

# 2026-2027 Colorado Standardized Identification Procedures

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

Colorado districts and schools\* must support the academic, linguistic, and social-emotional challenges and opportunities of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students to ensure appropriate access to grade level content and a well-rounded education for all students identified as a Multilingual Learner (ML). The state definition derived from the 2014 Colorado Revised Statutes under the English Language Proficiency Act 22-24-103 (4) and is defined as “a student who is linguistically diverse and who is identified [using the state-approved English language proficiency assessment] as having a level of English language proficiency that requires English language development instruction to achieve standards in grade-level content in English”. Following the Colorado Standardized Identification Procedures to identify MLs ensures that Language Instruction Educational Programs (LIEPs) are designed to best meet the needs of students. Colorado districts and schools must develop comprehensive English Language Development (ELD) and academic programs for MLs that accurately reflect the size and characteristics of the population to be served.

Districts and schools must also ensure that students who enroll complete a Home Language Survey (HLS), a tool to identify languages used and spoken by the student and their family. The use of a language other than English does not signify that the student requires academic and/or linguistic supports. However, when response(s) on the HLS indicate the use of a language other than English by the student or another person in the home, further investigation must be conducted to determine the student’s English language proficiency\*\*.

**The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requires districts and schools to follow the Colorado Standardized Identification Procedures. This document, as established, is an authoritative guide to ensure accuracy and consistency when developing and implementing procedures for identifying potential K–12 multilingual learners.**

As part of its asset-based belief system, Multilingual Learner (ML) is used in place of English Learner (EL) in this document to describe students who are linguistically diverse and identified as having a level of English Language Proficiency (ELP) that requires language support to achieve standards and access grade-level content in English. Refer to the [ML Letter](#) for more information.

## English Language Proficiency Determination

WIDA Screener (Screener for Kindergarten, Online and Paper Screener for Grades 1-12, and Alternate Screener) is used to assess the level of English Language Proficiency (ELP) of new students who may have a language exposure or background other than English. Based on WIDA Screener assessment scores and a local Body of Evidence (BOE)\*\*\*, students will be designated in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Data Pipeline as Non English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) or Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE). ELP determination which includes reviewing HLS responses and data reports, screening, collecting evidence when applicable, parent notification and enrollment into an LIEP must be completed within 30 days of school or 2 weeks if the student enrolls after Student October Count (typically on October 1). Furthermore, districts and schools must retain documentation (i.e., score reports, educator notes, rubric or other objective criteria) demonstrating these procedures have been followed. This documentation must be made available during CDE audits and reviews. A flow chart (see Appendix A) and sample identification form (see Appendix B) are provided to assist in developing districtwide procedures and processes aligned with CDE guidance.

*\*In this document, the term “district and school” references any public local educational agency, the State Charter School Institute, as well as, public facility, online, and charter schools (Title 22, C.R.S. 22-1-101). \*\*HLS indicates “English only” or “No”, but a primary or home language other than English is being used or observed by educators and/or seen in Data Pipeline reports. When this occurs districts and schools must conduct further ELP level investigation upon enrollment to determine if the student is a potential ML and eligible for ELD instruction. This includes reviewing current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores found on ML Historical data reports found in CEDAR/COGNOS (Student Interchange File) prior to administering WIDA Screener and/or determining student’s ELP designation and data coding.\*\*\* Refer to the 4.Evaluate Scores and Collect Evidence section regarding when BOE is required/not required.*



## Multilingual Learner Identification Procedures

Colorado's Standardized Identification Procedures requires districts and schools to establish accurate, systematic and timely procedures that strengthen processes to identify potential multilingual learners and to protect students' civil rights for educational opportunities. Districts and schools that currently do not have any designated or coded ML students enrolled, remain obligated to describe and document identification procedures and processes should a potential ML student enter the district or school at any point during the school year. The standardized identification procedure, which includes the evaluation of ELP assessment scores and, when applicable, locally determined evidence, must incorporate components listed below prior to a student's placement into an LIEP.

**1. Provide Home Language Survey** to each student at the time of enrollment in the language most frequently spoken in the local community. It is advisable to be the first form filled out in the registration process for all students. The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in their compliance work under *Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act* and the *Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974* requires asking the three questions, and then testing a student whose parent or guardian responded to one or more of the three questions with a language other than English, is considered minimally compliant under the law. Surveys and questionnaires must remain on file in the Student Information System (SIS) or cumulative file, easily accessible to educators and made available during CDE audits and reviews.

- OCR- and DOJ-approved home language survey questions: 1) What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student? 2) What is the language most often spoken by the student? 3) What is the language that the student first acquired? If the response to any of these questions is in a language other than English, refer the student for testing with the state-approved ELP placement assessment, WIDA Screener.
- The HLS is the first step in flagging potential multilingual learners and captures essential information about families' language needs and students' school experiences. Reasonable efforts should be made to help parents and guardians understand the purpose of the survey and how to complete it. If needed, language support or skilled interpreters with knowledge of LIEPs should be provided upon request to assist those who may be limited English proficient. If an online enrollment process is used, translate electronic or paper versions of the enrollment form into the most common district or school language(s). A follow up to ensure that parents and guardians understood and answered these questions accurately should be completed.
- Responses indicated on the HLS alone must not be used to determine student's ELP level or to identify students who may have a language exposure other than or in addition to English. Districts and schools must conduct further investigation to determine the student's ELP level and whether or not potential ML student is in fact ML who is eligible for enrollment into LIEP. When a discrepancy between a new HLS and a completed HLS from a previous district or school arises, review student's ML History in CEDAR/COGNOS to determine whether the student has already been identified as an ML in Colorado, then proceed with identification procedures for designation and coding outlined in this document.

