

# State Tests During the COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## ACCESS for English Language Learners

### Prioritizing health and safety during ACCESS testing

This year, ACCESS for ELLs testing will occur **only if and when** state and local health orders, as well as district policies for COVID-19, allow students and staff to safely be in school buildings. The ACCESS tests are given each year to help parents, teachers and school leaders understand the progress emerging bilingual students are making in learning English.

Many of our students who typically take ACCESS come from [families that are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19](#). Parents and guardians of children who are learning remotely should consider their family's health needs, especially the needs of older family members and those at increased risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19, when deciding whether to allow their child to come into the school building for testing. **Negative consequences on students or families will not be imposed if children do not participate in the ACCESS tests.**

### Dates extended to allow more time to safely conduct tests

The Colorado Department of Education has extended the dates during which the assessment can be given. The tests can be administered between Jan. 11 and March 12, 2021, to provide schools and districts with more flexibility to schedule the tests when it is safe for students and staff and more time to make plans for the best health safety practices.



### Protecting health and safety of students and teachers

The health and safety of students and teachers is our top priority. The ACCESS tests are administered in person by a teacher, but extra precautions will be taken to ensure the tests can be administered safely.

- Sharing of materials, including test booklets, will be limited;
- Materials will be sanitized whenever possible;
- Students will be seated 6 feet apart;
- Ventilation and air flow will be maximized; and
- Staff and students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after testing.

Depending on local health data on the spread of COVID-19, additional changes to ACCESS testing plans may be made to keep students, families and staff safe.

### ACCESS tests monitor students' progress in learning English

1. The test helps parents and teachers understand their students' progress in learning English.
2. The test helps teachers know if adjustments are needed in instruction to help students succeed in learning English.
3. The test helps teachers know when students have become proficient in English and no longer need English language development classes or support.