

Frequently Asked Questions

What ACCESS for ELLs scores does a student need to be considered Fluent English Proficient (FEP)?

The Colorado Department of Education has set an Overall Composite score of 5.0 combined with a Literacy score of 5.0 on ACCESS for ELLs (the state English language proficiency assessment) as one of the criteria for initiating a review of additional evidence indicating that a student may be FEP. Performance on ACCESS for ELLs is only one piece of information included in the body of evidence used to make a determination that a student is FEP. These ACCESS for ELLs cut scores for the designation of FEP are to be used May 2013 through March 2014.

How were the FEP cut scores selected?

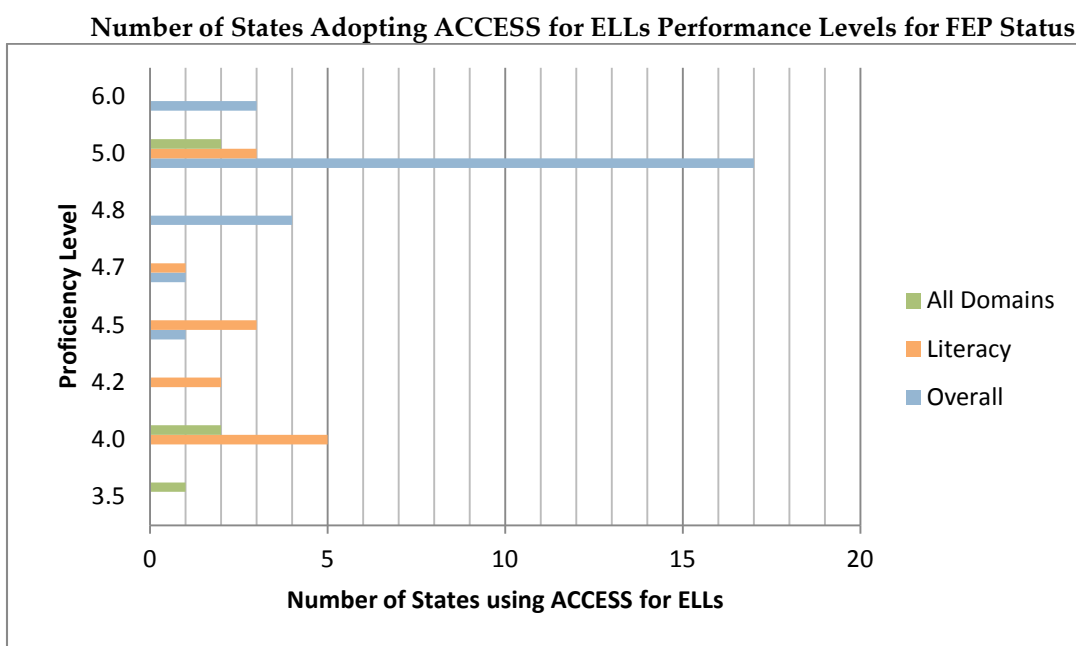
Representatives from the Colorado Department of Education's Language, Culture and Equity, Title I, Title III, Assessment, and Accountability teams reviewed several options for setting the cut score(s) indicating a student may be FEP. The 5.0 Overall Composite score combined with a 5.0 Literacy score were selected based on a review of:

- Performance level descriptors
- Other states' criteria and prior experience with the assessment
- Language and literacy skills needed to access and master the Colorado Academic Standards
- Input from the field, including the ELL Assessment Advisory Committee and the Community of Practitioners

Both the internal and external advisory stakeholder groups unanimously agreed on the ACCESS for ELLs proficiency cut scores for FEP and the timeline (May 2013 to March 2014) for their use.

What FEP cut scores are used by other states using ACCESS for ELLs?

In adopting ACCESS for ELLs, Colorado joined a large multi-state consortium, World-Class Instructional Design and Assessments (WIDA). Some states have administered ACCESS for ELLs for numerous years. The recommended 5.0 level is an empirically derived value attained by comparing state content tests with English language proficiency test performance via several statistical approaches. These procedures have been accepted by over a dozen WIDA states and several non-WIDA states.



Will the 5.0 Composite and Literacy scores as a Colorado indicator of FEP be reviewed?

Yes. The intent is for additional analyses to occur after the 2013 TCAP results are available. Verifying that students scoring a 5.0 perform comparably to their native English-speaking peers in Colorado will be a critical part of those analyses. Any adjustments resulting from that process will be implemented for FEP guidance for school year 2014-2015.

Will the percentage of students meeting the 5.0 Overall Composite on ACCESS for ELLs be the same as what was seen with CELApro in the past?

No. The 5.0 proficiency level is not the same across the two assessments. ACCESS for ELLs has six performance levels that are defined differently than CELApro's five performance levels. In addition, although there is overlap in content, the skills and knowledge being measured by the assessments are not identical. Differences in the percentage of students meeting a proficiency level of 5.0 on the assessments are expected. See below for a table indicating the percentage of students meeting the 5.0 Composite score on ACCESS for ELLs nationally last year.

Grade	% Students Scoring 5+ on ACCESS for ELLs 2012 Nationwide
K	6.5
1	5.6
2	14.1
3	34.8
4	27.3
5	23.9
6	9.6
7	11.5
8	10.6
9	34.7
10	26.3
11	24.4
12	19.5

Twenty-five percent of my students had a Composite score of 5.0 or higher. Do I need to re-designate all of them?

No. Districts, using state guidelines, determine additional local criteria for re-designation (changing student's status from Limited English Proficient to FEP Monitor Year 1). The ACCESS for ELLs Overall Composite score is only one of the criteria considered. Students are expected also to meet the ACCESS for ELLs 5.0 Literacy score. Fewer students will meet both FEP score criteria. Student performance on the state content-based assessments, along with local evidence validating or refuting the scores, also must be considered. The 5.0 Overall Composite score is only one of the "triggers" for considering a student for re-designation. See CDE's **Interim Re-Designation Guidance provided by the Office of Language, Culture and Equity** at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/elau_whatsnew.htm