

Identification of English Learners  
in the Perceptions of ESOL Resource Teachers

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## **Abstract**

In this descriptive study, the English Learner (EL) identification process in one of the Maryland public school districts was reviewed and evaluated through the lens of ESOL instructional or non-instructional staff members. In order to describe what EL identification practices are required by the law, how the implementation works in schools, and how can the implementation in a school be improved, this study considers literature and resources published between 2005 and 2020. All participants were presented with information on the approved state and district-wide practices. Subsequently, the participants were asked to reflect on those practices and provide their perspective. Through the interview process, they were asked to identify critical steps in the EL identification process at the school level, evaluate each school's implementation, and identify factors which make school implementation effective or hinder it.

Numerous findings of interest from the interviews and implications are discussed in the combined chapters IV and V. This study suggests that it would be beneficial to collect perspectives of ESOL staff members from multiple school districts and to collect information on the process from the perspective of the front office personnel. Expanded perspective might bring more clarity on the content, format, and timing of the most relevant professional development needed in order to improve the implementation of the EL identification process in public schools.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is undeniable fact that the number of English Learners (ELs) in the US schools is growing at high rates. The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English Language Learners was higher in fall 2016 (9.6% or 4.9 million ELs) than it was in fall 2000 (8.1% or 3.8 million ELs). In fall 2016, the percentage of public school students who were ELs ranged from 0.9% in West Virginia to 20.2% in California (USDE, 2019). In the same timeframe, Maryland public school districts reported about 8% of students who were ELs. Maryland Department of Education (MSDE, n.d.) shows that in the fall of 2018, those 8% represented about 85,000 ELs in Maryland public schools . Based on early reports from fall 2019, the number of ELs in Maryland is nearing 100,000.

English learners require access to appropriate instructional services that match their strengths and needs to have an equal opportunity to achieve the same academic standards as other students. If ELs are not properly identified and classified, they may be excluded from services that would better help them meet high academic standards, and they may not receive optimal supports to advance both linguistically and academically. Therefore, it is critical to accurately and properly identify newly enrolled students who are in need of supplemental instruction and support (Lopez, Pooler, & Linqanti, 2016).

The school front office personnel and school administration play key roles in the identification of ELs. Their knowledge of the school district operating procedures for identification of ELs, their ability to access and implement resources and procedures for EL identification have impact on timely and accurate identification of students for ESOL supporting services. The review of the literature will bring a more detail look at the desired practices and

some related issues with implementation of the EL identification process. The process in one of the Maryland public school districts will be reviewed and evaluated through the lens of ESOL instructional or non-instructional staff members who are also on the front line of supporting ELs and their families.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of the study is to investigate how the identification of English learners is implemented in the perceptions of ESOL resource teachers in terms of consistency at the school level.

### **Limitations**

In order to describe what EL identification practices are required by the law, how the implementation works in schools, and how can the implementation in a school be improved, this study considers literature and resources published between 2005 and 2020.

### **Definition of Title III**

Title III of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 provides Federal financial support to state and local educational agencies to supplement English language development (ELD) programs. These ELD programs ensure that all English Learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic language achievement in English, and achieve at high levels in academic subjects so that all English learners (ELs) can meet the same challenging academic standards that all children are expected to meet. (MSDE, 2020)

### **Definition of English Learner (EL)**

English Learner, in some literature also English Language Learner (ELL), is a student: who communicates in a language other than English; or whose family uses a primary language

other than English in the home; and whose English language proficiency falls within the range established by the State for an English language development program (MSDE, 2020)

### **Definition of ESOL**

ESOL stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages. ESOL is one of the widely used terms for an English language development program. More recently, some literature and school districts also use the term ELL or EL Program to identify ELD programs for ELs. For the purpose of this study, the term ESOL will be used to identify ELD.

### **Definition of ESOL instructional and non-instructional staff members**

Depending on a school district, ESOL instructional and non-instructional staff may include department supervisors, teacher specialists, curriculum specialists, content teachers, resource teachers, counselors, test administrators, instructional assistants, family liaisons, administrative assistants, etc. For the purpose of this study, two groups of staff members will be considered: itinerant ESOL Resource Teachers who are assigned to multiple school buildings and ESOL administrative assistants who work with front office personnel of all schools.

### **Definition of school front office personnel**

Depending on a type and size of school, the front office personnel would include any school employee whose job responsibilities address mostly administrative tasks in the main office. The front office personnel consist of at least a school principal and a lead secretary. Most schools in the Maryland school district described in this study has also one or more assistant principals and one or more supporting secretaries with more specific front office job responsibilities. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the front office personnel responsible for student registration.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

In order to describe what EL identification practices are required by the law, how the implementation works in schools, and how can the implementation in a school be improved, this study considers literature and resources published between 2005 and 2020.

#### **Identification of English Learners – the legal requirements**

The legal requirements surrounding identification of English learners and their placement in ELD programs have not changed much in the last two decades. USDE (2016) reminds school administrators that the last two major amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act from 1964, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2002 and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) from 2015, both highlight importance of timely and effective identification of ELs. United States Department of Education (USDE, 2016) has developed several documents for state and local school systems in order to provide guidance and clarification of the law regarding ELs. In September 2016, USDE published, yet another non-regulatory (which means no new legislation) guidance document with a clear purpose. It reads: “[t]he Department is issuing this guidance to provide States and local educational agencies (LEAs) with information to assist them in meeting their obligations under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1964 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). This guidance also provides members of the public with information about their rights under this law and other relevant laws and regulations.” (USDE, 2016, p.3). In this document, the legal obligations of States and local school systems (LSS) to ELs under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the ESEA, are clearly spelled out. It is important to mention that this guidance is heavily focused on some fiscal and reporting

obligations which can require rather meticulous data reviews, however, the point regarding identification and assessment of all potential EL students in a timely, valid, and reliable manner is made early in the document.

Another guiding document developed by USDE (2015) covers also obligations of States and LSS to ELs and their families in terms of overcoming language barriers as they go through the EL identification process and enrollment in schools. The document outlines appropriate actions schools should take to complete identification ELs and the supports they should provide to their parents and guardians. According to DCL, schools must develop operating procedures for timely, valid, and reliable gathering information on potential ELs, their language assessment, and communication about their placement with parents/guardians. The communication must be in a language that parents/guardians understand. Therefore, if schools use any kind of printed documents to communicate with parents, those documents must be translated into a language they understand. If printed translation is not available, schools must provide free oral interpretation of the documents to parents/guardians. The EL identification process must be completed within the first thirty (30) days from the date EL enrolled in a school (USDE, 2015).

In conjunction with these guidelines, the USDE Office of English Language Acquisition has published an English Learner Tool Kit. This ten-chapter document, one for each section of the DCL, contains sample tools and resources to state and local education agencies on how to implement the legal obligations. The first chapter is specifically developed to help the states and LSS adequately identify ELs (USDE, 2016).

