

# Iowa Guidelines for K-12 ELL Participation in Districtwide Assessments (2011-2012)

(Updated 2013-2014)

State of Iowa

Department of Education

Grimes State Office Building

Des Moines, Iowa

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**Document Overview:** Per federal requirements, each state education agency (SEA) is required to have in place guidelines for including and accommodating English language learners (ELLs\*) in assessments of mathematics, reading, and science used to measure student Adequate Yearly Progress. The Iowa Department of Education (DE) has worked in coordination with Title III Subgrantees (Area Education Agencies and the Waterloo and Des Moines School Districts) to develop the following guidelines.

- **Part I** of the guidelines provides federal and state requirements for ELL inclusion and accommodation in districtwide assessments of mathematics, reading, and science.
- **Part II** of the guidelines provide research-based and recommended best practice guidance on the accommodation of ELLs in these districtwide assessments.
- These guidelines do not address the accommodation of ELLs in the I-ELDA, a separate test ELLs take to gauge student's English language proficiency.

\* For the purposes of this guide, the term ELL refers to currently identified Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, not former LEP students.

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The initial framework for this document was developed in 2004 under a grant from the Department of Education. A later revision was developed as part of a 2008-2011 technical assistance project conducted by The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (GW-CEEE) and sponsored by the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC).

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## Part I: Federal and State Requirements

### 1. *Where do I find other guidance on classifying students as English language learners (ELLs)?*

As defined in Iowa state law, current ELLs are those students who are participating in English language acquisition programs and/ or services. For more information, refer to the Handbook for English language learners found on the English Language Learner Web page on:

[http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=683&Itemid=1391](http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=683&Itemid=1391)

### 2. *Where do I find other guidance on determining an ELL's English language proficiency level?*

LEAs must annually assess their LEP students (K-12) in English language proficiency. The assessment being used for both public and non-public schools is I-ELDA – the Iowa English Language Development Assessment. Please contact your AEA ELL Consultant to inquire about availability of training and other important information relevant your assessment needs.

For more information and relevant documents on the Iowa English Language Development Assessment (I-ELDA), please refer to the *I-ELDA Web page* in the *Program and Services* section of the *Northwest AEA Website* at [http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/programs\\_and\\_services/research\\_development\\_and\\_evaluation/iowa\\_english\\_language\\_development\\_assessment\\_ielda/](http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/programs_and_services/research_development_and_evaluation/iowa_english_language_development_assessment_ielda/). Dr. Tom Green at [tgreen@nwaea.k12.ia.us](mailto:tgreen@nwaea.k12.ia.us) can be contacted by districts if a local AEA representative is unable to assist.

### 3. *What is the rationale for including ELLs in districtwide assessments of mathematics, reading, and science?*

Over the past two decades, achievement and accountability reforms in the U.S. have focused on supporting the broad goal of achieving equality of opportunity in our society. The realization of this goal in large-scale testing requires all students have equal access to grade-level content. In the 1990s, there were instances nationwide where rates of exclusions for ELLs in large-scale assessments were as high as 44 percent (Mazzeo, Carlson, Voelkl, & Lutkus, 2000, p. 5). Thus, it has been difficult to ascertain ELL academic progress using large-scale assessment (Shakrani & Roeber, 2009).

Proponents argue that by including ELLs in federal and state assessment accountability systems, there is a greater likelihood of creating a more accurate picture of overall student achievement and growth and having available to parents of ELLs, their teachers and school administrators individual diagnostic information on which ELLs have reached proficiency and therefore no longer need additional ESL/ESOL support. If ELL achievement is not reaching desired performance levels, student test scores may provide information which can be used in designing specific policies or funding to improve ELL academic performance.

The inclusion of ELLs in state assessment and accountability systems is protected by federal and state standards-based legislation and civil rights cases. This legislation

(such as *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*) and court cases such as *Lau v. Nichols* [414 U.S. 563 (1974)] mandate that historically excluded student populations, such as students with limited English proficiency, be included for purposes of equal opportunity, accountability, and representation. Districts are obligated to follow all federal and state guidelines in providing equal educational opportunities to all students. Therefore, it is necessary that the district take care in evaluating and meeting the needs of students with limited English proficiency. The rights of this group of students to an equal education are protected by the force of legislation, judicial opinion, and administrative regulation.

#### **4. What are the federal and state inclusion requirements for ELLs' participation in districtwide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science?**

Title I requires students with limited English proficiency (LEP)/English language learners (ELLs) to be included in each district's academic content assessments in mathematics, reading, and science. [Chapter 12 of the Iowa Administrative Code](#), requires all students to be included in districtwide assessments of student progress. [*Whatever a district is giving as a general assessment for all students needs to be given to ELLs. ELLs need to be afforded the same opportunity to engage in all assessments given districtwide. ELLs would be included in the social studies assessment, for example, if all students in the district take this assessment. (This is a **civil rights issue** of access for all students.)*]

**281—12.8(256) Accountability for student achievement.** Schools and school districts shall meet the following accountability requirements for increased student achievement.

f. *Assessment of student progress.* Each school or school district shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan provisions for districtwide assessment of student progress for all students.

##### A. Mathematics and science:

- i. Students classified as ELLs, including those who have refused ESOL services, must be assessed annually in the areas of mathematics and science (regardless of time in a language instructional program and level of proficiency in English).
- ii. The [federal non-regulatory guidance](#) issued in May 2007 states, Recently arrived LEP students must take the State's mathematics assessment, with accommodations as necessary. Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, recently arrived LEP students also must take the State's science assessment, with accommodations as necessary.

Thus, **recently arrived students are required to take the district's academic content assessments in mathematics and science** (Iowa Assessments). No exemptions are permitted based on time in English instruction or level of English proficiency for the Iowa Tests for Mathematics or Science. This also includes the Iowa alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

B. Reading:

- i. The [federal non-regulatory guidance](#) issued in May 2007 states,

The regulations define a recently arrived LEP student as a LEP student who has attended schools in the United States for less than 12 months. During the period within which an LEP student may be a recent arrival to the United States (during his or her first 12 months attending schools in the U.S.) a State may exempt such a student from **one administration** of the State's reading/language arts assessment.

***Thus, DE policy is that recently arrived ELLs, including those who have refused ESOL services, who have not been enrolled for a full academic year in US schools may be exempt from one administration of the Iowa Test for Reading (Iowa Assessments). However, these students' I-ELDA results will count towards NCLB AYP participation in Reading. Guidance for accommodating ELLs in district's academic content assessments in mathematics, reading, and science is found later in this document.***

***The I-ELDA is the growth measure used to assess English language proficiency (it is not a placement test). If the I-ELDA is used for the NCLB reading participation in lieu of the Iowa Assessment reading subtest, for ELLs who are new (first year students), the district needs to report to the Iowa Department of Education so that the information can be included in the annual AYP student participation counts. (See forms in #4 below.)***

Decisions about how to include the student in the districtwide testing program (with or without accommodations) should not be based on the continuation of funds from the State.

Questions about the inclusions of ELLs in each district's content assessments in mathematics, reading, and science should be directed to Dr. Jobi Lawrence at the Iowa Department of Education.

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### *Background on Civil Rights Legislation and Court Cases Ensuring Equal Access for ELLs*

*Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* bans discrimination "based on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." As a result, states are now required to ensure appropriate identification, assessment and instruction of all students whose native language is not English.

*Lau v. Nichols* [414 U.S. 563 (1974)], a class action suit originally filed on behalf of Chinese-speaking public school students against the San Francisco Unified school district in 1970. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the failure of the San Francisco school system to provide appropriate and meaningful instruction to students who do not speak English denied them the opportunity to effectively participate in the public education program and thus violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In response, states have issued *Lau Mandate* guidelines for districts to ensure students an opportunity to a "meaningful education" regardless of their language background.

### *Background on Federal and State Legislation Requiring Participation by ELLs*

Both federal and state legislation now require the participation of all students, including ELLs in state assessment and accountability systems. Federal provisions for inclusion and accommodation of ELLs in state systems are found in the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA provisions require the participation of all students, including ELLs, in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. These provisions were first presented in The Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) in 1994 and then updated in 2001 in The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* stipulates in Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(ix)(I) that **all** students (including ELLs) must participate in state assessments of reading, mathematics, and science (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Districts must include all ELLs in their academic content assessments in mathematics, science, and reading (although there is flexibility for recently-arrived ELLs with the reading assessment (refer to detailed explanation below) ([U.S. Department of Education, 2007](#)). Current districtwide assessment requirements include grade K-3 diagnostic reading assessments, grade K-8 and 11 reading and mathematics, and grade 5, 8 and 11 science. Furthermore, if your district assesses other subjects or grade levels, all students (including ELLs) in those grade levels must be tested.

