

This document contains guidance on the EL identification and placement process in your state. WIDA and your state education agency have worked together to provide this outline of policies, procedures, assessment options, test administrator training requirements, and criteria for placement in EL services. This document is updated each spring and throughout the year per SEA request.

For questions related to state policy, please contact:

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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 or (866) 276-7735.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Questions/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Process Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Language Survey• Parent Notification Letter: A parent notification letter will be issued for students whose English Language Proficiency screener scores indicate they are eligible for placement in the program.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Timelines	<p>Potential EL students flagged for EL screening through the state's Home Language Survey must be assessed for EL identification within thirty (30) days of enrollment. Potential EL students that register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within two weeks of enrollment. (Found in Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia.)</p> <p>Within 30 days of the start of the school year, or within 30 days of placement if not identified at the beginning of the school year, the LEA must notify parents that their child was identified as being eligible for EL services.</p>
Home Language Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state's Home Language Survey is completed once, at the time of initial enrollment in a DC public or public charter school. • If the Home Language Survey indicates a language other than English is spoken in the home, then further assessments must be conducted to determine the student's English Language proficiency level <p>The state's Home Language Survey is available in English and seven other languages.</p> <p>Additional information on Alternate Screener participation criteria will be available by August 1st</p>
State Approved Assessments	<p>For details, refer to Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia.</p>
Paper Based Screener Costs	<p>LEAs are responsible for purchasing paper screener assessments if they choose to administer WIDA Screener Paper</p> <p>For more information, go to the WIDA Store.</p> <p>New for 2025-2026: WIDA Alternate Screener can be downloaded and printed from the WIDA Secure Portal for free. The <i>WIDA Alternate Screener: Administration and Scoring</i> training course is available online through the WIDA Secure Portal.</p>

Initial Assessment and Identification

Identification/Placement Criteria	<p>Exit Criteria: Additional information will be available by August 1st</p> <p>Kindergarten: Composite PL of 5.0 or higher on the annual ACCESS assessment.</p> <p>Grades 1-12: Overall composite PL of 4.5 or higher on the annual ACCESS assessment.</p> <p>Alternate: Additional information will be available by August 1st</p> <hr/> <p>Identification Criteria: Additional information will be available by August 1st</p> <p>Kindergarten, first semester (listening and speaking only)</p> <p>In Kindergarten, first semester, students will take listening and speaking only. Students who receive an <u>oral</u> composite score of less than 5.0 will qualify for EL services.</p> <p>Kindergarten, second semester (all four domains)</p> <p>In Kindergarten, second semester, students will take all four domains. Students who receive an <u>overall</u> composite score of less than 5.0 will qualify for EL services.</p> <p>Grades 1 – 12:</p> <p>Students who receive a composite proficiency level score less than 5.0 will qualify for EL services.</p> <p>Alternate: Additional information will be available by August 1st</p>
Other Useful Resources or Information	<p>More information on the identification and placement process can be found in Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia.</p> <p>Please consult the OSSE website for more resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Learner Instructional Resources • English Learner Policy and Programs • Dual Language Programs • Dually Identified Students

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Test Administrator Qualifications	<p>The following individuals can administer WIDA Screener, WIDA Screener for Kindergarten</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Administrators • Paraprofessionals • Other certified school staff (counselors, speech & language specialists)
Test Administrator Training Requirements	<p>To be certified to administer and score WIDA Screener, Test Administrators must complete the relevant training courses, and pass the certification quizzes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Screener Online: Administration • WIDA Screener Paper: Administration • WIDA Alternate Screener Paper: Administration • Speaking for Grades 1-5: Scoring WIDA Screener and ACCESS Braille • Speaking for Grades 6-12: Scoring WIDA Screener and ACCESS Braille • Writing for Grades 1-5: Scoring WIDA Screener • Writing for Grades 6-12: Scoring WIDA Screener <p>New for 2025-2026: WIDA Screener training courses for scoring Speaking and Writing no longer include content related to WIDA ACCESS 1-5 or 6-12.</p> <p>Speaking and Writing Scoring certification is required annually for paper-based administration only.</p> <p>Proof of certification can be found and downloaded from the WIDA Secure Portal.</p> <p>Training must be completed by the start of the testing window.</p> <p>Pre-IPT: Please see Pre-IPT site for more information.</p> <p>WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Test administrators should review the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten Test Administrator Manual and complete the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Administration and Scoring training course.</p>

Test Administrator Training and Certification

	<p>WIDA Alternate Screener: Test administrators must complete the WIDA Alternate Screener Administration and Scoring training course.</p> <p>New for 2025-2026: The WIDA Alternate Screener training course will be available July 1.</p>
Website Permissions	<p>WIDA Secure Portal (portal.wida.us)</p> <p>Test administrators should contact their LEA ACCESS Test Coordinator or WIDA Client Services for access to the WIDA Secure Portal.</p> <p>WIDA AMS (DRC) (wida-ams.us)</p> <p>Educator Scoring for WIDA Screener: Test administrators should contact their LEA ACCESS Test Coordinator for permissions.</p>

EL Program Requirements – Services & Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
EL Services or Program Requirements	<p>LEAs must provide an instructional language assistance or bilingual program to students who are identified as ELs. The chosen program model must be recognized as effective and sound by experts, and services should meet individual student needs. Additionally, the LEA or school must determine who will provide services, when services will be rendered, and how often services will be provided. In all program models, the LEA must ensure that ELs are held to the same high standards as all students.</p> <p>Services can begin after identification. The LEA must issue parent notification letter, however, non-return (by parents) does not prevent LEA from rendering services.</p> <p>For more information, refer to Delivering Education Services to English Learners: Policies and Procedures for Administrators, Instructional Leaders, and Teachers in the District of Columbia</p> <p>Please consult the OSSE website for additional resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Learner Instructional Resources • English Learner Policy and Programs
Declining Services	<p>If services are refused, LEAs should work directly with the parents to ensure they understand the purpose of the service. If the parent(s) understands the service, yet still prefers to opt-out, then the refusal of services must be documented in writing.</p> <p>An English learner who is 'opted out' of all EL programs and services must be monitored regularly to ensure academic progress, be provided adequate support to reduce any language barriers, and participate in the annual ACCESS assessment until meeting the exit protocol requirements. After meeting the exit protocol requirements, the student who has 'opted out' is formally exited and is monitored for four years.</p>