

AZELLA REASSESSMENT ADJUSTMENTS 2026

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WELCOME

Thank you for joining!

We anticipate that you will be asking some great questions. Please type those into the chat.

To reduce background noise, please remain on mute.

AGENDA

Applies to the Spring 2026 administration:

- Adjustments to cut scores
- Revisions to Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

Today's Objectives:

- Participants will understand the adjustments that were applied to the cut scores and PLDs.
- Participants will know how to interpret the AZELLA Reassessment results for the Spring 2026 administration.

AZELLA

We do not have any information about the 2026-2027 school year yet. We hope to be able to share an update on the May 1 Friday Focus Webinar.

To register, please follow this link:

<https://azed.geniussis.com/Registration.aspx?aid=10932>

AZELLA : REASSESSMENT SPRING 2026



OUTLINE

- ❖ Changes for Spring 2026
- ❖ Context
- ❖ Why, How, and What

CHANGES SPRING 2026

Cut scores

- ❖ Domains and proficiency levels
- ❖ **Report changes**
 - ❖ ISR change – cut scores
- ❖ **Changes in PLDs**
 - ❖ Proficiency Level Descriptors

BACKGROUND

Why are we here?

- ❖ We review AZELLA data every year
- ❖ Review items for continuous improvement
 - ❖ Data review
 - ❖ Review the reliability and validity of the scores
- ❖ Continuous process to improve the test every year
- ❖ Validity Evidence
 - ❖ Native speaker field test in Spring 2025

NATIVE SPEAKER FIELD TEST (NSFT)

- ❖ **Designed to collect data from 500 Native speakers**

- ❖ Over sampled to about 600 students

- ❖ **Sample Selection**

- ❖ Students identified based on Home Language Survey (HLS) data
 - ❖ Cannot have any other language other than English
 - ❖ Cannot have a AZELLA test history

- ❖ **At the school level**

- ❖ Needed a trained person to administer AZELLA
 - ❖ Five/ Six students at each school.

NSFT DATA COLLECTED

Limited Data

- ❖ **K and grade 1**

- ❖ 500 + students

- ❖ **Grades 2-5**

- ❖ 200 – 273 students

- ❖ **Grade above 5**

- ❖ 69 – 184 students

NSFT DATA

❖ **Validity evidence**

- ❖ Native speakers outperformed EL students

❖ **Data review**

- ❖ Item level data
 - ❖ Higher difficulty rate than anticipated

❖ **Cut scores**

- ❖ Psychometric process

❖ **Expectations**

- ❖ Feedback from Content Experts

CONDITIONAL STANDARD ERROR OF MEASUREMENT (CSEM)

❖ Adjust scores based on CSEM

❖ What is CSEM?

❖ Statistical computation

❖ Variation in scores for students due to measurement error

- ❖ Student scores can vary slightly when measured multiple times
- ❖ Estimated to be plus/minus certain points.
- ❖ True score is in the middle

CUT SCORE ADJUSTMENT

- ❖ Adjusted cut scores
- ❖ New scale score ranges for all domains and each proficiency level
- ❖ Used the lower point in CSEM for the new cut scores
 - ❖ EL Proposed - 23% proficiency rate.
 - ❖ Preliminary data from 2026 shows higher rates in some grade spans.
 - ❖ EL Current Rate – 13%
- ❖ Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)
 - ❖ Different expectations based on new cut scores

REPORT EXAMPLE

Score Report				
Total Proficiency Scale Score: 1405				
	Scale Score	Pre-Emergent/ Emergent/Basic	Intermediate	Proficient
Domain Scores	Reading	375		✓
	Writing	390		✓
	Listening	223	✓	
	Speaking	397		✓
Additional Scores	Receptive Communication		✓	
	Productive Communication		✓	
	Interactive Communication			✓
	Language (Conventions/Vocabulary)			✓

Scale Score Ranges			
Domain	Pre-Emergent/ Emergent/Basic	Intermediate	Proficient
Reading	100-216	217-235	236-400
Writing	100-217	218-236	237-400
Listening	100-210	211-229	230-400
Speaking	100-223	224-240	241-400

PROFICIENCY CUT SCORES -REASSESSMENT SPRING 2026

Grade	Minimum Total Proficiency Scale Score by Grade
	Proficient
Kindergarten	944
1	947
2	961
3	963
4	958
5	965
6	956
7	955
8	957
9–12	962

