TELPAS Alternate

Educator Guide



TELPAS ALTERNATE
Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

2026–2027

Information about the Texas Assessment Program can be found on the Student Assessment website.

Texas Educator Committees

The Texas Education Agency encourages highly qualified educators to apply to participate in educator committees for the Texas Assessment Program. Click the link or scan the QR code for more information.

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Overview

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Alternate assessment is an English language proficiency assessment designed to assess the progress that emergent bilingual (EB) students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 2–12 make in learning the English language. TELPAS Alternate is aligned to the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and fulfills the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which requires that all EB students be assessed annually until they are determined to be proficient in the English language and that the state administer an alternate English language proficiency assessment to EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 2–12 who cannot participate in the general English language proficiency assessment even with allowable accommodations.

> Students taking TELPAS Alternate are in the process of acquiring English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; have one or more disabilities that significantly limit their intellectual functioning, as shown by their ability to plan, comprehend, and reason; and have one or more disabilities that significantly limit their adaptive behavior, as shown by their ability to apply social and practical skills.

All EB students in kindergarten and grade 1 are holistically assessed in all four language domains using the general TELPAS. This decision was based on feedback from various stakeholders that the holistically administered TELPAS is accessible and appropriate for students at this early age, as some kindergarten and grade 1 students have not yet been identified with a disability (i.e., non-categorical).

In 2024 the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted new ELPS that became effective in classrooms during the 2026–27 school year. The 2026–27 and 2027–28 school years will serve as a transition period to support the implementation of these new standards and a new assessment in 2028–29. In addition to providing an overview of TELPAS Alternate and how the new ELPS support the second language acquisition of students as part of classroom instruction, this guide provides information regarding the TELPAS Alternate transition-year assessments for 2026–27 and 2027–28.

Participation Requirements

All students enrolled in Texas public schools and open-enrollment charter schools, including virtual schools, are required by federal and state law to participate in the Texas Assessment Program. EB students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 who are not over the age of 21 are required to be assessed annually in English language proficiency until they are determined to be proficient by meeting the EB reclassification criteria available on the Bilingual Education: Bilingual and English as a Second Language Education Programs web page. This includes students classified as emergent bilingual (EB)/English learner (EL) in the Public Education

Information Management System (PEIMS) whose parents have declined bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) program services (PEIMS code C).

TELPAS Alternate may be considered only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A student with the most significant cognitive disability is a student who exhibits significant intellectual and adaptive behavior deficits in his or her 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. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and needs substantial supports that are neither temporary nor specific to a particular content area.

The student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee should hold a meeting to determine assessment decisions either before the TELPAS Alternate testing window opens or, for decisions to be applied the following school year, at the end of the school year. The TELPAS Alternate participation requirements, available in English and Spanish on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page, detail the ARD committee's responsibility for ensuring that a student is eligible for TELPAS Alternate.

Prior to reviewing the eligibility criteria for TELPAS Alternate, the ARD committee must understand all assessment options, including the characteristics of each assessment and the potential implications of each assessment choice.

If TELPAS Alternate is being considered, the ARD committee, in collaboration with the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC), must review the participation requirements against the supporting documentation within the student's individualized education program (IEP), such as the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), to determine eligibility. If it is determined that the student meets the participation requirements for TELPAS Alternate, the TELPAS Alternate Participation Requirements form and supporting IEP documentation may serve as the required IEP statement under 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1055(b) and must be available for review during cyclical and targeted monitoring.

Step I of the TELPAS Alternate Participation Requirements form includes questions to determine whether the student meets the participation requirements. In Step II of the document, the ARD committee must review and initial the assurances and provide confirmation of TELPAS Alternate participation.

If the ARD committee determines that a student meets all participation requirements, the student should be assessed with TELPAS Alternate in all four language domains. There are no domain-specific exemptions. The following grade-level guidelines apply:

- Students in grades 3–12 who meet all participation requirements will take TELPAS Alternate. If students do not meet all participation requirements, they must take TELPAS.
- Students in grade 2 will take TELPAS unless they have an ARD committee. If a student has an ARD committee, the ARD committee, in collaboration with the LPAC, must make an assessment determination for TELPAS Alternate, as there is no State of Texas

Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Alternate 2 assessment for grade 2. Students should take TELPAS unless the committees determine that TELPAS Alternate is more appropriate.

