

WIDA Testing:

Tools for Measuring English Learner Success

Utah joined the **WIDA** Consortium in 2013 to support the academic success of English learners (ELs). The WIDA Consortium is a national member-based organization focused on advancing high-quality, standards-based instruction and assessment for K-12 ELs through research, professional learning, and comprehensive language development tools.

Why Utah Assesses English Learners

Federal and state laws require the assessment of English learners (ELs) to ensure they receive appropriate support and services.

Under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

- States must use standardized, statewide procedures to identify English learners within 30 days of enrollment.
- States must set long-term goals and track progress toward English language proficiency using approved assessments aligned with the state's English Language Development standards.



How does this affect accountability?

Utah's accountability system includes an indicator of English Learner Progress (ELP). The ELP indicator is intended to reliably measure the impact of schools on EL students learning academic English. The ELP indicator is calculated based on both student progress toward English language proficiency and students reaching English language proficiency; this can be viewed by the public on the school's report card.

Rule R277-716

In addition, Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Rule R277-716 requires all LEAs to administer an approved annual English language proficiency assessment to measure fluency and progress in:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing



Required Assessments

Utah uses a set of WIDA-developed assessments to identify English learners (ELs) and to monitor their progress toward English language proficiency.

WIDA Screener and Alternate Screener (Grades K–12)

The WIDA Screener is a placement test used to identify students who qualify for English learner services. It assesses students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- Administered within 30 calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year, or within 10 school days if enrolling later.
- Students who score between 1.0 and 4.9 qualify for EL services.

WIDA ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS (Grades K–12)

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs is an annual assessment used to measure English language proficiency and student growth in the four language domains.

- All ELs in Utah are required to take ACCESS each year.
- Exit Criteria:
 - » Overall Composite Score of 4.2 or higher
 - » Speaking Score of 3.5 or higher

Alternate ACCESS Exit Criteria

- The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is currently working to establish exit criteria for students who take Alternate ACCESS.

For more info visit: schools.utah.gov/assessment

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