

Family Guide to ELPA21: The English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century



What is the ELPA21 assessment system?

The ELPA21 assessment system measures a student's proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, listening to, and understanding English. It comprises two assessments: the screener assessment and the summative assessment.

ELPA21's screener assessment is used to identify students who may qualify as English language learners (ELLs). It is given either at the beginning of the school year or at the time a student arrives at a new school system. Students who qualify as ELLs as a result of the ELPA21 screener assessment are placed into their school's ELL program and receive supplemental English learning support throughout the school year.



At the end of each school year, all designated ELLs are required to take the ELPA21 summative assessment. Results from that assessment are used to determine whether a student still qualifies as an English language learner or whether a student has achieved a sufficient level of proficiency in English so that he or she no longer needs support and can exit the school's ELL program.

How is the ELPA21 assessment system different from other tests?

The ELPA21 assessment is different from standard classroom tests. Instead of measuring a student's knowledge of academic content, ELPA21 measures a student's ability to understand and communicate in English. Performance on the ELPA21 screener and summative assessments will not affect your student's grades, your student's subject-based test scores, or your school's overall state performance rating. Results from the ELPA21 assessment are used to determine whether a student qualifies for English support services and what types of services might be needed.

Why is my student's school using a new English language proficiency assessment?

Your student's school adopted new ELP Standards that emphasize the important connection between learning English and understanding classroom content. The ELPA21 assessments are aligned with these high-quality standards and are designed to be more engaging and interactive for students. The tests are computer-based and include questions and prompts that mimic classroom interactions that students are familiar with, such as student presentations, hallway conversations, and debates.

When will the ELPA21 tests be given to students?

In the spring of 2016, your student's school will begin using the ELPA21 summative assessment to evaluate students' English language proficiency on an annual basis. In the fall of 2016, educators will begin using the ELPA21 screener assessment to identify students who qualify for English language support. For more specific information regarding dates of ELPA21's administration, please contact your student's teacher.

How can I help my student get ready?

You are an important partner in your student's education. Here are some things you can do to help prepare him or her for ELPA21:

- Visit elpa21.org/assessment-system/sample-items to see a few sample items that show some of the features of ELPA21 for grades K-12.
- Speak to your student's teacher about which areas of English your student needs to focus on improving.
- Set aside time every day to have your student read his or her favorite books to you.

Learn more about ELPA21.

To learn more about ELPA21 and how it will be administered in your student's school, speak with your student's teacher or principal.

For more information about ELPA21, visit elpa21.org or email us at info@elpa21.org.

