

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:**

Kia Johnson

Virginia Department of Education  
EL Assessment and Title III Specialist  
Kia.johnson@doe.virginia.gov  
(804) 225-2102

Stacy Freeman

Virginia Department of Education  
Title III Specialist  
Stacy.freeman@doe.virginia.gov  
(804) 371-0778

Louise Marks

Virginia Department of Education  
Title III Coordinator  
Louise.marks@doe.virginia.gov  
(804) 225-2901

For questions related to WIDA's website, resources, or assessments, please contact the WIDA Client Services Center at [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us) or (866) 276-7735.

### Initial Assessment and Identification

Questions/Topic	State-specific Guidance
<b>Process Overview</b>	<p>During registration, all students entering school in Virginia are required to answer three identifying questions developed by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice which are included on registration documents or on a separate Home Language Survey provided to all students enrolling in an LEA. If a parent or guardian responds with any language other than English for one or more questions below, then the student is progressed to the language screening process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?</li> <li>• What is the language most often spoken by the student?</li> <li>• What is the language that the student first acquired?</li> </ul>
<b>Timelines</b>	<p>For students who enroll at the beginning of the school year, LEAs complete the screening and parent notification process within thirty calendar days of enrollment. For students who enter during the school year, the process must be completed within two weeks.</p>

## Initial Assessment and Identification

<b>Home Language Survey</b>	<p>School divisions administer the following questions to all students enrolling in a Virginia public school on registration documents or on a separate Home Language Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?</li> <li>• What is the language most often spoken by the student?</li> <li>• What is the language that the student first acquired?</li> </ul> <p>If a parent or guardian responds with any language other than English for one or more questions, then the student is progressed to the language screening process.</p> <p>Designated division personnel review registration and/or home language survey documents submitted to the school for educational information, language, and ELD assessment scores to determine the next steps. If a current ACCESS for ELLs score (within one year of testing) is provided, the score can be used to determine the student's EL status and the services to be provided. If a current ACCESS for ELLs score is not provided, designated personnel should ascertain if the student took the ACCESS for ELLs in the last year and follow up with that school division in a timely manner or administer a WIDA screening tool to determine the student's English proficiency level.</p>
<b>State Approved Assessments</b>	<p>LEAs must select from the available WIDA screener options. Currently, those options are:</p> <p><b>Kindergarten</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kindergarten W-APT</li> <li>• WIDA MODEL</li> </ul> <p><b>Grades 1-12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WIDA Screener</li> <li>• WIDA MODEL</li> </ul> <p>Additional information on screening is provided in <a href="#">Superintendent's Memo #194-17: Entrance Procedures and Recommended Entrance Criteria for Identifying English Learners</a> and <a href="#">Superintendent's Memo 136-18: Screening Tools for Identifying English Learners</a></p> <p>WIDA Screener for Kindergarten will be available in Virginia beginning in July 2021. Training for the administration of this screener will be communicated by the VDOE Office of Student Assessment in the early spring. WIDA supports the use of WIDA Screener for Kindergarten for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as they enter kindergarten, beginning in July prior to the start of the school year,</li> </ul>

## Initial Assessment and Identification

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• throughout the kindergarten school year</li><li>• as they enter first grade, until the end of the first semester of the school year.</li></ul> <p>WIDA does not yet have evidence to support the use of WIDA Screener for Kindergarten for pre-kindergarten students prior to July of their kindergarten year.</p> <p>Please contact the VDOE Office of Student Assessment at <a href="mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov">student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov</a> for assistance with transitioning to use of this screening option.</p>
<b>Paper Based Screener Costs</b>	<p>School divisions are responsible for purchasing WIDA materials. Divisions can purchase the screener with state or local funds.</p> <p>For more information, go to the <a href="#">WIDA Store</a>.</p>

## Initial Assessment and Identification

**Identification/Placement Criteria**

**Recommended** screening criteria are provided in [Superintendent's Memo #194-17: Entrance Procedures and Recommended Entrance Criteria for Identifying English Learners](#). The Department *recommends* the criteria below for EL identification.

