

Dear Colleagues in Education:

This e-broadcast concerns important information about English Language Proficiency Assessment. Please take a few moments to review to note below.

Prior to FY06, Illinois used four state-approved nationally normed English language proficiency tests (LAS, MAC II, IPT, and LPTS). A student who scored at or above the 50th percentile on the nationally normed test used by its district was eligible to exit the program as English language proficient.

In FY06, Illinois instituted the use of ACCESS for ELLs™, a criterion-based assessment aligned to Illinois Learning Standards as its new, statewide test of English language proficiency. The state has determined that a composite score of 4.0 is English language proficient. At this level, English language learners can process, understand, produce, or use:

- specific and some technical language of the content areas;
- a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related paragraphs;
- oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with occasional visual and graphic support.

Any student scoring below 4.0 is deemed to be an English language learner and is eligible for placement in a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) or Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI). It is recommended that districts use this assessment along with other multiple indicators of English language learning to determine placement.

For more information about ACCESS for ELLs™, see <http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/access.htm> .

For more information about the rules governing transitional bilingual education, see <http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/default.htm> .