

eLearning Requirements and Supports for English Learner Students

Amid school closures and eLearning implementation due to COVID-19, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has issued the following guidance on the requirements surrounding English learner students and their services, as well as pertinent resources.

General Requirements:

If a school is closed and not operating virtually, no services are required for English learners. However, if the school is operating via eLearning, the local education agency (LEA) must provide services to English learners. Note that the structure and schedule of services may look different from what the school typically offers when meeting in person. Because of this, equitable access must be the focal point in delivering eLearning instruction for ELs.

EL staff must collaborate with certified classroom teachers to ensure that the e-learning content and delivery are accessible for ELs at their current level of English proficiency. This must align with accommodations and modifications indicated in the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). It must encompass the delivery of content and assessments, appropriate scaffolds and supports, and equitable grading practices.

Apart from these instructional requirements, continuing to welcome and serve all students and families equitably, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, national minority must be the priority of Indiana schools. This must include the required effective communication with parents in a language and method they understand and can access.

Enrollment and Screening Requirements:

If a school is closed and not enrolling or providing educational services to any student, the requirement to screen new students with WIDA Screener or Kindergarten W-APT will not apply during the time of closure.

If a school is open and meeting virtually through extended e-learning, IDOE offers the following recommendation given the delays from receiving formal guidance. The school should make every effort to gather pertinent language information about newly-enrolled students in order to best serve them during the time school is meeting virtually. Upon enrollment, the Home Language Survey should be completed to determine the student's primary language. For students who speak a language other than English as identified on the HLS, schools should attempt to gather information about the student's academic English proficiency through conversation with the student, family, and sending school, as applicable. Until the student can be formally screened and identified, the school should provide EL services and supports comparable to those of other formally-identified English learners at the student's grade and proficiency level. The student should be provided with a draft ILP with all language information available, and the ILP must be implemented immediately upon enrollment.

When regular on-site instruction has resumed, the student must be formally assessed with the WIDA Screener immediately, and the draft ILP must be updated based on the assessment data gathered.

Resources:

IDOE's departments have collaborated to compile [eLearning resources](#) in each of the subject areas, including resources specific to English learner instruction.

For all questions surrounding the use of English learner-related funding, please see the IDOE memo on [Federal Funds and COVID-related Issues](#). For general guidance from IDOE on the COVID-19 response, see this [resources page](#). IDOE's English learner team remains committed to supporting schools and families during this time, and will continue to provide updates moving forward. In the meantime, please reach out to an [IDOE EL team member](#) with any questions.