

*The purpose of this Question and Answer (Q&A) resource is to provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with guidance on adjustments and flexibility for Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) procedures and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment (TELPAS), particularly related to English Learner (EL) reclassification amid school closures in the 2019-2020 school year. It is important to ensure that English learners have access to their right to demonstrate English proficiency and to reclassify as English proficient.*

**Q1: Do Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have flexibility to discontinue bilingual education and/or English as a second language (ESL) programs during an emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**A1:** No. Neither state nor federal law provide flexibility to LEAs in times of emergency regarding their obligation to provide equitable access to the curriculum for English learners through bilingual education and ESL programs. If schools are closed, but the LEA continues to provide educational opportunities to the general student population during the closure, the school must ensure that English learners also have equal access to the same opportunities. The LEA must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each English learner can be provided language program services commensurate with the student's English language proficiency level.

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**Q2: Has the TELPAS been waived this year?**

**A2:** The TELPAS testing window has been extended until May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and the State has made the completion of the TELPAS optional for LEAs.

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**Q3: What if some students have not completed all four domains of TELPAS (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)?**

**A3:** As feasible, it is recommended for LEAs to finalize TELPAS when partially completed, **particularly when the only remaining domain to assess is writing and writing collections have already been collected (for grades 2-12)**. Priority should be given to English learners who

- have a high potential for reclassification
- have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, or other exceptional needs.

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**Q4: What if we are unable to complete all four domains of TELPAS?**

**A4:** The English Language Proficiency Assessment component of the reclassification criteria cannot be fulfilled with partial TELPAS data. If all four domains of the 2019-2020 TELPAS cannot be completed, the **LEA may administer the [LAS Links Assessment](#)** to English learners who are potential for reclassification with an extended testing window through the first 30 calendar days of the 2020-2021 school year (grade 1: listening and speaking; grades 2-12: listening, speaking, reading, and writing)<sup>1</sup>.

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**Q5: With school closures and some assessment requirements waived, does the LPAC need to convene for English learner (EL) [end-of-year review and reclassification decisions](#)?**

**A5:** LEAs should determine, to the extent possible, how to proceed with the annual review of progress for all English learners. However, priority should be placed on English learners **who are potential for reclassification**, such as those for whom the LPAC and/or classroom teachers have documented readiness

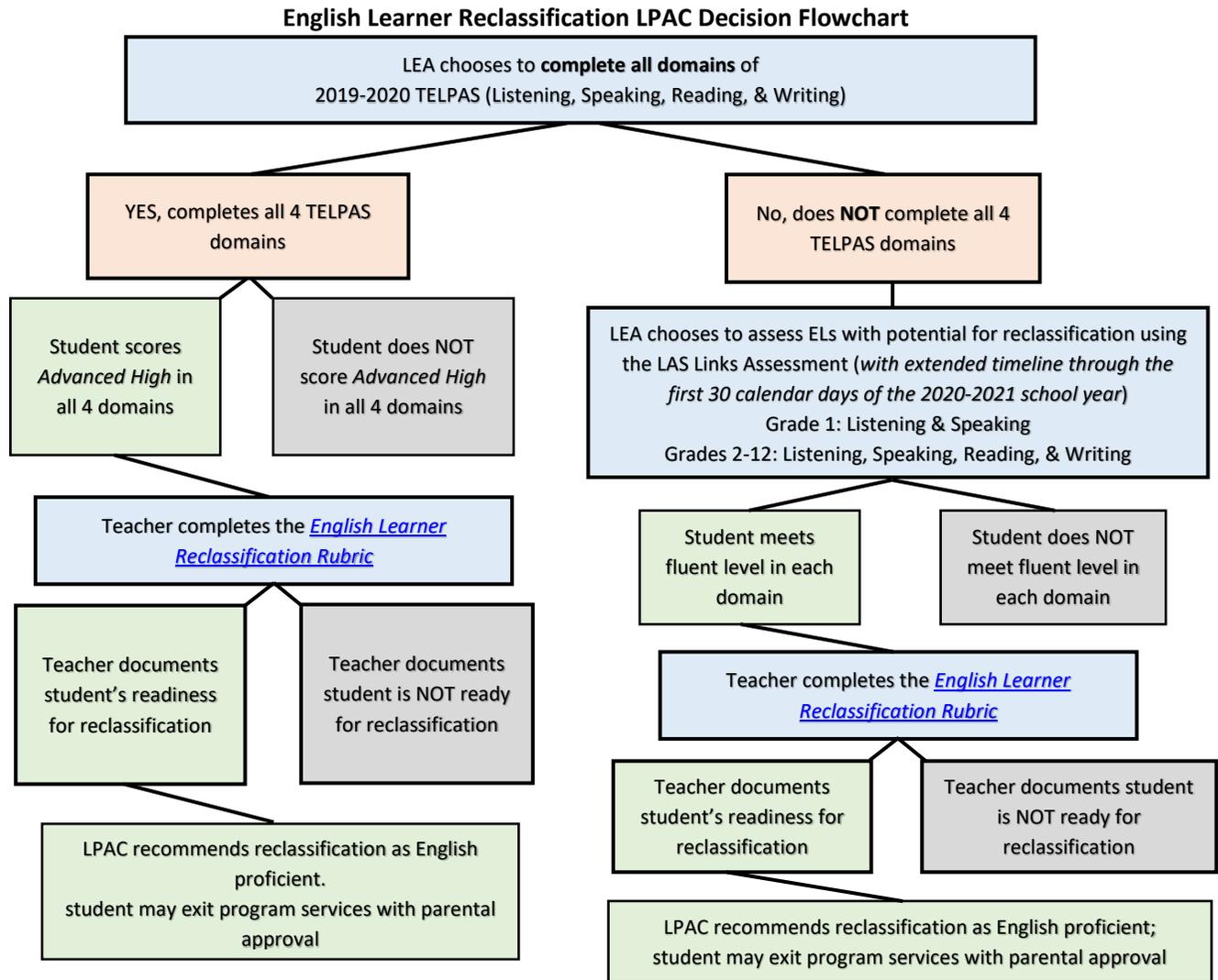
for successful participation in grade-level content instruction delivered with no second language acquisitions supports.

