



Tools

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Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment

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Summary

Most state departments of education across the United States recommend or require that districts use a home language survey as the first step in a multistep process of identifying students who qualify for English learner student services (U.S. Department of Education, 2012; Zehr, 2009). School districts typically administer the home language survey to parents and guardians during a student's first enrollment in a school or district to determine whether the student speaks a language other than English or whether parents or guardians speak a language other than English to the student in the home (Linguanti & Bailey, 2014). Parents, educators, and the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights have raised concerns that existing home language surveys may not reveal accurate information about students' language skills or exposure to English language and literacy because of inconsistency in administering these surveys, among other reasons. Therefore, the home language survey may contribute to the misidentification of English learner students (Bailey & Kelly, 2010).

Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands, in partnership with the English Language Learners Alliance, developed the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to help state departments of education and school districts improve the quality of data collected through home language surveys and improve the identification of potential English learner students. The 44-item self-assessment is designed for state leaders who coordinate district programs to support students' English language acquisition and achievement, as well as for district leaders who oversee the process of identifying English learner students in schools. The self-assessment is designed to be used by state staff to gather information from district English learner program coordinators on four areas that affect the quality of data collected through home language surveys: purposes, policies, and guidelines about home language survey administration; data collection practices; personnel support; and data management. The self-assessment also prompts district staff to self-assess key practices in home language survey development and administration to improve high-quality data collection at the local level.

This report presents the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment, along with instructions on how to administer it, and describes how to engage stakeholders—including state departments of education, district English learner program coordinators, school English learner specialists, parents, student enrollment/registration staff, and data managers—in analyzing and interpreting its results. Reflecting on the results at both the state and district levels can inform decisions that could contribute to more accurate data on English learner students and more accurate resource allocations for districts.

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What is the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment?

Most state departments of education across the United States recommend or require that districts use a home language survey as the first step in a multistep process of identifying students who qualify for English learner student services (U.S. Department of Education, 2012; Zehr, 2009). Home language surveys are typically completed by parents or guardians and are intended to determine whether a student speaks or is spoken to at home in a language other than English. The aim is to identify potential English learner students rather than to measure English language proficiency. Depending on the results of the survey, students may then undergo assessment of their English language proficiency to determine whether they are entitled to receive specialized language and academic support services as English learner students (Lhamon & Gupta, 2015; Linquanti & Bailey, 2014).

In partnership with the English Language Learners Alliance, Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northeast & Islands developed the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to help state departments of education and school districts improve the quality of data collected through home language surveys. The self-assessment was originally developed to support a small working group of state and district leaders in Connecticut and Rhode Island in identifying and addressing challenges to the quality of their home language survey data (see appendix A for further information on the process of developing the self-assessment). That original work has been revised and expanded so that the current self-assessment survey can support states in improving the quality of home language survey data as part of an effort to more accurately identify potential English learner students and allocate resources to students who qualify for them.

The self-assessment is based on a data quality framework, which is supported by current research and expertise from the field. The framework describes four areas that affect the quality of data collected through home language surveys: purposes, policies, and guidelines; data collection practices; personnel support; and data management. The 44 assessment items are organized to gather information on the district context and then on district practices in each of the four framework areas (table 1). Further description of the framework is provided in appendix B. The matrix in appendix C illustrates the alignment of assessment items with the four areas represented in the framework.

State departments of education can choose to administer the 15-minute self-assessment to all school districts or to a subset of districts. Districts may also choose to complete the self-assessment independent of any state study in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in local home language survey practices. The self-assessment is intended to be completed by the district English learner program coordinator¹ or the individual whom the district identifies as the most knowledgeable about how the home language survey is administered locally.

Why administer this self-assessment?

Although the state- or district-created home language survey is the first step in a multistep process of identifying English learner students, recent studies point to multiple factors that can undermine the quality of home language survey data. These factors include unclear survey purposes,² lack of appropriate language support for parents to complete the survey, and inconsistent practices during survey administration (Bailey & Kelly, 2010, 2013;

The Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment is designed to help state departments of education and school districts improve the quality of data collected through home language surveys

Table 1. Self-assessment items, by section

Item number	Section	Guiding question and description of items
1–6	1. District context	District size, English learner student population, and means of home language survey administration.
7–18	2. Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Has the district established clear purposes, procedures, and guidelines to guide high-quality data collection during administration of the home language survey? Items address the specification of procedures and expectations that promote common understandings and practices for home language survey administration.
19–28	3. Data collection practices	Does the district ensure that its home language survey policies and guidelines are applied during design and administration of the home language survey? Items address the application of prescribed procedures and expectations, typically enacted as a sequence of events using provided resources.
29–32	4. Personnel support	Does the district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to collect high-quality data? Items address the preparation and supervision of personnel to ensure the necessary knowledge and skills to apply the prescribed procedures, expectations, and resources for home language survey administration.
33–42	5. Data management	Does the district ensure that data management systems and practices contribute to high-quality data? Items address the use of systems, procedures, and expectations for entering, archiving, and reporting home language survey data.
43–44	6. Closing questions	Questions about consistency of administration and perceptions about accuracy of results.

Source: Authors' compilation.

Linquanti & Bailey, 2014). These factors may contribute to poor data quality, which can result in the misidentification of potential English learner students in school districts. Misidentifying students poses a challenge for both districts and state education departments when they allocate resources to support English learner students' success.

Benefits for state departments of education

State departments of education can use the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to learn more about the variation in how home language surveys are administered across their state and to identify ways to target resources and support toward collecting accurate survey data. State support might include developing online training modules to ensure broad understanding of the purpose and use of the home language survey, creating a sample home language survey administration script, or providing home language survey forms translated into a range of languages spoken by parents across the state. By analyzing results from the self-assessment, state leaders can gain a better understanding of how to help districts collect accurate data at the start of the English learner identification process.

Benefits for school districts

For school districts, completing the assessment can prompt reflection among respondents about the importance of home language survey data, facilitate the review of factors that

affect data quality, and suggest ways to take action to improve the quality of the data collected. When respondents note that these activities do not occur or occur to a limited extent, they also gain practical ideas about ways that their local survey practices might be strengthened, because each survey item provides potential directions for improvement. For example, items ask about the extent to which those who administer the home language survey receive training in specific topics, the extent to which parents are informed of particular issues, and the extent to which language-based support is provided. English learner program coordinators who reviewed the self-assessment during its development indicated that when such practices were not occurring in their districts, the items suggested useful practices they could pursue to strengthen the quality of their data.

How to administer the self-assessment

State and district leaders can access the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment in this document. The self-assessment includes an explanation and directions for each section, definitions of several terms, and items and their respective response choices. The Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment should not be administered when states are in the midst of revising their home language survey forms or guidance. Doing so may lead to respondents conflating current district practices and anticipated district practices once state guidance is finalized. Such mixed responses may make it impossible to draw valid conclusions from the results. The self-assessment should take 15 minutes for respondents to complete.

Administration by state departments of education

State departments of education may choose to administer the self-assessment to all school districts or to a subset of districts. English learner program coordinators (or the individuals most knowledgeable about how the home language survey is administered locally) are often best prepared to complete the self-assessment. States should explain to respondents the purpose of the self-assessment and the state's intended use of the data. States can model the explanation after the information included in the introduction of the self-assessment but should add relevant information about home language survey data use in their state context. States should also revise the welcome page of the self-assessment to convey how they will use the results, revise definitions to reflect current state definitions, and modify the closing page to include relevant contact information.

States may choose to administer the self-assessment in paper-and-pencil format or through an online survey platform. An online platform allows the self-assessment administrator to require a response to closed-ended items before the user can proceed to the next item. Requiring responses can assist in reducing item nonresponse bias.³ An online platform also facilitates the efficient compilation of results and often includes easy-to-use reporting features that produce graphical displays, tabular counts, or response distributions.

