



The Home Language Survey (HLS) Frequently Asked Questions

The “Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited-English Proficient Students” (OCR, August 2000) and Title I, Section 1111(b)(6) of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires each state to “identify the languages other than English that are present in [a] participating school population...” Indiana has chosen to do this through the administration of the Home Language Survey (HLS). The HLS is a student-specific questionnaire to determine the primary or home language of a student. Below are the three student-specific questions that should be asked on the HLS:

1. What is the native language of the student?
2. What language(s) is spoken most often by the student?
3. What language(s) is spoken by the student in the home?

If a language other than English is indicated for any of the three questions, the LAS Links Placement Assessment should be administered to determine whether or not the student qualifies for English language development support.

The FAQ below is a guidance document that is to be used as a resource

- 1. Q. Should my school corporation give out a HLS to every new student that enrolls in my school corporation?**

No. The HLS is a document that should only be filled out **once** in a student’s educational career. If the student is enrolling in school for the first time ever, then a HLS should be given to complete. If the student is enrolling in your school corporation from a school within Indiana, then the **original HLS** must be obtained (*refer to question 7 on what to do when a student moves to your corporation from outside of Indiana*).

- 2. Q. When filling out the HLS, a parent marked “English/Spanish” for one or more of the responses- What should we do?**

If the parent marked multiple languages for one or more of the responses, it is important first to ensure that the HLS was explained properly to the parent. If the parent was aware of what the HLS was, then proceed with testing. If the HLS was not explained to the parent, it is important that its purpose is explained.

- 3. Q. A parent marked a language other than English on the HLS, but now would like to re-complete the survey so that it indicates all “English”- can the HLS be re-completed?**

No. The HLS is a document that should only ever be filled out once. A parent cannot “go back” and change their original answers that they indicated. It is important that a school corporation properly explain the purpose of the HLS in order to ensure that the parent is aware of what occurs when a language other than English is marked.

- 4. Q. There is a student that is enrolling in school for the first time. Our corporation has administered the HLS and the parents have indicated a language other than English, what should we do?**

If a language other than English has been indicated on the HLS, a LAS Links Placement Assessment should be administered to determine the student’s language proficiency. If a student scores Not Proficient (NP) or Approaching Proficiency (AP) on the LAS Links Placement Assessment, they should be entered in to an English language development program.

- 5. Q. I have given the student the initial placement assessment and they have scored Fluent English Proficient (FEP), is there anything further that I need to do?**

No. If a student’s placement assessment indicates that they are FEP, the student does not need to be in an English language development program.

- 6. Q. Our school corporation received a student from a different school within Indiana. Do we issue a new HLS?**

You should not administer a new HLS. When a student arrives at your school from a different school within Indiana, your school corporation must look in the student’s cumulative folder to find the original HLS. Whatever is indicated on the original HLS is what you must go by. If a language other than English was indicated, there should be documentation of a student’s LAS Links Annual Assessment in the student’s cumulative folder and the student’s instructional program should follow accordingly.

- 7. Q. Our school corporation received a student from outside of Indiana. Should we give them a new HLS?**

Yes. Indiana does not accept an HLS from outside of Indiana. If you have a student that moves to your corporation from outside Indiana, a new HLS should be administered.

8. Q. Our school corporation has a student that attended an Indiana school, moved out of state, and then returned to Indiana. What should we do?

A student's cumulative folder follows a student wherever they go. The current school corporation should attempt to contact the previous school where the student attended outside of Indiana to obtain the cumulative folder. Once received, the school corporation should look for the original HLS that was given to the student **from the Indiana school corporation where the student originally attended**. The school corporation must abide by whatever is on the original HLS from the school that the student attended while in Indiana.

9. Q. What if the cumulative folder was not transferred with the student when they moved to our corporation?

If the cumulative folder was not transferred with the student when they moved to your school corporation, every effort necessary should be made to obtain the HLS from the previous school corporation. The Office of English Learning and Migrant Education (OEL & ME) recommends that a school secretary contact the previous school to ask if they can send or fax the HLS. If the student has identified a language other than English on the HLS, the school corporation should also request copies of the student's LAS Links Annual Assessments.

10. Q. What if my school corporation has tried to contact the student's previous school to obtain the HLS, but they will not respond to repeated requests?

If your school corporation has tried multiple times to contact the student's previous school corporation, but they will not provide you with the HLS, as a last resort you may administer a new HLS. However, multiple attempts should be made to obtain the original HLS. If you must administer a new HLS, proper documentation indicating dates and times that attempts were made to obtain the HLS should be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

11. Q. If we have documentation of a student's LAS Links Annual Assessment from their previous school, should we still give them a placement assessment?

No. If you have documentation from the previous school year indicating the student's LAS Links Annual Assessment results, you do not have to administer a LAS Links Placement Assessment. Instead, the school corporation should use the results of the student's LAS Links Annual Assessment to appropriately place the student into an English language development program.

12. Q. Our HLS is currently in our registration packet- should it be there?

The OEL & ME highly recommends that the HLS is **not** in your registration packet. Again, the HLS should only ever be administered once. Therefore, the HLS should not be available in the registration packet that a parent fills out when they enroll their child at your school corporation. The HLS should be given to the parent as a separate document that is thoroughly explained to them so they understand its purpose. Additionally, the HLS should only be given to those parents who: a) are enrolling their student for the first time in school or, b) the school corporation is unable to obtain the original HLS from the student's cumulative folder (*refer to question 10*).

13. Q. Our school corporation has given out a HLS every year and/or anytime a student has enrolled at our corporation. We now realize this is incorrect. How do we fix this problem?

The distribution of a HLS to students every year and/or anytime a student enrolls at your corporation should be stopped immediately. Any personnel in your school corporation responsible for administering the HLS should be notified of the correct procedures for distributing a HLS.

14. Q. What is the school's responsibility when a LEP student leaves our corporation?

When a LEP student transfers from your corporation to another corporation, it is your school corporation's responsibility to ensure that the following items are in the student's cumulative folder to be transferred:

- HLS;
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP);
- A copy of the Parent Notification letter that indicates the student's score on the LAS Links Placement Assessment and/or LAS Links Annual Assessment and their placement in a English language development program;
- Copy of a student's LAS Links student proficiency report;
- ISTEP+ scores; Exiting/Monitoring documents for students in the two-year monitoring period (if applicable); and
- Copy of a parent's refusal of services (if applicable).

15. Q. Should the HLS be kept in a student's cumulative folder if the parent answered English to all three questions?

Yes. The HLS must be kept in every student's cumulative folder. Under no circumstance should it be thrown away. Section 1111 (b) (6) states: "Each State plan shall identify the

language other than English that are present in a participating school population...” The HLS has been adopted by the State of Indiana for determining any student that speaks a language(s) other than English. It is important that this document is retained as proof that a school corporation has identified any student that speaks a language other than English. Additionally, if a student transfers from one school corporation to another within Indiana, the receiving school corporation is required to use the original HLS to determine placement in a English language development program.