

# SURVEY OF TEACHER EXPERIENCES WITH THE EARLY LITERACY PHONEMIC AWARENESS TEST – SURREY

## A Brief Report



*October, 2021*

## A MESSAGE FROM SURREY SCHOOLS

Surrey Schools is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Katzie, Kwan-tlen, Semiahmoo and other Coast Salish Peoples. It is B.C.'s largest school district where close to 12,000 employees serve almost 75,000 children in our diverse multicultural city. We have over 130 educational sites from early learning to adult education.

The District is committed to continuous improvement and success of all students through implementation of evidence-informed practices that enhance student learning, inclusivity and equity of outcomes. We welcome and honour diversity while supporting students' holistic growth—mind, body and heart—a commitment captured in our welcome video, *Éy swayel / Bienvenue / Welcome to Surrey Schools*.



Click to watch our welcome video, [Éy swayel / Bienvenue / Welcome to Surrey Schools](#).

**TITLE:** Survey of Teacher Experiences with the Early Literacy Phonemic Awareness Test – Surrey:  
A Brief Report

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW OF THE ELPATS .....1

METHODOLOGY .....2

SURVEY RESULTS .....3

RECOMMENDATIONS.....11

APPENDIX.....13



## OVERVIEW OF THE ELPATS

### Purpose of the ELPATS

The Early Literacy Phonemic Awareness Test-Survey (ELPATS) is a district-based oral assessment of phonemic awareness administered twice each year (January and May) by Kindergarten teachers to identify students who are experiencing difficulty in the acquisition of phonemic awareness skills and to guide early literacy instruction in Kindergarten and Grade One classrooms.

*At-promise refers to the potential that resides in every child who is demonstrating difficulties with phonemic awareness.*

The ELPATS help teachers identify learning gaps and plan instructional strategies to meet student' needs and maximize learning.

### What the ELPATS Assesses

The ELPATS consists 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.

## METHODOLOGY

### Survey Design

To better understand teacher' experiences administering the ELPATS, entering data into Learning Metrix – a data capture system – and using ELPATS to plan educational activities, an 11-item survey was developed.



1. Background questions: (a) What grades are you teaching, (b) Were the ELPATS administered to your students this year and how, (c) How were the ELPATS administered to your kindergarten students, and (d) In which context are you teaching?
2. Who administers the ELPATS to kindergarten students in your school?
3. What do you feel is the value of the ELPATS?
4. What challenges arose during the administration of the ELPATS? (How were those challenges addressed, or how would you adjust next year?)
5. What do you do with your students' ELPATS results?
6. What was your experience with the entering of ELPATS data into Learning Metrix?
7. Did you feel well-equipped/trained to administer the ELPATS? (Were you aware of ELPATS training Videos or workshop sessions?)
8. What tools or training would support your administration of the ELPATS moving forward?
9. Do you have any additional experiences or feedback regarding the ELPATS?

*The survey was administered between February 10th and March 9th, 2021 to elementary school teachers in the Surrey Schools.*

### Approach to the Survey Analysis

Borrowed from well-established procedures in qualitative analysis, responses underwent line-by-line analysis that reduced data into codes (i.e., deductive analysis) by identifying salient features in teacher' responses. Codes were combined into sub-themes based on shared characteristics. Sub-themes were compared, refined, and further built up into higher-level themes (i.e., inductive analysis).

## SURVEY RESULTS

### Number of Respondents

A total of 109 elementary teachers in Surrey completed the survey. Initially, 115 respondents completed the survey, but was reduced when 6 respondents were removed from the analysis as a result of either self-identifying as a Learning Support Teacher, not being a Kindergarten teacher, and/or not having experience administering the ELPATS or using results from the assessment.

Among the respondents, 61% primarily teach Kindergarten. The majority of the teaching contexts were in-person in the classroom. The remaining 16% of teachers delivered the curriculum through a Surrey Blended context, of which nearly 60% administered the ELPATS both virtually and in-person. See Figure 1 for a breakdown of the contexts in which teachers teach and the ELPATs were administered.

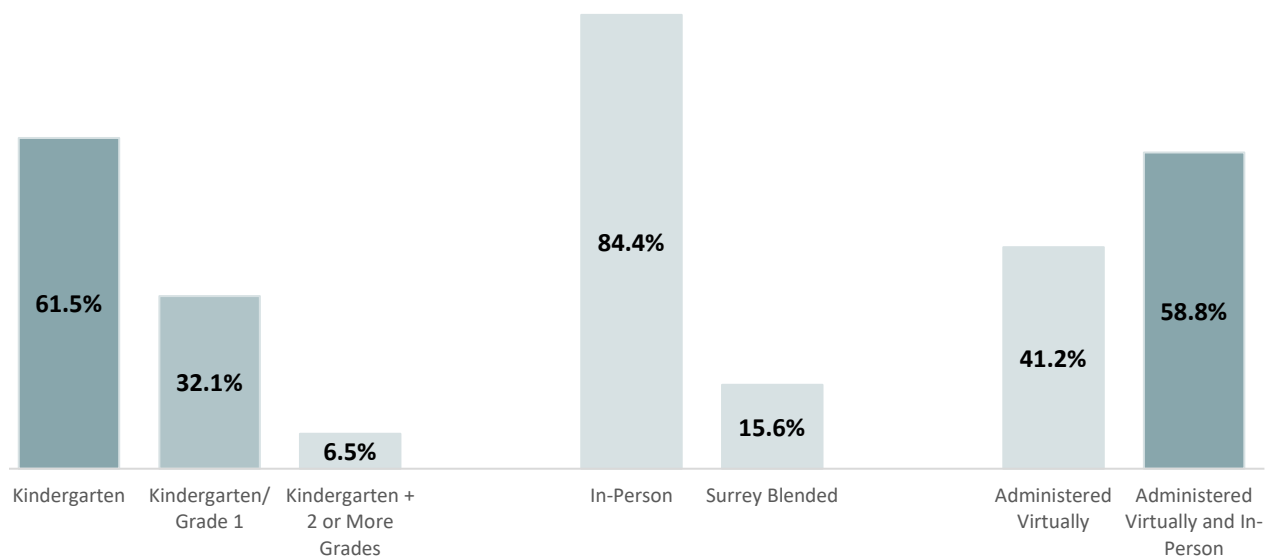


Figure 1. Student Cohorts Taught, Where Teachers Teach, and Where ELPATS Were Administered



