

This document contains guidance on the identification and placement process for newly arrived English language learners 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 ELL services. This document is updated each spring and throughout the year per SEA request.

For questions related to state policy or the contents of this document, 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	<p>Step 1: Establish procedures in accordance with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) guidelines to identify students who may be English learners (ELs) or former English learners (FELs).</p> <p>Step 2: Administer a home language survey (HLS) to all newly enrolling students.</p> <p>Step 3: Screen the English proficiency of a student when the answer to any of the questions on the HLS is a language other than English. A screening test is not necessary for students who come from another Massachusetts district or another WIDA state if the district is able to obtain ACCESS results from the test that was administered within the last calendar year.</p> <p>Step 4: Determine whether the student is an EL using screening test results and make initial placement decisions.</p> <p>Step 5: Notify parent and/or legal guardian of screening test results and initial placement decision.</p> <p>Step 6: Code the student determined to be an EL in all future Student Information Management System (SIMS) reports submitted to the Department.</p> <p>Please see the Guidance on the Identification and Placement of English Learners SY2020-2021 document on the Department's website for information regarding the identification of English learners during COVID-19 restrictions.</p>

Initial Assessment and Identification

Timelines	The English language proficiency screening shall take place and parents will be notified of the results in their preferred language no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year and within two weeks if the student enrolls in the school district during the school year. Districts should keep a record of the parents' preferred language for future communications as well.
Home Language Survey	<p>Administer the Home Language Survey (HLS) to ALL new students. Districts should administer the HLS provided by the Department, or another survey identified by the district, provided the district's survey contains all questions asked in the Department's version, to the parents of all new students enrolling in Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) through 12th grade. If enrollment takes place at a central intake location, there should be a sufficient number of individuals designated and trained in administering the HLS at that location. If the enrollment takes place directly at schools, each school should identify and train at least one person to administer the HLS.</p> <p>Please see the Guidance on the Identification and Placement of English Learners SY2020-2021 document on the Department's website for information regarding administration of the Home Language Survey during COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Establish a record-keeping system. HLSs provide useful information about ELs. Districts should file HLSs in students' cumulative folders as a resource for educators. Districts should keep a record of the parents' preferred language for future communications.</p> <p>Districts must screen every newly enrolled student whose HLS indicates that there is a language other than English spoken at home. In other words, districts must administer a language proficiency screening test when the answer to any question on the HLS is a language other than English, with the following limited exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students who were previously classified as ELs and were then reclassified as FELs in their former district; • students who transferred from another district within Massachusetts or another WIDA state and who did not qualify as ELs on the English proficiency screening test administered in their former districts; and • students who transferred from another district within Massachusetts or another WIDA state with ACCESS results from the last calendar year.

Initial Assessment and Identification

State Approved Assessments

Pre-school

- Pre-IPT Oral ages 3-5
- Pre-LAS Observational Assessment ages 3-3.11
- Pre-LAS 3-5

Kindergarten W-APT or **Kindergarten MODEL** can be used to screen incoming Kindergarten students and 1st grade students during the first semester.

WIDA Screener (Paper & Online versions) can be used to screen students in 2nd semester 1st grade through 12th grade.

New in 2021: Approval for districts to begin using the new WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is anticipated in fall 2021. Schools should continue to use either the K W-APT or the Kindergarten MODEL to screen incoming kindergarten students until further guidance is available regarding use of WIDA Screener for Kindergarten.

The Kindergarten Screener should NOT be used prior to the release of further guidance from the Department.

The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten should be used to screen students:

- as they enter kindergarten;
- if they enroll during the kindergarten school year; or
- as they enter first grade, and through the end of the first semester of first grade.

Schools will continue to have access to the Kindergarten W-APT until further notice. After the Kindergarten W-APT is no longer available, the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten will be the only screener provided at no charge for kindergarten students. Districts may continue to purchase the Kindergarten MODEL.

To see a list of approved screening assessments, training information, and where the assessments can be obtained, see the [Guidance on the Initial Identification of English Learners](#) and the [Guidance on the Provisional Identification and Placement of English Learners During Extended School Closures](#).

