ELPA21

# EXCERPT FROM ELPA2I SCORE INTERPRETATION GUIDE

## The Profiles

The ELP Standards maintain that proficiency can be achieved in multiple ways, and may look different for individual students. Students develop skill in each domain at different rates and may exhibit some skills of a domain at higher levels and still struggle with other skills at a lower level. As such, ELPA21 recognizes the possibility of other profiles of skills across the domains of listening, reading, speaking and writing that may describe proficiency in addition to the "4444" profile.

Profiles may be expressed as 1) four numbers representing the level of proficiency on each of the four domains, or as 2) rules that summarize a common pattern for sets of profiles. As an example, the hypothetical scores described in Figure 5 could be expressed as a profile of "4343" or by the rule "no domain score falls below Level 3". Profiles are based on the domain scores of proficient students identified during the ELPA21 contrasting group study, were refined and vetted by a panel of member state EL experts, and were refined and vetted again during standard setting.

Relying on student profiles instead of an overall composite score as is traditionally done benefits educators in a couple ways. A profile provides more instructional information about students who may have the same overall score, but differ in skills and needs.
Proficiency is a function of the domains, not of the overall scores with domains combined. It also highlights the relationship between the domains in a way that an overall score would not.

Profiles are used to differentiate "Proficient" students from those who are "Progressing" or "Emerging." Table 7 describes how the different profiles are expressed and used to determine proficiency on ELPA21.

Table 7. Profiles of Proficiency

| Rules | Profiles (examples) | Proficiency Determination |
|---|---|---|
| A profile of 4s and 5s meets assessment targets and indicates overall proficiency | 4444 5555 4545 5454 4455 5544 4445 4454 4544 5444 5554 5545 5455 4555 4E44 | Proficient |
| A profile with one or more domain scores above Level 2 that does not meet the requirements to be "Proficient" | 3333 1333 3353 3233 2242 1234 1114 2232 | Progressing |
| A profile of 1s and 2s indicates an "Emerging" level of proficiency. | 1122 1212 E222 2222 | Emerging |

*Note. The order of the example profiles of the four domains is: 1) reading, 2) writing, 3) speaking and 4) listening. "E" indicates an exempt test.*

## The Proficiency Determination

Using the profiles, different combinations of skills and abilities across the domains are deemed as "Proficient," "Progressing," or "Emerging" (see Table 8). The Proficiency Determination (often referred to by states as the Overall Proficiency Determination) identifies ELLs whose language skills enable full participation in grade-level academic contexts.

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Table 8. Policy Definition for the Proficiency Determination

| Proficient | Students are "Proficient" when they attain a level of English language skill necessary to independently produce, interpret, collaborate on, and succeed in grade-level content-related academic tasks in English. This is indicated on ELPA21 by attaining a profile of Level 4 or higher in all domains. Once Proficient on ELPA21, students can be considered for reclassification. |
|---|---|
| Progressing | Students are Progressing when, with support, they approach a level of English language skill necessary to produce, interpret, and collaborate, on grade-level content- related academic tasks in English. This is indicated on ELPA21 by attaining a profile with one or more domain scores above Level 2 that does not meet the requirements to be Proficient. Students scoring Progressing on ELPA21 are eligible for ongoing program support. |
| Emerging | Students are Emerging when they have not yet attained a level of English language skill necessary to produce, interpret, and collaborate on grade-level content-related academic tasks in English. This is indicated on ELPA21 by attaining a profile of Levels 1 and 2 in all four domains. Students scoring Emerging on ELPA21 are eligible for ongoing program support. |

*Note. Each definition consists of three elements: a learning expectation (first sentence), an operational definition (second sentence), and a policy impact statement (third sentence).*

Using profiles of proficiency allows for limited compensation within a mostly conjunctive classification model. Defining proficiency as profiles of skills rather than as an average or a sum across those skills allows for richer, more nuanced and flexible distinctions between proficient and not proficient students. For example, a profile of "4131" is more useful and provides educators with more information than does an overall composite score of 360. The profile, while not diagnostic, does show clear strength and weakness.

Note that summative assessments are developed by grade-band, but scores are reported at grade-level, and as a result, different profiles may indicate proficiency in different grades. Because of this, students at different grades within the same grade-band who earn identical scores may fall into different achievement levels and receive different proficiency determinations. This is because the expectation (e.g., cut score, or standard for proficiency) increases for each grade. For example, referring back to Figure 5, a student receiving a 220 in listening, a 132 in reading, a 275 in speaking and a 156 in writing may be "Progressing" (a profile of "4343") in 8th grade, but "Proficient" in 6th grade.

## Business Rules

The ELPA21 business rules define or constrain some aspect of collecting, scoring, manipulating, or reporting scores from ELPA21 summative assessments. These eight rules are intended to meet two objectives of the grant: 1) implement a shared definition of proficient across member states, and 2) ensure score comparability across member states.