## Results of Question 3 - What do you feel is the value of the ELPATS?

Teachers found the greatest value of the ELPATS was in its ability to reveal valuable information around children's skills (39%). The most mentions of any sub-theme was related to the ELPATS allowing teachers to adjust their teaching practices to meet their class' needs (31.3%). See Table 1 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 1.** What Teachers Feel is the Value of the ELPATS

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. ELPATS Reveal Valuable Information about Children's Skills (n = 90; 39%)	a. Helpful for Gauging Students' Current Skills, Strengths, and Areas for Improvement	68 (29.6%)	"The results give me a clear picture of where each student is at regarding their phonemic awareness skills."
	b. Valuable Source of Information for Parents and Teachers	11 (4.8%)	
	c. Helpful for Identifying At-Promise Learners	10 (4.3%)	
2. ELPATS Performance Informs Teaching Practice (n = 88; 38%)	a. Allows Teachers to Adjust Their Teaching Practices to Meet their Class' Needs	72 (31.3%)	"It shows me what areas I need to work on with my Kiddos. Helps to guide my teaching."
	b. Directs Instruction for Individual Students or Small Groups	16 (7.0%)	
3. Challenges and Concerns Associated with Administering the ELPATS (n = 52; 23%)	a. Logistical Challenges with Administering the ELPATS and Following up on ELPATS Results (e.g., Limited Time; Administered Too Early in the Year; etc.)	21 (9.1%)	"I feel that the timing of administering the test is very early in the year for some of the topics covered in class."
	b. Tool Limitations and Concerns about Capacity to Capture Student Knowledge and Teacher Instruction	15 (6.5%)	
	c. Teachers are Unsure or have Mixed Feelings about ELPATS	10 (4.3%)	
	d. Challenging to Administer with ELL Students	6 (2.6%)	
Total = 230 Mentions			

## Results of Question 4 - What challenges arose during the administration of the ELPATS? (How were those challenges addressed, or how would you adjust next year?)

Teachers found the greatest challenge during the administration of the ELPATS was related to having limited or no release time to conduct the assessment (20%). The most mentions of any sub-theme was related to the conditions of the test and testing environment possibly impacting students' results (12.2%). See Table 2 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 2.** What Teachers Identified as Challenges that Arose During the Administration of the ELPATS

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
<b>1. Limited or No Release Time to Administer the ELPATS</b> (n = 85; 20%)	a. Must Administer ELPATS During Regular Class Time	38 (8.9%)	"It is really challenging to try to complete the assessment while managing the rest of the class."
	b. Challenging to Manage Class While Administering ELPATS	34 (8.0%)	
	c. Limited Class Coverage and Support for Teachers and Students	13 (3.1%)	
<b>2. COVID-Specific Challenges Impacted Test Administration</b> (n = 82; 19%)	a. Difficult to Conduct the Assessment while Wearing Masks	46 (10.8%)	"An additional challenge this year is with the masks. It is difficult to hear the students and difficult for the students to hear me or see my mouth formation."
	b. Challenges Associated with Administering the ELPATS Virtually	27 (6.3%)	
	c. Safety Concerns, Scheduling Issues, and Lack of Support During COVID	9 (2.1%)	
<b>3. Concerns about Whether ELPATS Fully Reflect Students' Skills and Abilities</b> (n = 75; 18%)	a. Conditions of the Test and Testing Environment May Impact Students' Results	52 (12.2%)	"I feel that the results may not be fully indicative of their abilities, especially when the testing environments vary so much between students."
	b. Language Barriers, Absences, and Behavioural Issues Impact Test Administration and Student Performance	23 (5.4%)	
<b>4. Logistical Concerns Associated with Administering the ELPATS</b> (n = 73; 17%)	a. Time Consuming and Limited Time to Complete	32 (7.5%)	"Finding a quiet space and separate time to administer the ELPATS."
	b. ELPATS are Administered Too Early in the Year and There's Often No Quiet Space to Conduct Assessments	30 (7.0%)	
	c. Unclear Expectations, Unresolved Concerns, and a Lack of Support	11 (2.6%)	
<b>5. Modifications that Were Helpful or Would be Helpful in the Future</b> (n = 65; 15%)	a. Strategies, Solutions, and Suggestions for Overcoming Challenges Associated with Preparing for, Administering, and Following Up on the ELPATS	39 (9.2%)	"I would definitely break up the assessment for the students. It can be a long time for some of them."
	b. Uninterrupted Release Time and Quiet Space to Conduct Assessments	26 (6.1%)	
<b>6. Minimal Challenges Administering the ELPATS</b> (n = 46; 11%)	a. Administration and Team Provided Support	26 (6.1%)	"Our LST was VERY supportive and gave us release time to administer the ELPATS."
	b. Teachers Reported Experiencing Minimal to No Challenges	20 (4.7%)	

Total = 426 Mentions



## Results of Question 5 - What do you do with your students' ELPATS results?

Teachers indicated that what they most often do with ELPATS results was to use the data to inform and support teaching (63%). The most mentions of any sub-theme was related to the use of ELPATS results to target skills to work on and guide teaching practice (32.5%). See Table 3 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 3.** What Teachers Do with ELPATS Results

