



# Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual

**Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt-OELPA)**

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## Structure of this Document

The *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* includes the following sections:

### **Section 1: Introduction**

This section provides relevant background information on providing access to the Alt-OELPA. It clarifies the intended audience and the framework for the Alt-OELPA approach to accessibility.

### **Section 2: Alt-OELPA Participation Criteria**

This section provides the Alt-OELPA participation criteria with additional information to support participation decisions.

### **Section 3: Embedded Assessment Features**

This section describes features of the assessment that are embedded in the testing platform. These include universal features, designated supports, and accommodations.

### **Section 4: Non-Embedded Features**

This section describes features of the assessment that are provided by the test administrator. These include optimal testing conditions, designated supports, and accommodations.

### **Resources**

This section lists resources that provide information relevant to accessibility and accommodations.

### **Appendices**

This section includes six appendices. Two appendices support the process of making decisions about participation in the Alt-OELPA rather than the general OELPA. Two additional appendices support the process of making decisions about accessibility needs of individual students participating in the Alt-OELPA. Appendix E provides a view of the Personal Needs Profile (PNP) Planning Tool. A final appendix provides information about the domain exemption policy for the Alt-OELPA.

## Section 1: Introduction

The Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt ELPA) was developed by the Collaborative for the Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP). CAAELP was a federally funded project awarded to the Iowa Department of Education; Iowa worked in collaboration with nine other states (Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Louisiana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and West Virginia) and the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA. In 2023, the CAAELP project ended and English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ELPA21) now sustains the assessment.

The Alt ELPA was developed to provide an assessment of English language proficiency for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.<sup>1</sup> This assessment meets the unique needs of these students and allows the measurement of their progress toward attaining English language proficiency based on alternate performance standards.<sup>2</sup> The Alt-OELPA was developed to align with English language proficiency standards that correspond to college- and career-ready content standards in mathematics, English language arts, and science. By doing so, it supports the English language and academic skills needed for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities to progress through school and be ready for post-school success, including independent living, social engagement, employment, and postsecondary training. In Ohio, the test is referred to as the Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment ([Alt-OELPA](#)) and is aligned to [Ohio's Learning Standards-Extended for English Language Proficiency](#).

CAAELP developed this *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* to guide the provision of optimal testing conditions and the selection and administration of appropriate universal features, designated supports, and accommodations for individual English learners with significant cognitive disabilities. For the administration of the Alt-OELPA, there are only embedded universal features. While Ohio's general English language proficiency assessment, OELPA, has the category of non-embedded universal features (external to the testing platform), for the Alt-OELPA, this parallels the non-embedded optimal testing conditions (not tracked in the testing platform) and the non-embedded designated supports (tracked in the testing platform).

Decisions about appropriate accessibility and accommodations help to produce valid assessment results and support appropriate interpretations and uses of assessment results. ELPA21 and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (Department) recognize that validity, reliability, and fairness of the Alt-OELPA depend on each English learner with significant cognitive disabilities

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<sup>1</sup> “English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities” is a term used in federal law. In this document, both that term and the term “English learners with significant cognitive disabilities” are used to mean “English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.”

<sup>2</sup> The term “alternate performance standards” corresponds to the term “alternate achievement standards” used in federal law. The term indicates that the performance to which students are held may be different from that for other students, even though the targeted English language proficiency standards for the student’s grade are the same.

having appropriate access to the assessment to show their English language proficiency. ELPA21 and the Department also recognize the important role of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in making decisions for English learners with significant cognitive disabilities.

### **Intended Audience**

The *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* is primarily for district- and school-level educational and assessment staff, as well as parents and students within IEP teams, as they make decisions about student participation in the Alt-OELPA and the accessibility needs of those students. This manual provides information for classroom teachers, English language development educators, special education teachers, and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering universal features, designated supports, and accommodations for those students who need them. It clarifies which of these are embedded in the testing platform and which ones may be provided by the test administrator. This manual is also intended for administrative staff who oversee the decisions made in instruction and assessment.

### **Recommended Use**

The *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* applies to all students who take the Alt-OELPA and reflects the diverse needs of the students taking this online assessment. The manual highlights the Personal Needs Profile (PNP) (found in [Appendix E](#) of this manual) as a means of identifying and administering specific accessibility features and tools for students. The IEP team determines accessibility features and accommodations and documents the decisions by entering information required for the Alt-OELPA from the IEP/504 plan into the PNP so these can be activated prior to testing. This can be accomplished by identifying one person (for example, a team member or a test coordinator who will follow Ohio’s test security guidelines) to enter information into the PNP prior to testing. The manual recognizes the critical connection between accessibility and accommodations in instruction and assessment and provides guidance on when accessibility features may differ between instruction and assessment. It also encourages an iterative approach to accessibility decisions. As each student’s needs evolve, decisions should be reevaluated to ensure that appropriate accessibility features are provided.

### **Purposes of the Alt-OELPA**

The Alt-OELPA measures English language proficiency in the domains of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. It supports individual English learners with significant cognitive disabilities and their schools and districts by:

- monitoring the annual progress of English learners with significant cognitive disabilities in the attainment of English proficiency for academic purposes;

- measuring school district success in meeting accountability benchmarks established for Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); and
- informing decisions about exiting students with significant cognitive disabilities from English language development services.

The Alt-OELPA is designed to reflect the diversity of English learners with significant cognitive disabilities. It also is designed to hold high expectations for these students to make progress toward English language proficiency based on alternate performance standards and to acquire discipline-relevant language for grade-appropriate academic content tasks.

For more information on the Alt-OELPA, visit <http://www.elpa21.org/alt-elpa>.

### **Alt-OELPA Accessibility Model**

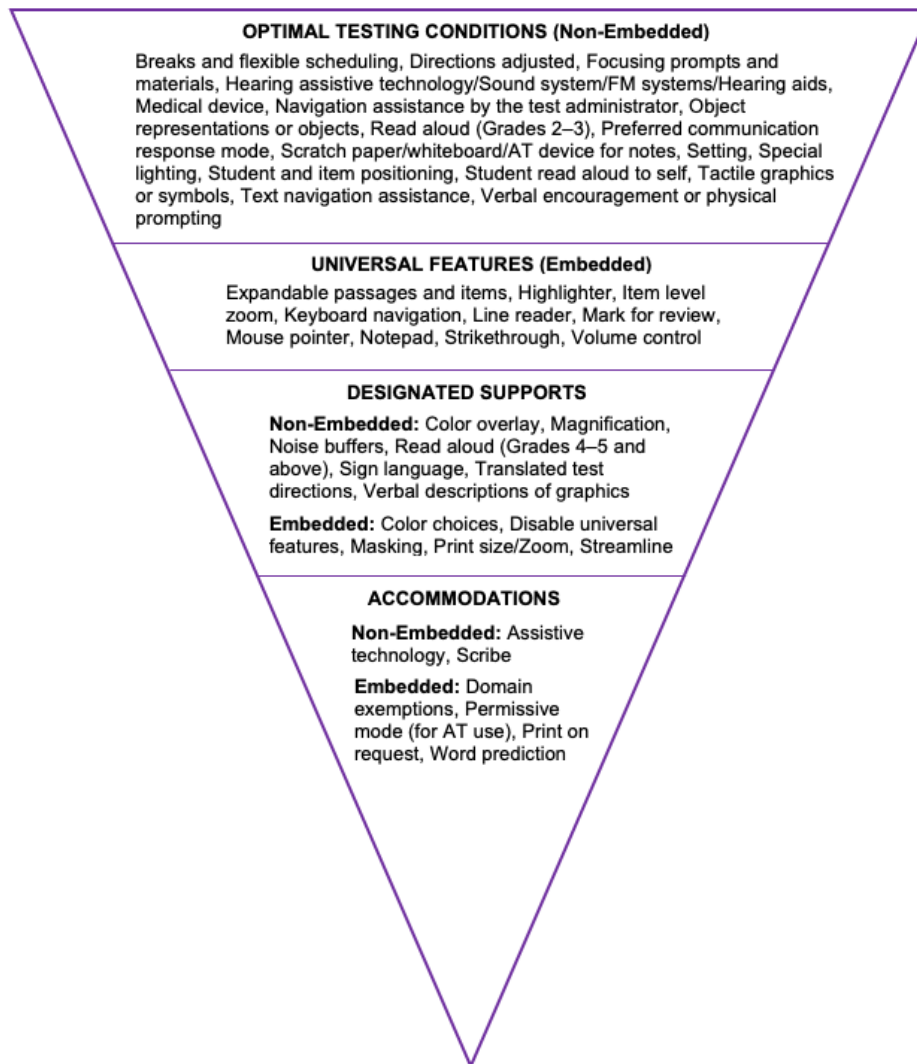
Accommodations remove barriers to test taking without reducing expectations by providing for changes in scheduling or timing, setting, presentation methods, and response formats. ELPA21 and the collaborating states have broadened the approach to removing barriers by greatly increasing the accessibility of the Alt-OELPA.

The collaborating states determined which testing conditions, universal features, designated supports, and accommodations provide equitable access and support valid assessment results, interpretations, and uses. This accessibility model reflects a tiered approach to accessibility tools that are **embedded** in the testing platform: (a) universal features available to all English learners with significant cognitive disabilities for the Alt-OELPA, (b) designated supports available to all English learners based on need and identified by an educator in the PNP (see the Alt-OELPA PNP in [Appendix E](#) of this manual), and (c) accommodations available only to certain students with significant cognitive disabilities based on their documented needs. [Figure 1](#) shows each of these categories of accessibility. This model also reflects accessibility features that are not embedded in the testing platform: (a) optimal testing conditions, (b) designated supports, and (c) accommodations. Some accessibility features that are provided during alternate content assessments of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and other content areas may not be provided for the Alt-OELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

Domain exemptions are an available accommodation for students being administered the Alt-OELPA. Please refer to [Appendix F: Alt-OELPA Domain Exemption Policy](#) for information.

**Figure 1**

*Alt-OELPA Tiered Accessibility Model*



[Figure 1](#) shows that the policy on reading the test aloud to a student varies by grade:

**For students in Grades K and 1:** By design, the test form includes sections that the test administrator reads aloud to the students. Therefore, Grades K–1 are not specifically addressed in the read aloud policy in this manual.

**For students in Grades 2 and 3:** Read aloud is considered an *optimal testing condition* that is external to the testing platform. Test administrators can provide read aloud if the student in Grade 2 or 3 has successfully used read aloud in the classroom.