As defined in the [Districtwide Assessment Requirements](#) available on the DE Website, Chapter 12 of [Iowa Code](#) requires that each school or school district shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan provisions for districtwide assessment of student progress for all students. The plan shall identify valid and reliable student assessments aligned with local content standards, which include the [core content standards referenced in subparagraph 12.8\(1\)\(c\)\(2\)](#). These assessments are not limited to commercially developed measures.

Rule Interpretation:

1. Districtwide means all attendance centers within a school district or accredited nonpublic school.
2. Districtwide assessment means large-scale achievement or performance measures.
3. All students must participate in districtwide assessments unless a student's IEP designates an alternate assessment.
4. The districtwide assessment plan must assess student progress on all content standards in reading, mathematics, and science.
5. School districts are providing evidence for the technical adequacy of districtwide assessments through the Iowa Technical Adequacy Project (ITAP).

**Note for only public school districts:** NCLB requires that all students be tested if they are enrolled in school on the day of testing. Testing windows for the Iowa Assessments are established by Iowa school districts in accordance with Iowa Testing Program guidelines. It is expected that a school building and the district can report results for all district enrolled and open-enrolled students.

**5. What are the requirements for reporting results and participation rates on state content assessments**

Regarding State and district report cards, it is required that the number of *recently arrived* students who are **exempted from one administration** of the State's (districtwide) reading test be reported.

To ensure recent arrival students are properly counted for AYP, the district needs to make sure student enrollment and test codes are properly completed in their student information systems, which is submitted to the DE during the Project EASIER data collection. If this is done correctly, first year students will be included or excluded correctly in AYP reporting for the state.

- If tested, results for recently arrived ELLs (during their first 12 months) are not counted for proficiency in reading, mathematics, or science because students do not meet FAY [full academic year] requirements.

However...

- Recently arrived ELLs must be tested and counted for AYP participation rates in mathematics and science testing.
- Recently arrived ELLs who take the English language proficiency test (I-ELDA) are included in AYP participation rates for reading.
- If a district elects to count the results of **any** recently arrived ELL for taking the reading, mathematics, and/or science assessments, the district must count the scores of **all** recently arrived ELLs. A district may not count the scores of only some recently arrived ELLs. These students cannot be counted as participating in the Iowa Assessments. They are considered to be excluded and cannot be counted toward the 95% participation rate for this sub-group.

- The only flexibility regarding academic achievement testing for recently-arrived ELLs (less than 12 months) is that they may opt out of districtwide reading assessment (Iowa Assessments) one time and that the reading portion of the I-ELDA, the ELP assessment, can serve as a substitute for the Iowa Assessments reading participation for AYP purposes.

**6. Can we test students out of level?**

Yes. However, a student tested out-of-level below their grade level will be counted as **an exclusion** for AYP purposes.

**7. What are the requirements for meaningful participation for students taking a districtwide assessment in mathematics, science, or reading?**

The opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and abilities does not mean that students whose level of English precludes their meaningful participation in testing must sit in front of a blank answer sheet for the entire testing period; **once such students have demonstrated their knowledge and abilities on the test section, they are finished with that section.**

On the Iowa Assessments, if a student does not answer enough questions to generate a score, he is counted non-participating. This rule affects both AYP and AMAOs. If a student is counted as non-participating for not answering enough questions and a district or a school misses AYP because of that, the district may appeal the decision to the Iowa Department of Education.

**8. Which ELLs are eligible for ELL accommodations?**

- An ELL who:
  - has been assessed with an English language proficiency test and meets the criteria as an ELL student,
  - has evaluation data that demonstrates a need for accommodations, and
  - is participating in instructional programs and services to meet the language and academic content needs of the student. (Transition students may receive ELL accommodations on the Iowa Assessments.)

In some AEAs, this data is found in the student's cumulative folder or in an ELL Success Plan. The ELL Success Plan is recommended, but not required.

- An ELL who has been assessed with an English language proficiency test and meets the criteria as an ELL student but whose family has refused ESOL services for their child.

In each example above, documentation on the ELL accommodations selected and implemented during testing be maintained in the appropriate student and testing records.

**Reminders:**

- For state assessments, an ELL who also has either an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan may receive additional accommodations as identified in that plan. Please note that they are also eligible for ELL accommodations that may not be included in the IEP or 504 Plan.

For the I-ELDA, ELL accommodations are not permitted unless an IEP or a 504 Plan specifies accommodations that do not violate the constructs and purposes of the I-ELDA.

- ELL accommodations should be a part of the ELL students' classroom testing practice on a regular basis. If a student is not familiar with the accommodations for statewide testing before the actual test, such accommodations may negatively impact on the student's score.

**9. *What accommodations are allowed to ELLs?***

Table 1 shows the allowed ELL accommodations and their administrative requirements. Part 2 of this document contains research based guidance to individualize accommodation support for ELLs on districtwide and state-wide assessments.

Additional administration directions for accommodations are also located in the Testing Manuals for each assessment.

**TABLE 1. Accommodations Permissible for ELLs for Districtwide Assessments**

Direct Linguistic Support Accommodations (Presentation Accommodations)		Content Area	Administration Directions/ Requirements
<b>Reference Materials</b>	<p>Provision of English/Native Language Word-to-Word Dictionary</p> <p>(Accommodation D in <i>Appendix C</i> Flow Chart)</p>	<p>Allowable for all content areas <b>except</b> Reading</p>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed in all content area assessments except Reading</li> <li>Dictionaries that include pictures or full definitions are not allowed</li> <li><b>Electronic and computer translators are not allowed</b></li> <li>Should not be used for the first time during testing</li> </ul> <p><b>Administrative Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should provide each ELL with access to a paper-based commercial bilingual word-to-word dictionary, if available at the school.</li> <li>A vetted list of paper commercial word-to-word dictionaries allowable on large-scale assessments may be obtained from <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=ell">http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=ell</a>.</li> <li>Test in a separate area or small group with students needing the same accommodation, so that other students are not distracted</li> <li>Provide extended time to allow students appropriate time to use the dictionary</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each district should standardize the dictionaries allowable for classroom and testing purposes</li> <li>This accommodation is allowed for all subtests as the benefit outweighs the risk of compromised validity</li> <li>Accommodation should reflect like-type classroom instruction</li> </ul>
<b>Test Directions</b>	<p>In English or the student's native language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide written version of written/oral test directions</li> <li>read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions</li> <li>clarify/simplify test directions (in English only)</li> </ul> <p>(Accommodation B in <i>Appendix C</i> Flow Chart)</p>	<p>Allowable for all content areas</p>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited to test directions, NOT for test items or test questions</li> <li>Clarification/simplification may be provided in English only, not in the native language</li> </ul> <p><b>English Language Administrative Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For written directions, students should be given ample time to read or re-read directions</li> <li>If written directions are provided in English, directions must be written verbatim from the administration manual</li> <li>Oral directions must either be verbatim or, if involving clarification or simplification, must remain close to the test direction wording. Clarifications and simplifications should not provide clues to test item answers</li> <li>With oral directions, test in a separate area or small group with students needing the same accommodation, so that other students are not distracted</li> </ul> <p><b>Native Language Administrative Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For both oral and written translation of directions, direct translation (not interpretation) from English is essential. The intended purpose of the translation is to be an accommodation rather than a modification of the directions.</li> <li>Proctors may provide a district-approved written version of the test directions in the native language to students who need this accommodation, as available. Not all districts will have the native language version of the test directions to provide for their students.</li> </ul> <p>See # 10 on translator qualifications/administration processes.</p>