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. Use ELPATS as an Assessment Tool to Inform and Support Teaching (n = 174; 63%)	a. Target Skills to Work on and Guide Teaching Practice	90 (32.5%)	"It guides my teaching and helps me target students according to their needs."
	b. Use Results to Form Small Learning Groups	33 (11.9%)	
	c. Identify and Support Students Who Need More Direct Instruction	30 (10.8%)	
	d. Assessment of Student Learning	21 (7.6%)	
2. Share Results of ELPATS with Others (n = 51; 18%)	a. Share Results with Other Teachers, Staff, and Administration	30 (10.8%)	"On my next report home, I will highlight areas for parents to work on with their child."
	b. Share Results with Family Members	21 (7.6%)	
3. Concerns about Managing ELPATS Results and Outcomes (n = 30; 11%)	a. Need Additional Support	12 (4.3%)	"This year I used my low ELPAT scores to fight for LST support."
	b. Teachers don't Always, Fully, or Correctly Utilize ELPATS Results	12 (4.3%)	
	c. COVID-Related Concerns and Issues Submitting ELPATS Scores Online	6 (2.2%)	
4. Perform Administrative Duties (n = 22; 8%)	a. Compile and File Results for Future Reference	12 (4.3%)	"I also enter the results into the online ELPATS system."
	b. Enter and Upload Results	10 (3.6%)	
Total = 277 Mentions			

## Results of Question 6 - What was your experience with the entering of ELPATS data into Learning Metrix

Teacher experiences related to entering ELPATS data into Learning Metrix were either absent as they hadn't used the data capture system or another person (e.g., LST) entered the data for them (32%). The most mentions of any sub-theme was positive, in that teachers felt entering data into Learning Metrix was easy to use and encountered no issues (23.4%). See Table 4 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 4.** What Teacher Experiences Were Entering ELPATS Data into Learning Metrix

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. Teachers Didn't Enter Data into Learning Metrix (n = 54; 32%)	a. Teachers Didn't Use Learning Metrix	28 (16.4%)	"This year's data has not been added yet as it can be time consuming."
	b. Teachers Haven't Entered the Data into Learning Metrix Yet	15 (8.8%)	
	c. Another Person Entered or Helped Enter the Data	11 (6.4%)	
2. Negative Experiences with Entering Data into Learning Metrix (n = 50; 29%)	a. Challenging to Use or Not User Friendly	15 (8.8%)	"It was challenging to figure out how to enter the data."
	b. Too Time Consuming or Inconvenient to Enter Data in Multiple Places	14 (8.2%)	
	c. Need Assistance from Others or are Waiting on Guidance from Others	13 (7.6%)	
	d. Teachers Have Concerns About its Use	8 (4.7%)	
3. Positive Experiences with Entering Data into Learning Metrix (n = 46; 27%)	a. It was Fine, Easy to Use, or Teachers Encountered No Issues	40 (23.4%)	"It was a straight forward process and was able to enter the data easily."
	b. Aggregation of Data Helps Inform Teaching Practice and Reveals Student Performance	6 (3.5%)	
4. Issues with Accessing their Class on Learning Metrix (n = 21; 12%)	a. Issues with Logging Into Learning Metrix	13 (7.6%)	"I did have trouble logging on as I have changed schools and therefore they hadn't updated the records."
	b. Couldn't Promptly Access School or Class List	8 (4.7%)	
Total = 171 Mentions			

## Results of Question 7 - Did you feel well-equipped/trained to administer the ELPATS? (Were you aware of ELPATS training videos or workshop sessions?)

The majority of teachers indicated that they felt prepared to administer the ELPATS (92%). The top sub-themes with the most mentions were related to teachers feeling equipped to administer the ELPATS (59.3%) and teachers being aware of the training resources and believing they are helpful (16.8%). See Table 5 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 5.** How Well-Equipped and Trained Teachers Felt They Were to Administer the ELPATS

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. Teachers Felt Well Prepared to Administer the ELPATS (n = 154; 92%)	a. Teachers Felt Well-Equipped and Trained to Administer the ELPATS	99 (59.3%)	"I have done the ELPATS for many years, and feel confident administering them."
	b. Teachers are Aware of Training Resources and Believe That They are Helpful	28 (16.8%)	
	c. Teachers Have Participated in ELPATS Training	23 (13.8%)	
	d. Teachers Emphasized the Importance of the ELPATS	4 (2.4%)	
2. Teachers Did Not Feel Fully Prepared to Administer the ELPATS (n = 12; 7%)	a. Teachers were Unaware of Training Resources	5 (3.0%)	"I was not aware no (this is my first year teaching K/1 in Surrey School District)."
	b. Teachers Didn't Feel Well-Equipped to Administer the ELPATS	4 (2.4%)	
	c. Teachers Encountered Issues During their ELPATS Training that Made it More Challenging	3 (1.8%)	
Total = 167 Mentions*			

\*One teacher responded with "N/A"

## Results of Question 8 - What tools or training would support your administration of the ELPATS moving forward?

The most often identified tools and training that would support teachers in their administration of the ELPATS consisted of modifications to the ELPATS structure and administration (39%). The top sub-theme with the most mentions was related to release time and class coverage for teachers to administer the ELPATS (30.3%). See Table 6 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 6.** Tools and Training Teachers Identified to Support Their Administration of the ELPATS

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. Modifications to ELPATS Structure and Administration (n = 55; 39%)	a. Release Time and Class Coverage for ELPATS Administration	43 (30.3%)	"Pull out coverage so that the classroom teachers can conduct the assessment in a space where it is quiet and with appropriate COVID safe barriers in place."
	b. COVID-safe and Quiet Environment to Administer the ELPATS	10 (7.0%)	
	c. Restructure the ELPATS to Improve Assessment Capacity	2 (1.4%)	
2. Additional Training, Resources, and Support with the Administration of ELPATS (n = 52; 37%)	a. Training on how to Administer the ELPATS and Use Results to Modify Teaching Practices	24 (16.9%)	"It would be nice if the district would purchase resources for all K teachers to target skills in class."
	b. Additional Support for Teachers and Students	13 (9.2%)	
	c. Provide Resources and Practice Materials to Teachers and Parents	8 (5.6%)	
	d. Inform Teachers and Administration about the Utility of ELPATS Data	7 (4.9%)	
3. No Tools or Training Identified (n = 35; 25%)	a. No Tools or Training are Necessary	27 (19.0%)	"I don't think any further training is necessary."
	b. Not Sure or Not Applicable	8 (5.6%)	
Total = 142 Mentions			



## Results of Question 9 - Do you have any additional experiences or feedback regarding the ELPATS?

The majority of teachers indicated that additional resources and support would help with their administration of the ELPATS (38%). The sub-themes with the most mentions were related to teachers' belief that the ELPATS is a valuable tool (12.3%), teachers wanting more support for students (11.1%), and the need for consistency between schools in how the ELPATS are administered (11.1%). See Table 7 for a breakdown of themes generated from survey responses and a sample of quotes related to each theme.

