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Funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) of the U.S. Department of Education

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NCELA FAQ

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Q: Which tests are used commonly to determine English language proficiency?

Revised September 2006

Purpose of English language proficiency assessments

English language proficiency (ELP) assessments typically are used for two general purposes: (1) to identify students as English language learners (ELLs) and place them in classes with appropriate support services and (2) for accountability purposes to demonstrate students' progress in attaining English. The results of the ELP assessments and previous educational experiences should inform both the language of the curriculum students receive and their participation in large-scale English assessments. If students demonstrate proficiency in academic English, they may be ready for an English curriculum with no support services and may be ready for large-scale assessments in English without accommodations. If students do not demonstrate proficiency in English, support services and continued English language development will be needed.

Legislation regarding ELP assessment

Both Title I and Title III require that students' English language proficiency be tested. Title I specifically requires states to ensure that local districts test students' oral language, reading, and writing skills in English each year (§1111(b)(7)) to determine whether students are, in fact, limited English proficient. Title III defines *Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives* that include annual testing to determine students' progress in learning English and whether they have attained English proficiency (§3122(a)(3)(A)(i-ii)). Title III defines English language proficiency as comprehension, speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills (§3121(d)(1)).

The assessments used to determine English language proficiency must specifically test English language proficiency. Assessments of English language arts and/or reading are measuring constructs related to content achievement, not language proficiency, and thus should not be used to measure English language proficiency.

Updated August 2006. Data from the GAO report *No Child Left Behind Act: Assistance from Education Could Help States Better Measure Progress of Students with Limited English Proficiency*, July 2006. Available from www.gao.gov

ELP assessments

With the advent of NCLB, many states have developed new ELP standards, which have necessitated new ELP assessments. According to the GAO, many states used these new assessments for the first time in Spring 2006. The current assessments for English language proficiency generally fall into one of three categories, each defined below.

- Four commonly used assessments were created by national test development companies (so called off-the-shelf tests) and are aligned with generally accepted standards for English language proficiency. A total of 20 states use these assessments.
- Two commonly used assessments were developed by consortia funded by the Department of Education for the specific purpose of creating new English language proficiency assessments that are aligned with states' English language proficiency standards. According to the GAO report, two consortia developed assessments and continue to provide support and assistance to member states and two consortia developed assessments and disbanded -- their states are determining individually how best to use the materials. A total of 23 states use these assessments, or items from them.

Some states use assessments from more than one of these categories, some states use multiple tests from one category. Table 1 provides the assessments used within each of these categories. The ELP assessments that States used in 2005-06, as reported to the GAO, are listed in Table 2.

The four consortia included the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) Consortium, Mountain West Assessment Consortium (MWAC), and Pennsylvania Enhanced Assessment Grant (PA EAG) Consortium. See the document *Enhanced Assessment Consortia* for more information: www.ncelea.gwu.edu/resabout/assessment/EnhancedAssessmentConsortia.pdf

Table 1: Commonly used assessments by category and number of states using them

Category	Name of assessment	# states
	IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) www.ballard-tighe.com/assessment.html	5
	Language Assessment System (LAS) www.ctb.com/products/category_home.jsp FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302057165&bmUID =1156189729545	7
Off-the-shelf	Maculaitis Assessment of Competencies (MAC II) http://store.cambiumlearning.com/ProgramPage.aspx?parentId=019005529&functionID=009000008&pID=&site=sw	2

	Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (SELP) http://harcourtassessment.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-us/dotCom/SELP/Stanford+English+Language+Proficiency+Test.htm	4
	Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey www.assess.nelson.com/test-ind/wmls-r.html	2
	English Language Development Assessment (ELDA from SCASS) www.ccsso.org/projects/ELDA/	6
	Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs from WIDA) www.wida.us	13
Consortia	Mountain West Consortium – items from the assessment www.measuredprogress.org/Assessment/GeneralEducation/MountainWest/MountainWest.html Some individual states have information on their sites; e.g., www.schools.utah.gov/eval/Documents/EIL_Intro.pdf and www.nmabe.net/noticiero.html	3
	Pennsylvania Enhanced Assessment Grant Consortium (PA EAG)	1
Individual states	Each state has developed its own assessment	14

Table 2: English language proficiency assessment(s) used by each state in 2005-06, with contact information

State	English language proficiency assessment
Alabama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Alaska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDEA Proficiency Test – IPT
Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stanford English Language Proficiency Test – SELP
Arkansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maculaitis Assessment of Competencies Test of English Language Proficiency – MAC II
California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California English Language Proficiency Test – CELDT
Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado English Language Assessment
Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language Assessment System Links – LAS
Delaware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
District of Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various off-the-shelf tests
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Hawaii	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language Assessment System Links – LAS
Idaho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mountain West Assessment Consortium tests items
Illinois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language Assessment System Links – LAS
Iowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kansas English Language Proficiency Assessment
Kentucky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004 IDEA Proficiency Test – IPT Language Assessment Scales – LAS
Louisiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)

Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Assessment System Links – LAS
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment
Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Proficiency Assessment (includes Mountain West Consortium test items)
Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test of Emerging Academic English • Minnesota Student Oral Language Observation Matrix • Checklist for reading and writing for K-2 students
Mississippi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanford English Language Proficiency Test – SELP
Missouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maculaitis Assessment of Competencies Test of English Language Proficiency – MAC I
Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa Test of Basic Skills • Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (English) • Other state-approved test
Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
Nevada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Assessment System Links – LAS
New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
New Jersey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Mexico English Language Proficiency Assessment (includes Mountain West Consortium test items)
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test
North Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDEA Proficiency Test – IPT
North Dakota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2004 IDEA Proficiency Test – IPT • Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (English) • Language Assessment Scales (LAS)
Ohio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
Oklahoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Proficiency Assessment
Pennsylvania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanford English Language Proficiency Test – SELP
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
South Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
South Dakota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dakota English Language Proficiency Assessment
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive English language Learning Assessment (PA EAG Consortium)
Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System • TELPAS includes: Reading Proficiency Tests in English & Texas Observation Protocols
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2004 IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT)
Vermont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)
Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanford English Language Proficiency Test – SELP
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington Language Proficiency Test
West Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Development Assessment – ELDA (SCASS Consortium)
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners – ACCESS for ELLs (WIDA Consortium)

Wyoming

• Wyoming English Language Learner Assessment

Number of states sums to more than 51 (50 states plus the District of Columbia) because of states that allow use of more than one test. The mention of products and services in this table is informational and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education or NCELA. The mention of products and services in this table is informational and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education or NCELA.

In 2006-07, ND will join the WIDA consortium and change to the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. This is a different a test from that of Michigan, even though the name is the same

The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) and is operated by The George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Center for the Study of Language and Education.

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This page last updated: Sep 28, 2006 01:10pm

