

Unique Screening in 2020-21

Overview

In spring of 2020, the COVID pandemic interrupted ongoing statewide summative testing. As a result, some students with English learner status did not complete the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) Summative as scheduled. Although most students with English learner status had completed ELPA testing at the time of COVID-related school closures in 2020, some students had only partially completed the ELPA, while others had not yet begun.

As school resumes in the 2020-21 school year, districts need to know if students with English learner status remain eligible for language services. Therefore, all students with English learner status who did not complete the ELPA Summative in spring 2020 will be assessed on the ELPA Screener to determine their need for language services in school year 2020-21. ODE is calling this process **unique screening**.

Note: On July 28, 2020, additional metrics were announced statewide regarding the permissibility of in-person instruction. This document has been updated to clarify requirements.

Student, family, and staff health and safety

The following guidance was written to prioritize the health and safety of students, staff, and families. In the event that circumstances lead to a conflict between this guidance and the health and safety of any student, staff member, or community member, districts should always maintain health and safety as the clear priority. Please contact ODE with any such concerns.

In general, if in-person interactions are permissible at a school, in-person screening is also permissible. If in-person interactions are not permissible at a school, in-person screening should be delayed until such time as in-person interactions become permissible.

If COVID-related factors interfere significantly with an individual district's ability to carry out a unique screening program, please contact ODE.

Parameters

Districts whose local contexts allow for unique screening will complete the process between the dates of August 4, 2020 and November 20, 2020. Such districts must make a good faith effort to screen all eligible students during this window. For exceptions, see note on in-person attendance below, as well as the Parent communication section.

All students who would have been required to complete in ELPA Summative in spring 2020, but did not, are eligible for unique screening. This includes students who partially completed the ELPA Summative in spring 2020, as well as students who did not begin the ELPA Summative.

Districts may test students at any time during the unique screening window. Districts will develop local criteria for when to screen students, which could include some or all of the following:

- Prioritizing students whose previous academic data indicate are more likely to score Proficient
- Prioritizing students who are more likely to experience scheduling or course-taking impacts as a result of a Proficient determination (such as many secondary students)
- Scheduling testing with sensitivity to students' social-emotional state and potential COVID-related traumas
- Building in time for students to acclimate to new environments and new school routines

Since every Screener administration includes a one-to-one component, students must be present for in-person instruction during the unique screening window to participate in unique screening. Students not present for in-person instruction during this window (or students with a period of absence sufficient to render unique screening impossible) will not participate in unique screening and will experience no change in their English learner status.

Students must be screened at their current enrolled grade for school year 2020-21. For example, a student who was scheduled to take the Grade 7 ELPA Summative in spring 2020, but did not due to COVID-related school closures, and who advances to 8th Grade during the 2020-21 school year, should be screened on the Grade 8 Screener.

Students participating in unique screening must be tested under a Temporary ID, even if they have no ELPA Screener score associated with their Secure Student ID (SSID). Districts should *not* merge Temporary IDs created for unique screening purposes with SSIDs. Districts should *not* use an SSID for unique screening. This could overwrite existing screener data and add confusion to a student's ELP testing history. As unique screening scores cannot be linked to a student's SSID in TIDE, it is recommended that districts preserve these scores in their local information systems where possible (digitally, physically, or both).

If a Temporary ID already exists for a student with the same name or birthdate as the student about to participate in unique screening, a warning dialogue box will appear asking the district to verify creation of a new Temporary ID. This is a cautionary measure intended to reduce unintentional rescreening of students. Districts should confirm the creation of a new Temporary ID and note the ORT# to help differentiate unique screening Temporary IDs from any Temporary IDs that may have been used to screen this student in the past. More recently-created Temporary IDs will have a higher ORT#.

Parent communication

Districts should inform parents, guardians, and adult students (referred to in this guidance as "parents") of intent to screen a student. In general, districts should adhere to the standards and procedures used when communicating with parents regarding standard screening, with the addition that this screening is a special event precipitated by COVID-related disruptions to regular ELP testing, and helps supply

districts with missing information for students who did not have the opportunity to complete the ELPA Summative in spring of 2020.

While districts are required to offer unique screening, parents may decline unique screening for any reason. If they do, the student will remain identified as an English learner for 2020-21 and participate in 2020-21 ELP testing. The student will participate in the district's English language development program, unless the parent has signed a waiver for program participation. It is appropriate to inform parents of their right to decline unique screening and the effects of such a decision. It is not appropriate to attempt to influence a parent decision regarding unique screening.

