

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.

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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"> • At registration, parents must complete Utah's standard form of the Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify a student with a native language other than English, or who comes from an environment where a non-English language either is dominant or may have affected a student's English-language proficiency. • If a language other than English is identified, the initial English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener is administered to confirm EL Status. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students who score a composite ELP level 1-4.9 on the WIDA Screener 1-12 or WIDA Screener for Kindergarten are eligible for English Language Development services. ○ Those who receive a composite score of 5 on the WIDA Screener do not qualify for EL services.
Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs are required to administer the Screener within 30 calendar days of enrollment within the first month of school, and within 10 calendar days of enrollment thereafter.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Home Language Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Home Language Survey (HLS) is completed at registration in a Utah school. A standardized HLS is provided by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) and can be accessed on USBE’s website. • Required screener questions to target the most relevant information include the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which language does your child most frequently speak at home? 2. Which language do adults in your home most frequently use when speaking with your child? 3. Which language(s) does your child currently understand or speak? 4. Does your family come from a refugee background? • Technical assistance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) is provided by USBE to ensure the purpose of the Home Language Survey is clearly understood by those who will administer it and those who will complete it. This survey cannot be used to confirm citizenship status or predetermine educational services. Consequently, to obtain accurate information, LEAs shall inform parents and families that the information provided by them will not be used to determine legal status or for any immigration purpose.
State Approved Assessments	<p>LEAs must use the WIDA assessments listed below aligned with WIDA ACCESS and proficiency levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Kindergarten: Screening is not required for Pre-K • Kindergarten: WIDA Screener for Kindergarten <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kindergarten MODEL is an allowed substitute if purchased by the LEA. ○ WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (new) replaced the Kindergarten W-APT in July 2021. ○ Kindergarten W-APT is not allowed starting the 2021-2022 school year. • Grades 1-12: WIDA Screener Online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WIDA Screener Paper is an allowed substitute for recently arrived ELs and students with significant disabilities.
Paper Based Screener Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Screener Paper and WIDA MODEL are only recommended for recently arrived ELs and students with significant disabilities. • WIDA Screener Paper costs will be covered by USBE, but the purchase requires USBE approval for LEA purchase. • LEAs are responsible for purchasing MODEL K-12 if they wish to; USBE has approved this as an appropriate use of Title I funds. For more information, go to the WIDA Store.

Initial Assessment and Identification

Identification/Placement Criteria	<p>Identification Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are eligible for EL services if they earn a score of 1-4.9 on WIDA Screener for grades K-12 or MODEL K-12. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only Speaking and Listening Domains are required on the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten during the first semester of the school year. All four WIDA Screener for Kindergarten domains are required during the second semester of the school year. • Pre-K screening is not required. • Recently arrived ELs and/or students with significant disabilities may be administered WIDA Screener Paper with appropriate accommodations. The state does not define alternate identification criteria for students with disabilities, but appropriate accommodations should be provided if the student is known to have a disability. <p>Frequently Asked Screener Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do LEAs have to screen students arriving from another WIDA state and have previous WIDA ACCESS scores? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, students need to be screened in order to qualify for EL services in Utah. • If a student lived in Utah, moved out of state, then returned to a Utah school, do they need to be screened? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, if it has been more than 2 years. ○ No, if it has less than 2 years. • If a student arrives in Utah from another WIDA state and reached a 5.0 or higher on their ACCESS test, do they need to be screened? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, to ensure whether they do or do not require EL services in Utah. • What Screener grade band should be used? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please see the WIDA Screener Online TAM pages 13-14 for guidance.
Other Useful Resources or Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents must be notified by LEAs of a student's ELP status within 30 calendar days through a standard letter provided by USBE in multiple languages. Parents are informed that even if their child qualifies for EL services, they have the right to decline such services. However, the school is still responsible to ensure that students receive appropriate instruction and are supported as they learn English in all educational settings. • It is the school's responsibility to accurately indicate EL status in their SIS. ELs are reported to the state through nightly uploads to Utah eTranscript and Record Exchange (UTREx). This data clearinghouse gathers and stores student data throughout the year for exchanging student records and for reporting at the local, state, and national levels. Newly identified ELs are flagged by the LEA, and this information is sent to USBE nightly.

