

Chapter 8

Accountability for English Learner Programs

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015 had significant impacts on federal accountability measures for English learners. For the first time, state education agencies were required to include growth toward English language proficiency as a separate indicator in their federal accountability system. Additionally, states were required to set long-term goals for English language proficiency and define various means for uniformly including English learners in accountability systems. This chapter provides an overview of English learner accountability in Indiana's federal accountability system.

State Long-Term Goals

Indiana's state long-term goal is for 67 percent of English learners to achieve their individual growth target each year, with a goal that all students attain proficiency within six years of their initial identification as an English learner. The alignment of this goal with the English language proficiency domain of the accountability system promotes the attainment of this goal within the established timeline, and allows schools to monitor this student group annually within the six-year timeline of the state long-term goal.

English Learner Student Group

Performance data will be reported out for any student group with at least 20 students at the school, corporation, or state level. Schools with at least 20 English Learners with reportable data in the academic achievement, academic progress, and graduation rate indicators (for high schools) will receive a federal grade for the English learner student group.

Former English Learners

After an English learner attains proficiency, they are no longer assessed with WIDA ACCESS, and so will no longer be represented in the school's English language proficiency indicator in subsequent years; however, in order to more fully analyze the performance of this diverse student group and to recognize schools' work to support English learners as they attain proficiency, these students will continue to be included in the English learner student group for all other federal indicators (e.g. academic achievement, graduation rate, etc.) for an additional four years after their re-designation as proficient.

Recently-Arrived English Learners

Indiana uniformly applies statewide flexibility for English learners who have recently arrived in the United States. Indiana defines a "recently-arrived English learner" as an English learner born outside of the United States and enrolled in US schools for fewer than twelve cumulative months during the school year. Indiana uniformly applies statewide flexibility for recently-arrived English learners to allow for three years before fully incorporating the achievement results of recently-arrived English learners in English/Language Arts accountability determinations. In year one, recently-arrived English learners will participate in all parts of the

statewide annual assessment, but their English/Language Arts results will be excluded from accountability calculations and determinations (although their participation will contribute towards the school participation rate). In year two, recently-arrived English learners will participate in all parts of the statewide annual assessment, and only their participation and growth scores will be included in accountability calculations and determinations for English/Language Arts. In year three and beyond, recently-arrived English learners will participate in the statewide annual assessment, and their participation, achievement, and growth scores will be fully included in accountability calculations and determinations. For math and other content areas other than English/Language Arts, recently-arrived English learners are included in all applicable accountability measures from year one onward.

English Language Progress Indicator

ESSA requires an indicator that measures progress for English learners toward attaining English language proficiency on the state-adopted English language proficiency assessment, which in Indiana is WIDA ACCESS for ELLs. The English language progress indicator measures whether an English learner is on track to attain English language proficiency within a period of time aligned to the state long-term goal for English language proficiency.

Each school receives a score for the English language proficiency indicator based on the total number of English learners that meet annual growth targets or demonstrate English language proficiency. The indicator is aligned to Indiana’s state long-term goal that English learner students attain English language proficiency within six years of initial identification as an English learner.

The ELP indicator applies to all schools with any combination of grades 1 through 12. In order to be included in the calculation for the ELP indicator, a student must be identified as an English learner, enrolled in any of grades 1 through 12; enrolled at the school for at least 162 days, or 90% of the school year, and have valid test results for both the prior and current school year on the WIDA ACCESS assessment. Schools will only receive a score for the ELP indicator if they have at least 20 English learners who meet the criteria to be included in the calculation. The school’s overall English language proficiency score is compared to the long-term progress goal to determine the final score and rating on this indicator. Please note that this indicator is only included in Indiana’s federal accountability determinations and is not included in the state accountability calculations.