**For students in Grades 4 and above:** Read aloud is a *non-embedded designated support* that must be identified for use with an individual student prior to administering the Alt-OELPA and that must be entered into the student's Alt-OELPA Personal Needs Profile (PNP).

[Table 1](#) provides definitions of the accessibility tiers and lists the available embedded tools in each tier for the Alt-OELPA. Tools in all tiers must be documented on the student’s IEP. Designated supports and accommodations must be assigned to individual students in advance of testing. All available tools yield valid scores and support valid interpretations of the results from the Alt-OELPA when used in a manner consistent with this manual. Some accessibility features that are provided during alternate assessments of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and other content areas may not be provided for the Alt-OELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

**Table 1**

*Embedded Features in the Alt-OELPA Accessibility Model*

Tier	Definition	Available Tools
Universal Features	These are provided digitally through the test delivery system and are available to any student based on their preference. All appear in the test delivery system but can be turned off by school staff in the student’s test settings.	Expandable passages and items, highlighter, item level zoom, keyboard navigation, line reader, mark for review, mouse pointer, notepad, strikethrough, volume control
Designated Supports	These are provided digitally through the test delivery system and are available to any student if they are turned on by school staff in the student’s test settings before testing.	Color choices, disable universal features, masking, print size/zoom, streamline
Accommodations	These are provided through the test delivery system but are available only to students based on documentation of their individual needs in their IEP.	Domain exemptions, permissive mode (for assistive technology use), print on request, word prediction

[Table 2](#) provides definitions of the accessibility tiers and examples of the features in each tier for Alt-OELPA non-embedded features. Features in all tiers must be documented on the student’s IEP. Accommodations must be assigned to individual students in advance. All non-embedded features yield valid scores and support valid interpretations of the results from the Alt-OELPA when used in a manner consistent with this manual. Some accessibility features that are provided during alternate assessments of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and other content areas may not be provided for the Alt-OELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

**Table 2**

*Non-Embedded Features in the Alt-OELPA Accessibility Model*

Feature	Definition	Examples
Optimal Testing Conditions	These are testing conditions that may be provided by the test administrator (non-embedded) to support an optimal testing experience for the student based on student needs and preferences.	Breaks, directions adjusted (e.g., clarified, highlighted, reread, simplified, underlined, or interpreted as often as needed), flexible scheduling, focusing prompts and materials (e.g., fidgets, redirect to test by prompting or physical objects), read aloud (Grades 2–3)
Designated Supports	These are accessibility features that may be provided by the test administrator (non-embedded) and are available to any student if they are identified by the IEP team for use before testing.	Color overlay, magnification, noise buffers, read aloud (Grades 4–5 and above), sign language presentation of items, translated test directions, verbal description of graphics
Accommodations	These may be provided by the test administrator (non-embedded) but are available only to students based on documentation of their individual needs in their IEP.	Assistive technology, scribe

In addition to the Alt-OELPA accessibility framework, the design of the Alt-OELPA provides customization to meet student needs. This is evidenced through the test administration instructions provided in the Alt-OELPA Test Administration Manual and the Alt-OELPA Test Administrator Directions and Scoring Rubrics Booklets.

## Accessibility Needs of English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities are generally a small population with highly complex needs. Thus, it is critical that the IEP team have current information about student strengths and areas of concern to make informed decisions about instruction and assessment. These decisions include accessibility and accommodations for instruction and assessment. The accessibility features and accommodations determined to meet individual student needs and preferences for participation in the Alt-OELPA will maintain the validity of the assessment results and interpretations when used in a manner consistent with this manual. This manual provides information about embedded features (universal features, designated supports, and accommodations) and non-embedded features (optimal testing conditions, designated supports, and accommodations) available for the Alt-OELPA. It also gives domain-specific indications of availability for each feature.

Educators should ensure that students have ample opportunity to practice using the accessibility features and accommodations available to them before students use them during the tests. The consistency between instructional supports and accessibility features for the Alt-OELPA should always be considered, even though some features may be used in instruction but are not allowed for the assessment.

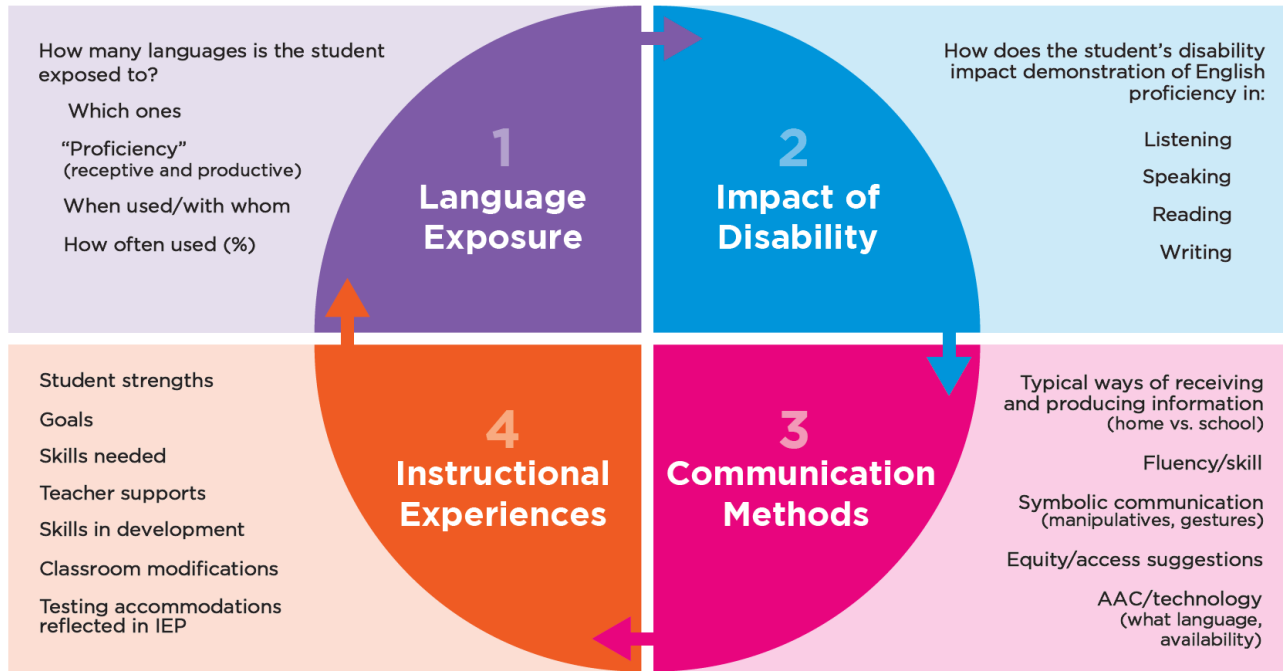
## Instructional and Assessment Accessibility Decisions

Supports that a student receives in instruction may not be identical to the accessibility features available for the Alt-OELPA. Instruction focuses on content knowledge (reading, English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) and developing English skills in English learners. The Alt-OELPA assesses English language proficiency in the domains of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Thus, the accessibility features must allow for appropriate interpretations related to what is being learned or measured. It is important to keep the language emphasis in mind for the Alt-OELPA.

[Figure 2](#) provides a model to guide accessibility decisions. It addresses language and disability in detail. It also guides teams to identify supports used for instruction and how these may bridge to accessibility features used for the Alt-OELPA. Teams may want to start with Section 1, and then work around the cycle.

**Figure 2**

*Accessibility Considerations*

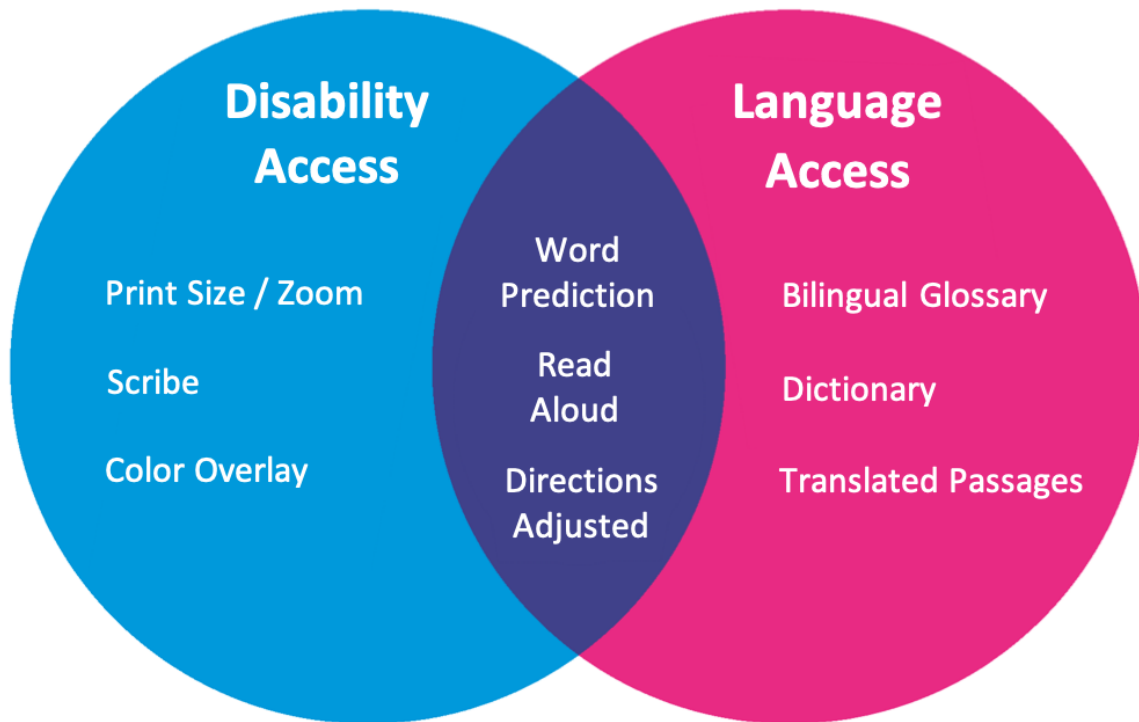


For each student, identify (a) how many languages the student is exposed to and the student’s receptive and productive language skills in each, (b) the impact of disability on English language skills (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, and writing), (c) what communication methods the student uses, and (d) the student’s instructional experiences. See [Appendix A](#) for student examples using the model and [Appendix B](#) for Tool 1: Template for Applying Accessibility Considerations to guide decision-making using the model.

