

EL Statewide Update Newsletter

December 2024

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Dear EL Educators,

This newsletter is designed to be a go-to resource for important announcements, reminders, and insights from MDE regarding English learner (EL) programming. Whether you're an administrator, coordinator, or teacher, our goal is to keep you informed about state-level developments, provide guidance on best practices, and share opportunities for professional growth. We hope you find this newsletter valuable as you continue to make a difference in the lives of EL students across Michigan.

Was this message forwarded to you? <u>Sign up using the Google Survey</u> to receive the newsletter to your email.

Important Dates

- December 1: WIDA Screener Cycle II open
- December 9: 2023-24 Section 41 report due
- **December 9:** False EL, off-site test WIDA administration request, initial material order, preidentification, and text exception windows open in the OEAA secure site
- **December 20:** WIDA initial material order (braille and enlarged print) and pre-ID for barcode labels and Tier T deadline (5 pm)
- January 3: WIDA AMS test set-up available
- January 15: Final submission date for the 2024-25 Section 41 Bilingual Education Application in NexSys Application must have been in/or be in "Application Submitted" status on or before this date
- January 17: WIDA test exception request deadline
- January 18: Final submission date for consolidated application amendments for all budgets, including final allocations and carryover funds addressing final semester and summer programs
- January 21: WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS Field Test window opens
- January 23: Districts receive test materials; Additional material order window opens in WIDA AMS
- January 27: The WIDA test administration window opens

Resources:

- OES Applications Schedule: 2024-25 Consolidated Application
- Annual EL To-Do Calendar
- <u>2025 WIDA Important Dates</u>



EL Programming Updates

New Home Language Survey Questions

With support from the EL Advisory Committee, MDE has completed an extensive review and update of the Home Language Survey (HLS). This review included a comprehensive research study and parent focus groups in multiple languages.

The new survey must be adopted for the next school year's enrollments (2025-26), meaning you should plan to have it fully integrated into your registration procedures by April or May. We encourage you to start collaborating with your district's registration personnel and technology representatives to ensure a smooth implementation.

Learn more on the <u>MDE HLS website</u>.

Funding Updates

Section 41

The needed report updates and fixes have been completed, and you may submit your 2023-24 Section 41 Report in NexSys. Please continue to double-check the accuracy of Table 1 and Table 2 and reach out with any questions or concerns. When doing so, email the <u>MDE-EL@michigan.gov</u> email and cc Tammy Franks at <u>FranksT1@michigan.gov</u>.

The 2024-2025 application for Section 41 is open as of December 16, 2024. Announcing letters to follow. The application must be in "Application Submitted" status at least one time before close of business on January 15, 2025. Anyone who has not applied by that deadline will become ineligible for the funding, and funding will be reallocated to the districts that applied.

The FY2025 allocations have been posted to the MDE Allocations page so that LEAs can begin the planning for the FY25 budget.

Please reach out to us at <u>MDE-EL@michigan.gov</u> with any additional questions or concerns.

<u>Title III</u>

The FY2025 final allocations for the Title III EL and Title III Immigrant grants are now posted to the <u>MDE</u> <u>Program Allocations</u> page. As a reminder, Title III Immigrant funds are only available at this time of year. Remember to go to the "Grant Selection" screen in NexSys to add this funding source to your Consolidated Application if your district is eligible.



Assessment Updates

WIDA Assessment Window Extended

The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment window has been temporarily expanded to a 10-week window through 2027. This will provide flexibility for schools with large numbers of students who may be observing Ramadan.

The 2025 summative WIDA window is scheduled for January 27, 2025 – April 4, 2025.

WIDA Test Setup

The Test Setup Window for WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs opens on Friday, January 3, 2025, and closes on April 4, 2025.

The Test Setup allows you to view students being assessed and to modify test sessions in <u>WIDA AMS</u>. If you are administering ACCESS for ELLs online, you must make sure your students are entered in the appropriate test sessions.

