

California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

pptb-adad-jan18item02

# California State Board of Education January 2018 Agenda Item #09

## Subject

English Language Proficiency Assessments for California: Approval of the General Performance Level Descriptors for the Initial Assessment.

## Type of Action

Action, Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

The general performance level descriptors (general PLDs) for the Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) are presented herein for State Board of Education (SBE) approval. The approval of these general PLDs is required by California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60810.

## Recommendation

The California Department of Education (CDE) recommends that the SBE approve the proposed Initial ELPAC general PLDs (Attachment 1).

## Brief History of Key Issues

### Proposed Initial ELPAC General PLDs

The Initial ELPAC general PLDs (sometimes referred to as policy descriptors) provide generic descriptions of student performance level expectations across the three levels of the reporting hierarchy, which were approved at the September 2017 SBE meeting (Attachment 1). The general PLDs will be used to set grade-level-specific PLDs and develop reporting PLDs that describe levels of performance to educators, students, and parents/guardians.

Individual student Initial Assessment (IA) results include an overall scale score and three performance levels: Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), Intermediate English Learner, and Novice English Learner (Attachment 1). At the composite level, the CDE expects to produce three performance levels for oral and written language, pending confirmation from the Initial ELPAC field test data. Finally, at the domain level, the number of items in each measure is relatively small; therefore, there will be no scores produced in those areas.

The SBE-approved general PLDs for the Summative Assessment (SA) were used as the basis for the IA general PLDs. The SA is comprised of more items than the IA because the SA is used to measure student growth across years. Due to that difference in test design, the IA cannot support the same number of performance levels.

Attachment 1 (the proposed general PLDs) defines the performance levels and the qualitative descriptions of each level that, on SBE approval, will apply to the Initial ELPAC.

The CDE has gathered input on the structure and content of the proposed general PLDs from the English Learner Support Division, the ELPAC Technical Advisory Group, and members from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress stakeholder group, which consisted of representatives from the California Association for Bilingual Education, Californians Together, California Charter Schools Association, Advisory Commission on Special Education, California State PTA, Association of California School Administrators, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, California Federation of Teachers, Small School Districts’ Association, California School Boards Association, California Teachers Association, California Science Teachers Association, and Special Education Local Plan Area Administrators of California.

### Next Steps

In partnership with the Sacramento County Office of Education for the ELPAC contract, Educational Testing Service (ETS) will convene a group of educators to develop content-specific performance level descriptors in January 2018. An Initial ELPAC standard setting meeting will follow in February 2018 to develop recommendations for specific performance preliminary level threshold scores (cut scores), which are planned for presentation to the SBE as an Information Memorandum in April 2018 and to the SBE for action in May 2018. Select California educators will consider the knowledge and skills needed by a student who meets the minimum level of each PLD and use the SBE-approved descriptors to guide their judgments in establishing a preliminary proposed threshold score for each level. The educators will review, discuss, and provide feedback on the specific performance level thresholds on the basis of results from the Initial ELPAC field test. During the first administration of the initial ELPAC, teachers will be selected to participate in a threshold score validation study. More information regarding this study will be forthcoming.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

In December 2017, an Information Memorandum was provided to the SBE, giving an update on the development of the ELPAC including a detailed timeline (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-pptb-adad-dec17item03.docx>).

In November 2017, the SBE approved the operational summative assessment threshold scores, composite weights, and local educational agency apportionment rates (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/nov17item08.doc>).

In October 2017, an Information Memorandum was provided to the SBE on the standard setting and domain weighting process (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-pptb-adad-oct17item01.doc>).

In September 2017, the SBE approved revisions to the summative ELPAC test blueprints, the revised general PLDs, and the reporting hierarchy of the summative and initial ELPAC score reports (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/sep17item18.doc>).

In June 2017, an Information Memorandum was provided to the SBE with a study regarding the ELPAC’s potential transition to a computer-based assessment (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-asb-adad-jun17item04.doc>).

In March 2017, the SBE approved the commencement of a second 15-day public comment period for the proposed ELPAC regulations (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/mar17item20.doc>).

In December 2016, an Information Memorandum was provided to the SBE on the plan for the sample field tests of the ELPAC (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-dsib-adad-dec16item02.doc>).

In November 2016, the SBE approved the commencement of a 15-day public comment period for the proposed ELPAC regulations (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr16/documents/nov16item07.doc>).

In May 2016, the SBE approved the commencement of the rulemaking process for the proposed ELPAC regulations (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr16/documents/may16item01.doc>).

In January 2016, the SBE approved the ELPAC general PLDs, which were used to guide the development of domain and grade/grade-span-specific PLDs (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr16/documents/jan16item08.doc>).

In November 2015, the SBE approved the proposed ELPAC task types and test blueprints, which initiated the development and administration of the ELPAC (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr15/documents/nov15item12.doc>).

In October 2015, an Information Memorandum was provided to the SBE with an update on the activities for the transition to the ELPAC, including the development of test blueprints (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memodsibadad-oct15item01.doc>).

## Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

The 2017–18 Budget Act includes $13.8 million for ETS contract activities, which includes the development of general PLDs.

## Attachment(s)

* Attachment 1: Proposed Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California General Performance Level Descriptors (2 Pages)

# Attachment 1

**Proposed Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California General**

**Performance Level Descriptors**

General performance level descriptors (PLDs), or policy PLDs, are generic descriptors of student performance level expectations. They provide the range of measurement for the assessment and characterize results with regard to the defined standards. General PLDs apply across grades and grade spans and are referenced when drafting the specific descriptors used in setting threshold scores.

| **Level** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| Initial Fluent English Proficient [IFEP] | Students at this level have **well developed** oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways that are appropriate to different tasks, purposes, and audiences in a variety of social and academic contexts. They may need occasional linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they may need light support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the upper range of the “Bridging” proficiency level as described in the 2012 *California English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (2012 *ELD Standards*). |
| Intermediate English Learner | Students at this level have **somewhat developed** to **moderately developed** oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. This level captures a broad range of English learners, from those who can use English only to meet immediate communication needs to those who can, at times, use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways in a range of topics and content areas. They may need some degree of linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts (depending on the student, the level of support needed may be moderate, light, or minimal); they may need substantial-to-moderate support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the entire “Expanding” proficiency level and to the lower range of the “Bridging” proficiency level as described in the 2012 *ELD Standards*. |
| Novice English Learner | Students at this level have **minimally developed** oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) English skills. They tend to rely on learned words and phrases to communicate meaning at a basic level. They need substantial-to-moderate linguistic support to communicate in familiar social and academic contexts; they need substantial linguistic support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the “Emerging” proficiency level as described in the 2012 *ELD Standards* |