

English Learner Assessment Updates for 2026–2027

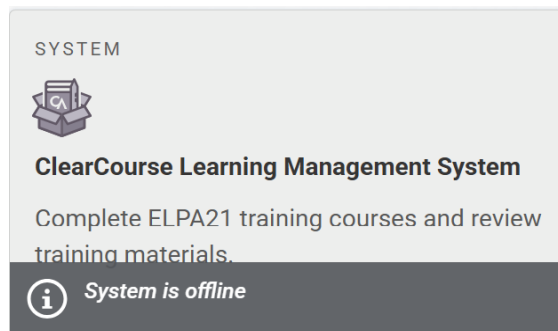
Compiled September 9, 2026

Assessment Updates

1. New ELPA21 Learning Management System: ClearCourse

The Department will soon launch the ClearCourse Learning Management System (LMS) to provide training on all [ELPA21](#) assessments administered in Ohio: the Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener ([OELPS](#)), the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment ([OELPA](#)), and the Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment ([Alt-OELPA](#)). In prior years, the Department only promoted the Alt-OELPA courses, but this year, the Department will encourage all educators working with Ohio's English Language Proficiency Tests to complete the corresponding courses for all three assessments in ClearCourse.

The new ClearCourse LMS will be active soon. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this transition. We are currently resolving some technical issues and developing companion guides specifically for Ohio educators.



The Department will post an announcement on the test portal and notify educators with a TIDE account via email that the system is ready, and the test portal will display the system card as active. Educators will access the new platform through the ClearCourse LMS card on the [Teachers and Test Administrators page](#) of Ohio's English Language Proficiency Tests portal, signing in with the same username and password used to access other assessment systems, like TIDE, the TA Interface, and the Centralized Reporting System.

Two courses for the ELPA21 Dynamic Screener (OELPS) will be available first – a course for first-time test administrators and a refresher course for educators who have already completed the full training in a prior year. The courses for ELPA21's summative assessments

(OELPA and Alt-OELPA) will be available later in the year. To support its educators, the Department will post companion guides with Ohio-specific information, links, and clarifications for each course.

In the meantime, please refer to the following resources for guidance on general training and OELPS administration:

- [General Test Administrator Certification](#) and [Test Administrator Certification Companion](#)
- [OELPS Test Coordination Manual](#)
- [OELPS Test Administration Manual for Online Testing](#)
- [OELPS Training for Administration and Local Scoring PPT](#) (for test coordinators to prepare test administrators)
- [OELPS Webinar](#)
- [Teacher Assessment Scoring Center \(TASC\) User Guide](#) (guidance for scoring spoken and written responses from Step Three)

We are committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for all educators. Please contact the Office of Assessment (614-466-1317 or statetests@education.ohio.gov) if you have questions about the transition. Once ClearCourse is active, please direct questions to the Ohio Help Desk (ohhelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com or 877-231-7809).

2. New User Role: District Test Administrator (DTA)

A new DTA role is available for personnel who administer tests across schools in a district. DTAs have access to the systems (e.g., TIDE, Test Administrator (TA) Interface, Centralized Reporting System (CRS)) similar to users with the Teachers (TE) and Test Administrator (TA) roles but at a district-wide level, eliminating the need to create accounts in each building and rosters to associate students with the educator. In fact, DTAs cannot be associated with rosters, so schools should not use the DTA role for staff needing rosters. Refer to the [Online User Role Matrix](#) for complete permissions of the new DTA role and others.

3. Accessibility Manual for OELPS & OELPA

There are two principle updates in this year's [Accessibility Manual for OELPS and OELPA](#). Please review the *Revision History* at the beginning of the manual for other minor updates.

- *Section V: Domain Exemption Policy for OELPS and OELPA* includes a revision and an additional question and answer on what to do if a student starts testing before setting the domain exemption(s) in TIDE.
- *Appendix C: Read Aloud Accommodation Guidelines*, specifically the *Background* and *Qualifications of Test Readers* sections, provide clearer, more complete guidance. The *Background* clarifies which students are eligible for the accommodation and provides brief description of the accommodation. The *Qualifications of Test Readers* section adds that the human reader must meet Ohio's test administrator criteria and be an adult, non-relative of the student.

4. **New Assessment Team Member: Sahara Woodruff-Zelaya**

Sahara Woodruff-Zelaya, a new Alternate Assessment Specialist, joined the Ohio Department Education & Workforce in August. Sahara will serve as the lead for the Alt-OELPA.

Assessment contacts for Ohio's English Language Proficiency Tests:

- David Brauer, OELPA Lead: david.brauer@education.ohio.gov | (614) 387-7586
- Paula Mahaley, OELPS Lead: paula.mahaley@education.ohio.gov | (614) 466-0217
- Kurt Taube, Performance Data & Psychometrics: kurt.taube@education.ohio.gov | (614) 752-4874
- Sahara Woodruff-Zelaya: sahara.woodruff-zelaya@education.ohio.gov | (614) 995-5179
- Office of Assessment: statetests@education.ohio.gov | (614) 466-1317
- Ohio Help Desk: OHHelpDesk@cambiumassessment.com | 1-877-231-7809

5. **OELPS Frequently Asked Questions Revised.** Review the updated [OELPS Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) webpage and contact the Office of Assessment with any questions. Several questions were removed, and some new questions were added.

6. **OELPA: Paper-test refresh planned for 2027 administration.** The Department and its assessment partners—ELPA21 and Cambium Assessment—are collaborating to refresh the paper-pencil and large-print paper versions of the OELPA for the 2027 administration. Annually, Ohio school administer paper versions of the OELPA to about 300 students statewide. The Department will share additional details once the test forms are finalized, but the goal of the refresh is to make the paper tests more similar to the online versions.

7. **Alt-OELPA Practice Test Enhancement.** Nine new items have been added to the kindergarten Alt-OELPA practice test. ELPA21 plans to add items to the other grade bands in future years. When administering the Alt-OELPA practice test for kindergarten, be sure to refer to the updated [Test Administrator Directions and Scoring Rubrics Booklets for Kindergarten](#).

8. **Preidentifying Students for OELPA and Alt-OELPA in TIDE.** There are new TIDE eligibility or preidentification requirements for the OELPA and Alt-OELPA. Refer to and share the [Ohio Pre-ID File Layout](#), which highlights these changes and others.

a. **OELPA Eligibility:** To preidentify a student the OELPA, these settings are required in the student's TIDE record:

- Enrolled grade must be: K (22), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, or "Adult High School" (for students in grade 13).
- OELPA attribute marked "Paper" or "Online"
- **NEW!** English Learner attribute marked "Yes"

b. Alt-OELPA Eligibility: To preidentify a student the Alt-OELPA, these settings are required in the student’s TIDE record:

- Enrolled grade must be K (22), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, or “Adult High School” (for students in grade 13).
- Alt-OELPA attribute marked “Yes”
- **NEW!** English Learner attribute marked “Yes”
- **NEW!** IEP attribute marked “Yes”
- **NEW!** Primary disability category entered

9. Audio Player Duration Display (OELPS & OELPA). Audio tracks in the OELPS and OELPA, including the OELPA Practice Tests will display duration (minutes and seconds) to help test administrators and students navigate audio playback.

10. New ELPA21 State: Arizona. Arizona joined the ELPA21 consortium in July and will administer the ELPA21 Dynamic Screener (OELPS), ELPA21 Summative (OELPA), and Alt ELPA Summative (Alt-OELPA) this school year. There are now eleven ELPA21 states: Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Connecticut, however, only administers ELPA21’s alternate assessments.

11. 2025-2026 Ohio Schools Report Cards: English Language Proficiency (ELP) Improvement Indicator

The Ohio School Report Cards released in September 2026 will—for the first time—reflect students’ performance *and* progress on the **Alt-OELPA** in the ELP Improvement Indicator rating. The 2024-2025 Report Cards only counted students as making progress on Alt-OELPA if they demonstrated overall proficiency. See the [English Language Proficiency Improvement Indicator Technical Document](#) for detailed information, including a new decision framework to help educators understand students’ individual improvement target of 1 or 2 points. Contact the Office of Accountability with questions at accountability@education.ohio.gov.

12. New Non-Embedded Accessibility Data Collection. In prior years, non-embedded accessibility features (accommodation codes) have only been collected in the Test Administrator (TA) Interface before approving a student to test. For the 2026-2027 school year, the Department is expanding this data collection to include additional non-embedded accommodations and non-embedded designated supports. Entering these accessibility features in TIDE will be helpful to districts that want to add these accessibility details to TIDE via file upload rather than manually in the TA Interface during the test session. If entered in TIDE, these settings can alert the test administrator about the non-embedded supports and accommodations they may need to provide to individual students.

The following table indicates the non-embedded designated supports and accommodations that educators can now set in TIDE in advance of testing for each state test.

OST = Ohio's State Tests

AASCD = Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

OELPS = Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener

OELPA = Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment

	OST ELA	OST Math	OST Science	OST Social Studies	AASCD	OELPS	OELPA
<i>Non-embedded Designated Supports</i>							
Translated Directions	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
<i>Non-embedded Accommodations</i>							
Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Calculator	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Extended Time	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Human Read-aloud	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Oral Translation	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Scribe	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Translated Directions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X