**Table 7.** Additional Experiences or Feedback Teachers Identified Regarding the ELPATS

Themes	Sub-Themes	# and % of Mentions	Sample Quotes
1. Additional Resources and Support would be Helpful (n = 65; 28%)	a. More Support for Students, Especially At-Promise Learners, ELL Students, and Students with Special Needs	26 (11.1%)	"We need early lit support teachers or more LST time so that we are able to provide more intensive learner support for the at risk students."
	b. District and Administration Should Provide Release Time for Teachers to Administer the ELPATS	24 (10.2%)	
	c. More Resources, Practice Activities, and Programs Focusing on Phonemic Awareness	15 (6.4%)	
2. Value in Administering the ELPATS and Seeking Teacher Input (n = 51; 22%)	a. Teachers Believe the ELPATS is a Valuable Tool and Support its Continued Use	29 (12.3%)	"I feel like they are a very, very important tool for getting to know our individual students and their literacy needs"
	b. Teachers Provided No Additional Feedback	13 (5.5%)	
	c. Teachers Expressed Gratitude for Seeking Their Feedback	9 (3.8%)	
3. Suggestions for Changes to the Way the ELPATS are Structured and Administered (n = 43; 18%)	a. Consider Administering the ELPATS Later in the Year or in Grade 1	21 (8.9%)	"I wonder if the push should be for the first ELPATS to be administered in May for the first screening and the second in September or October of Grade 1."
	b. Restructuring and Updating the ELPATS	16 (6.8%)	
	c. Providing a Quiet Space to Administer the ELPATS	6 (2.6%)	
4. Clear and Consistent Guidelines Regarding the Purpose of, Preparing for, Administering, and Reporting the ELPATS (n = 40; 17%)	a. Consistency Between Schools Regarding Who Administers the Assessment, How the Assessment is Administered, and in the Level of Support Provided	26 (11.1%)	"I believe that it is important for the classroom teacher to administer the ELPATS."
	b. More Transparency Surrounding the Purpose and Value of the ELPATs and How the Data is Used	8 (3.4%)	
	c. More Guidance About Preparing for the ELPATS and Entering the Results	6 (2.6%)	
5. COVID-Related and Logistical Challenges to Consider (n = 36; 15%)	a. COVID-Related Challenges with Administering the Exam	23 (9.8%)	"It is very hard to administer virtually."
	b. Time Consuming and Limited Reflection of Students' Knowledge	13 (5.5%)	
Total = 235 Mentions			

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Recommendation #1

Continue to gather feedback on an annual basis to gauge teacher experiences regarding:

1. Fidelity in the administration of the ELPATS
2. Quality of the ELPATS (i.e., validity, reliability, robustness in capturing learning activities taking place in the classroom)
3. Usability of the ELPATS data capture system (i.e., IMS-created app and tool)
4. Teacher instruction based on ELPATS results
5. Strengths and challenges associated with ELPATS administration

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### Recommendation #2

Continue to communicate with teachers and administration regarding:

1. What the purpose and objectives of the ELPATS are,
2. What the district does with the data (e.g., reporting, presentations, supporting planning decisions)

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### Recommendation #3

Ensure processes are in place for teachers to administer the ELPATS and enter data so that the results accurately reflect students' phonemic awareness skills. This may include:

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1. Modifications to the ELPATS structure and administration, such as administering the ELPATS later in the year, or providing release time and class coverage to teachers to administer the ELPATS
2. Consistency across schools in who administers the ELPATS, when the ELPATS are administered, and the conditions of the testing environment (i.e., quiet, uninterrupted space)
3. Consistent information about how and where to enter data and timely support with entering the data

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#### **Recommendation #4**

Develop COVID-specific strategies for administering the ELPATS (e.g., use a plexiglass barrier so that children and teachers can hear each other and see each other's mouth formations)

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#### **Recommendation #5**

Provide additional training resources and practice materials to teachers to support their preparation for and administration of the ELPATS

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#### **Recommendation #6**

Identify strategies to improve consistent, timely, and follow-up administration of the ELPATS

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## APPENDIX A

### Survey

# Kindergarten ELPATS

Each January (and June) in Surrey, classroom teachers check in with their kindergarten learners through the ELPATS assessment tool (Early Literacy Phonemic Awareness Test Surrey). In some instances, teachers also use the ELPATS to re-assess children in November of grade one.

With the desire to learn from the experiences of you and your students during the ELPATS this winter, we invite you to offer your insights and feedback via the questions below. We recognize the complexities of this school year and welcome any insights you can offer regarding this year as well as previous years.

We further recognize the pressures on your time and thank you in advance for any anecdotes and information that you can highlight about the ELPATS. Your voice is valuable in determining where support for teachers and students in Surrey may be beneficial.

This survey is anonymous (no teachers or schools identified)

\* Required

1. What grade(s) are you teaching? \*

2. Were the ELPATS administered to your kindergarten students this year? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No



3. Thank you for sharing your insights into why the ELPATS weren't administered.

4. In which context are you teaching?

- ☐ In-person
- ☐ Surrey Blended

5. How were the ELPATS administered to your kindergarten students?

- ☐ In-person
- ☐ Virtually
- ☐ Both

6. Who administers the ELPATS to kindergarten students in your school?

7. What do you feel is the value of the ELPATS?

8. What challenges arose during the administration of the ELPATS? How were those challenges addressed, or how would you adjust next year?

9. What do you do with your students' ELPATS results?

10. What was your experience with the entering of ELPATS data into Learning Matrix?

11. Did you feel well-equipped/trained to administer the ELPATS? Were you aware of ELPATS training videos or workshop sessions?