**2. Review Data Pipeline Reports (CEDAR/COGNOS)** during student enrollment to determine if there is prior K-12 schooling in Colorado. Districts and schools must examine ML Historical data reports to verify if students have been previously identified as ML and/or if they have taken WIDA ACCESS prior to administering WIDA Screener. CDE recommends periodic review of data reports throughout the school year beginning mid-July when Student Interchange opens and allows Student Demographic files to be uploaded (refer to the [ML Coding Guide](#) published by Data Services for more details about Student Interchange). Information contained in the reports should be communicated promptly between District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and ELD Coordinators to ensure accurate student coding and reporting.

- Student Interchange File contains two important data reports used to review prior ML designation and coding. Use Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: SASID Lookup to view a single-student by their state ID number. Use Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: District List to view a full list of students reported by the district or school.
- Current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores are located in Data Pipeline (CEDAR/COGNOS). However, individual domain scores are not included in the ML Historical data reports listed above. Districts or schools seeking individual domain scores must contact the district or school that administered the WIDA ACCESS assessment to the student. ML Historical data reports will be refreshed each July by Data Services.

**3. Administer WIDA Screener** as the state mandated common English language proficiency placement assessment (Colorado Senate Bill 109, CRS 22-24-106). This assessment must be used to determine ELP level and whether a student is in fact a multilingual learner or not. Moreover, results must not be used to meet or substitute for the statewide annual summative ELP test, WIDA ACCESS, required under Title I, Title III, and ESSA. WIDA Screener's purpose is strictly initial identification, not to meet [Standardized](#)



[Redesignation Procedures](#) or any criteria to exit from ML status. Parent or guardian permission is not needed to assess a student's ELP level for placement purposes. Additionally, district and schools must ensure the grade-appropriate test is administered to potential ML students who do not have ML Historical data in CEDAR/COGNOS following information located in the [WIDA Screener Quick Guides](#).

- WIDA Online and Paper Screener for Grades 1-12 is administered to second semester first grade - grade 12 students. WIDA Alternate Screener is administered to students identified with Intellectual Disabilities who have the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (MSCD) and qualify for instruction based on the Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs). WIDA Screener for Kindergarten is administered to incoming kindergarten and first semester first grade students (note: first semester kindergarten students must only be accessed in listening and speaking domains).
- In State Transfers: To support efficient K-12 enrollment and uninterrupted ELD instruction and programs, WIDA Screener administration is not required for:
  - Students who have a current designation as ML (NEP/LEP) in Data Pipeline; and/or
  - Students who have current-year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores found in CEDAR/COGNOS or included in transfer records

Per Title I and III, students are not eligible for redesignation until they, 'satisfy the State's standardized statewide exit procedures' which in Colorado requires collecting and evaluating WIDA ACCESS scores and a local body of evidence. Hence, when the enrolling district or school obtains the current WIDA ACCESS scores and those scores indicate that the state's minimum redesignation criteria have not been met, students must not be exited from ELD instruction or programs. They must retain their ML designation and coding in Data Pipeline and continue participating in WIDA ACCESS until meet requirements to transition from NEP/LEP to monitor status under the [Standardized ML Redesignation Procedures](#). Parents or guardians of previously identified in state transfer ML students must receive written notification of ELD instruction or program placement upon enrollment in the new CO district or school.

- Unique situations regarding in state transfers for enrolling districts and schools to follow:
  - Student is absent during the WIDA ACCESS test widow (January-February) for the current year or enrolls during non-instructional school days (spring, winter, summer break): Do not administer WIDA Screener. Keep the existing ML (NEP/LEP) designation and coding sequence as it appears in Data Pipeline. ELP status and progression are updated only after the next valid WIDA ACCESS assessment is completed and scored.
  - Student enrolls after they have taken WIDA ACCESS: Do not administer WIDA Screener. Contact the prior district or school that administered WIDA ACCESS to verify the student had completed the test. Request results if they are available, electronic results are available in WIDA AMS late April and CDE imports scores into CEDAR/COGNOS each July. If scores are not yet available at the time of enrollment, keep the existing ML (NEP/LEP) designation and coding as it appears in Data Pipeline until a full review of WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores is completed. ELP status and progression are updated in the following Student October.
  - Student does not have WIDA ACCESS results for two or more consecutive years: Administer WIDA Screener. Screener results inform instructional decisions, scaffolds, or strategies for best supporting the student in the classroom. Score results are also used to update the student's current ELP level, designation or coding and location on the language progression sequence (see Appendix C).
- Out of State Transfers: If a potential ML student has never been enrolled in a K-12 Colorado state public district or school, administer WIDA Screener to determine LIEP eligibility unless the student has an official WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener score report from another [WIDA State](#). Enrolling districts and schools are responsible to verify that score reports and records they obtain are within the current test administration year. When out-of-state WIDA scores are unavailable in a timely manner or the test year is unverifiable, administer the appropriate WIDA Screener. Additionally, if a student who previously met redesignated in CO or another WIDA state enrolls after having lived outside the U.S. in a non-English-speaking country for 12 months or more, districts and schools should administer WIDA Screener to determine if there has been a loss of English language proficiency. Based on the new screening test results, the student could re-qualify for ELD instruction.

**4. Evaluate Scores and Collect Evidence** prior to making an ELP level decision and determining the potential ML student's designation and coding location on the Language Progression Sequence (see Appendix C). ML identification procedures includes reviewing HLS responses and data reports, screening, collecting evidence when applicable (see second bullet point below) and parent notification must be completed within 30 days of school or 2 weeks if the student enrolls after [Student October Count](#) (typically on October 1) in Colorado. The enrolling district and school may accept ELP assessment scores (WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener) as an official report in the student cumulative file from another CO district or school and/or score reports from another WIDA State. However, they must verify that score reports and records are within the current test



administration year and make ELP decisions following federal and state timeline by which MLs must be identified.