Initial Assessment and Identification

<p>Paper Based Screener Costs</p>	<p>The district would pay for any materials needed for the WIDA Screener Paper or Kindergarten MODEL.</p> <p>For more information on the WIDA Screener Paper or Kindergarten MODEL, go to the WIDA Store.</p>																															
<p>Identification and Placement Criteria</p>	<p>Initial Identification of ELs in Pre-school</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Test</th> <th>Age</th> <th>Domains Assessed</th> <th>Minimum Score Not EL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pre-IPT Oral</td> <td>Age 3</td> <td>Listening, Speaking</td> <td>Score at Level C (on a scale of A-E)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-IPT Oral</td> <td>Age 4</td> <td>Listening, Speaking</td> <td>Score at Level D (on a scale of A-E)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-IPT Oral</td> <td>Age 5</td> <td>Listening, Speaking</td> <td>Score at Level E (on a scale of A-E)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-LAS Observational Assessment</td> <td>Age 3-3.5 years old</td> <td>Oral Language and Early Literacy</td> <td>60 or higher (Oral Language 41 and Early Literacy 19)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-LAS Observational Assessment</td> <td>Age 3.6-3.11 years old</td> <td>Oral Language and Early Literacy</td> <td>69 or higher (Oral Language 45 and Early Literacy 24)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pre-LAS</td> <td>Age 3-5</td> <td>Listening, Speaking</td> <td>Total score higher than 77 (3-4 years old) Total score higher than 82 (5 years old)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Test	Age	Domains Assessed	Minimum Score Not EL	Pre-IPT Oral	Age 3	Listening, Speaking	Score at Level C (on a scale of A-E)	Pre-IPT Oral	Age 4	Listening, Speaking	Score at Level D (on a scale of A-E)	Pre-IPT Oral	Age 5	Listening, Speaking	Score at Level E (on a scale of A-E)	Pre-LAS Observational Assessment	Age 3-3.5 years old	Oral Language and Early Literacy	60 or higher (Oral Language 41 and Early Literacy 19)	Pre-LAS Observational Assessment	Age 3.6-3.11 years old	Oral Language and Early Literacy	69 or higher (Oral Language 45 and Early Literacy 24)	Pre-LAS	Age 3-5	Listening, Speaking	Total score higher than 77 (3-4 years old) Total score higher than 82 (5 years old)
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Initial Assessment and Identification

Initial Identification of ELs in Kindergarten

Test	Grade	Domains Assessed	Minimum Score Not EL
W-APT Kindergarten	First semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking	Oral proficiency raw score 29 or higher
WIDA MODEL Kindergarten	First semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking	Oral proficiency level 5 in both Listening and Speaking
W-APT Kindergarten	Second semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	Oral proficiency raw score of 29 or higher Reading raw score of 14 or higher Writing raw score of 17 or higher
WIDA MODEL Kindergarten	Second semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	Overall composite proficiency level higher than 5 and Literacy composite proficiency level higher than 4
WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (anticipated fall 2021)	First semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking	To be determined upon release of guidance (anticipated after July 2021).
WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (anticipated fall 2021)	Second semester Kindergarten	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	To be determined upon release of guidance (anticipated after July 2021).

Initial Assessment and Identification

Initial Identification of ELs in Grades 1-12

Test	Grade	Domains Assessed	Minimum Score Not EL
WIDA Screener	1-12	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	Overall composite proficiency level 4.5 or higher and Literacy composite proficiency level 4.5 or higher

Other Useful Resources or Information

Parental Notification: The student’s parent must be notified about the screening test results and the placement decisions **no later than 30 days** after the beginning of the school year or within **two weeks** if the student enrolls in the school district during the school year. Please see the [Placement, Progress Monitoring, & Reclassification Procedures](#) document on the Department’s web page for more information. Such notifications must be provided in English and, to the maximum extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand.

Newcomer Students: Data collection code – LEP Students in their first year in U.S. schools are optionally exempt from the English Language Arts (ELA) test for their first year only. They must take all other grade appropriate assessments.