12. What tools or training would support your administration of the ELPATS moving forward?

13. Do you have any additional experiences or feedback regarding the ELPATS?

## APPENDIX B

### Code Books

### Question 3: What do you feel is the value of the ELPATS?

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
<b>1. ELPATS Reveal Valuable Information about Children's Skills</b>		The ELPATS reveal information about the children's skills, strengths, and weaknesses that is valuable for both them and the children's parents. This information can help them identify at-promise learners and is an important resource for them to refer back to throughout the year.
	a. Helpful for Gauging Students' Current Skills, Strengths, and Areas for Improvement	Helpful resource for gauging students' reading readiness in terms of their current skills and strengths and areas where they are struggling. In particular, the ELPATS reveal important information about students' phonemic awareness, including where the gaps are. ELPATS can reveal new insights that teachers had not realized in class. Teachers prefer to administer the ELPATS themselves so they can see this first hand.
	b. Valuable Source of Information for Parents and Teachers	The ELPATS are a source of concrete data that can be shared with parents and can inform teachers' suggestions to parents about what to work on at home with their kids. Teachers also indicated that they valued the ELPATS.
	c. Helpful for Identifying At-Promise Learners	Teachers believe that the ELPATS help students who are struggling with phonemic awareness and may need extra support with literacy skills.
<b>2. ELPATS Performance Informs Teaching Practice</b>		The ELPATS help to inform teachers' teaching practice for the year by aiding them in determining areas where students need additional support and identifying which students need additional support.
	a. Allows Teachers to Adjust Their Teaching Practices to Meet their Class' Needs	ELPATS performance helps teachers determine areas where their students, as an entire class, need additional support. This directs their instruction for the remainder of the year.
	b. Directs Instruction for Individual Students or Small Groups	The ELPATS provide valuable information about where individual students or small groups need additional instruction and support. This allows teachers to direct their instruction to these skills.
<b>3. Challenges and Concerns Associated with Administering the ELPATS</b>		These responses reflect teachers' challenges and concerns with administering the ELPATS.
	a. Logistical Challenges with Administering the ELPATS and Following up on ELPATS Results (e.g., Limited Time; Administered Too Early in the Year; etc.)	These responses refer to challenges and issues the teachers note with administering the ELPATS, including the fact that they are very time-consuming and limit instructional time, beliefs that they are administered too early in the year, and finding it particularly challenging to administer them virtually. Additionally, there is often limited instructional time to work with small groups on areas where they need further work after receiving ELPATS results.
	b. Tool Limitations and Concerns about Capacity to Capture Student Knowledge and Teacher Instruction	Teachers feel that the ELPATS have limited value, either because they don't provide a full snapshot of the students' skills, don't reflect in-class learning, are too basic, or the teachers are already aware of the students' skills and abilities and the ELPATS don't provide any additional information.
	c. Teachers are Unsure or have Mixed Feelings about ELPATS	Teachers indicate that they are unsure about the value of the ELPATS or express that they have mixed feelings about the utility of the ELPATS. They believe the ELPATS can be a good indicator of students' foundational skills for reading but should not be used as the only indicator. Some teachers already assess these skills on their own. Others do not know why the data needs to be collected for the district.
	d. Challenging to Administer with ELL Students	Teachers note that the ELPATS are especially difficult for ELL learners and can have limited relevance for language learners.



## Question 4: What challenges arose during the administration of the ELPATS? (How were those challenges addressed, or how would you adjust next year?)

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
<b>1. Limited or No Release Time to Administer the ELPATS</b>		Issues that arise from teachers having limited or no release time to administer the ELPATS.
	a. Must Administer ELPATS During Regular Class Time	Teachers with limited or no release time must administer the ELPATS during regular class time. This can have negative impacts on the rest of the class, such as periods where children were not being fully monitored and students missing out on learning time.
	b. Challenging to Manage Class While Administering ELPATS	Teachers find it challenging to manage the rest of the class while administering the ELPATS to individual students.
	c. Limited Class Coverage and Support for Teachers and Students	Even when given release time, it is often not enough time to assess all students. Additionally, teachers' ability to use release time depends on the availability of ELT and LST, which can be inconvenient or limited. At-promise students need additional support.
<b>2. COVID-Specific Challenges Impacted Test Administration</b>		These are challenges that specifically arose due to the circumstances of administering the ELPATS during COVID.
	a. Difficult to Conduct the Assessment while Wearing Masks	Teachers found it challenging to hear the students through the masks and the students couldn't hear the teachers or see their mouths move properly.
	b. Challenges Associated with Administering the ELPATS Virtually	Teachers indicated the challenges associated with administering this assessment virtually, including parents trying to help their children, children being reluctant to make mistakes in front of their parents, audio connection issues, wifi issues, etc.
	c. Safety Concerns, Scheduling Issues, and Lack of Support During COVID Made Test Administration Especially Difficult	Some teachers felt unsafe administering the test due to COVID - particularly because they felt it was necessary for the children to remove their mask during the assessment. Additionally, teachers found it difficult to schedule times for Blended and Online Learning students to complete their assessments and that it was especially difficult to administer the ELPATS during class with no support throughout COVID.
<b>3. Concerns about Whether ELPATS Fully Reflect Students' Skills and Abilities</b>		Teachers express concerns about whether the ELPATS fully and accurately reflect students' skills and abilities due to various test-related, student-related, and testing environment-related circumstances.
	a. Conditions of the Test and Testing Environment May Impact Students' Results	Teachers express concern that the results may not be truly indicative of students' skills and abilities because of the conditions of the test itself (e.g., test questions, students are overwhelmed) or the conditions of the testing environment (e.g., variable test environments, unfamiliar adults conducting assessments, student tiredness, etc.). Teachers also don't like that they feel like they have to teach to the test.
	b. Language Barriers, Absences, and Behavioural Issues Impact Test Administration and Student Performance	The teachers feel that the ELPATS are especially difficult for ELL students, students with behavioural issues or special needs (e.g., student is very shy), or students with no formal education experience and do not fully capture their abilities. Additionally, student absences can negatively affect performance.
<b>4. Logistical Concerns Associated with</b>		Teachers note that there are logistical issues with when and how the ELPATS are administered because they are time consuming and there is limited time and space to conduct them.

