
MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Principals
FROM: Anne Bordonaro, FESP Division Director
SUBJECT: SU/SD Responsibilities related to Multilingual English Language Learners
DATE: August 25, 2022

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to remind all Superintendents, Principals, and District Administrators of the LEA (SU/SDs in Vermont) requirements in relation to Multilingual English Language Learners and immigrants.

Identification and Notification

It is a federal requirement that all English Learners (ELs) and immigrant students are identified, and parents/guardians notified of their child's status within 30 days of the start of school or when the student arrives in the SU/SD. In addition, all immigrant students and ELs need to be officially reported to the Agency of Education (AOE).

The identification is made via a process that begins with the Home Language Survey. If a Home Language Survey shows a language other than English, the student needs to be referred to an EL specialist for further screening.

Please remind your administrators at all levels about the process of identification. For more information about the Home Language Survey and how to officially report ELs and immigrants to the AOE, please see [Home Language Survey and Instructions](#).

English Learner Services

Once a student is identified as an EL per federal criteria, federal and state law require that they are provided the services and supports necessary to enable them to acquire academic English proficiency and access the general, grade-level curriculum, which includes services and supports to their families to enable them to understand and participate in their child's education. The child's parent/guardian may opt out of all such services upon written notification to the school. Schools and SU/SDs need to keep such written notifications on file.

The AOE does not prescribe the specific nature of the EL services that should be provided; however, parents who are concerned about the quality or content of the services their students are receiving have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, [Office of Civil Rights](#). Please see the [Useful Documents](#) section of this memo for more information.

In addition to EL services and supports, it is best practice for all classroom/grade level teachers who interact with ELs to complete relevant training. The AOE provides training resources via our membership in the [WIDA Consortium](#). These training courses can be found in WIDA's Secure Portal. Any teacher in the district, whether EL endorsed or not, has access to these useful sessions which will help them learn how best to support the EL learners, including newcomers, in their classrooms.

Teachers can set up WIDA Secure Portal accounts by contacting WIDA Client Services at help@wida.us or by calling (866) 276-7735.

Assessment

In addition to providing services, it is a federal requirement that students who have been identified as ELs take English language proficiency assessments each year in the four domains – reading, writing, listening and speaking. The WIDA Access Test is used in Vermont for such assessment purposes. Students who are not receiving services because their parents have opted out must still be assessed with the WIDA ACCESS Test.

For important dates and other information related to the WIDA assessment, please see our [WIDA Vermont State Page](#).

Useful Documents

- [The English Learner Toolkit](#)
- [The Newcomer Toolkit](#)
- [USED Dear Colleague Letter \(2015\)](#)

Contact Information

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact Stephanie Vogel, Title III and EL Programs Director, at stephanie.vogel@vermont.gov.