Results, interpretation, impacts on instruction and testing

Unique screening is scored just like any other administration of the ELPA Screener. If a student scores 4 or higher in all nonexempt domains, that student is Proficient and will no longer have English learner status. Such students no longer need English language development services and will not test on the ELPA Summative in the spring.

Students who score a 3 or lower in at least one nonexempt domain will remain in EL status and will continue to receive English language development services. Districts may use unique screening results to inform placement and instructional decisions for such students.

Districts will provide language services to all eligible students until their EL status is resolved via unique screening.

Reporting and EL status

Students who participate in this unique screening will be reported to the 2020-21 Fall and Spring EL collections under the EL Record Type Code = CS (COVID Screener Participant). Under this code, students can be reported as continuing in the EL program or exiting the EL program based on scoring Proficient on the ELPA Screener. Students will be able to be reported with instructional program models (Program Model 1, 2 and 3) or reported as not participating in the program.

Students exiting the EL program through unique screening will enter monitor status the school year following the exit. As students are unique screening in 20-21 the school year, they will be reported as monitor year 1 in the 21-22 school year. Accountability for ELs scoring Proficient during this unique screening will be determined at a later date. It is not yet clear if or how COVID-related factors will impact accountability during the 2020-21 school year.

Special considerations

Practice Step 1

Practice Step 1 is primarily intended for students who may be encountering the ELPA interface for the first time. Many students participating in unique screening will be familiar with the ELPA interface and

may wish to skip or “click through” Practice Step 1. Some students may wish to proceed more slowly so as to re-acclimate themselves to the test.

The decision of how rapidly to proceed through Practice Step 1 lies with the student. It is appropriate to inform students that items in Practice Step 1 are unscored and may be skipped without impacting the student’s score. It is not appropriate to attempt to influence student decisions in this area.

To maintain physical distancing and minimize handling of surfaces by multiple individuals, it is permissible for students who fully understand the purpose and function of Practice Step 1 to request that a TA advance through Practice Step 1 on their behalf. If there is any doubt that a student fully understands the purpose and function of Practice Step 1, they should be given the opportunity to participate in this step.

Mobile students, in-district and inter-district transfers

If a student with English learner status changes schools or districts during the unique screening window, the receiving school or district should make a good faith effort to discover if the student:

- Is eligible for unique screening, and
- Has not yet participated in unique screening in any of their districts of origin.

If both of the above criteria are met, test the student. Otherwise, do not test the student; the student will retain their EL status and participate in the ELPA Summative in spring 2021.

Accommodations and supports

Districts should test students using the most up-to-date accommodation and support decisions available. Because unique screening is intended to measure a student’s need for language services during the coming school year, districts are not required to reproduce the support profile that a student would have used on the 2020 Summative; rather, they should test using the most appropriate profile for the student given current knowledge.

If there is uncertainty about the appropriateness of a student’s support profile, best practice would suggest that the district wait to test until the student’s IEP or 504 team has convened and discussed an appropriate support profile for unique screening.

Testing multiple students

While it is not possible to conduct truly simultaneous screening for a group of students, it is possible to arrange a “staggered start” for students who are confident with the interface and able to proceed independently. A TA’s one-to-one responsibilities for such students end after the Step 2 “on the fly” Speaking items. Districts with significant populations of students who are able to test independently could schedule testing so that students arrive one by one for their “staggered start” time to increase

testing efficiency. However, note that cleaning and physical distancing considerations will likely introduce delays into several steps of the testing procedure.

Beginning the 2020-21 school year with distance learning

Due to COVID-related factors, some districts may begin the 2020-21 school year with a distance learning model and delay implementation of in-person instruction.

If in-person interactions are permitted between students and school personnel, unique screening should be conducted.

If in-person interactions are not permitted, unique screening should not be conducted. When in-person interactions resume, districts must make a good faith effort to screen eligible students, even though it may not be possible to screen every eligible student before the expiry of the unique screening window. Per guidance earlier in this document, this means:

- Districts must develop local criteria to prioritize screening order for eligible students.
- Eligible students who cannot be screened (due to insufficient time, resources, unexpected absences, etc.) will retain their EL status and will participate in the next available ELPA Summative administration.

Health and safety considerations

In addition to the procedures above, please review ODE guidance on [Administering the ELPA Screener with Physical Distancing](#).

Contact information

For questions about funding and reporting, please contact [Kim Miller](#).

For other questions about this guidance, please contact [Ben Wolcott](#).