

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

EARLY LITERACY PHONEMIC AWARENESS TEST–SURREY (ELPATS)

The Early Literacy Phonemic Awareness Test–Surrey (ELPATS) is a district-based oral assessment of phonemic awareness consisting of 45 items across nine domains:

1. Phonemic Rhyme–identifying words,
2. Rhyme–generating rhyme,
3. Syllables–segmenting words into syllables,
4. Syllables–blending syllables into words,
5. Segmenting Sounds–first sounds,
6. Segmenting Sounds–last sounds,
7. Segmenting Sounds–words with two sounds,
8. Blending Sounds–blending first sound with rest of word, and
9. Blending Sounds–blending sounds into words.

During the 2020/21 school year, 528 Kindergarten students were assessed in 26 inner-city schools using the ELPATS (January, 2021). Of those, three-quarters (74%) were identified as *at-promise* as determined by the cut-off score on the ELPATS (26 and below) or by the professional judgment made by the teacher assessing the student. Three-quarters of **Indigenous students** were identified as *at-promise* while nine in ten (91%) **Students with Special Needs or Diverse Abilities** were identified as *at-promise*. When students were re-assessed in May, the number of students dropped to 34%, representing a cut in the number of students deemed *at-promise* by more than half. There was a decrease in the percentage and number of students identified as *at-promise* across all sub-groups. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the changes in ELPATS scores between the two timepoints.

Table 1. Percentage and number of Surrey Kindergarten students identified as *at-promise* by ELPATS scores and teacher assessments, 2020/21¹

ELPATS Test Date	Number of Students	Identified as <i>at-promise</i> (scoring 0–26)	Identified as <i>at-promise</i> by a teacher (scoring 27–33)	Total <i>at-promise</i>
JANUARY	528	64% (336)	10% (55) ¹	74% (391)
ELPATS Re-Test Date	Number of Students Re-Tested	Identified as <i>at-promise</i> (scoring 0–26)	Identified as <i>at-promise</i> by a teacher (scoring 27–33)	Total remains <i>at-promise</i>
MAY	528²	29% (153)	5% (26)	34% (179)

¹ ELPATS scores for the four sub-groups have been masked to ensure confidentiality.

² Includes only students with a January ELPATS score.

Kindergarten students identified as at-promise in January were re-assessed in May. The average score achieved on the ELPATS in January was 18, which increased to an average score of 28 in May—reflecting a 56% increase and improvement of 10 points. A breakdown of the average score achieved by all students, as well as the change scores across the nine domains of the ELPATS are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Surrey Kindergarten students’ average ELPATS scores, point increases, and overall change between assessment dates, 2020/21

	AVERAGE JANUARY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE MAY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE POINTS INCREASE	OVERALL % CHANGE
Rhyme—identifying words	3.35	4.26	0.91	27%
Rhyme—generating rhyme	1	2.25	1.25	125%
Syllables—segmenting words into syllables	3.6	4.36	0.76	21%
Syllables—blending syllables into words	4	4.69	0.69	17%
Segmenting Sounds—first sounds	2.52	3.91	1.39	55%
Segmenting Sounds—last sounds	1.05	2.77	1.72	164%
Segmenting Sounds—words with two sounds	0.52	2	1.48	285%
Blending Sounds—blending first sound with rest of word	2.21	3.53	1.32	60%
Blending Sounds—blending sounds into words	1.22	2.74	1.52	125%
TOTAL	18.25	28.47	10.21	56%

The average score achieved on the ELPATS by **Indigenous students** who were assessed in January was 16, which increased to a score of 24 in May—reflecting a 51% increase and improvement of 8 points. A breakdown of the average score achieved by **Indigenous students**, as well as the change scores for all nine domains of the ELPATS are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Surrey Kindergarten students’ average ELPATS scores, point increases, and overall change between assessment dates, 2020/21

	AVERAGE JANUARY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE MAY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE POINTS INCREASE	OVERALL % CHANGE
Rhyme—identifying words	2.63	4.12	1.49	57%
Rhyme—generating rhyme	0.63	1.62	0.99	157%
Syllables—segmenting words into syllables	2.81	4	1.19	42%
Syllables—blending syllables into words	3.45	4.25	0.8	23%
Segmenting Sounds—first sounds	1.81	3.62	1.81	100%
Segmenting Sounds—last sounds	0.27	3.12	2.85	1056%
Segmenting Sounds—words with two sounds	0.18	2.25	2.07	1150%
Blending Sounds—blending first sound with rest of word	2.72	3	0.28	10%
Blending Sounds—blending sounds into words	1.81	2.5	0.69	38%
TOTAL	15.91	24.09	8.18	51%

The average score achieved on the ELPATS by **English Language Learners** in January was 17, which increased to 28 points in May— reflecting a 58% increase and improvement of 10 points. A breakdown of the average score achieved by **English Language Learners**, as well as the change scores for the nine domains of the ELPATS are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Surrey Kindergarten English Language Learners average ELPATS scores, point increases, and overall change between assessment dates, 2020/21

	AVERAGE JANUARY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE MAY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE POINTS INCREASE	OVERALL % CHANGE
Rhyme—identifying words	3.26	4.15	0.89	27%
Rhyme—generating rhyme	0.97	2.33	1.36	140%
Syllables—segmenting words into syllables	3.55	4.25	0.7	20%
Syllables—blending syllables into words	3.89	4.58	0.69	18%
Segmenting Sounds—first sounds	2.58	3.86	1.28	50%
Segmenting Sounds—last sounds	1.04	2.77	1.73	166%
Segmenting Sounds—words with two sounds	0.53	2.11	1.58	298%
Blending Sounds—blending first sound with rest of word	2.08	3.42	1.34	64%
Blending Sounds—blending sounds into words	1.18	2.77	1.59	135%
TOTAL	17.49	27.68	10.19	58%

The average score achieved on the ELPATS by **Students with Special Needs or Diverse Abilities** who were assessed in January was 14.5, which decreased to a score of 9.6 in May—reflecting a 35% increase and improvement of 5 points. A breakdown of the average score achieved by the **Students with Special Needs or Diverse Abilities** who were as well as the change scores for all nine domains of the ELPATS are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Surrey Kindergarten Students with Special Needs or Diverse Abilities’ average ELPATS scores, point increases, and overall change between assessment dates, 2020/21

	AVERAGE JANUARY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE MAY ELPATS SCORE	AVERAGE POINTS INCREASE	OVERALL % CHANGE
Rhyme—identifying words	2.58	3.6	1.02	40%
Rhyme—generating rhyme	1.0	2.0	1.00	100%
Syllables—segmenting words into syllables	3.11	4.1	0.99	32%
Syllables—blending syllables into words	3.17	4.2	1.03	32%
Segmenting Sounds—first sounds	1.35	3.4	2.05	152%
Segmenting Sounds—last sounds	0.82	2.2	1.38	168%
Segmenting Sounds—words with two sounds	0.17	1.4	1.23	724%
Blending Sounds—blending first sound with rest of word	2.0	3.0	1.00	50%
Blending Sounds—blending sounds into words	1.29	2.1	0.81	63%
TOTAL	14.5	19.6	5.1	35%