

Chapter 2

Identifying English Learners

Identifying English Learners

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the ESSA, requires state education agencies to establish and implement standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures for English learners (Section 3113). Indiana has established standardized statewide entrance procedures to identify and screen potential English learners based upon the accurate and timely administration of the Home Language Survey and the English language proficiency placement exam (WIDA Screener and the Kindergarten W-APT). The standardized entrance and exit procedures are used to determine whether a student is considered an English learner and therefore entitled to an English language development program required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA).

All students enrolling in an Indiana school for the first time, including foreign exchange and preschool students, should be given the Home Language Survey. Any student enrolling in grades K-12 with a language other than English included on the Home Language Survey is screened for English proficiency with the WIDA Screener or the Kindergarten W-APT, unless transferring from another WIDA state. A student who scores below a 5.0 overall composite score on the WIDA Screener or the Kindergarten W-APT is formally identified as an English Learner. Although the HLS is administered for preschool students, they are not given the Kindergarten W-APT until they enroll in Kindergarten.

Home Language Survey

The Home Language Survey (HLS) is a legally binding document that should only be completed once during a child's Indiana academic career, upon their first enrollment in Indiana schools. To avoid duplicate administration, the HLS should not be included in the school enrollment packet, but only given to those students who have confirmed that they are enrolling in an Indiana school for the first time. The HLS must be kept in the student's cumulative folder as part of the permanent record and, in case of transfer, should follow the student to the receiving school.

The school administering the Home Language Survey must explain the purpose of the HLS and the questions in a language the parent or guardian understands. The Indiana Home Language Survey is provided in English and Spanish in Appendix A. Although use of this particular form is not mandated, the three included questions are required, and are the only allowable questions to determine the student's language background.

- 1. What is the native language of the student?**
- 2. What language(s) is spoken most often by the student?**
- 3. What language(s) is spoken by the student in the home?**

If a language other than English is indicated for any of the three questions, the English language proficiency screener (WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT) must be administered to determine whether or not the student qualifies as an English learner.

As many school districts move to online registration and record keeping, the Home Language Survey may be administered online instead of using a paper format. The Indiana HLS may only be administered once in a student's academic career, and so should not be included in the general online registration packet. However, electronic registration may allow for the registrant to indicate that the student is enrolling for the first time in an Indiana school, and then trigger the HLS for completion. Even if administered online, the HLS must be signed by the parent or guardian (electronic signature is sufficient). Additionally, the HLS must be accessible in case of IDOE on-site monitoring or student record transfer.

In the case of student transfer, the sending school should send the original Indiana HLS to the receiving school. If a receiving school does not have the original Indiana HLS for an incoming student, the receiving school must contact the previous school to request that the HLS be transferred. The receiving school should make at least three documented attempts to obtain the original HLS from the previous school or schools.

The IDOE has a formal Home Language Survey Amendment Request process to address students who were misidentified as speaking a language other than English. This process is designed to address true cases of data entry error, where the student was mistakenly coded with a language other than that documented on the original HLS. School districts must submit an amendment request form with parent and administrator signatures, including cause of misidentification, student English language proficiency assessment data if applicable, and the original HLS. The IDOE English Learner team reviews the HLS Amendment Request, determines whether the student was misidentified as a language minority student, and approves or denies the request. The Home Language Survey Amendment Request is included in Appendix A.

Housing the Home Language Survey within IILP

Indiana ILP is an online platform which houses the Individual Learning Plan and other English learner-related documentation for active students in the state. IILP also includes the capability to house a student's original Home Language Survey. This will allow the original HLS to travel with a student digitally throughout their Indiana academic career. For an HLS stored within the IILP system to be recognized as in compliance with federal regulations, one of the following must be in place:

- An uploaded version of the original HLS; OR
- The HLS questions answered exactly as they were on the version initially administered and signed by the parent, including the date of parent signature and the school corporation in which the original HLS was administered

If successfully in place, that version of the HLS can be presented as documentation for federal monitoring purposes. A physical HLS copy is not necessary to be maintained for a student whose HLS is stored in IILP. It is also important to note the following:

- The student’s language assigned on their STN App Center profile must be based off of the responses to the Home Language Survey. See the “Language Reporting Requirements” section below for more details.
- Utilizing the IILP system for HLS storage is not a requirement, even if using the system for its other features.
- The HLS can be stored for all students, not just those speaking a non-English language.