<b>Administering the ELPATS</b>	a. ELPATS are Time Consuming and there is Limited Time to Complete Them	The ELPATS are time consuming and can often be too long to complete in one sitting or in one day. There is limited time to complete these assessments, especially with teachers trying to balance students' needs, and it can be challenging to schedule assessments, especially with children that are away or in blended learning. Teachers must sacrifice time working on other work (e.g., prep time) to complete them.
	b. ELPATS are Administered Too Early in the Year and There's Often No Quiet Space to Conduct Assessments	Teachers expressed concern that the ELPATS are administered too early in the year, and they have not had the chance to cover some of the concepts on the test yet. Teachers also find it challenging to find quiet space to conduct the assessments, and thus, find that it is hard to hear the students and/or that the students are distracted during the test.
	c. Unclear Expectations, Unresolved Concerns, and a Lack of Support	Teachers struggle with unclear expectations about when and how to administer the ELPATS, unresolved concerns that they've previously voiced, and a lack of support from other staff regarding ELPATS administration.
<b>5. Modifications that Were Helpful or Would be Helpful in the Future</b>		These responses reflect teachers' perceptions of what makes the ELPATS easier to administer and suggestions for modifications that would be helpful in the future.
	a. Strategies, Solutions, and Suggestions for Overcoming Challenges Associated with Preparing for, Administering, and Following Up on the ELPATS	This category reflects teachers' perceptions of what has made the ELPATS easier to prepare for, administer, and follow up on in the past and what would be helpful for kindergarten teachers in the future. Responses also reflect the fact that teachers believe that the classroom teachers should be conducting the assessments themselves.
	b. Uninterrupted Release Time and Quiet Space to Conduct Assessments	District should support teachers in getting uninterrupted release time to administer the ELPATS in a quiet space. Teachers also need more time for marking and paperwork.
<b>6. Minimal Challenges Administering the ELPATS</b>		Teachers noted that they encountered minimal challenges when it came to administering the ELPATS.
	a. Administration and Team Provided Support	Teachers did not experience many challenges while administering the ELPATS because they had support from both their administration and team. This support included release time as well as a quiet space to conduct the assessments.
	b. Teachers Reported Experiencing Minimal to No Challenges	The teachers reported that they experienced minimal to no challenges while administering the ELPATS. This may reflect the fact that they have fewer students to test or they could better see students' mouths online because they didn't have to wear masks.

## Question 5: What do you do with your students' ELPATS results?

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
1. Use ELPATS as an Assessment Tool to Inform and Support Teaching		Teachers use the ELPATS as a tool for assessing their students. The ELPATS results directly inform their teaching practice and help them determine which students and which areas require additional support.
	a. Target Skills to Work on and Guide Teaching Practice	The ELPATS highlight the skills with which students need additional practice, and thus, allow teachers to target those skills throughout the rest of the year. The ELPATS results guide their teaching practice and planning. They would do the same thing whether teaching online or in person.
	b. Use Results to Form Small Learning Groups	Teachers use the ELPATS results to form small strategic groups for guided instruction where they can target the specific skills with which students require additional support.
	c. Identify and Support Students Who Need More Direct Instruction	The ELPATS allow teachers to identify at-risk students and provide additional support to students who need more targeted and direct instruction. This includes both the teacher providing direct support as well as LSTs and ELTs providing support.
	d. Assessment of Student Learning	The ELPATS allow teachers to assess what students' strengths and challenges are with early literacy as well as how their skills continue to develop throughout the year. It reinforces for teachers the importance of the lessons that they've been teaching throughout the year.
2. Share Results of ELPATS with Others		Teachers share the results of the ELPATS with other people who are invested in the students' learning, including LSTs and ELTs, other teachers, parents, and administration.
	a. Share Results with Other Teachers, Staff, and Administration	Teachers share students' ELPATS results with other teachers, staff, and their administration. This includes other kindergarten teachers, Grade 1 teachers, LSTs and ELTs as well as other staff like speech and language pathologists.
	b. Share Results with Family Members	Teachers share general results (not specific scores) with parents or other family members and recommend skills and activities that they can work on at home with their children.
3. Concerns about Managing ELPATS Results and Outcomes		Teachers expressed concerns about whether ELPATS results were useful, issues with managing the ELPATS results (e.g., issues with entering grades, etc.), and the challenges of following up on the results without additional support.
	a. Need Additional Support	Teachers either explicitly state that they need LST support to help support children who need more direct instruction or note that it is very challenging to actually work on targeting specific skills/areas with small groups because of having to manage so many kids.
	b. Teachers don't Always, Fully, or Correctly Utilize ELPATS Results	Teachers indicated that they are not doing anything with the ELPATS results, that they're continuing to do what they've always done, or that they only enter ELPATS results some of the time. This also includes concern that many staff don't know/care about the ELPATS and that some teachers are giving specific scores to parents when they're not supposed to.
	c. COVID-Related Concerns and Issues Submitting ELPATS Scores Online	Teachers noted that interpreting the ELPATS results is much more challenging with blended learning than in-person learning and that blended learning students scored considerably lower than in-person students. Additionally, because of COVID, they can't pull students in a small group. Teachers also reported issues with submitting their ELPATS scores online.
4. Perform Administrative Duties		This category involves the more administrative activities that teachers perform with the ELPATS results (e.g., entering and filing scores)
	a. Compile and File Results for Future Reference	Teachers compile students' results and put them in the students' files for future reference.
	b. Enter and Upload Results	Teachers or ELTs enter and upload results into the ELPATS database.

