



Alabama English Learners (ELs) 2014-2015 Fact Sheet



Who are Alabama's English learners (ELs)?

ELs can be immigrants, refugees, migrants, children of military families, exchange students, internationally adopted children, and US citizens. They come from various countries, but many are U.S. citizens with Alabama as their only home.

What languages do Alabama's ELs speak?

The majority of our EL students in Alabama speak Spanish. The top five languages spoken by EL students include Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Chinese. Alabama has around 100 different languages statewide.

Legal obligation to serve ELs

The legal obligation to serve ELs can be found in the Equal Education Opportunities Act, Lau v. Nichols, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Plyler v. Doe, Castaneda v. Pickard, No Child Left Behind, and other references. ELs also have the rights to access Advanced Placement college preparation courses, Gifted and Talented programs, Special Education services, extracurricular activities, etc.

Individual Education Learning Plan (I-ELP)

It is recommended that each student designated as EL have an Individual English Language Plan (I-ELP). This plan should be updated annually until the student achieves Former LEP (FLEP) status.

How are ELs in Alabama identified?

Every child enrolled in Alabama schools is to be given a Home Language Survey. If a language other than English is indicated on the survey, students in grades K-12 are assessed for English proficiency using the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT). The W-APT is an assessment tool, used by educators to measure the English language proficiency of students who have recently arrived in the U.S., or in a particular district. This screening tool is used to determine whether a child is eligible for English language instructional services.

I-Now

Students identified as ELs are entered into I-Now, applying appropriate fields. Information gathered from I-NOW is used to determine funding and report program information.

EL Coaching Support

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ACCESS for ELs

ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is a secure, summative English language proficiency assessment given to k-12 students identified as English learners (ELs). This assessment is given annually in WIDA consortium member states for monitoring students' progress in acquiring English.

How does Alabama serve ELs?

Alabama has a standards-based curriculum emphasizing academic and social language proficiency. EL coursework is based upon WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) standards. Classroom teachers integrate these ELD standards with Alabama State Content Standards and College and Career Standards to enable ELs to both communicate in English and demonstrate their academic and social language proficiency. Instructional approaches, both in EL and general education classes, ensure Alabama's ELs are provided accommodated materials and assessments. It is appropriate to use the EL's home language as a means of facilitating instruction, and providing parents with necessary school-related information.

What if a school district does not provide services to an EL student?

This is a violation of several legal authorities and districts could be cited by the Office for Civil Rights and/or the Departments of Justice.

What if a school district only has a few ELs?

If only one EL is enrolled in the school district, the district must provide EL services for that student.

Funding

The State of Alabama provides funding to districts with ELs to help provide quality instruction for students and professional development for staff working to meet the needs of ELs. Funding is provided using a weighted formula based on a per pupil amount.

Further Information

Updates, forms and information on Title III and serving English Learners: <http://alex.state.al.us/ell/> or <http://alex.state.al.us/si/>

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