- Students in kindergarten and grade 1 must be assessed with TELPAS holistically rated assessments, as there is no TELPAS Alternate assessment for those grades. More information on these holistically rated assessments can be found in the *TELPAS Educator Guide* and in the Grades K–1 Eligible Proficiency Level Descriptors for 2026–2027 and 2027–2028 Holistically Rated Assessments, available in the Assessed Curriculum for Holistic Assessments section, on the TELPAS Resources web page.

Refer to the *LPAC Decisions Educator Guide* on the Assessments for Special Populations web page for more information.

In rare circumstances a student's ARD committee may determine prior to the test administration that the student will not participate in TELPAS Alternate because the student meets the eligibility criteria for a medical exception or no authentic academic response (NAAR). For both exceptions, the ARD committee reviews educational records and eligibility requirements.

Medical Exception

Students who are medically fragile and cannot attend to or tolerate any academic interaction may qualify for a medical exception under certain circumstances. To determine eligibility, the ARD committee reviews medical and educational records and uses the information in the STAAR Alternate 2 and TELPAS Alternate Medical Exception Eligibility Requirements form on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page. The decision must be documented in the student's IEP along with evidence to support the determination.

No Authentic Academic Response

For students who are not able to respond authentically to any verbal, visual, or tactile stimuli during academic instruction due to level of cognition, the ARD committee uses the information in the STAAR Alternate 2 and TELPAS Alternate No Authentic Academic Response Eligibility Requirements form on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page to determine whether the student is eligible for a NAAR exception.

Test Design

Observable Behaviors

TELPAS Alternate is a holistic inventory aligned to the ELPS and based on alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs) that describe the English language acquisition progress of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The inventory includes 40 descriptions of behaviors, called Observable Behaviors, for test administrators to consider regarding each student's use of the English language in the four language domains. Each Observable Behavior describes characteristics that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities demonstrate as they gain proficiency learning English. Figure 1 shows an Observable Behavior within the reading domain that addresses the skill of decoding. The boxes contain the five characteristics that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may demonstrate.

Figure 1. Observable Behavior for Decoding

R2.	The student:				
Decoding	may or may not attend to familiar word/picture combinations Ⓐ	matches familiar word/picture combinations to identical word/picture combinations Ⓑ	selects requested high-frequency words from a group of words Ⓒ	decodes words or phrases consisting of a few simple high-frequency words Ⓓ	decodes longer phrases or sentences with some unfamiliar words Ⓔ

The Observable Behavior for decoding in Figure 1 aligns to ELPS 3(B), which reads:

For kindergarten–grade 3:

> (B) decode words using relationships between sounds and letters

For grades 4–12:

> (B) decode words using the relationships between sounds and letters and identify syllable patterns, cognates, affixes, roots, or base words

The behaviors from the first proficiency level to the final proficiency level show a possible progression from being unable to decode to exhibiting decoding skills as described in the standard.

Texas teachers developed classroom examples to help test administrators better understand the descriptions of student performance for each Observable Behavior. These elementary and secondary examples describe one way that students could demonstrate each skill across the five levels of proficiency. Figure 2 shows classroom examples for the Observable Behavior for decoding within the reading domain.

The purpose of the classroom examples is to illustrate how a student could demonstrate the skill at each proficiency level. There are many other classroom scenarios that could be used as examples for the Observable Behaviors. The classroom examples are not intended to be used as test questions or performance tasks to replicate, although using them for this purpose is acceptable, if needed. Teachers are encouraged to use their own activities in the regular classroom when determining a student's ability to understand and use English.

Figure 2. Classroom Examples for Decoding

R2.	The student:				
Decoding	may or may not attend to familiar word/picture combinations	matches familiar word/picture combinations to identical word/picture combinations	selects requested high-frequency words from a group of words	decodes words or phrases consisting of a few simple high-frequency words	decodes longer phrases or sentences with some unfamiliar words
Elementary	Teacher reads a familiar story to student and points to the word and picture for "cat" and says "cat." Student then touches teacher and smiles.	Student matches a word/picture combination for "cat" to an identical word/ picture combination for "cat."	Teacher asks student to find the word "cat." Student locates the word "cat" from a group of words.	Student reads the phrase "fast black cat" independently.	Student reads the sentence "The cat jumps on the sofa."
Secondary	Teacher reads a word/picture combination for a familiar staff member, Mr. Smith, and says "Mr. Smith." The student touches the picture.	Student matches a word/picture combination for "Mr. Smith" to an identical word/picture combination for "Mr. Smith."	Teacher asks student to find the words "Mr. Smith." Student locates the words "Mr. Smith" from a group of other familiar staff members' names.	Student reads the words "Mr. Smith" and "bus" from the sentence "Mr. Smith drives the bus."	Student reads the sentence "Mr. Smith drives the bus for our field trip."

