

# Determining Eligibility to Participate in Oregon’s Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt ELPA)

## Overview

Oregon’s Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt ELPA) is a standards-based English language proficiency (ELP) assessment for eligible English learners (ELs) who experience significant cognitive disabilities in Kindergarten through grade 12. This assessment measures English language proficiency in the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including the academic language needed to access grade-appropriate content taught in English.

## Alt-ELPA Eligibility Criteria

**Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams** determine how a student experiencing disability participates in statewide assessments, including determination of accessibility supports. Students who are identified as ELs must participate in either the general ELPA or the Alt ELPA. These participation guidelines will help IEP Teams determine which assessment best matches the student.

In order to be eligible to participate in the Alt-ELPA, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student has EL status (per the Federal definition of an EL (ESEA §8101(20)).
2. The student has been, or will be, found eligible to participate in the Oregon Extended Assessment (ORExt, administered in Grades 3-8 and 11).
3. The student is unable to participate in the ELPA Summative, even with accommodations (including, but not limited to, domain exemptions).
4. The student’s IEP team has determined an alternate assessment is the most appropriate for the student.

Students who “experience the most significant cognitive disabilities” commonly have test scores two or more standard deviations below the mean on a standardized individually administered intelligence test and also demonstrate commensurate deficits in adaptive behavior. These deficits are frequently evident in early childhood. Additionally, the cognitive disability must significantly impact the child's educational performance and ability to generalize learning from one setting to another. Students with the significant cognitive disabilities typically need highly specialized education and/or social, psychological, assistive technology devices, and/or medical services to access an educational program. These students may also rely on adults for safety, personal care/hygiene and physical/verbal supports. These intensive and on-going supports and services are typically provided directly by educators and are delivered across all educational and community settings.

## Factors That Should Not Determine Participation in the Alt-ELPA

The following lie outside the eligibility criteria above and *do not* have any impact on student eligibility to participate in the Alt ELPA:

- Time of arrival in U.S. schools.
- Percent of time served in a special education setting.
- Language, social-cultural, or economic differences.
- History of limited or interrupted formal schooling (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education SLIFE/SIFE).
- Low English language proficiency or literacy levels without the presence of significant cognitive disability.
- Student's ability to exit from English learner services.
- Poor attendance or extended absences.
- Poor performance or impact on accountability system.
- Disability category label.
- Anticipated disrupted behavior during assessment.
- Anticipated emotional duress/anxiety around or during assessment.
- Special education placement or services.
- Mobility or migrant status.
- Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/Augmentative and Alternative Communication AAC (mobility)) to participate in assessment process.
- A single person (e.g., principal, teacher) making the decision.

### **Possible Consequences of Alt ELPA Participation**

These potential consequences should be considered by the IEP team and shared with parents or guardians prior to making any final decision about participation in the Alt ELPA.

- Assignment to Alt ELPA in early grades (K-2) may influence participation in future alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS), which differ in depth, breadth, and complexity compared to general academic achievement standards.
- May result in different access to instructional content, perhaps at a reduced level of depth, breadth, and complexity.
- Exit criteria from English language development services may be different compared to EL peers without significant cognitive disabilities.

### **Documenting Alt ELPA Participation**

To ensure students receive the appropriate test, participation in the Alt ELPA must be documented in the student's IEP prior to the Alt ELPA administration window. Districts should prepare teams to implement this update during annual IEP meetings, or prior to the annual IEP meeting if it is scheduled after the administration window.

Participation in the Alt ELPA can be annotated in the "Statewide Assessment" section of the [Oregon Standard IEP](#) similar to the example shown below. Districts with an approved

alternative format should determine the equivalent location within their approved forms to annotate this assessment.

**STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT** 34 CFR 300.320(a)(6)

<p align="center"><b>Standard Assessment</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Accessibility Supports</b> (includes all accommodations, designated supports, and/or universal tools the team identifies as necessary for statewide assessments)</p>	<p align="center"><b>Exemption Decisions (identify appropriate domains)</b> Up to a maximum of three domains may be exempted, but only in very rare and documented circumstances. All exemptions must be reviewed and documented in the student's IEP or 504 plan prior to the student beginning ELPA21. All cases of domain exemptions on ELPA21 are subject to monitoring by ODE.</p>	<p align="center"><b>*Explanation</b> Statement why student cannot participate in select domains</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) <input type="checkbox"/> Without accessibility supports <input type="checkbox"/> With accessibility supports	<p><b>NAME will participate in the Alt ELPA.</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> *Listening <input type="checkbox"/> *Reading <input type="checkbox"/> *Writing <input type="checkbox"/> *Speaking	<p><b>Explanation of why NAME will participate in the Alt ELPA.</b></p>

Note that documenting participation in the Alt ELPA is not a substitute for documenting accessibility supports and/or domain exemptions.

For more information about Oregon’s Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment, please contact [Mason Rivers](#), Special Education Assessment Specialist.

For other questions about special education service provision, districts can reach out to their District Support Specialist.

Please reach out to [Kim Miller](#) and [Susy Mekarski](#), Title III contacts, for questions about English learner identification or language service provision.

## ALT ELPA Flowchart

IEP teams may use this flowchart to determine whether a student should participate in the Alt ELPA. This flowchart is ***not*** a required document. It is a tool to assist IEP teams in making individual decisions regarding participation in the Oregon’s Alt ELPA. Alt ELPA participation can only be determined by the student’s IEP team, with the inclusion of an EL instructor.

