

Parent/Guardian FAQs about ELPAC:

How does VUSD decide which students take the initial ELPAC?

The California Department of Education mandates public school districts, like VUSD, to evaluate English Language Proficiency (ELP) when the answers on a student's home language survey contain a non-English language. The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) is the test presently used for determining ELP. The ELPAC identifies multilingual learners who may need support to acquire a proficient level of *academic English* to perform on par with their English-only peers in a classroom setting. Students are required to take the initial ELPAC even if the non-English language from the home language survey is not the student's predominant language.

[ELPAC Info Guide 2022-23](#), Appendix B–Glossary, page 80

primary language

The language identified (by a parent or guardian at the local level) to be a student's primary language based on information provided on the HLS upon the student's first enrollment in a California public school. The term primary language does not mean the language used the most, rather it refers to the language other than English regardless of the proficiency in that language. This identification is done only once during the course of the student's academic career, and the results of the survey are used to identify whether the student is to be assessed with the ELPAC.

Generally, if the student's predominant language is English, they will do well on the ELPAC and their test score will place them at a proficient level - Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). No further ELPAC testing is required for students with an IFEP designation. Our department is happy to speak with you if you have questions about your student's ELPAC score report.

[ELPAC Overview Video](#) (9:46)

[Initial ELPAC Estimated Testing Times](#)

Please note that there is a difference between the primary language and the home language. The home language is a parent/guardian's preferred language of communication between school/district and home. It can be changed at the request of the parent/guardian. In contrast, the primary language is set based on the answers to the home language survey and cannot be changed.

I just got a letter informing me that my student will be tested with the initial ELPAC. How can I prepare them for testing?

When will testing take place?

The VUSD language assessment team will make an appointment with you if your student is testing before the first day of school. On the day of the appointment, the accompanying adult will be asked to wait outside of the testing environment and can sit within the student's viewpoint for comfort. If your student requires testing after the first day of school, the language assessment team will coordinate an appropriate date and time with the school office. Your student will be pulled from class and tested on site during instructional time. Students are released for all breaks like recess, nutrition, and lunch.

Every eligible student must be assessed with the ELPAC within 30 calendar days from the date of enrollment.

Modality

The ELPAC is an untimed test and administered 1:1 to all grades and grade spans.

Kindergarten

Grade 1

Grade 2

Grades 3-5

Grades 6-8

Grades 9-12

[Initial ELPAC Estimated Testing Times](#)

[Alternate ELPAC: Estimated Testing Times](#)

How can we prepare?

The ELPAC will test your student in four areas - listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.

Visit the ELPAC Starting Smarter website at <https://elpac.startingsmarter.org/> to review sample test questions on the practice tests. Practice all 4 domains with your student on the website and continue practicing the task types at different times throughout the day. Encourage your student to focus, speak loudly and clearly, and to do their best. Explain to them that someone other than their teacher will be working with them that day.

- Read to your student or have your student read to you on a regular basis.
- Practice Active Listening
- Use pictures and ask your student to tell you what they see, or what is happening in each picture.
- Provide your student with opportunities to use language outside of school.
- Talk with your student's teacher about your student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to help support their progress.

Moreover, as you would do before any test, encourage your student to get a good night's rest and eat a healthy breakfast.

My TK/Kindergarten student can't read or write yet. Will that keep them from reaching an Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) designation?

Most incoming kindergarten students cannot read or write, and the assessment is designed with this information in mind. The written language composite only accounts for 10% of a kindergarten student's overall score. It will not prevent them from demonstrating proficiency through the other task types.

In 2018, the SSPI approved threshold and composite weight adoptions for the Initial ELPAC. The ELPAC allows for differential weights in the calculation of the Overall performance level for each grade span. The preliminary weight recommendations for the Initial ELPAC are presented in the chart below:

Grade	Oral Language Composite (Listening and Speaking)	Written Language Composite (Reading and Writing)
Kindergarten	90	10
Grades 1	70	30
Grades 2–12	50	50

My student's predominant language is English. Why do they need to take the initial ELPAC?

