Alt ELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual

Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment

School Year 2025-26

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Section 1: Introduction

The 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.

CAAELP developed the Alt ELPA to provide an assessment of English language proficiency for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.[1] 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.[2] The Alt ELPA is 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.

CAAELP developed this *Alt ELPA 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 ELPA, there are only embedded universal features. While your state's general ELP assessment may have the category of non-embedded universal features (external to the testing platform), for the Alt ELPA, 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. CAAELP recognizes that validity, reliability, and fairness of the Alt ELPA depend on each English learner with significant cognitive disabilities having appropriate access to the assessment to show their English language proficiency. CAAELP also recognizes the important role of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in making decisions for English learners with significant cognitive disabilities.

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[1] "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."

[2] 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.

Intended Audience

The *Alt ELPA 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 ELPA 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 also is intended for administrative staff who oversee the decisions made in instruction and assessment.

Recommended Use

The *Alt ELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* applies to all students who take the Alt ELPA and reflects the diverse needs of the student population taking this online assessment. The manual highlights the Personal Needs Profile (PNP) (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found in Appendix E of this manual) as a means of identifying and administering specific accessibility features and tools for students. Decision makers enter information on accessibility features and accommodations required for the Alt ELPA from the IEP/504 plan into the PNP so these can be activated prior to testing. This can be accomplished by identifying one person (e.g., a team member or a test coordinator who will follow the state's 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 students' needs evolve, decisions should be reevaluated to ensure that appropriate accessibility features are provided.

Purposes of the Alt ELPA

The Alt ELPA 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 learner services.

The Alt ELPA is designed to reflect the diversity of English learners with significant cognitive disabilities. It was also 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 ELPA, visit http://www.elpa21.org/alt-elpa.

Alt ELPA 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. The consortium has broadened the approach to removing barriers by greatly increasing the accessibility of the Alt ELPA.

The consortium 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 ELPA, (b) designated supports available to all English learners based on need and identified by an adult in the PNP (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found 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 tools. 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 ELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

Note: While domain exemptions are listed as an accommodation for the Alt ELPA, test administrators should check their state's policies online or speak with their state assessment coordinator if there are any questions about domain exemptions.

Figure 1

Alt ELPA Tiered Accessibility Model

OPTIMAL TESTING CONDITIONS (Non-Embedded)

Breaks and flexible scheduling, Directions adjusted, Focusing prompts and materials, Hearing assistive technology/Sound system/FM systems/Hearing aids, Medical device, Navigation assistance by the test administrator, Object representations or objects, Read aloud (Grades 2-3), Preferred communication response mode, Scratch paper/whiteboard/AT device for notes, Setting, Special lighting, Student and item positioning, Student read aloud to self, Tactile graphics or symbols, Text navigation assistance, Verbal encouragement or physical prompting

UNIVERSAL FEATURES (Embedded)

Expandable passages and items, Highlighter, Item level zoom, Keyboard navigation, Line reader, Mark for review, Notepad, Strikethrough, Volume control

DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

Non-Embedded - Color overlay, Magnification, Noise buffers, Read aloud (Grades 4-5 and above), Sign language, Translated test directions, Verbal descriptions of graphics
Embedded - Color choices, Masking, Mouse pointer, Print size/Zoom, Streamline

ACCOMMODATIONS

Non-Embedded - Assistive technology and Scribe

Embedded - Domain exemptions, Permissive mode (for AT use), Print on request, Word prediction
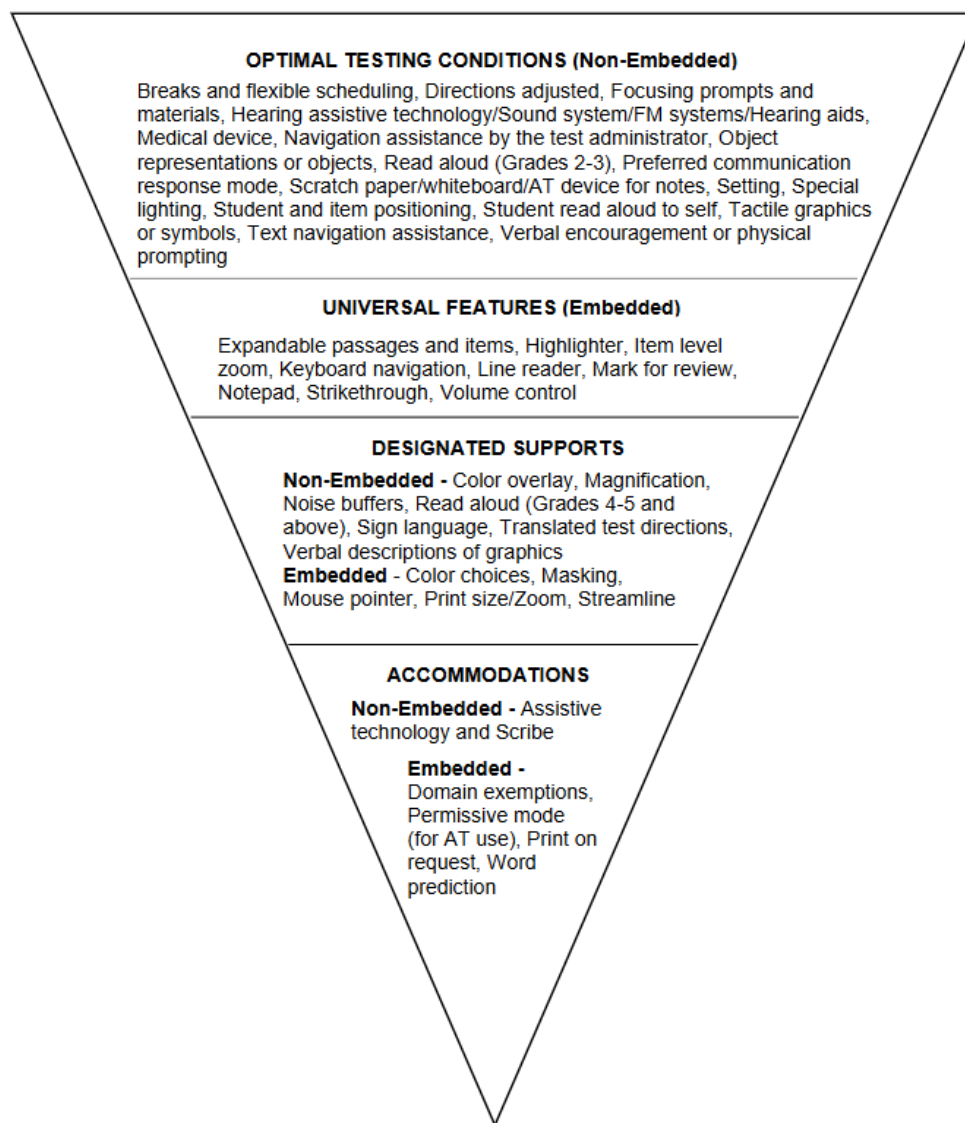
Figure 1 shows that the policy on reading the test aloud to a student varies by grade:

<u>For students in Grades K and 1</u>: 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.

<u>For students in Grade Band 2-3</u>: Read aloud is considered an optimal testing condition that is external to the testing platform. It can be provided if a student in Grade 2 or 3 has successfully used read aloud in the classroom.

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

Table 1 provides definitions of the accessibility tiers and available tools in each tier for Alt ELPA embedded features. Tools in all tiers should be documented on the student's IEP. Designated supports and accommodations must be assigned to individual students in advance. All available tools yield valid scores and support valid interpretations of the results from the Alt ELPA when used in a manner consistent with this manual. 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 ELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

Table 1

Embedded Features in the Alt ELPA Accessibility Model

Tier	Definition	Available Tools
Universal Features	These are provided digitally through the assessment delivery system and are available to any student based on their preference. All appear in the assessment delivery system.	Click and delete, click and drop, expandable passages and items, highlighter, item level zoom, keyboard navigation, line reader, mark for review, notepad, strikethrough, volume control
Designated Supports	These are provided digitally through the assessment delivery system and are available to any student if selected before testing by an adult.	Color choices, masking, mouse pointer, print size/zoom, streamline
Accommodations	These are provided through the assessment delivery system (embedded) but are available only to certain students based on their	Domain exemptions, permissive mode (for assistive technology use), print on request, word prediction

Tier	Definition	Available Tools
	individual needs in their IEP.	

Table 2 provides definitions of the accessibility tiers and examples of the features in each tier for Alt ELPA non-embedded features. Features in all tiers should 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 ELPA when used in a manner consistent with this manual. 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 ELPA because they would change the construct measured, making interpretations from test results invalid.

Table 2

Non-Embedded Features in the Alt ELPA Accessibility Model

Feature	Definition
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.
Designated Supports	These are accessibility features that may be provided by the test administrator (non-embedded) and are available to any student if selected before testing by an adult.
Accommodations	These may be provided by the test administrator (non-embedded) but are available only to certain students based on their individual needs in their IEP.

In addition to the Alt ELPA accessibility framework, the design of the Alt ELPA provides customization to meet student needs. This is evidenced through the test administration instructions provided in the platform.