### **Challenges with Implementation**

The federal guidance mentioned above was released as a result of prior research that revealed significant variation within and across states in both the instruments and decision-making processes used to identify ELs.

Lopez et al. (2016), in their report, describe the current EL identification process as inconsistent among the states and even among local school districts. The report published by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and WestEd, an education research/consulting company, claims that nearly all states implement the EL identification process in two steps. First, schools identify students who might be potential ELs based on the Home Language Survey (HLS). Then, schools determine the EL status for each student based on the initial language assessment.

It is important to mention that even though most states are using the HLS as a tool, it is not a prescribed federal requirement. In fact, there is no federal requirement about the format or content for HLS. Similarly, there is no federal requirement for a specific initial assessment and there are no unified criteria that would classify students as ELs.

### **Variations in Home Language Surveys**

After their nation-wide review, Bailey and Kelly (2011) state that there is no standard home language survey in use across the United States. Their findings reveal that HLS across the states vary in the types and number of questions for parents/guardians to answer and they also vary in the mandate in which they are administered. They range from a state mandated HLS in a single format at the student registration with state mandated questions to no state mandate for the use of HLS and their format. The lack of mandate and clarity in questions asked on the HLS can lead to over or, at least initial, under-identification of students for EL services. Goldenberg and Rutherford-Quach (2012) describe the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) case from 2009

in which the State changed the HLS administration mandate in the number and type of questions asked. Before July 2009, there were three mandated questions on the HLS. Bailey and Kelly (2011) state that the HLS forms nation-wide often use three types of questions. One question is asking for the primary language used in the home regardless of the language spoken by the student. The next question is targeting the language that the student first acquired, and another question targets the language most often spoken by the student.

If any of the responses indicated a language other than English, a student was given an initial language assessment of English language proficiency. Beginning on July 1, 2009, ADE transitioned to a mandated single question HLS. The question asked, “What is the primary language of the student?” The studies conducted in two sample Arizona local school districts, totaling over seven thousands collected forms revealed that under the new, one question HLS mandate, more than 10% in one district and more than 18% of students in the second district would have missed access for EL services (Goldenberg & Rutherford-Quach, 2012). After this study was conducted, the Department of Justice (DOJ) got involved and the ADE had to change the mandate back to the three-question HLS.

### **EL Classification Issues**

The responses on the HLS alone do not establish the EL status for a student. Defining and understanding what constitutes an English learner leads to an accurate EL identification. Linquanti and Cook (2013), state that the EL status should be considered as a relationship between student’s language background, the student’s English language proficiency (ELP), and the academic language performance. If home language surveys provide information regarding student’s language background, the question is how to collect information on ELP and how to measure it in terms of academic language performance. Linquanti and Cook suggest that as the

States look for a common definition of English learner, they should consider specific sections of the ESEA, where the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students are described. According to those sections, students should be labeled as English learners if they demonstrate difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to the level where they do not have ability to meet the proficient levels on State content assessments, or the ability to perform successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English. Based on this description, the ELP should be measured on a scale, expressed with levels of English language proficiency, and should include a clear criterion which determines EL status on initial assessment for placement in ELD and on the assessments for continuing placements or exit from ELD.

### **Variations in Initial Assessments**

The research studies from the last 15 years suggest that initial assessments for EL identification not only varied among the school districts nation-wide but some of them were completely inappropriate tools of measurements. Mahoney and MacSwan (2005) reported that in some states the schools used academic achievement tests for EL identification not realizing that language proficiency and academic achievement are two distinct constructs and should be measured separately. Some schools routinely assessed students' native language ability as a criterion for placement in ELD programs. "While it may be useful for schools to assess children's reading and writing ability in their home language upon entering school, using potentially misleading native-language assessments adds confusion rather than additional clarity to the identification process" (p. 5).

Linquanti and Cook (2013) report that there are four assessment consortia, associations of various education testing companies, that receive federal funds. They all required to define what constitutes a student as an English learner. Two of those consortia, PARCC and Smarter

Balanced deliver content assessment for various states. Two others, ELPA and WIDA, develop and deliver English language proficiency assessments.

Most of the State Education Agencies (SEA), including US territories, subscribe to be members of one of these nation-wide consortia and use their products to assess ELs annually and also use their products designed for initial EL identification. In the school year 2017-2018, 38 SEAs used WIDA initial assessments, seven SEAs used ELPA initial assessments. In the same school year, there were also seven SEAs that did not subscribe to a large consortium and use their own developed ELP assessments. Three other SEAs used LAS Links, a smaller vendor for ELP assessments (Villegas & Pompa, 2020).

One can assume that even though the definition of EL might be established by all SEAs, if the ELP is measured with different initial assessments, there will be some inconsistencies in EL identification as the students move from one state to another. Lopez et al. (2016) state that it exceedingly difficult to compare results of initial ELP assessments across states—or across districts within states—that use different instruments. Students who are identified as ELs in one state might not be eligible for ELD programs in another state that uses different initial assessment. On the other hand, student who initially did not qualify for ELD program in one state might become ELs in another state based on a different initial assessment. Some initial assessments may not be appropriately aligned with the grade level state standards or they measure content construct that might be difficult to access for students from various cultural and linguistic background. Subsequently, the results of initial assessments lead educators to misidentification.

Villegas and Pompa (2020) offer a close look at a variety of initial assessments for each grade-level band used by various states. In addition to instruments listed in the table below,

Villegas and Pompa mention that some states use their own, state-developed screeners, and at least one state has five different state-approved screening products without reference to grade band.

**TABLE 1**

**Screeners Identified by Grade Band, 2018**

Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grades 1–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oral language proficiency test (OLPT)</li> <li>- LAS Links Screener</li> <li>- IDEA oral language proficiency tests (Pre-IPT)</li> <li>- Pre-K screening tool</li> <li>- World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) MODEL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kindergarten WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (K W-APT)</li> <li>- WIDA MODEL</li> <li>- OLPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WIDA Screener (online and paper)</li> <li>- W-APT*</li> <li>- OLPT</li> <li>- State-approved literacy assessment</li> </ul>

\* It should be noted that the WIDA Consortium discontinued the use of the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) in grades 1–12 effective August 31, 2017, although the consortium continues to support the Kindergarten W-APT. For more information, see WIDA, "Kindergarten W-APT," accessed July 19, 2018.

Villegas & Pompa (2020) point out that some schools or the whole school districts also use additional criteria to identify ELs such as: parent or family interviews, teacher observation and referrals, performance portfolios and previous academic records, or even alternative EL identification protocols.

### **Improving the EL Identification Process**

In a state education agency such as Maryland, the improvement at the school level comes from sticking to at least to the guidance and resources provided by the State department of education because in the county based local school systems, the minimal requirements trickle down from the state, through the district, down to each school building.

In general, culturally responsive practices must be implemented by not only making adjustments to curricula and professional development training for staff and leadership, but also in connecting racially, culturally, and linguistically different parents to individual school and

district central office leaders. It is crucial for all district supervisors and school administrators to be knowledgeable of the law's requirements and their application. All school administrators and teachers should understand the relationship between legal requirements to raise students' academic performance and the needs of ELs to participate in the ELD programs (Diarrassouba & Johnson, 2014).

