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April 24, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents, Charter Administrators, District Test Coordinators, Directors of EL, Title III and/or Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs

FROM: Lisa Chandler, Director of Assessment and Accountability *LC*

RE: State Policy EL Identification, ELP Placement, and Exit Criteria

The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate and clarify state policy around three important criteria related to the identification and assessment of English Learners (ELs):

- 1) the **WIDA Screener Online**,
- 2) the **ACCESS for ELLs 2.0** assessment, and
- 3) the **Alternate ACCESS for ELLs**

Please note that this memorandum serves as a follow-up to previously communicated information regarding *Requirements and Guidance for Identification of English Learners (ELs) Using the New Mexico Language Usage Survey (LUS)* dated October 31, 2016, and the *WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Standard Setting* dated March 6, 2017.

WIDA Screener Online

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, New Mexico is implementing an online English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener for grades 1-12 as part of the state's EL identification process. The WIDA Screener Online will be accessed using the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) and will be available beginning May 15, 2017, in time for implementation for 2017-2018. For EL students with disabilities who require a paper-based assessment per their IEP or 504 Plan, a WIDA Screener paper version is available.

For kindergarten students, the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) will continue to be used as the ELP screener.

Attached are the placement scores for the English language proficiency screeners. Further information on the WIDA Screener Online and relevant training materials and resources are available at <https://www.wida.us/assessment/Screener/screener-online.aspx>.

State Exit Criteria for ELs – ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

New Mexico will maintain the proficiency score for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 at the **composite (overall) score of 5.0 or higher**, which also serves as the exit criteria from EL status. At this ELP level, students are considered reclassified fluent English proficient (RFEP).

The PED analyzed student-level data for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and the PARCC English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments. The ELP level of a composite score of 5.0 or higher on ACCESS is more aligned to the rigorous performance standards of the PARCC ELA and mathematics assessments.

This data analysis was presented in the New Mexico-specific WIDA webinar on April 5, 2017, which can be accessed in the link: <https://www.wida.us/membership/states/NM/NMScoreChangesWebinar.aspx>.

State Exit Criteria for ELs with Significant Cognitive Disabilities – Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

All students identified as EL must participate annually in an ELP assessment, regardless of disability category. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Alt ACCESS) is an ELP assessment for students in grades 1-12 who are classified as ELs and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS assessment. These are the students who take the New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA).

In order to determine the proficiency score and exit criteria for ELs taking the Alt ACCESS assessment, the PED examined student performance data for Alt ACCESS and NMAPA, including comparisons of initially fluent English proficient students (IFEPS) with current ELs on the academic subject proficiencies on NMAPA. Based on this analysis, the composite (overall) score P1¹ is the ELP cut score for Alternate ACCESS in New Mexico. Students scoring at a composite (overall) score of P1 or higher are considered as having attained ELP, thus exiting EL status and being reclassified as RFEP.

Questions

If you have questions regarding the EL identification and placement process or the state's exit criteria, please contact Kirsi Laine, EL and Title III Specialist, at (505) 827-6505 or via email at kirsi.laine@state.nm.us.

CR/IP/kl

Enc. (1): W-APT and WIDA Screener Placement Criteria

cc: Hanna Skandera, Secretary of Education
Icela Pelayo, PhD, Options for Parents and Families Division Deputy Director
Latifah Phillips, Assistant Secretary for Indian Education
Katie Poulos, Options for Parents and Families Division Director

¹ Scores for Alternate ACCESS and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 are not on the same scale. While an ELP level of P1 on the Alternate ACCESS appears similar to ELP level 1 on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, it is not the same. A student who scores a P1 on the Alt ACCESS is not necessarily at the entering level on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0.

W-APT Placement Criteria

GRADE	DOMAINS	W-APT SCORE IDENTIFIES STUDENT AS AN EL	W-APT SCORE INDICATES STUDENT <u>IS NOT</u> AN EL
Kindergarten 1 st Semester	Listening & Speaking	26 or lower	27 or higher
Kindergarten 2 nd Semester	Listening & Speaking	26 or lower	27 or higher
	Reading	13 or lower	14 or higher
	Writing	16 or lower	17 or higher

WIDA Screener Placement Criteria

GRADE	DOMAINS	WIDA SCREENER SCORE IDENTIFIES STUDENT AS AN EL	WIDA SCREENER SCORE INDICATES STUDENT <u>IS NOT</u> AN EL
Grades 1-12	All Four Domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, & Writing	Composite (overall) score of 4.5 or lower*	Composite (overall) score of 5.0 or higher

*The composite scores for the WIDA Screener will be reported as integers and with 0.5 interval scores (for example, scores of 3.5, 4, 4.5, 5).