

This document contains guidance on the identification and placement process for newly arrived English 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 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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[Montana Office of Public Instruction](https://www.mt.gov/Portals/0/education/EL/MontanaOfficeofPublicInstruction.pdf)

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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>Key Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student enrolls in a Montana accredited school and a language other than English is indicated on the Home Language Survey, or an educator notices that there may be a language of impact. [If home language survey is not completed properly]. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the student is transferring from another accredited Montana school, and was identified as an EL previously, the student will not take the WIDA Screener, but will take the ACCESS for ELLs. Contacting the previous school, reviewing the cumulative file, and/or reviewing the student record in Infinite Campus may be necessary to determine previous EL identification. 2. WIDA Screener or WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is administered. 3. If student does not score proficient as defined in Montana’s English Learner Guidance for School Districts, the district identifies the student as an EL in AIM/Infinite Campus.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Timelines	<p>All districts collect a Home Language Survey (HLS) as part of the data collection process, however, some districts may collect additional information prior to the screening process.</p> <p>Per federal guidelines, the district has 30 days from the beginning of the school year, or from time of enrollment for newly enrolled students, to administer the screener and make a determination. Montana follows federal guidelines.</p> <p><i>Path 2:</i> The teacher/educator notices that there may be a language deficit and administers a Language Observation Checklist to determine if WIDA Screener is needed.</p>
Home Language Survey	<p>The state-mandated Home Language Survey should be administered one time, at the enrollment of the student. Parents/Guardians of all newly enrolled students will complete HLS at time of enrollment.</p> <p>Students are administered a screener if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A language other than English is indicated on HLS <i>and/or</i> • An educator notices that there may be a language of impact
State Approved Assessments	<p>Pre-K/Preschool: No state mandated option Kindergarten: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (SEA purchases); Kindergarten MODEL (LEAs purchase) Grades 1-12: WIDA Screener Online (SEA purchases); WIDA Screener Paper (LEAs purchase)</p> <p>Students with disabilities will take the same screener as students without disabilities. Accommodations are available on all WIDA assessments.</p> <p>For students with significant cognitive disabilities (students who would qualify to take an alternate content assessment), districts should contact the Montana Office of Public Instruction. OPI will discuss the individual student needs and recommend appropriate screening strategies.</p> <p>All Test Administrators must complete the training courses and pass the certification quizzes for any screener that they wish to administer.</p>

Initial Assessment and Identification

<p>Paper Based Screener Costs</p>	<p>WIDA Screener Online and WIDA Screener for Kindergarten are available to districts at no additional cost through the WIDA Secure Portal and the WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS).</p> <p>Districts will purchase WIDA MODEL, WIDA Screener Paper, or professionally printed WIDA Screener for Kindergarten kits if needed.</p> <p>For more information, go to the WIDA Store.</p>									
<p>Identification/Placement Criteria</p>	<p>Exit Criteria: In order to be considered proficient in English and to exit English learner status, students must attain an overall composite score of at least 4.7 on ACCESS for ELLs.</p> <p>Students with significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible to participate in other alternate statewide assessments may be considered proficient with an overall composite score of P2 or higher on Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.</p> <p>Identification Criteria:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="575 748 1906 1393"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="575 748 1276 816"> Kindergarten Registration – First Semester </th> <th data-bbox="1283 748 1906 816"> Kindergarten Second Semester </th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="575 816 1276 1073"> <p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking and Listening</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 (Speaking and Listening) K MODEL: 4.7 or higher on Speaking and Listening</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1283 816 1906 1073"> <p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 overall composite score K MODEL: 4.7 overall composite score</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="575 1073 1276 1174"> Grade 1 First Semester </th> <th data-bbox="1283 1073 1906 1174"> Grade 1 Second Semester Grades 2-12 </th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="575 1174 1276 1393"> <p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 overall composite score K MODEL: 4.7 overall composite score</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1283 1174 1906 1393"> <p>Test Administered: WIDA Screener (Online or Paper)</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener: 5.0 overall composite score</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Kindergarten Registration – First Semester	Kindergarten Second Semester	<p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking and Listening</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 (Speaking and Listening) K MODEL: 4.7 or higher on Speaking and Listening</p>	<p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 overall composite score K MODEL: 4.7 overall composite score</p>	Grade 1 First Semester	Grade 1 Second Semester Grades 2-12	<p>Test Name: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, Kindergarten MODEL</p> <p>Domains Administered: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: 5.0 overall composite score K MODEL: 4.7 overall composite score</p>	<p>Test Administered: WIDA Screener (Online or Paper)</p> <p>Proficiency Criteria: WIDA Screener: 5.0 overall composite score</p>
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Initial Assessment and Identification