Students for whom pre-identification data was submitted by December 20, 2024, will automatically be placed into generic test sessions based on grade cluster and domain; these sessions will be available for review on January 3, 2025. To view the test sessions, log into WIDA AMS, click on Test Management, and then click on Manage Test Sessions. This view, which can be filtered by a specific district or school, displays the status of the test session: Not Started, In Progress, or Completed.

For detailed instructions on Test Setup, refer to the "WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) User Guide", located in <u>WIDA AMS</u> under My Applications > General Information > Documents. Detailed information regarding the Central Office Services (COS) – including how to configure, install, manage, and troubleshoot the COS Service Devices (COS - SD) software – is found in the Technology User Guide located in <u>WIDA AMS</u> under My Applications > General Information > Documents.

WIDA Text Exceptions

The window for WIDA Test Exceptions will be open December 10, 2024 – January 17, 2025, in the OEAA Secure Site, accessed through <u>MiLogin for Business</u>. During this window, educators may request a waiver from the Spring 2025 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs or the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs for students with specific disabilities. All test exceptions must be applied for on an annual basis, and approvals do not carry over from year to year.

For more information on WIDA Test Exceptions, refer to the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Test Exceptions and False EL Guidance document found on the WIDA web page. Directions for submitting WIDA Test Exceptions can be found on the Secure Site Training web page under the Quick Reference section. For questions about how to submit WIDA Exceptions, contact the OEAA Call Center at 1-877-560-8378 (select Option 1) or email <u>mdeoeaa@michigan.gov</u>.



ACCESS or Alt ACCESS?

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team of a student with disabilities who is also an English learner makes the decision about which summative assessment the student should take – either the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

When making this decision, the IEP team can follow the <u>WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Selection</u> <u>Guidance</u>.

The Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) does not make this decision for educators. Also, OEAA does not pre-identify (Pre-ID) students to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs if a student has taken the assessment previously.

Educators should note that not all students with disabilities who are also ELs should take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. This assessment is specifically designed for ELs in grades K-12 who have or function as if they have a significant cognitive disability.

If the IEP team makes the decision that the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is the most appropriate assessment for the student, then educators will need to update the student's Pre-ID record when the Pre-ID window opens in the OEAA Secure Site on December 9, 2024. Educators will have until December 20 to update records for these students if they wish to receive appropriate WIDA materials on January 23, 2025.

Screening Kindergarten Students as Potentially Eligible for English Learner Services

Kindergarten students who are potentially eligible for English learner (EL) services and who have achieved a 5.0 or higher on the Listening and Speaking domains of the WIDA Screener earlier this school year must also be assessed on the Reading and Writing domains of the WIDA Screener prior to January 31, 2025.

At that time, kindergarten students who score below 5.0 on the WIDA Screener Reading or Writing assessment should be identified as ELs and should be reported as ELs in the Michigan Student Data System. These EL students will be required to take Spring 2025 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs.

If the additional screening is not completed by December 20, 2024 – the date on which the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs initial material ordering and pre-identification window closes – educators will still be able to order materials for students who are subsequently identified as EL; this will be done during the WIDA AMS Additional Material Order window, which will open on January 23, 2025.

Additional information about screening potential EL students can be found in the Entrance and Exit Protocol.

New Guidance on Administering WIDA Screener

WIDA has released new guidance on administering the WIDA Screener to students who are blind or have low vision and/or who are deaf or hard of hearing. You can find this resource in the WIDA Secure Portal when filtering by Accessibility and Accommodations.



WIDA Alternate Screener

The WIDA Alternate Screener is in development. A release date is to be determined (TBD) sometime in the Summer of 2025. WIDA Alternate Screener is a brand-new, paper-based English language proficiency assessment given to new students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades K-12 to help determine if students are English learners.

Revised ACCESS for ELLs Coming 2025-26

WIDA is in the process of revising ACCESS to integrate the assessment with the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 edition. The updated tests will be ready for the 2025-26 school year.

