



WIDA Alternate Screener

What is the screener for potential English Learners (EL) students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

The WIDA Alternate Screener is an assessment designed to provide an initial measure of English language proficiency for students identified with a most significant cognitive disability. It is given to incoming students in grades K-12 to help determine whether they qualify for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services.

Typically, it is appropriate for potential ELs who participate, or who would likely participate, in alternate state content assessments such as the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) or the Kansas Alternate Early Literacy Screener. Students can use their preferred writing instrument and communication tools (e.g., AAC). The Alternate Screener is based on grade bands and takes approximately 30 minutes to administer.

The WIDA Alternate Screener can be downloaded and printed from the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) for free.

Help families of students learn what to expect with Alternate Screener by sharing the [What Is WIDA Alternate Screener?](#) handout.

More information about the Alternate Screener can be found on the [WIDA Alternate Screener webpage](#).

What are the eligibility criteria for WIDA Alternate Screener?

If a language other than English is indicated on at least one of the Home Language Survey questions and there is evidence indicating that the student may have a most significant cognitive disability, the student's IEP team (including the ESOL teacher) should use the [KS WIDA Alternate Screener Participation Decision Tree](#) to determine if the WIDA Alternate Screener is appropriate for the student.

For students who have recently arrived in the United States and have not been identified with a most significant cognitive disability, use the Pre-Screener questions from the [KELPA Screener](#) to determine if a student qualifies for ESOL services.

Students with existing IEPs that indicate the student will, or will most likely, participate in the alternate assessment (DLM) are eligible for the WIDA Alternate Screener. For students who do not have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), the [KELPA Screener](#) is the approved screener.

The following resources may assist the IEP team:

- [Tell Us About Your Child Survey](#)
- [KS WIDA Alternate Screener Participation Decision Tree](#)
- [What Is WIDA Alternate Screener?](#)
- [Alternate Proficiency Level Descriptors](#) and [WIDA Alternate Can Do Descriptors](#)
- [Kansas Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)

What is the required training to administer WIDA Alternate Screener?

The WIDA Alternate Screener may be administered by any certified teacher who enrolls in the brand-new WIDA Alternate Screener training course, which takes about 90 minutes to complete.

Educators must:

1. Successfully complete the WIDA training modules associated with the assessment. All training resources are located in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#)
2. Pass the Speaking and Writing quizzes with a score of 80% or better.

How is the WIDA Alternate Screener scored?

- There are three test forms, by grade cluster: K-2, 3-5, and 6-12.
- A student scoring a 3.0 or below on the overall composite will qualify for ESOL services.
- Refer to the [WIDA Screener Interpretive Guide](#) and use the [WIDA Alternate Screener Score Calculator](#) to convert raw scores (found in the Student Response Booklet) to Proficiency Levels and generate Individual Student Reports (ISRs). **It is important to save or print, as WIDA will not keep the information.**
- All students who score proficient on an approved English Proficiency Screener are not eligible for ESOL services.
- All students who are not proficient on an approved screener are eligible for ESOL services, and a parent notification letter must be sent home.
- After being identified, all eligible students must be assessed on a state approved English Language Proficiency assessment annually. The majority of K-12 students will be assessed using the KELPA summative assessment. Only those students with the most significant cognitive disability will be assessed using the WIDA Alternate ACCESS

assessment. More information about the Alternate ACCESS assessment can be found on the [WIDA KS Page](#).

Can a previously identified English Learner student be rescreened with the WIDA Alternate Screener?

Screening, if required, must be completed with any administrative considerations, universal tools, or accommodations that the ESOL/special educators deem necessary. This procedure must be completed in accordance with the outlined guidelines, and the student must be placed in the appropriate language instruction educational program (LIEP) based on the information available at the conclusion of the identification procedure.

If a student was screened with the KELPA screener and is placed in an LIEP and later is determined to have a significant cognitive disability, the IEP team may determine that the KELPA screener affected the validity of the screening. If the IEP specifies that the student is eligible for the alternate assessment and the student has not participated in the WIDA Alternate Screener or Alternate ACCESS, then the student can be re-screened with the WIDA Alternate Screener.

Likewise, if a student participated in the WIDA Alternate Screener but not the KELPA or Alternate ACCESS, and it is later determined that they should have participated in the KELPA Screener then the student can be re-screened with the KELPA Screener.

If the student does not meet the criteria for identification as an EL based on this subsequent testing, then the district should submit KIDS records with an ESOL exit date.

Important Reminders:

As the WIDA Alternate Screener is administered to students with extremely limited literacy skills and exposure to formal assessment, LEA staff should note the following points:

- The WIDA Alternate Screener allows the test administrator to pause and potentially discontinue a domain if the student is unable or unwilling to continue.
- The capacity of the WIDA Alternate Screener to accurately determine the English language proficiency of a kindergarten-aged student may be influenced by interpersonal and environmental factors unrelated to the assessment's design. A student in this age group may have extremely limited or no experience with formal assessment and may exhibit reservation and situational anxiety if placed in an unknown environment and/or with an unfamiliar adult administering the assessment.
- LEAs are strongly encouraged to implement the following best practices prior to screener administration:
 - Introduce and allow the student to explore the testing environment,

- Ensure the student has experienced one or more positive interactions with the test administrator(s), and
- Provide one or more structured classroom activities that align to the assessment's administrative format and process.

For questions related to state policy or the contents of this document, please contact:

- Cary Rogers for WIDA Alternate ACCESS eligibility
- Emily Scott for EL support, KELPA, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment
- Chelsea Pelfrey for WIDA Secure Portal and WIDA AMS

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For questions related to WIDA's website, resources, or assessments, please contact the WIDA Client Services Center at:

- help@wida.us
- (866) 276-773