



English Learner Parent Notification Letter Guidance

Requirements

Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains several requirements for English learner (EL) students. ESSA 1112(e)(3)(A-B) refers to the parental notification of their child's identification as an EL and their placement in a language instruction educational program (LIEP). The notification must include:

- The reason for the identification of the child as an EL;
- The child's level of English language proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- Methods of instruction used in the program in which the child is, or will be, participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how the programs differ;
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child and help the child achieve English language proficiency, and meet academic standards;
- Exit requirements for the program, expected rate of transition to a classroom not tailored for EL students, and expected rate of high school graduation;
- In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the annual goals in the child's individualized education program (IEP); and
- Information regarding parents' right to withdraw the child from a program upon their request, and to decline enrollment or choose another program or method of instruction, if available.

Timeline

Districts have 30 calendar days to identify EL students. In Kentucky this involves administering the [home language survey](#) (HLS) upon the student's initial enrollment in a Kentucky district and a subsequent English language proficiency screening using the appropriate WIDA screener when a response on the HLS lists a language other than English. For EL students enrolled at the beginning of the school year, the parent notification letter must also be sent within that 30-day window. For EL students who enroll after the beginning of the year, the district has 30 days to identify the student and an additional 14 calendar days to send the parent notification letter, if necessary.

The identification and parent notification timeline have been previously interpreted by many states to provide 30 days for students enrolled at the beginning of the school year and 14 days total for students enrolled after the beginning of the school year. Further clarification from the U.S. Department of Education has confirmed that the 14 calendar days provided for students enrolling after the beginning of the school year is in addition to the 30 calendar days to identify the student as an EL.



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Templates

All parents of ELs, not just newly enrolled ELs, should be notified annually of their child's placement in a language instruction education program (LIEP). The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has created two templates that districts may adopt to meet the parent notification letter requirements of ESSA.

- The *Initial EL Identification Letter* may be used for students identified as ELs by the district for the first time.
- The *Continued EL Identification Letter* may be used for students already identified as ELs by the district who have not yet reached proficiency and will therefore retain their EL designation.

Districts are not required to use the templates created by KDE, but they are required to ensure that any letter they do use contains all required components. Use of the KDE templates will help ensure all required components are included in the letter.

Translation

Districts are required under civil rights laws (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974) to ensure meaningful communication with parents who are not proficient in English. This refers to providing qualified interpreters as well as translating documents into a language the parents can understand. Districts are responsible for ensuring that the individual or company providing the interpretation and/or translation services are qualified to do so. Qualified interpreters and translators must have knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms or concepts to be used in the communication at issue, as well as an understanding of the ethics of interpreting and the need to maintain confidentiality.

In the event a parent speaks a language with no writing system, or the parent is not literate in their primary language, the letter should be read to them by a qualified interpreter. Civil rights obligations cannot be met using federal funds, meaning translation of the parent notification letter cannot be paid for with Title I, Part A or Title III funds.

To assist districts in meeting this requirement, KDE provides translated versions of the templates into the most common primary home languages listed for EL students in Infinite Campus in recent years. The templates are available in English as well as the following languages:

- Spanish
- Swahili
- Arabic
- Somali
- Nepali
- Kinyarwanda
- French



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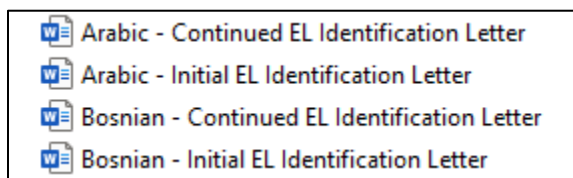
- Karen
- Bosnian
- Japanese

Although most of the letter will already be translated, the district will still be required to translate information added to the letter, such as details regarding the student’s current level of academic achievement. Details added to the letter must be translated by a qualified translator or translation service.