Direct Linguistic Support Accommodations (Presentation Accommodations)		Content Area	Administration Directions/ Requirements
Test Items	<p>Proctor reads aloud parts of tests or complete test verbatim in English</p> <p>(Accommodation C in <i>Appendix C</i> Flow Chart)</p>	<p>Allowable for all content areas <b>except</b> Reading</p>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not Allowable for the reading subtest. Other than the directions, the reading test (passages, questions, or answers) cannot be read. Otherwise, the reading test becomes a listening test and invalidates the construct being assessed (i.e., the student's understanding of sound, form, and meaning relationships.)</li> </ul> <p><b>Administrative Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The read aloud accommodation may be used to read aloud any writing prompts, test questions, and/or answer choices on the mathematics, science, social studies, and language subtests. It is not allowable for the reading subtest</li> <li>Readers should use even inflection so that the student does not receive any cues by the way the information is read. It is important for readers to read test items/questions and text word-for-word exactly as written. Readers may not clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance to students. Readers need to be familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the content. This is especially important for high school mathematics and science. Graphic materials may be described, but should also be made available in print or tactile formats.</li> <li>While the ELL may not need assistance with the entire test, the ELL is allowed to request that specific words, phrases rather than having the entire test read aloud verbatim</li> <li>Student may need to be tested individually in an isolated area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practices typically call for readers to be provided to students on an individual basis – not to a group of students. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. This is difficult when a person is reading to an entire group of students.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Test in a separate area or small group with students needing the same accommodation, so that other students are not distracted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>However, verbatim reading to a group of students is permitted in testing if the accommodation is provided to the student on that basis during regular ongoing instruction</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Other Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the district's decision as to whether this accommodation will be available to students based on local resources</li> <li>It is incumbent on the school to provide this accommodation, not DE.</li> <li>Accommodation should reflect like-type classroom instruction</li> </ul>
	<b>Indirect Linguistic Support Accommodations (Timing Accommodation)</b>		
Timing	<p>Provide extended time</p> <p>(Accommodation A in <i>Appendix C</i> Flow Chart)</p>	<p>Allowable for all content areas</p>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All tests must be completed on or by the end of the test window</li> </ul> <p><b>Administration Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any extension of time should occur at the end of, or immediately following, the planned testing session during the scheduled test day.</li> <li>Students who use this accommodation may need a separate place to test. They will take considerably longer to finish than their peers.</li> </ul>

**10. What are the conditions under which a translator can be used for test directions, the qualification requirements for that translator, and the procedures to improve the validity of the test direction translation?**

**Conditions under which an interpreter/sight translator can be used:**

- Student has limited reading skills in English; and
- Student's native language listening proficiency is sufficient to benefit from an interpreter/sight translator; and
- No print translation is available or student has low proficiency in reading and writing in the native language.

**Translator qualifications**

- Translators providing this accommodation should be literate and articulate in the native language so as to provide a synonym as close to the English words as possible. Great care should be taken with translations so they can render a direct (e.g., verbatim) translation of the directions only.
- If not a certified Iowa educator, the test administration must be supervised by a certified Iowa educator.

**Procedures to Improve the Validity of the Translation**

**Before a test**

- The interpreter/sight translator ...
  - may have supervised access to the test up to four days prior to test administration
  - must review security policy
  - must be trained by the school test coordinator or designee in the expectations for test administrators
  - should be assigned to one student for the entire assessment (it is preferred that the interpreter/sight translator be the same person each day – stay consistent throughout test administration)
  - should become familiar with the student before testing (if not already known to the student)
- The student and interpreter/sight translator should each have a copy of the test.

**During a test**

- Do not alert the student to his/her mistakes during testing.
- Do not prompt the student in any way that would result in a better response or essay.
- Do not influence the student's response in any way.
- Interpret/translate all directions including example questions.
- If asked to repeat a question or paragraph, repeat the entire paragraph or question so as not to identify only important aspects.
- Give special emphasis to words printed in boldface, italics or capitals.
- Interpret/translate all answer choices on a multiple-choice test before accepting an answer.
- Avoid voice inflection which may be seen as a clue.

**After a test**

- Do not discuss test or responses with others.
- Participate in the evaluation process (discussion of how well the accommodation worked).

Adapted from: the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) *Guidelines for Inclusion*. (2011)  
Author: Dover, DE.

Guidelines derived from:

Clapper, A.T., Morse, A.B., Thurlow, M. L., & Thompson, S. J. (2006). *How to Develop State Guidelines for Access Assistants: Scribes, Readers, and Sign Language Interpreters*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Stansfield, C. (2008). Sight translation of assessments. Prepared for the LEP Partnership, U.S. Department of Education. Rockville, MD: Second Language Testing, Inc. Retrieved November 12, 2008, from <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/spotlight/LEP/2008/>.

**11. Are there any additional administrative practices (that are available to all students) that can also be provided to ELLs on the day of the test?**

Yes, on the day of the assessment, test administrators may need to adjust the timing, scheduling, or setting of the assessment *based on the individual needs of all students (including ELLs), scheduling needs of the school, or requirements associated with specific accommodations*.

Because these test administration practices are not specific to ELLs' linguistic needs, they are generally not defined as *accommodations*. They include the following:

- Different location
- Provide distraction-free space or alternate, supervised location for student (e.g., study carrel, front of room).
- Individual or small group
- Breaks
- Use of page markers to maintain place

Test administration practices available for all students can be found in the Iowa Assessments test administration directions.

**12. What are key considerations for assigning accommodations to ELLs with special needs (IEPs or 504 plans)?**

1. Accommodated tests for students with disabilities (unless they are cognitively impaired) must measure the same construct that all other students experience. Alternate assessments, based on alternate achievement standards, may be provided to students with the most significant cognitive impairments, as determined by the IEP team.
2. The Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan team and ESL professionals must collaborate to include the ESL needs of any ELL with an identified disability in his/her IEP. Effective collaboration will guarantee that ELL accommodations are placed in the 504 plan or IEP.

3. The IEPs or 504 plans for any ELL with a disability must follow the accommodation requirements established by the IEPs or 504 plans. ELLs with IEPs may receive both the ELL accommodations found in these guidelines *and* the accommodations listed on their IEPs (those of which correspond to the disabilities accommodations allowable on the Iowa Assessments). When an ELL accommodation and the same accommodation in the student's IEP have conflicting guidance, the guidance for the accommodation in the IEP takes precedence, as long as the accommodation does not invalidate the constructs of the test.

**For more information see** IDEA, [34 CFR §300.160\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) and [34 CFR §300.160\(b\)\(2\)\(ii\)](#) as excerpted below:

The State's (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, the LEA's guidelines) must-

- (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and
- (ii) Instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

### **13. What is an alternate assessment?**

The Iowa Alternate Assessment is designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to engage the Iowa Assessments, even with accommodations. Alternate assessments are evaluative measures that are administered when the standard assessment is considered to be unsuitable for a particular student. Alternate assessments are designed to increase the capacity of large-scale assessment systems to ensure that all students are included in the accountability system of overall student performance.

ELLs who are special education students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) can take the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM) if specified in their IEP.

### **14. What is the difference between an alternative and an alternate assessment?**

Judith Wilde clarifies this terminology in her document entitled *Definitions for the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Assessment* (Wilde, 2004, p. 4).

**Alternative assessment** refers to assessment that is used instead of standardized testing. Examples of this type of assessment include journaling, reports, presentations, observations, criterion-referenced tests (in which students' achievement on specific objectives is the focus, rather than their achievement in comparison to some specific "norm" group), and collaborative work. **Alternate assessment** is used for students who cannot complete the standardized tests in their original format.

### **15. What about the NAEP?**

ELLs who are enrolled in district buildings at the grade levels selected for participation in the National Assessment of Educational Progress must be included. Accommodation guidelines are provided with the test administration directions. As of 2011, NAEP ELL accommodation guidelines no longer ask school decision-makers to refer to the accommodations given to the student on the state assessment. Please follow NAEP guidelines to ensure consistency of ELL accommodations across states.

The NAEP guidelines for Iowa are located on the Iowa Department of Education Web site at [http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=677&Itemid=1312](http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=677&Itemid=1312).

## Part II: Research-Based Recommended Best Practices

### **16. Can you explain more about the kind of support available for ELLs taking academic assessments?**

Yes, *linguistic* support accommodations are available to ELLs; this is different from the type of accommodations allowable for students with disabilities.

The purpose of testing should be to obtain information that will be useful for making instructional decisions and determining the extent of student progress in the curriculum. Testing accommodations are one of the primary strategies for ensuring that ELLs who are included in districtwide mathematics, science, social studies, writing, or reading assessments are more likely to be tested on their knowledge of the content rather than their English language proficiency.

Testing accommodations for ELLs involve standardized changes to testing procedures, testing materials, or the testing situation in order to allow students meaningful participation in an assessment. Effective accommodations for ELLs address the unique linguistic and socio-cultural needs of the student by reducing construct irrelevant variance due to language, but do not alter the test construct. Accommodated scores should be sufficiently equivalent in scale that they can be pooled with unaccommodated scores (Acosta, Rivera, & Shafer Willner, 2008, p. 38). (To learn more about accommodations, go to <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu>.)

Accommodations should only be used when they help to reduce the effect of the student's developing English language proficiency that would interfere with obtaining accurate information about the student's achievement. When selected properly, the use of accommodations can still permit the interpretation of the student's percentile ranks and grade equivalents in the same manner in which they are interpreted for others.

