

How ELLs Are Counted on New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Reports

This document clarifies how English language learners (ELLs) are currently counted on various NJDOE reports and explains the use of ELL data. The definition of ELLs and how they are counted on different state reports and initiatives has evolved in recent years. The following information describes this evolution and explains how each initiative currently addresses ELLs.

In the past, ELLs were counted for purposes of state and federal aid, as well as for eligibility for accommodations on state assessments, only if they were participating in a language assistance program. Similarly, until the fall of 2014, only ELLs who participated in a language assistance program could be counted as LEP in NJSMART. However, recent guidance from the United States Department of Education has prompted the separation of ELL status from program participation (see <https://homerom5.doe.state.nj.us/broadcasts/2014/APR/22/11285/Title%20III%20Guidance%20to%20School%20Districts.pdf>).

Beginning in the fall of 2014, any student who is identified as ELL, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:15*, must be reported as such in NJSMART, regardless of whether the student is being served in a language assistance program or not. This enables school districts to count ELLs whose parents have declined program services and to receive federal Title III funds for these students for whom the Title III accountability system also applies.

In addition, the NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) afforded accommodations only for ELLs served in language assistance programs. In the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments that became operational in the 2014-15 school year, however, any identified ELL could be assessed with accommodations regardless of parent refusal.

The following is a summary of each report/initiative.

NJSMART

The data elements for ELLs changed in the October 15, 2014 data submission. Even though the names of the elements have remained the same (LEP Program Start Date and LEP Program Completion Date), students are entered in NJSMART in accordance to the date *identified* as ELL and the date in which the students are determined to *no longer need services*. This change allows districts to count ELLs whose parents declined language assistance program services. The following is an excerpt from the NJSMART manual:

LEP Program Start Date

Definition of Data Element

The year, month, and day on which a student is identified by the district as being in need of ELL services and/or a program based on multiple criteria as defined by *N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.10*. This includes students being served in a language assistance program, as well as students whose parents have refused language assistance program services.

This field must be reported for all special education nonpublic students that have been identified as limited English proficient. This field must be filled in for all identified students regardless of whether parental consent has been obtained.

LEP Program Completion Date

Definition of Data Element

The year, month, and day on which a student successfully completes an ELL program or is determined to no longer be in need of ELL services and/or a program based on multiple criteria as defined by *N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.10*.

This field is mandatory for all students who have successfully completed an ELL program or have been determined to no longer need ELL services and/or a program.

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

The accommodations policy for ELLs taking the PARCC assessments diverges from that for the NJASK assessment. On the PARCC assessment, accommodations may be afforded any English language learner (ELL; also Limited English Proficient or LEP) student regardless of participation in a language assistance program. Therefore, any ELL with an “LEP Program Start Date” in NJSMART, and no “LEP Program End Date,” may be afforded accommodations for ELLs on the PARCC assessments. For more information on PARCC accommodations, please see the

[PARCC ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES AND ACCOMMODATIONS MANUAL](#).

The exemption policy for newcomer ELLs taking the language arts section of the assessment will continue. For example, newly arrived students into US schools (regardless of country of birth), as of July 1 of the current school year, are not required to participate in the English Language Arts/Literacy component of the PARCC assessment; however, they must participate in the mathematics assessments. This policy only extends to students currently enrolled in grades 3 through 8. The language arts (LAL) exemption for ELLs who have been in a U.S. school for less than one year is collected through the *State Assessment Registration* collection, which is collected through NJSMART. The “Date First Enrolled In US School” element (collected for all ELLs regardless of country of birth) is used to determine whether or not students are eligible for the “ELL Exempt from Taking LAL” status.

Current ELL subgroup status is determined by the “English Learner” element on the *State Assessment Registration* collection. Any student with an “LEP Program Start Date” in NJSMART, and “refused” or a null value in “LEP Program End Date” must be marked “Y” in the “English Learner” element. In many accountability measures, former ELLs are also included in the ELL subgroup. These students are identified when F1, F2, F3, or F4 is the value for “NJ ELL Status”. More information about F1, F2, F3, and F4 status can be found in the *State Assessment Registration Student Data Handbook*.

The “Title III ELL Status” data element in the *State Assessment Registration* collection is not an element used by New Jersey for reporting or accountability. Districts may use the element for internal purposes, but this element will not impact state-level data decisions. To indicate “Title III ELL Status”, districts can enter “Y” for this element.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

The ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 pre-ID file will be generated by the New Jersey Department of Education based on the *State Assessment Registration* collection through NJSMART. WIDA-AMS (<https://www.wida-ams.us>) will then be prepopulated with the data gathered in the *State Assessment Registration*. Note that all ELLs grades K-12 must be included in the *State Assessment Registration* collection since all K-12 ELLs are required to take the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. The “State Assessment Name” element and the “English Learner” element generate when “State Assessment Name” includes ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and/or when “English Learner” is marked with “Y”. “ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Mapping” in the *State Assessment Registration Student Data Handbook* shows which elements are included in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 pre-ID file. Data related to specific testing accommodations and students that enroll after the *State Assessment Registration* collection is closed must be entered through WIDA-AMS.

As the result of the Title III consultation process between a public and private school, a public school district may decide to administer the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment to private school students who receive Title III services. In this situation, public districts would enter these students through WIDA-AMS instead of the *State Assessment Registration*. In WIDA-AMS, the students would be entered using the public school district name and code, but districts would enter “N” for “Non-Public (Private)” in the “Student Type” data element. Non-public, Title III students will not be counted in the state accountability system under these circumstances.

Application for State School Aid (ASSA)

The ASSA continues to count ELLs based on program participation consistent with the *School Funding Reform Act of 2008* in which the ELL cost is defined as “the cost of providing educational and other services for bilingual education...” Therefore, the calculation for funding is based on those ELLs in a district who are participating in a language assistance program on October 15.

The ASSA directions define ELLs as follows:

Resident and nonresident students identified as ELL, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:15.1.3(c)*, who are participating in a bilingual, ESL, or ELS program; and

Students who continue to need and participate in bilingual, ESL or ELS program services on the basis of multiple indicators as per *N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.10(b)*.

Chapter 192 Funding Program for ESL Services for Nonpublic School Pupils

Chapter 192 programs provide nonpublic school students with auxiliary services such as compensatory education, English as a second language, and home instruction.

English as a second language services are available to an eligible student identified as limited English proficient.

Eligibility Criteria

The student’s native language must be other than English;

The student must score below the cut-off level of English language proficiency on a Department-approved language proficiency test (appendices section); and
The student must have at least one other indicator*.

*Other indicators include: assessing the level of reading in English, reviewing the previous academic performance of the student, as well as standardized tests in English and reviewing the input of teaching staff members responsible for the educational program of the pupil.

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