

2010

# English Language Proficiency Assessment / Reassessment

## Final Policy Document

This document outlines the consultation process as well as the modifications and changes to the new English Language Proficiency Assessment / Reassessment Graduation Requirement at High School.



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## Executive Summary

### CONSULTATION PROCESS

The English Language Proficiency Assessment / Reassessment is, and will continue to be, a graduation requirement for all students registered in the New Brunswick Anglophone school system. However, modifications were required to ensure that continued to serve as an effective measure of functional literacy skills and that the administration become efficient and reflects inclusive practice inasmuch as large-scale standardized assessment will allow.

In order to ensure appropriate modifications were considered, an extensive consultation process was undertaken (September 2009 to June 2010), and included the following stakeholders:

- Student Services Branch, DOE
- Education Programs and Services, DOE
- Policy and Planning, DOE
- ELPA Steering Committee (high school teachers, administrators and district literacy leads)
- the NBTA Committee (chair, Melinda Cook)
- Education Group (Superintendents and Directors of Education of the nine Anglophone School Districts)
- MACTE (Ministerial Advisory Committee on Testing and Evaluation)

This final document has been constructed from recommendations of the consultation and has received endorsement from all of the stakeholders listed above.

Provided in this document:

Final ELPA/R

- A. Purpose of the ELPA/R
- B. Grade Placement and Reassessments
- C. Test Design and Construction
- D. Test Administration
- E. Scoring
- F. Reporting

Other areas:

- Communication and Implementation.

## A. PURPOSE

### DEFINITION OF NEW ELPA/R

1. To ensure a functional level of literacy, specifically in reading comprehension and writing, for all New Brunswick High School graduates. Functional literacy level is defined as end of grade 8 standards in reading and writing as per CAMET document. OECD supports end of grade 8 as functional literacy level.

The ELPA/R is a graduation requirement and as such, all students must be successful on this literacy assessment in order to receive a New Brunswick High School Diploma. Students who qualify for an exemption will be excused from the ELPA as a graduation requirement and are able to graduate with a New Brunswick High School Diploma\*. Please refer to the Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions (2010) for further information.

\*student transcript will note exemption from ELPA/R

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## B. GRADE PLACEMENT

### GRADE PLACEMENT OF THE NEW ELPA/R

2. ELP Assessment – Grade 9 January (initial administration)
3. ELP Reassessment – Grade 11 and 12 January (2 re-writes)

*The consensus from the consultations was to move the reassessments to Grade 11 (allowing Grade 10 for targeted intervention) and again at Grade 12.*

*\*It is the responsibility of the school district and school to provide targeted intervention for students in grade 10 who were unsuccessful on the ELPA.*

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## C. TEST DESIGN / CONSTRUCTION

### TEST DESIGN OF THE NEW ELPA/R

4. The ELPA/R aligns to the NB Provincial Achievement Standards and is comprised of 2 sections:
  - Reading (7 to 9 passages with selected response items) and,
  - Writing (2 writing pieces to be produced).
5. Items have been developed by NB teachers and align with provincial standards. Test specifications have been developed and will be included in the information package.
6. The ELPA/R consists of a blend of locally developed items with nationally developed items for comparison.
7. Computer-based assessment by 2013

The ELPA/R aligns with the New Brunswick 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies. Specifically, the competencies of critical thinking and problem solving; ability to think beyond literal responses; develop a creative and original response to writing prompts; 20% of reading comprehension questions are personal/critical/evaluative; writing II invites students to write expository pieces including persuasive arguments.

#### WAIVING OF ELPA/R

If students have documentation from another province of successful completion of a high school literacy credential – these will be accepted.

This policy applies only to other provinces in Canada. Outside of Canada will not be accepted and the students must write the ELPA/R.

*\*Test specifications are included in Appendix A.*

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## **D. Test Administration**

### TEST ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEW ELPA/R:

8. Administration the ELPA will continue to be during the high school exam time in January (at Grade 9, 11 and 12).
  9. A band of time will be offered to districts and schools so schools can best organize their schedule.
  10. The English Language Proficiency Assessment in January of Grade 9 will be THE ONLY English exam in all New Brunswick High Schools (so that students do not have to write 2 exams in English). As the ELPA is a graduation requirement, it is not to be blended with the Grade 9 classroom mark. These will continue to be treated separately.
  11. Communication will be streamlined through one 'point-person' at each of the high schools in the province for the ELPA.
  12. Administrative protocols and protocols for accommodations and exemptions will be clearly articulated through the appropriate district learning specialist.
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## **E. Scoring**

### SCORING OF THE NEW ELPA/R:

13. Scoring procedures and standards for the reading component will be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
  14. In-service educators will score the ELPA writing by trait as outlined in the Provincial Achievement Standards for Writing, End of Grade 8.
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## F. Reporting

### REPORTING OF THE NEW ELPA/R:

15. The reading component will be reported by genre and by response level as outlined in the Provincial Achievement Standards for Reading (also broken into literal, inferential and evaluative).
16. The writing component will be reported by trait as outlined in the Provincial Achievement Standards for Writing, end of Grade 8.
17. The ELPA/R results will be recorded on student report cards, indicating whether the student has passed the reading component, the writing component, or both.
18. Individual reports will be issued to student and parent(s) / guardian(s).