For more news related to student assessment and accountability, be sure to read the <u>Spotlight</u> <u>Newsletter</u>, published every Thursday by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA). Sign up on the <u>MDE GoveDelivery Website</u> to receive the weekly Spotlight Newsletter edition via email!

Professional Learning

Continuous growth is key to effectively supporting our English Learners! Check out the resources below for professional learning opportunities designed to enhance your practice and expand your expertise.



English Learner Collaboratives & Networks

MDE Sponsored PL

- MDE PL Calendar
- MDE EL Teacher Network
- <u>Sheltered Content Statewide PLC</u>



Regional PL

- ELD Workshops | Oakland Schools
- <u>Course Catalog</u> | Wayne RESA (see page 68 for Multilingual Learner offerings)

Earn SCECHs through eLearning Opportunities (Free!)

WIDA

Michigan educators can access WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops on demand from 9/1/24-8/30/25.

- <u>WIDA Self-Paced Workshops Flyer</u>
- E-Learning SCECH Credit Request- English Learners

Michigan Partnership with Project MOMENTUM

MDE is sponsoring free SCECHs earned through Project MOMENTUM, a National Development (NPD) grant project underway in Minnesota.

- Project MOMENTUM Course Catalog
- E-Learning SCECH Credit Request- English Learners

Helpful Resources

REL Resources for Educators of English Learner Students

The Cross-REL EL Working Group has compiled a selection of resources to support your work with English learners. The first set of resources focuses on identifying ELs and assessing their needs, while the second set offers strategies for targeted support. These resources come in various formats infographics, guidance documents, briefs, toolkits, videos, and more—designed to be accessible and practical.

December Highlights

- <u>Resources For Determining Special Education Eligibility of English Learners</u> These resources are designed to help teachers and administrators working with EL students provide high-quality instruction and build practices to better determine special education eligibility.
- Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies for Elementary English Learner Students This infographic serves as a quick reference to evidence-based practices that can be used daily by elementary classroom teachers to support effective instruction for their EL students.

OELA Resources

OELA has produced a series of practice briefs and podcast episodes on instructional approaches and strategies for educators who serve English learners and their families. These resources highlight promising practices related to STEM, language instruction educational programs, teacher preparation, and early childhood instruction.



Oakland Schools Guidance Documents

Did you know that Oakland Schools consultants, along with expert educators from around the state, have created a wide variety of guidance documents and resources?

December Highlights:

These documents provide a collection of resources specific to Afghan and Ukrainian students and their families. They provide background information on the situations, resources for staff and families, and links to community organizations. They are updated regularly. For questions about Afghan or Ukrainian students and families, contact Christina.Kozlowski@oakland.k12.mi.us

- Ukrainian Arrivals: What Schools Need to Know...
- Afghan Arrivals: What Schools Need to Know...

Seal of Biliteracy

Updated Website

The Michigan Department of Education is proud to announce the revamped website for the <u>Michigan</u> <u>Seal of Biliteracy</u>. The new website features a special section for students, another for educators, and a final section for families. The resources have been refreshed and are designed with the different perspectives in mind.



Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Council

- The Council for the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy (MI-SoBL) is responsible for establishing policy regarding the implementation and granting of the Seal as well as promoting the benefits of the Seal.
- The Council is composed of 20+ volunteer members who represent world language programs, EL programs, K-12 language faculty, post-secondary language faculty, administrators, counselors, and community and business leaders.
- The Council has established two standing committees to help with the administration of the Seal.
 - o Postsecondary and Careers Committee
 - Outreach Committee
- In addition, the Council can appoint task forces to deal with a specific issue or policy.



Goals for 2024-25

The MI-SoBL Council has established the following goals for this academic year.

