Assessing English Language Learners: Considerations and Requirements

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CT State Department of Education

Session Participants

• Name
• Role
• District (urban, suburban, rural, high-incidence, low-incidence)
• Reasons for attending this session
Session Topics

• Assessment for identification purposes
• Annual federal mandates/state mandated LAS Links assessment
• AMAO targets
• SRBI and ELLs
• Using LAS Links subtest results to plan

Assessment for Identification Purposes

• Title III Primary Requirements for English Language Learner (ELL) Identification:
  
  STEP 1: Preliminary assessment of dominant language (Home Language Survey)
  
  STEP 2: Final determination of dominant language (LAS Links or other language proficiency assessment, optional interview/observation)
  
  STEP 3: Determination of English language proficiency (proficiency interview, English language proficiency test, performance on grade-level tasks and assessments)
Annual Federal Assessment Mandates

- All schools that receive ESEA, Title III are held accountable for annually measuring the English proficiency of all students identified as ELLs.

- Language instructional education programs must help ELLs develop English proficiency by addressing and assessing reading, writing, listening, speaking and comprehension.

State Mandated LAS Links Assessment

- Must be given annually

- Students meet ELL exit criteria only if they achieve both the linguistic mastery standard and grade-level academic expectations.

- Students who have met exit criteria must be reported to the CSDE and their parents should also be notified.
AMAO Targets

- Under ESEA, states must establish Title III Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs).

- AMAO 1: Progress

- AMAO 2: Proficiency

- AMAO 3: Adequate Yearly Progress of ELL Subgroup (based on CMT/CAPT)

- AMAO targets must increase annually.

AMAO Targets:
School Years 2008-2009 to 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>AMAO 1 (Progress)</th>
<th>AMAO 2 (Proficiency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</table>

*AMAO 3 percentages are equivalent to the Adequate Yearly Progress requirements for that year but take only the ELL subgroup into account.
ELLs and SRBI

- English language instruction is part of core instruction and is therefore part of Tier I for all ELLs.
- Individual needs of an ELL must be considered
- Universal screens and Assessment for ELLs
  - ELLs may go through same process as their non-ELL peers, but results should be interpreted by an ELL practitioner.

What is “typical progress” for an ELL?

- There is no quantifiable moment when it is definitively known that an ELL is not making progress.
  - NCLB, IDEA, and RTI/SRBI research are limited regarding ELLs
    - SRBI practices have not been validated with culturally and linguistically diverse students
    - To be effective, SRBI (including core instruction) must be embedded in culturally and linguistically responsive practice.
- “True peers” provide the best way to determine whether an ELL student is progressing sufficiently.
Universal Screening— for all students

Evaluation by appointed staff using cut-off scores scientifically research-based for the general population

- Meets cut-off score
- Does not meet cut-off score
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>Non-ELL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELL at Level 1, 2, 3 in Rdg. or Wr. subtests of LAS Links testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL at Level 4 or 5 in Rdg. and Wr. subtests of LAS Links testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  
Evaluation by qualified ELL specialist

- Qualified staff determines ELL is making appropriate progress
- Qualified staff determines ELL is not making appropriate progress

- Continue high-quality Tier I instruction
- Qualified staff conducts appropriate diagnostic assessment. Student considered for Tier II intervention

Follow regular protocol for diagnostic assessment and consideration for placement in appropriate Tier II services

Hallmarks of Tier I for ELLs

- **Setting** may include general education classrooms, bilingual education classrooms, dual language classrooms, ESL pull-out and/or push-in programs

- **Curriculum and instruction** should be research based, aligned to standards, differentiated, culturally responsive and reflect best strategies for instructing ELLs and align to CT ELL Framework

- **Interventions** such as flexible small groups, appropriate instructional materials, effective and appropriate strategies for instructing ELLs carried out by interventionists such as general education teacher, ESL/Bilingual teachers, school specialists

- **Assessments and progress monitoring** carried out to monitor language and content acquisition and effectiveness of instruction and interventions, comparison to “true peers,” use of multiple measures

- **Data analysis and decision making** as a team with trained ESL/Bilingual staff
Hallmarks of Tier II for ELLs
(Student achievement is at a lower level and substantially lower rate when compared to “true peers.”)

- **Setting** may include general education classrooms, bilingual education classrooms, dual language classrooms, ESL pull-out and/or push-in programs, small group setting (3-5 students)
- **Interventions** should be short-term, systematic and explicit, matched to student needs; should develop academic language through vocabulary instruction and substantial practice opportunities, reinforce skills
- **Interventionists** such as general education teacher, ESL/Bilingual teachers, school specialists
- **Assessments and progress monitoring** should be carried out frequently (e.g., weekly or biweekly), should use multiple measures, valid and reliable tools; instruction should be planned based on knowledge of student performance and literacy in L1 and L2
- **Data analysis and decision making** as a team with trained ESL/Bilingual staff; consideration of how to measure language and academic progress

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Hallmarks of Tier III for ELLs
(Achievement continues at a lower level and substantially lower rate when compared to “true peers,” and student needs more individualized instruction)

- **Setting** may include general education classrooms, bilingual education classrooms, dual language classrooms, ESL pull-out and/or push-in programs, very small or individualized instruction
- **Interventions** should be short-term, systematic and explicit, more intensive and individualized than Tier II interventions
- **Interventionists** should have training and experience working with ELLs, must collaborate with the ELL specialist, may include special education teacher, instructional support providers, general education teacher, ELL specialist
- **Assessments and progress monitoring** should be carried out very frequently (e.g., twice per week), should use multiple measures, cognitive and academic assessments should be conducted; interpreted within context of student’s language proficiency and acculturation
- **Data analysis and decision making** as a team with trained ESL/Bilingual staff; consideration of how to measure language and academic progress, students’ needs and specific background
Using LAS Links subtest results to plan

- LAS Links results are reported for the Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing subtests, Comprehension and Oral composites and Overall.
- Scores fall into five performance levels.
- The Overall score is used to determine whether a student has met exit criteria and for compliance purposes.
- However, the subtests provide valuable information for a range of purposes at the classroom and school levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Oral</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>455*</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>432</td>
<td><strong>406</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>541</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>470</td>
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<tr>
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<td>555</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<td>589</td>
<td>646</td>
<td><strong>625</strong></td>
<td>567</td>
<td>700</td>
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</table>

*Top Number = Scale Score
*Bottom Number = Score Level

- Level range from 1 (Beginning) to 5 (Above Proficient)
- Comprehension scores come from specific items on Listening and Reading subtests; Oral scores reflect the Speaking and Listening subtests
Questions on LAS Links Data

1. Which students have met English mastery criteria (as defined by LAS Links)?

2. Which students might you choose to group for reinforcement of specific skills?

3. Do you see any “red flags” in the data set? How would you proceed?

CT State Department of Education Online Resources

To access Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) page:


2. On QuickLinks menu select 'more' to display additional QuickLinks.

Questions

Please feel free to contact us if you have additional questions!

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