The California Department of Education mandates public school districts, like VUSD, to evaluate English Language Proficiency (ELP) when the answers on a student's home language survey contain a non-English language. The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) is the test used for determining ELP since the spring of 2018. It is entirely in *English*. The ELPAC identifies multilingual learners who may need support to acquire a proficient level of academic English to perform en par with their English-only peers in a classroom setting. Students are required to take the initial ELPAC even if the non-English language from the home language survey is not the student's predominant language. In general, if the student's predominant language is English, they will do well on the ELPAC and their test score will place them at a proficient level - Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). No further ELPAC testing is required for students with an IFEP designation. Our department is happy to speak with you if you have questions about your student's ELPAC score report.

[ELPAC Info Guide 2022-23](#), Appendix B–Glossary, page 80

primary language

The language identified (by a parent or guardian at the local level) to be a student's primary language based on information provided on the HLS upon the student's first enrollment in a California public school. The term primary language does not mean the language used the most, rather it refers to the language other than English regardless of the proficiency in that language. This identification is done only once during the course of the student's academic career, and the results of the survey are used to identify whether the student is to be assessed with the ELPAC.

[Initial ELPAC Estimated Testing Times](#)

[Alternate ELPAC: Estimated Testing Times](#)

Can I opt my student out of ELPAC testing?

ELPAC regulations require LEAs to administer the Initial ELPAC to 100% of eligible students in kindergarten through grade twelve, ages three through twenty-one. LEAs also are required to administer the summative ELPAC annually to 100% of students identified as Multilingual Learners (ML) until they are reclassified. There is no parent opt out or medical exemption for this assessment.

Additionally, not having a summative ELPAC score will make your ML student ineligible for reclassification the following school year. It is in the student's best interest to participate and to do their best. Please refer to the Reclassification tab for more information.

The Law

State and federal laws require that all students whose primary language is a language other than English be assessed for ELP.

The legal basis for requiring ELP testing is that all students have the right to an equal and appropriate education, and any English language limitations left unidentified and/or unaddressed could preclude a student from accessing that right.

This legal basis comes from *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5 (5 CCR), Section 11518; *California Education Code (EC)* sections 313 and 60810; and Titles I and III of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

LEAs have a legal obligation to ensure that EL students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs. EL students are entitled to appropriate language acquisition services to become proficient in English and to participate equally in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time. School districts must have procedures in place to accurately and timely identify potential EL students. This requirement comes from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

I have been informed that my student's summative ELPAC scores are available. Where do I find them? What do they mean?

To access the summative ELPAC Student Score Report electronically, first log on to [Q Parent Connection](#).

- Click on the student profile you wish to open.
- Expand the "Testing" section from the navigation menu (on the left-hand side).
- Scroll down to the "California Electronic Score Reports" subsection.
- Click on the paper icon next to the line titled "ELPAC Summative Assessment 2022."
- The Student Score Report will open as a PDF.

We recommend that you watch the following video with the Student Score Report in hand.

[Understanding the Summative ELPAC Score Report](#) (11:56)

[Understanding the Summative ELPAC Score Report - Spanish](#) (14:41)

Please contact Multilingual/Multicultural Services if you need assistance or have additional questions.

My student was designated Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). Why hasn't their primary language changed to English?

LEAs are not allowed to change a student's primary language regardless of English Language Proficiency. A student's primary language does not affect their instructional setting, and students with an IFEP designation do not take the ELPAC again because they are not considered Multilingual Learners.

On the contrary, the *home language* is the parent/guardian's preferred language for all communication between the school/district and home. It can be updated by the parent/guardian at their request.

My student has been reclassified (RFEP). Why hasn't their primary language changed to English?

LEAs are not allowed to change a student's primary language regardless of English Language Proficiency. A student's primary language does not affect their instructional setting, and students with an IFEP designation do not take the ELPAC again because they are not considered Multilingual Learners.

On the contrary, the *home language* is the parent/guardian's preferred language for all communication between the school/district and home. It can be updated by the parent/guardian at their request.