Provisional Identification and Placement Procedures for Missouri English Learners During Periods of Extended School Closures Due to COVID-19 – Grades K-12

Information last updated 4/10/20

The procedure described in this document provides a means of provisionally identifying English Learners (ELs) during the time that schools are closed for normal operations due to COVID-19. This method should not replace the formal identification process when face-to-face screening is possible.

All students that are subject to this procedure, regardless of provisional EL qualification status, are required to go through a formal administration of the screening process once school resumes normal operations. Enrollment of students should not be postponed due to any delays in screening for EL services, to the extent consistent with health and welfare directives from the relevant governmental entities.

Per the announcement on April 9, 2020, Missouri school buildings shall remain closed through the current school year (2019-20); however, school services should continue to the extent possible. Provisional identification of ELs is available through that time, and will be extended if any subsequent Executive Orders lengthen school closures for the summer/fall of 2020.

Districts that are subject to settlement agreements or consent decrees relating to English Learners must seek guidance from the district’s legal counsel as to whether the provisional procedures would be consistent with the terms of the applicable agreement/decree.

Step 1: Administer the Language Use Survey (LUS) to all newly enrolling students.

The primary purpose of the Language Use Survey (LUS) is to find out if the student should be assessed for English language proficiency, based on the student’s first language, and if there are languages other than English spoken at home. The LUS also presents an opportunity to collect other useful information that will help district personnel understand the student’s personal and educational history in order to plan an appropriate educational program. During extended school closures due to COVID-19, district-trained personnel will complete the LUS remotely via phone, Skype, etc. if it is accessible to both districts and families. Parents can also complete the LUS and mail it to the district.

Step 2: Conduct an interview remotely with the student/family (phone, Skype, Zoom, etc.) when the answer to any of the questions on the LUS is a language other than English. Follow the procedures below and complete the speaking, listening and interaction rubrics in the Appendix.

Using the rubrics in the Appendix, districts must conduct an interview remotely with all students and families whose LUS indicate that the first language of the student is not English or that there is a language other than English spoken at home, with the following limited exceptions:

- Students who were previously classified as ELs and were then reclassified as English proficient in their former districts;
• Students who transferred from another district within Missouri or another WIDA state and do not qualify as ELs on the English proficiency screening test administered in their former district or state; and
• Students who transferred from another district within Missouri or another WIDA state with ACCESS or Screener results from the last calendar year.

The interview should consist of questions at varying levels of difficulty to elicit interaction between the interviewer and the student that will make it possible to determine the student’s ability in listening, speaking and interaction. Interviewers must have strategies in place to ensure students who do not have experience interacting with someone through a screen are comfortable during the interview.

Below are examples of questions at various levels of difficulty, but interviewers must tailor the interaction as necessary, based on the apparent proficiency of the student and their age.

Begin with questions at a lower level of difficulty and progress from there.

• Example of low-level questions: “What is your name?” “How old are you?” and “What do you like to do?”
• Examples of moderate-level questions: “What do you like at school?” “What kind of food do you like?” “Tell me about your favorite (sports team, video game, toy, hobby).” “What would you like to do when you graduate from high school/grow up?”
• Examples of high-level questions: “What is your favorite subject in school and why?” “Pretend you are trying to convince me why I should like your favorite (sports team, video game, toy, hobby). What would you say?” “Describe your favorite teacher/friend/family member.” “What is a job that you think is useful for society and why?”

Stop at the level where a student has difficulty responding. If the student has difficulty responding at a particular level, ask a question or two from the previous level to end on a positive note. Generally, a student who easily communicates at a “high level” is NOT likely to qualify for EL status.

NOTE: If a student is unable to complete the interview process (e.g., because of a disability or refusal), then the determination of EL status must be made based upon the remaining available evidence gathered from the LUS, parent interview and academic records review. If reasonable evidence of English proficiency cannot be established based on those sources and any incomplete screener results, then the student should be provisionally identified as an EL until screening can be completed.

Step 3. Determine whether the student might be an EL using interview results and make a provisional placement decision.

Districts make a provisional determination about the most appropriate academic placement and supports based on:
• The student’s English language proficiency information
• The district’s chosen method of instructional delivery to address students’ limited English proficiency
• Giving students the opportunity to participate meaningfully and equitably in the district’s educational program

Consistent with federal and state civil rights laws, school districts must continue to provide services to English learners, in conjunction with the need to protect the health and safety of students and staff.
The district must ensure that students assigned a provisional status assignment (identified as EL or non-EL) are tracked by some means (e.g. a special code in the local management system) so that once school resumes, they are screened according to the full procedure.

**Step 4: Notify parents and/or legal guardians of screening test results and provisional placement decisions.**

Districts must provide the parent/guardian with a description of the provisional placement and EL services made available to their children.

Once schools have reopened for normal operations, districts will communicate to parents the results of the administration of an English Language Proficiency Screener. Detailed information regarding the nature of this communication is provided in the Identifying and Reclassifying English Learners: Guidance on Missouri’s Entry and Exit Criteria.

**Step 5: DO NOT code the student as an EL in your Student Information System (SIS)/MOSIS before you administer a language proficiency screener.**

Students should NOT be coded as ELs in your SIS/MOSIS before they are screened according to the full procedure described in the Identifying and Reclassifying English Learners: Guidance on Missouri’s Entry and Exit Criteria document.
Appendix

Grade: Kindergarten
Rubric 1 – Interaction, Listening and Speaking Language Use Inventory

Student:  
Evaluator:  
Date:  
Domain:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Moderate (.3)</th>
<th>High (.5)</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Can engage in very short social exchanges and sustain the conversation with substantial support. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities, possibly using provided language frames or structures.</td>
<td>Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression.</td>
<td>Can use language spontaneously, flexibly and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics.</td>
<td>Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations and educational videos.</td>
<td>Can understand extended speech, even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics.</td>
<td>Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar and academic topics.</td>
<td>Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using some content specific vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL
Appendix

Grade: 1
Rubric 1 – Interaction, Listening and Speaking Language Use Inventory

Student:  
Evaluator:  
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<td>Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics.</td>
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<td>Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using some content specific vocabulary.</td>
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**TOTAL**
Appendix

Grade: 2-3
Rubric 1 – Interaction, Listening and Speaking Language Use Inventory

Student:  
Evaluator:  
Date:  
Domain:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
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<td>Speaking</td>
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<td>Can present clear, expanded discourse about a familiar or academic topic using some content specific vocabulary.</td>
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TOTAL
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Grade: 4-12
Rubric 1 – Interaction, Listening and Speaking Language Use Inventory

Student:
Evaluator:
Date:
Domain:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Low (0)</th>
<th>Moderate (.3)</th>
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<td>Can function in most social situations in the classroom. Can enter unprepared in conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or connected to everyday life. Can use provided language frames or structures as models for original expression.</td>
<td>Can use language spontaneously, flexibly and effectively for social and academic purposes. Can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate contributions skillfully to those of other speakers.</td>
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<td>Listening</td>
<td>Can understand the main point in simple messages in slow and clear standard speech. Can understand phrases and high frequency vocabulary related to familiar topics.</td>
<td>Can understand the main points in slow and clear standard speech on familiar topics in discussions, presentations and educational videos.</td>
<td>Can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Can use a series of connected phrases and short, simple sentences to talk in simple terms about familiar topics.</td>
<td>Can connect phrases to talk about familiar topics using simple sentences. Can briefly give reasons and explanations for reactions, opinions and plans.</td>
<td>Can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating subthemes, developing particular points and finishing with an appropriate conclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL