

# Office Hour FAQ

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## September 18, 2025 Office Hour Topics:

### Multilingual Learner Programming

Guidance on ED rescission of Jan. 2015 Dear Colleague letter: In August 2025, the US Department of Education (ED) rescinded its January 2015 Dear Colleague Letter (“[English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents](#)”). This rescission does not change district and school legal obligations in serving multilingual learners; [you can visit our website for more information about those requirements](#).

### Suggested Timeline for Redesignation Procedures

Month	Procedures and Processes
January-February	ACCESS administration
March-June	District/schools collect a body of evidence
May	Districts receive ACCESS scores and share with schools and families
May-July	Districts/schools determine redesignation eligibility
August	Districts adjust student’s schedule to reflect redesignation decisions
August-October	Districts update coding during <i>Student October Count</i>

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 out of English Language Development (ELD) instruction with minimal or no language 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). Redesignation is based on an evaluation of summative English Language Proficiency (ELP) annual assessment scores (WIDA ACCESS\*) and a collection of local evidence which supports student has demonstrated English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. See the complete [Redesignation Guidance](#) for more information about standardized procedures and processes districts must follow when considering students for redesignation.

Each year, regardless of redesignation determination, ACCESS Individual Student Reports (ISRs) should be shared with parents or guardians before the end of the school year. Please note that score reports are confidential, and both electronic and hard copy distributions must comply with state and federal privacy laws, as well as local school board policies. In addition, the body of evidence collected during the redesignation process must be well-documented and kept in the student’s records. CO districts are instructed to provide student assessment data when a student transfers out of the school district. Specifically, ELP assessment results and other records related to redesignation should follow the student into a new district as described in [ECEA Rules](#) and the [Transcript and Records Checklist](#).

### Screening Students with Disabilities

Alternate Screener is not available during SY25-26. If an accessibility and/or accommodations feature is 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 with a documented disability requires the use of an accommodation not available at the time of Screener administration (Screener for grades 1-12 or Screener for Kindergarten\*), the general guidance is:

- Consult with the IEP Team, try to administer test 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, decision tree or flow chart etc., to help guide how the district will make ELP decisions when test domains cannot be administered due to student's documented disability which is precluding them from testing. Should the district be audited by CDE, documentation about how language proficiency is determined when a specific domain(s) of the Screener could not be given is required.

## Multilingual Learner Enrollment

Beginning SY25-26, ACCESS Overall and Literacy scores from the current test year have been added to ML data reports to assist districts in meeting the civil rights and educational needs for students, and to provide accurate reporting of student's language proficiency level. During student enrollment, districts and schools should extract/pull, and review ML Historical data reports found in Data Pipeline (CEDAR/COGNOS) to verify if student has been previously designated as ML and/or if ELD instruction has been provided, use this data to support ELP level designation and data coding decisions. There are two new ML data reports; SASID and District List. Privileges to access or view these data reports are decided by districts and schools, how many educators who can view this data is requested by each district or school through the Data Pipeline Office at CDE.

The enrolling district remains obligated to make ELP decisions following Federal and State identification procedures, to provide written parent notification in a language parents can understand, and to adhere to identification timeline requirements when using ML History seen in Data Pipeline (CEDAR/Cognos Reports). See the complete [Identification Guidance](#) for more information about standardized procedures, processes districts must follow when identifying potential ML students and/or enrolling students who have previously been identified in Colorado during SY25-26.

### Common Questions Related to Multilingual Enrollment and Programming

Should the enrolling district or school screen PHLOTE FEP Former ML students?

The enrolling district must collect and evaluate local evidence to determine if student is still English proficient and that language is not a barrier to content, if so, continue coding student PHLOTE FEP Former ML. When local evidence shows language is a reoccurring barrier to content, and student has not been screened in the past year, administer the appropriate WIDA Screener.

When will CDE update ML Historical data reports with 2026 ACCESS scores?

Data reports will be updated each summer. CLDE will send notification through its weekly list serv emails.

### Why can't I access/view ACCESS scores on ML Historical data reports?

A few common reasons data reports are blank: check Student Interchange file permission setting, select the current school year (SY25-26), if the district TAGS files (choose 'OCT' in the tag field), district has not uploaded the Student School Association (SSA) and Demographic files to CDE.

### Will Screener scores be included on ML Historical data reports?

No, only current year ACCESS scores will be added to data reports. CDE does not have access to all Screener reports and due to the format (paper Screener and Kinder Screener) and use of online scoring calculator, this is not doable. Enrolling district should reach out to the prior district that administered Screener to the student.

### Should the enrolling district or school administer Screener if student enrolls during the ACCESS test window?

The enrolling district or school should look at ML Historical data reports in CEDAR/COGNOS when student enrolls during 2026 ACCESS test window, if scores are available, evaluate and determine designation first (in most cases student may not need to be screened and would proceed to take ACCESS).

### What ACCESS score report format is allowed when student enrolls?

ACCESS score reports can come from ML Historical data reports provided by CDE, from another [WIDA state](#), or as data points in transferred records. It is incredibly helpful if enrolling district seeks to obtain the official ISR because scale scores are included. Enrolling district and school must make sure the score reports clearly indicate the current test year.

### Parents can formally decline CMAS but is that an option for ACCESS or Screener too?

No, there is no formal option to decline ACCESS or Screener. Districts and schools should attempt to administer Screener to potential MLs and ACCESS to all NEP and LEP students who are enrolled in ELD and students whose parents have opted them out of ELD instruction. There are a few ACCESS test codes that pertain to circumstances when student is unable to come to school, or on medical absence. Providing parents a form to decline testing is not aligned to federal and state annual summative testing requirements for multilingual learners.

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*\*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 (Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, ACCESS for ELLs) is a required ELP summative assessment administered annually to all identified NEP and LEP students (FEP, FELL and PHLOTE students are excluded from annual WIDA ACCESS testing). In accordance with ESEA Section 1111(b)(2), students who opt-out of ELD instruction are required to take annual ELP assessments until they meet criteria to redesignate through an evaluation of assessment scores and a collection of local academic evidence. Furthermore, districts may not recommend parents opt their child out of an LIEP or instruction for any reason. If a parent voluntarily decides to opt their child out of ML programs or particular ML services, that child retains their ML designation. Appropriate signed opt-out documentation is important to support legal compliance and should be reviewed with parents annually.*