- Increase the number of approved Seals to 2500
- Increase the number of LEAs participating to 150
- Maintain or increase the number of represented languages at or above 52
- Begin tracking and identify 20 adult learners receiving the Seal

Testing Centers

The following locations have been established as testing centers for assessing the world language proficiency of MI-SoBL applicants. These sites have been established to help individuals, schools, and districts with their assessments.

- Grand Valley State University (GVSU) Testing Center dates for MI-SoBL
 - o March 28, March 29, April 22, 2025
 - Link to the Language Resource Center site where proficiency testing will take place
 - o Offering the Avant STAMP assessment
- Western Michigan University (WMU) Testing Center
 - Scheduling by appointment at <u>spls-info@wmich.edu</u>
 - Offering the Avant STAMP assessment
- Oakland Schools Testing Center for Adults
 - Offering an in-person opportunity for adults to test for the Global Seal of Biliteracy on May 6, 2025. The cost is \$39.90. Sign up on the <u>Global Seal of Biliteracy Survey</u>.
 - Adults can also sign up to test at home via this link. The cost is \$59.90 to test at home.

Grand Valley State University to Grant Credit for MI-SoBL Recipients

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) has recently announced that it will grant up to 16 credits, including credit for one General Education course, for MI-SoBL recipients. Credit will be granted for any language, not just the languages that GVSU teaches. This granting of credit will provide equitable opportunities for users of all languages, not just the more commonly taught and assessed languages.

Presentation at MACAE Conference

Emily Spinelli and Irma Torres, MDE Consultants for the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy, gave a presentation on the MI-SoBL for the Michigan Adult, Community, and Alternative Education Association (MACAE) Conference on December 4, 2024. The presentation focused on adult learners in the hope that more adult learners would apply and receive the MI-SoBL in 2024-2025 and in the near future.

New Email Address

Finally, MI-SoBL now has a dedicated email address for all email correspondence related to the Seal. Please email <u>MDE-SealOfBiliteracy@michigan.gov</u> with any questions or requests for assistance.



News from Our Partner Organizations

MABE



Register now for MABE 2025!

Call for Proposals

Immigrant & Refugee Resource Collaborative (IRRC)

This past year, Michigan Regional Community Collaboratives (RCCs) have been working on a series of financial empowerment resources that the Office of Global Michigan has now translated into various languages. Please check out this folder for topics by <u>subject matter</u> and this folder for the same topics <u>organized by language</u>. Thank you to all our partners across the state and the Office of Global Michigan for these powerful resources. Please share away! A sampling of topics includes Banking, Buying a Vehicle, Renters Rights, No-Fault Auto Insurance, Home Insurance & Ownership, and more.

All documents can be linked to our <u>Immigrant & Refugee Website</u>. Go to "Stakeholders and Resources -- > Community Resources -- > Financial Literacy. Bookmark for easy access! Thank you to all our community partners at Michigan RCCs!



MI-ALAS



MI-ALAS was created to promote strong

leadership, collaboration, and networking opportunities for high-quality public education. MI-ALAS strives to develop and advance Latino administrators, empowering them to address the unique needs of Latino students and educators throughout Michigan.



MI-ALAS Hosts an Impactful Listening Tour in Lansing!

On October 15th, the Michigan Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (MI-ALAS) brought together an incredible group of leaders and advocates for the Lansing Listening Tour at Urban Beat in Old Town Lansing.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who joined us and made this event a success. A special thank-you goes to our amazing sponsors at Curriculum Associates, especially Ms. Lissette Powell and her dedicated team, for their generous support in making this gathering possible.

Together, we're amplifying voices, building community, and paving the way for transformative change in education!

What's next for MI-ALAS?

