Understanding and Implementing the WIDA ACCESS tests

August 13. 2025

dese **MASSACHUSETTS**
Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education

2026 ACCESS: Important Dates

Before Testing	Test administrators complete training and certifications	
	DESE orders test materials for schools	
	Online test set-up (schools review and update student test registration information in WIDA AMS as needed)	
	Schools receive paper test materials	
Test Administration	**Administer ACCESS tests**	
During Test Window	Additional Test Materials Ordering	**To be determined**
After Testing	Schedule UPS pickup of paper testing materials	
	Deadline for UPS pickup of paper materials for on-time reporting	
Before Results are Reported	Pre-reporting data validation (schools correct student demographic information, accommodations used, and Do Not Score codes in WIDA AMS)	
Results Reported	Results posted in WIDA AMS	
	Paper results received in schools and districts	
After Results are Reported	Post-reporting data validation (schools' last chance to correct student demographic information, accommodations used, and Do Not Score codes in AMS)	
	Validated and corrected results posted in WIDA AMS	

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Participation Requirements

- Students in K-12 must take **WIDA ACCESS** if they:
  - were reported as EL in the October 2025 SIMS, **OR**
  - arrived after October 2025 and will be reported as EL in the March 2026 SIMS
  - are new to MA and arrived and were identified as EL on or before February 6, 2026.
- Students should be considered for **WIDA Alternate ACCESS** if they:
  - Are a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and
  - Meet all of the criteria found in the "Participation Guidelines for WIDA Alternate ACCESS 2025-2026" (to be updated this fall)
- Students whose parents have opted them out of EL services are required to take WIDA ACCESS, Kindergarten ACCESS, or WIDA Alternate ACCESS until they meet exit criteria*
- Accommodations for WIDA ACCESS, Kindergarten ACCESS, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS should be listed in the student's signed IEP
  - Accommodations may be different from those on MCAS
  - If the student is taking the WIDA Alternate ACCESS, this must also be listed in the IEP

*Exit criteria for ACCESS and Kindergarten ACCESS is 4.2 overall and 3.9 literacy. Exit criteria for WIDA Alternate ACCESS is the scale score equivalent of P2 on the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs and a score of 12 on the English Language Observation Form.

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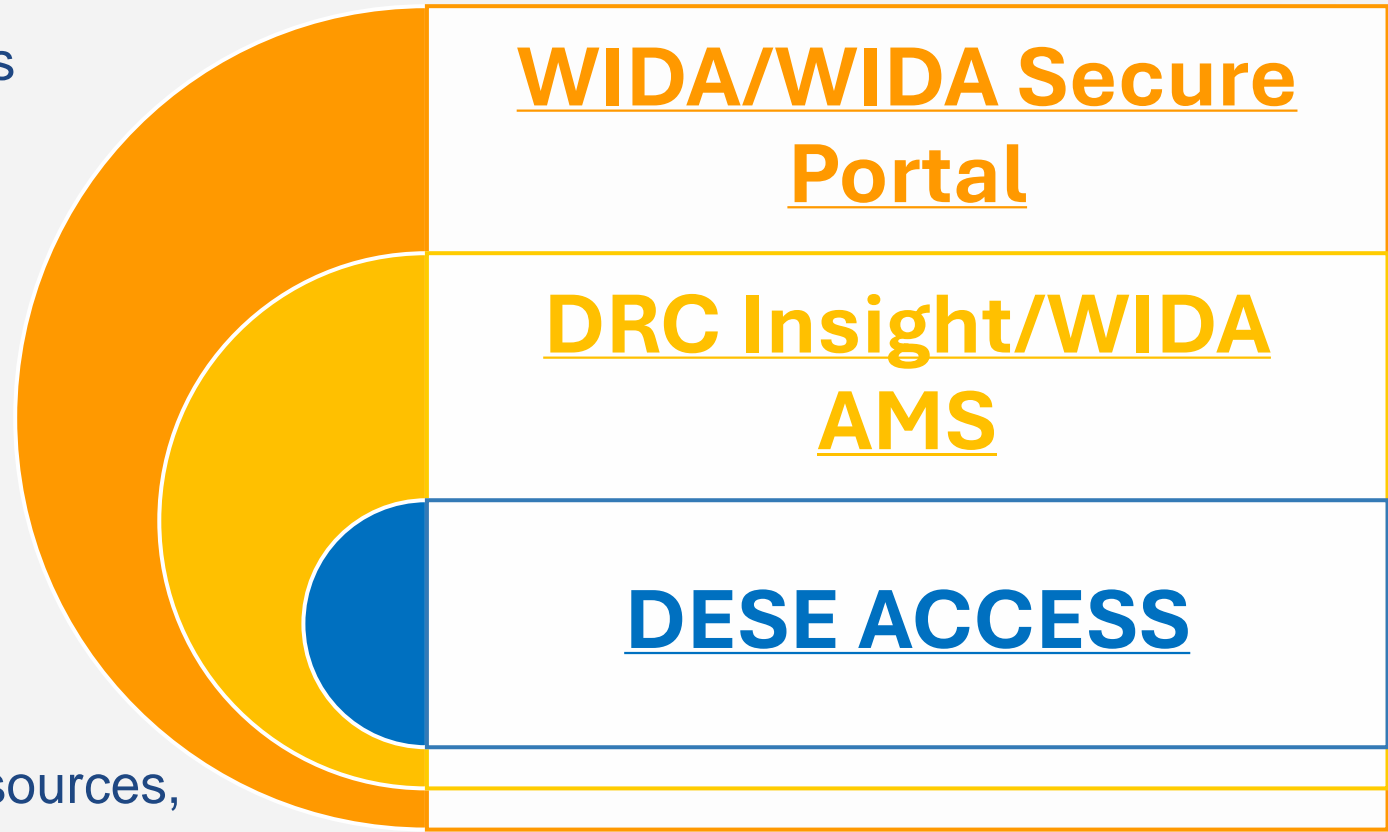and Secondary Education