INCREASED RECLASSIFICATION RATE

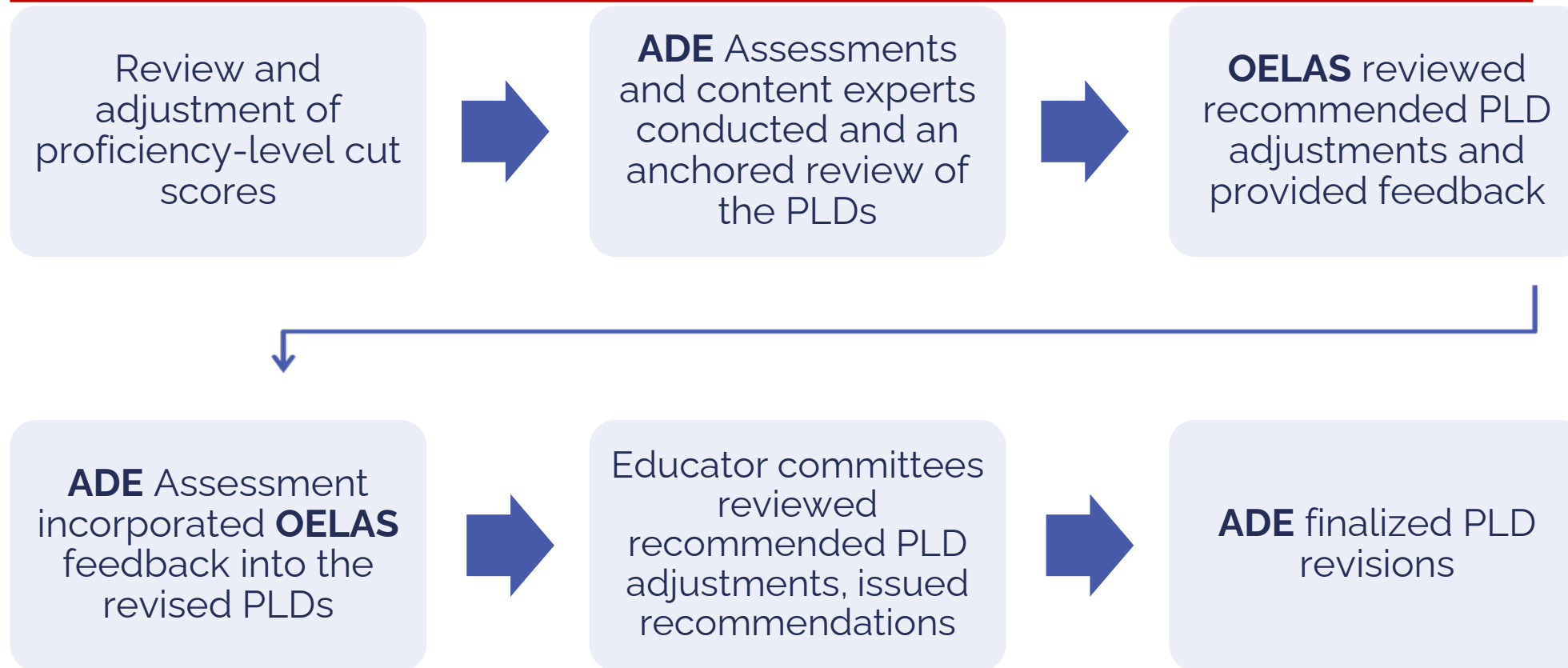
❖ Multiple Reasons

- ❖ Test design was changed based on the NSFT data
- ❖ Familiarity with the test
- ❖ Cut score changes
- ❖ Multiple years of Professional Development in place
 - ❖ Preliminary data shows increase in scores even without the cut score changes

AZELLA PLDs ADJUSTMENT BASED ON EVIDENCE



TIMELINE

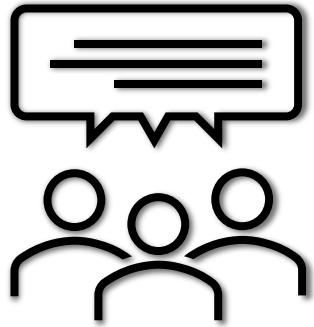


PLD REVISION AND VALIDATION PROCESS

EDUCATOR COMMITTEES

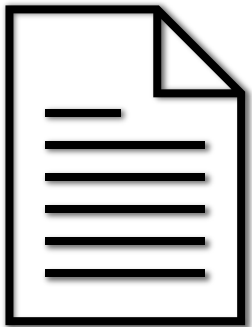
- Committees represented diverse regions across the state, including rural and urban communities
- Panelists included EL Coordinators, EL Coaches, EL Teachers, and Administrators with experience working with English Learners
- Four grade-band committees: K-1, 2-3, 4-5, and 6-12
- Committees met for three days including the vertical articulation session

POST COMMITTEE ADE REVIEW AND TECHNICAL REPORTING



ADE Review Process:

ADE reviewed the PLD Educator committee recommendations and incorporated as appropriate.