The Observable Behaviors, Observable Behaviors with Classroom Examples, and test blueprints for TELPAS Alternate can be found on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page.

Accommodations

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) defines accommodations as changes to materials or procedures that enable students to participate meaningfully in learning and testing. Because TELPAS Alternate is an assessment based on a year of quality English instruction, the student performance described in the Observable Behaviors occurs while students have access to the instructional accommodations indicated in their IEP. A teacher's determination of the English language proficiency of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities using TELPAS Alternate should reflect the student's performance in English using the same accommodations used in daily instruction.

Student Response Modes

For the purposes of TELPAS Alternate, "English" is not limited to the typical spoken or written English of other state assessments. It is important to recognize that some EB students use sign language, braille, or another method of communication as a substitute for typical spoken or written English in one or more domains. Teachers evaluating how well their students participate in classroom activities in English should consider whether an alternate response mode is an appropriate way for a student to demonstrate proficiency in a specific language domain. Allowable response modes for TELPAS Alternate are listed in the table below.

Domain	Allowable Response Modes
For the **listening** domain, it is allowable for a student to:	• alert to • gaze at • point to • reach for • touch or pick up • draw • circle • nod • gesture toward the targeted stimulus
For the **speaking** domain, it is allowable for a student to:	• verbalize • form responses with the assistance of a communication device with preprogrammed familiar vocabulary or programmed student vocabulary • sign responses
For the **reading** domain, it is allowable for a student to:	• read • alert to • gaze at • point to • reach for • touch or pick up • draw • circle • nod • gesture toward the targeted stimulus • verbalize or sign by responding to letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives is available • arrange letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives is available

Domain	Allowable Response Modes
	• form responses with the assistance of a communication device with preprogrammed familiar vocabulary or programmed student vocabulary • indicate yes or no when presented with three or more choices and being asked, "Is this the ___?"
For the **writing** domain, it is allowable for a student to:	• write • alert to • gaze at • point to • reach for • touch or pick up • draw • circle • nod • gesture toward the targeted stimulus • use adaptive writing equipment (typing, keyboarding) • arrange letters, words, or numbers to form a response when a wide range of manipulatives is available

Alignment with State Curriculum

The ELPS

TELPAS Alternate assesses the ELPS, which district personnel are required to implement as an integral part of ongoing subject-area instruction in each foundation and enrichment subject of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state-required curriculum. The ELPS help teachers meet the language and subject-matter needs of EB students simultaneously. The ELPS outline student expectations (SEs) and PLDs for EB students in English and are organized across four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Applying the ELPS in Instruction

Beginning with the 2026–27 school year, the ELPS are organized across two grade bands: kindergarten–grade 3 and grades 4–12. The ELPS do not vary by subject or between grades within the same grade band. Despite their uniformity, they fully support and align with the learning of subject-specific and grade-specific English, and subject-area teachers are required to use the ELPS to build the English language skills that enable EB students to understand and use grade-appropriate English in class.

As set forth in 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §120, Subchapter B, the ELPS are published along with the TEKS for each subject. The ELPS for kindergarten–grade 3 can be found in TAC §120.20, and TAC §120.21 includes the ELPS for grades 4–12. Every teacher of an EB student is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the subject-area TEKS and the ELPS.

The ELPS have two instructional components:

- **Cross-curricular English acquisition SEs**

  Cross-curricular second language acquisition curriculum standards represent what EB students need to learn to become proficient in English in the context of academic instruction. The knowledge and skills are stated as SEs and are divided into four sections: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- **PLDs**

  TELPAS Alternate measures the ELPS SEs in accordance with five English language proficiency levels—Awareness, Imitation, Early Independence, Developing Independence, and Basic Fluency. These five stages of second language acquisition are defined in the alternate PLDs, which TEA developed for TELPAS Alternate to describe how well EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities at each proficiency level can understand and use English to engage in grade-appropriate academic instruction. There are separate alternate PLDs for each of the four language domains.