- Districts and schools must use cut score guidance associated with each assessment located in the [WIDA Screener Quick Guides](#). Students who score at or above the minimum cut score are considered English proficient. They are not eligible for an LIEP, are designated and coded as PHLOTE, and do not participate in WIDA ACCESS testing. When WIDA Screener scores fall below the state-established cut-score criteria, students are eligible for ML identification, are offered an LIEP to support English language acquisition, are designated and coded as NEP or LEP, and are required to take WIDA ACCESS annually until they meet the [Standardized ML Redesignation Procedures](#).
- Districts and schools are required to have a consistent, criteria-based system to evaluate student level Body of Evidence (BOE) when a documented disability precludes a student from taking any WIDA Screener test domain. For instances, when test accommodations are not available or do not support the student overcoming the impacts of their disability, the educational team must collect local evidence in the non-tested domain(s) prior to determining student's ELP level. Specifically, an accompanying rubric or other objective indicator used to evaluate assessments, classroom observations, or analysis of student work to determine whether the potential ML student has met expectations for accessing grade level content. In addition, for very rare cases, evidence must also be collected, evaluated, and documented when there is reasonable cause to believe WIDA Screener scores do not accurately reflect student's language abilities which directly effects eligibility for ELD instruction or programming. However, collecting evidence is not required when a student completes all four WIDA Screener test domains, i.e., student was not precluded from accessing the contents of the test. Here evidence may be used to inform instruction, scaffolds and supports in the classroom.

**5. Provide Parent or Guardian Notification.** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA Title I Section 1112(e)(3)), reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) requires districts and schools to notify parents and guardians of identified ML student in writing, in a language and format they can understand. It must include the minimum essential elements that are required by ESEA for parent notification. Districts and schools may use this [sample letter](#) or compose their own letter addressing all required elements. Written notification must be sent no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year (CDE defines the Student October Count date as the beginning of school year) or two weeks when student enrolls after the beginning of the school year. ESSA also asserts that parents or guardians have the legal right to formally opt their child out of ML programs or particular services at any time after receiving written notification in a language than can understand. The parent's or guardian's decision must be voluntary and based on a full understanding of the child's rights, the range of services available to their child, and the benefits of such services. Districts and schools may not recommend parents or guardians opt their child out of an LIEP or services for any reason (ESEA 1112(e)(3)(A)(viii)).

- Formal opt-out documentation with parent or guardian signature required. To ensure legal compliance, districts and schools must review opt-out documentation with parents or guardians on an annual basis and maintain all records locally. Districts and schools may use the [sample opt-out letter provided in the EL Tool Kit](#) or develop their own letter that meets state and federal requirements.
- Parents or guardians cannot formally opt-out of ML designation or coding and/or the annual summative ELP assessment, WIDA ACCESS designed for students with a language proficiency of Non English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Opt-out students are still expected to participate in WIDA ACCESS annually until assessment scores and a collection of local academic evidence indicate they have achieved English language proficiency, meet criteria outlined in the [Standardized Redesignation Procedures](#) and can transition to monitoring status as Fluent English Proficient (FEP) (ESEA Section 1111(b)(2)(G)). All identified ML students retain their designation (NEP/LEP) and are coded with the appropriate language background, language proficiency and not enrolled in an LIEP, Parent Choice (98) following guidance found in the [Student Interchange: Student Demographic File and Definitions](#).
- If an opt-out student does not demonstrate appropriate linguistic growth or maintain appropriate academic levels, districts and schools must annually inform families of student's ELP level and academic achievement and offer parents or guardians an opportunity to enroll their child into an LIEP program or continue to decline ELD instruction or programs. Districts and schools are also obligated to take affirmative steps and appropriate action required by civil rights laws, Title VI and Equal Educational Opportunity Act, to provide students who formally opted out of an LIEP or services meaningful access grade level content and educational programs through periodically monitoring the opted out student's academic progress. These steps may include, but are not limited to, further assessing the student's ELP; sharing the WIDA ACCESS Individual Student Reports (ISRs) with parents or guardians before the end of the school year, and providing supports for the student's ELD, such as offering professional development in second language development to the student's core curriculum teachers.



6. Enrollment into Language Instruction Educational Program after providing parent or guardian written notification and receiving consent. All identified ML (NEP/LEP) students are eligible to receive adequate and appropriate ELD instruction through the identified LIEP. The program model used for language instruction, and/or implementation of the curriculum as well as the service minute requirement is a local decision determined by the linguistic needs of the student. However, if a district or school is operating under an active OCR or DOJ Consent Decree (CD) related to service minutes, they must adhere to the obligations, requirements, and terms outlined in that agreement in addition to the guidance described in this document.

- Districts and schools must ensure that MLs are not unnecessarily segregated. Even though a selected LIEP may require that MLs receive separate instruction for portions of the school day or school year, districts and schools must carry out their language instruction and programs in the least segregative manner possible.
- ML students with disabilities are entitled to both language assistance and specially designed instruction as outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP) per state and federal regulations. When designing IEPs for dually identified students (ML & SpEd), it is important that educator's knowledge about the student's language needs are included. Districts and schools must ensure that steps are taken to prevent MLs from being mistakenly identified as students with disabilities because of their ELP level, such as evaluating MLs for special education services based on the student's language abilities.

