



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2009-186

TO: School District Superintendents
Title III Directors
Principals
English Language Learner Teachers

FROM: Cassandra Celaya, ELL Content and Assessment Specialist
Standards and Assessment Unit

DATE: November 25, 2009

SUBJECT: English Language Proficiency Assessment



TIME SENSITIVE

Students whose primary language is not English and who are of limited English proficiency represent a steadily increasing percentage of Wyoming's school population and are enrolled at all grade levels in communities across the state. Federal statutes require that school systems provide an equal educational opportunity for all students, including those identified as limited English proficient. Most recently, Title III of No Child Left Behind holds State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools accountable for increases in English language proficiency and core academic content knowledge of limited English proficient students.

For many years, the Wyoming Department of Education has published resources designed to assist school personnel in providing a quality educational program for these students. In 2005-09, the Wyoming English Language Learners Assessment (WELLA) was provided.

Today, the WDE is providing the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium English language proficiency standards beginning with the 2009-10 school year. In addition, the WELLA has been replaced by the ACCESS for ELLs®. This new assessment is aligned with the new English language proficiency standards.

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This change is effective immediately for the 2009-10 school year. Additional information regarding the WIDA Consortium, its standards, and assessments can be found on the Consortium's home page at <http://www.wida.us/index.aspx>.

Important Dates:

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>
Ordering test materials	December 1, 2009
Ordering Pre-ID labels	December 1, 2009
Test Administration Training	January 25, 2010 (Jackson & Rock Springs) January 27, 2010 (Casper, Riverton) January 29, 2010 (Gillette & Cheyenne)
Testing window	February 1 – April 2, 2010

All district ELL/Title III coordinators will be contacted by MetriTech with username and password information for the creation of personal accounts to begin the online test administrator training and ordering Pre-ID labels.

Please refer to the attached document for additional information. If you have further questions, please contact Cassandra Celaya at ccelay@educ.state.wy.us or (307) 777-5217.

CC:al

Attachment

Wyoming English Language Proficiency Assessment

ACCESS for ELLs®

Why did Wyoming move from using the WELLA and replaced it with ACCESS for ELLs®?

In response to the governor's appeal for statewide budget cuts, the WDE and Pearson reached an agreement to cut the Wyoming English Language Learners Assessment (WELLA) from the assessment contract.

Who or what is WIDA?

The WIDA Consortium is a non-profit cooperative of twenty states working together to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for English Language Learners (ELLs) with standards and assessments. It is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research in Madison, Wisconsin. WIDA was founded in 2002 when it received a federal enhanced assessment grant. The WIDA Consortium consists of twenty partner states: Alabama, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Additional information regarding the WIDA Consortium, its standards, and assessments can be found on the WIDA's web page at <http://www.wida.us/index.aspx>.

What do the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards look like?

The WIDA Consortium's English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners (ELLs) in PreKindergarten through Grade 12 encompass:

- Social and Instructional language
- the language of Language Arts
- the language of Mathematics
- the language of Science
- the language of Social Studies

What assessment will Wyoming use for English Language Proficiency?

ACCESS for ELLs™ stands for *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners*. It is a large-scale test that addresses the English language development standards that form the core of the WIDA Consortium's approach to instructing and testing English language learners. These standards incorporate a set of model performance indicators (MPIs) that describe the expectations educators have of ELL students at four different grade level clusters and in five different content areas.

The grade level clusters include PreK-K, 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. There are five content areas of the standards. The first is called social and instructional language (SI), which incorporates proficiencies needed to deal with the general language of the classroom and the school. The others are English language arts (LA), math (MA), science (SC), and social studies (SS). For each grade level, then, the standards specify one or more performance indicators for each content area within each of the four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

The ACCESS for ELLs® incorporates all five standards and English language proficiency levels in sections that correspond to the four domains. The target administration times for each section of the test for grades 1-12 are:

1. **Listening: 20-25 minutes, machine scored**
2. **Reading: 35-40 minutes, machine scored**
3. **Writing: Up to 1 hour, rater scored**
4. **Speaking: Up to 15 minutes, administrator scored**

The Kindergarten test is individually-administered and takes an average of 40 minutes per student. Kindergarten students with very high English language proficiency may take around 55 minutes to complete the test while students with low levels of English language proficiency may take only a few minutes.

For more detailed information about ACCESS for ELLs® please refer to the following website:

<http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/background.aspx> and

<http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/tiers.aspx> .

Who is allowed to become a certified W-APT or ACCESS for ELLs® test administrator in Wyoming?

- The test administrator must be a certified teacher.
- The certified teacher needs to complete the WIDA training module(s) assigned and obtain a quiz score of an 80% or higher on those modules assigned by the ELL/Title III coordinator facilitator.
- The certified teacher should have knowledge of the levels of WIDA and Wyoming English Language Proficiency Standards and have experience teaching English Language Learners.
- Any other certified teacher who meets these criteria is eligible to administer the assessment.

What are ACCESS for ELLs® Tiers?

ACCESS for ELLs® uses Tiers (A, B, or C) to maximize accuracy and validity of test results, allowing students to avoid responding to questions that are inappropriately difficult or easy.

For placement into the appropriate Tier, English language learners must meet at least ONE of the criteria listed for the Tier. The majority (75%) of Wyoming ELL students fall into the Tier B range. It is only the low performing (new) students that should take Tier A, and Tier C is for those that are ready to exit the program.

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
ACCESS for ELLs®: TIER A					
ACCESS for ELLs®: TIER B					
ACCESS for ELLs®: TIER C					
<p>TIER A is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have arrived in the U.S. or entered school in the U.S. within this academic school year without previous instruction in English, OR • currently receive literacy instruction ONLY in their native language, OR • have recently tested at the lowest level of English language proficiency 					
<p>TIER B is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have language proficiency and some, but not extensive, academic language proficiency in English, OR • have acquired some literacy in English, though have not yet reached grade level literacy 					
<p>TIER C is most appropriate for English language learners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are approaching grade level in literacy and academic language proficiency in the core content areas, OR • will likely meet the state's exit criteria for support services by the end of the academic year 					

http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/tier_criteria.aspx

Who will score ACCESS for ELLs?

MetriTech of Champaign, IL is responsible for the printing, scoring, reporting, and distributing of all test materials and results. Test materials include: test booklets, picture booklets, and test administration scripts, score sheets, pre-ID labels, and score reports. If you have questions about these materials or functions, please call 1-800-747-4868 and ask for WIDA Support.

In addition WIDA provides the following services in support of the standards and assessment:

W-APT™

W-APT stands for the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test™. This assessment tool, known as the "screener", is used by educators to measure the English language proficiency of students who have recently arrived in the U.S. or in a particular district. It can help to determine whether or not a child is in need of English language instructional services, and if so, at what level. As a member state of WIDA this screener is available for free online.

Professional Development

WIDA offers professional development in the following areas:

- Assessment
- Curriculum and Instruction
- System/ School Improvement Initiatives

WIDA Consortium Research Team

The mission of the WIDA Consortium Research Team is to provide timely, meaningful, and actionable research that promotes educational equity and academic achievement for linguistically and culturally diverse students.

Helping States Meet Needs and Fulfill Requirements

- Each member state in WIDA has a voice and a vote in the direction of the Consortium.
- By joining forces and pooling resources, member states are able to meet the requirements of NCLB in an effective, economical manner. For example, WIDA has conducted one bridge study between old and new English proficiency instruments. WIDA is also developing and validating an alternate assessment for use with ELLs with severe disabilities.