### **NOTES: (Change)**

*Existing reporting procedures lack the specific information necessary to inform instructional practices, assist student goal-setting, and facilitate remediation. This is particularly problematic given that the ELPA/R is a graduation requirement.*

*The current reporting procedures make tracking student success from grade to grade and school to school difficult. Because students are only required to rewrite the portions of the ELPA on which they are not successful, this also leads to scheduling challenges for schools.*

*Currently reading results are reported as Strong Achievement, Appropriate Achievement, and Experiencing Difficulty and percentages are provided by genre. Historically, writing has been scored holistically and reported as Strong Achievement, Appropriate Achievement, or Experiencing Difficulty overall.*

*ELPA Assessment results will be reported as detailed below:*

- *The Superintendent and Director of Education for each district will receive the individual results for all students who participated in the assessment, as well as a list of those students officially exempted. The Briefing Note will include aggregate data for the province and districts as well as the percentage exempted.*
  - *Each school principal will receive individual results for all students in that school who participated in the assessment as well as those who did not write and exempted.*
  - *Writing results will be disaggregated into the 6 trait categories for individual students.*
  - *Reading results will be disaggregated into categories by genre and response level.*
  - *The student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a personalized and confidential report of performance. A label will also be placed in the student's cumulative school record with a notation indicating a successful or unsuccessful achievement on the English Language Proficiency Assessment.*
  - *The individual ELPA result will be included in the student report card.*
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## **Implementation, Communication and Timelines**

Communication will begin with the Education Group and with District Learning Specialists responsible for secondary literacy regarding changes in the ELPA/R. A conference call in early September will be conducted with school districts.

District Learning Specialists responsible for secondary literacy will communicate with the high schools in their district regarding the changes to the ELPA/R.

At the school level, an ELPA coordinator will be the point of contact for streamlining information flow for the new administrative protocols and all logistics.

Electronic communication will mainly be used to streamline test specifications, information bulletins, provide exemplars and rationales based on achievement standards and post frequently asked questions.

## **Timeline**

As there cannot be a break in service of the ELPA/R, two streams must run concurrently:

1. **\*Revised ELPA**
2. **\*\*Under Development ELPA**

\*The January 2011 revised ELPA/R is highlighted in **bold**. This will be scored and reported upon in terms of reading and writing and there will be no break in service. The January 2011 ELPA/R consists of items purchased from the Canadian Test Centre and aligns completely with the NB Standards in Reading for the end of grade 8. The writing will continue to be scored by NB teachers and aligns with the Standards in Writing for the end of grade 8.

\*\*The ELPA *Under Development (UD)* is in *italics*. This is the pilot assessment which will become our future item banks for use in 2013. Field testing of these new items will be in May/June of the end of Grade 8 in 2011. More information will be provided to districts regarding the field testing of items.

The final ELPA will be aligned (in terms of structure, test design and reporting) with the other literacy assessments in grades 2, 4 and 7. The ELPA will consist of nationally normed items as well as locally developed passages and items (as is the case with the other literacy assessments).

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>✓</b>
<i>Consultations with interest groups</i>	<i>September 2009 – June 2010</i>	✓
<i>Development of Test specifications</i>	<i>May 2010</i>	✓
<i>Passage selection / licence</i>	<i>June 2010</i>	✓
<i>Item Writing Training &amp; Development (Dr. D. Galati, CTC)</i>	<i>July 5 to 9 2010</i>	✓
District Learning Specialist meeting (district information packages distributed for High Schools)	September 2010	✓
Communication Plan Presentation (Ed Group and MACTE)	September 2010	✓
<b>Printing of ELPA (for January)</b>	<b>October 2010</b>	
<b>Printing of Parent/Guardian/Student letters</b>	<b>October 2010</b>	
<i>Test Construction &amp; Design (quad matrix for field testing of items)</i>	<i>December 2010</i>	
<i>Printing of Field Test booklets</i>	<i>January 2011</i>	
<i>End of Grade 8 field test classes (to gather information on the matrix items, each student will respond to a maximum of 3-5 passages)</i>	<i>May 2011</i>	
<i>Data collection</i>	<i>Summer 2011</i>	
<i>Data analysis (p-values /IRT / ICC)</i>		
<i>New items ready for use and banking</i>	<i>January 2012</i>	
<i>Computer based testing pilot ELPA Reading</i>	<i>January 2012</i>	

### **Future development**

In order to ensure that we have a sufficient variety of passages and items, on-going development must be a part of the future of the ELPA/R.

Future development will not be as intensive or expensive as we will be able to add to the newly developed items to the existing test format (embedded items rather than a matrix sampling). New reading passages and items will be embedded into the January administration in future years and analysis will be part of the existing process.