



2019 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Test Exceptions and False EL Guidance

WIDA Test Exceptions

Below is a list of student groups for whom a Test Exception, or waiver, from the Spring 2019 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs could be available.

Student groups for whom a test exception from the ACCESS for ELLs could be available:

- K – 2nd grade students who are visually impaired and are in the process of learning braille could be allowed to not take assessments in all domains
- K students who use American Sign Language (ASL) as their primary method of communication could be allowed to not take assessments in all domains
- 1st – 12th grade students who use American Sign Language (ASL) as their primary method of communication could be allowed to not take assessments in Speaking and Listening domains (WIDA considers the usage of ASL on this assessment a non-standard accommodation)
- K-12 students who have mutism as identified on their IEP/504 plan could be allowed to not take assessments in the Speaking domain

Student groups for whom a test exception from the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs could be available:

- 1st – 12th grade students who are visually impaired (learning braille) and cognitively impaired could be allowed to not take assessments in all domains (there is no braille version of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs)
- 1st – 12th grade students who use American Sign Language (ASL) as their primary method of communication could be allowed to not take assessments in the Speaking and Listening domains (WIDA considers the usage

of ASL on this assessment a non-standard accommodation)

- 1st -12 students who have mutism as identified on their IEP/504 plan could be allowed to not take assessments in all domains

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that would like to request a Test Exception for a student must make the request on an annual basis through the MDE Secure Site. An approval of test exceptions for 1-3 domains of the assessment will not result in the student receiving an overall proficiency level score. The WIDA Test Exception window is open from **December 11, 2018 through January 25, 2019**. Directions for submitting WIDA Test Exceptions can be found on the [Secure Site Training web page](http://www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) (www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) under the **Quick Reference** section.

Test Exception approvals will not negatively impact any of a district's accountability measures. If you have any questions, please send them in an email to mde-oeaa@michigan.gov (use "WIDA" in the subject line) or call 877-560-8378.

Correction of Records for Students Incorrectly Designated as English Learners (ELs) (Formerly known as Limited English Proficient "false LEPs"):

A significant number of English Learners/EL students are not being assessed on the annual English language proficiency (ELP) assessment (WIDA). This is a violation of federal legislation and requirements. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) have shared that one of the reasons certain students were not tested was because they were falsely coded as EL in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) due to human error (e.g., data entry personnel inadvertently reported a student as EL when the student's home language and primary language is English).

A team from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has created an annual process by which LEAs may submit an appeal to MDE requesting a review of “false EL” cases for a final resolution and possible correction within MSDS.

To request correction of “false EL” records, districts must enter the information and required documents described below using the WIDA Test Exceptions function on the Secure Site between **December 11, 2018 and January 25, 2019.**

Directions for submitting WIDA Test Exceptions and “false EL” appeals can be found on the [Secure Site Training web page](#) (www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) under the **Quick Reference** section.

LEA’s whose “false EL” request is approved by MDE’s Title III team SHOULD NOT:

- Have the student participate in the 2019 Spring WIDA, or beyond
- Report the student as EL in MSDS, reporting the student again as EL will re-identify the student as EL and negate the approved request.

Prior to submitting your request to correct “false EL” records, please read the information below carefully:

Who is a “false EL”?

A “false EL” is an English speaker, as determined by the *initial* home language survey (HLS) completed by parents upon the *first* enrollment in *any* local educational agency (LEA) in the state of Michigan. Appealing districts are responsible for securing this historical information from other districts.

What to Submit: Districts submitting an appeal to resolve a “false EL” case must:

1. Submit/upload to the Secure Site the initial home language survey of the “false EL” student completed by parents upon the first enrollment in any local educational agency (LEA) in the state of Michigan. All responses on the students’ initial HLS must indicate that the student’s primary language and the student’s home language is English.

2. Attest/certify that the uploaded HLS is identical to the original document. A signature of the local district’s program director fulfills this requirement.
3. Ensure the HLS was signed by the student’s parent/guardian and not signed on behalf of the parent/guardian.
4. Provide an explanation of the discrepancy between the original HLS and MSDS coding of EL.
5. Submit the request in the MDE Secure Site no later than **January 25, 2019.**

The MDE Title III team will not review requests for changing a EL status to a non-EL status if:

1. The request is not submitted by **January 25, 2019.**
2. The request submitted to MDE’s Title III team lacks *any* of the required documents and information listed above.
3. The student transitions to another LEA and the parent/guardian fills out a new home language survey reporting that the child speaks English and the home language is English while previously a second language, other than English was reported.
4. The parent/guardian wants to withdraw the EL student from the program and fills out a new home language survey.
5. A bilingual parent and an English speaking parent share parenting time and the English-speaking parent completes a new home language survey indicating that the child speaks English.
6. The EL student whose native language is a language other than English is placed in a foster care home with English-speaking foster parent(s). The foster parent(s) will complete a new home language survey and indicate that both native language and home language is English.

Please direct questions or concerns regarding “false EL” to **LaTrese Royal**, Analyst, Office of Educational Supports at **517-241-6975** or at RoyalL@michigan.gov.