- Host Detroit Listening tour in January 2025
- Launch Website & Newsletter
- Develop Event Calendar for 2025



Goals for MI-ALAS

- **Professional Growth**: Promote and provide professional opportunities that facilitate the growth and advancement of Latino educational leaders.
- **Equitable Representation**: Advocate for the equitable representation of Latino educational leaders, driving positive transformation and nurturing a more inclusive educational system.
- **Opportunity Bridging**: Facilitate the bridging of opportunity gaps for emerging educational leaders.
- **Cultural and Academic Success**: Foster an educational environment that embraces diversity and cultivates success for Latino students by enhancing academic performance, cultural pride, and leadership skills.

Stay tuned for the new website that is coming soon! There, we plan to share upcoming events and professional opportunities! To learn more about MI-ALAS or get in touch with the team, please email <u>michigan.alas@gmail.com</u>.



Interested in becoming a member? Join our email list by completing the MI-ALAS Interest Form.

District Highlight: Center Line Public Schools



Like many districts, **Center Line Public Schools** has experienced significant growth in its English Learner (EL) population over the past decade, now serving nearly 400 ELs (15% of the student body). To address this growth, staffing has increased substantially since 2019, expanding from 4.5 ELD teachers and 3 paraprofessionals to 8 teachers, 5 paraprofessionals, a Bengali Family Liaison, and a dedicated EL Director. Throughout this, Center Line has maintained an average exit rate of 10.1% over the past three years (compared to the state average of 7.6%). Several initiatives have supported the program's success:

Family Engagement Efforts

Throughout the year, **Center Line** hosts various family events tailored to different grade levels.

- **K-12:** In September, **Center Line** hosted a K-12 Science Night featuring the Ann Arbor Hands-on Science Museum. With the help of district-provided transportation, over 300 people attended this event! Staff shared a range of parent resources, such as guidance on understanding assessments to empower advocacy, at-home learning tips, and information on attendance.
- Elementary: Center Line holds elementary math and reading events during the school year. Families receive a kit with about \$20 in materials and books for them to take home



and support literacy and math development. Staff teach families how to use those materials and practice using them with their children during the event.

• **Secondary:** Secondary ELs have academic portfolio events during the year in which students present goals, grades, and examples of excellent work to their families in their preferred language. This year, high school students and their families will visit a local community college to learn more about postsecondary opportunities.

WIDA Standards Implementation

Since their release in December 2020, **Center Line** has begun actively integrating the WIDA Standards Framework into ELD instruction. This transition from a predominantly ELA-focused approach better addresses the academic language demands across all content areas. The ELD team is developing lessons, rubrics, and assessments around targeted standard statements. Notably, after completing these math lessons last spring, 95% of ELs reported that they directly helped them in their math classes.

Ellevation Adoption

Center Line first adopted Ellevation in the 2020-2021 school year. This comprehensive data hub allows teams to more efficiently analyze data for ELs and FELs to improve instruction. In the 2023-2024 school year, **Center Line** added the Strategies component, which features a library of research-based activities that support ELs and expert-developed modules related to ELD practices. To enhance professional development, Center Line offers a \$100 stipend to each teacher who completes one self-paced module.

Michigan-Themed Summer Program

For the past two years, **Center Line** has offered an EL Summer Program for elementary students scoring between 1.0-3.9 on the WIDA ACCESS test. Students highly regard this program for its language-rich and experience-based learning environment. Over three weeks, students delved into academic language with Michigan as the central theme, broadening their knowledge of the state's history, wildlife, resources, and geography. The program included exciting field trips to Belle Isle and the Henry Ford Museum/Greenfield Village. Students learned about the automotive industry by creating cars using assembly lines and engaged in activities such as the Taste of Michigan, where they sampled local foods, followed by related writing and math exercises. The program concluded with an EL Summer Program Family Celebration, showcasing students' work and experiences.

Professional Learning

In an effort to equip all staff with the necessary tools and knowledge to support ELs, **Center** Line has strengthened professional development offerings.

Classroom Teachers

- Ellevation Strategies: Center Line offers a \$100 stipend to each teacher who completes one self-paced module in Ellevation. There are over 30 modules developed by researchers in the field that cover a variety of topics!
- **Newsletter:** The EL Director sends the "ExcEL Newsletter" to staff every 2-3 weeks with tips and strategies around supporting ELs and information to increase cultural competency.



