

English Learner (EL) Attributes and Definitions

These terms and acronyms are used very commonly in the EL Program. In addition, some of these designations are also used in reporting data to the State of Illinois.

ACCESS – A state-mandated assessment given to EL students each year to monitor student progress towards meeting the ISBE EL program exit criteria of a minimum of 5.0 composite.

Content Objective – Statement that identifies what students should know and be able to do in particular content areas. These objectives identify the required proficiencies within the content standards, e.g. NCSS, ILS.

Co-Teaching- A service delivery model in which two teachers work in a collaborative and coordinated fashion to jointly teach academically and behaviorally heterogeneous groups of students in a general education setting (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend). Co-teachers share instructional responsibility and accountability for a group of students for whom they both have ownership (Friend, n.d.). “Both educators contribute to instruction as part of co-teaching. Perhaps the most significant reconceptualization critical for co-teaching is the notion of a two-teacher classroom--rather than a one-teacher classroom with ‘help’ available from the other teacher” (Friend, n.d.)

Dual Language Learners- this term has two meanings. Within early childhood settings, the United States Department of Education defines this groups as “children who have a home language other than English and are learning two or more languages at the same time or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language” (US Dept. of Health and Human Services 2018).¹⁶ In K-12 settings, these are students who are participating in dual language education programs where they are taught in more than one language (see Chapter 3 for an in-depth description of types of language programming).

EL – English learner

ELP Level – English language proficiency level based on WIDA standards

EL Teacher - This teacher has a Bilingual and/or ESL endorsement in addition to a PEL (primary educator license) and supports EL students through a push-in and/or pull-out model. This teacher collaborates and plans instruction with the classroom teacher with a focus on co-teaching where appropriate.

Classroom Teacher with ESL/BL – This is a general education teacher who has ESL or Bilingual endorsements.

Home Language – Refers to the first question on the Home Language Survey: “Is there a language other than English spoken in your home?”

ISBE – Illinois State Board of Education – offices in Chicago and Springfield, Illinois

Language Objective – Statement that identifies what students should know and be able to do while using English during the lesson. Question: What language/literacy support will students need in this lesson?

LEP- Limited English Proficient (Federal Grant terminology for EL students)

Native Language – Refers to the second question on the Home Language Survey: “Does your child speak a language other than English?”

Newcomer – An EL student that has typically been in the United States less than one or two years.

TBE – Transitional Bilingual Education is a state mandated program for a school site with 20 or more EL students of the same language background. Preschool is counted separately from K – 5. TBE programs require native language instruction in core subjects as well as ESL.

TPI – Transitional Program of Instruction is a state mandated program for a school site with 19 or less EL students of the same language background. Native language instruction may be used as necessary and possible. ESL is the primary instructional methodology.

WIDA (formerly World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment)- is an educational consortium of state departments of education. Currently, 37 U.S. states and others, participate in the WIDA Consortium. WIDA designs and implements proficiency standards and assessment for grade K-12 students who are EL, as well as a set of proficiency standards and assessments for Spanish language learners. WIDA also provides professional development to educators and conducts research on instructional practices, as well as the results and use of the ACCESS and W-APT English language proficiency assessments.