Initial Assessment and Identification

- All EL students' English Language Proficiency must be assessed annually using the WIDA ACCESS assessment. When students reach a Proficiency Level of 5.0 or higher, they are considered fluent in English. Students are then re-designated to monitoring status for four years. Students are not required to take the WIDA ACCESS assessment during these four years of monitoring. The Local Education Agency (LEA) may use appropriate data, evaluation, and team-based problem solving to consider reclassifying the student as EL if, while in monitoring status, the student demonstrates consistent and continued need for increased language support services.
- For State Content Assessments, the state defines "newcomer" or recently arrived status based on enrollment on or after April 15th of a given school year. This has implications for participation in statewide assessments and inclusion in the state accountability system (see chart below).

Year of Enrollment	Statewide Academic Assessment Required	Consideration in Accountability
Recently arrived: Enroll during current school year, On or after April 15th	None	N/A
Recently Arrived: Enroll during current school year, Before April 15th	ELA, Math, Science	Excluded from accountability determination
Year 1-2: Enrolled in the previous school year, On or after April 15th	ELA, Math, Science	Excluded from accountability determination; counted in participation
Year 1-2: Enrolled in previous school year, before April 15th	ELA, Math, Science	Included in growth calculations only; counted in participation
Year 2: Student enrolled in school anytime during the school year two years ago	ELA, Math, Science	Included in growth and proficiency accountability calculations; counted in participation

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
Test Administrator Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a LEA employee, and complete the WIDA online training courses for the applicable assessments. • USBE requires that test administrator certification be renewed annually.
Test Administrator Training Requirements	<p>To be certified to administer WIDA Screener, test administrators must complete the following courses for the tests they will be administering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA Screener Online: Administration • WIDA Screener Paper: Administration <p>To be certified to score WIDA Screener, test administrators must complete the following courses for the grade level tests and domains they will be scoring:</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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is required that test administrators renew their certification every year for Screener. • All training and certification quizzes are located on the WIDA Secure Portal. • Kindergarten MODEL does not require certification, but test administrators must thoroughly understand and follow test administration guidelines provided in the test administration manual. This is in accordance with the State Testing Ethics policy. • Screener training and certification may be completed online. Face-to-face training for WIDA Screener Online is offered to educators and has been provided by WIDA trainers but is not required for test administration. • All training for WIDA Screener has been contracted through WIDA and the WIDA online training modules.

Test Administrator Training and Certification

Website Permissions	<p>WIDA Secure Portal (portal.wida.us) Test Administrators should contact District Test Coordinator for access to training materials.</p> <p>WIDA AMS (DRC) (wida-ams.us) Educator Scoring/Test Administration for WIDA Screener and ACCESS Test Administration: Test Administrators should contact District Test Coordinator for permissions.</p> <p>District Testing Coordinator Permissions: Educators should contact state assessment contacts for district level WIDA and WIDA AMS accounts and permissions.</p>
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ELL Program Requirements – Services & Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
ELL Services or Program Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language assistance services and programs must be provided to qualifying students <i>unless</i> parents opt-out of such identified programs. • Special education services must also be provided to English Learners with identified and qualifying disabilities through the school’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and as articulated by the Special Education Department at USBE. • Appropriate EL services allow students to access curriculum in English within a reasonable period of time, generally from 5 to 7 years based on multiple variables such as initial ELP level at entrance, grade level, age, literacy in the native language, and interrupted formal education. • Programs are chosen by the LEA based on educational theory recognized by experts in the field, administered by individuals who are trained to use the program(s) effectively, and after a review of the evidence which demonstrates the program(s) produces results for students to overcome any language barriers within a reasonable amount of time and allows the student to participate equally in the schools’ curricular and extracurricular programs as outlined in the joint guidance from the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education and the Civil Rights Division of the U. S. Department of Justice. The 2016 Fact Sheet reaffirms the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which states: “Public schools must ensure that EL students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs.”
Declining Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents must be notified of their child’s eligibility for EL services and their right to decline services in the annual parent notification letter. Parents may opt-out of services by signing the appropriate paperwork, which is kept with the student’s cumulative record. • Parental opt-out of EL services does not opt students out of annual WIDA ACCESS assessment. The schools should administer WIDA ACCESS annually. • Annual WIDA ACCESS assessment of students whose parents decline services is one method of monitoring language progress. The school is still responsible to ensure that students learn English in every educational setting which includes after school and summer school or other educational opportunities.