

**Policy TEST-011: Identification of English Learners Participation in the Statewide Testing Program, Eligibility for Testing Accommodations and Exit Criteria**

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**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Policy Manual**

Item	Description
<b>Policy Title</b>	Identification of English Learners Participation in the Statewide Testing Program, Eligibility for Testing Accommodations and Exit Criteria
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<b>Statutory Reference</b>	G.S. 115C-12; G.S. 115C-83.5; 20 U.S.C. 6311(F), (G); 34 CFR 200.6(h)GS 115C-12(9)c.; GS 115C-81(b)(4); NC Constitution Article IX, Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq, 1964 Civil Rights Act

**I. Identification and Annual Assessment of English Learners**

- A. To be identified as English Learners (ELs), students indicating more than one language on the standardized, statewide Home Language Survey (HLS) must have their language background and previous identification as an EL investigated by Public School Unit (PSU) staff with English language acquisition experience. If the student's background or previous identification indicates limited English proficiency, the state adopted screener must be administered within 30 days of enrollment. Thereafter, all students identified as ELs must be annually assessed using the state adopted EL proficiency assessment.
  - 1. The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment is the state-designated EL proficiency assessment administered annually to kindergarten through twelfth-grade students who have been identified as ELs.
  - 2. The WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment is the state-designated EL proficiency assessment administered annually to students with significant cognitive disabilities and instructed on the extended content standards in kindergarten through grade 12.
- B. Students who move into North Carolina from another state or country and do not meet the North Carolina exit criteria on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment must be administered the standardized, statewide Home Language Survey. If more than one language is indicated, their language background and previous identification as an EL must be investigated by PSU staff with English language acquisition experience. If the student's background or previous identification indicates limited English proficiency, the state adopted screener must be administered within 30 days of enrollment.
- C. Effective with the 2022–23 school year, the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in kindergarten and in the first semester of grade 1.
- D. Effective with the 2022–23 school year, the WIDA Screener Online is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in second semester grade 1 through grade 12.
- E. Effective with the 2025–26 school year, students in the first semester of kindergarten who score below a 4.5 on the Oral Language (listening and speaking) composite qualify for English language development services and are assessed annually on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessments.
- F. Effective with the 2025–26 school year, students in the second semester of kindergarten through grade 12 with an overall (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) composite score below 4.5 on the WIDA Screener assessment qualify for English language development services and are assessed annually on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessments.

**II. Participation in Statewide Testing Program**



Subtest	1 Entering	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Expanding	5 Bridging	6 Reaching
Reading	Eligible to Receive State-Approved EL Testing Accommodations for All State Tests				Must Participate in the General State Test Administration without EL Testing Accommodations	

IV. English Learner Exit Criteria

A. Results from the annual ACCESS for ELLs test are used in determining whether a student has exited EL identification. Students must meet the Comprehensive Objective Composite (COC) set by the state to exit EL status:

- The COC is defined as the attainment of English language proficiency by a student reaching an overall composite score of 4.8 or above on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Additionally, attainment of English language proficiency by a student taking the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is a score of P1 or higher.
- The exit criteria for the adaptive online version of the ACCESS for ELLs has the same exit criteria as the paper/pencil version, but without tiers.

B. Students who exit EL identification are no longer assessed on the English language proficiency test nor are they eligible to receive EL accommodations on state tests.

C. Students who have exited EL status by obtaining the COC can be retested on the WIDA Screener Online for "Re-Identification" as an EL if observation and data collection indicates that a student was exited from the language assistance program prematurely.

V. ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels and Performance Definitions

A. Student performance on the ACCESS for ELLs is reported for each grade level as shown on the following tables. Performance definitions for each level at each grade level are reported and are accessible at <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2012-ELD-Standards.pdf>. The WIDA Performance Definitions are on pages 5–7: Figure D shows performance definitions for receptive language domains (Listening and Reading) and Figure E shows performance definitions for expressive language domains (Speaking and Writing).

