

# Office Hour FAQ

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## September 21, 2023 Office Hour Topics:

### Screening Students with Disabilities

Alternate Screener is not Available: Accessibility features are available for all students. Review [WIDA's Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) to see if it would be appropriate to administer any part(s) of the test or if there is a feature that would meet the needs of the student. If this student has been identified with a disability i.e., must have a documented Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 Plan during the time of screening, use accommodations to provide targeted support.

If you find that accessibility and/or accommodations are not going to increase equitable access and help students overcome the effects of a disability it may be best to evaluate the student's English language proficiency through other means.

English Language Development (ELD) staff (in coordination the child's IEP specialist) can observe student language use in class, considering the ELD standards framework and language expectations for the child's grade level, to determine if the student would likely benefit from English language development instruction. It's important that someone familiar with the WIDA Screener and the ELD standards be involved in the alignment process. The goal is to answer the question of whether the child would be considered proficient in English compared to multilingual peers at the same grade level who are proficient or who have reached proficiency in English. A brief description of the process used, and the results need to be documented in the child's cumulative file.

In the rare case that a student requires the use of an accommodation not available on the Screener for grades 1-12 or Screener for Kindergarten, the general guidance is:

- Consult with the IEP Team, try to administer pieces/domains of the Screener (Kindergarten or grades 1-12) that are appropriate;
- Interview parents to find out what they think about enrolling the student in a language instruction educational program;
- Consider a body of evidence that would demonstrate proficiency in domains appropriate for student's grade level;
- Closely evaluate the body of evidence from general education teachers and other ELD staff;
- **VERY IMPORTANT** to create a check list or decision tree to help guide how the district will make English Language Proficiency (ELP) decisions when all test domains on the Screener cannot be administered due to a student's documented disability.

### Body of Evidence

Identification: English Language Proficiency Act (ELPA) requires all districts and schools to identify Multilingual Learners (MLs). In addition, Colorado Senate Bill 109, CRS 22-24-106 requires the use of one common assessment to identify potential ML students. Colorado administers the Screener for Kindergarten and WIDA Screener for grades 1-12 as the state mandated placement assessments. **Screener scores and a collection of evidence must be used to determine the ELP level of newly enrolled and transferring back to the district students.**



Per federal guidelines, students who have a language influence other than English must be screened, enrolled in a language instruction educational program, and parents must be notified within 30 days at the beginning of the school year. Throughout the remainder of the school year, determination must happen within two weeks of the student's enrollment.

See the complete [Identification Guidance](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/identification-placement) (https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde\_english/identification-placement) for more information about standardized procedures and processes districts must follow when identifying potential ML students.

**Redesignation:** A term that describes a process that districts and schools develop to determine when Multilingual Learners (MLs) are Fluent English Proficient (FEP) and can transition successfully to classrooms with minimal English Language Development (ELD) support. It represents a student's English language proficiency level has changed from Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor.

**Redesignation is based on an evaluation of annual ELP assessment scores (WIDA ACCESS) and a collection of evidence which supports students have demonstrated proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**

See the complete [Redesignation Guidance](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/redesignation)

(https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde\_english/redesignation) for more information about standardized procedures and processes districts must follow when considering students for redesignation.

#### Collecting a Body of Evidence (BOE):

- Identification BOE is collected very shortly after screening (identification occurs within 30days/2weeks)
  - Kindergarten first semester students only take two domains of Screener for Kindergarten\*: Speaking and Listening
  - Kindergarten second semester through grade 12 students take four domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of WIDA Screener
- Redesignation BOE is collected ideally in the spring after WIDA ACCESS\* testing window (Jan-Feb)
  - WIDA ACCESS scores are typically released to districts during Apr-May each year
  - Changes to ML codes or designation occur during Student October Count. Program changes to student's ML instructional plan can occur anytime during the school year and does not require a coding or designation change in Data Pipeline

WIDA ACCESS cut points guide districts in making Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP M1) determinations for state reporting:

NEP: 1.0 – 2.4 (Overall)

LEP: 2.5 – 3.9 (Overall)

FEP M1: 4.0 Overall AND 4.0 Literacy

*\*Screener for Kindergarten is an assessment administered to potential ML students enrolled in kindergarten first and second semester as well as first semester first grade students*

*\*WIDA ACCESS is a required ELP assessment administered annually to all identified NEP and LEP students who are taking ACCESS for ELLs, Alternate ACCESS or ACCESS for Kindergarten. FEP and PHLOTE students are excluded from annual WIDA ACCESS testing.*