

English Learner (EL) Assessment & Accountability Pitfalls FAQ

Pupil accounting staff, English Learner (EL) Assessment Coordinators, and other building/district administrators should review this document. It outlines a variety of situations related to identification of ELs and requirements to assess EL students. For example, did you know you can check a student's current EL status and history in MSDS? You also may not know that the Secure Site is updated with MSDS data daily at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm with student demographic data from MSDS. If the district submits the student enrollment data in MSDS through a General Collection or Student Record Maintenance (SRM) File which changes the primary educational providing entity (PEPE) to the district/school, users of the Secure Site can access a student's historic assessment scores, including the W-APT and WIDA and ensures districts do not need to re-screen a student.

The Division of Accountability Services (DAS), Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), and the Office of Field Services (OFS) strongly encourage districts to review this document collectively with staff involved in pupil accounting as well as assessment for this student group.

The FAQ document will be updated as new questions are generated during webcasts, webinars, Q & A sessions, and other training events. New questions will be posted at the beginning of each topic section and will be starred with a "Just Added" icon to indicate their status.

As you review this document please contact the following offices if you have questions:

Division of Accountability Services (DAS)

1-877-560-8378

WIDA assessment administration, dates for testing activities, Secure Site functions, including pre-identification, and Accountable Students and Test Verification

Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI)

517-335-0505 Ext. 3

Michigan Student Data System (MSDS)

Office of Field Services

517-373-6066

EL services, Title III funding, Entrance and Exit Protocol

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EL Identification

- Q. How does a student become identified as an English Learner (EL)?
- A. Please refer to the Entrance & Exit Protocol (http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Entrance_and_Exit_Protocol_2015_05_15_490174_7.pdf).
- Q. I have a student that another district identified as an EL. Am I required to also identify the student as an EL?
- A. Yes. If another district has already identified the student as an EL in MSDS (no exit code for proficiency exists) then the student is an EL regardless of which district they transfer to in Michigan.
- Q. How does a student's EL status get removed in MSDS?
- A. A student's EL status can only be removed if they score proficient on the summative WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 in addition to any other criteria as defined in the Entrance and Exit Protocol (http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Entrance_and_Exit_Protocol_2015_05_15_490174_7.pdf). Graduation is the second valid exit code for EL status removal.
- Q. What do I do with W-APT scores?
- A. Schools must enter all W-APT scores into the BAA Secure Site. Please refer to the Secure Site User Guide for more information (<https://baa.state.mi.us/BAASecure/pdfs/SecureSiteUserManual.pdf>).

Summative ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

- Q. Why did I have some students receive an N/A for their summative ACCESS score?
- A. The most frequent reason for this is that districts did not have students identified as EL in MSDS (in a Limited English Proficient [LEP] Program in MSDS) by this past spring's deadline. MDE will not provide scores for students who have not been identified as ELs.
- Q. I have students that took the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs in Spring 2015 but received a score of N/A. Should they be tested again in the Spring of 2016?

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- A. If a student has been identified by any district as EL in MSDS (in an LEP Program) during 2015-16, or was identified as EL in a previous year but never exited from EL services in MSDS, then the student is expected to take Spring 2016 WIDA. The only exception to this is for a student that was never supposed to be identified as EL based on the Entrance and Exit Protocol (i.e., was falsely identified as EL) and for whom the district takes the following actions. For these students the district needs to submit a False LEP appeal in the Secure Site on or before 5:00 PM, January 8, 2016. If the appeal is approved the student will not need to take Spring 2016 WIDA. If the appeal is rejected the student will still be expected to take Spring 2016 WIDA. Directions on how to submit 'False LEP' appeals can be found on the Secure Site Training website (www.mi.gov/securesitetraining) under the Quick Reference section using the link for WIDA Exceptions. False LEP appeals will only be approved if they meet the specific requirements described in the Guidance for WIDA Test Exceptions and False LEP Appeals document found on the MDE WIDA web page (www.mi.gov/wida) under What's New.

Q. Can parents opt out of having their child assessed on the Spring WIDA?

- A. No. There is no option for opting out of any state assessments. Parents may opt out of receiving EL services. However, schools are accountable for testing ALL students identified as EL on the summative WIDA assessments.

Exiting

Q. Does MDE automatically exit students from EL status if they score proficient on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs?

- A. No. MDE does not automatically exit students from their EL status based on their WIDA ACCESS for ELLs scores. The exiting process is a manual one that either occurs directly in MSDS or through your district's SIS, and according to the Entrance and Exit Protocol, includes criteria in addition to the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs. Please refer to the Entrance and Exit Protocol at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Entrance_and_Exit_Protocol_2015_05_15_490174_7.pdf.

Q. If a student tested proficient on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs in Spring 2015 but wasn't exited properly/on-time in MSDS, are they expected to test on the Spring 2016 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0?

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A. Yes. Please also keep in mind that exiting is not solely based on WIDA ACCESS for ELLs scores.

Q. Can this same student, from the question above, be exited from EL services for 2015-16 using a 2015-16 MSDS collection period or SRM?

A. Yes, they can be exited from services but they are still required to take the Spring 2016 WIDA. The MSDS EL exit records submitted in 2015-16 will remove the student's expectation to take the Spring 2017 WIDA, provided the student was not re-submitted as EL in subsequent 2015-16 collections (general or SRM).

Students are exited from the requirement to participate in EL assessments using records from prior year MSDS collections. That is 2015-16 EL exits were done using records from 2014-15 or prior MSDS collections (general and SRM). To have been exited from the requirement to participate in EL assessments for 2015-16, a student needed to have an MSDS records with

1. [LEP Exit Date] on or before '6/30/2015'
2. "AS OF" date on or before '6/30/2015'
3. [Certification Date] on or before '9/15/2015'

If a student was submitted after the above [Certification Date] deadline OR had a [LEP Exit Date] after '6/30/2015' OR had an "AS OF" date after '6/30/2015' that MSDS record will not remove the requirement to test. However, that record will exit the student from the requirement to participate in EL assessments for 2016-17, provided the student was not re-submitted as EL in subsequent MSDS collections. If the student was re-submitted as EL they will need a new EL exit record to be exited from the requirement to participate in EL assessments in 2016-17.

Q. A number of our student's scored proficient on the Spring 2015 WIDA ACCESS for ELLs, but they are now appearing on the Spring 2016 WIDA pre-id list. Why did this happen?

A. It is possible that students were not exited in MSDS by the correct deadline or were exited with an incorrect 'as of' date. It could also be that staff responsible for ensuring that students were exited just didn't follow through at all. Please check with CEPI for more information about how to determine if these issues occurred.

It is also possible that an error is occurring in your student information system (SIS) that is reidentifying the students. You should check with staff responsible for ensuring correct functionality of your SIS to remedy the issue.