Introduction to TELPAS Alternate

Purpose of this TELPAS Alternate Training

- **Intended for any individual who needs a general overview of TELPAS Alternate**
  - Can be used as one of several training PowerPoints for test coordinators and test administrators
  - Can be shown to administrators or parents who need to have a basic understanding of TELPAS Alternate

- **Describes the TELPAS Alternate assessment and the reason for its development**

- **Provides a definition of the students in this special population**

- **Outlines a schedule of events and additional training resources**

TELPAS Alternate

- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires each state to administer an alternate English language proficiency (ELP) assessment for emergent bilingual (EB) students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the general ELP assessment, even with allowable accommodations.

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) worked with stakeholders to develop the TELPAS Alternate to evaluate grades 2-12 students receiving special education services identified in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) as an EB student and also identified with a most significant cognitive disability.

What is TELPAS Alternate?

- A holistic inventory that assesses the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing for EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 2-12

- Aligned to the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)

- Based on alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs) created to address the specific access needs of this population

Observable Behaviors

S3.	The student:				
Discussing with a Group	may or may not attend to group discussions ⒶA	imitates or attempts to imitate words heard in group discussions ⒷB	shares information in group discussions using a few high-frequency, high-need vocabulary words ⒸC	shares information in group settings using a small number of combined words ⒹD	shares detailed information in group settings ⒺE

The "test questions" in TELPAS Alternate are called observable behaviors. They are descriptions of student behaviors in the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Test administrators consider how well students understand and use English in a variety of social and academic situations.

Who takes TELPAS Alternate?

Students taking TELPAS Alternate are EB students in grades 2-12 who have the most significant cognitive disabilities and who are in the process of acquiring English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

EB students, whose parents have declined bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) program services, are also required to be assessed with either TELPAS or TELPAS Alternate.

TEA Definition of Student with a Most Significant Cognitive Disability

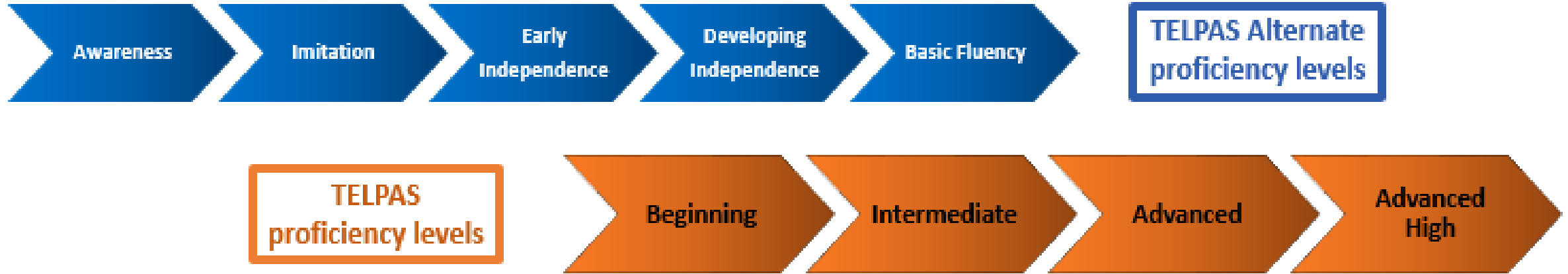A student with the most significant cognitive disability:

- Exhibits significant intellectual and adaptive behavior deficits in their ability to plan, comprehend, and reason, and who also indicates adaptive behavior deficits that limit his or her ability to apply social and practical skills (e.g., personal care, social problem-solving skills, dressing, eating, using money) across all life domains.

- Requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and needs substantial supports that are neither temporary nor specific to a particular content area.

Alternate Response Modes

- For TELPAS Alternate, "English" is more inclusive to allow for all modes of communication in English.

- Some EB students use sign language, braille, or another method of communication as a substitute for traditional English in one or more language domains.

- Teachers should take into account whether an alternate response mode is an appropriate way for an individual student to demonstrate English proficiency in a specific language domain.

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Labels

Awareness → Imitation → Early Independence → Developing Independence → Basic Fluency

TELPAS Alternate proficiency levels

TELPAS proficiency levels

Beginning → Intermediate → Advanced → Advanced High

- **For each language domain, TELPAS Alternate measures five levels, or stages, of increasing English language proficiency versus the four levels in TELPAS (the general English language proficiency assessment).**

- **Some TELPAS Alternate proficiency levels overlap some of the TELPAS proficiency levels.**

- **By stretching out the Beginning and Intermediate levels of TELPAS, TELPAS Alternate provides more granular information about English language proficiency for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This can help educators more specifically assess growth and target instruction from year to year.**

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Global Definitions

- Global definitions provide a common definition of the characteristics specific to each proficiency level across all four language domains and explain what it means for a student to be classified as: Awareness, Imitation, Early Independence, Developing Independence, or Basic Fluency.

