

Guidance for English Learner Placement and Seal of Biliteracy Determination with Provisional and Preliminary ACCESS Results

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When will 2021 ACCESS scores be available?

ACCESS demographic corrections in SIS	July 1 – December 19, 2021
Spring provisional ¹ results posted in SIS for ELs who completed all ACCESS testing by June 30, 2021	August 2, 2021
Preliminary ² results for spring and fall posted in SIS that include all ACCESS testing through September 17, 2021	ACCESS Preliminary Review November 8 –19, 2021
Final results posted in WIDA AMS	December 15, 2021
Printed reports sent to districts and schools	January 6, 2022
Final results posted in SIS	January 19, 2022

Go to the [Assessment Department's FAQ](#) or the [Illinois WIDA page for more information on ACCESS logistics](#).

2. When does a district have to turn in all ACCESS test materials to be included in the provisional ACCESS data file that will be released on August 2?

Districts must ship all paper test materials back to Data Recognition Corporation by June 30, 2021, to likely be included in the provisional file.

3. How should a district determine school year 2021-22 placement in TBE/TPI programs for ELs who participated in the 2021 spring ACCESS administration?

The district may use provisional 2021 ACCESS scores to place ELs in TBE/TPI programs and to reclassify students in the 2021-22 school year. If 2021 ACCESS scores are not available when the district makes decisions about placement, students should be placed in TBE/TPI programs based on their 2020 ACCESS scores and recent classroom performance. However, student reclassification must be based on 2021 provisional or final ACCESS scores. Districts should

¹ "Provisional" will be used to describe the first 2021 ACCESS file that will be released to districts on August 2, 2021. This file will include English Learners who were tested prior to and including June 30, 2021. ISBE and districts will be validating the data until November 19, 2021.

² "Preliminary" will be used to describe the second 2021 ACCESS file that will be released to districts on November 8, 2021. This file will include all English Learners who tested from March 15 to September 17, 2021. Like the provisional results, ISBE and districts will be validating the data until November 19, 2021.

consult the final ACCESS file regarding those who were placed at the start of the school year based on the above criteria to ensure proper placement.

4. Why are some ELs not included in the provisional file?

Incomplete or split scores (e.g., Writing domain is in a separate record from the other three domains) will not be in the provisional results and won't be available for placement decisions in August. The ACCESS Preliminary Review (November 8 – 19) will include all ACCESS results for 2021. This is where districts will find students who were tested in the spring but were not included in the provisional results.

5. May a student be transitioned out of the TBE/TPI program based on provisional ACCESS scores?

Yes. The provisional scores will be available in SIS for data correction by districts starting July 27. Districts will be able to reclassify students using this data.

6. How should a district determine TBE/TPI program placement in 2021-22 for ELs who participated in the 2021 fall ACCESS administration?

These students should be placed in the TBE/TPI program based on their 2020 ACCESS scores and recent classroom performance. However, student reclassification must be based on 2021 provisional or preliminary ACCESS scores. The ACCESS Preliminary Review file will be available in SIS on November 8. This file will include all students who took the ACCESS in the spring and fall. Districts should consult this data regarding the students who were placed at the start of the school year based on the above criteria to ensure proper placement.

7. What action should a district take regarding students who reach proficiency when ACCESS results are available?

Once scores are available, the district must update the EL program indicator on local data systems for students who reached proficiency. Students who are proficient should be transitioned out of the TBE/TPI program³, and parents must be notified of this transition.

8. Do districts have to send parent notification letters to EL parents for the 2021-22 school year?

Yes. The district may use provisional 2021 ACCESS scores, if available, to complete the parent notification letter regarding placement in the TBE/TPI program.

When provisional scores are not available, the letter should inform parents that the placement is based on the 2020 ACCESS results as well as recent classroom performance. This letter must

³ Those reclassified students who were in a TBE/TPI program for fewer than three years may be retained in the program for up to three full years if parents do not consent to transitioning out prior to the entitled period of time.

include a statement that the placement decision may be adjusted when 2021 ACCESS scores are available.

9. When should districts notify parents that students met English language proficiency on the 2021 ACCESS?

When 2021 ACCESS scores are available, districts must notify parents of students who attained English proficiency on the assessment.

10. How will this affect EL eligibility for the 2022 ACCESS administration?

The 2021 ACCESS results will determine student eligibility for the 2022 ACCESS administration. Whenever possible, districts will use the 2021 provisional or preliminary ACCESS results to order the tests. Districts should order tests for all their students who are actively receiving services. ACCESS scores are released provisionally in August and the final data is released in December, so districts will know whether to test the child or not in January 2022. If students are reclassified, even with the November 8 Preliminary Review file, they will not participate in the 2022 ACCESS test. Even though a pre-ID label is generated for a student, it does not mean that they must test if they are identified as English proficient after the label is issued.

11. Can a district use the provisional 2021 ACCESS scores to document English proficiency for the purpose of awarding the Seal of Biliteracy?

Yes. The district may use provisional 2021 ACCESS scores, if available, to document English proficiency for the purpose of awarding the Seal of Biliteracy. These scores will become available following the completion of school year 2020-21, so districts will first need to update the official electronic diploma and transcript files of the qualifying student to include the Seal graphic designation in order to ensure that their official record includes this award. Then the district will need to either reprint those documents that include the designation and send them to the qualifying students so that they have a copy or send stickers of the Seal graphic to these students to place on the documents to indicate that they received the award.

12. Can a district postpone awarding the Seal of Biliteracy until a student's 2021 ACCESS scores are available?

If a student does not have a provisional 2021 ACCESS score, a district can postpone awarding the Seal of Biliteracy until the student's score is available in the 2021 ACCESS Preliminary Review file. However, if a student does receive a provisional 2021 ACCESS score, then districts may not postpone awarding the Seal of Biliteracy. As a reminder, once districts have identified the students who have qualified with ACCESS following the completion of the 2020-21 school year, they will need to first update the official electronic diploma and transcript files of these students to include the Seal graphic designation. This ensures that the official record for these students includes the Seal of Biliteracy. Then districts will need to either reprint those documents that include the designation and send them to the qualifying students so that they have a copy or send stickers of the Seal graphic to these students to place on the documents to indicate that they received the award.

13. How should a district report the end-of-year Seal of Biliteracy award information for students who qualified with the 2021 ACCESS?

A district that has students who qualified for the Seal of Biliteracy with their provisional 2021 ACCESS scores should submit the end-of-year report in SIS as soon as it is determined which students qualified and the awards are given. A district that has students who did not receive a provisional 2021 ACCESS score and are waiting for the Preliminary Review file to determine eligibility must wait until then to submit the end-of year report. Districts will have until the end of January 2022 to submit the end-of-year report in SIS.
