



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 9, 2020

To: Executive County Superintendents, Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads

Route To: District Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL)/English Language Services (ELS) Leads, District Test Coordinators, District Special Education Administrators, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Project Coordinators, District Technology Coordinators, School Business Administrators

From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Academics and Performance

Preparation for the 2020-2021 ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs State Assessment Administration

The United States Department of Education (USDE) anticipates that all states will administer statewide assessments as required under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* during the 2020-2021 school year. Therefore, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) plans to administer in the spring of 2021 New Jersey's statewide assessment system, which includes the ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency assessment to all English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades K-12, and the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment in grades 1-12 to ELL students who meet the participation guidelines.

Recognizing that districts and educators will require additional support and guidance for this upcoming administration, WIDA has created a resource, [Assessment Best Practices During COVID-19](#), to support test coordinators and test administrators administering the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessments. This resource can be accessed through the [WIDA Secure Portal](#). For questions and guidance regarding the ACCESS and the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, please refer to the table of contacts at the end of this broadcast.

Given the complexity of the circumstances in schools across the state, NJDOE will closely monitor developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the school year and will keep school administrators and educators apprised of any new information regarding assessments through additional broadcasts as necessary.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS ELLs Administration Window

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessments are designed to be administered in-person, and the WIDA Consortium has determined that there will **not** be a remote option for the 2020-2021 administration. In an effort to help mitigate some of the scheduling issues and provide districts with additional scheduling and timing options for administration, the NJDOE has provided an extended administration window.

The 2020-2021 ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs administration window is scheduled for **February 16, 2021 through May 21, 2021**. For additional key dates for the ACCESS for ELLs administration, please visit [New Jersey WIDA webpage](#) and review the dates with the appropriate staff.

ACCESS for ELLs Student Participation Guidelines

All students in grades K-12 currently identified as ELLs (including ELLs whose parents have refused services) in accordance with New Jersey's [ELL identification process](#) are required to participate in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment.

Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Student Participation Guidelines

Students in grades 1-12 who are identified as ELLs with significant intellectual disabilities as reflected in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and meet or will be eligible to meet New Jersey's [criteria for participation in the Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\) assessment](#) should participate in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment.

State Accountability and Reporting

Results from the ACCESS for ELLs test administration are used in the calculation of schools' and districts' performance on the Progress to English Language Proficiency (ELP) indicator in the school accountability system. To ensure accurate data, school districts should have filled in all required fields during the NJ SMART State Assessment Registration (SAR) Submission that was due on December 3, 2020. For students who were not included in the NJ SMART SAR Pre-ID Submission and must be entered manually into the WIDA AMS, please refer to the [New Jersey State Specific Directions for ACCESS for ELLs document](#) on the New Jersey WIDA webpage.

Pre-Reporting Data Validation Window: June 15, 2021-June 25, 2021

A pre-reporting data validation window is available to school districts from June 15, 2021 through June 25, 2021. ACCESS Test Coordinators and other related staff must ensure that all required fields have been corrected in the WIDA AMS during this window. Although there is a post-reporting data validation period available, *data cannot be corrected for state reporting purposes after June 25, 2021.*

Staff Assessment Roles and Responsibilities

Administrators or specialized staff must be designated in the [WIDA AMS](#) and the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) to serve as the District Test Coordinator and the District Technology Coordinator. Individual school-level coordinators may also be assigned the School Test Coordinator role.

District Test Coordinators must conduct training for all school test coordinators and teachers administering the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, oversee and ensure the proper implementation of the assessment, act as the point of contact for all teachers administering the ACCESS assessments, and interact with and request assistance from the Data Manager and Technology Representative as needed.

The Office of Assessments has created a [New Jersey ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs District Test Coordinator Training Manual](#) that includes all required information to be turnkeyed to district and school staff who are involved in the administration of the ACCESS assessments. Training requirements for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs administration have been aligned to New Jersey's federally peer reviewed standards for assessment administration and security.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Requirements

To be an ACCESS and/or an Alternate ACCESS test administrator, educators must meet the following requirements:

ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrators	Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrators
Are certified New Jersey educators	Are certified New Jersey educators
Have received training and professional development (PD) on WIDA User and Training Manuals	Work with the students taking the Alternate ACCESS daily. (Required starting with the 2020-2021 administration)
Have passed relevant (paper or online) ACCESS test administrator training quizzes with 80% or higher every two years. (Required starting with the 2020-2021 administration)	Have received training and PD on WIDA User and Training Manuals
	Have passed the paper-based ACCESS test administrator training quizzes with 80% or higher every two years. (Required starting with the 2020-2021 administration)

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Recertification Requirement

New Jersey ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator recertification will be required every two years, starting with the 2020-2021 school year. Test Administrators who were certified for the online and paper ACCESS tests during the 2019-2020 school year need not re-certify for the 2020-2021 administration. Test administrators who were certified **prior** to the 2019-2020 school year must recertify for the 2020-2021 administration, and then must recertify every two years thereafter. Test Administrators who are already certified to administer the Speaking test for WIDA Screener are not required to certify separately.

Proof of certification can be printed out and submitted to the School or District Test Coordinator, or District Test Coordinators may view proof of certification with the Account Management and Training Status tool in the WIDA Secure Portal. District and School Test Coordinators should maintain evidence of test administrator required certification and recertification. Evidence may be requested by the State during monitoring visits.

Additional information regarding the requirements for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS certification can be found in the [New Jersey ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs District Test Coordinator Training Manual](#).

Technical Assistance

The NJDOE encourages districts to visit the [New Jersey WIDA webpage](#) for additional information and assistance with testing. Information and resources on test demos, test practice, and sample items for ACCESS Online and ACCESS Paper for grades 1-12 have been moved to a new, dedicated webpage for [ACCESS Test Practice and Sample Items](#).

Contact Information

Contact	Contact Information	Contact for Questions Regarding
WIDA Client Services Center	help@wida.us (866) 276-7735	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WIDA Secure Portal user accounts• Training and certification• Test administration preparation and procedures• Content of score reports
DRC Customer Service	WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com (855) 787-9615	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Materials receipt, inventory, and return• Labeling of test booklets• Processing paper test materials• Data validation and correction issues
NJDOE Office of Assessments	assessments@doe.nj.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Jersey ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS assessment administration policy and procedures
NJDOE Office of Title III & Bilingual/ESL Education	ell@doe.nj.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Jersey technical/policy and program assistance• ACCESS student participation guidance

c: Members, State Board of Education

Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education

NJDOE Staff

NJ Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages/Bilingual Education

NJ LEE Group

Garden State Coalition of Schools

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network