



NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Guidance on Identification and Screening

English Learners in North Dakota
Office of Indian/Multicultural Education
(701) 328-1876

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English Learners Defined

The first step in providing English language development (ELD) services for English learners (ELs) is to identify the students who may qualify for the ELD program. The federal and state definitions for ELs are very similar.

Federal EL definition:

(Students must meet a part of the criteria in each of the sections A-D)

The term “**English Learner**”, which is defined in section 9101 of Title IX (ESEA) when used with respect to an individual, means an individual:

- A. who is aged 3 through 21;
and
- B. who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
and
- C. who
 - i. was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English
OR
 - ii. (1) is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; **and**
(2) comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency;
OR
 - iii. is **migratory**, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant;
and
- D. whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual
 - i. the ability to meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on state assessments described in section 1111(b) (3);
 - ii. the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English: **or**
 - iii. the opportunity to participate fully in society.

State Eligibility for ELD services

To be eligible for English language development services, a student must:

1. Be at least five years of age, but must not have reached the age of twenty-two;
2. Be enrolled in a school district in North Dakota;
3. Have a primary language other than English or come from an environment in which a language other than English significantly impacts the individual's level of English language proficiency; and
4. Have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, and understanding English as shown by assessment results.

ND Administrative Code Section 67-28-01-04

Identification of EL – [Home Language Survey \(HLS\)](#)

Schools must provide ELD services for all ELs who need language support to succeed academically and the identification of those students must be linguistically-based. To comply with this civil right and the ESSA, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) recommends a Home Language Survey (HLS) to be used in every school to help identify potential English Learners (ELs). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires every state to have uniform statewide entrance and exit criteria and procedures for the ELD Program. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), in consultation with the English Learner Program Advisory Committee (ELPAC), has developed the ND HLS for schools and districts to help determine if a student meets the first three criteria of the definition of an English learner as part of North Dakota’s uniform entrance criteria. Schools must use the HLS for **ALL** students. It is not acceptable to administer the HLS to only those students

suspected to be ELs due to national origin, culture, race or ethnicity. The HLS must be completed by ALL parents in ALL Districts upon registering their child(ren) for school.

Two important factors regarding the use of the HLS are communication and individual consideration for each student. Schools must communicate clearly with parents to assure the answers given on the HLS are accurate and reflect the influences of other languages on the child. Parents, and not schools, must report the language information. Many factors can contribute to inaccurate data reported on the HLS. Parents might think the school values English more than other languages or might be reluctant to be honest about the languages used in the home. Other parents may not understand the purpose of the HLS and report languages their child is studying as a second language. If the data seems incorrect or incomplete, schools may ask parents for further clarification and make changes on the HLS by noting the conversation (preferably in a different color ink, initialing and dating). Keep in mind it is not for teachers or parents to determine whether the language proficiency of the student qualifies the student to participate in a ND ELP Screener assessment. They are to determine if the student has a “native” language other than English. Native or heritage language is a language the child first learned to speak and/or understand.

If a student is Native American or Alaska Native, the parents can provide information to the EL teacher to help determine if the child comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the child’s level of English language proficiency. If so, the child will participate in the ND ELP Screener Assessment.

ELs in North Dakota can be students who are Native American, refugee, immigrant, migrant, Hutterite, foreign adopted, or natural born citizens from bilingual households. Some students may be the only English speaker in the household or have one parent who speaks English and one parent who does not. Other students may have been raised by a grandparent who speaks a language other than English. The North Dakota HLS includes critical questions to assist in determining if a heritage language is present or has had a significant impact for Native American/Alaska Native students.

The HLS may also serve as a tool to collect data for other EL related programs in which students may qualify such as immigrant, students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE), and/or refugee.

Screening for ELs – English Language Proficiency Assessment

The next step after the school determines the individual student meets the first three criteria of the EL definition is to determine if the student whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on state assessments, successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate fully in society. If the student records indicate one or more of the above criteria, previous participation in EL services in another school, or if records are unavailable, the student should be screened using the appropriate ND English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener assessment.

North Dakota is a member of the WIDA Consortium and uses the WIDA MODEL for kindergarten and WIDA Screener for grades 1-12 for initial ELP screening. It is important to understand the nature of an ELP assessment prior to determining which students should be administered the assessment. ELP assessments measure the degree to which a student can read, write, listen and speak using academic English. Many at-risk students lack proficiency in academic language. Using the MODEL, WIDA Screener or ACCESS for students who do not have a native language other than English or a significant influence of a language other than English may result in false positives and over-identification of ELs.

WIDA Screener

The WIDA Screener is used for students in grades 1-12 and requires special training to administer. Please see Table A below for training requirements. An overview of the WIDA Screener and additional information is available in the [WIDA website](#).

WIDA MODEL

The WIDA MODEL is a box kit used for kindergarten students and also requires special training to administer. The MODEL is available for grades K-12, but the WIDA Screener is better aligned to the new ACCESS for ELLs and current English Language Development Standards for grades 1-12. Therefore, the NDDPI suggests schools use MODEL only for kindergarten. Each school with English learners should have a K MODEL kit on-site. If this is not the case, please contact the [EL Program Office](#). An overview of the WIDA MODEL and additional information is available inside the kit or on the [WIDA Website](#). Training for the K MODEL is available through disks included in each kit. Test administrators for kindergarten must also complete the speaking portion of the WIDA paper test administrator training to help understand the scoring process.

