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English Learner Performance Measures Within the Vermont State Plan: FAQ

The Vermont State Plan describes how Vermont will meet the school and LEA accountability requirements outlined within the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Measuring the progress of English Learners (ELs) towards attaining English language proficiency (ELP) within an accountability model is one of these federal requirements. Vermont's approach to meeting that requirement is described below.

Where are guidelines for accountability for performance on EL proficiency assessments, within ESSA?

Accountability for performance on the ELP assessment moved from Title III, Part A of the ESEA to Title I, Part A (Title I) of the ESEA.

What process for identifying and assessing ELs appears in the Vermont State Plan?

The major points of Vermont's process are:

1. The state's standardized Home Language Survey will be administered to all students upon enrollment in a school in order to identify potential ELs;
2. *New under ESSA:* After reviewing records and communicating with parents, EL staff will assess potential students with WIDA screening tools to determine their EL status. ELs must be identified, and their parents notified of support services, within 30 days from the beginning of the school year or 2 weeks from the time assessed for ELP, if the student enrolls *during* the school year;
3. *New under ESSA:* Long-term goals and annual proficiency benchmarks will be established based on student ELP performance levels on their initial ACCESS 2.0 assessment;
4. EL students will take the ACCESS 2.0 assessment annually to assess their progress towards proficiency goals and/or attainment of proficiency, until they have exited EL status

How are timeframes for student attainment of proficiency determined?

Students who have been identified as ELs will take the ACCESS 2.0 assessment to determine their level of ELP. **Starting in the 2017-18 school year**, based on assessment results available in June, 2018, students will be expected to attain ELP as follows:

1. Students identified as Level 1 would have 5-years to attain proficiency;
2. Students identified as Level 2 would have 4-years to attain proficiency;
3. Students identified as Level 3 would have 3-years to attain proficiency;
4. Students identified as Level 4 would have 2-years to attain proficiency;
5. Students identified as Level 5 and 6 have already demonstrated proficiency in their use of the English language and are considered English Proficient

What ELP performance measures are represented in Vermont's new accountability system?

Under the Vermont State Plan, the EL performance measure is the percentage of students in a school meeting their annual benchmarks on the ACCESS 2.0 assessment.

When students take their initial ACCESS 2.0 test and their timeline for attainment of ELP is identified, a student's annual proficiency benchmarks will also be identified. EL students will

continue to take the ACCESS 2.0 assessment annually, with each student's performance being measured against their annual proficiency benchmark.

This performance measure will count for between 10%-14% of a school's overall accountability determination, depending on the grades served by that school. If a school's population of ELs is too small for it to count towards an accountability determination, that 10%-14% would be reallocated to other performance measures. See Table 36 in the [Vermont State Plan](#) for more details.

When will the framework described in the Vermont State Plan take effect?

The AOE will use student data collected in the 2017-18 school year to identify students' timelines for proficiency and annual performance benchmarks. Whether or not students have met those benchmarks will be reflected within our accountability system beginning in 2018-19.

Do the requirements of the State Plan still apply to schools with small English Learner populations?

All schools are expected to meet all English learner requirements outlined in the State Plan, regardless of N-size, including requirements related to screening students, assigning timeframes for proficiency attainment, and annual ACCESS 2.0 administration to determine progress towards proficiency attainment.

When are ELs required to begin taking the SBAC ELA and Math assessments?

Under Title I, Part A, ELs are also required to take statewide academic assessments. Recently arrived ELs are exempted from Smarter Balanced ELA assessments in their first year of enrollment, but must be included in Math and Science assessments. For more specifics on EL participation in academic assessments, contact Linda Moreno, Assessment Coordinator for Special Populations, at linda.moreno@vermont.gov.

Where can I find a copy of the State Plan?

The final draft of the State Plan is available on the [ESSA page](#) of the AOE's website.

Who should I contact with my questions?

If you have questions or want additional information about these requirements, please contact James McCobb, Title III Director, at james.mccobb@vermont.gov.