

Look at the student’s Triand transfer transcript to determine whether the student has already been identified as an English Learner in Arkansas if:

- the HLUS indicates a language other than English **OR**
- there is any indication in the student’s enrollment forms or cumulative file that the student may have been identified as an English Learner in Arkansas in the past

No screener is necessary for a LMS who has been assessed with an ELPA21 assessment within the last twelve months.

Students who currently have a language proficiency level of “emerging” or “progressing” on an ELPA21 assessment should be placed directly into the district’s ESOL program as an English Learner. Students who score at the “proficient” level on an ELPA21 assessment are eligible for consideration of exiting English Learner status by applying the “Professional Judgment Rubric” and placing appropriately.

In-state Transfer Students

- Contact the sending district to obtain what data they entered in eSchool pertinent to the ELL Program Screens (ELL Entry Date, ELL Exit Date, ELL Waived Services Date) and copies of the student’s most recent initial or annual placement forms. ([Sample transfer data/records request form](#)—must be on district/school letterhead)
- If no ELPA21 results are found for the student in Triand or in TIDE (the ELPA21 assessment portal), contact the sending district to determine if the student completed the ELPA21 screener, and information was simply not yet uploaded.
- If the sending district does not respond in a timely manner, administer the ELPA21 screener.
- If the student’s original ELPA21 screener becomes available after retesting, base program eligibility on the results of the first screener and report the results of the original screener.
- If an English Learner student has not been tested/has not received a score on the most recent annual ELPA21, the district must administer a new state language proficiency screener to determine the student’s current language proficiency level and continued program eligibility.

Out-of-State Transfer Students

- Students who transfer from out-of-state and who meet the identification criteria as an LMS on the HLUS must be tested on the ELPA21 screener, regardless of whether the student has already been identified as an English Learner in another state, unless they were identified with an ELPA21 assessment in the last twelve months.
- Students who transfer from out-of-state and who meet the identification criteria as an LMS on the HLUS and were exited from English Learner status in another state must take the ELPA21 screener if the sending state did



NOT use the ELPA21 as its English language proficiency assessment. If the Former English Learner student has ELPA21 scores from another state, proceed with appropriate placement based on those results

- If a student who previously exited from English Learner status returns to Arkansas after having lived outside the United States in a non-English-speaking country for twelve or more months, the district may administer the screener to determine if there has been a loss of English language proficiency. The student can re-qualify for English Learner status and services based on the new screener results.

Foreign Exchange Students

Districts are required to follow the same English Learner identification procedures for all students, including foreign exchange students.

Translations of all Sample Parent Letters available in 10 additional languages—available on the [DESE English Learners' webpage](#) and via TransACT. Every Arkansas educator is encouraged to utilize their free account in TransACT to obtain translations of multiple parent notices and letters. See the [TransACT Quick Start Guide](#) to obtain your account. The types of pre-translated letters available to educators fall into two general categories: [General Education Notices](#) and [ESSA Required Parent Notices](#).

Revision History:

July 29, 2020-ADE to DESE logo and verbiage; updated links to sample parent letters and Home Language Usage Survey; added translation availability statement