

WIDA Alternate Screener Guidance

Introduction

In July 2025, the WIDA Consortium released the WIDA Alternate Screener to complement the the WIDA Screener and WIDA Kindergarten Screener as the placement assessments used to determine English Language Proficiency (ELP) and establish eligibility for English Language Development (ELD) services in Washington. Intended to more accurately screen potential English Learners (ELs) who have the most significant cognitive disabilities for ELD services, the WIDA Alternate Screener is available in Washington using the guidance outlined below.

Background

Echoing the WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the WIDA Alternate Screener is a six-item, four-domain assessment available in the following grade-level clusters: K-2, 3-5, and 6-12. Because it is a paper assessment, the test administrator will score the completed assessment and enter scores into an online score calculator to produce a score report. The WIDA Alternate Screener assessment materials are available for user download in the WIDA Secure Portal. Test administrators must complete the WIDA Alternate Screener training before administering the assessment.

Using the WIDA Alternate Screener

The WIDA Alternate Screener has limited use in Washington. To be eligible to take the WIDA Alternate Screener, students must have an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) and be identified for alternate assessments before a district can use the WIDA Alternate Screener as the student's ELP screening tool, per [WAC 392-172A-03090\(f\)\(i\)](#). As a reminder, the IEP is updated at least once a year and must include the current assessment decision for each student, and this decision must not be limited or delayed to assessment years.

If the student is eligible to be screened for ELD services using the WIDA Alternate Screener, the WIDA Alternate Screener is the only screening the student will need to complete to determine eligibility for ELD services. IEP teams may also choose to administer the WIDA Screener instead of the WIDA Alternate Screener. Additionally, as with the WIDA Screener, WIDA Alternate Screener scores will not be accepted from other states.

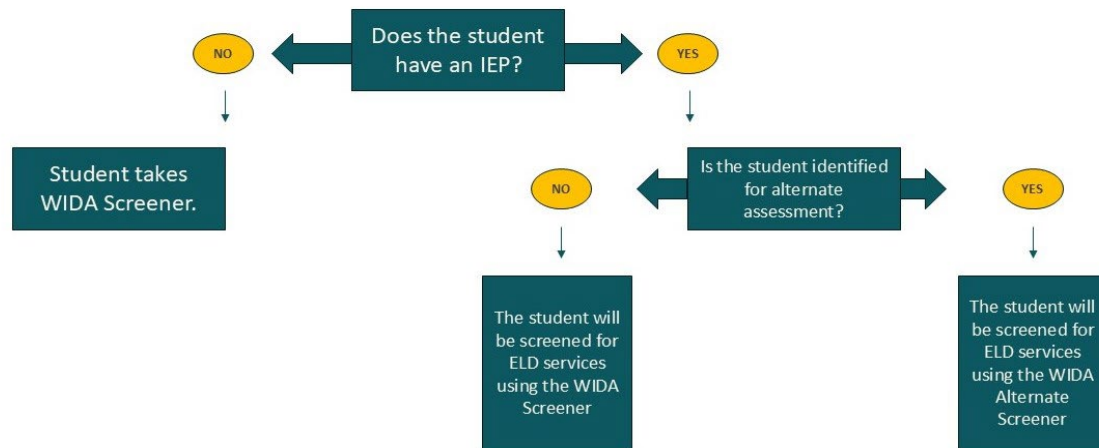
Use of the WIDA Alternate Screener as a placement assessment does not automatically track the student into taking the WIDA Alternate ACCESS as an annual assessment. The decision to administer the WIDA Alternate ACCESS must be an IEP team decision and must be documented in the student's IEP.

The [Guidelines for Statewide Accountability Assessments](#) provide guidance to IEP teams on their authority related to accountability assessments and requirements to guide their determination of the appropriate assessment options for students.



WIDA Alternate Screener Eligibility Model for Washington

Once a student qualifies for ELD screening, the eligibility tree below indicates when the WIDA Alternate Screener should be administered instead of the WIDA Screener.



ELD Eligibility Criteria For WIDA Alternate Screener

Eligibility criteria for English Language Development (ELD) services are outlined below.

Eligibility Criteria

Grade Level	Minimum Qualifications	Notes
Grades K – 12	Must score a 5.0 Overall Composite Score to be in	<p>Domain scores are not considered when making eligibility determinations due to the low number of tested items in each domain.</p> <p>Students must try to complete all four domains. There will be no domain exemptions. Kindergarten will test in all four domains.</p>

Family Notification letters can be found on the Multilingual Education Program page on OSPI's website: [Multilingual Family Communication Templates](#).

CEDARS Reporting Guidance for WIDA Alternate Screener

Reporting the WIDA Alternate Screener to CEDARS will follow the same process as the WIDA Screener. There will be an additional option for the WIDA Alternate Screener. Report the Overall Composite score as a whole number.