STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

September 14, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Update on English Learners in Their First 12 Months of Enrollment in U.S. Schools

This is an update of information provided in a memorandum dated October 14, 2011, regarding flexibility given to states by the U.S. Department of Education as it relates to assessment of English Learner (EL) students for accountability purposes. This flexibility pertains only to EL students in their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools. EL students for whom this is not their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools are required to participate in all state assessments.

An EL student during his/her first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools is defined as an EL student who has attended schools in the United States (not including Puerto Rico) for 12 months or less. The definition provides a window (the student’s first 12 months attending schools in the U.S.) within which time such a student is entitled to an exemption from academic content assessments in reading/language arts for accountability purposes.

Reading

EL students, during their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools, will not be required to participate in the reading test of the Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test* (ARMT*), the reading test of EXPLORE, the reading test of PLAN, or the reading test of the Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA). The reading test of the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE) may be deferred until the first administration of the next school year.

All EL students in Grades K-12, regardless of the number of years of enrollment in U.S. schools, must participate in Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs), the state-administered English language proficiency test, or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Participation in one of these English language acquisition assessments, which is required, will satisfy the reading participation requirement for accountability purposes for these students.
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Mathematics

EL students, during their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools, must take the mathematics test of the ARMT+, the mathematics test of the AAA, the mathematics test of EXPLORE, the mathematics test of PLAN, or the mathematics test of the AHSGE, with accommodations as necessary.

Science

EL students, during their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools, must take the science test of the ARMT+ (Grades 5 and 7), the science test of the AAA (Grades 5, 7, and 11), the science test of EXPLORE, the science test of PLAN, or the biology test of the AHSGE, with accommodations as necessary.

Language/English/Social Studies

The language and social studies subject-area tests of the AHSGE may be deferred for one administration only. EL students during their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools will not be required to participate in the English test of EXPLORE or the English test of PLAN.

End-of-Course

All EL students must participate in the end-of-course assessments for any of the courses for which they are enrolled and receiving course credit, and for which an end-of-course assessment is administered.

The EL Committee must include decisions regarding the criteria outlined above in the EL Plans for EL students in their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools. These decisions must be made on an individual basis. An updated copy of the AHSGE deferral form for use with an EL student during his/her first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools is attached. If you have questions about EL student participation in assessments, please contact Mrs. Susan Beard, Student Assessment Section, at (334) 242-8038. If you have questions about the EL Program or EL Plans, please contact Ms. Novelette Seroyer, Federal Programs Section, at (334) 242-8199.

TRB/GT/SB
Attachment

cc: City and County System Test Coordinators
    City and County Title III Coordinators
    Mrs. Sherrill Parris
    Dr. Melinda Maddox
    Dr. Gloria Turner
    Mr. Edmund Moore
    Ms. Crystal Richardson
    Ms. Novelette Seroyer
    Mrs. Susan Beard

FY12-2127
Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE)
Deferral Form for English Learner (EL) Student
During His/Her First 12 Months of Enrollment in U.S. Schools

Student Name: _______________________________ System: _______________________

School: __________________________ Grade: _____ Year: ______

This EL student is in his/her first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools and is required to pass the AHSGE in order to receive an Alabama High School Diploma. Although the student must take the mathematics and biology tests of the AHSGE, the following decisions have been made regarding the other AHSGE tests:

Reading:
_____ The student will participate in the reading test.
_____ The student will defer the reading test until the first administration of the next school year.

Language:
_____ The student will participate in the language test.
_____ The student will defer the language test until the next administration for which the student is eligible.

Social Studies:
_____ The student will participate in the social studies test.
_____ The student will defer the social studies test until the next administration for which the student is eligible.

The student, parent/guardian, and EL Committee understand that this deferral is for the specified period only. The student must pass all required tests of the AHSGE in order to receive an Alabama High School Diploma.

Signature of Student ___________________________ Date __________ Signature of Parent/Guardian ___________________________ Date __________

Signature of EL Committee Member ___________________________ Title ___________________________ Date __________

Signature of EL Committee Member ___________________________ Title ___________________________ Date __________

Signature of EL Committee Member ___________________________ Title ___________________________ Date __________