Table 1. Cut Scores for Speaking across Grades (Final Recommended Cuts)  
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	Phase 1 cut	5.0	6.0
1	205	261	311	348	361	403
2	220	273	322	360	374	415
3	234	283	332	370	386	425
4	246	293	342	379	397	435
5	258	302	350	387	407	443
6	268	310	360	394	417	451
7	277	317	369	400	425	457
8	284	323	377	405	433	463
9	290	328	385	410	440	468
10	295	333	393	414	446	471
11	299	337	400	418	451	474
12	302	340	406	421	455	476

Table 2. Cut Scores for Writing across Grades (Final Recommended Cuts)  
Proficiency Levels

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	Phase 1 cut	5.0	6.0
1	238	275	337	348	382	405

2	242	279	341	367	388	411
3	247	283	346	379	394	418
4	266	288	351	387	401	425
5	267	293	356	393	407	433
6	268	298	361	398	413	441
7	273	305	367	402	419	450
8	281	311	372	406	424	459
9	289	319	378	410	430	469
10	298	326	385	412	436	479
11	308	335	391	415	441	490
12	318	344	398	418	447	501

Table 3. Cut Scores for Reading across Grades (Final Recommended Cuts)

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	Phase 1 cut	5.5	6.0
1	264	286	304	315	328	325	334
2	283	307	326	337	345	346	355
3	297	323	342	352	359	361	370
4	307	335	354	364	371	373	382
5	316	345	364	373	381	382	391
6	323	353	373	382	390	391	399
7	329	360	380	389	397	398	406
8	335	366	386	395	403	404	412
9	340	372	392	401	408	410	418
10	344	377	397	406	412	415	423
11	348	382	402	410	415	419	427
12	352	386	407	414	418	423	432

Table 4. Cut Scores for Listening across Grades (Final Recommended Cuts)

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	Phase 1 cut	5.5	6.0
1	236	259	291	303	310	315	327
2	245	283	314	330	339	342	354
3	262	300	331	349	361	362	374
4	275	313	343	363	378	376	388
5	285	323	354	375	391	388	401
6	294	332	363	385	401	398	411
7	302	340	370	394	409	407	420
8	308	347	377	402	415	415	427
9	314	353	383	409	419	422	434
10	325	358	389	415	423	428	441
11	335	364	394	420	425	434	447
12	342	368	398	426	427	439	452

Table 5. Final Cuts Scores: Overall Composite

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
1	242	274	315	344	368
2	254	289	329	359	383
3	265	300	340	371	396
4	279	309	350	382	406
5	286	317	358	390	415
6	291	324	365	399	423
7	298	331	372	406	431
8	304	337	378	412	438
9	311	344	385	418	446

10	318	350	391	424	453
11	325	356	397	429	459
12	331	362	402	434	466

Table 6. Final Cut Scores: Literacy  
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
1	251	281	321	349	370
2	263	293	334	363	383
3	272	303	344	373	394
4	287	312	353	383	404
5	292	319	360	390	412
6	296	326	367	398	420
7	301	333	374	404	428
8	308	339	379	410	436
9	315	346	385	416	444
10	321	352	391	421	451
11	328	359	397	426	459
12	335	365	403	431	467

Table 7. Final Cut Scores: Comprehension  
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
1	256	278	300	311	332
2	272	300	322	335	355
3	287	316	339	351	371
4	297	328	351	364	384
5	307	338	361	374	394
6	314	347	370	383	403
7	321	354	377	391	410
8	327	360	383	397	417
9	332	366	389	403	423
10	338	371	395	409	428
11	344	377	400	413	433
12	349	381	404	418	438

Table 8. Final Cut Scores: Oral  
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Proficiency Levels

Grade	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
1	221	260	301	332	365
2	233	278	318	352	385
3	248	292	332	368	400
4	261	303	343	380	412
5	272	313	352	391	422
6	281	321	362	401	431
7	290	329	370	410	439
8	296	335	377	418	445
9	302	341	384	425	451
10	310	346	391	431	456
11	317	351	397	436	461
12	322	354	402	441	464

VI. Alternate ACCESS Language Proficiency Level Scores

A. Alternate ACCESS Scores and Reports are accessible at <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access/scores-reports>.

Table 9. Cut Scores by Domain and Composite  
WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Domain	A1/A2	A2/A3	A3/P1	P1/P2
Listening	925	932	937	942
Reading	924	932	937	942
Speaking	925	930	939	945
Writing	923	931	938	947
Oral Composite	925	931	938	944
Literacy Composite	924	932	938	945
Comprehension Composite	924	932	937	942
Overall Composite	924	931	938	944

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