**Frequently Asked Questions – Alternate English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment**

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## Background Information

**What is the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs?**

The WIDA Alternate ACCESS is an English language proficiency assessment that is designed to test those English learners in grades 1 to 12 with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot meaningfully participate in the ELPA21 with accommodations. See the Alternate ACCESS Resources page for more information about the WIDA Alternate ACCESS: <https://www.wida.us/assessment/alternateaccess.aspx>.

**Why do we need to test English learners (ELs) with significant cognitive disabilities?**

Federal regulations require the assessment of all ELs. In order to comply with this regulation, OSPI has adopted the ELPA21 and a variety of accommodation options which will meet the assessment needs of most ELs. In addition, the WIDA Alternate ACCESS was adopted as the alternate assessment for measuring English language proficiency in Washington for students with significant cognitive disabilities. All ELs will need to participate in either the ELPA21 or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

Resource: Dear Colleague letter (page 32, footnote 88): <http://k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/pubdocs/January7MeaningfulParticipationDearColleagueLetter.pdf>

Excerpt: “All students who meet the definition of LEP under the ESEA—see 20 U.S.C. § 7801(25)—must be tested annually with a State-approved ELP assessment.”

# Testing Options and Decisions

**What options are available for testing English language proficiency (ELP)?**

Students participate in testing language proficiency in one of three ways:

1) Regular ELPA 21 without accommodations- ELs with or without disabilities participate in the regular assessment and may access any universal tools or designated supports as noted in the GTSA.

2) Regular ELPA 21 with accommodations- ELs with disabilities participate in the regular assessment and may access any universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations as designated in their IEP or 504 plans and as noted in the GTSA.

3) Alternate EL assessments- ELs with significant cognitive disabilities participate in the state’s alternate English Proficiency assessment (WIDA Alternate ACCESS) based on alternate achievement standards.

For ELs with disabilities, the determination of how a student will participate in state and district assessment is determined by the student’s IEP team in accordance with the [Guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams: Student participation in Statewide Assessments for Accountability and Graduation](http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/ResourceLibrary/pubdocs/IEP-Team-Guidelines-Assess.pdf).

**Which students are eligible for the Alternate ELP assessment?**

Students must be English learners with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to meaningfully participate in the ELPA21 annual assessment with accommodations to be eligible for the alternate ELP assessment. For guidance on identifying eligible students, please consult the [Guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams: Student participation in Statewide Assessments for Accountability and Graduation](http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/ResourceLibrary/pubdocs/IEP-Team-Guidelines-Assess.pdf) document.

The Alternate ELP assessment that Washington has adopted is the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. This test is intended for ELs in grades 1 to 12 with significant cognitive disabilities. Kindergarten English learners who are eligible for an alternate assessment will participate in the first grade WIDA Alternate ACCESS test. Kindergarten cut scores will be established independent of the first grade expectations.

**Who decides which test an EL will take?**

Assessment decisions are made by a student’s IEP team. If the English learner meets the guidance criteria, then s/he is eligible, but not required, to participate in the alternate ELP assessment. However, the final decision is made by the IEP team. OSPI has produced guidance for this decision that can be found under “Assessment” in the [resource library](http://k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/ResourceLibrary/default.aspx) on the Special Education website.

**Is the Engagement Rubric for Language Proficiency still an option?**

No. In a departure from the 2017 administration of language proficiency assessments, OSPI will not continue to use the Engagement Rubric for Language Proficiency protocols with the alternate ELP assessment. Instead, all ELs recommended for an alternate ELP assessment will be expected to attempt the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The proctors will be able to apply specific stopping rules based on student responses.

This guidance is specific to language proficiency testing only. The Engagement Rubric is still in use for the academic assessment of students with significant cognitive disabilities where appropriate.

# Identifying students

**How do I register students for the Alternate ELP Assessment?**

Initial student registration (pre-identification) for the alternate ELP assessment in Washington concludes on December 4. The process for pre-identification takes place in WAMS through the Students Receiving Services application and can be accessed by clicking the “Assessment Operations” tab, then the “Pre‐ID” tab, then the “Students Receiving Services” in the left margin of the page. The prerequisite for a student to show up in the Students Receiving Services registration application is that a student must have an active 2018–2019 CEDARS record, and that the student’s CEDARS record indicates that the student is receiving special education services.

Students can only be pre-identified in WAMS. If students are not pre-identified you will need to follow the process to order “additional” materials described in the [User Guide](https://www.wida.us/assessment/access%202.0/documents/WIDAAMSUserGuide.pdf) (link will be updated soon) and use a school-specific label from DRC on the test booklet. These students’ demographic information will need to be bubbled in as the label will not reflect a specific student’s information.

NOTE: Although the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment is only for grades 1 to 12, Washington will be testing kindergarten students with this assessment as well. They will be taking the same test as grade 1 students.

