



Introducing Alt ELPA

Arizona's Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment



Objectives

Participants will

- Become familiar with the Alt ELPA
- Review and apply the approved Alternate ELP Standards
- Evaluate existing practices within your PEA that support English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities (ELSCDs)



Purpose

The purpose of state assessments is to provide an opportunity for students to show what they know and can do in relation to grade level standards.

What state assessments are:

- Opportunities
- Aligned to grade level standards
- Summative assessments
- Used along with other data to monitor trends and provide professional development

What state assessments are not:

- Designed to be used for teacher evaluations
- An isolated piece of data to use for making instructional or administrative decisions
- A test that students must “pass”



Alt ELPA Vision

Our vision is to embrace the language capabilities and full potential of ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities through a fair and accurate alternate assessment.

The “hows”

- Developed proficiency descriptors at three levels as part of the [standards document](#)
- Allow many universal features and accommodations to support students at varying ranges of communication
- Requested feedback from teachers of ELSCD throughout development
- Conducted a pilot study with a cognitive lab



The Students

Who takes alternate assessments?

Meet eligibility criteria as determined by the IEP Team:

- Have a significant cognitive disability characterized by a disability or multiple disabilities that impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior
- Is learning content linked to state content standards
- Requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains

Who takes Alt ELPA?

- Meet eligibility criteria above
- Has an EL status based on AZELLA Placement test



Eligibility Determination

1. Does the student have a significant cognitive disability? What evidence supports this?
2. Is the student's learning linked to grade level state content standards?
3. Does the student require extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-appropriate curriculum.



Significant Cognitive Disability

- Evidence of a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior
- Use results from
 - Cognitive Testing
 - Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
 - Achievement Tests
 - Classroom or District Assessments
 - English Language Assessments, if applicable



Instruction in State Content Standards

- Instruction is based on Arizona Academic Content Standards and/or Core Content Connectors
- Standards are taken from the student's enrolled grade level
- IEP goals and objectives align to State Standards
- Teacher is using research-based instructional strategies and interventions



Intensive Instruction and Substantial Supports

- School and community-based instruction
- Documented instructional needs and supports for the student to make measurable academic gains
- Present levels of academic and functional performance indicate the need for extensive direct individualized instruction



Considerations NOT to Use

- Disability category
- Attendance/absences
- Language/social/cultural differences
- Services received
- Setting/placement
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- Anticipated results of general assessment
- Low reading/achievement level
- Disruptive behavior
- Impact on accountability
- Administrator decision
- Anticipated emotional duress
- Need for accommodations



Accessibility

What about students with alternate modes of communication or a sensory impairment?

Optimal Testing Conditions

Universal Features*

Accommodations

Embedded

Non-embedded

*Universal features and accommodations are determined by domain.
Refer to the [Accessibility Manual](#) for details.



Optimal Testing Conditions

For all students and all domains

Assistive Technology (AT) device

Breaks and flexible scheduling

Directions adjusted

Focusing prompts and materials

Lighting

Magnification

Medical device

Navigation assistance by test administrator

Noise buffer

Object representations

Positioning

Preferred communication mode

Scratch paper and other note taking devices

Scribe

Tactile graphics

Verbal encouragement



Universal Features

Domain Dependent: Some universal features may also be accommodations

Amplification

Color adjustment

Disable universal features

Keyboard navigation

Online tools: highlighter, mark items, masking, strikethrough

Replay audio

Re-record

Text-to-speech

Writing tools

Zoom



Accommodations

Domain Dependent

Print on demand (paper test)

Text-to-speech

Word prediction

Read aloud

Sign language presentation

Verbal description of graphics

Remember: all accommodations must be documented in the IEP!



Application of Accessibility

- Are your IEP teams prepared to make these decisions?
- Who should be involved in these conversations?
- Are there practices that might need adjusting?



Logistics

Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators will register students October 3 – November 30, 2022.

Test administrator and test coordinator training available October 17.

No accommodations requests are required.

One on one administration with an observer required for scoring items on the speaking test.

Test administration window February 1 – March 17, 2023.

Operational field test: All ELs must take either AZELLA or Alt ELPA.



Systems

Registration

- Student Selector Application in ADEConnect
- Accessed by Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators
- Test administrator list

Training

- Available in the [LMS](#)
- Test administrators create their own accounts
- Instructions were e-mailed to Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators in September

Test Administration

- [Cambium portal](#)
- Practice tests
- Additional resources (manuals, technology requirements, etc.)



Registration Communication

- AZELLA platform is set up to upload all students.
- Students who are eligible for alternate assessments will be uploaded to AZELLA platform.
- Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators and AZELLA Test Coordinators must communicate students lists with each other.
- Do not administer AZELLA to students who are eligible for Alt ELPA!



Standards

Were developed to

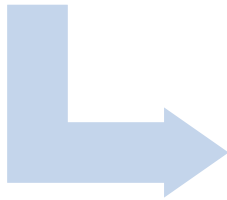
- Meet federal requirements
- Support instruction
- Reflect an understanding of the learner



Organization

6 grade levels/grade bands

- Kindergarten; grade 1; and grade bands 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12



10 standards

- common across the grade levels/grade bands



3 proficiency levels

- low, mid, and high
- reflecting end targets
- reflecting a progression K–12

ELP Standards for ELSCD

1	construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing
2	participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions
3	speak and write about grade-appropriate complex literary and information texts and topics
4	construct grade appropriate oral and written claims
5	conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems
6	analyze and critique the arguments of others orally and in writing
7	adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing
8	determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text
9	create clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech and text
10	make accurate use of standard English to communicate in grade-appropriate speech and writing

Standards 1 through 7 involve the language necessary for ELSCDs to engage in the central content specific practices associated with ELA and literacy, mathematics, and science. They begin with a focus on extracting meaning and then progress to engagement in these practices.