	<p>Students with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with mild or moderate disabilities fall under same criteria as those without disabilities. • For students with severe cognitive disabilities, the IEP team will consult with an EL specialist to make decision on EL status or program.
<p>Other Useful Resources or Information</p>	<p>Districts must follow Montana guidance for identification procedures, student enrollment in an EL program, updating student data in AIM, and notifying families. See Montana’s English Learner Guidance for School Districts for more information.</p> <p>Parents must be notified of initial student placement in an EL program and must be provided with ACCESS for ELLs score reports annually with information on exit criteria.</p> <p>Results of screening assessment are kept locally within district. EL students are identified in statewide data system as LEP.</p> <p>EL students who qualify as newcomers are exempt from ELA portion of statewide assessment during their first calendar year in a U.S. school.</p> <p>Students who were not identified as EL through the screening process upon enrollment can be re-screened at the discretion of the district.</p>

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Test Administrator Qualifications	<p>All licensed educators may administer WIDA Screener and WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. Paraprofessionals may seek an exemption to administer in special circumstances where no licensed teacher is available. These arrangements should be made at least two weeks prior to administration and must be approved by the OPI. See the MontCAS Test Security Manual for details.</p>
Test Administrator Training Requirements	<p>Test administration training is required of all educators involved in the administration of the MontCAS tests, including the WIDA screeners and the ACCESS for ELLs annual progress monitoring assessment. This requirement includes System Test Coordinators (STCs), school, or other district level coordinators, and test administrators. All test coordinators and administrators must complete the certifications relevant to their duties once every two years.</p> <p>System Test Coordinators and School Coordinators: must complete the ACCESS online grades 1-12 test administration training so that they are prepared to manage user accounts, monitor student participation, and understand procedures for accessibility, test administration, and test security. Should an irregularity occur, it is essential that the STC have a thorough understanding of the WIDA assessment administration procedures and policies so that they are able to monitor and guide TAs to ensure that the WIDA assessments are being administered in a secure and standardized manner.</p> <p>Test Administrators: Test administrators must complete the test administration training and pass the certification quiz for any WIDA assessments that they will administer. For instance, if the TA is only administering the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, they are only required to complete the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Administration and Scoring training course.</p> <p>Educators may complete face-to-face or statewide assessment training but must still complete the online WIDA training courses and certification quizzes once every two years in order to be considered certified for these specific assessments.</p> <p>To be certified to administer WIDA Screener, test administrators must complete the following courses for the tests they will administer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Screener Online: Administration • WIDA Screener Paper: Administration

Test Administrator Training and Certification

	<p>To be certified to score WIDA Screener, test administrators must complete the following courses for the grade level tests and domains that they will score:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking for Grades 1-5: Scoring ACCESS Paper and WIDA Screener • Speaking for Grades 6-12: Scoring ACCESS Paper and WIDA Screener • Writing for Grades 1-5: Scoring WIDA Screener • Writing for Grades 6-12: Scoring WIDA Screener <p>To be certified to administer and score WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, test administrators must complete the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Administration and Scoring training course.</p> <p>New for 2024-25: WIDA Screener training courses will be available on the WIDA Secure Portal July 1, 2024.</p>
Website Permissions	<p>WIDA Secure Portal (portal.wida.us) System Test Coordinators: Contact SEA for access to WIDA Secure Portal.</p> <p>Test Administrators/School Coordinators: Contact Test Coordinator or WIDA Client Services for access to the WIDA Secure Portal and for assessment training materials.</p> <p>WIDA AMS (DRC) (wida-ams.us) Test Administrators: Contact Test Coordinator or DRC Customer Service for Educator Scoring permission on WIDA AMS.</p>

ELL Program Requirements – Services & Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
ELL Services or Program Requirements	Once a student has been identified as an EL, an Education Plan must be drafted to document their placement in an EL program, set goals, monitor progress, and determine the best course of action according to their needs.
Declining Services	Parents/Guardians can decline services; however, districts must continue to meet student needs within the general education setting (i.e. through differentiation) and students must continue to be assessed annually through ACCESS for ELLs.