## Question 6: What was your experience with the entering of ELPATS data into Learning Metrix?

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
1. Teachers Didn't Enter Data into Learning Metrix		Teachers indicated that they did not enter their data into Learning Metrix for various reasons.
	a. Teachers Didn't Use Learning Metrix	Teachers did not enter data into Learning Metrix this year. Some have done it in previous years while others have no experience with it. Some didn't do it because the site wasn't working. Some indicated that their school wasn't aware they had to enter it or were told someone else would.
	b. Teachers Haven't Entered the Data into Learning Metrix Yet	Teachers indicated that they have not yet entered the data into Learning Metrix.
	c. Another Person Entered or Helped Enter the Data	Teacher had assistance entering the data in Learning Metrix (e.g., from secretary, LST, ELT, administrative assistant, etc.)
2. Negative Experiences with Entering Data into Learning Metrix		These responses reflect negative experiences that teachers had with entering their data into Learning Metrix.
	a. Challenging to Use or Not User Friendly	Teachers found that Learning Metrix is challenging to use, frustrating, or can be glitchy. Some teachers also expressed that they were unhappy with how the database organizes and manages their data.
	b. Too Time Consuming or Inconvenient to Enter Data in Multiple Places	Teachers found that it takes too much time to enter their data into Learning Metrix or that it can be inconvenient to have to enter their data in multiple places. Their responses also reflect the fact that teachers already have limited time and this adds to their full plates. It would be helpful to have release time to work on it.
	c. Need Assistance from Others or are Waiting on Guidance from Others	Teachers indicate that they don't know how to enter the data, question whether they entered the data correctly, need guidance from others, or have contacted others and are waiting for feedback.
	d. Teachers Have Concerns About its Use	Teachers indicated they had concerns about entering the data into Learning Metrix because they're not sure what it is being used for or about the security of the site.
3. Positive Experiences with Entering Data into Learning Metrix		These responses reflect positive experiences that teachers had with entering their data into Learning Metrix.
	a. It was Fine, Easy to Use, or Teachers Encountered No Issues	Teachers indicated that it was "fine," easy to use, or that they didn't experience any issues. They also indicated that they were familiar with the program because they had used it before.
	b. Aggregation of Data Helps Inform Teaching Practice and Reveals Student Performance	Teachers note that the way the data is aggregated helps to inform teaching practices, organize learning groups, and support students with low scores.
4. Issues with Accessing their Class on Learning Metrix		Teachers experienced issues with accessing their class list on Learning Metrix, either because their class wasn't posted or because they experienced login issues.
	a. Issues with Logging Into Learning Metrix	Teachers either experienced difficulties logging into their account or with the password reset function this year and/or in previous years.
	b. Couldn't Promptly Access School or Class List	Teachers couldn't access their current school or class list or they were ready to enter their data before their list was posted.



## Question 7: Did you feel well-equipped/trained to administer the ELPATS? (Were you aware of ELPATS training videos or workshop sessions?)

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
<b>1. Teachers Felt Well Prepared to Administer the ELPATS</b>		Teachers felt well-equipped to administer the ELPATS and/or were aware of the training resources (e.g., workshops and videos) available to them.
	a. Teachers Felt Well-Equipped and Trained to Administer the ELPATS	Teachers reported that they were well-equipped and trained to administer the ELPATS. This also represents responses where teachers indicated that the ELPATS are easy to administer and user friendly.
	b. Teachers are Aware of Training Resources and Believe That They are Helpful	Teachers are aware of the training resources available and believe that they are or would be helpful, especially for new teachers.
	c. Teachers Have Participated in ELPATS Training	Teachers have either been trained by other teachers, attended ELPATS workshops, or have watched training videos in the past.
	d. Teachers Emphasized the Importance of the ELPATS	Teachers indicated that the ELPATS were important and believed that Gr. 1/2 teachers should be familiar with the ELPATS as well.
<b>2. Teachers Did Not Feel Fully Prepared to Administer the ELPATS</b>		Teachers indicated that they either did not feel well-equipped to administer the ELPATS and/or were unaware of training resources (e.g., workshops and videos) available to them.
	a. Teachers were Unaware of Training Resources	Teachers indicated that they were not aware of any ELPATS workshops or training videos. In some cases, they were unaware of these resources because they were new to teaching kindergarten in the school district.
	b. Teachers Didn't Feel Well-Equipped to Administer the ELPATS	Teachers indicated that they did not feel they were well-equipped to administer the ELPATS. In some cases, this was because they were new to teaching kindergarten.
	c. Teachers Encountered Issues During their ELPATS Training that Made it More Challenging	Teachers reported experiencing issues such as technical problems or the length of the training that made the training more challenging.

## Question 8: What tools or training would support your administration of the ELPATS moving forward?

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
1. Modifications to ELPATS Structure and Administration		These responses include suggestions for modifying the environments in which the ELPATS are administered, providing teachers with more time to administer the ELPATS, and restructuring the ELPATS.
	a. Release Time and Class Coverage for ELPATS Administration	Teachers indicate that they need more uninterrupted time to administer the ELPATS as well as enter their results into Learning Metrix. It would be helpful for them to have class coverage while they administer the ELPATS.
	b. COVID-safe and Quiet Environment to Administer the ELPATS	Teachers believe that having a COVID-safe (e.g., plexiglass) and quiet testing environment will increase the ease with which the ELPATS are administered along with the ultimate utility of the results.
	c. Restructure the ELPATS to Improve Assessment Capacity	Teachers made recommendations to restructure the ELPATS, including adding additional components (i.e., writing) and changing the ELPATS to accommodate ELL students.
2. Additional Training, Resources, and Support with the Administration of ELPATS		Teachers would like to see the district provide resources they can use in class to practice early literacy skills. They also think that ELPATS training would be helpful. Teachers would like more guidance about how to administer the ELPATS and enter the data as well as more support administering the exam and following up with at-risk students.
	a. Training on how to Administer the ELPATS and Use Results to Modify Teaching Practices	Teachers suggested that training on how to administer the ELPATS would be helpful, especially for those who are administering it for the first time. This includes more consistent and advanced information about who is responsible for administering the ELPATS as well as where teachers are supposed to report the data. They also noted that training on how to use the ELPATS results to modify teaching practices would be useful.
	b. Additional Support for Teachers and Students	Teachers believe that LSTs should work with classroom teachers in administering the ELPATS and provide more support to vulnerable learners. They also would like additional support entering the results into Learning Metrix or an alternative way to enter the results.
	c. Provide Resources and Practice Materials to Teachers and Parents	Teachers indicated that it would be helpful if the district purchased resources for all Kindergarten teachers to practice early literacy skills in class. It would also be nice to provide parents with practice materials.
	d. Inform Teachers and Administration about the Utility of ELPATS Data	Teachers believe that the utility of the ELPATS must be made clear to all teachers and administration and that kindergarten teachers should be valued. They also want to make sure that the classroom teachers (rather than others who are less familiar with the students) are administering the ELPATS and that Grade 1 teachers are conducting follow-up assessments with at-risk students.
3. No Tools or Training Identified		Teachers did not report any tools or training that would be helpful in their administration of the ELPATS.
	a. No Tools or Training are Necessary	Teachers noted that no additional tools or training were necessary to support their administration of the ELPATS. Some of these teachers indicated that they had been administering the assessment for many years.
	b. Not Sure or Not Applicable	Teachers either indicated that they weren't sure what tools or training would support their administration of the ELPATS or that this question did not apply to them.