Results from online survey platforms can be downloaded or exported for subgroup or cross-tabular analysis, which can help states understand how and why the quality of home language survey data varies across districts. To support a high rate of return for the self-assessment, and thereby reduce survey nonresponse bias, it is recommended that states provide an electronic link to the self-assessment and time to complete it during a regularly scheduled statewide meeting (for example, a quarterly meeting or professional development session for English learner program coordinators) or as a required component of a state email communication.

State departments of education can use the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to learn more about the variation in how home language surveys are administered across their state and to identify ways to target resources and support toward collecting accurate survey data

Administration by district leaders

District leaders or teams may decide to independently complete the self-assessment in order to assess and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their district's local home language survey practices. In this case, respondents can disregard the first paragraph of the welcome text in the self-assessment. The self-assessment items can be completed individually by the district leader or, to increase reliability, collectively with a team. To determine priorities for improving data quality, respondents can reflect on the items that indicate areas of strength (practices that occur to some or great extent) or weakness (practices that occur to little or no extent).

How to analyze the self-assessment results

State departments of education and district leaders can analyze the results of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to identify priorities for improving home language survey data quality. States can then use these priorities to develop evidence-based policies and guidance and to strengthen resources and support for districts related to developing and administering home language surveys. District leaders can also use the results to identify areas of weakness in their local practices.

Analyzing results at the state level

The first step in analyzing self-assessment results from multiple districts across a state is to create a set of basic descriptive statistics that can be used to determine how many and which types of districts are represented. For example, summary statistics could include the overall response rate and statistics determined by items from the “Your district context” section: the percentage of respondents that represent small, medium, and large districts (item 1); the percentage of respondents from districts with a low, medium, and high incidence of English learner students in their population (item 2); the percentages of respondents from districts that administer the home language survey through an online platform or by paper and pencil (item 5); and which staff typically administer the survey (item 6). In addition, it may be useful to know the percentage of respondents by role (item 3) and the percentage of respondents who report having an accurate understanding of the state's home language survey policy (item 4).

In addition to calculating frequency distributions that describe the respondents and their local contexts (items 1–6), users can calculate or visually represent the frequency distributions of responses to the remaining items in sections 2–5 (see table 1). For example, the percentage of respondents who indicated that a particular home language survey practice occurred “to no extent,” “to little extent,” “to some extent,” and “to great extent,” as well as the percentage who indicated “I don't know” will need to be reviewed.

Summary statistics serve as a launching point for interpreting the self-assessment results. For example, if the target population was all districts, but most of the responding districts are small and mid-sized districts, the results may not necessarily reflect the perspectives of larger districts in the target population of the self-assessment administration. Further, summary statistics may generate questions about how the quality of home language survey data varies across different types of districts.

State departments of education and district leaders can analyze the results of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to identify priorities for improving home language survey data quality

When examining the self-assessment data, it is recommended that those interpreting the results decide together the level at which a statistic is deemed acceptable or concerning, based on knowledge of their local contexts. For example, users in one state might discuss self-assessment results and agree that response rates of 70 percent or greater indicating “to some extent” and “to great extent” will be considered an area of strength or that response rates of 30 percent or greater indicating “to little extent” and “to no extent” will indicate an area of weakness. Users in another state might use different cutpoints.

Determining statistical cutpoints is only a starting point for more substantive conversations about the meaning and potential causes of particular results. Through these conversations, teams analyzing the self-assessment collectively explore and establish their priorities for improvement. Their final priorities may or may not adhere to the parameters they initially set for determining areas of strength and weakness.

To support these interpretations, users should compile results from open-response items from the end of each section and group those comments thematically (for example, by type of comment, question, or suggestion). These qualitative data can provide important clarifications, ideas for improvement, or experiences that may prompt more specific or in-depth analysis.

Analyzing results at the district level

At the district level a single individual or team typically completes the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment; only when there are multiple respondents is it necessary to create summary statistics. Most important, the self-assessment serves as a tool for guided reflection. The district pattern of responses may suggest actions that can strengthen the quality of home language survey data.

For example, items in the second section ask about specific practices that can be implemented to reinforce district guidelines, such as conveying the purposes and uses of the home language survey to parents and explaining how confidentiality will be maintained. Indications by respondents that topics are not currently addressed or are addressed only to a little extent should prompt discussion, sharing of observations, and consensus building for action, if they are established as priorities. The content of the items suggests direction for improvement. Similarly, each section suggests a range of specific district actions for improvement.

How to engage stakeholders to drive improvement in data quality

State and district leaders can engage stakeholders in reviewing the results and determining the actions that can be taken to address data quality concerns. In particular, stakeholders can be invited to investigate how home language survey practices might be affecting data quality and subsequent identification of English learner students and what actions can be taken to improve data quality.

Both state departments of education and district leaders can refer to the data quality framework (appendix B) and Workshop protocol: Working with the results of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (appendix D). The data quality framework provides a big-picture look at the purpose of the self-assessment. The protocol describes a workshop

Stakeholders can be invited to investigate how home language survey practices might be affecting data quality and subsequent identification of English learner students and what actions can be taken to improve data quality

session and provides content and process resources for facilitators to engage a diverse group of stakeholders in examining and using the self-assessment results to drive improvements. The protocol is designed for state departments of education, which may benefit from inviting a selection of district English learner program coordinators, school English learner specialists, parents, student enrollment/registration staff, and data managers into the process.

At the district level, English learner program coordinators can also benefit from inviting knowledgeable stakeholders, such as district student enrollment/registration staff, parents and parent liaisons, and school-based English learner specialists, into the discussion of the self-assessment items and collective response to them. A facilitator can modify the workshop protocol to help participants interpret the results, begin to establish consensus around priorities, and build commitment to improving the quality of home language survey data.

As detailed in the workshop protocol, session facilitators should do the following to engage diverse stakeholders in analyzing the data and discussing and prioritizing actions:

- Explain the purpose of reviewing the results of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment, particularly in relation to improving state or district policies, guidance, and support for the home language survey.
- Discuss the data quality framework as a facilitating structure for understanding factors that affect the quality of home language survey data.
- Facilitate the group's examination of the self-assessment results to identify strengths and weaknesses in guidance, data collection, personnel support, and data management related to the home language survey.
- Ensure that the group identifies and prioritizes actions that will advance the quality of home language survey data and that the group articulates key lessons that can inform the quality of other efforts to collect data on English learner students.

For both state and district leaders, including diverse stakeholders in this work could expand the perspectives and experiences being considered, deepen discourse and problem solving, and engage additional expertise and commitment in addressing prioritized areas of need.

How to adapt the self-assessment to specific state or district contexts

Users may be interested in altering, adding, or removing self-assessment items to address their particular state or district contexts. But to effectively identify areas in need of improvement, adaptations should be aligned with the data quality framework. The matrix in table C1 in appendix C can assist with decisionmaking on adaptations. For example, the matrix illustrates that 11 items in the self-assessment address the purposes of the home language survey, but the questions vary according to the framework area being addressed.

Having a variety of questions in each area is not meant to be redundant; rather, items are deliberately aligned to different areas of the framework. It is thus important for those who are considering adapting the self-assessment to understand the information that the current items are intended to collect and how they can point to distinct areas of a system that may need attention. Consulting the matrix can enhance this understanding and show how adaptations may complement existing self-assessment items. Overall, adaptations should add value to the full set of items in the self-assessment and provide actionable information that helps answer the guiding question for each framework section, as shown in table 1 and in table C1 in appendix C.

For users interested in altering, adding, or removing self-assessment items to address state or district contexts, it is important to understand the information that the current items are intended to collect and how they can point to distinct areas of a system that may need attention

The Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment

Welcome!

Your state department of education is surveying districts as part of a systematic review of factors that may affect the quality of data on English learner students (see box for definitions of key terms). This district self-assessment focuses on data quality related to a common first step for identifying potential English learner students—the home language survey.

This self-assessment should be completed by the person who is most familiar with home language survey administration practices in your district. This is often the English learner program director but might also be the superintendent, deputy director, accountability or compliance manager, or student enrollment coordinator. If you are not the person most familiar with home language survey administration in your district, please convey this to your supervisor so the survey can be forwarded to the appropriate person for completion.