Modes of Testing

- WIDA ACCESS Online (grades 1-12) is the default testing mode
  - Grades 1-3 writing booklets are considered an online test
- WIDA ACCESS Paper (grades 1-12) is for:
  - Students with paper-based testing written in their IEP
  - First-year ELs who are unfamiliar with online testing or use of computers
- WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten is administered 1:1 and locally scored
- WIDA Alternate ACCESS (grades K-12) administered 1:1, locally scored
  - Only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
  - Must be written in the IEP

WIDA ACCESS Accommodation and Code	Online	Paper	Kinder	Alt
Extended Speaking Test Response Time (ES)	X	X		
In-person Human Reader (IR)	X	X		
Repeat In-person Human Reader (RP)	X	X		
Interpreter Signs Directions in ASL (SD)	X	X	X	X
Manual Control of Item Audio (MC)	X	X		
Repeat Item Audio (RA) NOTE: This is not "read aloud"	X	X		
Scribe (SR)	X	X	X	X
Recording Device and Transcription (RD)	X	X	X	X
Test Administered in a Non-school Setting (NS)	X	X	X	X
Word Processor or Similar Keyboarding Device (WD)	X	X	X	X
Braille (BR)		X		
Large Print (LP)		X	X	
Low-vision Script (LV) new in 2026, only for ACCESS Kindergarten			X	
Extended Testing of a Test Domain Over Multiple Days (EM)	Not allowed in MA for any ACCESS test			

Where to Find Information

- WIDA/WIDA Secure Portal
  - General information about WIDA and its products
  - Test administration training courses
  - WIDA and DRC webinars
  - MA State page of the WIDA website
    - MA specific information and policies
    - DESE webinar PowerPoints
- DRC Insight/WIDA AMS
  - Testing
  - Initial results and reports
- DESE ACCESS webpage
  - Massachusetts specific information, resources, policies, aggregate results, guidelines

WIDA/WIDA Secure Portal

DRC Insight/WIDA AMS

DESE ACCESS

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WIDA Website

https://wida.wisc.edu

- Public resources and information
- ELD Standards Framework
- Can Do Descriptors
- Score calculators
- Login to WIDA Secure Portal
  - Trainings
  - Resources
  - Webinars
- Links to state pages and state-specific information

WIDA Secure Portal

- Test administration trainings
- WIDA/DRC webinars
- Manuals and guides
- Parent resources
- Certifications

MA State Page on the WIDA Website

https://wida.wisc.edu/memberships/consortium/ma

DRC Insight (WIDA AMS)