## Question 9: Do you have any additional experiences or feedback regarding the ELPATS?

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
<b>1. Additional Resources and Support would be Helpful</b>		Teachers indicated that it would be helpful for the district to provide additional resources for practicing phonemic awareness skills as well as release time for teachers to administer the ELPATS. They also would like to see more support for students, especially at-promise learners.
	a. More Support for Students, Especially At-Promise Learners, ELL Students, and Students with Special Needs	Teachers believe that their students need additional support. In particular, they would like to further support at-promise learners, ELL students, and students with special needs. They also need support with preparing these students for the ELPATS, administering the test to these students, and following up with these students. They suggest that it would be especially helpful to get additional support from LSTs and ELTs.
	b. District and Administration Should Provide Release Time for Teachers to Administer the ELPATS	Teachers believe that the district and their administration should provide teachers with release time to administer the ELPATS. Otherwise, it's very difficult for both the students and the teachers to administer the ELPATS while the teachers are simultaneously trying to manage the rest of their classes.
	c. More Resources, Practice Activities, and Programs Focusing on Phonemic Awareness	Teachers indicated that it would be helpful if the district provided more resources, practice activities, and programs focusing on phonemic awareness so they can continue to reinforce these lessons and skills with their students.
<b>2. Value in Administering the ELPATS and Seeking Teacher Input</b>		These responses include positive remarks about the value of the ELPATS as well as teachers' gratitude for seeking their input. This also includes responses where teachers indicated that they did not have additional feedback.
	a. Teachers Believe the ELPATS is a Valuable Tool and Support its Continued Use	Teachers believe that the ELPATS is a valuable tool for assessing students' current knowledge and determining what skills to work on in class. Teachers also discussed positive experiences they had preparing for the ELPATS and how these contributed to overall student learning. They support the continued use of the ELPATS.
	b. Teachers Provided No Additional Feedback	Teachers did not have any additional feedback.
	c. Teachers Expressed Gratitude for Seeking Their Feedback	Teachers believe that they have a lot of knowledge and experience, but sometimes worry that their opinions don't matter. Therefore, they feel heard and valued when the district is interested in their feedback. They expressed gratitude for the opportunity to provide feedback.
<b>3. Suggestions for Changes to the Way the ELPATS are Structured and Administered</b>		Teachers recommended changes to the way that the ELPATS are structured and/or administered to improve the utility of the results.
	a. Consider Administering the ELPATS Later in the Year or in Grade 1	Teachers are concerned that the ELPATS are administered before they are able to cover certain skills in class, so they suggest that administering them later in the year may be more appropriate. Additionally, some teachers think that students may be more developmentally ready for the assessment in Grade 1.
	b. Restructuring and Updating the ELPATS	Teachers would like to see the ELPATS updated and/or restructured. These responses include suggestions to use a new phonemic awareness test. They also include specific strategies teachers use to administer the test that vary from the typical test administration.
	c. Providing a Quiet Space to Administer the ELPATS	Teachers believe that it is important that they have a quiet place to administer the ELPATS with their students. Otherwise, many students struggle with the assessment.

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description
<b>4. Clear and Consistent Guidelines Regarding the Purpose of, Preparing for, Administering, and Reporting the ELPATS</b>		Teachers would like to see clear and consistent guidelines regarding the purpose of the ELPATS, how to prepare for and administer the ELPATS, as well as where and how to report the ELPATS results.
	a. Consistency Between Schools Regarding Who Administers the Assessment, How the Assessment is Administered, and in the Level of Support Provided	Teachers feel that there is a lack of consistency across schools in terms of who administers the ELPATS (e.g., teachers, LST, etc.), how the assessment is administered (e.g., how teachers ask questions) and in the level of support provided by the administration (e.g., release time). They would like to see these processes standardized across the district, and many teachers note the importance of the classroom teachers being responsible for administering the assessment.
	b. More Transparency Surrounding the Purpose and Value of the ELPATS and How the Data is Used	Teachers and administration need to understand the purpose and value of the ELPATS - that is, why must teachers conduct the ELPATS? Also, there should be more transparency about how the ELPATS data are used, as some teachers are concerned about this.
	c. More Guidance About Preparing for the ELPATS and Entering the Results	Teachers would like more guidance about how to prepare for the ELPATS. Responses also reflect the fact that teachers don't know if and where they are supposed to enter their results and find it difficult to enter the results.
<b>5. COVID-Related and Logistical Challenges to Consider</b>		These responses reflect issues that arose from administering the ELPATS during COVID (e.g., virtual assessment) and other logistical challenges (e.g., limited time) that impacted ELPATS administration and/or student performance.
	a. COVID-Related Challenges with Administering the Exam	These responses represent COVID-related challenges teachers experienced while administering the ELPATS, including issues with administering the assessment virtually, while wearing masks, and due to changes in blended classrooms. They also represent the general challenges of teaching these skills throughout COVID, which likely impacted student performance this year.
	b. Time Consuming and Limited Reflection of Students' Knowledge	The ELPATS are time consuming, especially when teachers are not given designated release time to administer them. Teachers also believe that the ELPATS have a limited capacity to provide new information about the students' skills beyond what the teacher already knows. They are not always the best reflection of the students' knowledge.