Your task. This self-assessment asks you to make a professional judgment about the extent to which certain conditions and factors are in place to support the collection of high-quality

Key terms

Confidentiality. The obligation of those who receive personal information about an individual to respect the individual's privacy by safeguarding the information.

Cultural competency. A set of aligned behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable effective work in cross-cultural situations.

Data quality. The degree to which data provide accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased information; are useful for intended purposes; and are kept secure and protected from unauthorized access or revision.

English learner student. A student who is not yet able to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often comes from a home and background based on a language other than English, and who typically requires specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in academic courses.

Potential English learner student. A student identified for further screening to determine English learner student status. In most states a student is identified as a potential English learner student by interpreting data collected through the home language survey, which is the first step of a multistep identification process.

Source: Confidentiality and cultural competency: Cross, T., Bazron, B., Dennis, K., & Isaacs, M. (1989). *Towards a culturally competent system of care (Vol. 1)*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Child Development Center, CASSP Technical Assistance Center. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED330171>. Data quality: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2006, April). *Improving data quality for Title I standards, assessments, and accountability reporting: Guidelines for states, LEAs, and schools (Non-Regulatory Guidance)*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/standardsassessment/nclbdataguidance.doc>. English learner student: under English-language learner, in Great Schools Partnership (2013). *The glossary of education reform*. Portland, ME: Author. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <http://edglossary.org/english-language-learner/>. Potential English learner student: Linqanti, R., & Bailey, A. (2014). *Reprising the home language survey: Summary of a national working session on policies, practices, and tools for identifying potential English learners*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2014/CCSSO%20Common%20EL%20Definition%20Reprising%20the%20Home%20Language%20Survey%2001242014.pdf>.

data through the administration of the home language survey. You may want to refer to a copy of your home language survey while completing this self-assessment. After a few initial background questions, the core of this self-assessment tool should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

You should consider only your district's guidelines, data collection processes, personnel support, and data management procedures for the home language survey when responding, rather than the full multistep procedure for identifying English learner students.

Results. Members of the state department of education will review these data and may share this information with districts to support improved data quality. No information will be shared about individuals or individual districts. Assessment results will inform your state's efforts to support more accurate identification of English learner students to ensure that these students receive appropriate services and support.

1. Your district context

First, a few brief questions about your district context. Items marked with an asterisk are required.

- *1. Approximately how many students are enrolled in your district?
 - Fewer than 3,000
 - Between 3,000 and 10,000
 - Between 10,001 and 25,000
 - More than 25,000
 - I don't know

- *2. What percentage of your district's students are identified as English learner students?
 - 0–10 percent
 - 11–20 percent
 - 21–30 percent
 - 31–40 percent
 - 41–50 percent
 - More than 50 percent
 - I don't know

Your district role

- *3. What is your primary role?
 - Superintendent/executive director
 - Assistant superintendent/deputy director
 - Accountability/compliance manager
 - English learner program director or coordinator
 - Student enrollment/registration coordinator
 - Data specialist
 - Teacher
 - Other (please specify) _____

Your home language survey context

- *4. Which best describes your understanding of your state policy for the home language survey?
- My state mandates the use of a home language survey and provides the survey items, which districts are required to use without modification.
 - My state mandates the use of a home language survey and provides required survey items, but districts may include additional questions.
 - My state mandates the use of a home language survey and provides sample survey items, which districts may adopt, modify, or substitute for with their own.
 - My state mandates the use of a home language survey but does not provide districts with sample survey items, so districts create their own.
 - My state does not mandate the use of a home language survey but provides sample survey items for districts to use.
 - My state does not mandate the use of a home language survey and does not provide sample survey items for districts to use.
 - I don't know whether my state mandates elements of our home language survey.
 - Other (please specify) _____
- *5. In what form is your district's home language survey administered? Select all that apply.
- Paper survey (including a form downloaded from district website)
 - Online survey via computer, tablet, or other electronic device
 - Verbal survey administration for all families
 - Verbal survey administration for select families (for example, low literacy, non-English speaking, disability) or if requested
 - Other (please specify) _____
- *6. Who typically administers your district's home language survey? Select all that apply.
- District licensed/certified professional (for example, English learner program coordinator, bilingual specialist)
 - District support staff (for example, secretary, school enrollment/registration personnel)
 - School licensed/certified professional (for example, English learner teacher, pedagogue, counselor)
 - School support staff (for example, secretary, parent/community liaison, paraprofessional)
 - Parents complete the form independently (for example, the district provides a link to an online home language survey and parents complete it at home)
 - Other (please specify) _____

Directions

For most of the following items, you are asked to respond based on the extent to which it occurs:

- To no extent
- To little extent
- To some extent
- To great extent

You may also respond “I don’t know.”

You may add comments, questions, or suggestions at the close of each major section. Your comments provide important information about your local context and role and will help your state interpret the self-assessment results.

2. Purposes, policies, and guidelines

The questions in this section ask about your district’s purposes, policies, and guidelines for the home language survey.

Guidelines may address the purposes and uses of home language survey data, procedures and expectations that guide data collection and data management, and timelines and processes for supervision and support of those who administer the home language survey.

Guidelines might be conveyed in written documents, visual displays, verbal explanations from an administrator or coordinator, informal communications or anecdotal notes, or other forms.

Data quality can be affected by the clarity, consistency, and availability of district guidance to those administering the survey.

- *7. Has your district established guidelines for administering the home language survey?
- Yes
 - No (If “No,” skip to question 15)
 - I don’t know (If “I don’t know,” skip to question 15)
- *8. In what ways does your district convey guidelines for administering the home language survey? Select all that apply.
- Written documents (for example, handbook or procedural document)
 - Visual display (for example, posters)
 - Verbal explanation from an administrator or coordinator
 - Informal communications/anecdotal notes or records
 - None
 - Other (please specify) _____

- *9. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey (for example, identifying potential English learner students for subsequent assessment to determine English learner student status)?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *10. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address what the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey are not (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *11. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address what to do when an error, such as discrepant or omitted data, is discovered in data from the home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *12. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address how and when data from the home language survey will be reported to school, district, and, if applicable, state offices?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *13. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address procedures and responsibilities for protecting the confidentiality of data from the home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know

- *14. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address how to interpret responses on the home language survey to identify potential English learner students?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *15. To what extent does your district have translations of the home language survey in every language needed by survey respondents?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *16. To what extent are your district's translations of the home language survey created or vetted by professional translators?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *17. To what extent does your district specify a systematic process for periodic review of the quality of data from the home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
18. Before moving on, are there comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about your district's policies and guidelines for the home language survey? (optional)
-

3. Data collection practices

The questions in this section ask about data collection practices with the home language survey. Aspects of data collection that can affect data quality include survey design, the information provided to survey respondents, and data collection procedures.

- *19. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are informed about the purposes and uses of the home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *20. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are informed about what the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey are not (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *21. If the home language survey is embedded in a larger intake or registration packet, to what extent does your district distinguish the purpose of the home language survey from the purpose of the other registration or intake materials?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
 - Home language survey is not embedded in a larger intake packet
- *22. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents to the home language survey are informed about the multiple steps in the process of identifying English learner students?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *23. Does your district provide personnel who administer the home language survey with a frequently asked questions (FAQs) sheet to accompany the home language survey form?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know

- *24. Does your district provide personnel who administer the home language survey with standardized, simple-to-use scripts to verbally introduce and administer the survey?
- Yes
 - No (If “No,” skip to question 26)
 - I don’t know (If “I don’t know,” skip to question 26)
- *25. To what extent does your district ensure that administration scripts are read aloud by personnel with sufficient foreign language fluency for respondents who need information translated?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don’t know
- *26. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are provided with a translation of the home language survey at the time of completion, as needed?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don’t know
- *27. To what extent do any school or district personnel need to follow up with respondents to clarify or complete information submitted on your district’s home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don’t know
28. Before moving on, are there comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about your district’s data collection practices for the home language survey? (optional)
-

4. Personnel support

The questions in this section ask about the extent to which personnel are prepared and supported to administer the home language survey as well as to manage and report survey data. The extent, frequency, and consistency of training and support all affect the quality of the data collected through the home language survey.