These two instructional components work together to accelerate the rate at which EB students learn English and academic subject matter.

Cross-Curricular Second Language Acquisition Knowledge and Skills

The second language acquisition knowledge and skills in the ELPS are the means for helping EB students learn English simultaneously with academic subject matter.

Language Domains

TELPAS Alternate uses the same language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as TELPAS; however, the TELPAS language domains are more broadly defined in TELPAS Alternate to allow for alternate forms of expressive and receptive language. Students who are eligible for TELPAS Alternate **must** be evaluated in all four language domains. There are no domain-specific exemptions. For assessment purposes, the four domains are defined in the following table.

Domain	TELPAS Definition	TELPAS Alternate Refinement
Listening	The ability to understand spoken language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse through which information is provided	The ability to understand spoken or signed language, comprehend and extract information, and follow social and instructional discourse through which information is provided
Speaking	The ability to use spoken language appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions	The ability to use spoken language or alternative communication appropriately and effectively in learning activities and social interactions
Reading	The ability to comprehend and interpret written text at the grade-appropriate level	The ability to comprehend and interpret written text, including braille, at a modified level
Writing	The ability to produce written text with content and format to fulfill grade-appropriate classroom assignments	The ability to produce written text or alternative communication with content and format to fulfill classroom and community-based assignments

The definitions are not directly tied to academic achievement but to the communication skills that EB students need when using the English language as an effective medium for academic instruction.

An SE from each of the four sections of the ELPS for each grade band is provided in the following chart.

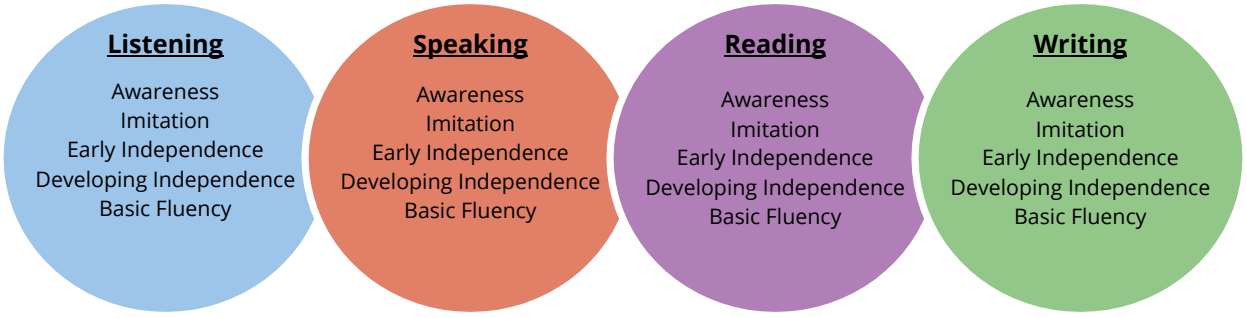
Examples of Cross-Curricular Second Language Acquisition Student Expectations, TAC §120.20 and §120.21

Effective implementation of the ELPS in the context of grade-appropriate subject-area instruction supports the learning of both English and academic subject matter.

	Grades K–3 TAC §120.20(d)	Grades 4–12 TAC §120.21(d)
Listening	(1)(E) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal and informal classroom interactions by recalling, retelling, responding, or asking for clarification or additional details	(1)(E) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal and informal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
Speaking	(2)(E) narrate, describe, or explain information or persuade orally with increasing specificity and detail during formal and informal classroom interactions	(2)(E) narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity and detail in academic context or discourse
Reading	(3)(C) use high-frequency words, cognates, and content-area vocabulary to comprehend written classroom materials	(3)(C) use high-frequency words, contextual factors, and word analysis such as Greek and Latin prefixes, suffixes, and roots and cognates to comprehend content-area vocabulary in text
Writing	(4)(D) write using a variety of grade-appropriate sentence lengths and types and connecting word	(4)(D) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths and types and transition words