**Districts and schools are obligated to develop comprehensive procedures and processes for identifying potential multilingual learners. The framework must meet federal and state statutory requirements to ensure accurate and timely evaluation when a student enrolls with potential linguistic needs.**

**ML Student Enrollment:** Districts and schools must first examine ML Historical Data reports in CEDAR/COGNOS which contain current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores before administering WIDA Screener. Enrolling districts and schools are responsible for making ML identification decisions in accordance with federal and state requirements, providing written parent or guardian notification in a language they can understand, and meeting identification timeline expectations prior to determining a student's placement on the State Language Progression Sequence (see Appendix C). The information below includes student enrollment examples to support Colorado's Standardized Identification Procedures. These examples are intended to facilitate data-driven decisions when a student enrolls, and only after the student's ML Historical Data has been reviewed.

*Example A:* data reports indicate student is NEP/LEP and current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores meet the state's minimum redesignation cut score criteria. The enrolling district and school must collect and evaluate local BOE in reading and writing. Both pieces of data, scores and evidence, must confirm the student is no longer NEP/LEP and is eligible for redesignation to Fluent English Proficient (FEP). If evidence does not confirm the student is English proficient, do not redesignate student.

*Example B:* data reports indicate student is NEP/LEP and current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores do not meet the state's minimum redesignation cut score criteria. The enrolling district and school must continue to designate and code student NEP/LEP, student is still eligible for an LIEP and required to take WIDA ACCESS until standardized redesignation procedures are met.

*Example C:* data reports indicate student is PHLOTE, FEP or Former ML. Typically these students will not have current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores. The enrolling district and school must collect local BOE in reading and writing prior to making an ELP level decision. When evidence confirms student is still English proficient, continue designating and coding student as PHLOTE, FEP or Former ML. However, when evidence indicates student is no longer English proficient i.e., there is an ongoing or persistent barrier to access grade level content due to language, administer the appropriate WIDA Screener to determine if student should be re-enrolled into an LIEP.

*Example D:* data reports indicate student has never been enrolled in a Colorado K-12 public district or school (for example students who are incoming kindergarten, homeschool or private school students or new to U.S. or new to CO coming from non WIDA State). The enrolling district or school must administer the appropriate WIDA Screener to determine LIEP eligibility unless the student has an official score report (WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener) from another WIDA State.

**Accessibility and Accommodations:** English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments are designed to provide an initial measure of a student's academic ELP level. It assists educators in identifying students who are candidates for Language Instruction Educational Programs (LIEPs). It also helps education teams make decisions about students' initial need for ELD instruction. Using WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations features help diminish barriers and maximize opportunities for students to demonstrate their ELP level.



It provides support for all potential MLs, as well as targeted accommodations for students with a documented Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504 plan at the time of testing. To protect the validity of WIDA Screener, only those features explicitly identified in the WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual should be used during test administration; using features that are not included could compromise the validity of the assessment and invalidate WIDA Screener results. Refer to WIDA's guidance document about recommendations for IEP/504 Plan teams to consider when administering a screener to a student who is Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI), or who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH). It includes general administration guidance, specific considerations for students who are BVI or DHH and a short list of resources for more information. Find this resource in the WIDA Secure Portal when filtering resources by WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations or any WIDA Screener assessment.

Despite WIDA Screener accommodations and recently released BVI and DHH guidance from WIDA, some language domains may still not be accessible to students who use sign system, braille, or have limited communication in any language. In these rare cases, educators should determine which domain (s) would be appropriate to administer. However, if accommodations do not increase equitable access and help students overcome the impacts of the disability, it may be best for the educational support teams (SpEd and ELD) to examine other relevant data or local evidence in non-tested domain(s). Districts and schools must also create a check list or decision tree to help guide how ELP decisions were made when any language domain could not be administered due to student's disability. Should the district or school be audited by CDE, documentation about how language proficiency is determined when a specific domain(s) of the WIDA Screener could not be given, is required.

**American Indian Students:** Title III of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) defines which students are eligible for ML identification, and while for most students' eligibility is based on having a non-English dominant language, the definition is differentiated for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. State guidance aims to ensure the accurate identification of American Indian or Alaska Native students who may be entitled to protection as MLs under Title III of ESSA. If Inquiry of a Standardized Body of Evidence (BOE) and/or results from the language observation protocol have led to a language influence other than or in addition to English, districts and schools must administer the appropriate WIDA Screener and follow standardized identification procedures and processes outlined in the [Guidance for Identifying Eligible American Indian and Alaska Native Students for English Language Development Services Under Title III](#). If students score at or above the minimum score for English language proficiency on the WIDA Screener assessment, they are not identified as an ML under Title III. A record of the student's WIDA Screener score report, HLS and supporting evidence should be saved and stored locally, and easily available to educators and/or during CDE audits or reviews.

**Annual Assessments:** WIDA ACCESS assessments are secure, large-scale summative ELP assessments given annually to Kindergarten through 12th graders who are identified as Multilingual Learners (NEP or LEP). Federal law requires that students whose parents or guardians have formally opted out of enrolling their child in language instruction (parent or guardian signature required), as well as students with disabilities, must participate in the state ELP assessment system. The educational team (IEP, 504, or ML), which must include the parents, determines whether the student will take the general WIDA ACCESS with or without accommodations or, for a student with the Most Significant Cognitive Disability (MSCD), meets the participation requirements for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Test results provide educators, parents and guardians with information about the student's ELP in the language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, and should be shared with parents or guardians before the end of each academic school year. Students designated and coded with a language proficiency Not Applicable (NA), Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE), Fluent English Proficient (FEP), or Former Multilingual Learner (Former ML) in Data Pipeline, are not eligible for ELD instruction and do not take WIDA ACCESS.