Typically, accessibility features that support a student’s developing English proficiency are not allowed on standard English language proficiency assessments. Features that address a student’s disability generally are allowed. Still, some features may appear to address both disability and language. This is especially the case for students identified as English learners with significant cognitive disabilities eligible for the Alt-OELPA. [Figure 3](#) shows how different accessibility features may address a student’s disability, language ability, or both.

**Figure 3**

*Examples of Accessibility Features that Address Disability, Language, or Both*



**Blue** = Allowed on the Alt-OELPA.

**Purple** = Conditionally allowed by domain on the Alt-OELPA.

**Pink** = Not allowed on the Alt-OELPA.

IEP teams should be aware of whether supports in the overlapping category of disability and language are provided to an individual student because of disability needs, language needs, or both. For example, a student may use word prediction to address a disability, even though it also supports the student’s language use. A dictionary typically only supports language. If a student uses an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device, that device would need to use only English settings for assessment items but might use another language during non-assessment portions (e.g., general directions) of the Alt-OELPA.

## Section 2: Alt-OELPA Participation Criteria

The following definition serves as the basis for the *Alt-OELPA Participation Guidelines* and is consistent with federal regulations that outline the scope of state definitions of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities are students:

- who are not proficient in the English language and have been identified as needing English language development services;
- who meet the federal definition of an English learner (ESEA §8101(20));
- who meet the state definition for having a most significant cognitive disability; and
- whose IEP teams have determined an alternate assessment is appropriate for the student.

The IEP team makes assessment eligibility decisions for students who receive special education services. This includes the Alt-OELPA participation decision for those students with a most significant cognitive disability who are also identified as English learners. No single individual should make the decision to have a student participate in the Alt-OELPA.

It is assumed here that the student has been identified as an English learner using Ohio's standardized English learner identification process and meets the federal definition of an English learner (ESEA 8101(20)). It also is assumed that results of the language screening process are included as just one piece of evidence in the Alt-OELPA participation criteria. Further, it is essential that parents or guardians, as members of the IEP team, are provided information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner that they can understand so they can participate in decision-making for their child.

It is expected that most English learners with disabilities will participate in the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) rather than the Alt-OELPA. Also, it is assumed that educators and parents will hold high expectations for the English language development of English learners, regardless of the assessment in which they participate. [Table 3](#) provides a summary of the assumptions that underlie the Alt-OELPA participation criteria.

**Table 3**

*Assumptions Underlying Alt-OELPA Participation Criteria*

- The student has been identified as an English learner.
- The results of the language screening process are included as just one piece of evidence.
- The IEP team makes the decision about participation in the general ELP assessment or the Alt-OELPA.
- Most English learners with disabilities will participate in Ohio’s general English language proficiency assessment (OELPA).
- No single individual makes the decision.
- The IEP team includes parents or guardians of the student as well as an English language development specialist.
- Parents are provided information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.

Making a decision about participation in the Alt-OELPA will differ for grades with an alternate content assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) and grades without an AA-AAAS. In Ohio, the AA-AAAS is Ohio’s Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD). Nevertheless, the **intent** is that criteria used to make Alt-OELPA participation decisions will be consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation across grades. The IEP team must determine at least annually whether the student will participate in the state’s alternate assessments, including the Alt-OELPA. [Appendix C](#) includes a Participation Checklist for the Alt-OELPA. [Appendix D](#) presents a flowchart portraying a visual representation of the process an IEP team may use when determining whether a student meets the criteria to participate in the Alt-OELPA.

**Student in a Grade with an AASCD (Grades 3-12):**

For English learners in grade 3 through high school, the IEP team should use the following criteria for participation in the Alt-OELPA:

1. Student participates in (or is eligible to participate in) the AASCD according to Ohio’s [Alternate Assessment Decision-making Tool](#).
2. Student could not access the OELPA even with accommodations.
3. Potential unintended consequences of the Alt-OELPA participation have been considered.

**Student Not in a Grade with an AASCD (Grades K-2 and recently arrived English learners):**

For English learners in grades K–2 and recent arrivals, the IEP team should use the following criteria for participation in the Alt-OELPA:

1. Student meets the state’s definition as having a most significant cognitive disability and has significant delays in adaptive behavior.
2. Student requires intensive and extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the curriculum.
3. Student could not access the OELPA even with accommodations.
4. Potential unintended consequences of Alt-OELPA participation have been considered.

Each criterion is described further in the [Additional Descriptions of Criteria](#) section.

### **Factors that Should NOT Determine Participation in the Alt-OELPA**

The need to participate in the Alt-OELPA instead of the OELPA (with or without accommodations) is **not primarily** the result of the following:

- Time of arrival in U.S. schools
- Language and cultural differences
- History of limited or interrupted formal schooling
- Low English language proficiency or literacy level without the presence of significant cognitive disability
- Student's ability to exit from English learner services
- Excessive absenteeism
- Poor performance or impact on accountability system
- Disability category label
- Special education placement or services
- A single person (principal, teacher) making the decision

### **Additional Description of Criteria**

#### **1. Student has a most significant cognitive disability and significant delays in adaptive behavior.**

The determination that a student has a most significant cognitive disability and significant delays in adaptive behavior should be based on an IEP team review of student records. This review should include the student’s IEP, Evaluation Team Report (ETR), and other data that the school or family have available, such as results from formative assessments, evidence-based interventions and documentation of additional supports and services. These records should indicate that a disability or multiple disabilities significantly affect both the student’s cognitive functioning and the student’s adaptive behavior compared to those of the student’s grade-level peers. The student’s delayed cognitive functioning and limited adaptive behavior are evident in home and community environments, not just in school.



A student's **cognitive functioning** reflects the student's reasoning, language, memory, and attention skills that may delay the student's ability to meaningfully attain information and knowledge. Records of cognitive functioning may include the results of a cognitive ability test or other formal or informal assessments.

A student's **adaptive behavior** reflects the student's conceptual skills, literacy, numeracy, and self-direction skills that are required for people to function in their daily lives. Adaptive behavior is essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life. Records of adaptive behavior may include the results of standardized measures, interviews (e.g., with parents, students), or observations.

## **2. Student requires extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the general education curriculum.**

Student needs intensive, extensive, and consistent individualized instruction and supports to successfully and meaningfully access the curriculum. These services and supports are needed on a continuous basis throughout the student's school years. Supports might also include assistive technology, personal care attendants, or medical services. Nevertheless, the mere presence of these types of supports does not automatically mean that the student will participate in the Alt-OELPA.

Adaptations and modifications in the general education curriculum and instruction are needed to provide alternate ways for the student to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and generalize English language skills across multiple settings and topics. Evidence of adaptations and modifications may include teacher-collected data (e.g., samples of student work or observations of the student). For English learners with significant cognitive disabilities, English language development is guided by alternate English language proficiency standards that are aligned to but may be somewhat different in depth, breadth, and complexity from those held for English learners without significant cognitive disabilities.

## **3. Student could not access the general OELPA even with accessibility supports and accommodations.**

Appropriate accessibility supports and accommodations should be provided to English learners with significant cognitive disabilities during instruction and assessments. It is essential to determine which accessibility supports and accommodations provide these students with access to instruction. The goal of using accessibility supports and accommodations is to ensure that students can demonstrate their English language skills without barriers that are irrelevant to those skills. There must be clear evidence that if needed accessibility supports and accommodations were provided, the English learner still would not be able to access the general OELPA.

#### **4. Potential unintended consequences of Alt-OELPA participation have been considered by the IEP team.**

There are potential negative consequences associated with participation in any assessment. Some that might be important to consider for participation in the Alt-OELPA include:

- Assignment to the Alt-OELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future AASCD;
- A change in the student’s placement, which may not be reflective of their least restrictive environment;
- Differential access to instructional content, perhaps at a reduced level of depth, breadth, and complexity compared to their English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities;
- Possible limitations in the provision of English language development services; and
- Differential exit criteria from English learner services compared to English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities.

Consideration of an English learner’s accessibility needs is intertwined with the English language proficiency assessment participation decision. Although full access should be considered when deciding whether the student can participate in the OELPA, the characteristics of the student (as described in the participation criteria) may mean that the allowed supports are insufficient for the English learner with significant intellectual and adaptive behavior challenges. The Alt-OELPA provides for optimal testing conditions, universal features, and accommodations to ensure that all English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities have access to the test. These accessibility features are described in detail in Sections 3 and 4 of this manual.

#### **Domain Exemptions**

A few students may be unable to access a domain of the Alt-OELPA because of the nature of their disability. See [Appendix F: Alt-OELPA Domain Exemption Policy](#) for more information.

### Section 3: Alt-OELPA Embedded Features

Embedded features are tools available as part of the test delivery system. They include universal features, designated supports, and accommodations.

#### Universal Features (Embedded)

The Alt-OELPA is a digitally delivered assessment that includes a range of embedded universal features. These features are available to all students as part of the assessment platform. Although embedded universal features are available to all students, educators may determine that one or more might be distracting for a particular student, and thus might indicate that the feature should be turned off for the administration of the assessment for that student. Disabling universal features is an embedded designated support.

Embedded universal features are available to all students participating in the Alt-OELPA. They are indicated by the IEP team and should reflect the student’s personal preferences. These features are selected by the student with test administrator support and are provided digitally through the test delivery system. All students are allowed unlimited audio re-plays, and test administrators may repeat spoken directions as many times as is necessary.

**Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt-OELPA, only those universal features explicitly identified in this manual may be used during test administration.** Using other features may create a risk that the assessment will no longer measure the intended constructs, and assessment results will be invalid. If you have questions about other features, contact the Department’s Office of Assessment at [statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-1317.

[Table 4](#) lists the embedded universal features available to all students for the Alt-OELPA. It also includes a description of each tool, recommendations for the domains in which the tool might be needed, and how and when it might be used.

**Table 4**

*Embedded Universal Features for Listening (L), Reading (R), Speaking (S), and Writing (W)*

Universal Feature	L	R	S	W	Description
Expandable Passages and Items	X	X	X	X	Passages and items can be expanded to cover more of the screen.

Universal Feature	L	R	S	W	Description
Highlighter	X	X	X	X	May be used for marking desired text, items, or response options, with a choice of four colors. Highlighted text remains available throughout the test.
Item Level Zoom	X	X	X	X	Allows magnification of up to a 400% increase in an individual item.
Keyboard Navigation	X	X	X	X	Navigating through test content may be done by using a keyboard (e.g., arrow keys).
Line Reader	X	X	X	X	Allows readers to focus on one line at a time.
Mark for Review	X	X	X	X	Items may be flagged for future review during the assessment.
Mouse Pointer	X	X	X	X	Enables the mouse pointer to be enlarged or to be in a different color.
Notepad	X	X	X	X	Tool in which notes may be entered.
Strikethrough	X	X	X	X	This feature is only for some item types. It may be used to eliminate answer choices that appear incorrect to the student. The student must clearly indicate the choice is not correct.
Volume Control	X	X	X	X	Audio may be raised or lowered depending on student's needs. Student may use headphones.