Bailey and Kelly (2011) suggest that SEAs must take a clear position on the HLS mandate and content. If SEAs don't require a single, state developed HLS that is mandated for all LSSs, then school districts and their schools should be given a clear advice on types of HLS questions and phrasing. Learning from the Arizona HLS case described by Goldenberg and Rutherford-Quach (2012), the HLS forms should include more than just one general question. Lopez et al. (2016) suggest that schools should implement an effective HLS forms which address "the languages the student currently speaks and understands, the student's degree of current English language use, and the students' degree of current English language exposure" (Lopez et al. 2016, p. 8). Multiple researchers agree that the most effective implementation of HLS comes using translated versions parents/guardians can understand. Also, in cases where the parents/guardians are not able to complete HLS due to lack of literacy, schools should identify resources, such as interpretation services in order to communicate the HLS purpose and questions with families.

Lopez et al. (2016) urge SEAs and each LSS to provide clear guidance about the content and purpose of HLS to those who administer it to the families. Liguanti and Cook (2013), also suggest that schools are provided clear guidelines on the HLS administration procedures and interpretation of responses. These suggestions clearly indicate the need for initial and periodic professional development of school staff that is communicating with families, directly



administering the HLS, and those who are evaluating and interpreting the responses. Multiple researchers agree that the training of staff should focus on all aspects of the HLS administration. The training should include topics covering the purpose and intended use of HLS, who will administer HLS, who should be given the HLS, where and how to identify languages for translated versions, and how to communicate via interpretation services, such as over-the phone-interpretation service (OPI). There should be training for staff members who collect, review, and interpret each HLS. The training should clearly outline the school staff decision-making process in terms of the weight of each response to HLS questions and in terms of who should be given the initial ELP assessment based on the HLS responses. Bailey and Kelly (2011) suggest that the outlines with decision-making rules can be as simple as checklists or flowcharts with clear and simple directions for each step in the process.

Research studies offer several recommendations regarding improvement in implementing EL initial assessments. Linquanti and Cook (2013) emphasize that if the school districts are members of one of the testing consortia, they should use the same placement instrument and work with comparable EL classification criteria – setting what classifies students as ELs at the same proficiency level, so that students moving within the consortia have a clear EL classification in every member state. Lopez et al. (2016) add that whether the school districts use one of the consortium’s assessment product or their own, state-developed assessments, it is important to ensure that their initial ELP assessments be developed specifically for initial EL classification purposes in order to prevent misclassification of students. Even though researchers describe effective initial assessments as those that should be simple to administer and interpret, they also highlight importance of adequate training for all test administrators. Similarly to those who communicate with families and administer HLS, the test administrators should be familiar

with legal requirements, the state and school district's EL identification process, as well as with the initial assessments procedures, scoring, and results interpretation. It is especially important for assessing young students. Lopez et al. (2016) offer recommendations to test administrators who will assess young learners. Their recommendations include adequate training on unique characteristics of young learners, placing more weight on assessing oral skills (listening and speaking) than on literacy skill, and focusing their assessments on topics which young learners might be more familiar with, such as colors, family, numbers, clothes, and animals.

Effective practices at the school level are achieved by solid foundational knowledge of the process and ability to translate assessment results into determination of student placement in the ELD programs. The recommendations around the HLS decision-making process by Bailey and Kelly (2011) are applicable also for initial ELP assessment. The flowcharts, checklists, or rubrics should clearly provide school staff with step-by-step guidance from the HLS administration to the initial ELP assessment, and towards the next stage – how to document and communicate EL classification and student ELD program placement with parents/guardians, students, their teachers.

In addition to equipping the front office personnel and other school staff members with these 'logistical tools', it may be more important to equip all school personnel in adequate training. The training that is focused not only on the sequence of operation and access to EL identification resources but also focused on developing professional skills for working with culturally and linguistically diverse population. Research consistently show the need for educators to possess skills for working with diverse learners. Therefore, in the rapidly changing student demographics, it is important for each school leader to *"provide school personnel with*

*diversity training that ultimately changes perceptions and behavior toward racially, culturally, and linguistically different people.”* (Diarrassouba & Johnson, 2014, p.13). They are important for instructional staff teaching students but also for non-instructional school staff members who work on the front line since they are the ones who everyone sees first as they enter the school buildings.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS**

The purpose of the study is to investigate how the identification of English learners is implemented in the perceptions of ESOL resource teachers in terms of consistency at the school level.

#### **Design**

In this descriptive study, the English learner identification process in one of the Maryland public school districts was reviewed and evaluated through the lens of ESOL instructional or non-instructional staff members. All participants were presented with information on the approved state and district-wide practices. Subsequently, the participants were asked to reflect on those practices and provide their perspective. Through the interview process, they were asked to identify critical steps in the EL identification process at the school level, evaluate each school's implementation, and identify factors which make school implementation effective or hinder it.

#### **Participants**

The participants in this descriptive study were 14 ESOL instructional and non-instructional staff members in one of the Maryland public school districts who were delivering and supporting English language development program for about 900 English learners in 52 school buildings.

ESOL teachers who are all full-time public school employees represented 12 ESOL instructional staff members. The group consisted of ten female and two male teachers with various lengths of professional experiences. Although not new to the teaching profession, four teachers were in their first year as ESOL staff members in the district. Four teachers were in their third or fourth year as ESOL staff members in the district. The four other teachers were

seasoned veterans with at least seven years of experience in the district. 10 out of 12 teachers were itinerants – they are assigned to multiple school buildings and across all levels, elementary, middle, and high schools. Two teachers were assigned together in a high school with an EL newcomer center supporting a group of lowest performing English learners. Both teachers have also previous itinerant experience.

The two non-instructional ESOL staff members consisted of two administrative assistants. Both of them were in their third year with the ESOL department. One served as the ESOL department supervisor's in the district's central office and one served as the administrative assistant at the EL newcomer center. Both administrative assistants provide direct or indirect support with EL identification and registration to all 52 school buildings in the district.

### **Instrument**

For the purpose of this study the researcher developed an instrument with the following questions for ESOL staff:

1. What do you feel are the critical implementation steps for identification of English Learners at the school level?
2. As you think over the schools you assist, to what degree do you believe these steps are followed consistently.
  - i. All of the time with very minor exceptions.
  - ii. Most of the time and some exceptions that are a problem.
  - iii. Intermittently, with some major exceptions or problems.
3. What are the significant differences between those that are most successful from those that aren't?