*29. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about the following topics?

	To no extent	To little extent	To some Extent	To great extent	I don't know
a. The purpose or purposes of the home language survey	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. What the purpose and use of the home language survey are not (for example, not for determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. How to use home language survey data as one step in a larger, multistep process for identifying English learner students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. The importance of high-quality data on English learner students for allocating resources and services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Administration procedures of the home language survey	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. Cultural competency, or aligned behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable effective work in cross-cultural situations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. Assessing respondents' needs for written translation or verbal interpretation support	<input type="checkbox"/>				
h. Confidentiality of home language survey responses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
i. Data entry, management, and reporting responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
j. Procedures to follow when errors, such as discrepant or omitted data, are discovered	<input type="checkbox"/>				

*30. How often does your district typically provide professional development for those administering the home language survey?

- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Every 2–3 years
- Every 4–5 years
- No set schedule; provided when needed
- Professional development is not provided
- I don't know
- Other (please specify) _____

- *31. To what extent do district personnel supervise and support those who administer and manage your district's home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
32. Before moving on, are there other comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about the personnel involved in the collection, management, and reporting of your district's home language survey? (optional)
-

5. Data management

The questions in this section ask about data management for the home language survey. Data management factors that can affect data quality include monitoring systems, coordination and communication, storage, and accessibility.

- *33. To what extent do district personnel actively monitor the quality of data from your district's home language survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *34. In what form are responses to your district's home language survey stored?
- Only in electronic files or data system
 - Only in paper files (if "only in paper files," skip to question 37)
 - Both in electronic files or data system and paper files
- *35. To what extent do the response options provided on your district's home language survey directly align to the response options available in your district's electronic files or data entry system?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *36. To what extent do personnel responsible for entering data from your district's home language survey have adequate and uninterrupted time and space to enter data into electronic files or data systems?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know

*37. To what extent are the following personnel involved in decisions about how data from your district's home language survey are collected, entered, or reported?

	To no extent	To little extent	To some extent	To great extent	I don't know
District technology/data managers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
District English learner program coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>				
School English learner specialists	<input type="checkbox"/>				
District student registration/enrollment staff	<input type="checkbox"/>				

*38. To what extent does your district maintain the confidentiality of data from the home language survey?

- To no extent
- To little extent
- To some extent
- To great extent
- I don't know

*39. To what extent can appropriate school and district personnel access data from your district's home language survey in an *easy, straightforward* manner?

- To no extent
- To little extent
- To some extent
- To great extent
- I don't know

*40. To what extent can appropriate school and district personnel access data from your district's home language survey in a *timely* manner?

- To no extent
- To little extent
- To some extent
- To great extent
- I don't know

*41. Does your district place responses to the home language survey in students' permanent records or cumulative folders?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

42. Before moving on, are there other comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make regarding data management with your district's home language survey? (optional)

Closing questions

Two final summary questions:

- *43. Overall, to what extent is your district's home language survey administered consistently for every student entering the district? Consider consistency throughout the school year and across schools in your district.
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know
- *44. To what extent do you feel confident about the accuracy of the responses you have provided throughout this survey?
- To no extent
 - To little extent
 - To some extent
 - To great extent
 - I don't know

Closing

We appreciate your giving time to share your observations and experiences with your district's home language survey.

Please direct any questions or inquiries pertaining to this Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to:

<Insert name and contact information>

For your information

This Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment was developed by Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands. Items are based primarily on the following sources:

- Recommendations in National Forum for Education Statistics. (2007). *Forum curriculum for improving education data: A resource for local education agencies* (NFES 2007–808). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED497512>
- Linquanti, R., & Bailey, A. (2014). Reprising the home language survey: Summary of a national working session on policies, practices, and tools for identifying potential English learners. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved March 14, 2016, from <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2014/CCSSO%20Common%20EL%20Definition%20Reprising%20the%20Home%20Language%20Survey%2001242014.pdf>.
- Reviews by survey methodology and content experts and district practitioners. Survey respondents might also like to review U.S. Department of Education. (2015). Tools and Resources for Identifying All English Learners. In *English Learner Tool Kit for State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs and LEAs)*. Washington, DC: Author. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED564264>

Appendix A. Developing the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment

Working directly with stakeholders in the region, the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northeast & Islands project team used an iterative process to develop and refine the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment. There were three main steps to the process:

- Developing the initial self-assessment.
- Conducting a small-scale administration of the self-assessment.
- Refining the self-assessment.

Developing the initial self-assessment

The REL Northeast & Islands English Language Learners Alliance assembled a small stakeholder group focused on understanding the challenges districts face in collecting and reporting English learner student-focused data. This stakeholder group initially examined the home language survey as an example of the challenges in collecting data and identified several areas in the administration, documentation, and reporting of the data that could be improved to ensure greater reliability.

Based on this initial examination of the home language survey, the REL Northeast & Islands project team then supported the stakeholder group in developing an initial self-assessment by consulting the work of other groups, including the Data Quality Campaign⁴ and the National Forum on Education Statistics. In particular, the project team drew on recommendations in *Forum curriculum for improving education data: A resource for local education agencies* (National Forum for Education Statistics, 2007) to develop a data quality framework highlighting key areas that affect data quality. This framework provided guidance to the stakeholder group and became the structure for the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment.

The development of survey items within each key area were further informed by *Reprising the home language survey: Summary of a national working session on policies, practices, and tools for identifying potential English learners* (Linguanti and Bailey, 2014). For example, in response to Linguanti and Bailey's summary consideration, "The purposes and intended uses of the HLS [home language survey] should be made explicit to those administering and those completing the survey" (p. 3), the project team created self-assessment items to gather information on the extent to which districts explicitly address the purposes and uses of their home language survey. Items target this practice in relation to several areas of the data quality framework: district guidelines (items 9 and 10), parent/guardian communications during data collection (items 19 and 20), and personnel training and support (item 29).

Conducting a small-scale administration of the self-assessment

The members of the Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners and the Rhode Island English as a Second Language Network conducted a voluntary administration of the first version of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment in their respective states. Members of these two organizations serve as participants in the REL Northeast and Islands English Language Learners Alliance and

participated as a part of the stakeholder group. They collected 23 completed self-assessments from Connecticut and eight from Rhode Island and shared the results with the stakeholder group for analysis and discussion. Using the data quality framework, Rhode Island and Connecticut members identified two to four areas of potential concern and prioritized one or two of these for recommended action in their respective states. Members of the stakeholder group indicated that the self-assessment tool and the facilitated review process provided useful information and sparked questions, insights, and cross-state sharing of resources as well as future agendas for improving the quality of data on English learner students through revised guidelines and practices.

Refining the self-assessment

After reviewing the Rhode Island and Connecticut results, the project team and the English Language Learners Alliance agreed that the self-assessment tool would be useful to stakeholders beyond Connecticut and Rhode Island.

To refine the initial tool, the project team first conducted a close, systematic review of the original survey items in relation to the responses gathered from the tool's first use in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Second, the project team formed a six-member advisory committee with members from state education departments and school districts in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York. Third, this committee provided perspectives on the survey from contexts that extended beyond the tool's original use in Connecticut and Rhode Island. In addition, the advisory committee recommended English learner program coordinators from districts in their states with a low incidence of English learner students in their populations and those with a high incidence for participation in a series of cognitive interviews (Beatty & Willis, 2007).⁵ Fourth, the project team consulted methodological and content experts, who provided suggestions pertaining to the particular aspects of survey design and the current home language survey context as represented in research and in the field.

