

Office Hour FAQ

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education



COLORADO
Department of Education

September 19, 2024 Office Hour Topics:

Screening Students with Disabilities

Alternate Screener is not Available: Accessibility features are available for all test takers, look at [WIDA's Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) and the BVI/DHH guidance to see if it would be appropriate to administer any part(s) of the test or if there is a feature that would meet the needs of the student. If this student has been identified with a disability i.e., must have a documented Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 Plan during the time of screening, use accommodations to provide targeted support.

If you find that accessibility and/or accommodations are not going to increase equitable access and help students overcome the effects of a disability it may be best to evaluate the student's English language proficiency through other means: English Language Development (ELD) staff (in coordination the child's IEP specialist) can observe student language use in class, considering the ELD standards framework and language expectations for the child's grade level, to determine if the student would likely benefit from English language development instruction. It's important that someone familiar with the WIDA Screener and the ELD standards be involved in the alignment process. The goal is to answer the question of whether the child would be considered proficient in English compared to multilingual peers at the same grade level who are proficient or who have reached proficiency in English. A brief description of the process used, and the results need to be documented in the child's cumulative file.

In the rare case that a student with a documented disability requires the use of an accommodation not available on the Screener for grades 1-12 or Screener for Kindergarten*, the general guidance is:

- Consult with the IEP Team, try to administer pieces/domains of the Screener (Kindergarten or grades 1-12) that are appropriate; Interview parents to find out what they think about enrolling the student in a language instruction educational program; Consider a body of evidence that would demonstrate proficiency in domains appropriate for student's grade level; Closely evaluate the body of evidence from general education teachers and other ELD staff;
- **VERY IMPORTANT** to create a check list, decision tree or flow chart etc., to help guide how the district will make ELP decisions when test domains cannot be administered due to student's documented disability which is precluding them from testing. Should the district be audited by CDE, documentation about how language proficiency is determined when a specific domain(s) of the Screener could not be given is required.

Important SY24-25 Updates

- A) Students who re-enroll or transfer back into the district: The enrolling district remains obligated to make ELP decisions following Federal and State identification procedures, to provide written parent notification in a language parents can understand, and to adhere to identification timeline requirements when using ML History seen in Data Pipeline (CEDAR/Cognos Reports) to make program and coding decisions for re-enrolling or transferring back to district students.

See the complete [Identification Guidance](#) for more information about standardized procedures, processes districts must follow when identifying potential ML students and the re-enrolled students update located on page 6.



- B) When Screener test administrator has entered the wrong score, or score entered for another student by mistake, or problems with technology i.e., student audio response was not recorded, contact CLDE to regenerate domain or reset scoring field(s). Never send student personal identifiable information (PII) via email. Please email to schedule a time to talk over the phone to reset/regenerate scoring or test domain for WIDA Screener.
- C) Test Administrators (TAs) are required to complete WIDA Screener modules and pass quizzes (earn 80% or higher) prior to administering and/or scoring Screener assessments. Districts, schools, and charter schools must collect and store TA certificates locally and ensure TAs follow certification guidance. CDE requires TAs to fully recertify every two years. If there is a district or school requirement to recertify yearly, educators administering or scoring Screener assessments must comply with local policy.
- D) Look for new Alternate Screener in SY25-26! This brand-new assessment helps educators identify if students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades K–12 are in fact multilingual learners. Recruitment for the WIDA Alternate Screener Validation Study starts in early August; check the [WIDA Alternate Screener Is Coming](#) webpage to stay in the know about all things WIDA Alternate Screener.

Redesignation: A term that describes a process that districts and schools develop to determine when Multilingual Learners (MLs) are Fluent English Proficient (FEP) and can transition successfully out of English Language Development (ELD) instruction with minimal or no language support. It represents a student’s English language proficiency level has changed from Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor. **Redesignation is based on an evaluation of annual ELP assessment scores (WIDA ACCESS*) and a collection of evidence which supports students have demonstrated proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**

WIDA ACCESS cut points guide districts in making Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP M1) determinations for state reporting:

NEP: 1.0 – 2.4 (Overall)

LEP: 2.5 – 3.9 (Overall)

FEP M1: 4.0 Overall AND 4.0 Literacy

See the complete [Redesignation Guidance](#) for more information about standardized procedures and processes districts must follow when considering students for redesignation.

Pause redesignation for students who took Alternate ACCESS during Jan-Feb 2024: Continue to provide language instruction until score setting is released. EL Exception request will be granted if score setting is not completed by Student October Count (SCO) deadline. CLDE will provide guidance for district seeking an EL Exception request after SOC.

**Screener for Kindergarten is an assessment administered to potential ML students enrolled in kindergarten first and second semester as well as first semester first grade students*

**WIDA ACCESS (Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, ACCESS for ELLs) is a required ELP summative assessment administered annually to all identified NEP and LEP students (FEP, FELL and PHLOTE students are excluded from annual WIDA ACCESS testing). In accordance with ESEA Section 1111(b)(2), students who opt-out of ELD instruction are required to take annual ELP assessments until they meet criteria to redesignate through an evaluation of assessment scores and a collection of local academic evidence. Furthermore, districts may not recommend parents opt their child out of an LIEP or instruction for any reason. If a parent voluntarily decides to opt their child out of ML programs or particular ML services, that child retains their ML designation. Appropriate signed opt-out documentation is important to support legal compliance and should be reviewed with parents annually.*