Alternate PLDs

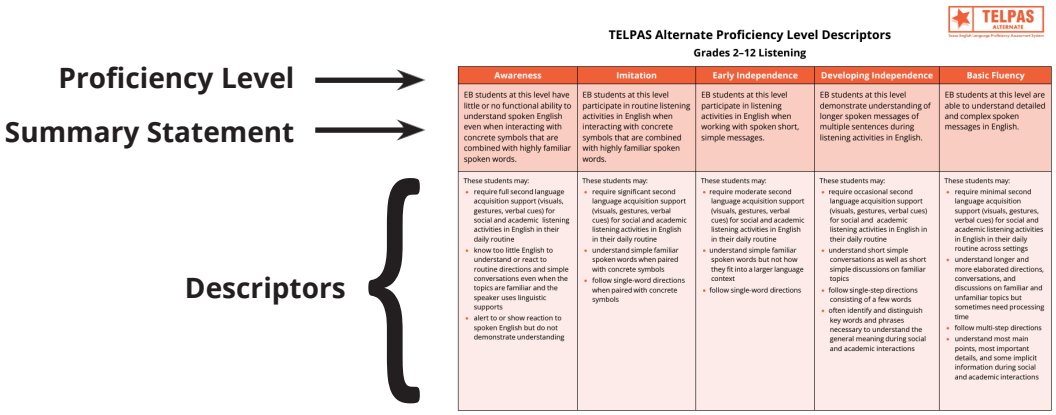
The alternate PLDs present the major characteristics of each language proficiency level—Awareness, Imitation, Early Independence, Developing Independence, and Basic Fluency—for each language domain.



The alternate PLDs define how well EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities at the five proficiency levels can understand and use English in grade-level academic settings. The

descriptors use the broader definitions of the language domains developed for TELPAS Alternate to 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 with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

For statewide consistency, the TELPAS Alternate PLDs can be found on the TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Standards web page in the format shown below.



While the alternate PLDs are language-domain specific, the global definitions and key features of each of the five proficiency levels remain constant across language domains. Understanding the global definitions and features provides the foundation for learning the characteristics that are specific to each language domain. There is one set of alternate PLDs for each language domain in grades 2–12.

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Levels and Policy Definitions	
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.

TELPAS Alternate Proficiency Levels and Policy Definitions	
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.

Linguistic Accommodations

The alternate PLDs play an important role in meeting the linguistic needs of EB students with the most significant cognitive difficulties. By describing the degree to which students at each of the five proficiency levels need scaffolded instruction and linguistic support to engage meaningfully in grade-level instruction, the alternate PLDs are a key resource for determining the kinds of linguistic accommodations to provide to students. As students progress from one proficiency level to the next, they gain more facility with English and require less scaffolded instruction and linguistic support.

Teachers who internalize the meaning of the alternate PLDs are better able to understand what a student can currently comprehend and communicate in English as well as which communication skills are associated with the next proficiency level. This knowledge helps teachers adjust content-area instruction to make it comprehensible at the student's current proficiency level. Teachers can also better sequence and scaffold instruction to help the student acquire the English communication abilities of the next proficiency level. Using the alternate PLDs as a formative assessment tool leads to linguistically accommodated instruction that helps students progress in both subject-matter instruction and in learning English.

Fundamentals of Second Language Acquisition

Learning a second language is different from learning a first language. Individuals may begin learning a second language at any age and in a variety of different contexts (e.g., social, school, work). Second languages are learned along a continuum that can be divided into stages or proficiency levels.

TELPAS Alternate reports progress from one proficiency level to the next rather than using passing scores because proceeding from little or no English to full English language proficiency generally takes place over a number of school years. EB students in U.S. school systems are a diverse group of students who differ widely in their educational backgrounds, sociocultural experiences, and knowledge of English. Some are born in the United States and are educated here from the beginning, while others are immigrants who may be in any grade when they

arrive in the United States. All of these factors affect how long it takes EB students to learn English.

It is difficult to learn and advance academically without the ability to fully understand the language of instruction. In bilingual education programs, students receive native language support as they learn English and grade-level academic skills. In ESL programs, students face the challenge of learning rigorous academic subject matter in English, a language they may struggle to understand.

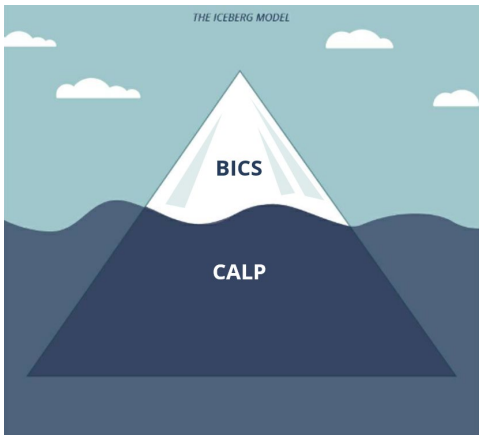
Informal (Social) Versus Formal (Academic) Language Proficiency

Two types of second language acquisition are important for success in school: informal (social) language and formal (academic) language. Informal (social) language consists of the English needed to effectively interact, exchange ideas, and engage in various settings and contexts. Formal (academic) language consists of oral and written language used to build knowledge, participate in content-specific discourse, and process complex academic material found in formal school settings and interactions.