**Certification to Administer Screener Assessments:** Test Administrators (TAs) are required to complete online WIDA Screener training modules and pass quizzes (earn 80% or higher) prior to administering and/or scoring any of the four WIDA Screener assessments (WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener Online or Paper for grades 1-12, and WIDA Alternate Screener). Districts and schools must collect and store TA certificates locally and ensure TAs follow certification guidance. CDE requires TAs to fully recertify every two years. However, if there is a district or school requirement to recertify yearly, educators administering or scoring Screener assessments must comply with local policy.

**Data Coding:** Students are identified as MLs according to the Standardized Identification Procedures and requirements outlined in this document. Districts and schools must follow [ML Coding Guidance](#) and report three data fields: language background, language proficiency, and Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) for students during student data collections. These fields are components of the Student Demographic file, which is a part of the Student Interchange. Student data collections or snapshots then include the reported values on the student demographic file in the collection data snapshot (e.g., Student October, Student Attendance, Student End of Year). [Business Rules](#)



[and Reporting Exceptions](#) are part of the data reporting process. District and school data respondent(s) work with the CDE data collection lead through the reporting process, utilizing business rules and reporting exceptions as one method for addressing data issues. Data respondents should also collaborate with ELD and other education teams to determine designation and coding accurately represents a student's ML status each school year.

**Effective Engagement:** family engagement are crucial to students' educational success. Districts and schools must ensure they provide meaningful communication to parents or guardians of MLs who may be Limited English Proficient (LEP). They must be provided with adequate notice of information about any program, service, or activity in a language they can understand. This may involve providing translated materials and/or language interpretation. More information about the rights of LEP parents or guardians can be found in the [LEP Parent Factsheet](#), [EL Toolkit Chapter 10](#), and [WIDA Engaging Families and Communities](#).

**English Language Proficiency Act (ELPA):** Colorado Senate Bill 109, CRS 22-24-106 requires all districts and schools to identify and report multilingual learners. The common State approved ELP screening assessment, WIDA Screener (Screener for Kindergarten, Online and Paper Screener for Grades 1-12 and/or Alternate Screener) must be used to determine if the definition of an ML is met under Title III of ESEA. The results of WIDA Screener assessments indicate the level of the student's proficiency in each domain and will guide accurate placement into an LIEP. Students who fall below the minimum cut score are identified as MLs (NEP/LEP), are eligible for ELD instruction, and must take the annual summative ELP assessments, WIDA ACCESS until they demonstrate ELP criteria described in the [Standardized ML Redesignation Procedures](#). Students who score at or above the minimum score for ELP on WIDA Screener should be identified as Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE) and are not required to take WIDA ACCESS.

**Foreign Exchange Students:** Colorado follows Guidance from The Office of Civil Rights, which does not exempt foreign exchange students from the protections established under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Under ESEA, a foreign exchange student is not exempt from any Title I or Title III required assessment, specifically ELP assessments. Foreign exchange student a district and school enrolls and is receiving state and federal funding is held to all statewide assessment and accountability processes. Following State guidance ensures appropriate practices for all students which includes foreign exchange, migrant, immigrant, non-immigrant, refugee, part-time home school, online, charter, and adopted students. If the district and school confirm there is a language exposure or background other than English that is impacting a student's access to academic content, districts and schools should investigate students ELP level using the same processes used with all other students as outlined in this document.

**Identification Timeline:** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds (ESSA), requires State Educational Agencies (SEAs) that receive *Title III* grants, after "timely and meaningful consultation with local educational agencies," to create and implement "standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures" for ELs, "including an assurance that all students who may be [ELs] are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State." [ESEA section 3113(b)(2)]. As such, ML identification which includes reviewing HLS responses and data reports, screening, collecting evidence when applicable, parent notification and enrollment into an LIEP must be completed within 30 days of school or 2 weeks if the student enrolls after [Student October Count](#) (typically on October 1) in Colorado.

**Online Registration and Collection of HLS:** Districts and schools using online registration during student enrollment must continue to maintain the same standards as in-person registration when evaluating HLS submitted electronically. There should be an internal process in place to collect and evaluate HLS responses including how to evaluate and verify responses are accurate. Furthermore, to ensure districts and schools are meeting the civil rights and educational needs for all students, and to provide accurate reporting of student's language proficiency level, there should be steps to gather additional information or evidence to identify and report a reasonable cause to screen without indication of a language other than English evident on the HLS. As such, CDE recommends reviewing CEDAR/COGNOS reports (i.e., extract and upload Student Demographic File to view potential coding errors) monthly to support ML designation and coding per the [ML Coding Guide](#) published by Data Services at CDE.

**Preschool Students:** Colorado does not have a State Screener for pre-K students. However, pre-K students who are identified as ML using a district and school developed assessment, must receive ELD instruction in an LIEP while in pre-K programs. Upon enrolling into kindergarten, districts and schools must follow Standardized ML Identification Procedures and administer Screener for Kindergarten to determine the student's current English language proficiency level. The earliest recommended testing window is from mid-April to June for students preceding their initial enrollment in kindergarten. Administration of the test earlier than mid-April may not support accurate decision-making about these young students' English language development.



**Public School Finance Act:** The Rules for the Administration of the Public School Finance Act are published in 1 CCR 301- 39. These rules further clarify the following: (6.03): Pursuant to Section 22-54-103(6.5)(a), C.R.S., funding eligible pupils are considered English Language Learners (ELLs) if they are reported with a language proficiency of NEP or LEP as of the applicable count date and are within the five-year services window defined in ELPA. (6.03(1)): Standardized Identification and Redesignation Procedures to identify and redesignate ELLs in CO must be followed. As provided under SB21-268 and beginning with fiscal year 21-22, the ELL funding factor will be included in the calculated total program funding for each district and school. Compliance audits including a review of documentation requires districts and schools to retain WIDA Screener, WIDA ACCESS score reports, supporting formative assessments, scoring rubrics and evaluation forms used to make ELP decisions following guidance found in the [ELL Count Audit Resource Guide](#).