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 ELPA 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 ELPA. 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 they are used during assessments. The consistency between instructional supports and accessibility features for the Alt ELPA should always be considered, even though some features may be used in instruction but are not allowed for the assessment.
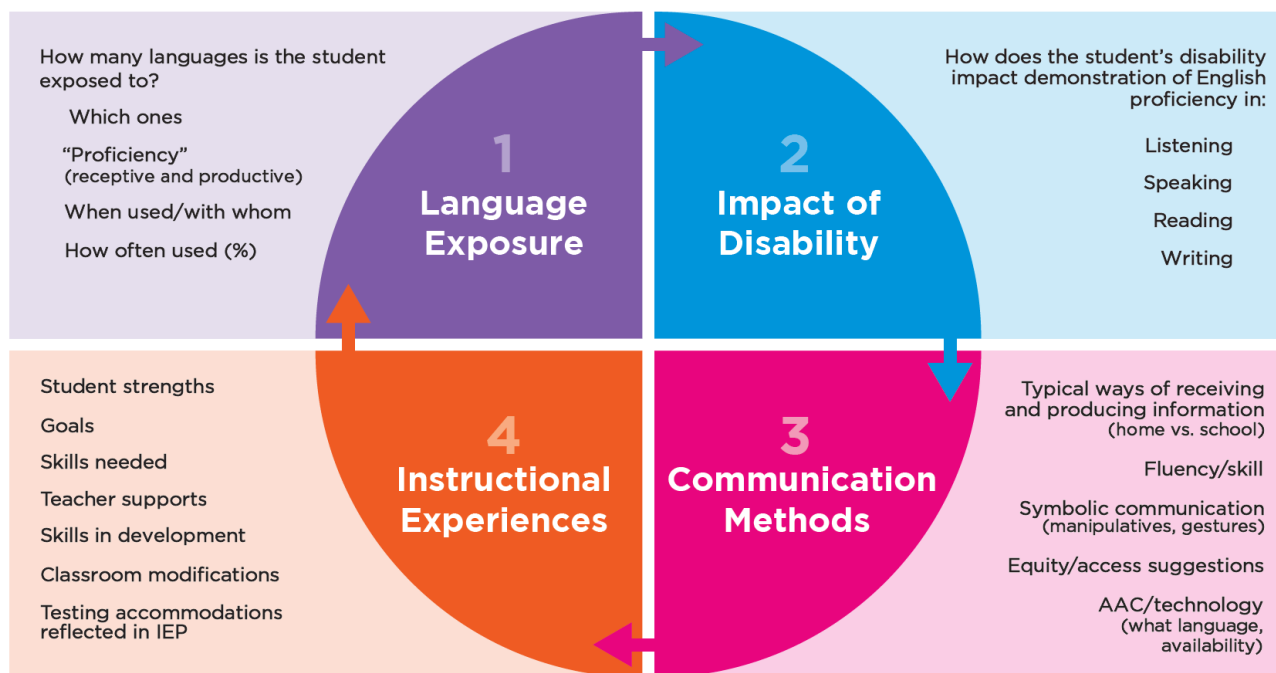
Instructional and Assessment Accessibility Decisions

Supports that a student receives in instruction may not be identical to the accessibility features available for the Alt ELPA. Instruction focuses on content knowledge (e.g., reading, English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) and developing English skills in English learners. The Alt ELPA 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 ELPA.

Figure 2 provides a model to guide accessibility decisions. It addresses language and disability in detail. At the same time, it guides teams to identify supports used for instruction and how these may bridge to accessibility features used for the Alt ELPA. Teams may want to start with Section 1 and then work around the cycle.
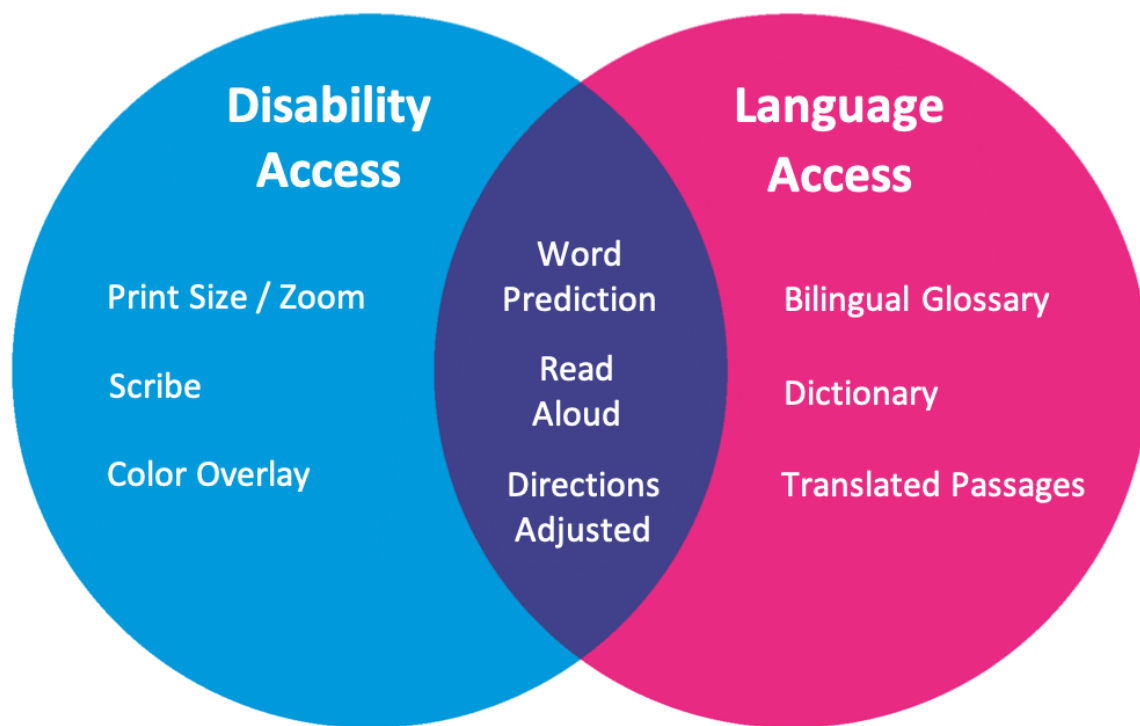
Figure 2

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 ELPA. 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

Note. Blue = Allowed on the Alt ELPA; Purple = Conditionally Allowed by Domain on the Alt ELPA; Pink = Not Allowed on the Alt ELPA.

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 ELPA.

Section 2: Alt ELPA Participation Criteria

The following definition serves as the basis for the *Alt ELPA Participation Guidelines*. 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 learner 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.