After several rounds of revisions, the project team again solicited responses to the revised self-assessment tool from the consulting experts and advisory committee members. The revision process also led to the development of a matrix detailing the alignment among the final survey items in relation to the four areas described in the data quality framework.

Appendix B. The data quality framework

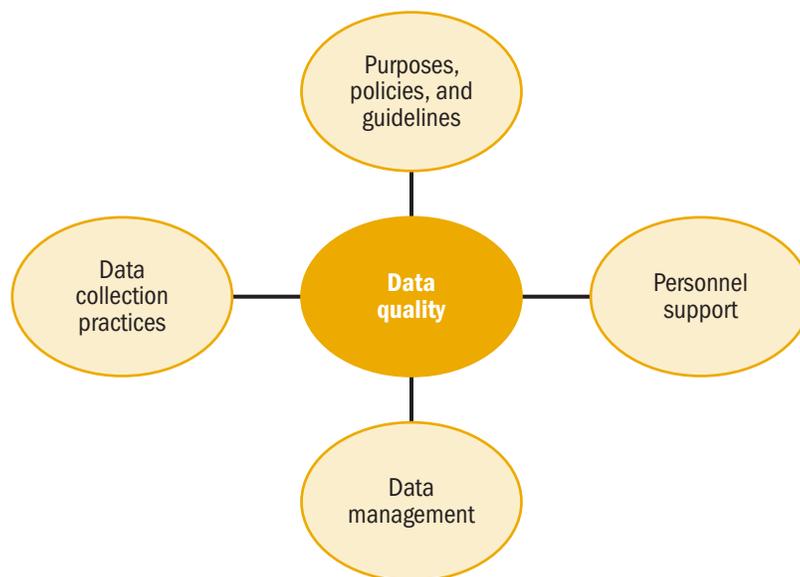
The data quality framework describes four mutually reinforcing areas that affect data quality: purposes, policies, and guidelines; data collection practices; personnel support; and data management (figure B1).⁶ For administration of a home language survey to yield high-quality data, district practices in each area should be sound and aligned. A deficit in one area may undermine efforts in another. Collaboration among local experts and practitioners can bring diverse experience and knowledge to the design of home language survey practices across these four areas.

Area 1: Purposes, policies, and guidelines

Guiding question: Has the district established clear purposes, procedures, and guidelines to guide high-quality data collection during administration of the home language survey?

Purpose, policies, and guidelines provide the foundation for high-quality data by specifying procedures and expectations that promote common understandings and practices for home language survey administration within and across school districts. Data challenges arise from lack of clarity around the purpose of data collection, including issues with overlapping or competing purposes, as well as lack of clarity about who will use the data and for what purposes. It may also be important for guidelines to specify how the data will not be used (for example, for determining legal status or reporting for immigration purposes). Lack of clarity of purpose can lead to instruments in which the core concepts being measured are poorly defined, differentiated, or understood. Further, each level of the system—the state, district, and school—needs clarity about who is responsible for each task when collecting and entering data on English learner students. For example, it is assumed that districts follow their state guidelines regarding the home language survey, but districts

Figure B1. Data quality framework on which the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment is based



Source: Authors' construction based on National Forum for Education Statistics (2007) and Linqunti and Bailey (2014).

should still provide their own guidelines that reiterate and explain relevant state guidance to administrators of home language surveys without expecting that staff will be able to locate their state guidelines, will be familiar with the state guidelines, or will interpret the state guidelines in the same way.

Area 2: Data collection practices

Guiding question: Does the district ensure that its home language survey guidelines are applied during design and administration of the home language survey?

Data collection practices are defined as the application of prescribed procedures and expectations in designing and administering the home language survey. However, there are often challenges related to collection practices for home language survey data. For example, challenges may arise from the design of the instrument. If the phrasing of survey items stimulates feelings of vulnerability in respondents, the resulting data may be incomplete or may be inaccurate or unreliable. Data quality challenges can also occur when the design of a survey varies across locations or when the instrument is not provided in an appropriate array of language versions. In addition, not making the purpose, use, and confidential nature of survey data explicit to participants can also reduce data quality, as can not maintaining consistent conditions across contexts or administrations of the survey. Any of these issues can lead to unreliable responses from participants.

Area 3: Personnel support

Guiding question: Does the district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to collect high-quality data?

To collect high-quality data, personnel must be prepared and supported to carry out procedures and expectations established by the district that are intended to promote high-quality data. Ensuring high-quality data can be challenging when those designing instruments and procedures for data collection, conducting surveys or interviews, or entering or reporting data—at all levels (state, district, and school)—are not consistently trained and supported. Training and support include ensuring that personnel understand and can convey the intended purpose and use of the data collected, the proper procedures (including those pertaining to confidentiality), and how the data will affect English learner students. When personnel involved with data collection are not provided with resources and regular opportunities to update or maintain their knowledge and skills through training and communication, data quality can be undermined.

Area 4: Data management

Guiding question: Does the district ensure that data management systems and practices contribute to high-quality data?

Data management—that is, the procedures and expectations established for entering, archiving, and reporting data—can ensure that data quality is maintained after the initial data collection. Data can be entered into a system in varied ways. A respondent might enter responses directly into a database, or an intermediary might enter the data. The various personnel, sites, and schedules for data collection require periodic quality checks,

as well as effective coordination and communication. Good data management practices include establishing data collection, entry, and reporting timelines and ensuring easy and timely access to the data for those involved at various points. Data management is typically enhanced when data are linked to student identification numbers in ways that can facilitate monitoring and communicating with others over time. Involving technology staff in data management decisions can also strengthen the quality and usefulness of data and bring greater attention to ensuring adequate and comfortable spaces where data collection and entry tasks can be completed without interruption.

Appendix C. How items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment align with the data quality framework

The matrix in table C1 illustrates how items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment align with the four areas in the data quality framework. Items addressing the same subtopic are aligned horizontally in the matrix and are not necessarily listed in numerical order. Items are organized to show how the same subtopic is addressed by different items in each of the four framework areas.

Table C1. Matrix of the alignment of items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment with the data quality framework

Subtopic	Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Data collection practices	Personnel support	Data management
Data quality framework guiding question				
	Has the district established clear purposes, procedures, and guidelines to guide high-quality data collection during administration of the home language survey?	Does the district ensure that its home language survey guidelines are applied during design and administration of the home language survey?	Does the district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to collect high-quality data?	Does the district ensure that data management systems and practices contribute to high-quality data?
1. District attends to appropriate procedures and expectations	*7. Has your district established guidelines for administering the home language survey? *8. In what ways does your district convey guidelines for administering the home language survey?	*24. Does your district provide personnel who administer the home language survey with standardized, simple-to-use scripts to verbally introduce and administer the survey?	*29e. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about administration procedures of the home language survey?	—
	*13. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address procedures and responsibilities for protecting the confidentiality of data from the home language survey?	*23. Does your district provide personnel who administer the home language survey with a frequently asked questions (FAQs) sheet to accompany the home language survey form?	*29h. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about confidentiality of home language survey responses?	*38. To what extent does your district maintain the confidentiality of data from the home language survey?