Technical Report Preparation:

Pearson is preparing a technical report detailing the validation plan, training, meetings, and evaluation survey results.



Adjusted Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for the Interpretation of the Spring 2026 AZELLA Reassessment Test Results

Notes: These Adjusted Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), based on the evidence collected from the Spring 2025 Reassessment, were developed by ADE with the input and recommendations of committees of Arizona educators. **The Adjusted PLDs are intended for use in the interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment test results in accordance with the adjusted cut scores.**

The adjusted Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the skills, knowledge and abilities described in the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards that students typically demonstrate at each proficiency level, while acknowledging that students may show a range of abilities within any level.

Although some of the Adjusted PLD statements may appear similar across grade bands, the expectations are based on grade-appropriate stimuli and tasks.

The phrase **“responses may be partially complete or clear”** is included in some of the Adjusted PLDs to signal that for multi-point test items, **two or more score points responses may still reflect skills associated with the Intermediate or even Proficient levels**, though the clarity or completeness of those skills may still be developing.

While the PLDs are presented as a linear progression for ease of understanding, actual **language development is not strictly linear** and may vary across domains and contexts.

The AZELLA PLDs contain a comprehensive number of the skills, knowledge, and abilities described in the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards, but do not represent all of them.

AZELLA ASSESSMENT WEB PAGE: SPRING 2026 ADJUSTED PLDS

▶ AZELLA Sample Test Information

▶ AZELLA Blueprints, Performance Level Descriptors, Item Specifications, and Rubrics

Blueprints

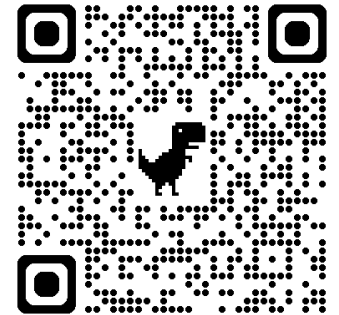
- [AZELLA Blueprint](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)

Adjusted AZELLA Performance Level Descriptors for the Interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment Test Results

- [AZELLA Kindergarten Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)
- [AZELLA Grade 1 Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)
- [AZELLA Grades 2-3 Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)
- [AZELLA Grades 4-5 Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)
- [AZELLA Grades 6-8 Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)
- [AZELLA Grades 9-12 Adjusted PLDs](#) (PDF) (Spring 2026 Reassessment)

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

- [AZELLA Kindergarten PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)
- [AZELLA Grade 1 PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)
- [AZELLA Grades 2-3 PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)
- [AZELLA Grades 4-5 PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)
- [AZELLA Grades 6-8 PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)
- [AZELLA Grades 9-12 PLDs](#) (PDF) (Fall 2023)



PLD COMPARISON: GRADES 2-3 & 4-5

Adjusted AZELLA Performance Level Descriptors for the Interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment Test Results

Grades 2 and 3

	Listening	
Students scoring Basic at Grades 2-3 have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.	Students scoring Intermediate at Grades 2-3 are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Basic" proficiency level and have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.	Students scoring Proficient at Grades 2-3 are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Intermediate" and "Basic" proficiency levels and have independently demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.
Recognizes the meaning of frequently occurring words and phrases, and common idiomatic expressions in oral texts	Determines the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, and some idiomatic expressions and figurative language in oral texts	Determines the meaning of a wider range of general academic and content-specific words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language in oral texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events
Responds to simple wh- questions about familiar topics	Responds to a variety of wh- questions	Asks and answers relevant questions about a variety of grade-appropriate topics

Adjusted AZELLA Performance Level Descriptors for the Interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment Test Results

Grades 4 and 5

	Listening	
Students scoring Basic at the 4-5 grade band have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.	Students scoring Intermediate at the 4-5 grade band are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Basic" proficiency level and have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.	Students scoring Proficient at the 4-5 grade band are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Intermediate" and "Basic" proficiency levels, and have independently demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.
Recognizes the meaning of frequently occurring words, phrases, and common idiomatic expressions in oral texts	Determines the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, and some idiomatic expressions and figurative language in oral texts	Determines the meaning of a wider range of general academic and content-specific words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language in oral texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events
Responds to simple wh- questions about familiar topics	Responds to a variety of wh- questions	Asks and answers questions about a variety of grade-appropriate topics

Grades 2-3 Adjusted PLD Speaking Example

Adjusted AZELLA Performance Level Descriptors for the Interpretation of the Spring 2026 Reassessment Test Results

