



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: November 1, 2023
To: Executive County Superintendents, Local Educational Agency 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: Jordan Schiff, Ed. D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

Preparation for the Administration of the 2023-2024 ACCESS for English Language Learners (ELLs) and WIDA Alternate ACCESS State Assessments

The purpose of this memo is to provide districts with information regarding the requirements and preparation for the 2023-2024 ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency assessment for all English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades Kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) and the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Alternate ACCESS assessment in grades 1-12 for ELLs who meet the participation guidelines. Included in this memo is important information about timelines, student participation, staff role assignments, training, and data/reporting considerations. Please note that the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment has changed names and is now the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Administration Window

The 2023-2024 ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS administration window is scheduled for **February 5, 2024 through March 29, 2024**. For additional key dates for the ACCESS for ELLs administration, please visit the [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](#) must participate in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment, except for students who are eligible to participate in the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment.

WIDA Alternate ACCESS 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](#) must participate in the WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessment.

State Accountability and Reporting

Results from the ACCESS for ELLs test administrations are used in the calculation of schools' and districts' performance on the Progress to English Language Proficiency (ELP) indicator in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) school accountability system. To ensure accurate data, school districts must complete all required fields during the NJ SMART State Assessment Registration Submission (SARS). For students who were not included in the NJ SMART SARS and must be entered manually into the WIDA Assessment Management System (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: April 26, 2024- May 8, 2024

A pre-reporting data validation window is available to school districts from April 26, 2024 through May 8, 2024. ACCESS Test Coordinators and other related staff must ensure that all required fields have been updated as

necessary in the WIDA AMS during this window. The data from this validation window will be used to generate individual student reports, and for accountability and state reporting purposes.

Importantly, the pre-reporting data validation period will be the **only** window in which districts can review and update ACCESS data, which will be used for reporting and accountability purposes. This is to ensure that reports from the administration reflect finalized data submitted by districts.

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 (such as principals, vice-principals, etc.) may be assigned the School Test Coordinator role.

Note: District and school coordinator roles in WIDA AMS and the WIDA Secure Portal may only be held by administrative-level staff. These roles cannot be assigned to teachers, support staff, or non-professional staff. Please review the staff listed in both portals and make edits as necessary.

District Test Coordinators must conduct annual training for all school test coordinators and teachers administering ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, oversee and ensure the proper implementation of the assessments, 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 for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS District Test Coordinator Training Manual for 2023-2024](#) that includes all required information to be turnkeyed annually to district and school staff who are involved in the administration of the ACCESS assessments. Training requirements for the ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS administration have been aligned with all New Jersey statewide assessment training requirements for test administrators and aligned with 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	WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators
Are certified New Jersey educators with a long-term district contract (<i>Per diem and short-term substitute teachers are not eligible to be test administrators</i>)	Are certified New Jersey educators with a long-term district contract (<i>Per diem and short-term substitute teachers are not eligible to be test administrators</i>)
Have received training and professional development on WIDA User and Training Manuals, as well as annual training from their District Test Coordinator on New Jersey-specific policies	Work with the students taking the Alternate ACCESS daily
Have passed relevant (paper and/or online) ACCESS test administrator training quizzes every year	Have received training and professional development on WIDA User and Training Manuals, as well as annual training from their District Test Coordinator on New Jersey-specific policies
	Have passed the relevant ACCESS test administrator training quizzes every year

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Recertification Requirement: Annual Certification

New Jersey ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS test administrator recertification will be required annually. Test administrators who are already certified to administer the Speaking test for WIDA Screener are not required to certify separately. This requirement aligns the test administrator training requirements with all other statewide assessment programs, which require yearly certification.

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 Certification Report tool in the WIDA Secure Portal. District and School Test Coordinators must maintain evidence of test administrator required certification and recertification. Evidence may be requested by New Jersey Department of Education staff during security monitoring visits.

Additional information regarding the requirements for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS certification can be found in the [New Jersey ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS District Test Coordinator Training Manual for 2023-2024](#).

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 can be found on the 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	assessment@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
 NJDOE Staff
 Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
 Garden State Coalition of Schools
 NJ LEE Group
 New Jersey Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages/Bilingual Education