(continued)

Table C1. Matrix of the alignment of items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment with the data quality framework (continued)

Subtopic	Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Data collection practices	Personnel support	Data management
2. District attends to clear and explicit home language survey purposes	*14. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address how to interpret responses on the home language survey to identify potential English learner students?	*22. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents to the home language survey are informed about the multiple steps in the process of identifying English learner students?	*29c. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about how to use home language survey data as one step in a larger, multistep process for identifying English learner students	—
	*9. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey (for example, identifying potential English learner students for subsequent assessment to determine English learner student status)?	*19. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are informed about the purposes and uses of the home language survey? *21. If embedded in a larger intake or registration packet, to what extent does your district distinguish the purpose of the home language survey from the purpose of the other registration or intake materials?	*29a. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about the purposes or purposes of the home language survey? *29d. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about the importance of high-quality data on English learner students for allocating resources and services?	—
	*10. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address what the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey are not (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)?	*20. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are informed about what the purposes and intended uses of the home language survey are not (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)?	*29b. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about what the purpose and use of the home language survey are not (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining the provision of education services)?	—

(continued)

Table C1. Matrix of the alignment of items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment with the data quality framework (continued)

Subtopic	Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Data collection practices	Personnel support	Data management
3. District attends to language support	*15. To what extent does your district have translations of the home language survey in every language needed by survey respondents?	*26. To what extent does your district ensure that respondents are provided with a translation of the home language survey at the time of completion, as needed?	*29f. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about cultural competency, or aligned behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable effective work in cross-cultural situations?	—
	*16. To what extent are your district’s translations of the home language survey created or vetted by professional translators?	*25. To what extent does your district ensure that administration scripts are read aloud by personnel with sufficient foreign language fluency for respondents who need information translated?	*29g. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about assessing respondents’ needs for written translation or verbal interpretation support?	—
4. District attends to oversight and support for home language survey personnel	—	—	*29. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about the following topics? <i>[specific topics listed in relevant areas of this matrix]</i>	—
	—	—	*30. How often does your district typically provide professional development for those administering the home language survey?	—
	—	—	*31. To what extent do district personnel supervise and support those who administer and manage your district’s home language survey?	—

(continued)

Table C1. Matrix of the alignment of items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment with the data quality framework (continued)

Subtopic	Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Data collection practices	Personnel support	Data management
5. District attends to appropriate data entry, management, and reporting procedures	*12. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address how and when data from the home language survey will be reported to school, district, and, if applicable, state offices?	—	*29i. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about data entry, management, and reporting responsibilities?	*35. To what extent do the response options provided on your district's home language survey directly align to the response options available in your district's electronic files or data entry system?
	—	—	—	*36. To what extent do personnel responsible for entering data from your district's home language survey have adequate and uninterrupted time and space to enter data into electronic files or data systems?
	—	—	—	*37. To what extent are the following personnel involved in decisions about how data from your district's home language survey are collected, entered, and reported: district technology/data managers, district English learner program coordinator, school English learner specialists, and district student registration/enrollment staff?
	—	—	—	*41. Does your district place responses to the home language survey in students' permanent records or cumulative folders?
6. District attends to appropriate data access	—	—	—	*34. In what form are responses to your district's home language survey stored?
	—	—	—	*39. To what extent can appropriate school and district personnel access data from your district's home language survey in an <i>easy, straightforward</i> manner?
	—	—	—	*40. To what extent can appropriate school and district personnel access data from your district's home language survey in a <i>timely</i> manner?

(continued)

Table C1. Matrix of the alignment of items in the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment with the data quality framework (continued)

Subtopic	Purposes, policies, and guidelines	Data collection practices	Personnel support	Data management
Overall. District attends to data quality protocols	18. Before moving on, are there comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about your district's policies and guidelines for the home language survey?	28. Before moving on, are there comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about your district's data collection practices for the home language survey?	32. Before moving on, are there other comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make about the personnel involved in the collection, management, and reporting of your district's home language survey?	42. Before moving on, are there other comments, questions, or suggestions you would like to make regarding data management with your district's home language survey?
	*17. To what extent does your district specify a systematic process for periodic review of the quality of data from the home language survey? *11. To what extent do your district's guidelines clearly address what to do when an error, such as discrepant or omitted data, is discovered in data from the home language survey?	*27. To what extent do any school or district personnel need to follow up with respondents to clarify or complete information submitted on your district's home language survey?	*29j. To what extent does your district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have adequate and current knowledge about procedures to follow when errors, such as discrepant or omitted data, are discovered?	*43. Overall, to what extent is your district's home language survey administered consistently for every student entering the district? Consider consistency throughout the school year and across schools in your district. *33. To what extent do district personnel actively monitor the quality of data from your district's home language survey?
	—	—	—	*44. To what extent did you feel confident about the accuracy of the responses you have provided throughout this survey?

* Indicates that the item is required to be answered; — indicates that a relevant item was not included. In some cases a relevant item may have been developed but was not included as a critical element in the final self-assessment tool, which was reviewed, in part, for brevity and potential completion within 15 minutes.

Note. This matrix was constructed by the project team to help users identify how self-assessment items align with the four data quality framework areas (columns) and with other items representing the same cross-cutting subtopics (rows). These subtopics were identified by the project team based on themes identified in the two primary sources consulted during framework development (see appendix A), as well as feedback collected during cognitive interviews with district English learner program coordinators.

Source: Authors' creation.

Appendix D. Workshop protocol: Working with the results of the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment

The following agenda and protocol describe one way that states can engage stakeholders in examining and taking action on data collected through the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment. This process should be modified to suit varied contexts, stakeholder groups, and timeframes.

Session participants

Session facilitator (for example, the state education agency lead or an independent facilitator), state education agency leader, and 5–10 state or district stakeholders (for example, state leaders, district and school administrators, English learner program coordinators and specialists, teachers, parents/guardians, data managers, or district student registration staff).

Session purpose

To identify and prioritize areas for improving the quality of data from the home language survey and consider application of lessons to other efforts to collect data on English learner students.

Session goals

Participants will:

- Discuss a framework for understanding the quality of data from the home language survey.
- Examine the results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in administration across the state.
- Identify opportunities for improvement and prioritize areas for action.
- Identify action steps and key lessons for strengthening data quality.

Session outcome

Agree on next steps to address ways to support the collection of high-quality data from the home language survey.

Session agenda

Time	Activity	Focus question
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and session overview	Why are we focusing on data quality?
9:10 a.m.	Introduce the data quality framework	How do the items on the self-assessment align with the data quality framework?
9:40 a.m.	Frame the inquiry	What are the focus and limitations of the data?
10:00 a.m.	Analyze results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment	What strengths and weaknesses do we notice in our data?
11:30 a.m.	Identify opportunities for improvement and prioritize areas for action	What actions can we take to gain the greatest improvements in the quality of data from the home language survey?
12:15 p.m.	Identify generalizable lessons	What have we learned that applies to other efforts to collect data on English learner students?
12:30 p.m.	Closing	

Facilitator preparation

- Coordinate session time with participants, meeting room, and refreshments.
- Determine who will facilitate the session.
- Prepare slide deck:
 - Slide 1: Participants and affiliation.
 - Slide 2: Session purpose.
 - Slide 3: Session goals and outcome.
 - Slide 4: Session agenda.
 - Slide 5: Data quality framework graphic (see figure B1 in appendix B).
 - Slide 6: Response rate statistics from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (bulleted list including percentage of districts responding, percentage of districts responding across the state, percentage of districts with a low, medium, and high incidence of English learner students in their population responding, size of responding districts, and other pertinent data about respondents).
 - Slide 7: Copy of Handout 5: Individual data review sheet (optional).
- Prepare handouts for all participants and charts as noted below:
 - Handout 1: Data quality framework graphic and self-assessment items by section (provided below).
 - Handout 2: Description of the data quality framework (see appendix B).
 - Handout 3: Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (blank copy).
 - Handout 4: Summary results from Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (provided by the state, with results presented by item in simple-to-read, clearly organized graphs and tables).
 - Handout 5: Individual data review sheet (provided below).
 - Handout 6: Alignment matrix (see table C1 in in appendix C).
 - Chart 1: Prepare four charts, each with sections for recording: framework area, factors that affect data quality, challenges to data quality, and questions; see 9:10–9:40 a.m. for further description of activity.
 - Chart 2: Prepare one chart with the following sections: response rate limitations, data summary limitations, and how to determine areas of strength and weakness.
 - Chart 3: Prepare four charts with the following sections (consider providing one chart for each topic): framework area, strengths (include item numbers and evidence), weaknesses (include item numbers and evidence), questions that might be answered by further data analysis, and opportunities for improvement.
 - Chart 4: Prepare one three-column chart with headings “Priorities,” “Action steps,” and “Responsible party” at the top of each column.