This definition is consistent with federal regulations that outline the scope of state definitions of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The IEP team makes assessment eligibility decisions for students who receive special education services. This includes the Alt ELPA 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 ELPA.

It is assumed here that the student has been identified as an English learner using the state's 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 ELPA 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 the vast majority of English learners with disabilities in Grades K–12 will participate in the state's general ELP assessment rather than the Alt ELPA. 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 ELPA participation criteria.

Table 3

Assumptions Underlying Alt ELPA 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 ELPA.

- The vast majority of English learners will participate in the general ELP assessment. Students with significant cognitive disabilities will participate in the Alt ELPA.
- 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 ELPA will differ for grades with an alternate content assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) and grades without an AA-AAAS. Nevertheless, the **intent** is that criteria used to make Alt ELPA participation decisions will be consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation across grades. The IEP team must meet at least one time during the school year to determine whether the student will participate in the state's alternate assessments, including the Alt ELPA. Appendix C includes a Participation Checklist for the Alt ELPA. 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 ELPA.

Student in a Grade with an AA-AAAS: *For English learners in grades [state enters grades with an AA-AAAS here, e.g., Grades 3–8],* the IEP team should use the following criteria for participation in the Alt ELPA:

1. Student participates in (or is eligible to participate in) at least one of the state's AA-AAAS according to the state's AA-AAAS participation guidelines.
2. Student could not participate in the general ELP even with accommodations.
3. Potential unintended consequences of the Alt ELPA participation have been considered.

Student Not in a Grade with an AA-AAAS: *For English learners in grades [state enters the grades without an AA-AAAS here, e.g., Grades K–2, high school and recent arrivals]*, the IEP team should use the following criteria for participation in the Alt ELPA:

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 participate in the general ELP even with accommodations.
4. Potential unintended consequences of Alt ELPA 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 ELPA

The need to participate in the Alt ELPA instead of the state's general ELP assessment (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 (e.g., principal, teacher) making the decision

Additional Description of Criteria

1. Student has a most significant cognitive disability <u>and</u> 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 any medical records that the school or family has available. 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 ELPA.

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 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 state's general ELP assessment 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 are able to 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 participate in the state's general ELP assessment.

4. Potential unintended consequences of Alt ELPA 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 ELPA include:

- Assignment to the Alt ELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future AA-AAAS
- 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 learner services
- 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 ELP assessment participation decision. Although full access should be considered when deciding whether the student can participate in the general ELP assessment, the characteristics of the student (as described in the participation criteria) may mean that the allowed supports are not sufficient for the English learner with significant intellectual and adaptive behavior challenges. The Alt ELPA 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 participate in a domain of the Alt ELPA because of the nature of their disability. See the Test Administration Manual (TAM) for information about exempting a student from a domain.

Section 3: Alt ELPA Embedded Features

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

Universal Features (Embedded)

The Alt ELPA 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. These features are selected by the student with test administrator support and are provided digitally through the assessment delivery system. All students are allowed unlimited audio re-plays. **Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt ELPA, only those universal features explicitly identified in this manual should 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 your Alt ELPA state representative listed at https://elpa21.org/resources/. Table 4 lists the embedded universal features available to all students for the Alt ELPA. 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
Click and delete	X	X	X	X	Students can remove a selected response from a target by clicking/tapping once on the word (or image) to reveal a trash can button, which will reset that target to its original blank state.
Click and drop	X	X	X	X	Instead of clicking and dragging a word (or image) into a target box, students can click/tap once on the word (or image) and click again on the target to enter their response.

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.
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 made 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. Markings are not saved when moving to another test domain or after pausing the test for more than 20 minutes.
Notepad	X	X	X	X	Tool in which notes may be entered.
Strikethrough	X	X	X	X	This feature is available for some item types. It may be used to eliminate those answer choices that do not appear correct 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. Check your state's policy for documenting universal features.

Designated Supports (Embedded)

The Alt ELPA 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 ELPA if selected before testing by school staff. Students whose IEPs identify embedded designated supports for the Alt ELPA will need to have these entered by an adult into the student's Personal Needs Profile (PNP) (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found in Appendix E of this manual) or similar document used to ensure that what the student needs is communicated to the assessment delivery system.

Table 5 lists the embedded designated supports available to all students for the Alt ELPA. 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.
Masking	X	X	X	X	This feature allows blocking off answer choices.
Mouse Pointer	X	X	X	X	This feature enables the mouse pointer to be enlarged or to be in a different color.
Print Size/Zoom	X	X	X	X	This feature allows the TA to pre-set the zoom level for a student prior to the student beginning the test. The zoom level can still be adjusted during the test by the student.
Streamline 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 on 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 ELPA Personal Needs Profile (PNP).

Standard vs. Streamline Example

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. Check your state's policy for documenting designated supports.

Accommodations (Embedded)

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access but do not change what the Alt ELPA 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 (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found in Appendix E of this manual) or similar document because they need to be activated in the assessment delivery system.

Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt ELPA, 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 accommodations, please contact your Alt ELPA state representative listed at https://elpa21.org/resources/.

Table 6 lists the embedded accommodations available to certain students for the Alt ELPA. 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 ELPA is administered one-on-one to individual students, some accommodations that are available for general ELP assessments are not available for the Alt ELPA. 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 ELPA (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.
Permissive Mode	X	X	X	X	Permissive mode allows for external assistive technology to be used with the assessment delivery system.
Print on Request	X	X	X	X	Individual test items may be printed on a printer located near the assessment delivery system. Printed items must be shredded at the end of each test domain.
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.

