

WIDA Alternate ACCESS¹ Participation Guidance 2024-25

Students identified as English learners must participate in the annual state English language proficiency (ELP) assessment until they attain the level of English proficiency set by the state of Illinois.

ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot meaningfully participate in the standard ACCESS for ELLs[®] assessment, even with accommodations, should participate using the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Eligibility for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS requires both 1 and 2 below.

1. The student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifies use of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.
2. The student meets one or more of the following conditions:
 - The student satisfies the participation guidelines for the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) for the current/upcoming school year (if in grades 3-11).
 - The student was unable to meaningfully participate in the most recent administration of the standard ACCESS for ELLs, even with accommodations.
 - Qualified school personnel determine that the student is unable to respond meaningfully to test items found on ACCESS for ELLs based upon observations of the student attempting to answer items that appear on either the WIDA Screener (for grades K or 1-12) or MODEL². Record observations from an administration using the accommodations (if any) specified in the student's IEP.

A special administration using one of these tests may be necessary, even if the student has been recently assessed with one of them. The test administrator, or another certified educator present during the administration, should record observations. A third-party observer does not need to be a trained test administrator.

These special administrations need not be given to completion, scored, or reported to the state. Observations (see other side) should be recorded for discussion at the student's IEP meeting. Administer the standard ACCESS to ELs for their annual ELP assessment when they are able to understand and respond meaningfully to the test questions. Give the WIDA Alternate ACCESS to ELs who cannot.

Important Notes:

- The WIDA Alternate ACCESS is available for grades K-12, not pre-K.
- Do not evaluate *every* EL who has an IEP for eligibility using the procedure in this document. Select likely candidates based on the students' IEPs.
- ELs who take the DLM-AA are not necessarily required to take the Alternate ACCESS. Consider their history taking ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS when deciding which assessment to use.
- Students who took the Alternate ACCESS in one school year are not required to continue using it in subsequent years. Students who earn an Overall Composite near the top of the scale on the Alternate ACCESS should be considered for transition to the standard ACCESS for ELLs the following year.
- Record observations of the student interacting with the WIDA Alternate ACCESS during its administration and provide them to the IEP team to inform decisions regarding its future use.
- The IEP team must annually re-evaluate a student's eligibility for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. It should include results and observations from the most recent administration of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.
- The ELP range of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS does not exceed 3.0 (on the WIDA scale) for any language domain. Any student assessed with the Alternate ACCESS cannot reclassify to "Former EL."
- Using ACCESS for ELLs for some domains and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for other domains is not allowed.

¹ ACCESS is the annual Illinois English language proficiency test.

² Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL) is no longer the Illinois English language proficiency screener for kindergarten.

Student _____ DOB _____ State ID _____ Date _____

Determining Initial Eligibility for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS Grades K-12		
Answer Questions 1 through 6 in order.	Yes	No
1. Does the student qualify as an English learner according to state criteria?		
2. Does the student have an IEP?		
3. Does the student satisfy the participation guidelines for the DLM-AA? If "Yes," go to Question 6. If "No," go to Question 4. (Skip if not in grades 3-11.)		
4. Was the student able to meaningfully participate in the most recent administration of ACCESS for ELLs, either with or without accommodations? If either "Yes" or "No," go to Question 6. If the student did not participate or observations are not available, go to Question 5. <u>Record your supporting observations here.</u> ³		
5. Can the student meaningfully participate in the WIDA Screener or MODEL, either with or without accommodations? ⁴ <u>Record your supporting observations here.</u>		
6. Is the student eligible for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS? Eligibility requires "Yes" responses to Questions 1 and 2, and either "Yes" for Question 3 <u>or</u> "No" for either Questions 4 or 5.		

Additional Instructions:

- Specify use of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS in the student's IEP.
- Keep this completed form with the student's IEP.
- Annually re-evaluate a student's eligibility for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Record observations of the student's interaction with the test to inform the IEP team.

³ Observations may be made by the test administrator or another certified educator present during the administration. A third-party observer does not need to be a trained test administrator. An extra page may be attached.

⁴ A special administration of the WIDA Screener or MODEL may be needed to answer this question. *You are not required to give it completely, score it, or report it to the state.* The purpose is to observe the student interacting with the test items.