**Rescreening:** Students who have been screened and did not qualify for ELD instruction and services should not be rescreened without first consulting with parents or guardians and other educational teams, and documenting intervention efforts through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process. For example, this is also true for kindergarten students in their first semester who were screened with WIDA Screener for Kindergarten in listening and speaking domains only. If kindergarten students are struggling with literacy development, these challenges should be addressed through literacy supports and interventions rather than rescreening. However, when there is a persistent language barrier and/or a previously redesignated student (FEP) is not progressing academically, document the basis for rescreening prior to administering WIDA Screener to determine if this student would benefit from re-enrolling into an LIEP. A local body of evidence must be collected and evaluated alongside WIDA Screener scores prior to making a decision about the student's current ELP level and eligibility for language support.

**Secure and Save Records and Score Reports:** Districts and schools are strongly encouraged to review and comply with student data retention security and privacy policies. The [School District Records Management Manual in the Colorado State Archives](#) outlines procedures to securely store paper test kits and safely transfer student records/score reports and other relevant documentation used to identify multilingual learners. Additionally, [ECEA Rules](#) and the [Transcript and Records Checklist](#) instructs districts and schools to provide student assessment data when a student transfers out or disenrolls. Specifically, ELP assessment results and other documentation or records related to multilingual learner identification and/or redesignation should follow the student into a new district and school. CDE recommends that WIDA Online Screener and WIDA ACCESS Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are downloaded and saved in the district and school Student Information System (SIS) during the current test administration year. ISRs are only available through WIDA AMS for up to two years from the administration year. These reports are confidential, and both electronic and hard copy distributions must also comply with state and federal privacy laws, as well as local school board policies. Score reports must be shared with parents or guardians before the end of each academic school year.

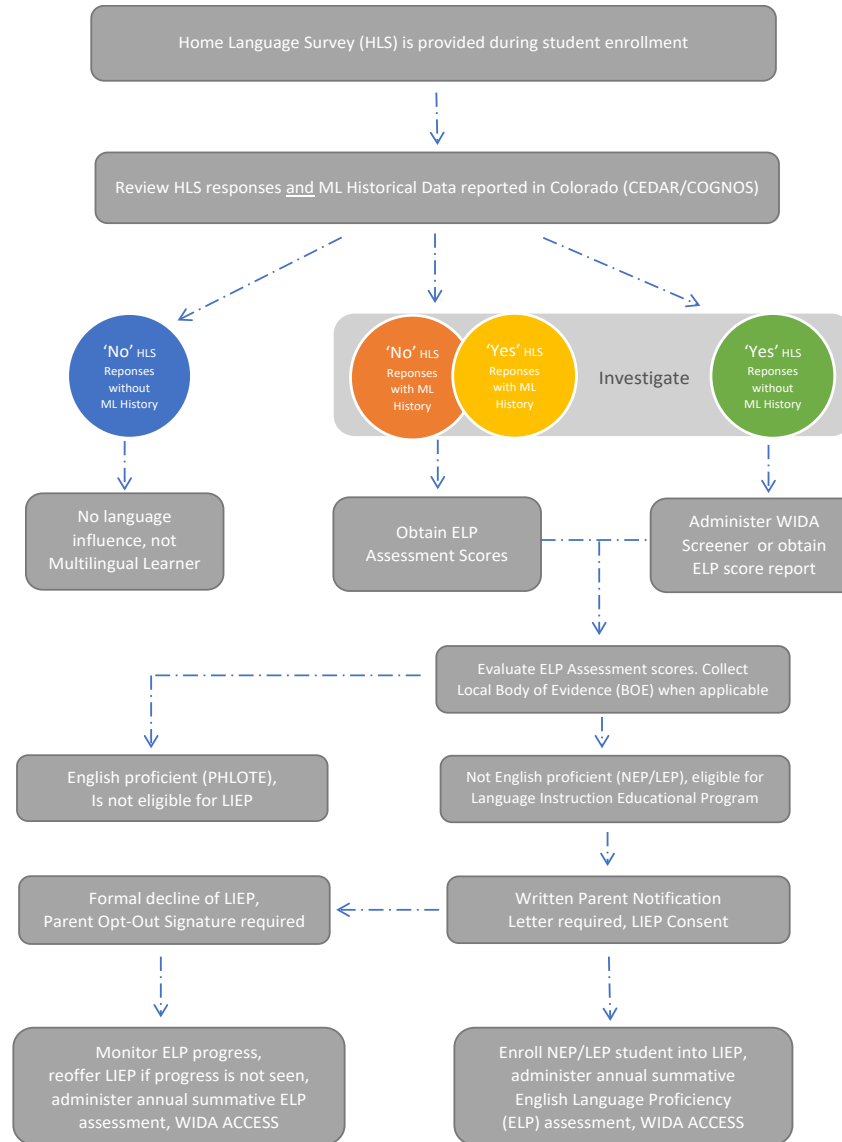
**Students in Alternative and Virtual Learning Environments:** All schools, including alternate, virtual or online programs, are required to ensure students are assessed on all academic and ELP state assessments (i.e., WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Screener). A common approach is to offer multiple in-person testing sites and test times to accommodate families. Moreover, best practices include clearly communicating state assessment participation expectations during student registration/enrollment. Students who attend these programs are served by the school they attend, not by the local district. However, if a student needs to take an ELP state assessment, schools can contract with the local district to support test administration. Many alternate, virtual or online programs already have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place with the local district to allow for annual state assessment testing, and ELP testing can be added to that MOU, if needed.

