

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
August 9, 2011

**SUBJECT:** State Required Exit Criteria for Pennsylvania's English Language Instructional Programs for English Language Learners

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Charter School CAOs  
Intermediate Unit Executive Directors  
Title III Coordinators  
ESL Coordinators, Administrators and Teachers  
Guidance Counselors

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This communication updates and replaces all previously released Penn\*Links and emails regarding exit criteria for English language instructional programs.

PDE has updated Pennsylvania's exit criteria with regard to specific score requirements based on the ACCESS for ELLs® Kindergarten assessment.

Assurance of implementation of the exit criteria by LEAs will take place within the Federal Programs Consolidated Monitoring Plan.

This required exit criteria will ensure consistent measures across LEAs for exiting ELLs from English language instructional programs.

**Exit Criteria for Pennsylvania's English Language Instructional Programs for English Language Learners**

The exit criteria provided below for English Language Learners (ELLs) represent valid and reliable evidence of a student's English language proficiency to exit from an English language instructional program. Every LEA must include the following exit criteria in the LEA Program Plan for ELLs.

In order to meet the required state exit criteria for Pennsylvania's English language instructional programs for ELLs, LEAs must use **both of the required exit criteria** listed below. In addition, LEAs must ensure that students meet **one of the two additional exit criteria** provided below to exit from an English language instructional program:

**Required Exit Criteria:**

1. Score of BASIC on the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- *For students transferring from other states, out-of-state academic achievement assessment results may be considered when the academic proficiency level is comparable to BASIC on the PSSA.*
  - *For students that are in a grade that is not assessed with the PSSA, LEA's must use each of the remaining criteria listed below to exit students.*
2. Score of 5.0 on an ACCESS for ELLs Kindergarten assessment or score of 5.0 on a Tier C ACCESS for ELLs assessment (See items A and B below for cutoff score flexibility).
  - A. Following the scoring criteria in the table below, the W-APT may be administered between April and June to students who scored below the minimum cutoff for program exit on the January administration of the ACCESS in order to demonstrate sufficient progress to justify exit.

NOTE: The W-APT may ONLY be administered to a student **once** in any school year.

| <u>Grade Level</u> | <u>ACCESS Score</u>   | <u>Required W-APT Scores*</u> |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| K                  | Cut-off score flexibility not allowable for Kindergarteners |                               |
| 1-5                | 4.6-4.9   | 5.0 in each domain            |
| 6-8                | 4.7-4.9   | 5.0 in each domain            |
| 9-12               | 4.8-4.9   | 5.0 in each domain            |

*\* A student must score 5.0 in each domain (listening, speaking, reading and writing). A composite proficiency score will not be used.*

- B. A score of PROFICIENT on the reading PSSA can be used along with all other required criteria outlined in this policy to justify exit for students who achieve a composite proficiency score of 4.5 to 4.9 on the January administration of the ACCESS. In this case, W-APT scores are not necessary to demonstrate progress from the time of ACCESS administration to the end of the school year.

**Additional Exit Criteria:**

1. Final grades of C or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies).
2. Scores on district-wide assessments that are comparable to the BASIC performance level on the PSSA.

PDE will post this updated guidance on the WIDA website at [www.wida.us/states/Pennsylvania.aspx](http://www.wida.us/states/Pennsylvania.aspx).

Questions may be directed to Linda Long ([lilong@pa.gov](mailto:lilong@pa.gov)) or Tami Shaffer ([tshaffer@pa.gov](mailto:tshaffer@pa.gov)).