

# **WIDA Assessments for Multilingual English Learners on IEPs**

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# Welcome!

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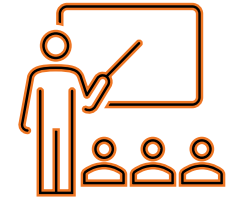
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# Today's Topics

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- Welcome!
- Our Students
- What is WIDA? What is ACCESS?
- ACCESS: test and scoring
- ACCESS Universal Tools
- Paper or Online Testing?
- ACCESS Accommodations
- Alternate ACCESS or ACCESS?
- Alternate ACCESS Accommodations
- Recording Accommodations
- Additional WIDA resources

# Who are our students?



- **Multilingual Student**

- Any student who speaks more than one language, to any degree of proficiency
- Students can also be biliterate or multiliterate (reading and writing)

- **English Learner**

- A student who has been identified and screened as [needing additional English Language Development support](#) to access the curriculum
- Identified in grades PK-12; tested in grades K-12
- A legal definition

- **And also...Adults!**



# Who are the Adults?

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- Family members may have varying levels of home language and English proficiencies in both speaking and literacy
  - Remember for notifications and invitations that are sent home
- Language and mode of communications
  - Remember for meetings at the school
  - Translation and interpretation services
- [ParentNotices](#) – some required documents already available in multiple languages
- WIDA has some resources about the ACCESS in multiple languages

# How are English Learners identified?

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## Multi-step process

1. Home Language Survey (required part of school registration documentation) indicates use of languages other than English in the home
2. School conducts family interviews, observations, review of educational history  
Alternate ACCESS: [Tell Us About Your Child Survey](#)
3. If determined that languages other than English are a significant part of the child's life, then one of the ACCESS Screeners are used
4. If the overall screener score is less than 5 on the ACCESS or less than 4 on the Alternate ACCESS, then the student is a designated English Learner
5. Student's information is submitted to the AOE [Home Language Survey](#) site and recorded internally

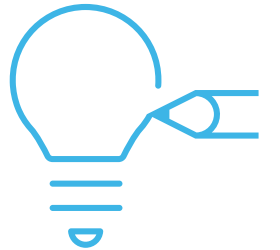


# What is WIDA? What is ACCESS?

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- What is WIDA?

- Vermont's English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment organization
- Leads the ELP assessment for 41 states, territories, and federal agencies
- Provides resources and professional development
- Assessment developer

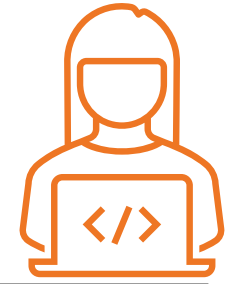


- What is ACCESS?

- ACCESS – annual ELP assessment required for all K-12 designated English Learners
- K-12 grade English Learners must take an annual ELP assessment
- The actual assessments

- What is DRC?

- DRC is the administrator of the WIDA tests (aka WIDA AMS)
- Registration and administration of the tests is done through DRC



# Tell me more about ACCESS!

- **Domains**

- Tests 4 domains of language separately: Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing

- **ACCESS Options**

- Online: grades 1-12; grades 1-3 written portion is on paper
- Kindergarten: paper-based; administered one-on-one; early stopping rules
- Paper: grades 1-12; mainly for newcomers or those with identified needs
- Alternate ACCESS: K-12 students with significant cognitive disabilities; paper-based; administered one-on-one; early stopping rules

- **Logistics**

- Test Window: Early January through mid-March
- K and Alternate ACCESS length: up to an hour; early stopping rules
- Online and Paper: 3-4 hours, separated by domains

- **[ACCESS for ELLs District and School Test Coordinator Manual](#)**





# Tell me about ACCESS scores!

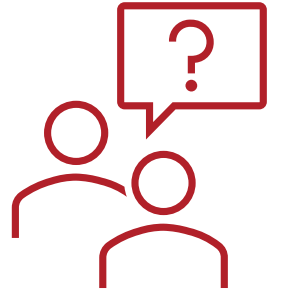
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- **ACCESS** (all types of assessments)
  - Scored on a 6-point proficiency scale
  - EL students need to score an overall proficiency level of 5 in order to automatically exit from EL program and services
  - Based on [Standards Framework Performance Level Descriptors](#)
- **Alternate ACCESS**
  - Scored on a 5-point proficiency scale
  - EL students need to score an overall proficiency level of 4 in order to automatically exit from EL program and services
  - Based on the [Alternate Performance Level Descriptors](#)
- **Both**
  - Scores and proficiency levels provided for all language domains