- **Student management and test registration**
- <u>**Additional**</u> **materials ordering**
- **Add student to AMS or remove from registration**
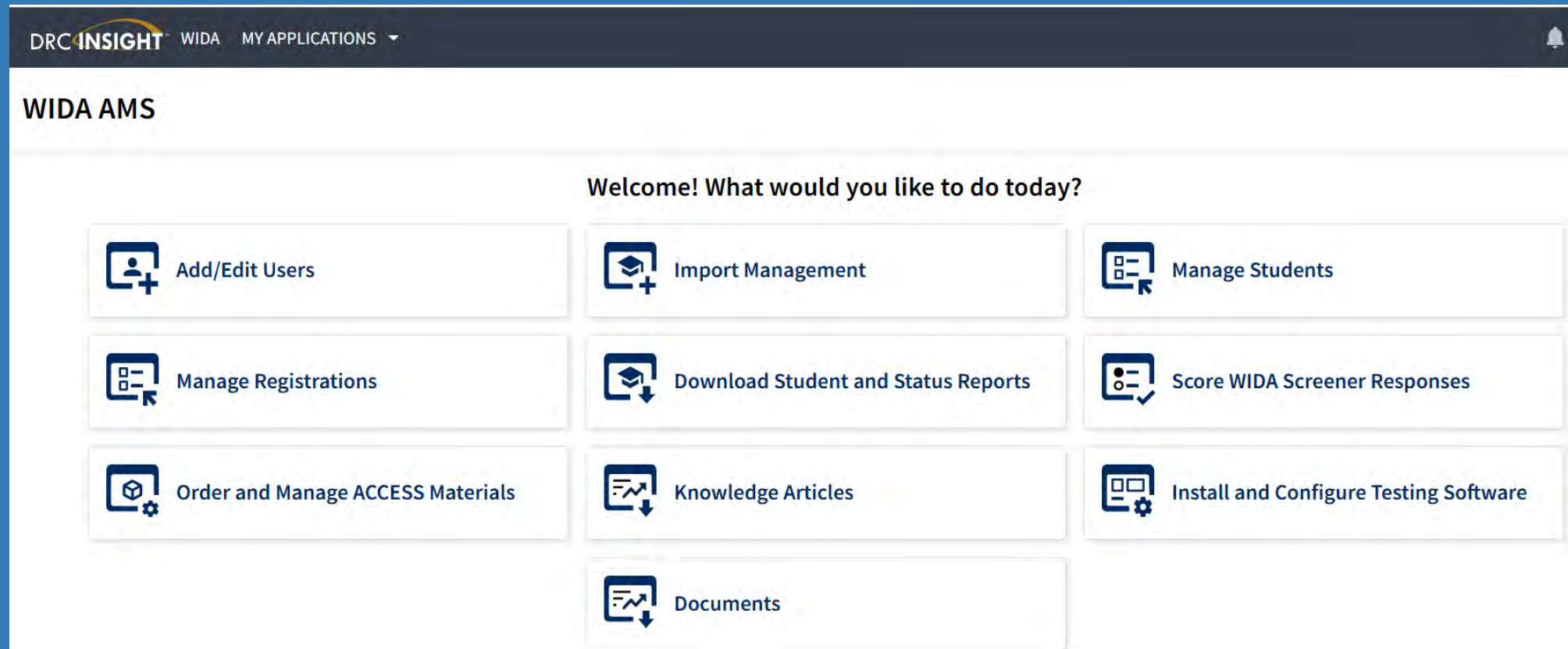- **Initial score reports**
- **Data validation**
- **Knowledge articles**

DESE ACCESS Web Page

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Student Assessment

Graduation Requirements

MCAS

MCAS Alternate Assessment

Performance Appeals

Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs)

ACCESS for ELLs
- Results

National/International Tests

Parent/Guardian Information

Training Opportunities

ACCESS for ELLs
(Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners)

ACCESS for ELLs Updates

There are no ACCESS for ELLs Headlines at this time

ACCESS for ELLs Updates Archive

Background and Student Participation

Federal and state laws require that English learner (EL) students be assessed annually to measure their proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English, as well as the progress they are making in learning English. In fulfillment of these laws, EL students are required to participate in ACCESS for ELLs tests. ACCESS for ELLs tests are administered annually in January-February.

EL students are also required to participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests for their grade.