Students must be able to understand and use the informal English of everyday social and routine classroom interactions as well as the formal English needed for accessing and negotiating learning, processing cognitively demanding information, and building conceptual understanding. Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) are terms used to describe these types of language proficiency that are based on research done in the 1980s by professor Jim Cummins.

BICS	Informal (social) language; the everyday language students need for daily social and routine classroom interactions
CALP	Formal (academic) language; the language students need in order to think critically, understand and learn new concepts, cognitively process complex academic material, and interact and communicate in academic contexts

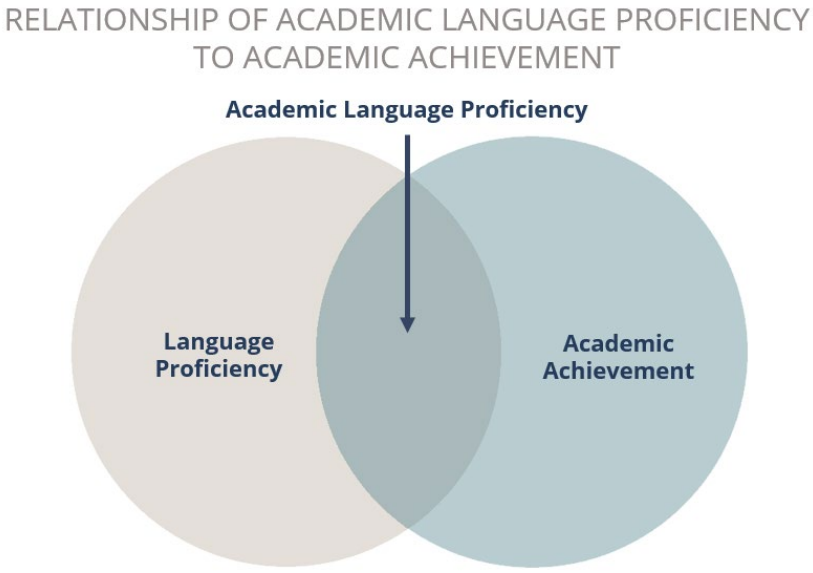
As shown in the following graphic, Cummins used an iceberg model to explain that BICS are often acquired more quickly and easy to observe (as is the part of the iceberg above the water), while CALP (the submerged part) has more depth, takes longer to acquire, and may require probing in order to be observed and evaluated.



Formal (Academic) Language Proficiency Versus Academic Achievement

Formal (academic) language proficiency is not the same as academic achievement, but it is an essential enabling component of academic achievement. EB students who have formal (academic) language proficiency understand the English that makes the learning of academic concepts and skills fully accessible. Formal (academic) language proficiency, therefore, provides the foundation for and access to academic achievement. Language proficiency encompasses both social language proficiency (BICS) and academic language proficiency (CALP).

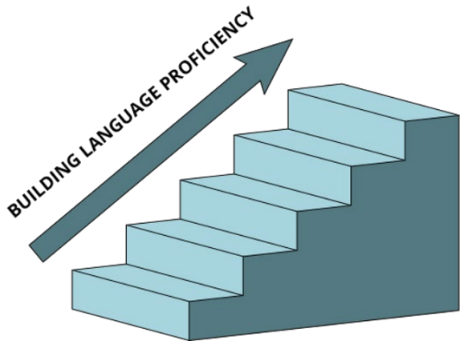
The graphic below helps show the relationship between language proficiency as a whole, academic achievement as a whole, and the area where those two overlap: formal (academic) language proficiency.