**Q6: How has the State’s waiver for the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) affected EL reclassification requirements?**

**A6:** All State Standardized Reading Assessment Requirements within the English Learner reclassification criteria have been waived for the 2019-2020 school year, including STAAR Reading (grades 3-8), STAAR English EOC (grades 9-10), and norm-referenced standardized achievement test (grades 1, 2, 11, 12).

**Q7: What are the available options for adjusting the general 2019-2020 English learner reclassification criteria?**

**A7:** The *English Learner Reclassification LPAC Decision Flowchart* below (next page) guides LEAs on how to determine 2019-2020 English Learner reclassification criteria for students in grades 1-12, including the subjective [teacher evaluation](#).



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**Q8: What adjustments to the LPAC end-of-year responsibilities are available for the remainder of the [2019-2020 school year](#)?**

**A8:** The LPAC may use the following provisions:

- **Alternative meeting methods**, such as
  - Phone or video conferencing
  - Use of electronic signatures that adhere with LEA policy
- **Optional LPAC parent representation** (although highly encouraged)
- **Extended timeline** for determining English learner reclassification through the first 30 calendar days of the 2020-2021 school year

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**Q9: Can some grade levels have different reclassification criteria?**

**A9:** The LEA must choose consistent criteria for each grade level across the LEA. For example, the LEA may choose to complete 2019-2020 TELPAS in all four domains for grade 1 only (since the ratings are all holistic), but they may choose not to complete TELPAS in grades 2-12, using LAS Links instead.

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**Q10: How has the reclassification criteria been adjusted for English learners with *significant cognitive disabilities* who use the [Individualized Reclassification Process](#)?**

**A10:** The STAAR Alternate 2 requirements for grades 3-10 have been **waived**. However, due to the nature of the TELPAS Alternate assessment design and the TELPAS holistic ratings for Grade 1, the English Language Proficiency component of the Individualized Reclassification Process for a student with a significant cognitive disability is to be completed for the 2019-2020 school year, even if the student is **not present**. Additionally, the subjective teacher evaluation component of the Individualized Reclassification Criteria is to be completed using the new [English Learner Reclassification Rubric – ALTERNATE](#). As noted above, if the LPAC process for determining EL reclassification is unable to be completed by the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year, an **extended timeline** through the first 30 calendar days of the 2020-2021 school year has also been provided, which includes students reclassified through the Individualized Reclassification Process.