**Who Makes Decisions about Universal Features?** The IEP team, which should include an English language development specialist as well as the student's parents or guardians and the student (when appropriate), makes decisions about embedded universal features. Decisions should be based on considerations of the student's individual needs and the routine use of the features during instruction. It is recommended that these be documented in the student's IEP, especially if required by the student to access the Alt-OELPA.

### **Designated Supports (Embedded)**

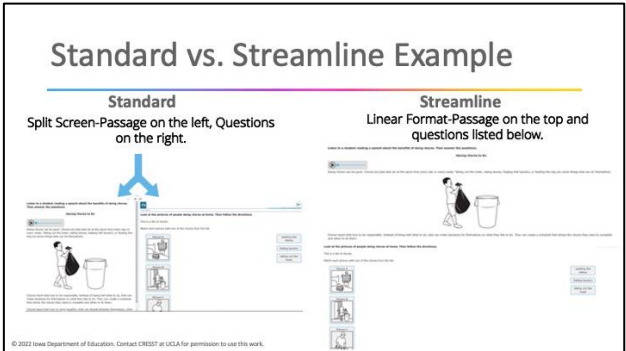
The Alt-OELPA is a digitally delivered assessment that also includes a range of embedded designated supports. These features are available to all students participating in the Alt-OELPA if selected before testing by school staff. Students whose IEPs identify embedded designated supports for the Alt-OELPA will need to have these entered by an adult into the student's Personal Needs Profile (PNP) ([Appendix E](#) of this manual) or similar document used to ensure that what the student needs is communicated to the test delivery system.

**Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt-OELPA, only those designates explicitly identified in this manual may be used during test administration.** Using other features may create a risk that the assessment will no longer measure the intended constructs, and assessment results will be invalid. If you have questions about other features, contact the Department's Office of Assessment at [statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-1317.

[Table 5](#) lists the embedded designated supports available to all students for the Alt-OELPA. It also includes a description of each tool, recommendations for the domains in which the tool might be needed, and how and when it might be used.

**Table 5**

*Embedded Designated Supports for Listening (L), Reading (R), Speaking (S), and Writing (W)*

Designated Support	L	R	S	W	Description
Color Choices	X	X	X	X	The text color and screen background color may be adjusted to meet the student’s needs.
Disable Universal Features	X	X	X	X	This feature allows disabling of any universal feature that might interfere with student performance or be distracting to the student.
Masking	X	X	X	X	This feature blocks off item content and answer choices.
Print Size/Zoom	X	X	X	X	Print size/zoom for the entire test can be preset in the student test settings before testing begins.
Streamline Mode or Screen Reader Mode	X	X	X	X	Streamline mode displays test content vertically for enhanced accessibility. It provides the assessment in an alternate, simplified format in which the items are displayed below the stimuli in the test interface. Two-column scrolling, or tables used for layouts are not present in streamline mode. The student should be familiar with this format before it is entered into the student's Alt-OELPA Personal Needs Profile (PNP).  

**Who Makes Decisions About Embedded Designated Supports?** The IEP team, which should include an English language development specialist as well as the student’s parents or guardians and the student (when appropriate), makes decisions about embedded designated supports. Decisions should be based on considerations of the student’s individual needs and the routine use

of the features during instruction. It is recommended that these be documented in the student's IEP, especially if required by the student to access the Alt-OELPA.

### **Accommodations (Embedded)**

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access but do not change what the Alt-OELPA is measuring. They are available only to certain students based on their individual needs. Accommodations must always be documented in the student's IEP. They should be identified prior to the opening of the testing window in the PNP ([Appendix E](#) of this manual) or similar document because they need to be activated in the test delivery system.

**Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt-OELPA, only those accommodations explicitly identified in this manual should be used during test administration.**

The use of other accommodations may create a risk that the assessment would no longer measure the intended constructs, and assessment results will be invalid. If you have questions about other features, contact the Department's Office of Assessment at [statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-1317.

[Table 6](#) lists the embedded accommodations available to certain students for the Alt-OELPA. It also includes a description of each tool, recommendations for the domains in which the tool might be needed, and how and when it might be used. Because the Alt-OELPA is administered one-on-one to individual students, some accommodations that are available for the general OELPA are not available for the Alt-OELPA. For example, text-to-speech (TTS) is not provided because the test administrator is able to read the directions and items to the student (see [Text to Speech Issue Brief](#)). For similar reasons, speech-to-text (STT) is not provided as an accommodation for the Alt-OELPA (see [Speech to Text Issue Brief](#)).

**Table 6**

*Embedded Accommodations for Listening (L), Reading (R), Speaking (S), Writing (W)*

Accommodation	L	R	S	W	Description
Domain Exemptions	X	X	X	X	This feature allows for a student to be exempted from certain domains when justified and in accordance with state policies. See <a href="#">Appendix F: Alt-OELPA Domain Exemption Policy</a> for information.
Permissive Mode	X	X	X	X	Permissive mode allows the student to use external assistive technology with the test delivery system.
Print on Request	X	X	X	X	Individual test items may be printed on a secure printer near the test session room. Printed items must be shredded at the end of each test session.
Word Prediction				X	Word prediction prompts the user with a list of likely word choices from which to select. The choices are based on words previously typed. Word prediction is allowed unless the Test Administrator Manual indicates it is not allowed for a specific item.

**Who Makes Decisions About Embedded Accommodations?** The IEP team, which should include an English language development educator as well as the student’s parents or guardians and the student (when appropriate), makes decisions about accommodations. The team should provide evidence of the need for specific accommodations and ensure that they are included on the IEP and used routinely during instruction.



## Section 4: Alt-OELPA Non-Embedded Features

The Alt-OELPA recognizes the need for some accessibility features that are not embedded within the online test delivery system. The identified non-embedded features provided by the test administrator ensure that Alt-OELPA scores and their interpretations are valid. The Alt-OELPA non-embedded features are optimal testing conditions, designated supports, and accommodations.

### Optimal Testing Conditions (Non-Embedded)

Optimal testing conditions are standardized testing conditions for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The conditions are all external to the test delivery system. Optimal testing conditions are meant to support a meaningful and accessible assessment experience for each student. They include the setup of the testing environment, medical considerations, and other adjustments to meet individual student needs to participate in the assessment while ensuring assessment validity and valid score interpretations. They generally mirror what has been successful in providing the student with access during instruction and must be documented in the student's IEP. Examples of these conditions may include:

- Breaks and flexible scheduling
- Directions adjusted (e.g., clarified, highlighted, reread, simplified, underlined, or orally interpreted as often as needed)
- Focusing prompts and materials (e.g., fidgets, redirect to test by prompting or physical objects)
- Hearing assistive technology, sound system, frequency modulation (FM) systems, and hearing aids
- Medical device (e.g., glucose monitor; the test administrator must ensure that security is maintained if a device connects to the internet)
- Navigation assistance by test administrator (e.g., mouse point-and-click, on-screen tool/button navigation)
- Object(s) representation (to represent a person, place, object, or activity)
- Read aloud (Grades 2–3)
- Student responds in preferred communication mode (e.g., pointing, eye gaze, tactile, cued speech, signed exact English, signing, use of AT, etc.)
- Scratch paper, individual erasable whiteboard, or AT device for notes (all notes must be shredded or deleted from devices)
- Setting (e.g., separate location, school-approved secure location)
- Special lighting (as indicated in IEP)
- Student and item positioning (as indicated in IEP)
- Student reads aloud to self

- Tactile graphics or symbols
- Text navigation assistance (e.g., mouse movement, tool/button navigation)
- Verbal encouragement that does not assist student to produce or correct responses (e.g., “keep working,” “make sure to answer every question”) or physical prompting (e.g., tapping the student’s arm or hand)

***Who Makes Decisions About Optimal Testing Conditions?*** Decisions about incorporating optimal testing conditions are made by trained test administrators or school test coordinators based on the supports and student needs defined in the IEP.

### **Designated Supports (Non-Embedded)**

Non-embedded designated supports are available to all students participating in the Alt-OELPA if identified before testing by school staff. Students whose IEPs identify non-embedded designated supports for the Alt-OELPA will need to have these entered by school staff into the student’s Personal Needs Profile (PNP) ([Appendix E](#) of this manual) or similar document used to ensure that what the student needs is communicated to the test delivery system.

[Table 7](#) lists the non-embedded designated supports available to all students for the Alt-OELPA. It also includes a description of each support, recommendations for the domains in which the tool might be needed, and how and when it might be used.

**Table 7**

*Non-Embedded Designated Supports for Listening (L), Reading (R), Speaking (S), Writing (W)*

Designated Support	L	R	S	W	Description
Color Overlay	X	X	X	X	Color transparencies are placed over a paper-based assessment.
Magnification	X	X	X	X	Magnification outside of the test delivery system (e.g., via a smart screen) allows for the size of specific areas of the screen or other testing materials to be enlarged more than is possible through the test delivery system.
Noise Buffers	X	X	X	X	These include external devices to block external sounds such as ear muffs and white noise.
Read Aloud (Grades 4–high school)	X	X	X	X	Text is read to the student (prompts, passages, and item choices).
Sign Language (American Sign Language (ASL), signed exact English, personalized sign system)	X	X	X	X	Signed presentation may be provided for directions, prompts, items, and answer choices. For signed presentation, the test administrator may sign allowable portions of the tests to the student in the manner that is regularly used in the classroom but must be careful not to use signs that might lead the student to a correct response. In such cases, fingerspelling may be used as an alternative. Signing may be repeated as many times as the student requests.

Designated Support	L	R	S	W	Description
Translated Test Directions	X	X	X	X	Written test directions may be translated into any language by a qualified translator.
Verbal Description of Graphics	X	X	X	X	The test administrator may describe graphics for specific students (e.g., those who are blind and do not read tactile graphics). Care must be taken to not describe in a way that provides the correct answer or cues to the correct answer.