Along with this questionnaire, the researcher reviewed and discussed with all participants the State and local school district's tools that are developed and mandated for EL identification process. These tools include:

- MSDE Title III guidance page (see Appendix 1)  
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/English-Learners/Eligibility-Guidance-Laws.aspx>
- Maryland Home Language Survey state version (MD HLS.pdf) (See Appendix 2)
- Maryland Home Language Survey local school district version (MD HLS LSS.pdf) (See Appendix 3)
- Elementary and Middle School Flowchart for New Student Enrollment and Identification, developed by the school district (ESMSFlowchart.pdf) ( See Appendix 4)
- High School Flowchart for New Student Enrollment and Identification, developed by the school district (HSFlowchart.pdf) (See Appendix 5)

### **Procedure**

In order to collect the ESOL staff members' perspective on the EL identification process at the school level, the researcher conducted individual interviews with all 14 participants. Each interview started with the pre-interview review and conversation. The researcher shared the purpose for the interview and established each participant's understanding of the local school district's legal obligations related to English learners. During each pre-interview conversation, the researcher and the participant together reviewed the aforementioned appendices. The researcher, then, recorded the total number of schools, the type and name of schools each participant supported.

During the interview phase, the researcher presented each participant with the three questions included in the developed instrument. The three questions were presented in three rounds, starting with question 1. Some participants responded to the three questions out of order; the responses were recorded in the order based on the question sequence, list and description of steps, degree to which the steps were followed, and list of descriptions of significant differences between the most and least consistent schools. All responses are summarized in the form of tables, lists, and descriptions in the next section.

## CHAPTERS IV and V

### DATA AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

The purpose of the study was to investigate how the identification of English learners is implemented in the perceptions of ESOL resource teachers in terms of consistency at the school level in one Maryland public school district. This descriptive study combines chapters IV and V into an integrated discussion which better supported an understanding of the data and findings.

The data was collected from the two groups of ESOL instructional or non-instructional staff members working in the school district; itinerant ESOL Resource Teachers who are assigned to multiple school buildings and ESOL administrative assistants who work with front office personnel of all schools. Table 1 summarizes the two groups of participants who responded to the three questions of the research instrument.

**Table 1.**

#### *Description of Participants*

<b>ELL Staff member (Names are pseudonyms)</b>	<b>Years of Experience in the district</b>	<b>Number of schools served (52 total)</b>	<b>Number of ELs served (831 total)</b>	<b>School levels served Elementary – ES, Middle – MS, High – HS</b>
<b>Alan</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>MS, HS</b>
<b>Brett</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>ES, MS, HS</b>
<b>Cathy</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>ES</b>
<b>Cindy</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>ES</b>
<b>Cristen</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>ES, MS, HS</b>
<b>Jane</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>ES</b>
<b>Linda</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>ES</b>



<b>Mary</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>ES, MS</b>
<b>Nina</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>ES, MS, HS</b>
<b>Olivia</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>MS, HS</b>
<b>Penny</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>HS</b>
<b>Wanda</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>HS</b>
<b>Stevie</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>ES, MS, HS</b>
<b>Josie</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>ES, MS, HS</b>
		<b>52 total schools</b>	<b>831 total ELs</b>	

**Question 1: What do you feel are the critical implementation steps for identification of English Learners at the school level?**

Table 2 contains a list of critical implementation steps for EL identification at a school level as described in responses from all participants and ordered by the number of participants responding with each step. It is important to note that each participant responded with different number and list of critical implementation steps. Most participants came up with three to four steps and they were able to describe each step in detail. There were two participants who initially listed only 2 critical steps but when they described them, they unpacked one to two additional steps needed to accomplish the process. Three participants elaborated on the critical steps in length and listed up to eight different steps they believed are needed to accomplish the process effectively. Some steps described by one participant, even though named differently, resembled steps described by other participants and when clarified, they were included in Table

1 with the same description. Overall, the participants came up with the total of twelve different critical implementation steps for EL identification at a school level.

**Table 2.**

*Critical Implementation Steps for Identification of English Learners at the School Level*

<b>Critical implementation steps identified by participants</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Maryland HLS administered to all families	14
Training of front office personnel on operating procedures	13
District-wide guideline/flowchart developed and followed	11
Communication with families in different language available and practiced	11
Front office personnel review of all HLS for completion and clarification	10
Front office personnel communicate with ESOL staff consistently	10
ESOL staff reviews forwarded HLS	10
ESOL staff administer initial EL assessment (asap, in 2 weeks or 30 days)	10
Establish close working relationship with assigned schools (ESOL staff included in distribution lists, team meetings, school announcements)	8
ESOL staff reviews student records of new registrations/transfers for ESOL documentation	4
Front office personnel reviews records of new registrations/transfers for ESOL documentation	4
Conduct family interview prior to testing	3

All 14 participants listed the administration of Maryland HLS to all families who register their children for any school in the district as a critical step for EL identification process. This step is a state requirement and it is included in the current district-wide operating procedure. All participants passionately commented on the current Maryland HLS administration in the schools they serve. One participant, Olivia, stated: “The first, most critical, step is that the person doing the registration at the school level, guidance or office administrative assistant, must ensure that EVERY family who registers is given Maryland Home Language Survey to complete.” Another participant, elementary ESOL teacher Cindy, stated: “Maryland home language survey should be

completed by all families registering their kids at a school. First time registering PreK or K, and families new to the school - survey should be included in ALL registration packets.”

Another major step identified by participants was the ability to communicate with limited or non-English speaking families. This step includes each school’s access to available registration and EL identification documents in languages other than English, as well as their access to interpretation services that would facilitate oral communication between the school and families. Ability to communicate with families in languages other than English is established in the current district-wide operating procedure by offering two resources. The school district has contracts with two companies: one providing document translation and the other providing over-the-phone interpretation services.

The critical implementation step that placed second by number of responses, listed by 13 participants, calls for training of the front office personnel on operating procedures for EL identification. Participants expressed their concern with the current status of the front office personnel’s knowledge and many of them exclaimed just like Brett who said: “I wish that all personnel who are involved in the registration of new students, especially guidance secretaries, are properly trained. They should know that all parents and guardians who register new students must complete Maryland Home Language Survey.” The next critical step identified by the participants seems to be related a district-wide guideline/flowchart for the process. All participants seem to be aware that the guidelines/flowcharts currently exist, but they listed this step as needing to be communicated and followed by the front office personnel.

Coming up, unanimously among all participants, with the critical implementation step that calls for Maryland HLS administered to all families, along with another step, communication with families in different language, signals their awareness of and desire for

fulfilling the Federal and State legal requirements for EL identification found in the review of the literature. Similarly, the two other steps identified by participants, implementation of district-wide guideline/flowchart for the process and training of front office personnel on operating procedures, demonstrate their understanding of ways how to implement and improve the EL identification process at the school level as suggested by several researchers mentioned in the literature review.

The rest of the steps described by the participants relate to staff roles, communication, and collaboration between the ESOL staff and each school. These steps include who and when should review Maryland HLS forms, who and when should review each transfer student's records for evidences of previous placement in ELD programs and their ELP scores, or when and how ESOL and school office staff should be interviewing families to clarify their responses in HLS forms and be able to administer each student's initial ELP assessment within the time limits established by the law. Even though, these steps might seem insignificant to some, the participants described them as important steps to be included in the district-wide guidelines and clearly identified by roles in the procedure flowcharts. In the ESOL staff's view, these steps make distinction between the front office personnel's not knowing or not following the guidelines and they directly affect the school's ability to implement EL identification process.

