



Arizona Department of Education

Assessment Section
Exceptional Student Service Section
Office of English Language Acquisition Services Section

AZELLA Reassessment - Domain Scoring

Background

The exiting criteria for English Learners must be the same for all students. See [January 2015 letter](#) from U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice.

For Arizona, the exit criteria is to obtain an Overall Proficiency Level of Proficient on the AZELLA.* In 2019, ADE notified the field that EL Services exit (code 07), *Withdrawal due to Sped Criteria*, would no longer be an option for exiting students from EL services.

Additionally, states are allowed to utilize Domain Scoring in the very rare instances in which students with a disability are not able to access one or more domains (i.e., Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) even with allowable accommodations. Students must participate in at least one domain. See letter from United States Department of Education, [Update on English Language Proficiency Assessments](#).

Examples of instances in which students are not able to participate or access a domain are: student is fully/completely/profoundly deaf or blind, student is mute, or student does not have any observable communication.

At this time, AZELLA is our State's only English Language Proficiency assessment. Students with significant cognitive disabilities will continue to participate in this assessment.

Looking Forward

ADE has been working with its Assessment Technical Advisory Committee (TAC- National Experts) and researching how other states are utilizing the Domain Scoring option. ADE has also been collaborating internally with the OELAS and Exceptional Student Services Units to develop guidelines, processes, and procedures. Utilizing the Domain Scoring option must ensure that students are able to demonstrate proficiency in the domain or domains in which they are able to participate and ultimately no longer in need of English Learner services. Domain Scoring is not intended for students who can access the assessment but may not demonstrate proficiency.

With the postponement of the AZELLA Stand-Alone Field Test, and a pause on A-F Letter grades for the 2020-2021 school year, ADE has been working to determine when the implementation of Domain Scoring would begin. Initially, Domain Scoring was set to begin with the new AZELLA assessment

Kathy Hoffman, Superintendent of Public Instruction

1535 West Jefferson Street • Phoenix, Arizona 85007 • (602) 542-5460 • www.azed.gov

aligned to the new 2019 Arizona ELP Standards. However, ADE believes it would be beneficial to implement this option for the Spring 2022 Reassessment as originally intended, although it will be with the current AZELLA Reassessment test.

Next Steps

- Developing guidelines that IEP Teams will use to determine: 1) if a student meets the criteria for Domain Scoring, and 2) how IEP Team will identify the domains in which the student *will* participate. This guidance will be coming soon. IEP Teams should not be making this determination at this time.
 - Decisions on exemptions from individual domains are based on access to the assessment construct, not on eligibility category or educational placement, and must be made on a case by case basis. Such decisions are inherently fact specific and need to be made by the appropriate team (i.e., the child's IEP or 504 Team, with input from the EL Specialists who work with the child).
- Share guidelines with the field via a Friday Focus Webinar
- Train and support the field with implementation

* A determination of Proficient for Overall Proficiency Level on AZELLA requires a Proficient Score on the Reading and Writing Domain Scores, as well as a Proficient Score on the Total Combined Score.