**WIDA Secure Portal Account:** Contact the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) to request account activation. WIDA will invite educators to create an account through the WIDA Secure Portal. This account will give educators access to self-paced workshops, workshop resources, assessment materials for students and guides for test administrators and scorers. Online training modules can be found by logging into the WIDA Secure Portal. In the Secure Portal, select Assessment Training, then filter by test type, i.e., WIDA Screener for Kindergarten Administration and Scoring, WIDA Screener (1-12) online or paper Administration and Scoring and/or WIDA Alternate Screener courses.

**WIDA Alternate Screener:** A new assessment designed to provide an initial measure of ELP level and to decide whether students are in fact MLs (NEP/LEP) who also qualify for ELD instruction in addition to SpEd services. Beginning SY26-27, WIDA Alternate Screener will be available for limited use for K-12 public school students in Colorado. It is a flexible, paper-based, on-demand individually administered test that can be given at any time during the school year. All domains will be scored locally and manually entered into the WIDA Alternate Screener score calculator in order to generate a report of the student's test performance. TAs must adhere to certification requirements prior to administering and scoring WIDA Alternate Screener. Refer to the [WIDA Alternate Screener Quick Guide](#) for more information about the 3-part eligibility criteria prior to testing.

## Appendix A Standardized Identification Flow Chart

ELP determination which includes reviewing HLS responses and data reports, screening, collecting evidence when applicable, parent notification and enrollment into an LIEP must be completed within 30 days of school or 2 weeks if the student enrolls after Student October Count (typically on October 1). Furthermore, districts and schools must retain documentation (i.e., score reports, educator notes, rubric or other objective criteria) demonstrating these procedures have been followed.





## Appendix B

### Sample Standardized Identification Procedures Form

The sequence of steps outlined below is required for the identification of potential Multilingual Learners (MLs) in Colorado. Districts and schools may use this sample form or compose their own form adopting all the required steps. ML Identification Procedures, which includes reviewing HLS responses and data reports, screening, collecting evidence when applicable, parent notification and enrollment into an LIEP must be completed within 30 days when student enrolls before Student October Count (or within 2 weeks when enrollment is after Student October Count).

Disclaimer: this form is intended to be printed and completed by hand. It is designed for physical use rather than digital interaction, some elements may not meet full digital accessibility standards.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Enrolling with ML History in Colorado: No / Yes (refer to Step 1 part C)

#### Step 1: Home Language Survey and ML Historical Data (survey responses alone cannot identify student as ML)

A. Evaluate Home Language Survey (HLS) responses: What is the primary language used in the home? What is the language most often spoken by the student? What is the language that the student first acquired? Refer to screening if responses indicate a language other than English.

B. Verify if student has been previously designated as ML and/or if language instruction has been provided in CDE Data Pipeline. WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite level scores from the current test year are found on ML Historical reports: Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: SASID Lookup and Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: District List in Student Interchange file.

C. ML Historical Data reports found in CEDAR/COGNOS provide WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores for students with previous K-12 education in Colorado. Refer to the Standardized Identification Procedures (In State, Out of State, ML Enrollment Examples) to determine whether student should take WIDA Screener. When screening is necessary, ensure the appropriate domain is given (i.e. first semester kindergarten students only take listening and speaking). For students in grades 1-12 who take WIDA Screener Online or Paper or Alternate Screener, follow the appropriate grade and semester specific test requirements (Link to WIDA Screener Quick Guides).

#### Step 2: WIDA Screener Administration (refer to cut score guidance associated with each assessment)

Which Screener was administered:  WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (K and 1st grades)  WIDA Online or Paper Screener (grades 1-12)  WIDA Alternate Screener\*

WIDA Screener accommodations (aligned with IEP goals) were provided during testing  \*3-part eligibility criteria must be determined by SpEd team prior to testing

Score report is available and was:  obtained from WIDA Screener administration  obtained from another CO district or school  obtained from WIDA State (\_\_\_\_\_)

Speaking: \_\_\_\_\_ Listening: \_\_\_\_\_ Reading: \_\_\_\_\_ Writing: \_\_\_\_\_ Overall: \_\_\_\_\_ Literacy: \_\_\_\_\_ Oral Language: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Tested: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Step 3: Body of Evidence (refer to state and/or local policy regarding this requirement)

Collect district determined evidence when applicable. Use a rubric or other objective criteria to determine whether the potential ML student meets district or school expectations for accessing grade-level content. Educator notes and any related documents used to evaluate the student's performance or language abilities must be attached to this form and made available during CDE audits and reviews.

Local writing data score \_\_\_\_\_ district rubric indicates student (circle one) approaches, meets, exceeds expectations

Local reading data score \_\_\_\_\_ district rubric indicates student (circle one) approaches, meets, exceeds expectations

Specify other data or evidence \_\_\_\_\_ district rubric indicates student (circle one) approaches, meets, exceeds expectations

Conducted Family Interview  Student Observation  Consulted with SpED Team  Analyzed ML Historical data reports in CEDAR/CONGOS



**Step 4: District Determination and Designation (must make data informed decisions)**

Evaluation of WIDA Screener scores on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

When applicable, an evaluation of local evidence on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

District ELD Staff/Team included in ELP determination \_\_\_\_\_ (printed names)

WIDA Screener scores and local evidence (when applicable) confirm ELP level. Student score report, local evidence, educator notes & supporting documentation are attached

ELP Determination:  Multilingual Learner (NEP/LEP)  Not Multilingual Learner (PHLOTE)