**Question 2: As you think over the schools you assist, to what degree do you believe these steps are followed consistently?**

Table 3 captures each participant's rating of schools they serve in terms of their consistency with implementation of critical steps for EL identification. The participants evaluated each of their schools on the eight critical steps which were identified by at least ten ESOL staff members. The remaining six critical steps identified by less than ten participants

were not included in the rating. The participants were given three rating choices for each critical implementation step and all schools were rated by assigned instructional ESOL staff. The two non-instructional ESOL staff members who participated in the study provided their input as well, but they rated only schools they were most familiar with and on the critical steps they worked on with those schools. The non-instructional ESOL staff's input was included in an overall school rating.

**Table 3.**

*Degree of the critical step implementation at the school level*

<b>Critical implementation steps identified by participants</b>	<b>Degree of consistent implementation at the school level (number of schools)</b>			
	All of the time with very minor exceptions.	Most of the time and some exceptions that are a problem.	Intermittently, with some major exceptions or problems.	Total
<b>Maryland HLS administered to all families</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Training of front office personnel on procedures</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>District wide guideline, flowchart developed and followed</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Communication with families in different languages/using OPI</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Front office personnel review of all HLS for completion and clarification</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Front office personnel communicate with ESOL staff</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>ESOL staff reviews forwarded HLS</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>

<b>ESOL staff administer Initial EL assessment (asap, in 2 weeks or 30 days)</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>
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The data indicate how each of the critical steps in the EL identification process is implemented in the perceptions of ESOL instructional and non-instructional staff in terms of consistency at the school level across the school district. The participants claim that the two steps directly dependent on them, reviewing of HLS and administering of initial EL assessment, is implemented rather consistently. There are only 3-4 schools where implementation of these two steps sometimes become a problem in some individual cases due to lack of communication by the front office staff, but it doesn't seem to be a major concern for the ESOL staff. It is important to note that rating of these two steps indicate a certain level of self-evaluation by the participants. Based on the ratings, the ESOL staff members understand their role in the process, they are knowledgeable about the tools used in the process, and they are aware of the criteria that need to be considered when it comes to placement in ELD program. One of the ESOL teachers, Alan, commented: "It's a very simple procedure. When I look at the responses of each home language survey, it should be clear whether I need to screen a student and which placement test I should use."

It is important to note the current guidelines available to schools in Maryland and in this school district. Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE, 2020) provides all local school districts with guidance on EL identification process on their website. This information is included in the MSDE Title III guidance page (Appendix 1), which is based on the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), specifically COMAR 13A.05.07.02 and COMAR 13a.05.07.03. MSDE defines, who in their view, is an English Learner and outlines a required EL identification process for the State of Maryland. Beginning on July 1, 2017, MSDE has

implemented a mandatory 3-question Maryland HLS to be used for all students enrolling in Maryland public schools. The Maryland HLS is available on the MSDE website in English and 18 other languages. MSDE also describes a required timeframe for EL identification, required administration of English Language Proficiency (ELP) placement test, and required communication with parents about each student placement by using Parent Notification Letter which is also available in English and 18 other languages. Additional MSDE guidance to EL identification can be found on the WIDA website. Maryland is a member of the WIDA consortium since 2011 and MSDE provides guidance on Maryland's EL Entry and Exit Criteria for minimum scores for placement and exit from ELD based on WIDA's framework for English Language Proficiency Assessments. The current eligibility criteria for entry in ELD in Maryland is the proficiency level score below PL 4.5, on the scale PL 1.0-6.0. This criterion is not the same across all WIDA member states. Therefore, MSDE developed another document which provides guidance on enrolling and re-screening of ELs who transferred from other WIDA and non-WIDA states (Appendix 6). This allows for a review of student's transfer records and determination of eligibility for ELD program based on previous ELD placement and without additional testing which can often result in saving a lot of time

MSDE guidance documents do not address who, at the school level specifically, is responsible for completing each of the required tasks. However, the school district subject to this action research has developed their tools specific for EL identification process and described responsibilities for each step at the school level. Specifically, the school district developed their own format of state-required HLS (Appendix 3). This form not only contains the three required questions but also includes directions for the front office personnel on how to administer the HLS and what to do with it after it is completed. The school district has also developed

flowcharts for new student enrollment and EL identification at a school level (Appendix 4 & Appendix 5). These flowcharts describe the district's guidelines for the front office personnel in steps and name specific district-wide tools to use at each of the steps. All documents and tools mentioned above serve as direct evidence that the State and the local school district comply with the legal requirements and they follow the recommendation found in the literature review.

There are many schools where according to the participants, the front office personnel is failing to follow district-wide guidelines. Participants identified seven schools with major problems with following the guidelines and 42 schools that have some problems following guidelines. According to the ESOL staff, many schools also have problems with administering the state required Maryland HLS. Only one school seems to administer the form consistently. 34 schools have some problems with handing out the surveys and 17 schools were identified as having major problems with completing them by all families. One of the participants, Cristen, commented: "In my schools, the critical step of the Maryland HLS is still only done when the administrative assistant thinks it is necessary; they are not giving it to EVERY family with all of the other registration papers."

It looks like many schools also fall short in the follow up to the HLS. Participants reported that in 45 schools, even if the front office personnel eventually administer HLS forms, they fail to review the forms for completion and clarification. Sometimes, the information on the form is missing or is unclear and preventing the ESOL staff members to make decisions on whether to proceed with EL assessment. According to the participants, only three schools are consistently using the district resources for communication with families in other languages than English. 34 schools were identified as having major problems communicating with families in their home language. One of the participants, Penny, stated: "I feel there should also be contact



with families if responses on the HLS are questionable/unclear. For example, when parents write "English/Spanish" to answer questions on HLS. If nothing else, to get some background info on the student's educational history, exposure to other languages, etc., a contact should be made by someone at the school level and it would be helpful to have some specific clarifying questions to ask so that we are all asking the same thing.”

According to the ESOL staff, the schools do not use the district provided over-the-phone interpretation (OPI) service often enough and they also commented on insufficient use of document translations needed for student registration, which are also available to schools. When asked why the front office personnel don't use the resources for communication with non-English speaking families, the problems stem from some inability to locate the document translations and from hesitation to use it because it takes much longer to complete the student registration by using OPI. Instead, the schools seem to rely on support from bilingual staff in their buildings and on support from the ESOL staff members who feel much more comfortable using the communication resources with students and their families.