Grades 2 and 3

Speaking		
<i>Students scoring Basic at Grades 2–3 have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>	<i>Students scoring Intermediate at Grades 2–3 are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Basic" proficiency level and have demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>	<i>Students scoring Proficient at Grades 2–3 are assumed to have acquired the skills described at the "Intermediate" and "Basic" proficiency levels and have independently demonstrated the following skills, knowledge, and abilities drawn from the 2019 English Language Proficiency Standards.</i>
		Delivers short oral presentations that may include relevant details and examples to develop a topic; responses may be partially complete or clear
	Expresses an opinion on a familiar topic that may include supporting details; responses may be partially complete or clear	Expresses opinions on a variety of topics with mostly complete and clear responses, including supporting details
Begins to participate in short discussions and conversations about familiar topics	Participates in short discussions and conversations about familiar topics; responses may be partially complete or clear	Participates in discussions and conversations about a variety of topics with consistently complete and clear responses
Begins to respond to simple wh-questions about familiar topics	Responds to a variety of wh-questions (including questions to compare ideas and information); responses may be partially complete or clear	Responds to a variety of wh-questions (including questions to compare ideas and information) and asks relevant questions to gain information or clarify understanding; responses are mostly complete and clear

AZELLA Overall Proficiency Determination –Spring 2026 Reassessment with Domain Scale and Cut Scores Document

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

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AZELLA Assessment

AZELLA

The Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA) is a standards-based assessment that meets both state and federal requirements to measure students' English language proficiency. AZELLA is used for both placement and reassessment purposes. Students who have been identified as second language learners on the Home Language Survey (HLS) take the AZELLA Placement Test, and the students' proficiency scores determine appropriate placement for instruction. Students who have been placed into an English language learner program will also take the Spring AZELLA Reassessment once per year until they achieve proficiency. Students who have scored proficient on the AZELLA are then monitored for two years to help ensure success after their move into a mainstream classroom.

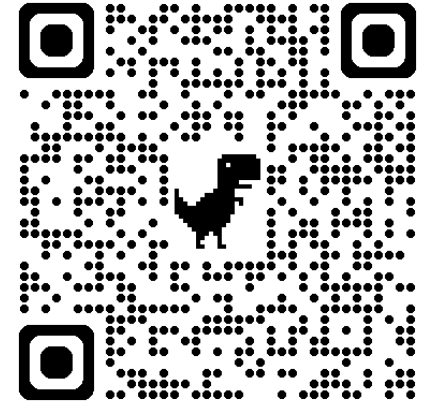


► General Information

Support Materials



- [AZELLA Overall Proficiency Determination - Spring 2026 Reassessment](#) (with Domain Scale and Cut Scores)



AZELLA OVERALL PROFICIENCY DETERMINATION SPRING 2026 REASSESSMENT TOTAL PROFICIENCY SCALE SCORE CUTS

Table 1 Total Proficiency Scale Score Cuts by Grade

Grade(s)	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient
KG	794	870	944
01	764	873	947
02	799	882	961
03	799	887	963
04	746	882	958
05	775	889	965
06	751	883	956
07	752	884	955
08	758	886	957
09-12	789	887	962

Student Report

Tom Horne
Superintendent of Public Instruction



Overall Proficiency Level

- ☒ **Proficient** students are capable of understanding and producing grade-appropriate social and academic English. They read and comprehend key information in oral and print grade-level texts with little to no support. They apply a range of grade-level appropriate English language skills in a variety of contexts. Student is not eligible for EL Services.
- ☐ **Intermediate** students have the ability to speak and understand using grade-appropriate English in social settings. With support, they inconsistently demonstrate grade-level academic English language skills to access grade-level materials. They demonstrate grade-level English skills in a limited variety of contexts. Student is eligible for EL Services.
- ☐ **Basic** students have limited ability to speak and understand simple and/or routine English phrases spoken in academic and social settings. With significant support, they have limited ability to address grade appropriate reading or writing tasks. Student is eligible for EL Services.
- ☐ **Pre-Emergent/Emergent** students have limited or no ability to speak or understand English in academic and social settings. Even with significant support, they have limited or no ability to address grade appropriate reading or writing tasks meaningfully due to lack of English vocabulary. They use simple English phrases and sentences to communicate their immediate needs. Student is eligible for EL Services.

District Name: DISTRICTNAME35CHARCTERSWWWWWWWWWWWW

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Thank you

A special thank you to all the educators who contributed to this work by reviewing the Performance Level Descriptors. Your expertise is valuable and we appreciate your involvement in making these PLDs relevant and useful for the interpretation of the AZELLA Spring 2026 Reassessment.