**Who Makes Decisions About Non-Embedded Designated Supports?** The IEP team, which should include an English language development specialist as well as the student’s parents or guardians and the student (when appropriate), makes decisions about non-embedded designated supports. Decisions should be based on considerations of the student’s individual needs and the routine use of the features during instruction. It is recommended that these be documented in the student’s IEP. Check your state’s policy for documenting designated supports.

### Accommodations (Non-Embedded)

Non-embedded accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access but do not change what the Alt-OELPA is measuring. They are available only to certain students based on their individual needs. Accommodations should always be documented on the student’s IEP. They should be identified prior to the opening of the testing window in the PNP ([Appendix E](#) of this manual) or similar document.

**Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt-OELPA, only those accommodations explicitly identified in this manual should be used during test administration.**

The use of other accommodations may create a risk that the assessment would no longer measure the intended constructs, and assessment results will be invalid. If you have questions about other features, contact the Department’s Office of Assessment at [statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-1317.

[Table 8](#) lists the non-embedded accommodations available to certain students who participate in the Alt-OELPA. It also includes a description of each accommodation, recommendations for the domains in which the tool might be needed, and how and when it might be used.

**Table 8**

*Non-Embedded Accommodations Listening (L), Reading (R), Speaking (S), Writing (W)*

Accommodation	L	R	S	W	Description
Assistive Technology (AT)	X	X	X	X	All forms of AT that the student uses to receive or express information are allowed as non-embedded accommodations. They may include, for example, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, adapted keyboards, switches, eye gaze equipment, and tablets.
Scribe	X	X	X	X	Student uses their typical response mode to a scribe who enters their responses into the test delivery system.

## Resources

- Collaborative for the Alternative Assessment of English Language Proficiency [CAAELP]. (2021). *Alt-OELPA participation guidelines*.  
<https://ucla.app.box.com/s/s7l90r1okroswpwco8c4d931aom8wvk6>
- Collaborative for the Alternative Assessment of English Language Proficiency [CAAELP]. (2018). *Alt-OELPA theory of action*.  
<https://ucla.app.box.com/s/sih72kbc6twxmw6gc9be8h8z3wlk2ny>
- Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO]. (2019). *English language proficiency (ELP) standards for English learners with significant cognitive disabilities*. <https://ccsso.org/resource-library/english-language-proficiency-standards-english-learners-significant-cognitive>
- Liu, K. K., Wolforth, S., Thurlow, M. L., Jacques, C., Lazarus, S. S., & August, D. (2021). *A framework for making decisions about participation in a state's alternate ELP assessment* (NCEO Report 426). National Center on Educational Outcomes. [www.nceo.info](http://www.nceo.info)
- National Center on Educational Outcomes [NCEO]. (n.d.) *Accessibility and accommodations for English learners with disabilities* [links to state policies].  
[https://nceo.info/state\\_policies/policy/accommodationsells](https://nceo.info/state_policies/policy/accommodationsells)
- Still, C. & Christensen, L. L., (2018, September). *Talking points for state leaders: Alternate English language proficiency standards and assessments* (ALTELLA Brief No. 8). Retrieved from University of Wisconsin–Madison, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, Alternate English Language Learning Assessment project.  
[https://altella.wceruw.org/pubs/ALTELLA\\_Brief-08\\_Talking-Points-State-Leaders.pdf](https://altella.wceruw.org/pubs/ALTELLA_Brief-08_Talking-Points-State-Leaders.pdf)

## Appendix A: Student Examples of Applying the Accessibility Model

The two student examples presented here show how to apply the accessibility considerations presented in [Figure 1](#) of the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*. The underlying template of these student examples is also provided as **Tool 1: Template for Applying Accessibility Considerations** in [Appendix B](#).

### **Mya Win** (*7<sup>th</sup> grade student with emergent symbolic communication*)

Mya Win is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade English learner with Down syndrome. Her family came to the U.S. from Myanmar two years ago. She is the middle child of three children. The parents use the Karen language at home, and the children use both English and Karen with one another. Mya uses primarily single words in both languages. She responds to yes or no questions, usually nodding or shaking her head. She requests objects by pointing or reaching for an object. She can make choices between two objects and occasionally with three objects. Mya Win attends a school that does not have widespread access to technology, so her teachers typically make hard copy materials or use physical objects in the classroom. Materials that are malleable or soft and colorful appeal to her, such as playdough, marshmallows, and foam to form objects, letters, and numbers. Given choices between two or three objects on large high-contrast flash cards, she can identify different shapes, sizes, most of the English alphabet, and sequence some numbers. She wears glasses and has difficulty attending to pictures, whether on paper or a computer, especially if there are many details. Occasionally, she will look at images or video clips if they are simple, large, and with contrasting colors on a topic of interest.

**Has the student taken the Alt-OELPA before?** (circle one)    Yes    No

If yes, review the prior form and update any section information below as appropriate on new form.

### Section 1: Language Exposure

**Table A1**

*Student Exposure to Languages*

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How often? (% overall)
Karen	Basic, uses single words	Uses with parents most of the time at home	70%
English	Basic, uses single words, most of English alphabet, and can sequence some numbers	Uses with siblings at home and at school	30%

**Sections 2 & 3: Communication Methods and Instructional Experiences**

**Table A2**

*Impacts and Communication Methods in Instruction*

<b>Domains</b>	<b>Disability Impact on English Proficiency</b>	<b>Communication Methods and Fluency/Skill</b>
Listening	Hearing tests show normal hearing ability, but cognitive ability limits overall language use.	Listens at basic level.
Reading	Identifies most letters in the English alphabet, but no words yet.	Uses objects and high-contrast flash cards in class.
Speaking	Speaks using some single words but currently uses nodding and gestures in response, or initiates with pointing to or moving objects.	Primarily uses physical communication (nods, shakes head, points, reaches).
Writing	Physically manipulates writing tools and presses keys on keyboard, but her English language skill level does not allow for composition using these tools.	Points to, reaches for, or moves objects to communicate.

**Are there any suggestions for equity/access in Table A2 (e.g., access to technology)?**

The school currently has limited access to technology and is pursuing grant funding in this area. In the meantime, teachers make hard copies of materials. If the school were to obtain more technology, Mya would need to access it using simple high-contrast content.

**Section 4: Instruction**

**Table A3**

*Instructional Experiences*

<b>Student Strengths</b>	Motivated on topics of interest, likes to socially engage with peers in her classes. Although Mya prefers the soft colorful letterforms, she is getting good at identifying the letters in other contexts. Her literacy awareness is broadening beyond the forms.
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<b>Goals</b>	Learning alphabet and ordering numerals. A big goal is shifting to symbolic communication.
<b>Teacher Supports</b>	Helps to adjust color/contrast and magnification for materials on computer or hard copy/printed. Teacher modifies materials for contrast, simple lines, and includes colors and textures that interest Mya.
<b>Classroom Modifications</b>	Need access to printer, objects, and flashcards.
<b>Skills Needed</b>	Learn all alphabet letters to advance to sound and letter correspondence to create words. Needs to broaden topics of interest.
<b>Skills in Development</b>	Mya is working on alphabet letter identification and ordering numbers. She is expanding her attention on areas outside of her favorite topics. Mya is also working on choosing between three options when working on shapes, sizes, and letters.
<b>Testing Accessibility Features and Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)</b>	Color choices, extra time, print on request, print size/zoom, read aloud, redirect to test, strikethrough, teacher helps navigate screens and assists with answer response location, text-to-speech, use of objects.

### Section 5: Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA

Review the student’s instructional impacts, methods, and experience in the above sections with the menu of optimal testing conditions, universal features, and accommodations found in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#) of the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*. Then fill in the following table with the appropriate features in each category from the manual. The first row applies to all domains of the assessment (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), and the following row applies to specific domains per the individual needs of the student.

**Table A4**

*Individualized Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA*

Alt-OELPA Domains	Optimal Testing Conditions	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Accommodations
All Domains		Redirect to test  Strikethrough (online or paper equivalent if printed material)  Teacher assists with test navigation screens and response location	Color choices Magnification	Print on request
Specific Domains Speaking	Although Mya can physically speak, this likely will not occur for the testing window this year. Instead, use pointing and moving objects, materials.		Read aloud	

**Review whether accessibility features for the Alt-OELPA have implications for instruction and note them here:**

Mya primarily uses physical and referential communication when a speaker describes things to her, but she may benefit from introducing a focus on speaking when she is ready. This would also benefit her growth in reading letters to advance to phonemes, as she transitions to more symbolic language use.

**Arif** (*Kindergarten student who is deaf and non-verbal*)

Arif was born in Indonesia, where he spent his first four years in an orphanage. He is profoundly deaf with unintelligible speech and has a severe intellectual disability. He also has limited mobility. While in the orphanage, he learned some of the local sign language in Jakarta, but his progress was slow. He was adopted by an Indonesian-speaking family from Australia who were not familiar with any sign languages but were willing to learn what was needed to support Arif. In Australia the family continued to use the signs Arif had learned in Jakarta while introducing some Australian Sign Language (Auslan), a language with different vocabulary and grammatical structure from ASL, at home to prepare for what public schools would use. Arif also has some motor challenges that affect his ability to sign, so his parents acquired a device so he could press or point to sign icons or pictures to facilitate communication. The family immigrated to the U.S. due to a job transfer. Now Arif is enrolled as a kindergartner in a U.S. school. He has been identified as an English learner because although his father is a fluent bilingual speaker in English, the family predominantly speaks Indonesian in the home. Arif and his family now have to shift to learning American Sign Language (ASL). He is unable to read or write in any language and does not produce speech.

The school’s special education staff are working with Arif using information from his parents about what specific signs he had been working on in the southern dialect of Auslan in Melbourne as well as his prior Jakarta signs. They are trying to smooth the transition to ASL but find they need to rely a lot on the picture and symbols device that he had started using in Australia with his family. The family has concerns about the recent shifts between sign languages and is coordinating with the school staff on his continued use of social interaction signs and gestures and pictures and signs to practice with him at home, aligned with the kindergarten standards.

**Has the student taken the Alt-OELPA before?** (circle one)    Yes    No

If yes, review the prior form and update any section information below as appropriate on new form.