The participants identified 48 schools where communication between the ESOL staff and the front office personnel cause some problems in EL identification cases. Participants described importance of effective communication between the schools and the ESOL teachers. ESOL staff members fulfil role of education liaison and advocate for ELs and their families. They feel obligated to inform school office personnel about language resources helpful for registration of non-English speaking students and they encourage school office personnel and teachers to refer such students to them for supporting services. They encourage school office personnel to use the MSDE required Maryland HLS in the language parents can understand in order to obtain essential information about students who may be eligible for ESOL services. However, based on

the participants' responses, one of the reasons the communication breaks down is because the itinerant schedules of ESOL teachers. Because they are not in those buildings every day, the ESOL teachers cannot attend to all cases in person and they often miss important supporting documentation and other information parents may share with the schools. One participant, Cristen, described what might be helpful to improve the communication with ESOL staff:

“ESOL teachers should be on list to review registration of all new students; their records from previous schools, and/or make sure HLS and registration card are filled out. We are willing to review them and see if students had ESOL services at previous school or they exited ESOL services recently. We can look for important information, such as if students were born in another country even if English was first language. This could help us and the teachers with sorting out the students and figure out what kind of supports they exactly need.”

Finally, all participants unanimously identified one critical step that is missing in all 52 schools in the district. All 14 interviewed ESOL staff members expressed their concern over the absence of any kind of school-based training of front office personnel on EL identification procedures. In the last two years, there have been only two face-to-face professional development sessions for the front office personnel, specifically on EL identification procedures, organized by the district central office ESOL staff. One ESOL teacher commented: “With office staff turnover/changes, we need to keep up with training. It is not enough to have an email from central office. A face to face training and reminder from ESOL teacher helps a lot; we can explain the process & the reason why we do it. I think it would be great to have our department make a video training that can be accessed by anyone at any time explaining from beginning to end how a student qualifies for ESOL services, what that means, and how they exit.”

**Question 3: What are the significant differences between those that are most successful from those that aren't?**

It is important to note that participants found it rather difficult to identify schools in the district where the EL identification process is implemented well and implemented consistently by all school staff members. There were only three to four schools that implemented steps identified by the participants with some consistency. However, each of the participants was able to describe what is going well and what is not going well in each school in order to complete steps in the EL identification process. With an obvious absence of consistent training, the following is a summary of differences listed by each ESOL staff member.

In the most successful schools:

- the front office personnel know ESOL staff members and communicate with them regularly about ELs
- the school principal and/or assistant principal/s know ESOL staff members and communicate with them regularly about ELs
- the front office personnel know ESOL central office staff and communicate with them about ELs
- the school principal and/or assistant principal/s know ESOL central office staff and communicate with them about ELs
- the front office personnel invest their time in asking and learning about EL resources and procedures
- classroom and content teachers invest their time in asking and learning about EL resources and procedures
- ESOL staff members model, encourage, and support the steps in EL identification

On the other hand, in the perception of ESOL staff there is no link between successful implementation and:

- school location or grade-levels
- number of ELs enrolling in each school
- years of experience of any school staff member involved in the process

One ESOL teacher, Cathy, summarized the differences in her statement: “All depends on the relationship the ESOL teacher has with the office staff. If you are at a school a few days a week, it seems they are more likely to keep you in the loop. When families come in and the parents do not speak English, office staff is more likely to let ESOL teacher know about the need for a screening. It takes a lot of conversation with office staff and reminders - and honestly, kindness goes a long way. They are working very hard and are very busy, just as we are.” It is also important to note some organizational changes within the ESOL department. Beginning in September 2019, the ESOL staff members were reassigned. As a result, 11 out of 12 ESOL teachers were assigned to a new school building and 47 school buildings were assigned a different ESOL teacher.

### **Threats to Validity**

In terms of this study, the threats to external validity involve two closely related aspects, the experimenter bias effect is the first one. It is possible that the researcher’s conscious or unconscious actions affected some participant’s responses. The researcher is a current staff member who is working with all participants. His familiarity with participants and the EL identification process in the school district may have contributed to producing desired results. The second aspect creating a threat to the external validity is in the selection of participants and their reactive arrangements. The participants were not randomly selected. In fact, for the

purpose of this study the participants consisted of only ESOL staff members, all them were included in the study. For majority of their business days, they are working in what they describe as isolated environment – they often feel working alone because they must travel between schools throughout the day, their interaction with school administration and their department supervisor can be limited. From feeling that they are in some way receiving special attention by being involved in this study may have affected them so that they act in ways different from their normal behavior, resulting in less relevant responses.

One of the aspects involving the threats to internal validity of this study, is in its instrumentation. The data for the study was collected through individual interviews of all participants, using an instrument consisting of three questions to which all participants were asked to respond. Even though the researcher's belief is that each question was specific enough for collection of adequate responses, the instrument did not offer the minimum requirements on the number of steps participants needed to list or the number of differences between the most and least successful schools. Also, the instrument did not provide any kind of word bank of choices as responses for Question 1. The responses to Question 1 resulted in various number and type of critical implementation steps participants listed. As mentioned in earlier, most participants came up with 3-4 steps, two participants initially listed only two critical steps, but the participants came up with the total of twelve different critical implementation steps for EL identification at a school level. Another threat to the internal validity of this study is in the selection–maturation interaction. The interview process was completed over a period of several weeks and the responses they provided may have been influenced by their interaction with other participants and also by their ongoing professional experiences at their assigned schools. It is possible that

the participants may have communicated about the questions and were influenced by each-other's responses.

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The purpose of the study was to investigate how the identification of English learners is implemented in the perceptions of ESOL resource teachers in terms of consistency at the school level in one Maryland public school district.

The data collected from the two groups of ESOL instructional or non-instructional staff members working in the school district indicate some good news. The school district has developed a process for EL identification based on federal and state requirements. All schools have access to a state-developed 3-question HLS and it is available in translated versions. The school district has developed step-by-step guidance documents for EL identification process in a form of flowcharts for all school levels. The district is providing schools with OPI service and translated documents for communication with families in languages other than English. Schools have assigned itinerant ESOL staff members who administer initial English language proficiency assessment based on WIDA EL framework and who determine each student's eligibility for ELD program based on the State criteria for ELD entry.

On the other hand, the study participants indicated that there are areas for improvement in many schools. Although the schools possess most of the elements needed for effective implementation of the EL identification process, they fall short in two major areas – ability to follow the district-wide procedures and ability to communicate effectively with families and the itinerant ESOL staff. These shortcomings point to a single most important issue with EL identification process at a school level – a lack of initial training and absence of continuing professional development for the front office personnel focused on all aspects of the process.

Since MSDE's guidance applies to all Maryland public schools, it would be beneficial to collect perspectives of ESOL staff members from multiple school districts and investigate whether the level of training for the front office staff has a similar impact on the process. It would also be beneficial to collect information on the process from the perspective of the front office personnel. Their perspective might bring more clarity on the content, format, and timing of the most relevant professional development needed in order to improve the implementation of the EL identification process in their schools.

## Appendix 1: MSDE Title III guidance page

### Identification of English Learners

Local school systems are required to ask the parents of every student upon enrollment if a language other than English is spoken using a Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify potential ELs. An EL is a student who may have been born outside of the U.S.:

- who communicates in a language other than English; or
- whose family uses a primary language other than English in the home; and
- whose English language proficiency falls within the range established by the State for an English language development program.