**If we have students that were initially pre-identified, but their IEP teams have decided they are ready for ELPA21 testing, can we use the booklets for other students that were not pre-identified, but do need to test? If we can do this, what paperwork is required?**

Yes. You can use “extra” booklets for other students. You will need to place a yellow school-specific label over the student-specific label (applicable only to the original pre-identified student) if you are using the booklet with a different student. Remember to bubble in all the student demographic and disability information in the Student Response Booklet.

Ensure the IEPs for each student accurately indicate the test they are participating in. You will also need to ensure that the students who were initially identified in WAMS for Alt ELP have TIDE records and can access an ELPA21 assessment.

# Ordering Materials

**When I order additional materials, what materials should I be ordering?**

There is a long list of materials on the DRC site. WA is only contracted for WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing. Only order WIDA Alternate ACCESS materials. Do not order the “paper-pencil” test as this is the accommodated form of the regular assessment, not the Alternate ACCESS. For each student tested, you will need

1. a Student Response Booklet
2. a Listening, Reading, Speaking Test booklet, and
3. a Test Administrator Script.

**Where/How do I order additional materials?**

Additional materials for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS are ordered through eDirect. The process to follow is outlined in the WIDA-AMS [User Guide](https://www.wida.us/assessment/access%202.0/documents/WIDAAMSUserGuide.pdf). Only district coordinators have permissions to order additional materials for this test.

**How do I order labels for a school if we didn’t have any students initially identified there, but we do now?**

To get additional (or initial) school-specific labels for WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing, you will need to email [leslie.huff@k12.wa.us](mailto:leslie.huff@k12.wa.us) with the following information:

* **District Name:**
* **District Code:**
* **School Name:**
* **School Code:**
* **District Coordinator Name:**
* **District Coordinator Email:**
* **Shipping Address:**
* **Number of labels needed (comes in sheets of 10):**

OSPI will then forward the information to DRC for new labels. Information is needed for each school needing labels, but it can all be sent in one email.

# Test Administrator Training

**Will OSPI provide training for proctors of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS?**

Yes. OSPI is providing trainings prior to the testing window opening via Moodle. TAs are required to complete training and pass the quiz that follows before registering with OSPI as a trained TA. Additional information can be found on the Alt ELP website located at <http://www.k12.wa.us/ELPA21/AlternateACCESS.aspx> .

Moodle Training link: <http://training.ospi.k12.wa.us/course/view.php?id=53> (access code from your DAC is required to enter the course).

**Are test administrators required to be trained to administer this test?**

Yes. Those administering the WIDA Alternate ACCESS are required to complete training annually. Training is located on OSPI’s Moodle site. District Assessment Coordinators can provide you with an access code for the course. In addition to the training, TAs will also need to pass a quiz and register with the state.

**Can paraeducators give this assessment?**

Yes. However, they must complete the training and be under the supervision of a certificated staff member.

# Alternate Screening

**Is there an alternate screener for these students?**

No. There are currently no alternate screeners available. This is something Washington will continue to explore.

# WIDA Administration

**Where can I find essential materials for administration?**

The Test Administrator Manual (TAM), WIDA AMS User Guide, and District/School Test Coordinator Manual are all located on WAMS under 2019 Administration Downloads. The Accommodations Manual, and other support documents and resources are available on the Alternate ACCESS R webpage.

**On the WIDA Alternate ACCESS there are multiple opportunities to answer an item with varying levels of linguistic complexity. Do students receive the same score for answering at any point in the process?**

Yes and No. Scores are weighted depending on the point at which a student successfully responded in the listening and reading tests. For the speaking and writing tests, if students meet the criteria at any point, they receive full credit.

**What are the stopping rules with the WIDA Alternate ACCESS?**

Stopping rules are clearly stated in each domain of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS in the Moving On box in the TA script. Please consult the Test Administrator’s Script booklet for specific guidance in each domain.

**If a student chooses an accurate response in the listening or reading test that is not in line with other response options, is that correct?**

Yes. If a student is asked to identify an “F” and the student chooses an “F” that is located somewhere besides in the response boxes, that is OK. The TA should consider that response correct.

**My student does not speak and cannot make words. Do I just not administer this part of the test?**

The TA cannot make the decision to test or not test a student on any part of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. The student’s IEP team is responsible for making this decision. The WIDA Alternate ACCESS assesses pre-linguistic communication as part of the speaking test.

**My student has multiple disabilities. How do I indicate that on the disabilities page (page 3)of the Student Response Booklet?**

To indicate multiple disabilities, mark more than one disability in either column of the disabilities chart on page three. Doing so will result in the student being recorded as MD. For more information, please see page 30 in the TAM.

# Native American ELP Testing

**Do Native American students in a self-contained classroom need to take this test? We don’t have any academic scores for them until they begin taking the WA-AIM.**

If these students are identified ELs, then they will need to complete an annual English language proficiency assessment. Many districts test these students on Dibbles, WaKIDS, or another academic assessment and use the results to determine the need for language proficiency screening. This process allows for earlier language interventions if necessary.

If they have not been identified as ELs, then they are not eligible for ELP testing.