**Section 1: Language Exposure**

**Table A5**

*Student Exposure to Languages*

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How Often? (% overall)
Jakarta Sign	Low	Family	80%

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How Often? (% overall)
Auslan-Australian Sign Language different from ASL	Very low	Family	10%
ASL	Very low, just started	Family, friends, teachers, and deaf community (online content)	10%

**Sections 2 & 3: Communication Methods and Instructional Experiences**

**Table A6**

*Impacts and Communication Methods in Instruction*

Domains	Disability Impact on English Proficiency	Communication Methods and Fluency/Skill
Listening	Deaf, can't hear English sound correspondence to phonemes.	Receives input through familiar signs, symbols/ pictures, gestures/expressions, and objects/touch. Student uses AAC device for Jakarta signs and new English vocabulary at basic levels. Content is repeated as many times as needed.
Reading	No phonemic awareness. Cognitive ability requires a lot of repetition and highly contextualized visual or tactile chunks of information.	Same method as for listening, with content repeated as many times as needed.
Speaking	Unintelligible speech.	Uses familiar signs, symbols, pictures, gestures, and expressions. Student uses AAC device for Jakarta signs and new English vocabulary at basic levels.
Writing	Motor challenges holding writing tools or typing keys. Not able to use speech-to-text.	Same method as for speaking.

**Are there any suggestions for equity/access in Table A6 (e.g., access to technology)?**

No suggestions at this time.

### Section 4: Instruction

**Table A7**

*Instructional Experiences*

<b>Student Strengths</b>	Social, positive energy, not easily frustrated with repetition or mistakes. Arif can use AAC device with a switch somewhat independently.
<b>Goals</b>	Transitioning to ASL. No discussion on when may start cued speech.
<b>Teacher Supports</b>	Teacher assists Arif in accessing classroom computers and navigating on-screen content.
<b>Classroom Modifications</b>	Arif needs a lot of one-on-one time during instruction, and a clear path visually and any other relevant contextual cues in the classroom.
<b>Skills Needed</b>	Arif needs to be consistent and reliable with pictures and signs already learned while assigning meaning to new pictures and signs to build and expand his vocabulary.
<b>Skills in Development</b>	Arif is working on basic social language to describe needs and wants in English, as well as grade-appropriate vocabulary.
<b>Testing Accessibility Features and Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)</b>	Arif has not yet participated in any state content assessments, and no IEP planning for accessibility needs on the state content alternate has occurred.

### Section 5: Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA

Review the student’s instructional impacts, methods, and experience in the above sections with the menu of optimal testing conditions, universal features, and accommodations found in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#) of the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*. Then fill in the following table with the appropriate features in each category from the manual. The first row applies to all domains (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) of the assessment, and the following row applies to specific domains per the individual needs of the student.

**Table A8**

*Individualized Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA*

Alt-OELPA Domains	Optimal Testing Conditions	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Accommodations
All Domains	Directions adjusted; Help with navigating test platform; Use AAC device with switch; Use symbols, pictures, and focusing prompts and materials, as allowed for each item			Help entering answers; Use AT (AAC device with switch)
Specific Domains  Listening				Student may need exemption for listening portion due to disability and the allowed accessibility features

**Review whether accessibility features for the Alt-OELPA have implications for instruction and note them here:**

Need to discuss timing for introducing cued speech and how much emphasis while transitioning to American Sign Language (ASL).

## Appendix B: Tool 1 Template for Applying Accessibility Considerations

Has the student taken the Alt-OELPA before? (circle one)    Yes    No

If yes, review the prior form and update any section information below as appropriate on new form.

### Section 1: Language Exposure

**Table B1**

*Student Exposures to Languages*

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How Often? (% overall)

### Sections 2 & 3: Communication Methods and Instructional Experiences

**Table B2**

*Impacts and Communication Methods in Instruction*

Domains	Disability Impact on English Proficiency	Communication Methods and Fluency/Skill
Listening		
Reading		
Speaking		
Writing		

Are there any suggestions for equity/access in Table B2 (e.g., access to technology)?

### Section 4: Instruction

**Table B3**

*Instructional Experiences*

<b>Student Strengths</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	
<b>Teacher Supports</b>	



<b>Classroom Modifications</b>	
<b>Skills Needed</b>	
<b>Skills in Development</b>	
<b>Testing Accessibility Features and Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)</b>	

### Section 5: Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA

Review the student’s instructional impacts, methods, and experience in the above sections with the menu of optimal testing conditions, universal features, and accommodations found in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#) of the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*. Then fill in the following table with the appropriate accessibility features in each category from the manual. The first row applies to all domains of the assessment (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), and the following row applies to specific domains per the individual needs of the student.

**Table B4**

*Individualized Accessibility on the Alt-OELPA*

Alt-OELPA Domains	Optimal Testing Considerations	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Accommodations
All Domains				
Specific Domains				

Alt-OELPA Domains	Optimal Testing Considerations	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Accommodations

Review whether accessibility features for the Alt-OELPA have implications for instruction and note them here:

## Appendix C: Alt-OELPA Participation Checklist

Student Name:

If it is determined that there is sufficient information to support **ALL** the criteria below, the decision will be documented in the student’s current Individualized Education Program (IEP) (and English learner [EL] plan if applicable) to participate in the Alt-OELPA, an alternate English language proficiency (ELP) assessment. Students who do not meet all the criteria will participate in the general Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA)—with or without accommodations.

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
<b>Yes / No</b>	1. Student is identified as an English learner (EL).	The student has been screened and identified as an English learner using the Ohio’s standardized English learner identification.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ohio Language Usage Survey (LUS)  <input type="checkbox"/> Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener (OELPS)
	Notes:		
<b>Yes / No</b>	2. The student is unable to participate in the general OELPA even with accommodations.	Assessment records from an English learner plan or IEP show that the English learner is unable to access the general OELPA even with the allowed accommodations and supports.	<input type="checkbox"/> English learner plan records  <input type="checkbox"/> IEP records

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
	<p>Appropriate accessibility supports and accommodations should be provided to English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities during instruction and assessments. It is essential to determine which accessibility supports and accommodations provide the student with access to instruction. The goal of using accessibility supports and accommodations is to ensure that the student can demonstrate their English language skills without barriers that are irrelevant to those skills. There must be clear evidence that if needed supports and accommodations were provided, the English learner still would not be able to participate in the general OELPA.</p>		
<p><b>Yes / No / Does Not Apply</b></p> <p>One “Yes” meets criterion in this section</p>	<p>3. The characteristics of the English learner fit one of the following conditions:</p> <p>(The intent is that the criteria are consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation in the Alt-OELPA regardless of grade.)</p>	<p><b><u>For an English learner in grade 3 through high school assessed by AASCD.</u></b></p> <p>Student participates in (or is eligible to participate in) the AASCD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> IEP testing plan record</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student records</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structured classroom observations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developmental history</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developmental evaluation assessing all five areas (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive behavior development)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian/relative familiar with student and student interviews</li> </ul>

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
<p><b>Yes / No / Does Not Apply</b></p> <p>One “Yes” meets criterion in this section</p>	<p>3. The characteristics of the English learner fit one of the following conditions:</p> <p>(The intent is that the criteria are consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation in the Alt-OELPA regardless of grade.)</p>	<p><b><u>For an English learner in grade K-2 or a recent arrival.</u></b></p> <p>English learner has the following characteristics:</p> <p>English learner meets the state’s definition as having a most significant cognitive disability and has significant delays in adaptive behavior.</p> <p>The determination that a student has a most significant cognitive disability and significant delays in adaptive behavior should be based on an IEP team review of student records. This review should include any medical records that the school has. These records should indicate that a disability or multiple disabilities significantly affect both the student’s cognitive functioning and the student’s adaptive behavior compared to that of the student’s same-grade level peers. The student’s delayed cognitive functioning and limited adaptive behavior are evident in home and community environments, not just in school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> IEP testing plan record</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student records and medical records</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structured classroom observations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developmental history</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developmental evaluation assessing all five areas (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive behavior development)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian/relative familiar with student and student interviews</li> </ul>

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
Yes / No	4. English learner requires intensive and extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the curriculum.	<p>Student needs intensive, extensive, and repeated individualized instruction and supports to successfully and meaningfully access the curriculum. These services and supports are needed on a continuous basis throughout the student’s school years. Supports might include assistive technology, personal care attendants, or medical services.</p> <p>Adaptations and modifications in the general education curriculum and instruction are needed to provide alternate ways for the student to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and generalize English language skills across multiple settings and topics. Evidence of adaptations and modifications may include teacher-collected data (e.g., samples of student work, or observations of the student.). For English learners with significant cognitive disabilities, English language development is guided by alternate English language proficiency standards that are aligned to, but may be somewhat different in depth, breadth, and complexity from those held for English learners without significant cognitive disabilities.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher-collected data: Notes:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student work samples Notes:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Observations Notes:</p>

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
Yes / No	5. Potential unintended consequences of Alt-OELPA participation have been considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment to the Alt-OELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future AASCD</li> <li>• A change in the student’s placement, which may not be reflective of their least restrictive environment</li> <li>• Differential access to instructional content, perhaps at a reduced level of depth, breadth, and complexity compared to their English learner peers without the most significant cognitive disabilities</li> <li>• Possible limitations in the provision of English language development services.</li> <li>• Differential exit criteria from English language development services compared to English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities.</li> </ul>	
<p>Is not based on these = Yes</p> <p>Is based on these = No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	6. The decision to participate in the Alt-OELPA is <b>NOT BASED</b> on these factors:	<p><b>NOT BASED</b> on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time of arrival in U.S. schools</li> <li>• Language and cultural differences</li> <li>• History of limited or interrupted formal schooling</li> <li>• Low English language proficiency or literacy level without the presence of significant cognitive disability</li> <li>• Student's ability to exit from English learner services</li> <li>• Excessive absenteeism</li> <li>• Poor performance or impact on accountability system</li> <li>• Disability category label</li> <li>• Special education placement or services</li> <li>• A single person (e.g., principal, teacher) making the decision</li> </ul>	

**If the response is NO for any eligibility criteria or considerations in the left column,** the IEP team should consider the English learner for participation in the general OELPA with accommodations, if necessary.

**If the response is YES to all five criteria and considerations in the left column,** the IEP team should consider the student for participation in the Alt-OELPA.