Process agenda

9:00–9:10 a.m.	
Agenda item	Welcome and session overview.
Purpose	To set a welcoming tone and provide rationale for the day's work.
Focus question	Why are we focusing on data quality?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide 1: Participants and affiliation.• Slide 2: Session purpose.• Slide 3: Session goals and outcome.• Slide 4: Session agenda.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(5 <i>minutes</i>) Introduces self and welcomes other stakeholders at the table. Asks each to introduce himself or herself, telling name, role, affiliation, and connection to the English learner identification process. (Facilitator may provide brief meet-and-greet activity and adjust time accordingly if participants have not previously worked together.)</p> <p>(3 <i>minutes</i>) Explains challenges with data quality based on literature and notes examples from state or district context, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent research points to multiple factors that often undermine home language survey data quality, including unclear survey purposes, lack of appropriate language supports for parents to complete the survey, untrained staff administering the survey, inconsistent practices during survey administration, and inaccurate data entry (Bailey & Kelly, 2010, 2013; Linquanti & Bailey, 2014). Any of these may contribute to poor data quality, which can result in the misidentification of potential English learner students in school districts. Misidentification of students poses a challenge for students and their families as well as districts and state education departments as they strive to appropriately allocate resources and services to support English learner students. <p>(2 <i>minutes</i>) Provides brief overview of session purpose, goals, and outcomes, then the session agenda (Slides 1–4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Today's purpose:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Identify and prioritize areas for improving the quality of data from the home language survey and consider application of lessons to other efforts to collect data on English learner students.• Today's goals:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Discuss a framework for understanding the quality of data from the home language survey.◦ Examine the results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in administration across the state.◦ Identify opportunities for improvement and prioritize areas for action.◦ Identify action steps and key lessons for improving data quality.• Today's outcomes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Agree on next steps to address the collection of high-quality data from the home language survey.• Today's agenda: (note that the group will take a break between 10:00 and 11:30)

9:10–9:40 a.m.

Agenda item	Introduce the data quality framework.
Purpose	To become familiar with four key areas that can affect data quality and how the self-assessment gathers information in these areas.
Focus question	How do the items on the self-assessment align with the data quality framework?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide 5: Data quality framework graphic (see figure B1).• Handout 1: Data quality framework and self-assessment items by section.• Handout 2: Description of the data quality framework (appendix B).• Handout 3: Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (blank copy).• Chart 1 (four copies) and markers.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(10 minutes) Introduces the data quality framework by referencing Slide 5: Data Quality Framework graphic and by distributing Handout 1: Data quality framework graphic and self-assessment items by section.</p> <p>Emphasizes that the framework area of purposes, policies, and guidelines refers to the district’s specification of this guidance; the framework area of data collection practices refers to the application of the district’s guidance; the framework area of personnel support refers to the necessary knowledge and skills for staff to apply the district’s guidance; and the framework area of data management refers to the maintenance of the data collected.</p> <p>Divides the group into small groups (or pairs or individuals, depending on the size of the full group) and assigns each small group one of the framework areas. Distributes chart paper, markers, and Handout 2: Description of the data quality framework description (appendix B). Asks participants to read about their assigned framework area, then record on Chart 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The name of the framework area.• A bulleted list of the key factors that affect data quality in that category, based on the handout description. <p>(5 minutes) Prompts small groups to rotate to another small group’s chart to review the chart (and the data quality framework, as needed), then add onto it by recording:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenges to the quality of data from the home language survey that they have seen, heard, or might imagine in relation to this category. <p>(5 minutes) Prompts small groups to rotate to another small group’s chart to review the chart (and data quality framework, as needed) and challenges listed, then add on by recording:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions they have about how to ensure home language survey data quality in this area. <p>(5 minutes) Prompts small groups to rotate back to their original chart, then review the items in the focal area from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment by referring to Handout 1 and Handout 3: The Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (blank copy), then record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checkmarks on bulleted factors, challenges, and questions that self-assessment items address or partially address. <p>(5 minutes) Describes the checkmarked topics across the charts that represent issues identified by recent research or expertise from the field. Solicits observations and responses from the full group, then notes that the self-assessment items serve as informal guidance about ways that states and districts can strengthen the quality of home language survey data (for example, provision of administration scripts, training on specific topics, and data management strategies).</p>

9:40–9:55 a.m.

Agenda item	Frame the inquiry.
Purpose	To understand the limitations of data from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment prior to using the data.
Focus question	What are the focus and limitations of the data?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide 6: Response rate statistics from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment.• Handout 4: Summary results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment (summary statistics and any desired disaggregated data).• Chart 2 (one copy) and markers.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(10 minutes) Explains that the group will be discussing strengths and weaknesses that are suggested by the self-assessment results. Shows and describes information on Slide 6: Response rate statistics from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment. For example, 55 percent of districts in the state responded, plus some descriptive statistics about which districts responded, such as 25 percent of respondents were from high-incidence districts, 35 percent from medium-incidence districts, and 40 percent from low-incidence districts.</p> <p>Asks the group to describe what the response rate suggests about limitations to the group's interpretation of the results. For example, high-incidence districts are under-represented in the target population, so the group needs to be cautious about applying interpretations from the data to these districts. Records responses on Chart 2.</p> <p>Asks group to view the data summary and describe what the data include (for example, percentage of respondents who indicated the extent to which a data practice occurs in the district; open responses with additional perspective) and what the data do not include (for example, summary statistics for each category in the framework or disaggregated views by subgroup). Records responses on Chart 2. Explains that data can be disaggregated after the session, or in preparation for a follow-up session, if the group identifies specific questions for inquiry during the day's work.</p> <p>(5 minutes) Asks group how they will define areas of strength (for example, more than 70 percent indicate to some or great extent) and areas of weakness (for example, more than 40 percent indicate to no or little extent). Asks the group to test these criteria against a couple of sample items in the results to see if all agree that these cutpoints make general sense. Explains that these criteria need to be somewhat flexible, depending on the item and the group's ongoing discussion and are meant only to facilitate the group's inquiry and discussion. Records decisions on Chart 2.</p>

9:55–11:35 a.m.

Agenda item	Analyze results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment.
Purpose	To identify practices that both contribute to and undermine home language survey data quality across the state.
Focus question	What strengths and weaknesses do we notice in our data?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide 7: Copy of Handout 5: Individual data review sheet.• Handout 4: Summary results from Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment.• Handout 5: Individual data review sheet.• Chart 3 (four copies) and markers.• Handout 6: Alignment matrix.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(5 minutes) Explains that participants will be asked to review Handout 4: Summary results from the Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment individually in more detail now, so the room will be quiet while they review and record notes on Handout 5: Individual data review sheet. Reviews directions on Handout 5 and responds to questions. Emphasizes that this is a quiet time to consider the results individually and that the group will have time to discuss and work with the results after this period.</p> <p>(20 minutes) Individual work</p> <p>(5 minutes) Divides the group into small groups (or pairs or individuals, depending on the size of the full group) and assigns each small group one or two areas in the self-assessment (purposes, policies, and guidelines; data collection practices; personnel support; or data management) to delve into. Explains that each small group will refer to the relevant sections of their completed Handout 5 to compare and discuss observations, one item at a time, and to chart identified strengths and weaknesses in each assigned area, making sure to note the specific numbers of relevant self-assessment items and evidence from the data and basing these strengths and weaknesses on criteria set earlier in the group's work (9:40–9:55 a.m.).</p> <p>Encourages participants to engage in probing, evidence-based discussion: ask colleagues why they identified areas as strengths and weakness, whether they think the results are expected or surprising and why, and what questions the data raise for them. In particular, encourages each small group to record questions that might be answered by disaggregating the self-assessment results and opportunities for improvement identified on the basis of their analysis. Explains that each small group will be asked to report out to the full group, using their chart as a visual guide. Solicits and responds to questions.</p> <p>(30 minutes) Teamwork.</p> <p>(10 minutes) Break.</p> <p>(10 minutes) Distributes Handout 6: Alignment matrix and explains how to read the chart: if participants look down the columns, they will see how all self-assessment items are aligned with specific framework areas, and if they look across the rows, they will see how self-assessment items align with key subtopics that run throughout the self-assessment. Allows several minutes for participants to review the matrix and responds to questions.</p> <p>Explains that during the small-group report-outs, participants can mark on their matrix items associated with strengths and weaknesses (for example, placing a checkmark on the items identified as strengths and an X on the items identified as weaknesses); notes that the full group will refer to these notes again after the break when they work to identify priorities for action.</p> <p>(20 minutes) Facilitates small-group report-outs to full group (three to five minutes per small group to describe their charted strengths and weaknesses, questions, and opportunities for improvement) and solicits clarifying questions.</p>

11:35 a.m.–12:25 p.m.