- **District-Provided PD:** The EL Director developed several 15-minute presentations to be shared during PD times at each school throughout the year by the ELD teacher(s) in that building. These cover a variety of topics such as newcomer empathy and instructional strategies, Ellevation, Can Do Descriptors and school EL data, building background knowledge, AI for ELs, and more! They do a great job!
- **SIOP Training: Center Line** has sent every ELD teacher to SIOP training offered at Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD) since January. Some content area teachers attended, too. This winter, MISD will come to Center Line to present a deep dive to content area teachers about four of the key SIOP components.

ELD Teachers

- **ELD Network:** All 8 ELD teachers attend the ELD Network at MISD to learn tools that support their students and to share resources with classroom teachers
- Quarterly PD Days: The team meets once per quarter to develop lessons and resources around the 2020 WIDA Standards Framework, work through a book study, and tackle needs that arise throughout the year.
- MABE: All ELD teachers attend the two-day MABE conference.

Principals

• In 2024, **Center Line** sent four principals to one day of the MABE conference to build their professional development and better support the needs in their schools.

Way to go, **Center Line**! Keep up the great work supporting multilingual learners. If you have questions about any of these initiatives, you can contact Laurenne McDougall, EL Director for Centerline Public Schools, at <u>mcdougall@clps.org</u>.

Is your district doing great things? Email <u>katnikk@michigan.gov</u> to be included in a future newsletter.

Promising Practices

Comprehensive Literacy Instruction for Multilingual Learners

Much of the research around evidence-based literacy instruction is centered around monolingual English speakers developing literacy in their native language. Considering that multilingual learners are the fastest-growing population of students in the United States, representing over 5 million students who speak over 400 languages and language varieties and accounting for approximately 10% of all K-12 public school students¹, this is a significant and concerning omission. In a 2020 research report,² the National Academy of Education called for equity in the field of literacy research. In no uncertain terms, they advocated for the inclusion of linguistically diverse students in research initiatives, theories, and instructional models:

¹ National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). *English Learners in Public Schools*. Condition of Education. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved May 30, 2024, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf

² Pearson, P.D., Palinscar, A.S., Biancarosa, G. & Berman, A.I. (2020). *Reaping the rewards of the reading for understanding initiative*. National Academy of Education.



"More of our work on comprehension needs to be directed toward populations currently underserved in U.S. schools... At the top of the list should be emergent bilingual learners, a growing but still underserved population" (p. 7).

In response to concerns over a narrow approach to the science of reading and to expand thinking on literacy instruction specifically for multilingual learners, the National Committee for Effective Literacy was formed to uplift research, policy, and practices that ensure emergent bilinguals/multilinguals leave school proficient readers and writers in English.³ In 2022, the committee published a white paper titled *Toward Comprehensive Literacy Policy and Instruction for English Learner/Emergent Bilingual Students*.

We encourage you to read this **Executive Summary** of NCEL's white paper.

As you read, consider:

- How has the implementation of a one-size-fits-all literacy approach impacted English learner/emergent bilingual students in the past, and what were the consequences?
- What does the research on literacy development for English learners suggest about effective literacy instruction? In what ways is it similar to and different from instruction for monolingual English proficient students?
- How do dual language programs contribute to the literacy development of English learners? What are the benefits of teaching emerging bilingual students to read in their home language and promoting biliteracy?

Further Reading

<u>Toward Comprehensive Effective Literacy Policy and Instruction for English Learner/Emergent Bilingual</u> <u>Students</u> (Full White Paper)

Comprehensive Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners (Research Brief)

"Teaching literacy as if a student is monolingual for a student who lives in and across multiple language worlds undermines the opportunity to draw upon linguistic resources across their languages."

³ https://multilingualliteracy.org/about/