# WIDA Accommodations

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- Accommodations may be different for the VTCAP or other assessments compared to ACCESS
  - Test of English Proficiency, not of content knowledge
- Key considerations:
  - Are the accommodations used by the student in the everyday classroom?
  - Are the accommodations listed on an active IEP/ 504 plan?
  - Do the accommodations interfere with the test of English proficiency?
  - Do the accommodations remove a testing barrier for the student?
- Determined as part of a team of educators and support folks
- Details about each type of accommodation found in the [Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)





# ACCESS Universal Tools

- Audio Aids
  - Provided by school/student
- Color Preferences
  - Online choices
  - Physical overlays provided by school/student
- Highlighters
  - Online options
  - Physical tools
- Keyboard Navigation
  - Additional considerations needed
- Line Guide/ Tracking Tool
  - Online
  - Physical tools
- Low-Vision Aids or Magnification Devices
  - Online
  - Physical tools
- Scratch Paper
  - Must be securely destroyed after testing
  - Online version also available

These don't need to be pre-selected for use on the ACCESS.





# Paper or Online ACCESS?

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- **Online ACCESS**

- Default for most students
- Grades 1-3 take Writing on paper, other domains online (still counts as “online”)

- **Paper ACCESS**

- For students whose IEPs indicate the need for paper testing
  - For newcomers who are unfamiliar with using computers
  - For specific educational setting needs
- Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS are completely on paper
  - Educators must choose either online OR paper





# ACCESS Accommodations

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- Braille
- Extended Speaking Test Response Time
- Extended Testing of a Test Domain Over Multiple Days
- In-Person Human Reader
- Repeat In-Person Human Reader
- Interpreter Signs Test Directions in ASL
- Large Print
- Low Vision Script
- Manual Control of Item Audio
- Repeat Item Audio
- Scribe
- Recording Device and Transcription
- Test Administered in a Non-School Setting
- Word Processor or Similar Keyboarding Device

## Braille (BR)



Materials must be ordered.

*This accommodation is available for:*

☒ **WIDA ACCESS Paper**

*In these domains:*

☒ **Listening**

☒ **Reading**

☒ **Speaking**

☒ **Writing**

## Manual Control of Item Audio (MC)



This option must be pre-selected.

*This accommodation is available for:*

☒ **WIDA ACCESS Paper**

☒ **WIDA ACCESS Online**

☒ **WIDA Screener Paper**

☒ **WIDA Screener Online**

*In these domains:*

☒ **Listening**

☒ **Speaking**

☒ **Writing**



# ACCESS Accommodations Selection

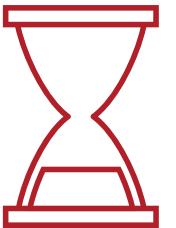
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## Order Additional Materials

- Braille
- In-Person Human Reader
- Large Print
- Low Vision Script

## Select in DRC Before Testing

- Extended Testing of a Test Domain Over Multiple Days
- Extended Speaking Test Response Time
- Manual Control of Item Audio
- Repeat Item Audio





# ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS: Which One?

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- **ACCESS**

- Default for majority of English Learner students

- **Alternate ACCESS**

- Needs an IEP which demonstrates need for alternate content assessment
- Student has a significant cognitive disability
- Student is an English Learner
- For students who can't take the ACCESS with accommodations

