# Superintendent’s Memo #006-21

  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: January 15, 2021

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: English Language Development (ELD) Standards, 2020 Edition Released

The *WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition: Kindergarten-Grade 12*was publicly released on December 18, 2020. This updated, comprehensive edition is centered on equity and fosters the assets, contributions, and potential of multilingual learners. With this edition, WIDA continues to advance the field of language development in support of disciplinary learning.

The WIDA ELD Standards, adopted by the Virginia Board of Education in 2008, focus on the social, instructional, and academic language forms and functions that English Learners (ELs) need to be successful within and across the content areas.

A new set of comprehensive resources will replace earlier publications from 2007 and 2012. The following materials represent and support the framework:

• Updated Key Language Uses summarize prominent language across disciplines, helping educators organize and coordinate instruction.

• Language Expectations identify what students do with language to meet academic content standards.

• Language Functions and Features describe some specific ways to meet Language Expectations.

• Proficiency Level Descriptors describe a continuum of language development for multilingual learners.

A PDF of the *WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition* is available for download on the [WIDA website](https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld).

It is important to note that any changes to the English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment, WIDA ACCESS for ELLs, reflecting the revised framework will not occur immediately. It is anticipated that new test content to assess the refreshed standards will begin to be developed in 2022-2023 and potentially field tested with students beginning in 2023-2024. Changes to WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessments would be implemented no sooner than the 2024-2025 school year. Additional information regarding the implementation timeline for revised assessments will be provided as it becomes available from WIDA.

WIDA will offer a [2020 Edition Q&A Webinar series](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/Teach/ELDstandards/WIDA-ELD-Standards-2020-Edition-QA-Webinar-Series-Flyer.pdf), beginning in January. Educators will have the opportunity to hear from members of the WIDA standards development team and ask questions live. The first webinar will be a high-level overview of the 2020 Edition and subsequent offering topics will be educators’ choice based on survey input.

For the remainder of the 2020-2021 and upcoming 2021-2022 school years, the Virginia Department of Education’s English Learner (EL) Instruction Program will also be offering a number of professional learning opportunities to build awareness and provide support for initial implementation of the ELD Standards. Educators at all levels receive updates and information about professional learning directly to their emails by [signing up for the EL Instruction Newsletter](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VADOE/signup/17029). There are a variety of resources to support quality instruction also currently available on the [English Learner Education website](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/index.shtml).

For questions about the new ELD Standards or about EL Instruction, please contact Dr. Jessica Costa, English Learner Instruction Specialist, at [jessica.costa@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:jessica.costa@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone (804) 786-3927. For questions regarding ELP assessments, please contact student assessment staff at [student\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-2102.

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