Standards 8 through 10 focus on some micro-level linguistic features and serve the other seven standards.



Domain Definitions

Speaking: the action of conveying information or expressing thoughts and feelings, or a response in a conversation.

Writing: process of using symbols to communicate thoughts and ideas or to convey or record information in a readable form to a particular audience and for a particular purpose.

Listening: receiving of language with thoughtful attention and processing sounds to understand their meaning or intent.

Reading: process of recognizing and understanding or making meaning from symbols, letters, or words.



Domains and Modalities

Modalities	Domains	Standards
Receptive	Listening and Reading	1, 8
Productive	Speaking and Writing	3, 4, 7
Interactive	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	2, 5, 6

The Alt ELPA will report out by modalities. Why is that helpful for this group of students?



Receptive Modalities: Standards 1 and 8

This mode refers to the learner as a reader or listener/viewer working with “text” whose author or deliverer is not present or accessible.

It presumes that the interaction is with authentic written or oral documents where language input is meaningful and content laden.

The learner brings background knowledge, experience, and appropriate interpretive strategies to the task to promote understanding of language and content to develop a personal reaction.



Productive Modalities: Standards 3, 4, and 7

This mode places the learner as speaker and writer for a “distant” audience, one with whom interaction is not possible or limited.

The communication is set for a specified audience, has purpose, and generally abides by rules of genre or style.

It is a planned or formalized speech act or written document, and the learner has an opportunity to draft, get feedback, and revise, before publication or broadcast.



Interactive Modalities: Standards 2, 5, and 6

This mode refers to the learner as a speaker/listener, where negotiation of meaning may be observed.

The exchange will provide evidence of awareness of the socio-cultural aspects of communication as language proficiency develops.

How does the modality organization of the standards inform curricular planning?



Proficiency Descriptors

The ten standards are common across every grade level/grade band.

Additional details about language are provided in the proficiency descriptors (low, mid, high) for each standard and grade level/grade band.

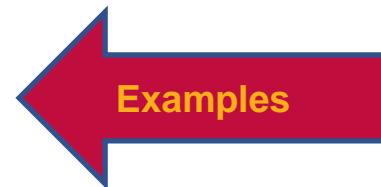
The proficiency descriptors articulate the English language proficiency knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of students at each level (low, mid, high) for a given standard and grade/grade band.



Proficiency Descriptors Level Examples

ELP Standard K.1: An English learner with significant cognitive disabilities can construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational texts through grade-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.

ELP Level	Proficiency Descriptors An English learner with significant cognitive disabilities can:	Example(s)
Low	<p>with prompting and support, use a very limited set of strategies to identify a few key words from read-alouds, oral presentations, and picture books.</p> <p><i>Limited set of strategies: Refers to one or two different strategies the student successfully uses regularly (e.g., matching, pointing, nodding, yes or no responses).</i></p>	<p>A student may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> match identical pictures or choose a picture of a familiar object, based on the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book, from a field of two pictures; attend to, point to, and/or identify realia, people, labeled pictures, items, shapes, etc., from the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book.
Mid	<p>with prompting and support, use an emerging set of strategies to identify some key words and main topics from read-alouds, oral presentations, and picture books.</p> <p><i>Emerging set of strategies: Refers to one or two different strategies to show understanding of meaning (e.g., select multiple choice, put pictures in order, answer verbally with a sentence starter).</i></p>	<p>A student may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> match pictures that are related by a concept (e.g., opposites), based on the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book; label/identify key vocabulary words/items/details, from the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book, using realia, visuals, or a word bank of key vocabulary to give a key detail; answer questions from the read-aloud, oral presentation or picture book with the use of pictures cards (from a field of 3); answer a cloze/fill in the blank question or use a sentence frame to give key information from the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book.
High	<p>with prompting and support, use an increasing range of strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer questions about key details retell basic information from read-alouds, oral presentations, and picture books. 	<p>A student may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> match antonyms or synonyms (e.g., "The dog is big, show me an animal that is not big.") from the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book; put items into the correct sequence of events, based on the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book, when provided with a field of 3 items; orally complete a sentence starter based on the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book (e.g., "The girl is happy but the boy is _____," or "Plants need sun, _____ and _____ to grow."); provide a simple retell in the appropriate sequence using key vocabulary (more elaborate details may be absent) from the read-aloud, oral presentation, or picture book, when provided with visual support as well as additional cues.



Compare-Standard 5 (Interactive)

An English learner with significant cognitive disabilities can conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems.

Kindergarten/Mid

With prompting and support:

- recall information from experience or from a provided source to answer a question showing developing control.

Middle School/Mid

With prompting and support:

- gather information from some provided sources.
- record some information from provided sources.
- retell information, using labeled illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics, as appropriate.

What are some content-based activities that align with this standard for each grade level?



Best Practices

Build a community of practice within your PEA. Members should include teachers of ELSCDs and EL support personnel.

AZELLA and Alternate Assessment Test Coordinator should develop communication methods with each other and support for teachers.

EL specialist should be part of the IEP team.

What else are you doing, or would you like to start doing to support language acquisition for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?





Questions?

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