Language Reporting Requirements

If a student’s Home Language Survey includes a language other than English, the other language should be reported to the IDOE as the primary language in the STN App Center. If multiple other languages are included on the HLS, the first language should be coded as the primary language. Regardless of EL status, the student will be permanently considered a language minority student and will be reported on the DOE-LM (Language Minority) data collection each year until graduation.

All Indiana local education agencies are required to submit the DOE-LM (Language Minority) data collection annually. The purpose of this data collection is to gather student information on English learners and immigrant students enrolled on November 1 of the collection year. The DOE-LM collection provides a count of English learners to generate per-pupil funding counts for Title III and the Non-English Speaking Program (NESP) and a count of immigrant students for Title III Significant Immigrant Influx grant. The DOE-LM collects testing results from the English language proficiency placement and annual assessments for accountability purposes and for public schools to report the Lau-required 1974 English language development program.

More information on the DOE-LM collection, including the data collection layout, can be found on the [IDOE-Data Collection](#) Learning Connection community.

Enrolling First-Time Indiana Students

Initial Home Language Survey

An Indiana Home Language Survey must be provided to parents for completion, ensuring that the purpose of the HLS is clearly explained.

HLS Indicates a Language Other Than English

A copy of the original HLS should be placed in the student's cumulative folder. The WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT should be administered to determine English proficiency.

**If coming from a WIDA consortium member state, previous WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener/W-APT scores may be used to determine EL status.*

HLS Indicates All English

A copy of the original HLS should be placed in the student's cumulative folder. No further action is required.

Student Scores Below Proficient on Placement Test

If the student scores below proficient on the WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT (below a 5.0 overall composite), the student is considered an English learner.

Student Scores Proficient on Placement Test

If the student scores proficient on the WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT (5.0 or higher overall composite), the student is considered fluent upon enrollment. The student is not considered to be an English learner and does not enter a monitoring period. Student will be reported annually on DOE-LM until graduation. A copy of the placement test results should be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

Student Identified as an English Learner

An ILP must be created for any student who has been identified as an English learner. The ILP must document accommodations or strategies that the student is able to use both in the classroom and on state assessments.

The student will begin receiving federally required English language development instruction and will be annually assessed for proficiency.

Enrolling Transfer Students From Another Indiana School

1. Check the student's cumulative folder for the original HLS
2. If the original HLS cannot be located, call the student's previous school to obtain the original HLS.

Note: If the original HLS cannot be obtained from the student's previous school, administer a new HLS to the student. Documentation of the attempts made to obtain the original Home Language Survey must be maintained locally.

Original HLS Indicates a Language Other Than English

The previous Indiana school was required to have already administered the English language proficiency placement assessment. Check the cumulative folder for the assessment results and contact the previous school to obtain the results if they have not been provided.

Original HLS Indicates All English

A copy of the original HLS should be placed in the student's cumulative folder. No further action is required.

Student Scored Below Proficient on Placement Test

If the student scored below proficient on the WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT (below a 5.0 overall composite), and has not achieved a proficient score on the WIDA ACCESS assessment in years since, the student is considered an English learner.

Student Scored Proficient on Placement Test or Annual Assessment

If the student scored proficient on the WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT (5.0 or higher overall composite), the student is considered fluent upon enrollment. If the student scored below proficient on the placement test, but has since achieved a proficient score (5.0 or higher overall composite) on the WIDA ACCESS annual assessment, the student is not considered to be an English learner. If the proficient score was achieved within the previous two years, the student should be placed in the district's formal monitoring system for former English learners. The student will be reported annually on the DOE-LM until graduation.

Student Identified as an English Learner

Parents must be notified of the student's placement in the EL program. An ILP must be created for any student who has been identified as an English learner. The ILP must document classroom and assessment accommodations or strategies provided for the student
The student will begin receiving federally required English language development instruction and will be annually assessed for proficiency.