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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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	The North Carolina State Board of Education requires a Home Language Survey (HLS) be administered to all students upon initial enrollment. The HLS is used to help determine if the student is a language minority student. The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online is used as the identification screener at the appropriate grade level and semester. Detailed information can be found on NC DPI's EL Data site.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Timelines	All students who may be considered English Learners are assessed within 30 days of enrollment in the state. When a language minority student enrolls, he or she must be administered all four domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) of the WIDA Screener.
	Kindergarten students enrolling at or during the 1st semester will be administered the Listening and Speaking domains of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. Kindergarten students enrolling in their 2nd semester will be administered all four domains of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. First grade students in their 1st semester will take all four domains of WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. First grade students in their 2nd semester will take the Grade 1 Online WIDA Screener.
	Notification for Screening Outcome: Parent/family caregiver notification of the students' eligibility for ESL services for any student who takes the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or the WIDA Screener must take place within 14 days of the screener administration.
	Continuations of Service Letters should be sent home to parent /family caregiver within the first 30 calendar days of the school year.
Home Language Survey	Home Language Survey (HLS) Administration: Upon initial enrollment in a public school unit (PSU), all students are guided through the HLS process and have a completed HLS placed on file. The state has provided a Sample Home Language Survey, which has recommended questions to include on the HLS, such as: • What is the first language the student learned to speak? • What language does the student speak most often? • What language is most often spoken in the home? • Which language do you use when talking with your child? Responses to any of the questions on the HLS indicating languages other than English should **prompt the school to investigate** and determine the student's actual home language.

Initial Assessment and Identification

State Approved Assessments	**Kindergarten and Grade 1 (First Semester)** WIDA Screener for Kindergarten - Kindergarten students enrolling at or during the 1st semester will be administered only the listening and speaking domains of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. Kindergarten students in 2nd semester and first grade students in 1st semester will take all four domains of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten. **Grade 1 (Second Semester) through Grade 12:** WIDA Screener Online WIDA Screener Paper – SEA approval required and only for students who have a documented need in Section 504 Plan or IEP The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online are the only approved identification/placement assessments used in NC.
Paper-based Screener	The NC Department of Public Instruction will provide WIDA Screener Paper materials for students with a documented need in a current IEP or Section 504 Plan, and other limited case-by-case needs. Testing Coordinators place the order via the state warehouse. Orders must be approved by RACs.
Identification/Placement Criteria	**Identification Criteria:** Any domain proficiency level < 5.0 on WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online **Exit Criteria:** ACCESS for ELLs Composite PL ≥ 4.8 Alternate ACCESS for ELLs P1 or > for 2 consecutive years, beginning with scores for the 2021–22 school year

Initial Assessment and Identification

	Identification Criteria: If the district investigation reveals that the dominant home language is a language other than English, that language is confirmed on the HLS. The survey is filed in the student's cumulative folder, and the student is scheduled for administration of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online to determine potential EL identification. An explanation of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten/Screener identification Criteria.
Other Useful Resources or Information	**Student Transfers:** For in-state students: The HLS is completed at the time of enrollment in NC. The home language survey must be administered for all students upon enrollment. The registrar should click the Transfer Student Record link in PowerSchool to move EL Records from a previous NC PSU to the current NC PSU. When a student enrolls in a school from a WIDA Consortium Member State, the school has up to thirty calendar days from enrollment to obtain WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener, and ACCESS for ELLs test scores from the member state. If the scores are less than one year old, they may be used for making decisions regarding EL identification and placement. If the receiving school does not receive the scores within the timeline, the school must administer either the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or the WIDA Screener to determine or update EL identification and eligibility for English as a Second Language (ESL) services. If scores are received and are more than a year old, PSUs should investigate the need for an Instructional Update using the appropriate WIDA Screener. If the student previously attended a North Carolina public school, the EL identification from the most recent NC enrollment still applies. If a student is identified as EL staff documents the identification and the appropriate language instructional program goals in the EL plan. The EL plan will also indicate appropriate instructional and testing accommodations for which the student is eligible.

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Test Administrator Qualifications	Only persons who are employed by the school system, either permanently or contractually, and have professional training in education (preferably a North Carolina educator's license) and the state testing program are permitted to administer secure state tests. If a school contracts with a third party for the provision of instructional services (e.g., special education teachers/tutors for blind or hearing-impaired students), the contracted employee can administer secure state tests only if the employee meets the following criteria: • Holds a valid North Carolina educator's license, • Passes a criminal history check as defined in G.S.§115C332(a)(1) performed at the school, • Is trained on test administration in accordance with the North Carolina Testing Program, and, • Signs a test security agreement and understands the sanctions for testing violations. The signed test security agreement must be kept on file at the school.
Test Administrator Training Requirements	**WIDA Screener for Kindergarten:** Test administrators must complete the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten: Administration and Scoring training course, including obtaining an 80% minimum on both certification quizzes. **WIDA Screener:** Test administrators must complete the following courses, including passing all applicable certification quizzes, for the tests they will be administering: • WIDA Screener Online: Administration • WIDA Screener Paper: Administration If also scoring the Speaking and/or Writing domains, test administrators must complete the following courses for the grade level tests and domains they will be scoring: • 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 Recertification is required every year.

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Website Permissions	**WIDA Secure Portal** (portal.wida.us) Test Administrators should contact their District Test Coordinator for access to the WIDA Secure Portal. **WIDA AMS (DRC)** (wida-ams.us) Educator Scoring for WIDA Screener: Test Administrators should contact their District Test Coordinator for permissions.

EL Program Requirements – Services & Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
EL Services or Program Requirements	Each PSU who has at least 1 identified EL per the annual November 1 headcount is required to complete a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) service chart and submit to ESL/Title III at NCDPI. Title III subgrantees submit this chart as part of the Title III application. Non-Title III subgrantees submit the chart in November. The LIEP Template and LIEP Guidance are available on the NCDPI ESL/Title III website. Please visit the NCDPI ESL/Title III website for additional information.
Declining Services	Parents can decline a particular type of EL services per the PSU established procedures which typically include a written and signed declaration of parental choice. Annual EL testing cannot be declined by parents. Linguistic needs of identified ELs who have declined services must be addressed within the general educational program.