Grade	Screening Tool	Domains	Levels indicating Student is an EL
Rising Kindergarten	*Kindergarten W-APT	Listening and Speaking	Oral raw score less than <b>21</b>
Kindergarten 1st semester	*Kindergarten W-APT	Listening and Speaking	Oral raw score less than <b>28</b>
Kindergarten 2nd semester	*Kindergarten W-APT	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Listening & Speaking Less than <b>28</b> <b>OR</b> Reading less than <b>14</b> <b>OR</b> Writing less than <b>17</b>
Kindergarten 1st semester	WIDA MODEL	Listening and Speaking	Oral Language Level less than <b>5.0</b>
Kindergarten 2nd semester	WIDA MODEL	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Overall less than <b>5.0</b>
Grade 1 - 12	WIDA MODEL	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Overall less than <b>5.0</b>
Grade 1 - 12	WIDA Screener (online and paper)	Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing	Overall less than <b>4.5**</b>

\*The Kindergarten W-APT provides a specific raw score that cannot be mapped to a specific Proficiency Level using the WIDA ELP scale.

\*\*The WIDA Screener provides an overall score, rounded down to the nearest 0.5.

## Initial Assessment and Identification

**Other Useful Resources or Information**

**Student Transfers:** If it is determined that the student was administered an English language proficiency test while enrolled in a previous school, then staff should seek to obtain test results from the other school to determine the student's EL status.

If a Home Language Survey was completed in another Virginia public school prior to enrolling at the current school, then staff should compare the response on the two forms for consistency. If inconsistencies are found, staff should determine if the student should be progressed to the language screening process.

If documentation indicates the student is an EL, and if no documentation of the student's English proficiency level is provided, then the student should be administered a WIDA screening instrument to determine an English proficiency level.

WIDA screening and ACCESS for ELLs scores should be entered in the division student information system by designated personnel.

## Test Administrator Training and Certification

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
<b>Test Administrator Qualifications</b>	School division test examiners who successfully complete the online WIDA Screener test administrator training in the WIDA Secure Portal and complete any local training required are qualified to administer the assessment(s).
<b>Test Administrator Training Requirements</b>	<p><b>WIDA Screener</b> Test administrators must review the WIDA Screener training module 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"> <li>• Speaking Quiz Grades 1-5</li> <li>• Speaking Quiz Grades 6-12</li> <li>• Screener Writing Quiz Grades 1-5</li> <li>• Screener Writing Quiz Grades 6-12</li> </ul> <p><b>Kindergarten W-APT</b> Test administrators should review the K W-APT Training Webinar and Test Administration Manual, located in the <a href="#">WIDA Secure Portal</a>.</p> <p><b>WIDA MODEL</b> Test administrators should review the training CD/DVD and materials included in the assessment kit.</p> <p>School division test examiners must complete all training components, including quizzes/certification, annually.</p>
<b>Website Permissions</b>	<p><b>WIDA Secure Portal</b> (<a href="http://portal.wida.us">portal.wida.us</a>): Contact School Division Director of Testing (DDOT) for permissions to access WIDA Screener &amp; Kindergarten W-APT training.</p> <p><b>WIDA AMS (DRC)</b> (<a href="http://wida-ams.us">wida-ams.us</a>): Contact School Division Director of Testing (DDOT) for permissions to access WIDA Screener test tickets and score reporting.</p>

## ELL Program Requirements – Services &amp; Support

Question/Topic	State-specific Guidance
<b>ELL Services or Program Requirements</b>	<p>All identified ELs grades K-12 must be placed in effective LIEP described in the approved annual Title III application.</p> <p>WIDA Screener Online results are stored in the WIDA AMS application. Enter student proficiency levels in your division's Student Information System and code the appropriate Student Record Collection Data (Code 1 for identified ELs receiving services.)</p>
<b>Declining Services</b>	<p>Parents can decline LIEP services per division procedures which typically include a written and signed declaration of parental choice documenting that they have full understanding of the LIEP services that they have declined. Annual English language proficiency testing cannot be declined by parents. The division must have a process in place to monitor the academic progress of identified ELs who have declined LIEP services, and they must be provided the same academic programs and services as any students at risk for academic failure. The linguistic needs of these ELs must also be addressed within the general education program.</p>