Language Proficiency	Formal (Academic) Language Proficiency	Academic Achievement
• Incorporates both BICS and CALP • Language of social interaction • Language acquisition often outside of school • Tied to everyday life • Evaluated using English language proficiency standards	• Language of content-based instruction • Language acquisition mainly within school • Tied to school life • Provides foundation for academic achievement • Evaluated using English language proficiency standards	• Concepts of content-based instruction • Conceptual development • Tied to curriculum in specific subject areas • Determined by evaluating students against academic standards

Building Language Proficiency

The stair-shaped model below depicts the cumulative and building nature of second language learning. The language skills associated with one proficiency level are a prerequisite to the broader range of skills at the next level. The arrow indicates that language continues to develop beyond the highest proficiency levels. The highest proficiency level on TELPAS Alternate is not intended to equal the English language proficiency of a student whose first language is English. Over time, EB students at this level will acquire more familiarity with the nuances of English meaning and grammar, use more natural phrasing, and learn low-frequency words, idioms, sayings, etc., that are typically familiar to individuals whose first language is English.



Students move through the proficiency levels at different rates depending on factors such as age, language facility, and instructional variables. Such factors may cause some students to progress more quickly in certain domains than others. In addition, students may move through certain levels more quickly or slowly than other levels. Without appropriate instruction, for example, some learners may plateau at the intermediate levels. These students need targeted linguistic support to progress academically.

Each proficiency level encompasses a range of growth and has an early, a middle, and a late stage. Students in the late stages of a level demonstrate language that peaks into the next level. Students in the early stages of a new level occasionally demonstrate language that spikes down to the previous level. Students progress to a new level when they perform most consistently at that level. If a student is near the border between two levels, test administrators will need to determine the level at which the student performs most consistently.

Building Communication Skills Through Classroom Instruction

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are at the core of all academic learning. The ELPS require essential knowledge and skills for second language acquisition to be taught in conjunction with all subject-area TEKS. To achieve this, teachers must provide EB students with frequent opportunities to communicate at grade-appropriate levels and to practice new English vocabulary and language structures through all four language domains. Providing students with speaking and writing opportunities gives EB students the time to practice the content they are learning. These interactions also help students internalize the informal (social) and formal (academic) English vocabulary and language structures needed to communicate about those concepts. Teachers should not assume that EB students internalize language just by hearing it or seeing it in writing.

The following graphic demonstrates how providing EB students with intentional and targeted practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing can help students build the English communication skills needed to develop and apply critical processing and thinking skills.



TELPAS Alternate Transition-Year Assessments (2026–27 and 2027–28)

Like TELPAS, TELPAS Alternate will undergo a two-year transition period during the 2026–27 and 2027–28 school years. All 2024 ELPS must be integrated into instruction during this period.

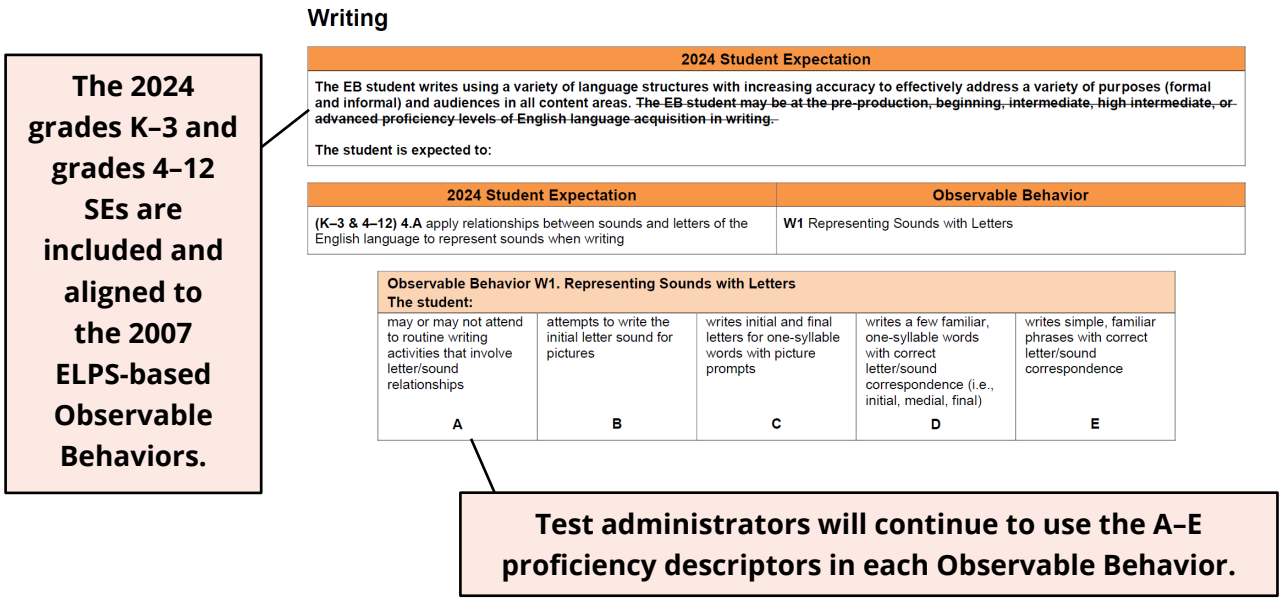
For assessment in the 2026–27 and 2027–28 school years, TELPAS Alternate will continue to follow the blueprints currently in place, and the current TELPAS Alternate Observable Behaviors Inventory and alternate PLDs will continue to be used to assess EB students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 2–12 who meet participation requirements. The 2024 ELPS will not be assessed in full until the 2028–29 school year, when a new assessment will be implemented.

