

Supplemental information to Wisconsin's September 1 Submission of Title III Requirements.

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English Language Proficiency Standards

Reference page: 2; Category: **Non-critical**

- Linkage of English proficiency standards and academic content areas is described below.
- K-12 English language proficiency standards for English language learners: A framework for large-scale assessment (please refer to Appendix A: WIDA Consortium: K-12 English Language Proficiency Standards.

The five **English language proficiency standards** cover the social and academic language proficiencies expected of English language learners in grade levels K-12:

English Language Proficiency Standard 1:
English language learners communicate in English for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.

English Language Proficiency Standard 2:
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of language arts.

English Language Proficiency Standard 3:
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of mathematics.

English Language Proficiency Standard 4:
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of science.

English Language Proficiency Standard 5:
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of social studies.

Standards and language acquisition: Each English **language proficiency standard** addresses a specific context for language acquisition, in social and instructional settings as well as each of the major content areas associated with schooling; language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Overall, the language proficiency standards center on the language needed and used by English language learners for social and academic purposes.

Standards and language domains: Each language proficiency standard addresses four **language domains**-- listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Standards and grade clusters: Each language proficiency standard is divided into four **grade level clusters**; K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

Standards and performance indicators: Each language proficiency standard is illustrated by **model performance indicators**, representative samples from the corpus of language associated with English language learners' acquisition of social and academic proficiencies. The model performance indicators incorporate the language necessary for students to move towards the attainment of state academic content standards.

The model performance indicators for each content standard typify the progression of language development implied in the acquisition of English as an additional language as outlined in the five **language proficiency levels**, from 1, **entering** the process, to 5, **bridging** to state academic content standards.

The **model performance indicators** are functional, measurable indices of the language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and aimed at the age/developmental levels of English language learners. They represent a full range of linguistic complexity and cognitive engagement within and across content areas. Model performance indicators are presented in a developmental sequence across language proficiency levels and grade level clusters.

Standards and assessment: The framework for large-scale assessment consists of:

- **5 English language proficiency standards,**
- **4 grade level clusters,**
- **5 levels of language proficiency,**
- **4 domains,**
- **20 performance indicators per domain, and**
- **80 unique, model performance indicators per standard.**

The English language proficiency standards are a component of an enhanced assessment system designed for English language learners. The large-scale assessment framework defines the parameters for the creation of the test blueprint and specifications of tasks. The specifications, in turn, guide the development of the standards-based English language proficiency test that encompasses the four language domains.

Rationale

The need to develop English language proficiency standards that articulate with state academic content standards stems from three sources: 1. pedagogy, 2. assessment, and 3. educational policy. These changes, spurred by the standards-based movement and federal legislation, directly impact English language learners in elementary and secondary schools throughout the United States.

States and school districts, now required to implement English language proficiency standards, are responding to this mandate.

English language proficiency standards need to capture the full range and complexities of methodologies that blend language and content learning. To this end, we must expand the coverage of current English language proficiency or development standards to bring them into alignment with practice. In addition, we must ensure that English language proficiency standards dovetail academic content standards to create a seamless pathway to academic success for our English language learners.

Language proficiency assessment, in large part, has not remained abreast with changing teaching practices for our English language learners. We need to retool existing language proficiency assessment measures to match the pedagogical shift to content-based instruction. English language proficiency standards guide the development of test blueprints, task specifications, and English language proficiency measures. Thus, language proficiency standards are the first step in the construction of reliable and valid assessment tools. We must create rigorous language proficiency standards as the anchor of a sound assessment system for English language learners.

English Language Proficiency Baseline Data

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- The baseline data for English language proficiency shall come from the **2002-2003 school year test administration**.
- The projected number of LEP children assessed: **43,087**. This is a projection of prospective students assessed during the school year 2002-2003.
- The projected number of LEP children identified: **38,778**. We are in the process of data collection and analysis. The final count of LEP students will be available in December 2003. We will submit the final count of LEP students to the United States Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition in December 2003.

Definition of “Proficiency”

Reference page: 6; Category: **Non-critical**

- Comprehension is measured by the scores of listening and reading tests. Test scores will determine the levels of listening comprehension and reading comprehension in English. Test scores will also determine the levels of English proficiency for listening and reading domains.
- Comprehension is also demonstrated by the ability to perform academic work or complete assignment in English in content areas.

State Performance Targets/Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (critical)

Reference page: 9; Category: **Critical**

- There are five (5) levels of limited English proficiency: Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Level 1 is minimal. Level 5 is advanced. Full-English proficiency is designated as Level 6.