Participation Requirements for EL Students, including EL students with disabilities, in MCAS

Participation Guidelines for WIDA Alternate ACCESS 2024-2025

2025 ACCESS Individual Student Results

[DESE Security Portal](#)
DropBox and Edwin
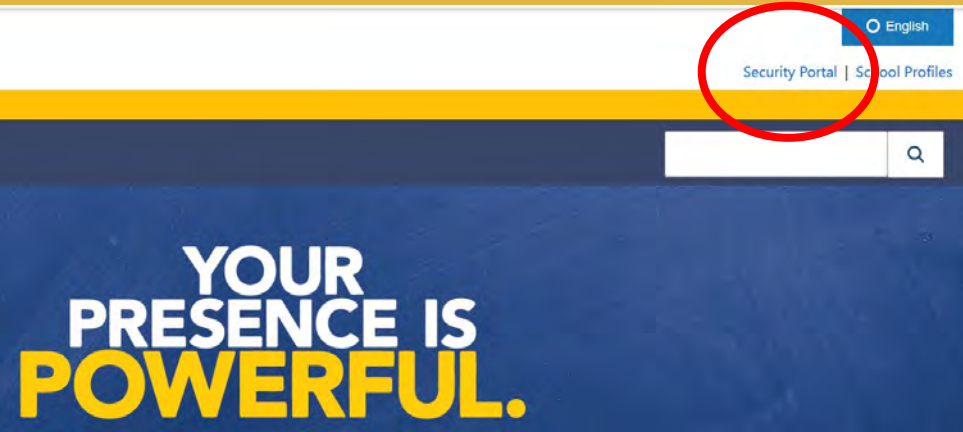
- Round 1 – *without* Student Growth Percentile on ACCESS (SGPA), progress indicator, attainment, or 2026 targets
    - **DropBox** in early July and in **Edwin** in mid-July.
- Round 2 – *with* Student Growth Percentile on ACCESS (SGPA), progress indicator, attainment, 2026 targets
    - **DropBox** in mid-August and in **Edwin** in late August
- Round 3 – final results available in December

Additional information regarding WIDA ACCESS reporting can be found on the [Massachusetts state page of the WIDA website](#) under Manuals, Guides and Workshops in the [DESE ACCESS for ELLs Reporting Webinar — May 2025](#) PowerPoint presentation (4 parts).

Trainings and Workshops for Test Coordinators and Test Administrators

Past DESE training and workshop PowerPoints are found on the MA State page of the WIDA website under Manuals, Guides and Workshops.

WIDA and DRC trainings and workshops are found in the WIDA Secure Portal.

Registration information for DESE trainings and workshops will be announced in EL Assessment Updates.

Registration for WIDA and DRC trainings are available in the WIDA Secure Portal.

Training and Certification for Administering ACCESS Tests

- Training and certification is required every two years in Massachusetts.

- Test administration training courses are updated every **September 1** and can be found in the WIDA Secure Portal.

- WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten training is available **September 29.**

- If you took the trainings last year (September 1, 2024 and later) and certified for tests you will administer, you do not need to recertify in 2025-2026, except for Kindergarten. *All test administrators must take the Kindergarten training if administering the Kindergarten test in 2026.*

- You may want to review the training courses, even if you are not required to recertify, to become familiar with technical enhancements to WIDA AMS and DRC INSIGHT.

To Do

- Update School and District Profiles to ensure accurate delivery of materials
- Ensure students' EL status in October SIMS is correct
- Check with ACCESS Test Coordinators to ensure test administrators are trained and certified for the tests they will administer
- Review the Checklists from the MA state page of the WIDA website (2026 checklists will be updated in September)
- Watch for EL Assessment Updates for timely information and DESE webinar registrations throughout the year
- Bookmark the MA state page of the WIDA website for testing schedule and resources, and DESE ACCESS web page for state specific guidance

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Directing Your Questions

MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
access@mass.gov

781-338-3625

Policies and program management, preparation for test administration – DESE ACCESS web page

WIDA

help@wida.us

866-276-7735

Training and manuals - WIDA Secure Portal

MA specific information - MA State page of the WIDA website

Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)
WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com
855-787-9615

Technology, ordering additional test materials, shipping test materials, testing, scoring, reporting - DRC Insight/WIDA AMS

Contact Information

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Student Assessment Services

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