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 ELPA Non-Embedded Features

The Alt ELPA recognizes the need for some accessibility features that are not embedded within the assessment delivery system. The identified non-embedded features provided by the test administrator are ones that ensure that scores obtained and the interpretations of those scores

from the Alt ELPA are valid. The Alt ELPA non-embedded features are optimal testing conditions, designated supports, and accommodations.

Optimal Testing Conditions (Non-Embedded)

Optimal testing conditions are considered to be standardized testing conditions for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The conditions are all external to the testing platform. 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 should be documented in the student's IEP. Examples of these conditions 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, hearing aids
- Locally-produced tactile graphics or symbols
- 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, onscreen 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
- 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 ELPA if identified before testing by an adult. Students whose IEPs identify non-embedded designated supports for the Alt ELPA will need to have these entered by an adult into the student's Personal Needs Profile (PNP) (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found in Appendix E of this manual) or similar document used to ensure that what the student needs is communicated to the assessment delivery system.

Table 7 lists the non-embedded designated supports available to all students for the Alt ELPA. 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 assessment content.
Magnification	X	X	X	X	Magnification outside of the assessment 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 assessment delivery system.

Designated Support	L	R	S	W	Description
Noise Buffers	X	X	X	X	These include external devices to block external sounds such as ear mufflers and white noise.
Read Aloud (Grades 4–5 and above)	X	X	X	X	Text is read to the student (including prompts, passages, and item choices).
Sign Language (e.g., 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.
Translated Test Directions Refer to your state's guidance regarding permissions and policies to use translations.	X	X	X	X	Written test directions may be translated into any language by a qualified translator.

Designated Support	L	R	S	W	Description
Verbal Description of Graphics	X	X	X	X	The Test Administrator Booklets and Scoring Rubrics documents include descriptions of select graphics for specific students (e.g., those who are blind and do not read tactile graphics). The included descriptions must be read verbatim. No other graphics may be described.

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 ELPA 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 (the Alt ELPA PNP can be found in Appendix E of this manual) or similar document because they need to be noted in the assessment delivery system.

Note: To ensure valid scores and secure administration of the Alt ELPA, 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 accommodations, please contact your Alt ELPA state representative listed at http://www.elpa21.org/resources.

Table 8 lists the non-embedded accommodations available to certain students who participate in the Alt ELPA. 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 assessment delivery system.

Resources

Collaborative for the Alternative Assessment of English Language Proficiency [CAAELP]. (2021). *Alt ELPA participation guidelines.* https://ucla.app.box.com/s/s7l90r1okroswpwco8c4d931aom8wvk6

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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

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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

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

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 ELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* (p. 10). The underlying template of these student examples is also provided as **Tool 1: Template for Applying Accessibility Considerations** in Appendix B.

Mya Win *(7th grade student with emergent symbolic communication)*

Mya Win is a 7th 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 a 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 student taken the Alt ELPA before? (circle one) Yes No

If yes, review 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%

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

Domains	Disability Impact on English Proficiency	Communication Methods and Fluency/Skill
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 press 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

Student Strengths	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.
Goals	Learning alphabet and ordering numerals. A big goal is shifting to symbolic communication.
Teacher Supports	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.
Classroom Modifications	Need access to printer, objects, and flashcards.
Skills Needed	Learn all alphabet letters to advance to sound and letter correspondence to create words. Needs to broaden topics of interest.
Skills in Development	Mya is working on alphabet letter identification and ordering numbers. She is expanding her attention on areas outside favorite topics. Mya is also working on choosing between three options when working on shapes, sizes and letters.
Testing Accessibility Features and Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)	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 ELPA

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 Tables 1 and 2 of the *Alt ELPA 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 ELPA

Alt ELPA Domains	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Optimal Testing Conditions	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 Domain Speaking		Read aloud	Although Mya can physically speak, this likely will not occur for the testing window this year. Instead, use pointing and moving objects, materials.	

Review whether accessibility features for the Alt ELPA 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

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)*** 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.

A language with different vocabulary and grammatical structure from ASL

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

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

Section 1: Language Exposure

Table A5

Student Exposures to Languages

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How Often? (%)
Jakarta Sign	Low	Family	80%
Auslan-Australian Sign Language different from ASL	Very low	Family	10%

Languages	General Proficiency	When Used and with Whom	How Often? (%)
ASL	Very low, just started	Family, friends, teachers, & deaf community (e.g., online content)	10%

Sections 2 & 3: Communication Methods and Instructional Experiences

Table A6

Impacts and Communication Methods in Instruction

Domain	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

Student Strengths	Social, positive energy, not easily frustrated with repetition or mistakes. Student can use AAC device with switch somewhat independently.
Goals	Transitioning to ASL. No discussion on when may start cued speech.
Teacher Supports	Teacher assists Arif in accessing classroom computers and navigating onscreen content.
Classroom Modifications	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.
Skills Needed	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.
Skills in Development	Arif is working on basic social language to describe needs and wants in English, as well as grade-appropriate vocabulary.
Testing Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)	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 ELPA

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 Tables 1 and 2 of the *Alt ELPA 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 ELPA

Alt ELPA 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 Domain Listening				Student may need exemption for listening portion due to disability and the allowed accessibility features

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

Need to discuss timing for introducing cued speech and how much emphasis while transitioning to ASL.

