

Updated Guidance for 2026-2027

MARYLAND GUIDANCE: WIDA ACCESS is an assessment for Multilingual Learners (MLs) in grades 1 through 12 (with an option for students in grades 4-12 to take a paper-based Writing test). However, MLs in Kindergarten and MLs who are eligible to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS will continue to take the paper-based assessments. Additionally, MLs with disabilities may take the paper-based WIDA ACCESS Online if indicated in their IEP or 504 Plan. The WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual and other resources related to accessibility features and accommodations can be found on the WIDA website at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/accessibility>.

WIDA ACCESS Online, WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS are English language proficiency tests; as such, it is a tool used to assess the construct of receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills in English. Because it focuses on language rather than on content-area knowledge and skills, some accessibility features and accommodations that might be appropriate for the classroom or content-area tests should not be used with WIDA ACCESS as they would invalidate the construct being measured. This would result in students taking a test that is no longer measuring just their English language proficiency making the scores invalid.

See IDEA (1997 and 2004) 34 CFR § 300.160 (b)(2)(i) and 34 CFR § 300.160 (b)(2)(ii) as excerpted below:

- (2) The State’s (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA’s) guidelines must—
 - (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and
 - (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

NOTE: Accommodations for WIDA ACCESS are available ONLY for MLs with disabilities when they are listed in an approved IEP and 504 Plan. The following accessibility features on Maryland state content assessments are accommodations on WIDA ACCESS that are allowed ONLY for MLs with disabilities.

- 1r: Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Assessments
- 1s: Human Reader or Human Signer for the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Assessments
- 1t: Writing Tools
- 2c: Separate or Alternate Location
- **4f: Speech-to-Text (New for 2027)**
- **4a: Assistive Technology (New for 2027)**
- 4g: Human Scribe Response

Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, & Accommodations Manual	WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
1r: Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Assessments	IR: In-Person Human Reader RP: Repeat In-Person Human Reader	CBT PBT	N/A	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
1s: Human Reader or Human Signer for the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Assessments	IR: In-Person Human Reader RP: Repeat In-Person Human Reader	CBT PBT	N/A	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
1t: Writing Tools	WD: Word Processor or Similar Keyboarding Device Note: Any spelling or grammar checking function is turned off, any dictionary or thesaurus features are disabled, and that the device is not connected to the internet.	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	N/A
2c: Separate or Alternate Location	NS: Test Administered in a Non-School Setting	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3a: Assistive Technology (Non-screen reader) (also a response accommodation 4a)	AT: Assistive Technology (New for 2027)	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3c: Refreshable Braille Display	BR: Braille Note: Requires approval from MSDE Office of Assessment.	CBT	CBT	CBT	CBT
3d: Hard Copy Braille Edition		PBT	PBT	PBT	PBT
3f: Large Print Edition	LP: Large Print	PBT	PBT	PBT	PBT
3g: Paper Based Edition (Paper Test) *Refer to 4K	Order the paper version of WIDA ACCESS.	PBT	PBT	PBT	PBT
3i: Text-to-Speech for ELA/Literacy	IR: In-Person Human Reader RP: Repeat In-Person Human Reader	CBT PBT	N/A	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3k: Human Reader/Human Signer for ELA	IR: In-Person Human Reader RP: Repeat In-Person Human Reader LV: Low Vision Script *Available for ACCESS for Kindergarten only	CBT PBT	N/A	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3m: Human Signer for Test Directions	SD: Interpreter Signs Test Directions in ASL Note: Translation of actual test items is not allowed.	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3n. Manual Control of Audio	MC: Applies only to WIDA ACCESS Paper (New for 2027)	PBT	N/A	PBT	PBT
3o. Repeat Item Audio	RA: Repeat Item Audio *Note: Must be pre-selected in the WIDA AMS for CBT.	CBT PBT	N/A	CBT	CBT PBT

Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, & Accommodations Manual	WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
3p. Notes and Outlines	Accessibility Features for All	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
3q. Unique Presentation Accommodations	<i>Unique accommodations form must be submitted to MSDE Office of Assessment by the LAC or ML coordinator at least six weeks before testing and must be approved by the office to be used for WIDA ACCESS. Refer to Appendix F: Unique Accommodations Form in the Maryland Assessment, Accessibility & Accommodations Manual.</i>	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
4a: Assistive Technology	AT: Assistive Technology (New for 2027)	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
4b: Braille Notetaker	BR: Braille *Requires approval from MSDE Office of Assessment	PBT	PBT	PBT	N/A
4f: Speech to Text	WD: Word Processor or Similar Keyboarding Device STT: Speech to Text (New for 2027) Note: Any spelling, word prediction, or grammar checking function is turned off, any dictionary or thesaurus features are disabled, and that the device is not connected to the internet.	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
4g: Human Scribe Response	SR: Scribe	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
4i: Monitor Test Response	Accessibility Features for All	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT
4k: Answers recorded in test book (for students taking a paper assessment) *Refer to 3g	MLs with disabilities who take the paper-based WIDA ACCESS per their IEP or 504 Plan write answers in test book.	PBT	PBT	PBT	PBT
4l: Recording Devices	RD: Recording Device and Transcription	N/A	N/A	CBT PBT	N/A
4o. Unique Response Accommodations	<i>Unique accommodations form must be submitted to the MSDE Office of Assessment by the LAC or ML coordinator at least 6 weeks prior to testing and must be approved by the office to be used for WIDA ACCESS. Refer to Appendix F: Unique Accommodations Form in the Maryland Assessment, Accessibility & Accommodations Manual.</i>	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT

Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, & Accommodations Manual	WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
5a. Extended Time	ES: Extended Speaking Test Response Time *Note: Must be pre-selected in the WIDA AMS for CBT.	N/A	N/A	N/A	CBT PBT
5b. Unique Timing and Scheduling Accommodations	EM: Extended Testing of a Test Domain over Multiple Days <i>Unique accommodations form must be submitted to the MSDE Office of Assessment by the LAC or ML coordinator at least 6 weeks prior to testing and must be approved by the office to be used for WIDA ACCESS. Refer to Appendix F: Unique Accommodations Form in the Maryland Assessment, Accessibility & Accommodations Manual.</i>	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT	CBT PBT