Parents/guardians have been presented with linguistically and culturally appropriate information in order to participate in making this participation decision.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

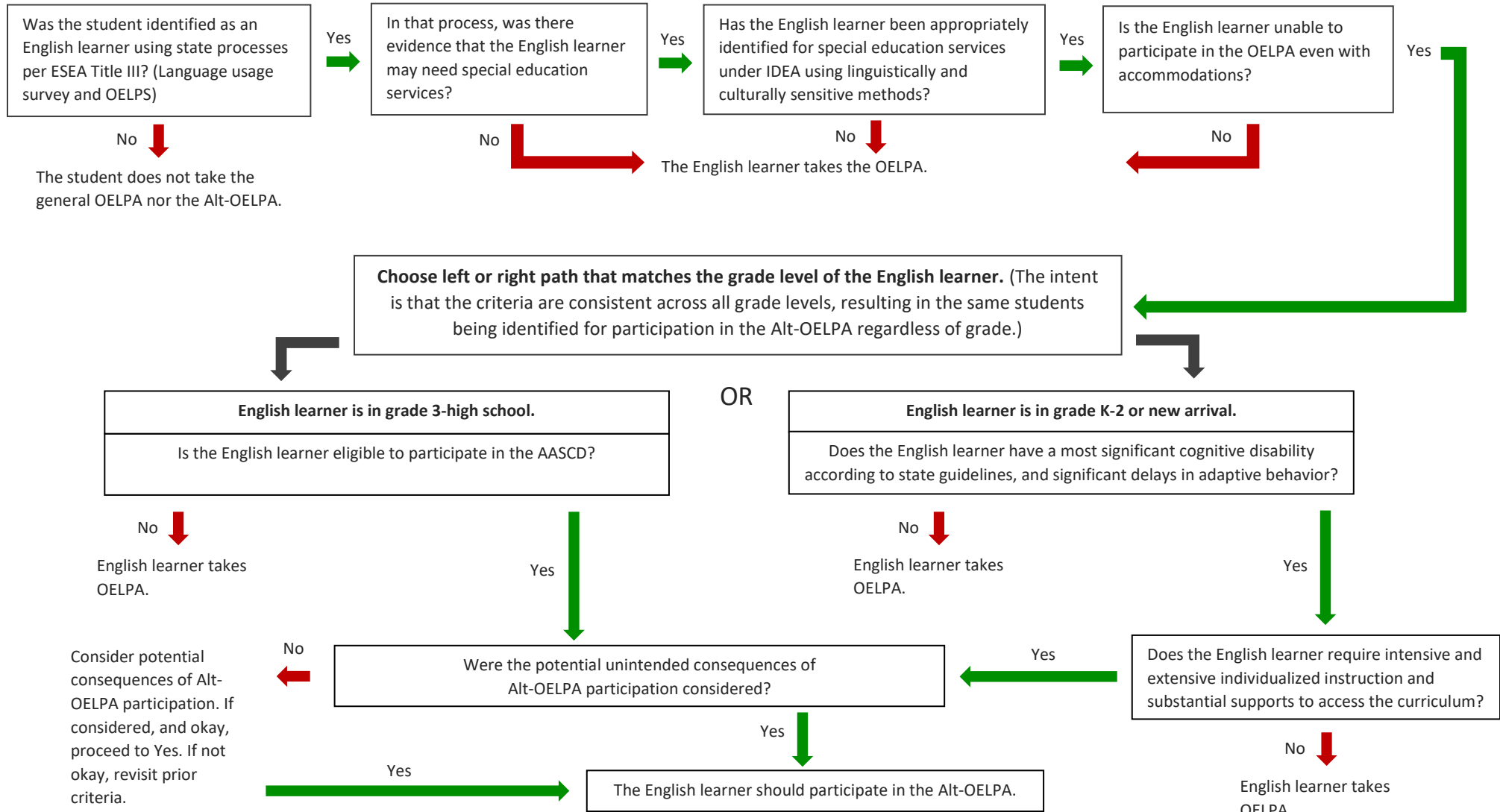
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### Appendix D: Alt-OELPA Participation Flowchart

This flowchart provides a visual representation of the process an IEP team may use when determining whether a student meets the criteria to participate in the Alt-OELPA, an alternate English language proficiency assessment.



## Flowchart Definitions

### 1. Student has a most significant cognitive disability and significant delays in adaptive behavior.

The determination that a student has a most significant cognitive disability and significant delays in adaptive behavior should be based on an IEP team review of student records. This review should include the student’s IEP, Evaluation Team Report (ETR), and other data that the school or family have available, such as results from formative assessments, evidence-based interventions and documentation of additional supports and services. These records should indicate that a disability or multiple disabilities significantly affect both the student’s cognitive functioning and the student’s adaptive behavior compared to those of the student’s grade-level peers. The student’s delayed cognitive functioning and limited adaptive behavior are evident in home and community environments, not just in school.

A student’s **cognitive functioning** reflects the student’s reasoning, language, memory, and attention skills that may delay the student’s ability to meaningfully attain information and knowledge. Records of cognitive functioning may include the results of an individual cognitive ability test or other formal or informal assessments.

A student’s **adaptive behavior** reflects the student’s conceptual skills, literacy, numeracy, and self-direction skills that are required for people to function in their daily lives. Adaptive behavior is essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life. Records of adaptive behavior may include the results of standardized measures, interviews (e.g., with parents, students), or observations.

Note: English learners are not assessed for disabilities unless there is evidence indicating a need. If an English learner who recently arrived to the U.S. is suspected of having a disability but has not yet been identified for special education services, the student should take the general ELP assessment.

### 2. Student requires extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the general education curriculum.

Student needs intensive, extensive, and repeated individualized instruction and supports to successfully and meaningfully access the curriculum. These services and supports are needed on a continuous basis throughout the student’s school years. Supports might also include assistive technology, personal care attendants, or medical services.

Adaptations and modifications in the general education curriculum and instruction are needed to provide alternate ways for

the student to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and generalize English language skills across multiple settings and topics. Evidence of adaptations and modifications may include teacher-collected data (e.g., samples of student work or observations of the student). For English learners with significant cognitive disabilities, English language development is guided by alternate English language proficiency standards that are aligned to but may be somewhat different in depth, breadth, and complexity from those held for English learners without significant cognitive disabilities.

### **3. Student could not participate in the general OELPA even with accessibility supports and accommodations.**

Appropriate accessibility supports and accommodations should be provided to English learners with significant cognitive disabilities during instruction and assessments. It is essential to determine which accessibility supports and accommodations provide these students with access to instruction. The goal of using accessibility supports and accommodations is to ensure that students can demonstrate their English language skills without barriers that are irrelevant to those skills. There must be clear evidence that if needed accessibility supports and accommodations were provided, the English learner still would not be able to access the general OELPA.

### **4. Potential unintended consequences of Alt-OELPA participation.**

There are potential consequences associated with participation in any assessment. Some that might be important to consider for participating in the Alt-OELPA include:

- Assignment to the Alt-OELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD);
- A change in the student’s placement, which may not be reflective of their least restrictive environment;
- Differential access to instructional content, perhaps at a reduced level of depth, breadth, and complexity compared to their English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities;
- Possible limitations in the provision of English language development services; and
- Differential exit criteria from English language development services compared to English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities.

## 5. Accommodations

For information about the accessibility features available for the general OELPA, please refer to the [Accessibility Manual for the OELPS and OELPA](#).

## 6. Alt-OELPA Participation Guidelines

To access the full *Alt-OELPA Participation Guidelines*, please visit the [Alt-OELPA Resource page](#) of Ohio's English Language Proficiency Tests portal.

### Flowchart Acronyms

**AASCD** – Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

**Alt-OELPA** – Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment

**ELP** – English Language Proficiency

**ESEA** – Elementary and Secondary Education Act

**IDEA** – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IEP** – Individualized Education Program

**OELPA** – Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (Ohio's general English language proficiency assessment)

**OELPS** – Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener (Step 2 of Ohio's standardized English learner identification)

## Appendix E: Alt-OELPA Personal Needs Profile (PNP) Planning Tool

<b>Optimal Testing Conditions (non-embedded).</b> Optimal testing conditions are standardized testing conditions for all English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. They are all external to the testing platform. <b>Check all that apply.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology (AT) device (must be checked in TIDE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Student responds in preferred communication mode
<input type="checkbox"/> Breaks and flexible scheduling	<input type="checkbox"/> Special lighting
<input type="checkbox"/> Focusing prompts and materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Setting
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing assistive technology, sound system, FM systems, hearing aids	<input type="checkbox"/> Scratch paper, individual erasable whiteboard, or AT device for notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Directions adjusted	<input type="checkbox"/> Student and item positioning
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical device	<input type="checkbox"/> Student reads aloud to self
<input type="checkbox"/> Navigation assistance by test administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> Tactile graphics or symbols
<input type="checkbox"/> Object(s) representation	<input type="checkbox"/> Text navigation assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud items/stimuli (Grades 2–3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal encouragement that does not assist the student to produce or correct responses
<b>Universal Features (embedded).</b> These features are available by default to all students. They are indicated by the IEP team and should reflect the student’s personal preferences. They are provided digitally through the test delivery system and are selected for use by the student with test administrator support. All students are allowed unlimited audio re-play. <b>Check all that apply.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Volume control	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark for review
<input type="checkbox"/> Strikethrough	<input type="checkbox"/> Highlighter
<input type="checkbox"/> Notepad	<input type="checkbox"/> Keyboard navigation
<input type="checkbox"/> Expandable passages and items	<input type="checkbox"/> Item level zoom
<b>Designated Supports.</b> These features are identified in advance by an informed educator. These features are not available unless selected. <b>Check all that apply.</b>	
<b>Embedded Designated Supports</b>	<b>Non-embedded Designated Supports</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Color choices	<input type="checkbox"/> Color overlay
<input type="checkbox"/> Line reader	<input type="checkbox"/> Magnification (beyond print size/zoom)
<input type="checkbox"/> Masking	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise buffers
<input type="checkbox"/> Mouse pointer	<input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud items/stimuli (Grades 4–12)
<input type="checkbox"/> Print size/zoom	<input type="checkbox"/> Translated test directions
<input type="checkbox"/> Streamline mode	<input type="checkbox"/> Sign language presentation of items
	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal description of graphics
<b>Accommodations.</b> These are identified in advance by an IEP team or 504 team. These accommodations are NOT available unless selected. <b>Check all that apply.</b>	
<b>Embedded Accommodations</b>	<b>Non-embedded Accommodations</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Domain exemption	<input type="checkbox"/> Scribe for responses (all domains)
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive mode	<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology (all domains)
<input type="checkbox"/> Print on request	
<input type="checkbox"/> Word prediction (only for writing)	
If a student needs a non-embedded accommodation (not listed above) to access the test and receive a valid and reliable score, contact the Office of Assessment at (614) 466-1317 or <a href="mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov">statetests@education.ohio.gov</a> .	