Appendix B
Tool 1: Template for Applying Accessibility Considerations

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

If yes, review 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? (%)

Sections 2 & 3: Communication Methods and Instructional Experiences

Table B2

Impacts and Communication Methods in Instruction

Domains	Disability Impact on English Proficiency	Communication Methods & 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

Student Strengths	
Goals	
Teacher Supports	
Classroom Modifications	
Skills Needed	
Skills in Development	
Testing Accommodations Reflected in IEP (If Available)	

Section 5: Accessibility on the Alt ELPA

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 of the *Alt ELPA 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 ELPA

Alt ELPA Domains	Optimal Testing Considerations	Universal Features	Designated Supports	Accommodations
All Domains				
Specific Domain				

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

Appendix C
Alt ELPA Participation Checklist

Student Name:

If it is determined that there is sufficient information to support **ALL** of 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 ELPA, an alternate English language proficiency (ELP) assessment. Students who do not meet all of the criteria will participate in the general statewide English language proficiency assessment—with or without accommodations.

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
Yes / No	1. Student is identified as an English learner (EL).	The student has been screened and identified as an English learner using the state's identification process.	[State English learner screener material(s) with check box(es)]
	Notes:		
Yes / No	2. The English learner is unable to participate in the general ELP assessment even with accommodation.	Assessment records from an English learner plan or IEP show that the English learner is not able to participate in the general ELP assessment even with the allowed accommodations and supports.	☐ English learner plan records ☐ IEP records

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
	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 these students with access to instruction. The goal of using accessibility supports and accommodations is to ensure that students are able to 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 ELP assessment.		
Yes / No / Does Not Apply One "Yes" meets criterion in this section	3. The characteristics of the English learner fit one of the following conditions: (The intent is that the criteria are consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation in the Alt ELPA regardless of grade.)	**For English learner in a grade assessed by state alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) [state fills in grades].** Student participates in (or is eligible to participate in) at least one of the state's AA-AAAS according to the state's AA-AAAS participation guidelines.	☐ IEP testing plan record ☐ Student records and medical records ☐ Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test ☐ Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment ☐ Results of informal assessments ☐ Results of individual reading assessments ☐ Structured classroom observations ☐ Developmental history ☐ Developmental evaluation assessing all five areas (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
			adaptive behavior development)
			☐ Parent/guardian/ relative familiar with student and student interviews

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
Yes / No / Does Not Apply One "Yes" meets criterion in this section	3. The characteristics of the English learner fit one of the following conditions: (The intent is that the criteria are consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation in the Alt ELPA regardless of grade.)	**For English learner NOT in a grade assessed by state AA-AAAS [State fills in grade] or a recent arrival.** English learner has the following characteristics: English learner meets the state's definition as having a most significant cognitive disability and has 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 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.	☐ IEP testing plan record ☐ Student records and medical records ☐ Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test ☐ Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment ☐ Results of informal assessments ☐ Results of individual reading assessments ☐ Structured classroom observations ☐ Developmental history ☐ Developmental evaluation assessing all five areas (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive behavior development) ☐ Parent/guardian/relative familiar with student and student interviews
Yes / No	4. English learner requires intensive	Student needs intensive, extensive, and repeated	☐ Teacher-collected data:

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
	and extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the curriculum.	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	Notes: ☐ Student work samples Notes: ☐ Observations Notes:

Meets Criterion (Yes or No)	Participation Criteria	Criteria Descriptors	Evidence Sources
		disabilities.	
Yes / No	5. Potential unintended consequences of Alt ELPA participation have been considered.	- Assignment to the Alt ELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future AA-AAAS - 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 the most significant cognitive disabilities - Possible limitations in the provision of English language development services. - Differential exit criteria from English language development services compared to English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities.	
Is not based on these = Yes **Is** based on these = No **Yes / No**	6. The decision to participate in the Alt ELPA is **NOT BASED** on these factors:	**NOT BASED** on: - 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 (e.g., principal, teacher) making the decision	

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 ELP assessment with accommodations, if necessary.