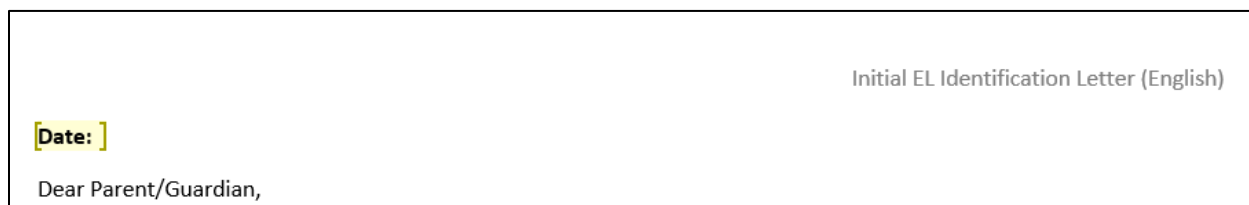
Parent Notification Letter Template Instructions

Accessing the Templates

The notification letter templates are available on the [English Learner and Immigrant Resources](#) webpage in a compressed zip file. Click the Parent Notification Letter Template link to download the entire file. Each document is clearly labeled with the template name and language (for example: *English – Initial EL Identification Letter*).



The template name and language are also included in the header section of the document.



Fonts

Some fonts do not contain the characters and diacritics (accent marks, tildes, umlauts, etc.) necessary to support certain languages. It may be necessary to download an additional font in order to support a template in a particular language. The following chart outlines which languages require specific fonts:

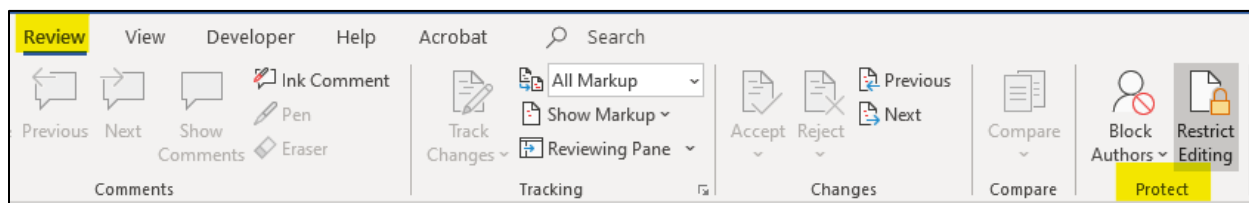
Language	Font (Windows)
Karen	Myanmar Text
Nepali	Arial Unicode MS

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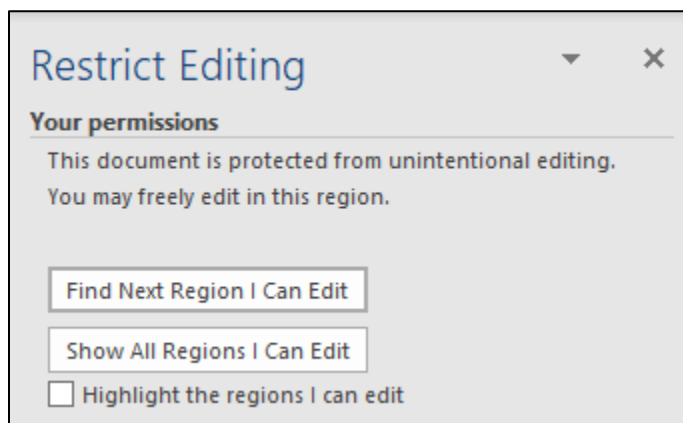
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Editing Restrictions

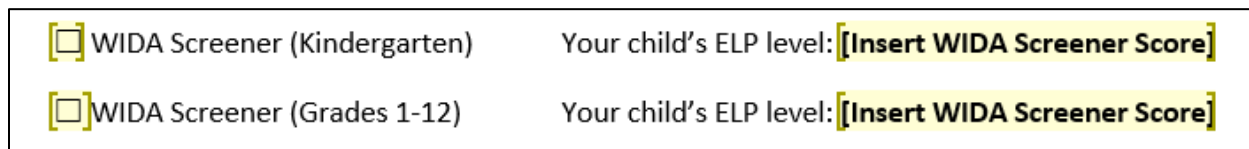
Portions of the letters have been locked to prevent users from accidentally removing required information. To view the sections of the letter which can be edited, go to the Restrict Editing tool located in the Protect Section of the Review Tab.



Check the box labeled “Highlight the regions I can edit” in the Restrict Editing pane and the sections will be highlighted in a pale yellow. This feature may already be enabled upon opening the document. Use the “Find Next Region I Can Edit” button to move from each editable field to the next.