- Understanding the global definitions and features provides the foundation for understanding the language acquisition skills students possess at each proficiency level.

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Level Labels and Global Definitions

Proficiency Level Label	Global Definition
Awareness	Students who receive this rating may be aware of English sounds or print; however, they have little or no functional ability to participate in communication activities in English.
Imitation	Students who receive this rating match, imitate, or approximate some English in their environment; however, they are not able to independently understand or produce English. They participate in routine communication activities in a familiar environment when the activities are significantly linguistically accommodated.
Early Independence	Students who receive this rating understand short, simple messages and produce messages of one or two high-need, high-frequency words (e.g., book, cafeteria, teacher). They are starting to participate in linguistically accommodated communication activities in English in familiar environments.
Developing Independence	Students who receive this rating understand longer messages of multiple sentences in English and produce simple, descriptive, original messages by combining two or more words (e.g., new red bike, big fast truck). They participate meaningfully in linguistically accommodated communication activities in English in familiar environments.
Basic Fluency	Students who receive this rating understand and produce more detailed, complex, and elaborate messages with multiple sentences in English. These students participate independently in communication activities in English in familiar environments.

Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors

- While the global definitions from the previous slide apply across all four language domains, the alternate PLDs present the major characteristics of students who are classified at the Awareness, Imitation, Early Independence, Developing Independence, or Basic Fluency proficiency level for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

- The PLDs are domain-specific and define how well EB students at the five proficiency levels are able to understand and use English in social and academic settings.

- The descriptors show the progression of second language acquisition from one proficiency level to the next and serve as a road map to help teachers tailor instruction to the linguistic needs of EB students.

- They provide a common framework for understanding the language acquisition skills needed to be classified within each proficiency level.

Awareness	Imitation	Early Independence	Developing Independence	Basic Fluency
ELs at the awareness level have little or no functional use of spoken English or augmentative and alternative communication even when interacting with highly familiar words.	ELs at the imitation level approximate speaking or augmentative and alternative communication activities in English when interacting with highly familiar words.	ELs at the early independence level participate in speaking or augmentative and alternative communication activities when working with familiar words.	ELs at the developing independence level produce short, simple messages in English or with augmentative and alternative communication.	ELs at the basic fluency produce detailed spoken messages in English or with augmentative and alternative communication.
These students may:	These students may:	These students may:	These students may:	These students may:
• require full second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine • know too little English to communicate simple ideas even when topics are highly familiar • alert to or show reaction to stimuli, but do not demonstrate ability to clearly communicate thoughts • not initiate spoken communication in English	• require significant second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine • imitate or attempt to imitate use of spoken English words after modeling • rarely initiate spoken communication in English independently	• require moderate second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine • communicate with a very limited vocabulary of high-frequency, high-need, concrete one- or two-word responses • not understand how words fit into a larger language context • hesitate to speak in English and often give up in their attempts to communicate	• require occasional second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine • combine spoken words to create simple original messages • pause to find words to restate or clarify meaning	• require minimal second language acquisition support (visuals, gestures, verbal cues) for social and academic communicative activities in their daily routine across settings • be able to express detailed ideas through spoken words in social and academic English • occasionally pause to search for words and phrases to clarify meaning

TELPAS Alternate Test Blueprint Development

- TELPAS organizes the majority of the ELPS student expectations under several reporting categories, or skill areas, on the test blueprints.

- In order to create the TELPAS Alternate test blueprints, educators from around the state reviewed the ELPS student expectations and determined those most accessible and assessable for EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

- These student expectations were then organized under the same reporting categories as TELPAS; however, the blueprints are not identical.

  - TELPAS contains more test questions than TELPAS Alternate.

  - Some student expectations were deemed not accessible and therefore not assessable for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

- TELPAS Alternate test blueprints illustrate the number of observable behaviors assessed in each reporting category with a total test length of 10 observable behaviors per language domain.