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

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

Name: _____Position_____ Date:_____

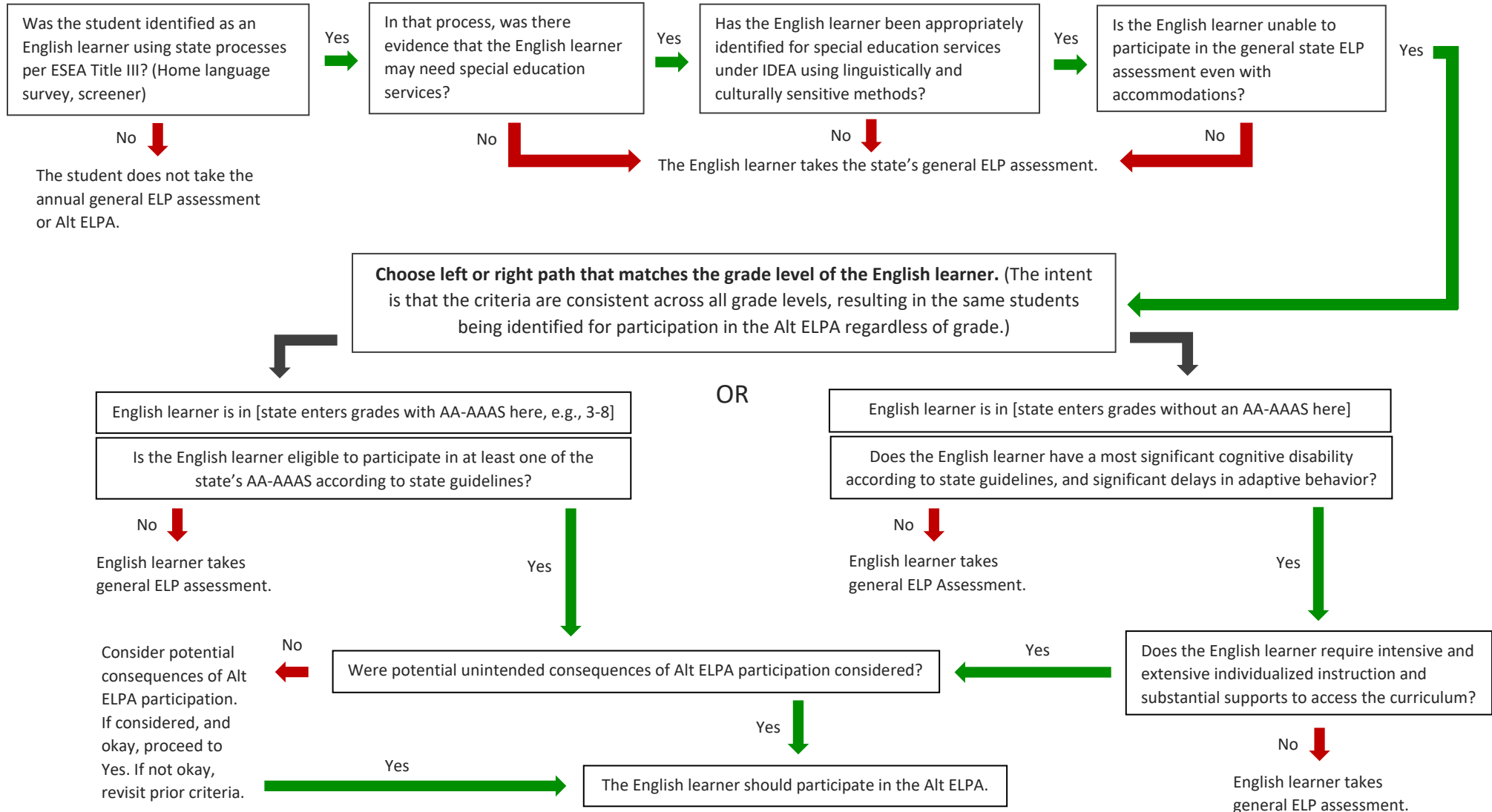Name: _____Position_____ Date:_____

Name: _____Position_____ Date:_____

Name: _____Position_____ Date:_____

Parent(s)/Guardian_____ Date:_____

*The IEP team **must** revisit eligibility criteria when the student enters third grade to determine whether the alternate assessment continues to be an appropriate assessment for the student.

Appendix D Alt ELPA Participation Flowchart

The purpose of this flowchart is to provide a visual representation of the process an IEP Team may use when determining if a student meets the criteria to participate in the Alt ELPA, an alternate English language proficiency assessment.

Was the student identified as an English learner using state processes per ESEA Title III? (Home language survey, screener)

— Yes → In that process, was there evidence that the English learner may need special education services?

— Yes → Has the English learner been appropriately identified for special education services under IDEA using linguistically and culturally sensitive methods?

— Yes → Is the English learner unable to participate in the general state ELP assessment even with accommodations?

— Yes →

No ↓ The student does not take the annual general ELP assessment or Alt ELPA.

No → / No ↓ / No ↓ The English learner takes the state's general ELP assessment.

Choose left or right path that matches the grade level of the English learner. (The intent is that the criteria are consistent across all grade levels, resulting in the same students being identified for participation in the Alt ELPA regardless of grade.)

OR

English learner is in [state enters grades with AA-AAAS here, e.g., 3-8]

Is the English learner eligible to participate in at least one of the state's AA-AAAS according to state guidelines?

No ↓ English learner takes general ELP assessment.

Yes ↓

English learner is in [state enters grades without an AA-AAAS here]

Does the English learner have a most significant cognitive disability according to state guidelines, and significant delays in adaptive behavior?

No ↓ English learner takes general ELP Assessment.

Yes ↓

Does the English learner require intensive and extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to access the curriculum?

No ↓ English learner takes general ELP assessment.

Yes → Were potential unintended consequences of Alt ELPA participation considered?

No → Consider potential consequences of Alt ELPA participation. If considered, and okay, proceed to Yes. If not okay, revisit prior criteria.

Yes ↓ / Yes → The English learner should participate in the Alt ELPA.

Flowchart Definitions

1. Student has a most significant cognitive disability <u>and</u> 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 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.

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: ELs are not assessed for disabilities unless there is evidence indicating a need. If an EL recently arrived to the United States is suspected of having a disability but not yet identified for special education services, please refer to state-issued guidance to determine the appropriate 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 English language proficiency assessment 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 participate in the general ELP assessment.