### Home Language Survey

➤ [Home Language Survey](#)

**Note:** Having another language spoken in the home or routinely used in other settings on its own is not an adequate basis for identifying a student as an EL. Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) provides the criteria of the HLS and defines them for EL identification:

- [COMAR 13A.05.07.02](#)
- [COMAR 13a.05.07.03](#)

A student's eligibility for services is based on the English Language Proficiency (ELP) placement test. Each local school system must inform parents of an EL identified for participation in the local school system's English language development program:

- No later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year for students who enter at the start of the school year.
- Within the first two weeks of a student being placed in such a program if the student was not identified as an EL prior to the beginning of the school year.

### Parent Notification Letter

The parent notification letter must be sent to parents/guardians annually for new and continuing ELs who participate in English language development programs, including ELs for whom services have been refused.

➤ [ESOL Placement: Parent Notification Letters](#)

Additionally, the Refusal of Placement in ESOL Program Letter must be sent annually to parents and guardians who indicate that they do not wish their child to participate in the ESOL program.

➤ [Refusal of Placement in ESOL Program Letters](#)



## Appendix 2: Maryland Home Language Survey state version



### Maryland Home Language Survey

In accordance with federal and state requirements, the Home Language Survey will be administered to all students and used only for determining whether a student needs English language support services and will not be used for immigration matters or reported to immigration authorities.

If a language other than English is indicated on two or more of the three questions below, the student will be assessed for English language support services. Additional criteria for testing may be considered.

1. What language(s) did the student first learn to speak?
2. What language does the student use most often to communicate?
3. What language(s) are spoken in your home?

### Appendix 3: Maryland Home Language Survey local school district version



## Maryland Home Language Survey

In accordance with federal and state requirements, the Home Language Survey will be administered to all students and used only for determining whether a student needs English language support services and will not be used for immigration matters or reported to immigration authorities.

If a language other than English is indicated on two or more of the three questions below, the student will be assessed for English language support services. Additional criteria for testing may be considered.

1. What language(s) did the student first learn to speak? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What language does the student use most often to communicate? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What language(s) are spoken in your home? \_\_\_\_\_

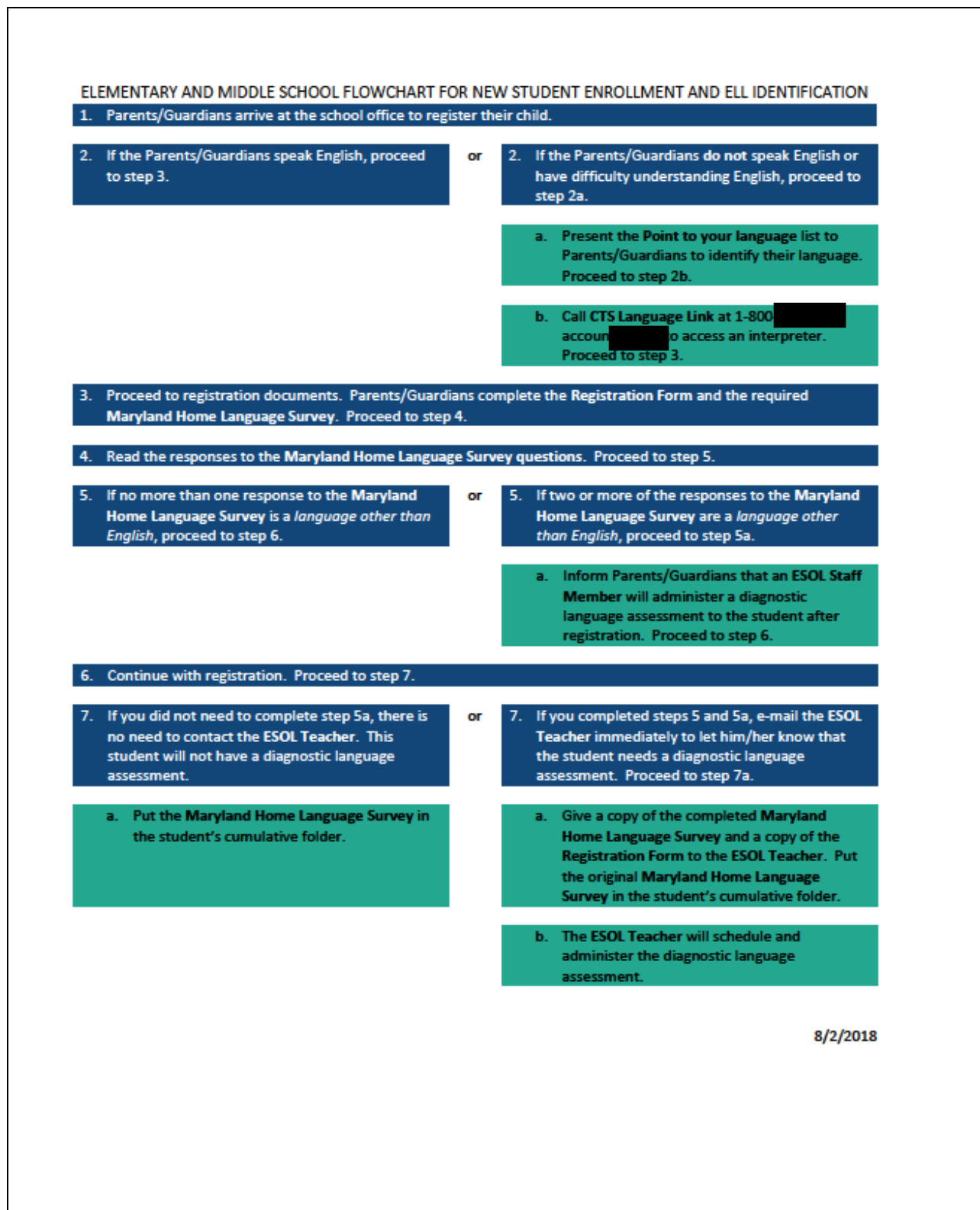
STUDENT INFORMATION	
STUDENT NAME _____	DATE OF BIRTH _____
DID THE STUDENT RECEIVE ESOL SERVICES IN HIS/HER PREVIOUS SCHOOL? (CHECK ONE.) YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
IF STUDENT RECEIVED ESOL SERVICES IN PREVIOUS SCHOOL, WHERE? _____ <small>(Write name of school and location above)</small>	
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME _____	
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____	DATE _____
PARENT/GUARDIAN E-MAIL _____	PHONE _____
<small>(Parents/Guardians of high school students only, If two or three answers above are not English)</small>	<small>(Parents/Guardians of high school students only, If two or three answers above are not English)</small>