## Appendix F: Alt-OELPA Domain Exemption Policy

### Domain Exemptions

Domain exemptions are unique to Ohio's English language proficiency assessment program. Domain exemptions are rare and only for students with disabilities whose IEP team determines that the student's disability precludes meaningful access to one or more of the four language domains being assessed (listening, reading, speaking, and writing). Domain exemptions are available for the Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt-OELPA), the general Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA), and the Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener (OELPS). For the Alt-OELPA, it is especially important that IEP teams understand the full range of Alt-OELPA's accessibility features before making the decision to exempt a student from a domain of the Alt-OELPA domain. The Alt-OELPA's accessibility features are described in the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*.

### Eligibility for Domain Exemption

A domain exemption may be appropriate when a student meets all the following criteria:

1. The student has a documented disability or impairment in an IEP applicable to the domain;
2. Even with available accessibility features and accommodations, the student cannot meaningfully engage with or access the domain; **and**
3. The IEP team, in consultation with the educator(s) supporting the student's English language development, have established that the student's disability prevents the student from demonstrating what the student knows and can do in English, taking into consideration all other allowable supports and accommodations available on the assessment.

The student must meet the above criteria for each domain being exempted. Each domain exemption must be documented in the student's IEP and configured in the student's test settings in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) **before** the student begins testing. Please see the [TIDE User Guide](#) for instructions on manually editing or uploading test settings.

### Key Considerations

- Federal and state laws require districts and schools to assess the English proficiency of all students who are English learners annually in all four domains. However, federal guidance allows exemptions from up to three of these domains for students who cannot access one or more domains due to a disability. Students are required to participate in at least one domain.
- Domain exemption decisions must be made for each language domain on a student-by-student basis by the student's IEP team.
- IEP teams should review the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* to determine whether any of the optimal testing conditions, universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations may allow the student to meaningfully interact with the domain prior to making any decision on domain exemption.

- When a student can access a domain, their subsequent score is valid even if the score is very low. It is important to understand that a domain exemption is only appropriate when the student is unable to access part of the assessment, which is different than the potential to not score well.

### **Alt-OELPA Results for Students with Domain Exemption(s)**

When a domain exemption is applied, the student will not be administered any test questions from that domain during the test. If a student is exempt from one or more domains, their results and overall proficiency determination will be based on their performance in the nonexempt domain(s). The results from the Alt-OELPA administered with domain exemption(s) is valid, meaning that it is usable for English learner exiting decisions, instructional planning, and counts as participation in Title I-A and Title III of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015). Students cannot receive an overall designation of Proficient if the district or school fails to test the student in a domain without a valid exemption or the student's score is invalidated after testing.

### **Considerations for IEP Team Discussion**

**IMPORTANT:** For students who have previously taken the general OELPA with domain exemptions but are now eligible for the Alt-OELPA, the IEP team must reconsider the domain exemptions for the Alt-OELPA and not simply apply the same domain exemptions from the general OELPA. The Alt-OELPA has markedly different items, administration procedures, accessibility supports, and accommodations which may provide the student meaningful access.

IEP teams should review all available information regarding the student's disability and educational progress when answering these questions:

#### ***Listening***

- What are the student's receptive language abilities?
- Has the student been taught to use a communication system?
- What receptive communication modes does the student use?
- Does the student respond to auditory content when provided in their dominant or preferred receptive communication mode?
- Is the communication technology that supports the student's dominant or preferred receptive communication mode allowable on the test being administered (OELPS, OELPA or Alt-OELPA)? If so, a domain exemption may not be appropriate.

#### ***Reading***

- How does the student access text?
- What alternate formats does the student use to access text from various sources?
- Is that alternate format allowable on the test being administered (OELPS, OELPA or Alt-OELPA)? If so, a domain exemption may not be appropriate.

#### ***Speaking***

- What are the student's expressive language abilities?
- What expressive communication modes does the student use?
- Is communication technology used by the student allowable on the test being administered (OELPS, OELPA or Alt-OELPA)? If so, a domain exemption may not be appropriate.

**Writing**

- How does the student produce text?
- What alternate formats does the student use to produce text?
- Is that alternate format allowable on the test being administered (OELPS, OELPA or Alt-OELPA)? If so, a domain exemption may not be appropriate.

All cases of domain exemptions are subject to monitoring by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. Please contact the Office of Assessment at the Department with questions about domain exemptions at [statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:statetests@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-1317.

**Alt-OELPA Examples by Domain**

**Listening**

Situation	Recommendation
Student is hard of hearing, uses amplification device.	No exemption. Allow the student to use the amplification device as hearing assistive technology (non-embedded optimal testing condition).
Student is hard of hearing, has difficulty understanding speech even with amplification devices.	IEP team must determine whether the student’s difficulties in hearing are so extensive as to prevent demonstration of what the student knows and can do in the listening domain, considering available accessibility supports. For example, if the student understands sign language, the Alt-OELPA can be administered in sign language (See <a href="#">Table 7</a> , Non-Embedded Designated Supports).
Student is deaf and does not yet understand or use sign language.	Consider exempting the listening domain. For this student, a speaking exemption may also be appropriate.

**Reading**

Note: Read aloud support is available for the Alt-OELPA in all grades. In grades K-1, the test administrator is instructed to read items allowed. For grades 2-3, read aloud is an optimal testing condition that the test administrator provides. For grades 4 through high school, read aloud is a non-embedded designated support provided by the test administrator if the IEP team selects this support.

Situation	Recommendation
Student is blind, reads braille at near grade level.	No exemption. There is no braille version of the Alt-OELPA, but the test administrator can administer the test with read aloud and represent test content with objects, symbols, manipulatives, and tactile graphics.
Student is deaf and blind and does not yet have a means of receiving language.	The IEP team could consider a domain exemption. Districts and schools must administer at least one domain test of the Alt-OELPA, but the early stopping rule may be invoked. See Appendix A of the <a href="#">Alt-OELPA Test Administration Manual</a> for more information.



### Speaking

Situation	Recommendation
Student has an articulation disorder or physical malformation which distorts their speech. Speech is comprehensible to familiar listeners or in a quiet environment.	No exemption. The student’s responses to the speaking domain items are scored by a test administrator who is familiar with the student’s mode of communication.
Student has an articulation disorder or physical malformation which renders their speech difficult to understand, even for a familiar listener.	IEP team must determine whether the student’s articulation difficulties impede comprehension to such a degree as to prevent a demonstration of what the student knows and can do in the speaking domain, considering available accessibility supports and that the responses to speaking items will be scored locally by a test administrator who is familiar with the student’s mode of communication.
Student has an articulation disorder or physical malformation which renders their speech impossible to understand, even for a familiar listener and with use accessibility supports.	Consider exempting the speaking domain.

### Writing

Situation	Recommendation
Student has an intellectual or physical disability which makes writing difficult and laborious.	No exemption. Accessibility supports such as assistive technology or scribe may be appropriate for this student.
Student has an intellectual or physical disability which impedes expression of ideas in writing, even if those ideas can be expressed via some other mode of communication.	The IEP team must decide whether the student’s disability is so extensive as to prevent demonstration of that the student knows and can do in the writing domain, considering available accessibility supports.
Student has an intellectual or physical disability which prevents expressions of ideas in writing entirely, in English or any other language, even with available accessibility supports such as assistive technology or scribe.	Consider exempting the writing domain.

### Frequently Asked Questions about Domain Exemptions

- 1. Before the Alt-OELPA was available (before school year 2022-2023), the student was an English learner who took the OELPA with three domains exemptions. Can the IEP team simply apply the same domain exemptions to the Alt-OELPA?**

No, the Alt-OELPA is a different assessment with different accessibility supports and accommodations. For students who have previously taken the general OELPA with domain exemptions but are now eligible for the Alt-OELPA, the IEP team must reconsider the domain exemptions for the Alt-OELPA and not simply apply the same domain exemptions from the general OELPA. Administering the Alt-OELPA sample test items in a proctored test session from the Practice

Test Site can help the IEP team gather data about whether the student can meaningfully access a domain of the Alt-OELPA.

**2. Can a student reading multiple grades below grade level be excused from the reading domain?**

A student may be excused from a domain only if they are unable to participate in that domain due to their disability and not a lack of instruction or opportunity to learn. In some cases, recently arrived English learners have had no previous language instruction, even in their native languages, and so may just be beginning to develop fundamental reading skills such as phonological awareness or decoding skills. These students would not qualify for a reading domain exemption unless teams have evidence that it is the student’s disability that is causing their inability to access the test and not the student’s lack of previous instruction or opportunity. Additionally, read aloud support is available for all grades of the Alt-OELPA.

**3. For a student to receive a domain exemption, must the IEP team document the exemption on the student’s IEP?**

Yes. It is the responsibility of a student’s IEP team to determine eligibility and to document the exemption in the IEP. The IEP team should review and document all exemptions in the student’s IEP **before** the student begins the Alt-OELPA.

**4. Does the domain exemption have to be entered into TIDE prior to the student taking the test?**

Yes, decisions about domain exemptions are made by the student’s IEP team, not an individual, and must be documented in the student’s IEP and configured in the student’s test record in TIDE **before** the student begins testing.

**5. What does it mean to “access a domain”?**

If a student can access a domain, it means that the student can meaningfully interact with and respond to test questions from that domain. One or more supports or accommodations may be necessary to enable meaningful interaction in a domain. Conversely, if a student cannot access a domain, it means they cannot meaningfully interact with or respond to test questions from that domain, even with the use of available supports and accommodations. IEP teams should review the *Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* to determine whether any of the optimal testing conditions, universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations may allow the student to meaningfully interact with the domain prior to making any decision on student participation.

**6. How can IEP teams determine whether a student can access each domain?**

When determining whether the student can meaningfully access a domain of the test, it is advisable to administer the sample items from the [Practice Test Site](#) (see [Alt-OELPA Practice Test Resources](#) on the test portal for more information). When administered in a proctored practice test session, the sample items are presented just as they will be on the operational test. During the administration of the sample items, IEP teams can collect data on whether the available accessibility supports and accommodations provide the student access.

### Document Change History

Date	Version	Initiator	Description of Change
09/27/21	1.0	NCEO, Assessment Design Team, CAAELP Leadership	Version 1.0 accepted by Team 1 via a vote.
07/29/22	1.1	NCEO	Manual reorganized and language and figures revised so that accessibility categories align with Cambium platform, separated sections by embedded/non-embedded supports, and terminology is consistent.
06/30/23	2.0	NCEO	Updates made based on test administrator survey feedback after field testing and Team 1 input.
07/06/2023	2.1	CRESST	Finalize branding and updates for first operational year



Alternate English Language  
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