4. Potential consequences of student participation

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

- Assignment to the Alt ELPA in early grades (e.g., K–2) may determine participation in a future alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS)
- 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
- Differential exit criteria from English language development services compared to English learner peers without significant cognitive disabilities

5. Accommodations for individual states

On the general ELP assessment, student accommodations are state-specific. For more information on available accommodations, please contact your state representative or consult your state's accessibility and accommodation guidelines.

6. Alt ELPA Participation Guidelines

To access the full *Alt ELPA Participation Guidelines*, please visit https://ucla.box.com/s/s7l90r1okroswpwco8c4d931aom8wvk6.

Flowchart Acronyms

AA-AAAS – Alternate Assessment aligned with Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

Alt ELPA – 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

Appendix E Alt ELPA Personal Needs Profile (PNP) Planning Tool

Optimal Testing Conditions (non-embedded)	
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. **Check all that apply.**	
☐ Breaks and flexible scheduling	☐ Student responds in preferred communication mode
☐ Focusing prompts and materials	☐ Special lighting
☐ Hearing assistive technology, sound system, FM systems, hearing aids	☐ Setting
☐ Directions adjusted	☐ Scratch paper, individual erasable whiteboard, or AT device for notes
☐ Medical device	☐ Student and item positioning
☐ Navigation assistance by test administrator	☐ Student reads aloud to self
☐ Object(s) representation	☐ Tactile graphics or symbols (locally produced)
☐ Read aloud items/stimuli (Grades 2–3)	☐ Text navigation assistance
	☐ Verbal encouragement that does not assist the student to produce or correct responses
Universal Features (embedded)	
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 assessment delivery system and are selected for use by the student with test administrator support. All students are allowed unlimited audio re-play. **Check all that apply.**	
☐ Volume control	☐ Mark for review
☐ Strikethrough	☐ Highlighter
☐ Notepad	☐ Keyboard navigation
☐ Expandable passages and items	☐ Item level zoom
☐ Click and delete	☐ Click and drop
Designated Supports	
These features are identified in advance by an informed educator. These features are not available unless selected. **Check all that apply.**	
Embedded Designated Supports	**Non-embedded Designated Supports**
☐ Color choices	☐ Color overlay
☐ Line reader	☐ Magnification (beyond print size/zoom)
☐ Masking	☐ Noise buffers
☐ Mouse pointer	☐ Read aloud items/stimuli (Grades 4–5 & above)
☐ Print size/zoom	☐ Translated test directions
☐ Streamline mode	☐ Sign language presentation of items
	☐ Verbal description of graphics
Accommodations	
These are identified in advance by an IEP team or 504 team. These accommodations are NOT available unless selected. **Check all that apply.**	

Embedded Accommodations	Non-embedded Accommodations
☐ Domain exemption	☐ Assistive technology (AT) device (must be checked in the test administration system)
☐ Permissive mode	☐ Scribe for responses (all domains)
☐ Print on request	*If a student needs a non-embedded accommodation not listed above in order to receive a valid and reliable score, follow district procedures to acquire state approval.*
☐ Word prediction (only for writing)	

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	2.0	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	3.0	NCEO	Updates made based on test administrator survey feedback after field testing and Team 1 input.
07/06/2023	3.1	CRESST	Finalize branding and updates for first operational year
6/18/2024	3.2	CRESST	Added "Click and delete" and "Click and drop" embedded supports to the universal features section.
5/19/2025	3.3	CRESST	• Page 7: Moved "mouse pointer" from Universal Features to Designated Supports. Deleted "disable universal features" from Designated Supports. • Page 8: Added "Click and delete" and "click and drop" to and deleted "mouse pointer" from the Available Tools column and deleted phrasing related to disabling features from the Definition column of the Universal Features row of the Embedded Supports

			table. In the same table, added "mouse pointer" and deleted "disable universal features" from the Available Tools column of the Designed Supports row.
			• Page 9: Removed the "Examples" column of the "Non-embedded Supports" table.
			• Page 14: Deleted "non-verbal" preceding "students with significant…" in the top box.
			• Page 18: Deleted language in the Universal Features (Embedded) section about disabling universal features. Deleted phrase suggesting IEP teams need to indicate universal feature use.
			• Page 19: Deleted "Mouse pointer" from Universal Features table.
			• Page 21: Deleted "Disable Universal Features" from and added "Mouse Pointer" to Designated Support table. Rewrote Print Size/Zoom description to define the tool's function.
			• Page 23: In the last row of the Accommodations table, deleted "Word prediction is allowed unless the Test Administration Manual indicates it is not allowed for a specific item."
			• Page 24: Added "locally-produced" before "tactile graphics…" and moved bullet to correct spot alphabetically.
			• Page 26: In the Color Overlay row of the Designated Support table, changed "paper-based assessments" to "assessment

			content." • Page 27: In the last row of the Designated Support table, rewrote description to reflect that graphics descriptions are provided in the TA booklets for select graphics and may not be otherwise used. • Page 27: Replaced "activated" with "noted" in the final line. • Page 55: Added "Click and delete" and "Click and drop" to the Universal Features list. Moved "Assistive technology" from Universal Features to Non-embedded Accommodations. Added "(locally produced)" behind "tactile graphics…" in the Optimal Testing Conditions list.