At level 6, student reads, writes, speaks, and comprehends English within academic settings.

- **Projected increases:** Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives for English language proficiency.

For Level 1, 90% of ELLs in the cohort will advance one level, that is, from Level 1 to Level 2, after one year of service. Starting from Level 1, LEP students are expected to advance to Level 6, i.e., full English proficiency, within 5 to 7 years.

For Levels 2 to 5, 90% of ELLs in the cohort will advance one step on the respective cut score charts. A step is defined as either a half proficiency level or full level, depending upon the results of the standards-setting session for that instrument. The expected progress is 90 percent of learners advancing one level every 1.5 years for levels 2 to 5.

A narrative explanation of the State Performance Targets/Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives submission (Page 9).

Wisconsin's State Performance Targets/Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives are interim objectives as the state is currently developing a standards-based English language proficiency assessment, fully compliant with NCLB requirements. This assessment will be operational in spring 2005.

The current targets/objectives were based on Wisconsin's English language proficiency definitions, our interim performance definitions, and our draft (soon-to-be finalized) English language proficiency standards. These standards and benchmarks were used to guide Wisconsin educators as they participated in standards-setting events using the Modified Anghoff procedure, an internationally recognized procedure for accurately setting

progress benchmarks. In this case, the benchmarks, or cut scores, required had to be set using our currently available English language proficiency assessment instruments. Wisconsin's interim instruments are the Language Assessment Scales (LAS), The Woodcock-Munoz, the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT), and the Maculitis II (MAC II). These instruments are not fully aligned with Wisconsin's standards but must serve as our assessment tools while our new statewide English language proficiency assessment, The ELL SUCCESS Test, is being developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), University of Illinois, and the WIDA development team.

The Modified Anghoff procedure required teams of ESL/bilingual professionals to set cut scores for the above mentioned instruments using Wisconsin's definitions and performance standards as their guide. The cuts were set to approximate one year's anticipated growth, using past performance data from Wisconsin LEAs and research based input into how long it takes for ELLs to reach full proficiency. National research and our state data both support five to seven years as the average for attaining full English proficiency, which includes grade level literacy and academic language proficiency skills. Certainly, as our programs improve we believe this average will be shorter for many ELLs, however it is important to note the wide variability in the rate of language acquisition among individual learners, even in good programs. This variability is research supported as the Thomas and Collier study, among others, has found that some students entering U.S. schools with weak native language and school backgrounds may take even longer than five to seven years. Nonetheless, Wisconsin is committed to the premise that schools can achieve this goal for most, if not all, ELLs within the overall five to seven year timeframe. Year-to-year progress intervals are set slightly wider to account for variability in rate at various stages in the process, but LEAs must ensure that ELLs are fully proficiency within the five to seven year period.

With these factors in mind, cut scores were set by our professional educator teams under the guidance of Fred Davidson, Language Educator and Assessment Expert, University of Illinois, using the Modified Anghoff. These cut scores form the basis of annual measurable achievement objectives and provide LEAs with clear guidance regarding acceptable annual progress toward full proficiency. Wisconsin will track cohorts by proficiency level as they progress to full proficiency within the five to seven year timeframe allotted. Wisconsin is currently developing the capacity to examine student-level data across all districts. This system will be in place by fall 2005, and will allow us to further triangulate data patterns at the school and district levels, ensuring greater accuracy in reporting. In the meanwhile, LEAs will report their cohort data by number and percentage, including the number advancing from level 5 to fully proficient each year.

As you examine the interim cut scores and narrative explanation included with Wisconsin's September 1, 2003 submission, please note that the charts work like a "ladder up" to full proficiency. In whatever grade and proficiency level a student enters a Wisconsin school, that student joins the proficiency-based cohort and begins the journey to full proficiency. The student must make a minimum of one interval of progress each year from the point of entry. As students are re-tested annually with the same interim instrument, educators know exactly how much progress must be made at a minimum in all tested areas. Wisconsin does not average the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension; rather we require that students meet minimum progress benchmarks (cut scores) in each area each year in order to "count" as having met the annual measurable achievement objective in English (AMAOs). Because comprehension is not measured as a separate domain on our current interim ELP tests, we use reading and listening scores as proxies for comprehension. If an ELL does not pass the reading and listening sections of the interim assessment, the ELL would

not have met his or her annual objective for comprehension. Thus cohort goals are met only when 90% of ELLs in the cohort advance one step on the respective cut score charts. (A step is defined as either a half proficiency level or full level, depending upon the results of the standards-setting session for that instrument.)