

English Language Learner (ELL) Services in Indiana Public Schools (K–12)

What Are English Language Learner (ELL) Services?

ELL services help students whose first language is not English develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing so they can succeed academically and socially. These services are provided free of charge in accordance with state and federal law.

Step 1: Home Language Survey (HLS)

When enrolling your child in an Indiana public school, families complete a Home Language Survey. If a language other than English is indicated, the school begins the identification process.

Step 2: English Language Screening

Students whose survey indicates another language are assessed using the WIDA Screener (or Kindergarten equivalent). The assessment measures listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to determine English proficiency.

Step 3: Program Placement and Services

If a student qualifies, they are placed in an appropriate instructional program based on proficiency level. Services may include small-group instruction, push-in classroom support, sheltered instruction, and language-supported content classes. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) outlines services and progress monitoring.

Parent Notification

Parents are notified in writing if their child qualifies for ELL services. The notification includes assessment results, placement details, and a description of services. Information is provided in the family's home language whenever possible.

Parent Rights

Parents have the right to decline ELL services in writing. However, the school must continue to assess English proficiency annually and ensure the student can access grade-level instruction. Parents may re-enroll their child in services at any time.

Exiting ELL Services

Students exit ELL services when they meet Indiana's English proficiency criteria, typically based on WIDA ACCESS scores. After exiting, students are monitored for at least two years to ensure continued academic success.

Additional Supports

Students may receive both ELL and special education services if eligible. Schools provide interpreters and translated materials when available to help families stay informed and involved.