Transition-Year ELPS and Observable Behaviors

The current Observable Behaviors Inventory was reviewed and approved by educator committees for use during the transition period. Because the Observable Behaviors in the inventory align to the standards that overlap between the 2007 and 2024 ELPS, the inventory remains in place for assessment during the transition years.

The 2024 ELPS and their alignment to the Observable Behaviors can be found in the TELPAS Alternate Eligible English Language Proficiency Standards for 2026–2027 and 2027–2028 document on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page. Test administrators can use the document to plan instructional activities that correspond to the eligible 2024 ELPS during the TELPAS Alternate administration window.

The figure below provides an example from the writing domain showing the alignment between ELPS 4(A) and Observable Behavior W1. For additional information, refer to the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page.



Training

Test administrators and other campus personnel participating in TELPAS Alternate administrations are required to be trained in test security and administration procedures. Training should be provided annually to ensure a standardized test administration and the best testing experience for Texas students. Annual training is especially important for understanding and implementing new or updated policies and procedures. It is imperative that all individuals participating in TELPAS Alternate administrations preserve the integrity of test content and student data through strict adherence to the instructions and procedures contained in the test administration manual. Lack of annual training typically results in testing incidents that may impact students' test scores, district and campus accountability ratings, and, ultimately, an educator's teaching certificate.

Trainings for TELPAS Alternate are posted in the Learning Management System (LMS), which can be accessed via the Educators page of the Texas Assessment website. There are system-specific recorded trainings as well as modules focusing on an overview of TELPAS Alternate and eligibility requirements for student participation. Trainings include:

- Managing Secure Materials for the Texas Assessment Program
- Test Security for the Texas Assessment Program
- The Centralized Reporting System Overview
- TELPAS Alternate training modules

District testing personnel who will administer TELPAS Alternate assessments should read not only this guide but also the applicable user guides and other resources listed in the table below to familiarize themselves with current testing systems, guidelines, and procedures.

Title	Audience
Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) User Guide	Testing Coordinators
Response Entry (RE) User Guide	Testing Coordinators and Classroom Teachers
Centralized Reporting System (CRS) User Guide	Testing Coordinators and Classroom Teachers

Additional training resources can be found on the TELPAS Alternate Resources web page.

Test Results

Educators who have a roster association with students can access results for those students through the Centralized Reporting System (CRS). TELPAS Alternate score reports include a student's individual proficiency level rating (Awareness, Imitation, Early Independence, Developing Independence, or Basic Fluency) in each of the four language domains assessed (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as well as composite proficiency ratings.

Composite proficiency ratings provide a single overall English language proficiency level derived from the proficiency ratings in the four language domains. The composite rating weights are 25 percent for each language domain.

Detailed information about TELPAS Alternate score reports is provided in CRS.

TELPAS Alternate report cards are reports that explain TELPAS Alternate results to parents. They are produced in English and Spanish and are available in the Family Portal. Detailed information about TELPAS Alternate report cards is provided on the Texas Assessment website.

The Research Portal contains assessment data for all Texas students who participated in statewide test administrations and can be used by educators, researchers, and the public to analyze state assessment results.

TELPAS Alternate results are used in the following ways:

- to help parents monitor the progress their children make in learning English
- to inform instructional planning and program exit decisions for individual students
- to report performance to local school boards, school professionals, and the community
- to evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns
- to evaluate districts and campuses in a variety of state and federal accountability measures

TEXAS ASSESSMENT