- **Decision Tree!**

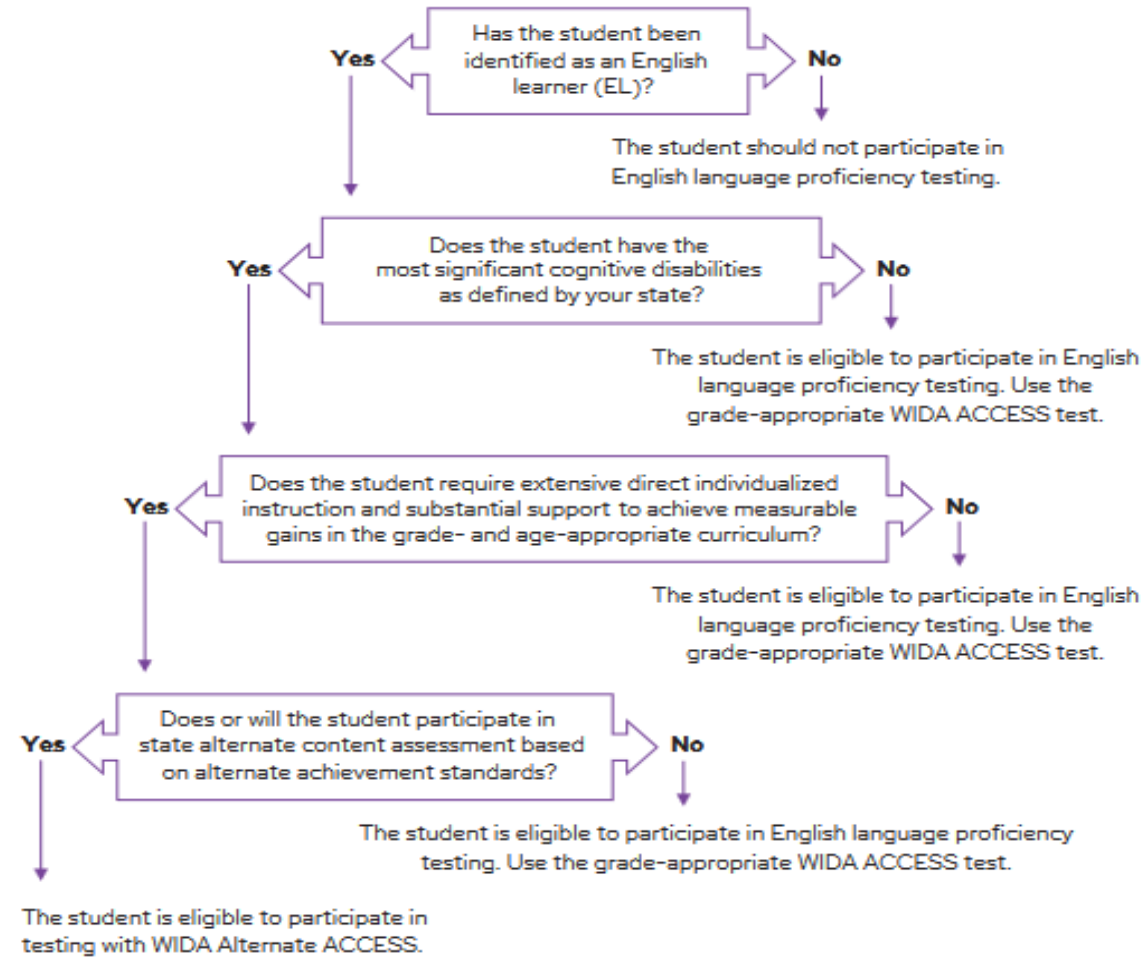






# Decision Tree

## WIDA Alternate ACCESS Participation Decision Tree



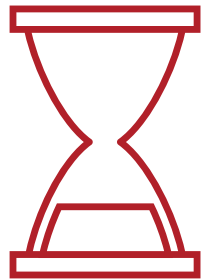
Assessment participation decisions must be made by an IEP team, not an individual. Check with your state education agency on specific criteria for identifying ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities.



# Alternate ACCESS Accommodations

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- **Some differences which mean that not all accommodations apply**
  - Administered one-on-one
  - Early stopping rules for each domain
  - Test Proctor scores all domains and records responses in the test booklet
  - Test in size 18 font or larger
- **Available accommodations include:**
  - Extended testing of a domain over multiple days
  - Interpreter signs directions in ASL
  - Scribe
  - Recording device and transcription
  - Test administered in non-school setting
  - Word processor or similar keyboarding device

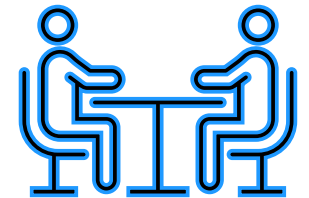




# How are these decisions recorded?


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- Two ways these decisions should be recorded:
- **At a local level**
  - Include all people who should be involved
  - If there are competing needs, determine which support is the best fit
  - Keep a record of the decisions in a way which other relevant people can find them (including for the next year's test, if needed)
  - Checklist resources available for each test to keep track!
- **In DRC** to ensure they are available for the actual test
  - Check that the test registration indicates the correct accommodation
  - Some accommodations change the online test; some do not
  - Some need to have additional materials ordered



# Checklist Example

Not a mandatory item to use, but decisions should be recorded and tracked in some way.