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE USE ONLY	HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE USE ONLY
<p>1. If a language other than English is indicated in two or more of the numbered survey responses above, fill in your school's name and the student's ID number (if known) below.</p> <p>REFERRING HCPS SCHOOL: _____ STUDENT ID: _____</p> <p>2. E-mail your school's ESOL Teacher to let him/her know that the student needs a diagnostic language assessment.</p> <p>3. Give your school's ESOL Teacher a copy of this completed form and a copy of the Registration Form.</p> <p>4. Put the original form in the student's cumulative folder.</p>	<p>1. If a language other than English is indicated in two or more of the numbered survey responses above, inform the parents/guardians that an ESOL Staff Member will administer a diagnostic language assessment to the student before the student can register.</p> <p>2. Please fill in your school's name on the blank below.</p> <p>REFERRING HCPS SCHOOL: _____</p> <p>3. Scan and email electronic copy of Maryland Home Language Survey to _____ the _____ ELL Family Welcome Center (FWC).</p> <p>The ESOL Family Welcome Center Administrative Support Technician will schedule the diagnostic language assessment with the family and an ESOL Staff Member.</p> <p>_____</p>

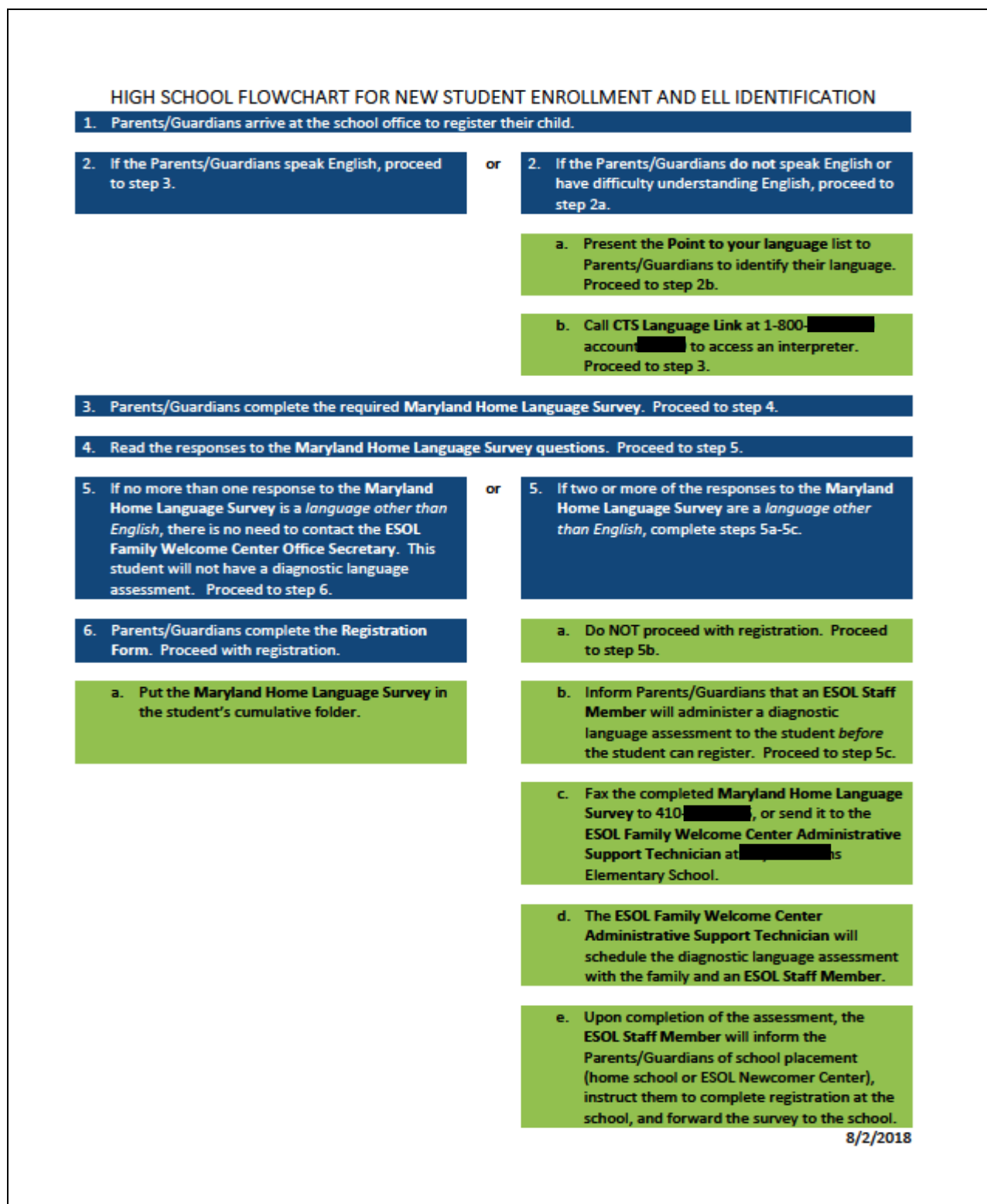
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

10/03/2019

**Appendix 4:** Elementary and Middle School Flowchart for New Student Enrollment and Identification, developed by the school district



**Appendix 5:** High School Flowchart for New Student Enrollment and Identification, developed by the school district (HSFlowchart.pdf)



## Appendix 6: MSDE Rescreening for Re-enrolling English Learners (ELs)



### Rescreening for Re-enrolling English Learners (ELs)

<b>Out-of-State (Outside of Maryland or Country) Transfers</b> If a former Maryland (MD) student <b>who was an active EL at the time of withdrawal from a MD school system</b> re-enrolls in MD from a school system in another state or country and the Home Language Survey (HLS) indicates that a language other than English is indicated on two or more of the three questions:		
State/System	Scenario	Action
WIDA State	Student enrolls with documented (e.g., exit letter or score sheet) WIDA English language proficiency (ELP) summative assessment scores that meet MD's exit criteria.	Do not rescreen. The EL End Date is a day after the student enrolls in the school system.
WIDA State	Student enrolls with documented WIDA ELP summative assessment scores from the previous school year that meet MD's criteria for EL services.	Do not rescreen. Use ELP summative assessment scores for English language development (ELD) program placement.
WIDA State	Student enrolls with documented WIDA ELP summative assessment scores older than one school year that meet MD's criteria for EL services.	Rescreen. Follow Maryland's EL Identification process.*
WIDA State	Student enrolls with documented current year WIDA ELP screener assessment scores that meets MD's criteria for EL services.	Do not rescreen. Use ELP screener assessment scores for ELD program placement.
WIDA and Non-WIDA State	Student enrolls with documentation of exit from another state.	Do not rescreen. Honor the exit status and document the exit date and exit score in the data system. The EL End Date is a day after the student enrolls in the school system.
WIDA and Non-WIDA system	Student enrolls with no documented ELP assessment scores.	Rescreen. Follow Maryland's EL identification process.*
Non-WIDA System	Student enrolls with ELP summative assessment scores from any year.	Rescreen. Follow Maryland's EL identification process.*
* If the student does not meet Maryland's eligibility criteria for EL services, then use the rescreening date as the student's EL End Date.		
<b>If you have a unique situation that is not covered by the scenarios in this table, please contact the MSDE EL/Title III Office.</b>		

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