TELPAS Alternate Test Blueprints

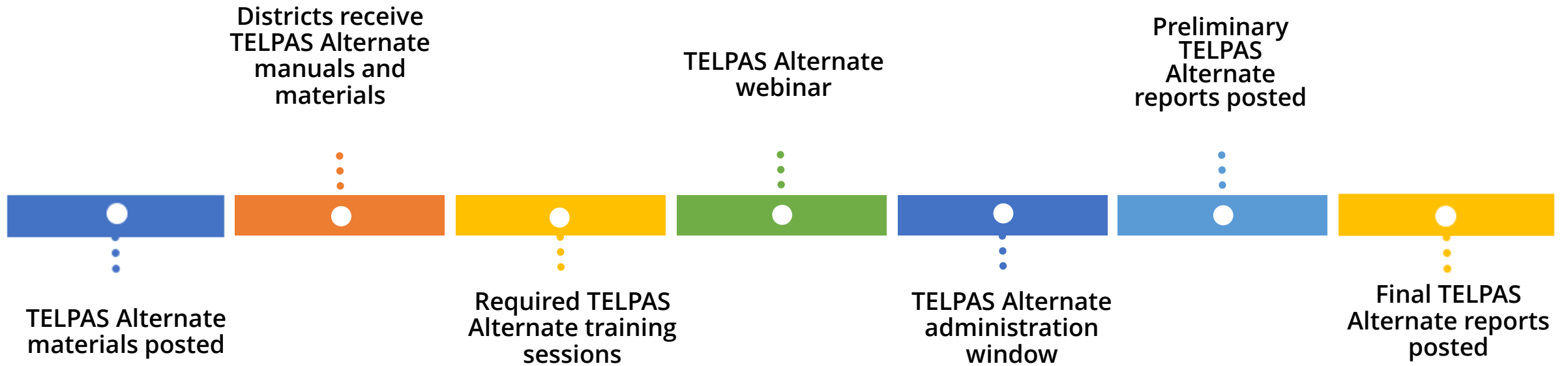| Domain	Reporting Category	Number of Observable Behaviors
Listening	Reporting Category 1: Understand spoken words and language structures	4
	Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of spoken English	6
	Total	**10**
Speaking	Reporting Category 1: Provide and summarize information	7
	Reporting Category 2: Share opinions and analyze information	3
	Total	**10**

Domain	Reporting Category	Number of Observable Behaviors
Reading	Reporting Category 1: Understand words and language structures	5
	Reporting Category 2: Basic understanding of a variety of texts written in English	3
	Reporting Category 3: Analyze and evaluate information and ideas in a variety of texts written in English	2
	Total	**10**
Writing	Reporting Category 1: Demonstrate an ability to use English vocabulary and language structures in a variety of academic and social situations	4
	Reporting Category 2: Demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge of English to complete a variety of writing tasks	6
	Total	**10**

Process for Considering Reclassification of EB Students with Special Needs

For questions regarding reclassification:

- **[Bilingual and English as a Second Language Education Programs](#) webpage**

- **Division of Emergent Bilingual Support:**

   512-463-9414

- **[EmergentBilingualSupport@tea.texas.gov](#)**

Schedule of Events

Districts receive TELPAS Alternate manuals and materials

TELPAS Alternate webinar

Preliminary TELPAS Alternate reports posted

TELPAS Alternate materials posted

Required TELPAS Alternate training sessions

TELPAS Alternate administration window

Final TELPAS Alternate reports posted

For specific dates for each of these events please consult the Texas Student Assessment Program Calendar of Events in the DCCR.

TELPAS Alternate Training Resources

Resource	Purpose	Audience
TELPAS Alternate Educator Guide	Provides an overview of TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate and serves to support effective implementation of the ELPS	Administrators, Coordinators, Teachers
Participation Requirements	Used by ARD committees in conjunction with the LPAC to make decisions about TELPAS Alternate	Members of ARD committees and LPACs
Test Administration Manual	Contains instructions covering the responsibilities of test administrators and the observable behaviors used to assess students Required to be read carefully and followed as written	Administrators, Coordinators, Teachers serving as test administrators

TELPAS Alternate Training Resources (continued)

Resource	Purpose	Audience
Training PowerPoints (See list on next slide)	Provides training on a variety of topics, including authentic classroom activities for each domain that explain how to rate students with the observable behaviors Designed as short PowerPoints that can be viewed in 10-15 minutes Are optional though highly recommended	Administrators, Coordinators, Teachers serving as test administrators
Online TELPAS Alternate Training Modules	Are online TELPAS Alternate training modules that are broken into two parts with each one having 4 modules. The training modules are available at the Texas Assessment Learning Management System.	Administrators, Coordinators, Teachers serving as test administrators

Available TELPAS Alternate Training PowerPoints

☑ **Introduction to TELPAS Alternate**

❑ **Student Eligibility**

❑ **Speaking Domain**

❑ **Listening Domain**

❑ **Reading Domain**

❑ **Writing Domain**

❑ **Accessibility**

❑ **Test Administration**

Contact Information

TEA's Student Assessment Division
512-463-9536

Help Desk
Helpdesk.tea.texas.gov

Texas Testing Support
833-601-8821

TexasTestingSupport@cambiumassessment.com.

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