

Fall 2025 Update

WIDA Alternate Screener Guidance

Introduction

In July 2025, the WIDA Consortium released the WIDA Alternate Screener to complement 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 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.

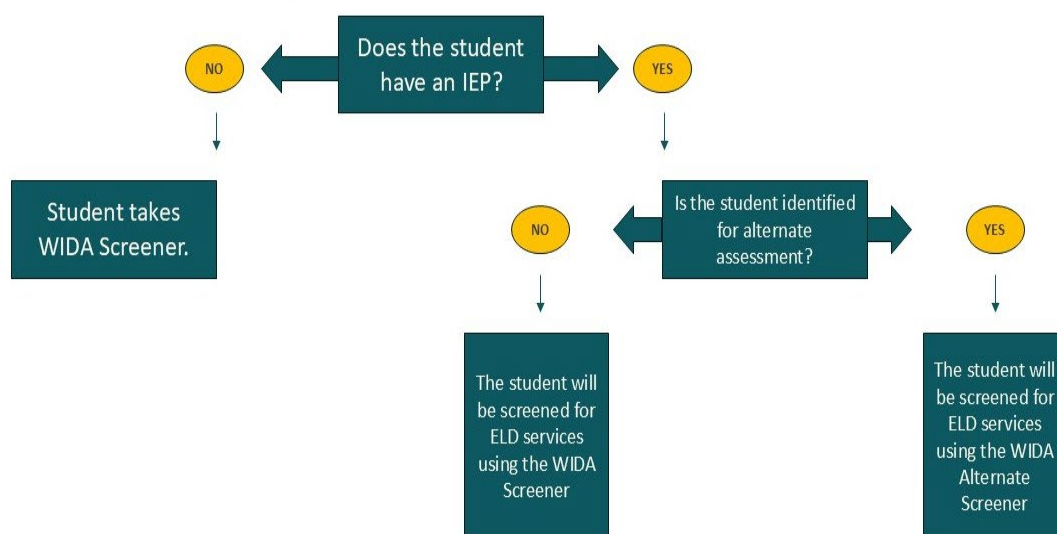
Using the WIDA Alternate Screener

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, as codified in [WAC 392-172A-03090\(f\)\(i\)](#).

WIDA Alternate Screener Eligibility Model for Washington

A student qualifies for ELD screening upon enrollment when the Home Language Survey (HLS) indicates a language other than English on Questions 2 and 3.

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



Guidelines for Considering the WIDA Alternate Screener

When considering administering the WIDA Alternate Screener, it is important to keep the following guidelines in the discussion:

- *Alternate Assessment Identification:* One of the qualifications for use is that the IEP must have "Alternate Assessment" selected under "Participation in State and District Assessments." This selection is not grade-specific. IEPs are updated once a year and must include the current assessment decision for each student. This decision must not be limited or delayed to assessment years, including Kindergarten through 2nd grade.
- *Convening an IEP Team:* If a student enrolls with an active IEP but does not yet have alternate assessment identified on the IEP, the district may choose to convene an IEP team and add the "Alternate Assessment" option to the IEP. The WIDA Alternate Screener may then be administered to screen for ELD services.
- *Re-screening for ELD Services:* 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 choose to administer the WIDA Screener instead of the WIDA Alternate Screener.
- *Alternate Assessment for Annual Assessment:* 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 IEP. If the WIDA Alternate ACCESS is selected as the annual assessment for a student who screened into ELD services, that must be identified under "Participation in State and District Assessments" under "Other Statewide Assessments" as "WIDA Alternate ACCESS."

Administering the WIDA Alternate Screener

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.

- *Training:* Test administrators must complete the WIDA Alternate Screener training before administering the assessment.
- *Materials:* The WIDA Alternate Screener assessment materials are available for user download in the WIDA Secure Portal.
- *Domains:* All four domains must be administered to all grade levels, including kindergarten, and there are no domain exemptions possible.
- *Score Report:* Because the WIDA Alternate Screener 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.
- *Other States:* As with the WIDA Screener, WIDA Alternate Screener scores will not be accepted from other states.

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 ineligible for services	Domain scores are not considered when making eligibility determinations due to the low number of tested items in each domain. Students must try to complete all four domains. There will be no domain exemptions. Kindergarten will test in all four domains.

Family Notification Letters

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. For a score of less than three, the reported number maps to a two.

Additional Resources

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.