#### *Accommodations Categories for ELLs*

There is sometimes confusion among school-based educators concerning the *rationales* for accommodations intended for ELLs and accommodations intended for students with Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) (Shafer Willner, Rivera, & Acosta, 2007). Current practices among many states is to define accommodations for ELLs in relation to ELLs' unique linguistic and other background needs, rather than using the categories used for students with disabilities.

Accommodations for ELLs provide two types of support, direct linguistic support and indirect linguistic support.

- Direct linguistic support accommodations involve adjustments to the language of the test. Such accommodations can be provided in the student's native language or in English. These accommodations are sometimes referred to as presentation accommodations.

- Indirect linguistic support accommodations involve adjustments to the conditions under which ELLs take the test. These accommodations are sometimes referred to as timing accommodations.

### ***Modifications vs. Accommodations***

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations; accommodations provide access. Modifications are not accommodations. Modifications lower performance expectations for students through off-level instruction or altering the construct being instructed and assessed. On high stakes assessments, ***modifications are not allowable*** for any student, since they may have the unintended consequence of reducing the opportunity to learn and demonstrate competency in critical content. Assessment modifications are changes in the test or the testing process that change the test expectation, the grade level, or the construct or content being measured. **Modifications are not appropriate for ELLs on high stakes assessments.** Modifications invalidate the test results. If modifications are used, the student's test result for the purpose of AYP will be invalidated.

Examples of test modifications:

- Clarifying or translating test items
- Answering questions about test items any time during the test, even without giving the answers
- Defining words for the student
- Using dictionaries that provide definitions; this does not include word-to-word dual language dictionaries

**Again, modifications are not allowed.**

**NOTES:** Reducing the quantity of assignments or items is not normally a modification; rather, reduction in quantity is a reflection of the fact that ELL students may require extra time to complete each assignment, and therefore may not be able to complete the same number of items as other students. These students, however, are expected to work on assignments of similar content depth and complexity.

Providing a student with a modification during a state accountability assessment may constitute a test irregularity and may result in an investigation into the school's or district's testing practices.

### ***17. Who should be involved in making decisions about accommodations?***

It is recommended that decisions about testing accommodations for ELLs are made by more than one individual. Decisions might be made by the school team responsible for planning the ELL's academic program. In most schools, these decisions are made by an ELL team, Language Acquisition Committee, or similar group. The role of the decision-making committee is to discuss the accommodations that a student may need for state testing, decide which accommodations will be used by the student, and document the accommodations selected.

For students who are ELLs, members of the decision-making committee might include:

- Teachers of English language learners or bilingual students
- General educators involved in supporting the student
- School/district test coordinator
- School administrator

Members of the ELL accommodation decision-making committee are encouraged to assign accommodations to ELLs at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment to ensure use throughout the school year; the day of the assessment should not be the first time the accommodation is introduced to the ELL.

### **18. What factors need to be considered when selecting accommodations to meet ELLs' unique needs during content assessments?**

There are those who suggest that if the school committee is unsure of which accommodations to select for the ELL, then all possible accommodations allowed should be selected for the student. However, this is not correct since it does not ensure that students receive *appropriate* support (i.e., scaffolding) as their English language proficiency increases. *More linguistic support is not always better; in fact, too much of the wrong type of linguistic support can actually hinder student performance.*

The decision-making committee can use the following guidance to select linguistic support accommodations for ELLs.

#### **General Principles for Accommodating ELLs**

It is important to remember there is no one-size-fits-all approach to ELL accommodation (Abedi, Mirocha, Leon, & Goldberg, 2005). Typically, accommodation needs change or alter as an English language learner gains language acquisition. Rather than ask what accommodation was found to be most effective for *all* ELLs, it is important to focus on the effectiveness of each accommodation based on the individual ELL's English language proficiency and other student background factors which influence a student's achievement of English language proficiency.

Research indicates that ELLs with selected accommodations matched to their linguistic and cultural needs scored higher than (a) ELLs with "incomplete" accommodations – i.e., selection done without matching accommodations to ELL-responsive criteria, and (b) ELLs who were not provided any accommodations at all (Kopriva, Emick, Hipolito-Delgado, & Cameron, 2007). Remember, the primary purpose of ELL assessment accommodations is *not* to improve ELLs' rate of passing the state assessments, but to allow ELLs to *more accurately* demonstrate their knowledge of the content being assessed.

**Important:** Decision-making committees are encouraged to assign accommodations to ELLs at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment to ensure use throughout the school year; the day of the assessment should not be the first time the accommodation is introduced to the ELL.

## Guidance for Individualizing ELL Accommodation Selection

The following guidance can be used with Table 2. Appendix C also contains a decision flow chart for assigning accommodations to ELLs.

Effective decision-making about the provision of appropriate accommodations is facilitated by gathering and reviewing a variety of information about the student's level of English language proficiency and present level of academic performance in relation to local and state academic standards. It is important that ELL accommodation decisions are based on evidence, not subjective judgment.

Base your ELL accommodation decisions on the evidence of the student's progress in school and other factors. In the weeks prior to the meeting for determining accommodations, gather information on student achievement, including

- Student demographic information
- ELL identification and placement information
- Student level of academic achievement
- Student instructional program

***Decisions for assigning accommodations should be, at minimum, aligned with the ELL's ELP level and literacy level. It is not appropriate to assign every ELL the same accommodation(s).*** These recommendations for the assignment of accommodations are derived from the ELL accommodation research base listed in the Reference List at the end of this document. These criteria and procedures are based on the recommendations found in the [\*Descriptive study of state assessment policies for accommodating English language learners\*](#) (Shafer Willner, Rivera, and Acosta, 2008), available at <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu/context.aspx>.

### Considerations When Selecting Accommodations for ELLs:

- A. Level of English language proficiency (ELP) on state ELP test**
  - Beginning, intermediate, or advanced ELP
- B. Literacy development in English and/or the native language**
  - Native language literacy
  - Interrupted schooling/literacy background
- C. Factors that impact effective usage of accommodations**
  - Grade/age
  - Affective needs
  - Time in U. S. schools

While DE does not require a specific format for documenting accommodation information in the student cumulative folder, a suggested format is available in Appendix A.

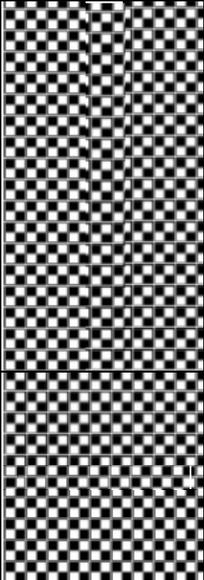
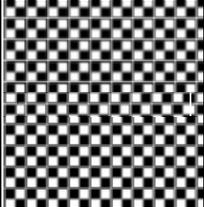
The ELL accommodation decision-making committee might also ask the ELL's teacher(s) to complete two forms found in the Appendix of this document which provide information on student use of linguistic accommodations during classroom instruction and assessment:

- Tool ELL-1: Teacher Observation Checklist on Student Access Needs Requiring Accommodation
- Tool ELL-2: Accommodations from the Student Perspectives

Once information/data is compiled about the student's background and needs, use the following three-step process for selecting accommodations that are the best fit for different ELLs is based on the research base for accommodating ELLs. (See the list of references in the Appendix for the research base.)

Table 2 provides a mapping of the ELL accommodations allowed in Iowa districtwide assessments based on the three considerations of (a) ELP, (b) literacy development in English and/or the native language, and (c) factors that impact effective usage of accommodations.

**Table 2. ELL Accommodations Mapped to Student ELP and Literacy Levels**

Direct Linguistic Support Accommodations		ELP Levels			Content Area
		Beginning 1 & 2	Intermediate 3 & 4	Advanced 5 & 6 (not exited)	
Reference Materials	<p><b>Provision of English/Native Language Word-to-Word Dictionary</b></p> <p><b>Intent:</b> The intent of this accommodation is to provide linguistic support to students by allowing students to access precise translation of unknown words from English to their native language in a standardized manner. Students who benefit most from this accommodation are students who are able to use a translation dictionary with ease.</p>	○	●	●	Allowable for all content areas <b>except</b> Reading
Test Directions	<p><b>In English or the student’s native language:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide written version of written/oral test directions</li> <li>• read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions</li> <li>• read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions</li> <li>• clarify/simplify test directions (in English only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Intent:</b> The intent of these accommodations are to provide test directions (not questions) in writing for students whose reading skills are more developed than their auditory receptive skills. This allows more time for processing language to understand expectations. When provided in the native language, these accommodations provide support to ELLs who may be unfamiliar with American testing procedures.</p>	●	○		Allowable for all content areas
Test Items	<p><b>Read aloud parts of tests or complete test verbatim in English</b></p> <p><b>Intent:</b> The intent of this accommodation is to provide linguistic support to ELLs so they can access the content of the test in order to show what they know. It lessens the linguistic load. As long as the test is not measuring reading, it does not adversely affect test validity to read prompts, test questions, and/or answer choices to the student.</p>	●	○		Allowable for all content areas <b>except</b> Reading
Indirect Linguistic Support Accommodations					
Timing	<p><b>Provide extended time</b></p> <p><b>Intent:</b> This accommodation reduces the linguistic load for ELL students by providing additional time to process the English language.</p>	●	●	●	content areas Allowable for all

- Highly recommended for use by ELLs at this English language proficiency level
- Recommended for use by ELLs at this English language proficiency level and certain levels of English or native language literacy development.
-  Not be appropriate for students at this ELP level; however, the accommodation may be deemed allowable as determined by the decision-making team

The following guidance can be used with Table 2. Appendix C also contains a decision flow chart for assigning accommodations to ELLs.