In the first semester of Kindergarten, the listening and speaking sections of the K-MODEL are administered. If a student scores a Level 3 or below, the **Oral** Composite Score is to be entered into PowerSchool/STARS as the **Overall** Composite Score and the student qualifies for the ELD program.

If a student scores at or above a Level 3 in both of these domains, the reading and writing sections may be administered as well. If a student is administered all four domains (RWLS), then the district has the option of calculating the Overall Composite Score and entering it into PowerSchool/STARS. The determination of program entry for Kindergarten students who qualify with the Overall Composite but do not qualify using the Oral Composite is made by the language development team of the school. If the team decides a kindergarten student does not qualify, the NDDPI recommends the school monitor the student to determine whether follow-up screening is necessary the second semester.

Test Administrator Training

In order to administer the WIDA assessments, teachers must be certified in the assessments they intend to administer. All training materials for the WIDA Screener and ACCESS 2.0 are available virtually through web-based modules and online resources available through the [WIDA secure portal](#). The MODEL training is available through the training disk provided with the MODEL kits. North Dakota's annual ELP assessment (ACCESS 2.0) is delivered online with the exception of the kindergarten test and the writing portion for grades 1-3. A non-EL endorsed teacher is welcome to administer the online (no paper sections) ACCESS 2.0 assessment if supervised by an EL endorsed teacher

The requirements to administer the WIDA MODEL, WIDA Screener and paper-based portions of the ACCESS 2.0 assessments include the completion of the applicable WIDA training and quizzes. Test administrators must complete the speaking and writing training and quizzes every two years for WIDA Screener, MODEL, K-3 ACCESS 2.0, and any other paper-based portions due to local scoring. First time test administrators are also highly encouraged to shadow another teacher testing until they feel comfortable to administer the assessment alone.

When the quizzes are completed, the results are available immediately and recorded in each test administrator's WIDA online account. This information is available to NDDPI staff and district test coordinators to assure test administrators are qualified to administer each portion of the assessment. NDDPI holds district test coordinators accountable for the accuracy of the staff account information for their respective district.

The training requirements for the WIDA family of assessments are outlined below:

TABLE A

Types of Assessments	ACCESS for ELLs				WIDA Screener		
	 Kindergarten	 Alternate ACCESS Grades 1-12	 ONLINE Grades 1-12	 PAPER-BASED Grades 1-12	 K MODEL	 WIDA SCREENER Online	 WIDA SCREENER Paper
Grade Level	K	1-12	1-12	1-12	K	1-12	1-12
Sections Scored by the local Test Administrator	All	All	None	Speaking	All	Speaking & Writing	All
Test Administrator Licensure Requirements	EL Endorsement	EL Endorsement	ND Teaching License	EL Endorsement	EL Endorsement	EL Endorsement	EL Endorsement
Test Administrator Training Requirements	K ACCESS including speaking	ALT ACCESS 1-12	ACCESS Online	ACCESS Paper 1-12 w/speaking	Training CD in kit w/speaking	Screener Online w/speaking & writing	Screener Paper w/speaking & writing

ELD Program Placement Criteria for Grades 1-12

Aligned to ESSA, North Dakota has developed statewide exit criteria which includes an overall Proficiency Level score of 5.0 with a minimum score of 3.5 in each domain of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Therefore, students who are screened using the MODEL, or the WIDA Screener and do not meet the exit criteria are entered into the ELD program and identified as ELs in PowerSchool and in STARS. A flowchart for EL identification, screening and programming is available in the EL Coordinator Team.

ELD Program Placement Criteria for PreK Students

If a family provides a language other than English during the HLS process, a PreK student is marked EL in PowerSchool/STARS. Currently, North Dakota has no assessment that can be used to accurately measure the ELP level for PreK students. When the student reaches Kindergarten, the “ELD Program Placement Criteria for Kindergarten Students” is used to determine ELD program eligibility.

ELD Program Placement for Migrant Students

A small number of students enter our schools on an annual basis each fall and spring who meet the definition of a migrant student (has a parent who is a migratory agricultural worker and in the last three (3) years has moved from one school district to another in order to work (temporary or seasonal) in agricultural activities). Many migrant students are not in attendance in our schools during the ACCESS testing window. Although it is ideal to exit the program based on the valid/reliable ACCESS test, NDDPI recognizes that some students miss the ACCESS testing window every year. In these special cases, the full MODEL (not the screener) can be used to determine whether or not the student would still qualify for the ELD program. If the student meets the exit criteria, the school must enter the WIDA Screener score into STARS/PS and contact the EL Program Office to add the student’s Exit/Attainment Date.

ELD Program Placement for Students Returning to ND

Students occasionally leave the state and return after a number of years. If the student is out of state for two years or less, the student automatically qualifies for the ELD Program, unless that student has taken ACCESS in the other state and has met the ND Exit Criteria. If the student returns after 2 years, the school can screen the student using the WIDA Screener to determine eligibility. If the student meets the exit criteria, the school must enter the WIDA Screener score into STARS/PS and contact the EL Program Office to add the student’s Exit/Attainment Date.

Contact Information

For clarification or more information about the ELD Program in North Dakota, please contact the [EL Program Office](#) 701-328-2254.