Agenda item	Identify opportunities for improvement and prioritize areas for action.
Purpose	To develop shared commitment to a strategic and limited set of priorities to strengthen the quality of data from the home language survey.
Focus question	What actions can we take to gain the greatest improvements in the quality of data from the home language survey?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior small-group report-out charts (Chart 3).• Handout 6: Alignment matrix with recorded notes.• Chart paper and markers.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(5 minutes) Explains that the group now considers the opportunities for improvement described by each small group and identifies the highest priorities for action, first in pairs or triads, then as a large group. Explains that highest priority means potential high impact on data quality and feasible for the state to address within the coming one to two years.</p> <p>(10 minutes) Asks pairs or triads to discuss their notes on Handout 6: Alignment matrix, and the group report-outs to identify up to three high priorities for state action, along with a rationale, to record on chart paper and share with the full group.</p> <p>(20 minutes) Asks each pair or triad to share its three priorities and provide a rationale for each. Cues the full group to listen for connections and for ways to achieve consensus in the group around three priorities. Facilitates sharing and consensus-building. Records final three priorities on Chart 4: Priorities, action steps, and responsible party.</p> <p>(15 minutes) Facilitates group discussion and records group ideas pertaining to key action steps for each identified priority and designates who would be responsible (presumably the state, but it may be the working group or districts). This is intended to capture the group's consensus; it is not a formal action plan, which will need to be drafted and communicated following the meeting.</p>

12:25–12:37 p.m.

Agenda item	Identify generalizable lessons.
Purpose	To reflect on the process and results to identify key ideas or concepts that might improve other efforts to collect data on English learner students.
Focus question	What have we learned that applies to other efforts to collect data on English learner students?
Materials	Chart paper and markers.
Steps: Facilitator	<p>(5 minutes) Solicits and records ideas from the group about what members learned from the day's work and how the lessons might apply to other efforts to collect data on English learner students.</p> <p>(2 minutes) Thanks participants for their time and insights. Recaps next steps agreed on during the meeting, and reminds participants of any upcoming meetings, communications, or other follow-up to ensure progress in the identified priority areas.</p> <p>(5 minutes) Provides a session evaluation form or collects feedback in the moment—for example by using a Plus/Delta Protocol (optional).</p>

Handout 1: Data quality framework and self-assessment items by section

Table D1. Self-assessment items by section

Item number	Section	Guiding question and description of items
1–6	1. District context	District size, English learner student population, and means of home language survey administration.
7–18	2. Purposes, policies, and guidelines	<p>Has the district established clear purposes, procedures, and expectations [guidelines?] to guide high-quality data collection during administration of the home language survey?</p> <p>Items address the specification of procedures and expectations that promote common understandings and practices for home language survey administration.</p>
19–28	3. Data collection practices	<p>Does the district ensure that its home language survey [policies and?] guidelines are applied during design and administration of the home language survey?</p> <p>Items address the application of prescribed procedures and expectations, typically enacted as a sequence of events using provided resources.</p>
29–32	4. Personnel support	<p>Does the district ensure that personnel who administer the home language survey have the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to collect high-quality data?</p> <p>Items address the preparation and supervision of personnel to ensure the necessary knowledge and skills to apply the prescribed procedures, expectations, and resources for home language survey administration.</p>
33–42	5. Data management	<p>Does the district ensure that data management systems and practices contribute to high-quality data?</p> <p>Items address the use of systems, procedures, and expectations for entering, archiving, and reporting home language survey data.</p>
43–44	6. Closing questions	Questions about consistency of administration and perceptions about accuracy of results.

Source: Authors' compilation.

Handout 5: Individual data review sheet

Review the results of Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment, which solicited information from district English learner program coordinators about their local contexts and their perspectives and observations in four core areas that can affect the quality of home language survey data: purposes, policies, and guidelines; data collection practices; personnel support; and data management.

As you review each section, please note three types of responses:

- *Circle* the item numbers with responses that strike you as interesting or concerning or that may provide some new insight about your state’s or district’s English learner student data quality. For example, you may notice notable discrepancies across participants’ responses for a particular item or you may identify an item where most responses indicate weak or overlooked data practices.
- *Place a checkmark* on items suggesting potential areas of strength. For example, there may be general consensus around the occurrence of some positive data practices.
- Jot notes, questions, or observations following each segment that may be useful to discuss or further explore with your team.

1. Context

Items: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Notes, questions, and observations:

2. Purposes, policies, and guidelines

Items: 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Notes, questions, and observations:

3. Data collection practices

Items: 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Notes, questions, and observations:

4. Personnel support

Items: 29a 29b 29c 29d 29e 29f 29g 29h 29i 29j 30 31 32

Notes, questions, and observations:

5. Data management

Items: 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42

Notes, questions, and observations:

6. Closing questions

Items: 43 44

Notes, questions, and observations:

Notes

The English Language Learners Alliance played a key role over the course of the project. In addition, the following individuals were integral to the development and refinement of the tool:

- *Stakeholder group*: Karen Lapuk (Connecticut), Bob Measel (formerly of Rhode Island), Michael Sabados (Connecticut), and Marie Salazar Glowski (Connecticut).
- *Advisory committee members*: Bonnie Baer-Simahk (Massachusetts), Patrick Larkin (Massachusetts), Bob Measel (Massachusetts), Andrea Somoza-Norton (New Hampshire), Xrystya Szyjka (New York), and Deborah Wall (Massachusetts).
- *District English learner program coordinators*: Karen Goyette (New Hampshire), Kellie Jones (Massachusetts), Kathleen Lange-Madden (Massachusetts), Nicole Lindeman (New York), Diane McIver (New York), Wendy Perron (New Hampshire), and Rachel Stead (New York).

1. An alternate title is English learner student coordinator. The most knowledgeable respondents should be determined locally but might include a district superintendent, deputy director, accountability or compliance manager, English learner program director, or student enrollment coordinator.
2. To encourage more valid, or truthful, responses from parents and other caregivers completing home language surveys, Linquanti and Bailey (2014) suggest that states specify what the home language survey results will not be used for (for example, determining immigration status or predetermining education services to be provided).
3. Nonresponse occurs when respondents purposefully or accidentally do not complete and return the self-assessment or leave items blank. Bias occurs when answers provided by those who completed the items differ from answers that would have been provided by those who did not respond. Nonresponse skews the results toward the responses provided.
4. The Data Quality Campaign (<http://dataqualitycampaign.org>) is a national nonprofit organization that supports state policymakers and other key leaders in promoting the effective use of data to improve education outcomes for students.
5. The purpose of Beatty & Willis's (2007) in-depth cognitive interviews was to collect verbal information from participants about survey items while they were completing the survey in order to determine whether the survey overall, and the items and response choices specifically, generated the information that the developers intended to collect. For example, participant responses might consist of explanations of what they interpreted the questions to mean, elaborations on how they selected their responses, reports of any difficulties they had in answering items; or information about their school, district, or state context that shaped their responses.
6. The framework, including the guiding questions and descriptions, is based primarily on recommendations in National Forum for Education Statistics (2007) and Linquanti and Bailey (2014).

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