**A. Create an initial list of accommodations matched to student’s English language proficiency level.**

The English Language Proficiency (ELP) level for each ELL is determined by the student’s *I-ELDA composite* score. Schools have the option to choose accommodations appropriate for their students, within the permitted accommodations for their ELP level. See **ELL Accommodations Mapped to Student ELP and Literacy Levels** (Table 2, above) for accommodations that are recommended for ELLs by ELP levels.

The I-ELDA performance levels (and how they map to the research base on linguistic support accommodations allowable for the state content area assessments) are as follows:

<i>I-ELDA</i> English Language Proficiency Levels		ELP Levels by Which ELL Accommodations Described in Research Base
Level 1	Pre-Functional	Beginning
Level 2	Beginning	
Level 3	Intermediate	Intermediate
Level 4	Advanced Intermediate	
Level 5	Advanced	Advanced
Level 6	Full English Proficiency, not exited	

**Note:** For more information and relevant documents on the I-ELDA, please refer to the *I-ELDA Web* page in the *Program and Services* section of the *Northwest AEA Website* at [http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/programs\\_and\\_services/research\\_development\\_and\\_evaluation/iowa\\_english\\_language\\_development\\_assess\\_i\\_elda/](http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/programs_and_services/research_development_and_evaluation/iowa_english_language_development_assess_i_elda/).

Dr. Tom Green at [tgreen@nwaea.k12.ia.us](mailto:tgreen@nwaea.k12.ia.us) can be contacted by districts if their local AEA representative is unable to assist.

**General Rules of Thumb for Matching Accommodations by ELP Levels**

**ELLs with beginning ELP**

ELLs at the lowest levels of English language proficiency [levels 1 and 2] tend to experience the greatest need of accommodations but are the least able to use them. In general, the use of oral supports **such as verbatim reading of the entire test or clarifying directions in English or the native language** are recommended over written accommodations in English; however, most of these would not be expected to produce much of an effect for the lowest proficiency levels.

**ELLs with Intermediate ELP**

ELLs at the intermediate level of ELP [levels 3 and 4] have usually developed some literacy in English and are expected to benefit from a wider variety of both written and oral accommodation options. Decision makers should note that the need for

accommodations at this level varies considerably depending upon the unique background characteristics of the student as well as the literacy demands of the test. Similar to ELLs with beginning ELP levels, the existing research suggests that native language accommodations such as **bilingual word-to-word dictionary (and extra time to use it)** as well as English accommodation are useful at the intermediate level. It may be more useful for these students to **request selected portions of the text be read-aloud** rather than have to sit through a read-aloud of the entire test.

#### **ELLs with Advanced ELP**

For students at advanced ELP levels [levels 5 and level 6 ELLs who have not exited from ELL status] the need for most kinds of accommodations is expected to decrease. English/native language support in the form of a **bilingual word-to-word dictionary (and extra time to use it)** can be helpful if the ELL is literate in his/her native language and has received recent instruction in that language (whether in the U.S. or abroad).

Table 2 provides the list of accommodations matched to ELP levels and literacy in English and the native language.

### **B. Individualize the initial list of accommodations for each ELL based on the student's literacy development in English and/or the native language**

Adjust the list of accommodations based on student background factors concerning the student's previous schooling experiences.

#### **a. Native Language Literacy**

If the student has developed literacy in his or her native language after receiving instruction in the specific content area being assessed either in their home country or the U.S., provide the student a **word-to-word bilingual dictionary** (along with **extended time** to use it).

**Note:** A vetted list of word-to-word dictionaries allowable on large-scale assessments may be obtained from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/?section=lep>

#### **b. Interrupted Schooling/Literacy Background**

If the ELL has experienced interrupted formal education during his/her schooling career and as a result, has weaker literacy skills in his/her native language and English, it is highly probable that the ELL is more oral-dominant in his/her developing English language proficiency), In this case, provide the ELL with **oral language support** accommodations that are generally offered to ELLs with beginning ELP (such as **verbatim reading of the entire test** rather than selected sections of the test and scribe test.)

Appendix C contains a decision flow chart for assigning accommodations to ELLs.

### **C. Individualize the initial list of accommodations for each ELL to increase the likelihood of effective use during assessment.**

Adjust the list of accommodations selected in #1 and #2 above based on student background factors to assure accommodations are useful to the student. Grade/Age, Time in U.S. Schools, and Affective needs may all impact student ability to use ELL

accommodations. (For example, older student sometimes refuse accommodations due to the embarrassment of receiving additional support in front of classmates. Students who have just arrived in the U.S. need to gain familiarity with U.S. testing practices and expectations. Anxiety can raise an ELL's affective filter and impact test performance.)

1. **Include the student in the process of assigning accommodations** to ensure use of the accommodation and student understanding of its use. (See Tool ELL-2 *Accommodations from the Student's Perspective*.)
2. If the student is unfamiliar with standardized testing or computer-based testing, provide **test preparation activities** prior to the assessment.
3. Offer opportunities to **use the accommodations prior to the assessment** during instruction and assessment.
4. When appropriate, administer tests in **special settings, with specialized personnel, in small groups or individually**, while not accommodations, are test administration adjustments that might be helpful for increasing students' level of comfort, facilitating test administration, and ensuring more accurate test results.

#### **D. Review your decision.**

Here is a recommended procedure. Check to see if this is the procedure recommended by your AEA or district:

- Document your decision in the **Accommodations Documentation Forms (Tool ELL-4 and Tool ELL-5)**. (They are located in this document's Appendix.) Place Tool ELL-4 in the student's cumulative folder. *Some AEAs and districts record this information in an Excel Spreadsheet ELL School Accommodation Plan which can be obtained from your AEA or district.*
- Verify that accommodation(s) are being used on a regular basis during classroom instruction and assessment. Ensure that (a) the student is being offered differentiated support in classroom instruction and assessment which measures the same construct as the state assessment, (b) the student is offered *appropriate* accommodations which do not provide them with undue support with the construct being assessed, and (c) the day of the assessment is not the first time the student encounters the accommodation.
- Review the decision both at the end of the initial Language Acquisition Committee meeting and throughout the school year. It is also recommended that the Language Acquisition Committee meet prior to the state-required assessment to examine any feedback provided by the student's teacher concerning the effectiveness and appropriateness of the accommodation provided.
  - You may wish to use the questions below as a guide:
    - a. What accommodation(s) is/are regularly used by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?
    - b. What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?

- c. What difficulties did the student experience in using the accommodation(s)?
- d. What is the student’s perception of how well the accommodation(s) “worked?”
- e. What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, & specialists about how the accommodation(s) worked?
- f. Should the student use accommodation(s) or are changes needed?

Remember, there is no one-size-fits-all set of accommodations for ELLs because ELLs are not a homogenous group. Testing accommodations and test administration practices need to be customized to the different needs and previous schooling of these students at different stages of English language proficiency.

**19. Are there any recommended best practices for test administrators for administering accommodations to ELLs?**

Yes. The following are recommendations for ways to help school personnel prepare to administer the Iowa Assessments with one or more accommodations:

- Attend a training session, implemented by the school, which explains and reviews at minimum the Test Administrator Manual and this training guide.
- Read both the Test Administrator Manual and this training guide prior to test administration.
- Experience implementing classroom practices that are similar to IOWA Assessments accommodations.
- Provide the test booklet on the day of testing, prior to the testing session, so that the test administrator can become familiar with the test form in advance of administration. This is especially true of accommodation administrators who will need to read particular test sessions aloud to a student(s).

It is recommended that the school maintain documentation indicating preparations for test administration have taken place.