Unchecking the box will remove the highlights; be sure to remove the highlights once the document is in its final state and ready to send to parents.



Clicking checkboxes will mark the box with an X, click again to remove the X. Text fields can be customized by selecting the entire text field with the cursor and typing to replace the instructional text with appropriate information. The example image represents an initial EL identification letter for a student screened using the WIDA Screener for grades 1-12. The box next to WIDA Screener (Grades 1-12) has been checked and the instructional text has been replaced with the student’s score.



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Upon your child's initial enrollment in the district, you completed a home language survey for your child and indicated a language other than English is spoken in the home. The district then screened your child for English language proficiency using a state-approved assessment. Your child has been identified as an English learner (EL) based on the following test of English language proficiency (ELP):

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WIDA Screener (Kindergarten) | Your child's ELP level: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WIDA Screener (Grades 1-12) | Your child's ELP level: 3.5 |

Customizing the Templates

The templates are provided as Word documents so that districts may make the necessary customizations for each EL student. Once the file is open, be sure to save a copy before making any changes. This will keep you from altering the original template.

The following fields can be customized:

- Date
- Most recent English language proficiency scores (WIDA Screener or ACCESS for ELLs)
- Student's expected rate of transition out of the EL program (number of years)
- Student's current level of academic achievement
- Language instruction educational programs (LIEPs) available in the district with a checkmark denoting the LIEP(s) in which the student will be participating.
- How the LIEP meets the objectives of the student's IEP (ELs with disabilities only)
- EL teacher/coordinator name and phone number
- Graduation rate for high school students in the EL program (percent)
- District Title III coordinator name
- Date, time and location of the Program Service Plan (PSP) meeting
- Contact information
- Name of sender

Language Instruction Educational Program Selection

The list of LIEPs included in each template represents all LIEPs available in Kentucky. Many districts do not offer every LIEP listed. Programs not available in the district should be removed from the letter. While entire program entries may need to be deleted from the letter, descriptions of programs available in the district should not be removed or edited.

In the example image, the LIEP description list has been updated to remove all but three programs. Two of the three programs have been checked indicating the student is participating in those programs and not participating in the third program.



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[Note to Districts: List EL service(s) available in the district and a brief description here using the following LIEP Description list. Check the service(s) selected for this student and delete services not available in the district.]

English as a Second Language (ESL) – Also known as English Language/Literacy Development. A program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach students who are English learners English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary and cultural orientation. Instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content) and usually is taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classroom, an immersion program or a bilingual education program. This method uses the academic and cultural experiences of the student as a platform to provide the appropriate instruction in English.

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Initial EL Identification Letter (English)

Pull-Out ESL Resource – Programs that remove English learners from general education classes to pre-teach, teach or re-teach English language skills and/or academic content covered by the general education classroom teacher. This method can benefit students by allowing them to receive more individualized attention in small groups.

Sheltered English Instruction – An instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to students who are English learners. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies and other subjects. This method uses techniques such as direct teaching of vocabulary and explicit modeling that makes content more accessible to all learners.

ELs with Disabilities

The paragraph explaining how the selected LIEP(s) will meet the objectives of the student’s IEP should only be included and customized in letters of EL students with disabilities. This paragraph should be removed from letters of EL students without disabilities.

[Note to districts: Complete the information if the EL student has been identified as a student with disabilities. If the child does not have a disability, delete this section.]

If your child has a disability, their EL program services are developed with special education staff, and they support your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). Members of the IEP team will include individuals with both knowledge of English language acquisition and an understanding of how to differentiate between needs your child’s language needs and their special education needs to ensure your child receives services that properly support all their needs. The English learner program your child will be enrolled in meets the objectives of your child’s individualized education program (IEP) because it **[Insert information regarding how the selected EL program(s) meets the objectives of the child’s IEP]**



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Instructional Notes to Districts

Several sections of the templates contain a “Note to Districts” further explaining how to customize the letter. These notes should be deleted prior to sending the letter to parents.

[Note to Districts: List EL service(s) available in the district and a brief description here using the following LIEP Description list. Check the service(s) selected for this student and delete services not available in the district.]

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