WIDA  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Accommodations: WIDA ACCESS Online

Completed by:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>
Student:	<input type="text"/>	ID number:	<input type="text"/>
District/School:	<input type="text"/>	Grade:	<input type="text"/>
Team Members:	<input type="text"/>		

**Accommodations:**

- Extended Speaking test response time (ES).** *Pre-select in WIDA AMS.*  
Listening *(not applicable)* Speaking ☐  
Reading *(not applicable)* Writing *(not applicable)*
- Extended testing of a test domain over multiple days (EM).** *Provide written request and evidence of need to state education agency.*  
Listening ☐ Speaking ☐  
Reading ☐ Writing ☐
- In-person human reader (IR).** *Read item text, graphics labels, and answer choices exactly as they appear.*  
Listening ☐ Speaking ☐  
Reading *(not applicable)* Writing ☐



STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Drc Use Only - Sample School

Home → Student Management

Sample Student

District: Drc Wida State  
Site: Drc Use Only - Sample School - 99999  
Academic Session: 2025 - 2026

CancelSave

DetailsAccommodationsAssessmentsAudit

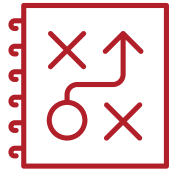
Search Accommodations

Accommodations	ACCESS - Listening	ACCESS - Reading	ACCESS - Speaking	ACCESS - Writing
BR - Braille	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ES - Extended speaking test response time	N/A	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
EM - Extended testing of a test domain over multiple days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Other Considerations for Testing

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- Use of an **Augmentative/ Alternative Communication** device (AAC)
  - Don't program specific WIDA/ ACCESS responses
  - Student should be familiar with its use and use it regularly
  - Proctor should be prepared to accept nonstandard responses
- **Domain Exemptions**
  - Student may be exempted from specific domains (i.e.: Listening for a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing)
  - Email me for documentation
- **Scoring**
  - Know what *test proctor* is responsible for scoring and what *WIDA* scores

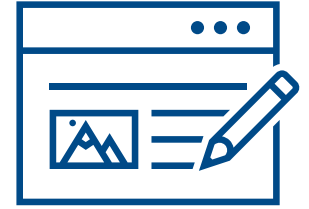




# Key Takeaways

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- The Multilingual and Student Services teams should work together to determine which accommodations are appropriate and make sure they're indicated on the IEPs
  - Purpose of accommodations is to remove barriers, not “do better”
- Students must have an active IEP or 504 plan to be assigned accommodations
- Include students in grades K-2 (before the state content assessments) as the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS start in K
- Test proctors should be aware of which accommodations are appropriate for students and ensure they're implemented with fidelity (need annual recertification)
- Practice accommodations as needed with students
- Ask questions!



# How can I find out more?

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- Ask your District Test Coordinator (DTC) or email me to get a free account for the WIDA Secure Portal
  - Must be connected with a school/ SU/ SD in Vermont
- Work through the Self-Paced workshops
- Work collaboratively with your Special Education, Multilingual, and Student Support Teams
- Attend the informational workshop in December!
- Schedule a time to chat with me about your questions or specific situations



# Resources

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- [ACCESS for ELLs District and School Test Coordinator Manual](#) (log-in required)
- [Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) for both ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS
- Accommodations Checklists: [ACCESS Online](#), [ACCESS Paper](#), [Kindergarten ACCESS](#), [Alternate ACCESS](#), [Online Screener](#), [Paper Screener](#), [Kindergarten Screener](#), [Alternate Screener](#)
- [Alternate ACCESS Decision Tree](#)
- Alternate ACCESS: [Tell Us About Your Child Survey](#)
- [Alternate Performance Level Descriptors](#), an extension of the standards framework with performance level descriptors
- [Home Language Survey](#)
- [Knowledge article](#) about recording accommodations in DRC (log-in required)
- [ParentNotices](#) – for documentation; some has been translated
- [Public-Facing WIDA website](#)
- Standards Framework with [Performance Level Descriptors](#)
- [What is the WIDA ACCESS?](#) (for families, multiple languages)
- [What is the WIDA Alternate ACCESS?](#) (for families, multiple languages)
- [WIDA ACCESS](#) Information for educators
- [WIDA Alternate ACCESS](#) Information for educators
- [WIDA website for Educators](#) (log-in required)

**Questions?**

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