**20. What types of ELL accommodation documentation does DE recommend?**

Accommodations for ELL/LEP students must be based on the individual needs of each student. Throughout the school year, instructional strategies should be documented. It is recommended that this documentation be placed in the student’s cumulative folder in the school records office. The decision making team can refer to this documentation when assigning and documenting accommodations to the student for the districtwide assessment.

*It is strongly recommended that the team keep a record of which accommodation(s) are used and why. This will enable schools to track what testing decisions are made for their students and how these decisions are enacted.*

*Recommendations:*

- See suggested format in Appendix A.
- Review your decision as you record it in the student's ELL service plan or other similar tracking documentation used in the student's cumulative folder (Tool ELL-4)
- Don't forget to document the accommodations selected in the notes for test administrator. (Tool ELL-5)
- Review the decision both at the end of the initial ELL Committee meeting and throughout the school year.
- It is also recommended that the ELL Team meet prior to the state-required assessment to examine any feedback provided by the student's teacher concerning the effectiveness and appropriateness of the assigned.

Remember, there is no one-size-fits-all set of accommodations for ELLs. They need to be customized to the needs these students have as they are developing English language proficiency.

## Definitions

### Accommodation for ELLs

Accommodations for ELLs involve changes to testing procedures, testing materials, or the testing situation in order to allow students meaningful participation in an assessment. Effective accommodations for ELLs address the unique linguistic and socio-cultural needs of the students without altering the test construct. Because appropriate accommodations do not alter the test construct, accommodated and un-accommodated scores can be interpreted equivalently and pooled for reporting. (Rivera, Acosta, and Shafer Willner, 2008)

### Alternate assessment

Alternate assessments are evaluative measures that are administered when the standard assessment is considered to be unsuitable for a particular student. Alternate assessments are designed to increase the capacity of large-scale assessment systems to ensure that all students are included in the accountability system of overall student performance. The Iowa Alternate Assessment is designed only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who are unable to engage the Iowa Assessments, even with accommodations.

### Alternative assessment

Judith Wilde clarifies this terminology in her document entitled *Definitions for the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Assessment* (Wilde, 2004, p. 4).

**Alternative assessment** refers to assessment that is used instead of standardized testing. Examples of this type of assessment include journaling, reports, presentations, observations, criterion-referenced tests (in which students' achievement on specific objectives is the focus, rather than their achievement in comparison to some specific "norm" group), and collaborative work. **Alternate assessment** is used for students who cannot complete the standardized tests in their original format.

### Limited English Proficient (LEP) (the Federal term)

Refers to a student who has a language background other than English, and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background. (Iowa Administrative Code, 281—60.2 (280))

### Limited English Proficient (LEP) (the Iowa guideline)

A student who scores limited English proficient on **all parts** of a language proficiency assessment (eg: TELPA, I-ELDA, IPT, LAS, etc) **or a combination of limited and proficient** scores.

### English Language Learner (ELL)

A national origin student who is limited-English proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.) (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 1999, p. 35) The term *English Learner* is also used as well.

## English as a Second Language (ESL)

Refers to a structured language acquisition program designed to teach English to students whose native language is other than English, until the student demonstrates a functional ability to speak, read, write, and listen to English language at the age- and grade-appropriate level. (Iowa Administrative Code, 281—60.2 (280)) A program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. ESL instruction is usually in English with little use of native language. (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 1999, p. 35)

## Refused ESL Services ELLs:

ELLs who have a primary or home language other than English and who may have limited or no age-appropriate ability to understand, speak, read, or write English. These students are qualified to receive ESOL services; however, their families have refused such services. By federal law, these students must participate in the content assessments and I-ELDA which are used for federal accountability requirements and are eligible for ELL accommodations based on the guidelines in this document.

## Other Second Language Acquisition Terminology

**L2** = a second language

**L1** = native language, primary language, first language, home language

**FEP** = Fluent (or fully) English proficient

**NEP** = Non-English Proficient (A student who scores non-English proficient on any part of the I-ELDA)

## Other Educational Terminology

**DE** = Iowa Department of Education

**IEP** = Individual Education Plan

**Iowa Assessments** = As of Fall 2011, the ITBS and ITED are referred to as the Iowa Assessments.

**ITBS** = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (Grades 3-8)

**ITED** = Iowa Tests of Educational Development (Grades 9-12)

## Iowa Administrative Code Definitions

(See Chapter 12, Iowa Administrative Code, Available:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/ACODocs/DOCS/4-20-2011.281.12.rtf>)

*“Districtwide assessments”* means large-scale achievement or performance measures. At least one districtwide assessment shall allow for the following: the comparison of the same group of students over time as they progress through the grades or the cross-sectional comparison of students at the same grades over multiple years.

*“English as a second language”* refers to a structured language acquisition program designed to teach English to students whose native language is other than English, until the student demonstrates a functional ability to speak, read, write, and listen to English language at the age- and grade-appropriate level. (See Chapter 60, Iowa Administrative Code). English as a Second Language (ESL) has been the traditional terminology in Iowa. A similar term that is being used more often is *English for Speakers of Other Languages* (ESOL) since there are many ELLs who have 3, 4, and 5 languages to their credit. The rationale is that ESL does not show full understanding of what many of ELLs bring to the classroom.

*“Fully English proficient”* refers to a student who is able to read, understand, write, and speak the English language and to use English to ask questions, to understand teachers and reading materials, to test ideas, and to challenge what is being asked in the classroom. (See Chapter 60, Iowa Administrative Code)

*“Limited English proficient”* refers to a student who has a language background other than English, and the proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student’s academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background. (See Chapter 60, Iowa Administrative Code)

*“Transitional bilingual instruction”* refers to a program of instruction in English and the native language of the student until the student demonstrates a functional ability to speak, read, write, and listen to the English language at the age- and grade-appropriate level. (See Chapter 60, Iowa Administrative Code)

## **Appendix A: ELL Success Plan Sample**

(provided by Green Hills AEA at <http://ghaea.org>)



The following GRADING adaptations or modifications will be used:

- 
- Use of rubric
- State Guidelines for Reasonable Expectations
- Reduced number of test items
- "Pass" grade
- "Effort" grade
- Student graded against self
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following TESTING accommodations will be used:

- 
- Bilingual word-to-word dictionary
- Directions read
- Test items read
- More time allotted
- One-on-one testing environment
- Small group testing
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following ENVIRONMENTAL adaptations will be used:

- 
- Student seating
- Wait time for answer increased
- Limit use of slang/idioms
- Language is clear and slowed, but natural
- Student is allowed peer contact
- Appropriate gestures/signing are allowed
- Classroom is labeled
- Student is allowed movement
- Classroom buddies assigned
- Visual schedules
- "Mini" visual schedules
- Allow use of first language
- Culturally-appropriate adaptation
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following CURRICULUM adaptations will be used:

- 
- Language objectives in content classrooms
- Post content objectives
- Post language objectives
- Revised assignments
- Highlight key words in textbooks
- Record directions on tape
- Record text on tape
- Supplemental reading material at student's lexical level
- Revised text
- Word bank
- Key vocabulary provided
- Rewording and rephrasing
- Revised text Visual supports Kurzweil software
- Accept oral answers Visual supports Student use of technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following instructional goals will be used in MATH:

- Language objectives for lessons
- Post language objectives
- Post content objectives
- Modeling during lesson
- Bilingual tutor
- Manipulatives, counters, calculators for classwork
- Manipulatives, counters, calculators for homework completion
- Bilingual math texts
- Hierarchy of questions for formative assessment
- "Check backs" to clarify instructions
- Additional instructional support for conceptual learning
- Additional time for homework
- Explicit instruction for academic language of math
- Repetition of vocabulary
- Vocabulary support (math word banks, math journal)
- Visual representations for word problems
- Content picture dictionaries
- Bilingual dictionary
- Content "buddy"
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following instructional goals will be used in SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Language objectives for lessons
- Post language objectives
- Post content objectives
- Illustrations conceptual knowledge
- Highlight key words in text
- Key concepts focus
- Hierarchy of questions for formative assessment
- Pre-teach key concepts
- Assessment of key concepts only
- Bilingual texts
- Additional time for homework
- Explicit instruction for academic language
- Group work for reading/writing
- Visuals
- Games supporting learning
- Oral administration of tests
- Teach the Text
- Backwards approach
- Additional support for worksheets/ chapter questions
- Content picture dictionaries
- Bilingual dictionary
- Content "buddy"
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following instructional goals will be used in SCIENCE:

- Language objectives for lessons
- Post language objectives
- Post content objectives
- Drawing to demonstrate learning
- Group work for lab
- Oral explanations of learning
- Bilingual science texts
- Pictorial steps for tasks
- Additional instructional support for conceptual learning
- Additional time for homework
- Hierarchy of questions for formative assessment
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Repetition of vocabulary
- Bilingual dictionary
- Explicit instruction for academic language of science
- Content picture dictionaries
- Process learning with writing
- Content "buddy"
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following instructional goals will be used in WRITING:

- Language objectives for lessons
- Post language objectives
- Post content objectives
- Think, say, write, read approach
- Illustrate writing pieces
- Mediated writing
- Writing dictionaries
- Bilingual dictionaries
- Grammar instruction in context of constructed response
- Graphic organizers
- Vocabulary in context
- Record story orally before writing
- Picture dictionaries
- Signed dictionaries
- Technology support
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The following instructional goals will be used in READING:

- Language objectives for lessons
- Post language objectives
- Post content objectives
- Supplemental reading program including
- Mediated reading
  - Mediated writing
  - Spelling
  - Phonics
  - Comprehension
  - Vocabulary
- Visual Phonics instruction
- Experiential approach
- Adapted reading material
- Bilingual books
- Picture dictionaries
- Signed dictionaries
- Student friendly definitions for vocabulary
- Explicit instruction of figurative language (idioms, slang)
- Explicit instruction of multiple meaning words
- Explicit instruction of academic language
- Oral summarizing
- Technology support
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Concerns:**

Difficulty paying attention

Peer relations

Attendance

Hearing

Difficulty following directions

Non-participation in class

Health

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Incomplete homework

Incomplete classwork

Vision

**Plan for Additional Concerns:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Appendix B: Accommodations Tools for ELLs**

# Tool ELL-1: (Sample) Teacher Observation Checklist on Student Access Needs Requiring Accommodations

**Directions:** School staff might use this form during the school year to identify opportunities for integrating ELL accommodations into classroom instruction and assessment.

Use this checklist to identify accommodations that might be effective for the ELL and/or indicate instances in which the ELL may need additional guidance from the teacher support to use the accommodation effectively. The list is not exhaustive—its purpose is to prompt teachers of ELLs to consider a wide range of student ELL accommodation needs. Might the ELL accommodation offer the ELL appropriate linguistic scaffolding so that the student can demonstrate his/her content knowledge and/or skills?

Indicate **Y** (yes), **Y/S\*** (Yes with support), **N** (Not at this time), or **DK/NA** (Don't know or not applicable).

\*Y/S is an important category because it helps track the *emergence* of content knowledge and skills in ELLs. Evidence of emerging skills can be seen when the task is completed with support (Shafer, 1999).

	Y	Y/S	N	DK/NA	Corresponding Accommodation(s)
<b>Direct Linguistic Support: Oral Accommodations</b>					
1. Is the student able to read and understand directions in English?					In English: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide written version of written/oral test directions</li> <li>read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions</li> <li>read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions</li> <li>clarify/simplify test directions</li> </ul>
2. Can the student follow oral directions in English from an adult or audiotape?					
3. Does the student need directions in English repeated frequently?					
4. Is the student able to read and understand directions in the native language?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide written version of written/oral test directions</li> <li>read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions</li> <li>read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions</li> <li>clarify/simplify test directions</li> </ul>
5. Can the student follow oral directions in the native language from an adult or audiotape?					
6. Does the student need directions in the native language repeated frequently?					
7. Does the student need all the text read to him/her or just selected words?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read aloud and repeat as requested: writing, math, and/or science test items in English</li> </ul>
8. Does the student have low/poor English Reading skills that may require the reading of tests or sections of tests that do not measure reading comprehension in order to demonstrate knowledge of subject areas?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read aloud and repeat as requested: writing, math, and/or science test items in English</li> </ul>
9. Other:					

**Next Steps:** As you complete this checklist, write a few notes to remind yourself how you'd like to use these accommodations in your classroom. Use the following questions as a guide for the Next Steps you might plan:

- What accommodation(s) would you suggest be regularly used by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?
- What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?
- What difficulties did the student experience in using the accommodation(s)?
- What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation(s) "worked?"
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, & specialists about how the accommodation(s) worked?
- Should the student use accommodation(s) or are changes needed?

	Y	Y/S	N	DK/NA	Corresponding Accommodation(s)
<b>Direct Linguistic Support: Written Accommodations</b>					
10. Has the student used a bilingual word-to-word dictionary during classroom instruction or assessments or with homework assignments?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide word-to-word bilingual dictionary</li> </ul>
11. Other:					
<p>Next Steps: As you complete this checklist, write a few notes to remind yourself how you'd like to use these accommodations in your classroom. Use the following questions as a guide for the Next Steps you might plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What accommodation(s) would you suggest be regularly used by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?</li> <li>What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?</li> <li>What difficulties did the student experience in using the accommodation(s)?</li> <li>What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation(s) "worked?"</li> <li>What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, &amp; specialists about how the accommodation(s) worked?</li> <li>Should the student use accommodation(s) or are changes needed?</li> </ul>					

	Y	Y/S	N	DK/NA	Corresponding Accommodation(s)
<b>Indirect Linguistic Support</b>					
12. Does the provision of extra time ensure the student can complete classroom assignments?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide extended time</li> </ul>
13. Does the student use other accommodations or equipment which require more time to complete test items (e.g., scribe, use of bilingual dictionary, etc.)?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide extended time</li> </ul>
14. Can the student work continuously for the length of time allocated for standard test administration?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide scheduled breaks as needed during testing</li> </ul>
15. Do others easily distract the student and/or does he/she have difficulty remaining on task?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide scheduled breaks as needed during testing</li> </ul>
16. Other:					
<p>Next Steps: As you complete this checklist, write a few notes to remind yourself how you'd like to use these accommodations in your classroom. Use the following questions as a guide for the Next Steps you might plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What accommodation(s) would you suggest be regularly used by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?</li> <li>What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?</li> <li>What difficulties did the student experience in using the accommodation(s)?</li> <li>What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation(s) "worked?"</li> <li>What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, &amp; specialists about how the accommodation(s) worked?</li> <li>Should the student use accommodation(s) or are changes needed?</li> </ul>					

## Tool ELL-2: (Sample) Accommodations from the Student's Perspective

It is critical for ELL students to learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Some students may come to the learning environment having had limited experience expressing personal preferences and advocating for themselves. Speaking out about preferences, particularly in the presence of "authority figures," may be a new role for students, one for which they need guidance and feedback. Teachers and other ELL team members can play a key role in working with students to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations.

Use this questionnaire to collect information about needed accommodations from the student's perspective. The questions can be completed independently or as part of an interview process. Whatever method is used, however, make sure that the student understands the concept of an "accommodation," providing examples as necessary. Also, provide a list of possible accommodations to give the student a good understanding of the range of accommodations that may be available.

1. Think about all the classes you are taking now, which is your best class?
2. Explain what you do well in this class.

The things you said you can do well above are your strengths. For example, you may have mentioned Reading, writing, listening, working in groups, working alone, drawing, or doing your homework as some things you can do well. Also, if you said, for example, you really like the subject, have a good memory, and you work hard in class, these are also examples of your strengths.

3. Now ask yourself, what class is hardest?
4. What's the hardest part of this class for you?

The things you said were hardest are areas you need to work on during the school year. For example, you might have listed paying attention in class, Reading the book, taking tests, listening, remembering new information, doing homework, or doing work in groups. These are all things in which an accommodation may be helpful for you.

5. In the "Class" box below, write down all of the classes you are taking now. Then look at a list of accommodations. Next to each class, write down what accommodation(s) you think might be helpful for you.

Classes	Accommodations

## Student Assessment Accommodations Agreement

Here is an example of a form a student could carry on test day to the test administrator or teacher. This type of format puts the student in charge (building self advocacy skills) and sets the expectation that, with these accommodations, the student can show what he/she knows on the test. Some accommodations (e.g., special test editions) need to be arranged long before test day, but should still be included on this list to make sure the student receives the correct test booklet. A similar form could be carried to class to remind teachers about daily accommodations.

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Student's Name)*

need the following accommodations to take this test:

If you need more information about these accommodations, you can talk to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of ESOL teacher, parent, principal, and/or related service provider)*

Thank you for helping me to do my best on this test!

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Student Signature)* *(Date)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Parent/Guardian Signature)* *(Date)*

### Tool ELL-3: (Sample) Logistics Planning Checklist

**Directions: School Accommodations** Logistics Planning Checklist can be used in the planning and implementation of assessment accommodations for an individual student. Use the checklist by indicating **Y** (Yes), **N** (No), or **DK/NA** (Don't Know or Not Applicable). School staff might print, complete this form, and keep with the student's ELL Plan in the student's cumulative folder.

