

OTELA Webinar December 18, 2012

The questions below were asked during the Dec. 18 OTELA webinar. The questions were answered by the presenter, Paula Mahaley, during the webinar. Questions that could not be answered during the webinar have been answered below.

1. Once identified, they must stay identified as ESL until 3rd grade?

OTELA is the statewide assessment used to determine whether the ELLs meet Ohio's criteria to be reclassified as no longer ELL. The OTELA is not used to identify students as ELL. Ohio has criteria, as set in the ORC, for exiting the ELL program. A student is reclassified as no longer ELL when the student:

- Has attained a composite score of five on the OTELA;

OR

- Has attained a composite score of four on the OTELA, subsequently completes a trial period of mainstream instruction, and has attained a composite score of five or a second four on the OTELA during the trial period of mainstream instruction (it is not necessary that it be consecutive years when the score of five or the second four is attained).

OR (*pertains only to grade 2 and 3 students*)

- Has attained a composite score of four or five on the OTELA in grade 2 and has attained a composite score of five or a second composite score of four on the OTELA during the trial period of mainstream instruction in grade 3.

Special Conditions

- Students in kindergarten through grade two shall not be exited from the ELL program.
- Transition Year – ELL who obtained a composite score of four or five on the OTELA in 2008-2009 will be exited from the program if they obtained a composite score of four or five on the OTELA in 2009-2010. *From the 2012 Rules Book*

2. How do we use OTELA with students who would otherwise qualify to take AASCD?

There is no alternate assessment for OTELA. We have tried to have one developed but have not had success due to budget constraints. Since federal law requires the OTELA to be administered, I cannot say not to administer the OTELA to the student who has severe disabilities. Please begin the administration. You will determine when you should stop the administration.

3. Has ODE determined if preschool counts as a year of education, or does Kindergarten still start when "schooling in the U.S." begins?

If you are referring to the identification of ELLs in EMIS, and the determination if a student qualifies for additional accommodations on the OAA or the OGT, then our guidance is to code preK ELL students enrolled in a public preschool program as "L" if it is their first time in a public school program, and then count that as the first year enrolled in a U.S. school.

4. The Home Language Survey indicates that English is the definite home language; however, you suspect that the answers to the survey were not truthful. In other words, the parents indicated on the survey that English is the home language but the teacher "observes" that this might not be the case.

If you have definite evidence that this is a language barrier, please discuss with the parents again the need to complete the Home Language Survey. It may be that you will need to use a formal assessment to determine if there is a language barrier but you must inform the parents that this is your plan.

5. Can we get contact hours for participating in this webinar? CEUs?

No, CEUs are not available for this webinar.

6. With Title III funds, can we purchase Netbooks, Nooks, or Tablets for our ELL students?

I mentioned that I could not respond to this question and suggested Dan Fleck or Abdi Mohamud. This is the response from Dan:

A district may use Title III funds to purchase supplies and materials (including electronic devices) as long as they are used to implement its approved Title III plan, and as long as they are supplemental in nature (that is, the district is already using local and state funds to provide a core language support program for its LEP/ELL students, and the Title III-funded supplies/services are used to enhance or improve the core program).

Here is the basic guideline provide by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) excerpted from the attached document entitled "Supplement Not Supplant – Final Letter".

SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT -- Federal funds made available under this subpart shall be used so as to supplement the level of Federal, State, and local public funds that, in the absence of such availability, would have been expended for programs for limited English proficient children and immigrant children and youth and in no case to supplant such Federal, State, and local public funds.

For further guidance regarding the use of Title III funds, refer to the attached PowerPoint provided by USDOE during a webinar on July 21, 2010. Refer especially to slide #25, question #7, and the response in the slide notes.

7. Please clarify what type of dictionary is acceptable for ELLs to use for the OAA.

We recommend a translation dictionary, a word-to-word as there are no definitions that could lead a student to an answer. However, the district/school may choose the type of dictionary.

8. Listening part for our hearing impaired ELL learners can be paused between questions?

No, the listening CD is timed.

9. What if a student has on IEP extended time for accommodations?

The reading and writing tests may accommodate extended time; the listening and speaking are on CDs which cannot be stopped or paused.

10. How many times does an exchange student need to take the OGT?

A foreign-exchange student would continue to take the OGT during any administrations while the student is enrolled in an Ohio public school unless the student passes all five tests the first time taken.

If the foreign-exchange student is pursuing an Ohio diploma, until the student passes all the tests on the OGT.

11. What is the difference between native and home language?

The native language is the student's primary language; the home language is the language spoken in the home. For EMIS: native language must be reported for all students; home language only for ELL.

12. Adopted students from another country, do we have to use a commercial assessment?

Adopted students from another country who speak English do not require a commercial assessment.

A Home Language Survey should be used for the student who was adopted from another country, does not speak English and seems to have a language barrier. If the HLS is returned saying the language spoken in the home is English, a discussion should occur with the family to explain that a commercial assessment is probably needed to determine if the student is an English language learner.

Questions should be addressed to Paula Mahaley paula.mahaley@education.ohio.gov or 614 466-0217.