For more information on the identification and placement process, please see the [Initial Identification of ELs](#) document from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Test Administrator Qualifications	<p>To the extent possible, Test Administrators should be education professionals employed by the district, such as teachers, administrators, or related service providers. Paraprofessionals may administer the tests provided they are monitored by a test administrator, have completed the online training for the tests they will administer, and have passed the required certification quizzes. Individuals <i>prohibited</i> from being Test Administrators include individuals not employed by the district and anyone who has not completed the relevant training and certification. Accommodations may be administered by test proctors, provided they receive training prior to test administration and are under the direct supervision of a Test Administrator. The Test Administration Manual (located in the WIDA Secure Portal Download Library) describes the responsibilities of Test Administrators. The Test Coordinator will determine which tests will be administered by each Test Administrator.</p>
Test Administrator Training Requirements	<p>WIDA Screener (Grades 1-12): Test Administrators must complete the appropriate online training and pass the following certification quizzes (for the appropriate grade levels) with a score of 80% or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking Quiz Grades 1-5 • Speaking Quiz Grades 6-12 • Screener Writing Quiz Grades 1-5 • Screener Writing Quiz Grades 6-12 <p>If a Test Administrator has passed the Speaking quiz for the ACCESS paper-based assessment, the Test Administrator is also certified to administer and score the WIDA Screener Speaking Test.</p> <p>Kindergarten W-APT: Test Administrators must review the K W-APT Test Administration Manual and Scored Student Writing Samples, and training tutorial prior to administering the assessment.</p> <p>WIDA MODEL: Test Administrators must complete the training CD/DVD.</p> <p>WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (training available March 2021): Test administrators will be required to complete the online training course in the WIDA Secure Portal and pass both the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Oral Language and WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Literacy certification quizzes with a score of 80% or higher prior to administering the screener.</p>

Test Administrator Training and Certification

	<p>Recertification is required every two years for all tests.</p>
<p>Website Permissions</p>	<p>WIDA Permissions (portal.wida.us) Test Coordinators and Test Administrators must set up a WIDA personal account to access the training courses and test administration materials.</p> <p>Educators who wish to set up an account may do so by contacting their District Test Coordinator. Instructions will remain posted on the Department's website as well.</p> <p>Contact WIDA Client Services at 866-276-7735 or help@wida.us for assistance in setting up or accessing a WIDA personal account.</p> <p>WIDA accounts set up previously are still active.</p> <p>WIDA AMS (DRC) Permissions (www.wida-ams.us) Test Coordinators should contact DRC Customer Service at 855-787-9615 or WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com to set up accounts in WIDA AMS.</p> <p>Test Administrators and Technology Coordinators who wish to set up an account may do so by contacting their District Test Coordinator.</p>

ELL Program Requirements – Services & Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
ELL Services or Program Requirements	<p>Please see the Department’s website for information regarding English learner education programs.</p> <p>Please see the ELE Programming Resource for the 2020-21 School Year document on the Department’s website for information regarding English learner services and program requirements during COVID-19 restrictions.</p>
Declining Services	<p>“Opt-out” Requests</p> <p>The decision to opt out must be voluntary and informed, and not the product of district practices or influence, the result of inadequate or inaccurate information, or inadequate district resources. In opt-out cases, the district must inform the parent of the services the child would receive in the district’s English learner education programs, as well as the type of support that the district will provide to the student if the parent decides to “opt out”. Parents should revisit their decision to opt out every year and submit a new request for the current academic year.</p> <p>If a parent of an EL decides to “opt out” of a language program, districts should place the student in an English language mainstream classroom or with an SEI-endorsed teacher and maintain the parent’s opt-out notice for each year in the student’s file. Under federal law, districts must provide instructional support to ensure all ELs, including those whose parent(s) has chosen to “opt out” of ELE programs, have access to the curriculum and receive the same opportunities to master the academic standards and curriculum frameworks as their native English speaking peers. Districts must also classify them as “ELs” on district reports, annually assess their language proficiency with the state mandated English language proficiency test, ACCESS for ELLs, and notify parents of their child’s participation in such assessments, as well as assessment results. Therefore, in practice, a parent’s choice to opt their child out of an ELE program means their child will not receive separate English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction focused on language development, but the district will provide the necessary support and actively monitor the student’s progress so as to meet the student’s English-language and academic needs. Districts may also provide additional literacy and language support through reading specialists qualified to teach ELs or establish structured opportunities for the students’ content area teachers to plan content area instruction in collaboration with a licensed ESL teacher.</p> <p>Districts must also keep a record of how such students are provided meaningful access to the curriculum and how they are progressing academically. When a student demonstrates English proficiency through ACCESS for ELLs and schoolwork, districts should reclassify the student and document the change in the student’s EL classification, including evidence used to inform the reclassification, in the student’s record.</p> <p>See Monitoring Academic Progress of Opt-out Students for more information.</p>