	Y	N	DK/NA
<b>Accommodations Throughout the Academic Year</b>			
1. Accommodations are documented on student's ELL plan.			
2. Student uses accommodations regularly and evaluates use.			
3. A master accommodations plan/data base listing assessment accommodation needs for all students tested is updated regularly.			
<b>Preparation for Test Day</b>			
4. Special test editions or native language test administrator to administer test directions are ordered for individual students based on information contained in the master accommodations plan			
5. Test administrators/proctors receive a list of accommodation needs for students they will supervise (list comes from master accommodations plan/data base).			
6. Adult supervision is arranged and test administrators receive training for each student receiving accommodations in small group or individual settings, including extended time (with substitutes available).			
7. Trained readers and/or scribes are arranged for individual students (with back-up personnel identified available in case of absence on the part of the accommodators).			
8. Special equipment is arranged and checked for correct operation (e.g., tape recorder, word processor).			
<b>Accommodations on the Day of the Test</b>			
9. All eligible students receive accommodations as determined by their ELL Plan.			
10. Provision of accommodations is recorded by test administrator.			
11. Substitute providers of accommodations are available as needed (e.g., readers, scribes).			
<b>Considerations After the Day of the Test</b>			
12. Responses are transferred to scannable answer sheets for students using special equipment and adapted test forms and response documents.			
13. All equipment is returned to appropriate locations.			
14. Students who take make up tests receive needed accommodations.			
15. Effectiveness of accommodations use is evaluated by test administrators and students and plans are made for improvement.			

## Tool ELL-4: (Sample) ELL Student Assessment Documentation Form

### Student Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Current Grade of Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_

State Testing Identifier (STI): \_\_\_\_\_ I-ELDA English Language Proficiency Level: \_\_\_\_\_

### School/District Information

District Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Content Area	Participation in the Iowa Assessment <u>Without</u> Accommodation	Participation in the Iowa Assessment With Accommodation (List those that apply)	Participation in the Iowa Assessment in Reading	Exempted from Participation in the Iowa Assessment
Reading		Example - Adhere to accommodations in IEP		<b>Reason:</b> ELL has attended school in the United States for less than 12 months
Mathematics		Example- Read math instructions		<b>Not Applicable</b>
Science		Example- Word to word dictionary		<b>Reason:</b>

### Language Acquisition Team Members' Signatures

Course Content Teacher	____/____/____ Date
ESOL Teacher/Title III Coordinator	____/____/____ Date
Parent (parent informed of Language Acquisition team decision, if not a member)	____/____/____ Date
Building Administrator or Designee	____/____/____ Date
Other	____/____/____ Date

## Tool ELL-5: (Sample) School Test Administrator Form for Monitoring ELL Inclusion and Accommodations in the Districtwide Assessments

### Directions

#### Part A. (To be completed by a member of the school Language Acquisition committee)

1. List the ELL/LEP students in the school.
2. Indicate whether each student will be included (I) or is exempt (E) from the test. (ELL/LEP students who have been in the U.S. for less than 12 months may be exempted from the state-required assessments on a one-time basis. No other exemptions are allowed.)
3. List the testing accommodations to be allowed for each student.

#### Part B. (To be completed by the test administrator after the test)

1. After the test, verify whether each accommodation was administered (A), refused (R), or not administered for any other reason (N).
2. Note in the test administrator comments sections the reasons for not administering or any issues that arose during administration of the accommodation. (e.g., translator not available).
3. A copy of this form may be kept at the school for purposes of documentation following the assessment to keep on file.

Name of Assessment \_\_\_\_\_ Date of assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

A. To be completed by school ELL accommodations decision-making team			B. To be completed by school test administrator	
Student Name(s)	I- Include E- Exempt	Accommodation(s) Allowed	A/ R/ N	Test Administrator Comments  A- administered R- refused N- not administered

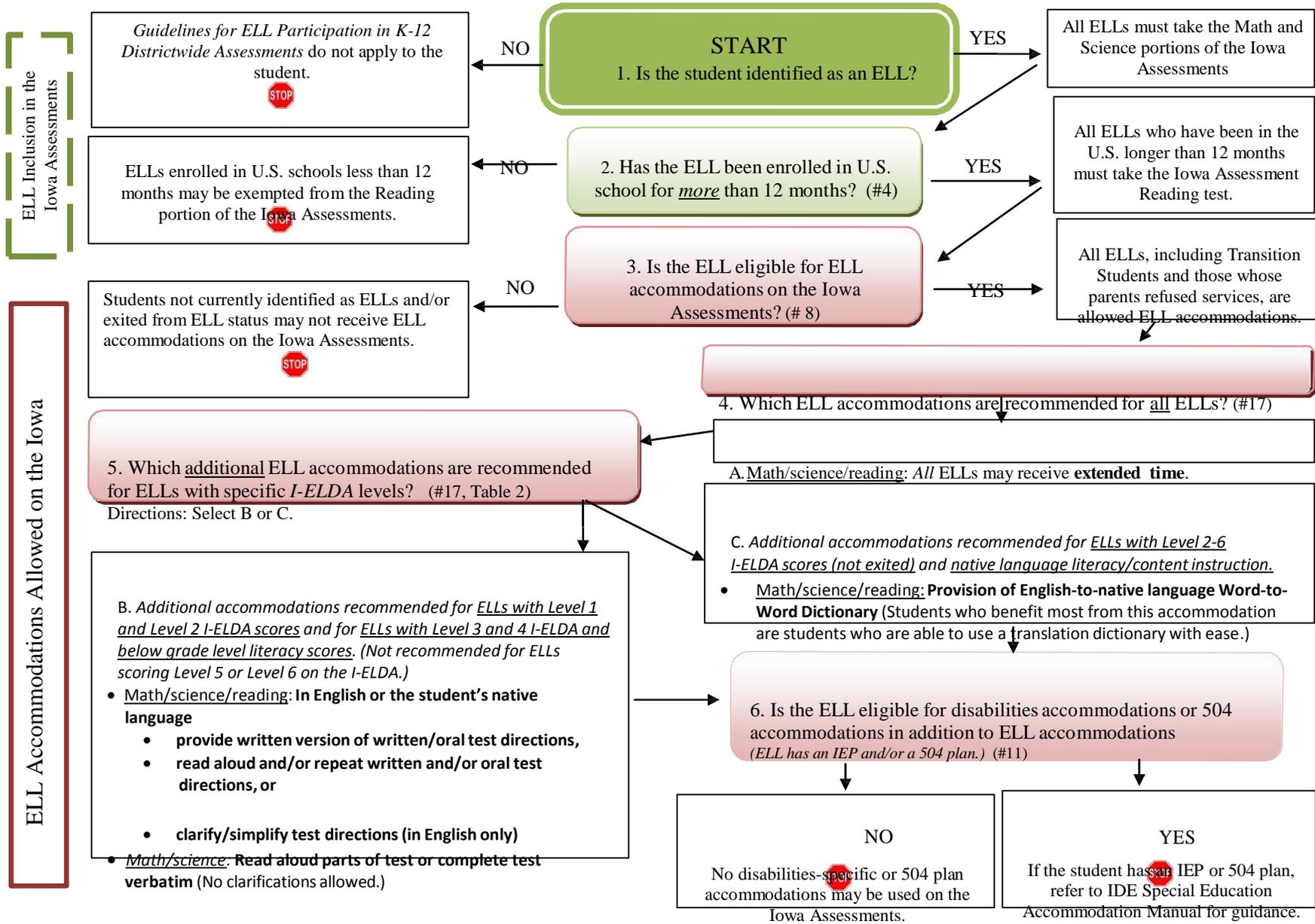
\*Please return this form to the school's test coordinator. This information will be sent to the LEA following the assessment.

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# Appendix C: Accommodations Tools for ELLs Decision Flow Chart for ELL Participation in the Iowa Assessments

Based on Guidelines found in Iowa Guidelines for ELL Participation in K-12 Districtwide Assessments

(Each box contains the item # in the Guidelines where this guidance in found.)



ELL Inclusion in the Iowa Assessments

ELL Accommodations Allowed on the Iowa Assessments

I-ELDA

Related Q: Are ELL accommodations also allowed

on the Iowa Assessments on the I-ELDA? (#8)

NO

No ELL accommodations are allowed on the I-ELDA. An ELL with an IEP



may use those disabilities accommodations which I-ELDA guidelines allow.

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