**Step 5: Written Notification Letter (must provide letter to parent or guardian of identified ML)**

Parent Notification Letter sent on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Parent Requests Translation Services on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**Step 6: Enroll into Instruction & Program (must provide English Language Development (ELD) instruction\*)**

Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) \_\_\_\_\_

Enrolled into English language instruction & program on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\*Only Applicable When Parent or Guardian decides to Opt-Out of English language instruction & programs:

Monitor student language progression and re-offer English language instruction & programs when an ongoing barrier to content due to language persists

Administer the annual ELP assessment, WIDA ACCESS as required by federal and state law until student meets minimum redesignation criteria established by CDE

Opt-Out Letter is on file at the district and was signed on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**Step 7: Data Pipeline Coding (must report student information to CDE during data collection periods)**

Language Background: \_\_\_\_\_

Language Instruction Educational Program: \_\_\_\_\_

English Language Proficiency Level: \_\_\_\_\_ (PHLOTE/NEP/LEP)

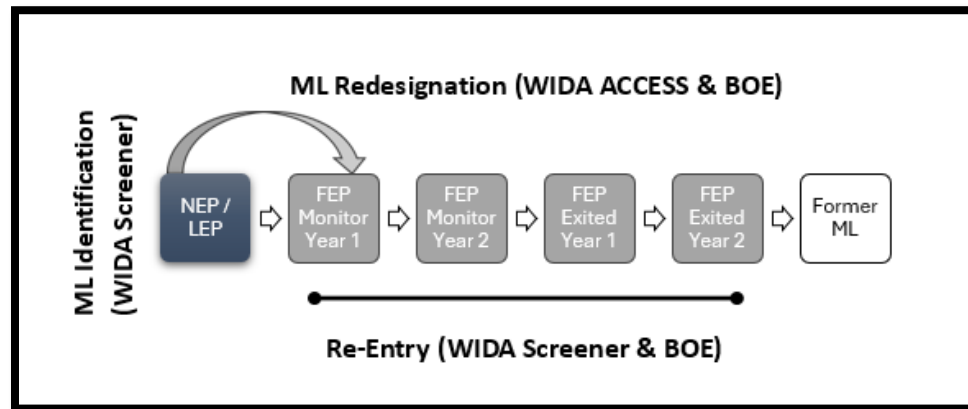
**Step 8: Record Keeping (must retain documents used to identify student as ML)**

Districts and schools are responsible to ensure that local student cumulative files are updated regularly and that all required documents follow students when they transfer.

When receiving transfer students, thoroughly review incoming cumulative files to identify any gaps/needs and reach out to the previous district or school to request any missing documents related to ML Identification. In addition, comply with student data retention security and privacy policies and the School District Records Management Manual in the Colorado State Archives for procedures to securely store paper test kits and records/score reports and other relevant documentation used to identify MLs. ECEA Rules and the Transcript and Records Checklist also instructs districts to provide student assessment data when a student transfers out or disenrolls. CDE compliance audits and reviews requires districts and schools to retain ELP assessment results and other documentation or records related to ML identification (refer to guidance found in the English Language Learner Count Audit Resource Guide).

**Optional Step:** Indicate ML Plan for ELD Instruction (i.e., service minutes, assessment accommodations, IEP and/or language goals, other formative assessment test scores, classroom instructional strategies etc.)

## Appendix C State Language Progression Sequence



Potential K-12 Multilingual Learners (MLs) are identified following an evaluation of WIDA Screener scores and when applicable, a local Body Evidence (BOE) as Non-English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP). Students are eligible for English Language Development (ELD) instruction and must be enrolled into Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) to help them acquire English after written notification is provided to parents and guardians. Students are typically designated NEP/LEP for multiple years until they meet criteria outlined in the [Standardized ML Redesignation Procedures](#). When students achieve the minimum cut score on WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy, they must be considered for redesignation. Districts and schools must also collect and evaluate student level BOE in reading and writing before proceeding to redesignate students from NEP/LEP to Fluent English Proficient (FEP).

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, EEOA, ESSA, and ELPA require districts and schools to monitor students' linguistic and academic progress two years (FEP M1 and FEP M2). Furthermore, monitoring ensures FEP students are able to actively participate and access grade-level content before they move to two years as exited students and finally designated and coded as Former Multilingual Learner (Former ML). If FEP student is not progressing academically and linguistically as expected, and there is a persistent and developing language need, districts and schools may re-evaluate the student's ELP level by readministering the appropriate WIDA Screener. In these cases, current evidence must be collected before making the decision to re-enroll student into an LIEP. While this is uncommon, re-entry into ELD services might occur during FEP years, which means the student moves back into programming, i.e., once again designated as NEP/LEP, which results in the language progression sequence restarting.

FEP students do not take annual summative ELP assessments, WIDA ACCESS since they have demonstrated they are English proficient. However, all identified ML (NEP/LEP) students are required to participate in annual summative ELP testing. These assessments measure the extent to which English language instruction and programming are supporting students in developing and attaining English proficiency. Students identified as NEP/LEP but are not enrolled in an LIEP due to parent or guardian opt-out are still expected to participate WIDA ACCESS annually until summative ELP assessment scores and a collection of locally determined evidence indicate they are eligible for redesignation.

When WIDA Screener scores indicate a potential ML is English proficient ([WIDA Screener Quick Guides](#) provides cut scores associated with each test), in other words, there is a language exposure or background other than English, but this exposure does not impact the student's ability to access grade-level content, nor does it create a barrier to academic participation or performance, designate and code as Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE). These students do not appear on the state language progression sequence since they are not eligible for an LIEP and do not take annual summative ELP assessments, WIDA ACCESS.