Multilingual Learner Designation and Data Coding

Office of Data Services and CLDE

August 26, 2026

Disclosures

Attendees may not use Artificial Intelligence (AI) software or services to capture the content of the event. CDE reserves the right to remove any attendee employing such services. By participating in this meeting, attendees agree that they will not record, capture, share, or publicly post its contents without expressed permission.

Districts and schools are required to adhere to Personally Identifiable Information (PII) information laws regarding student privacy. Always use secure methods to transfer any PII. Contact CDE Data Collection leads with questions about how to transmit PII securely through Syncplicity. Avoid sending PII via unencrypted email or unsecured faxes when sharing data between/within districts or with CDE.

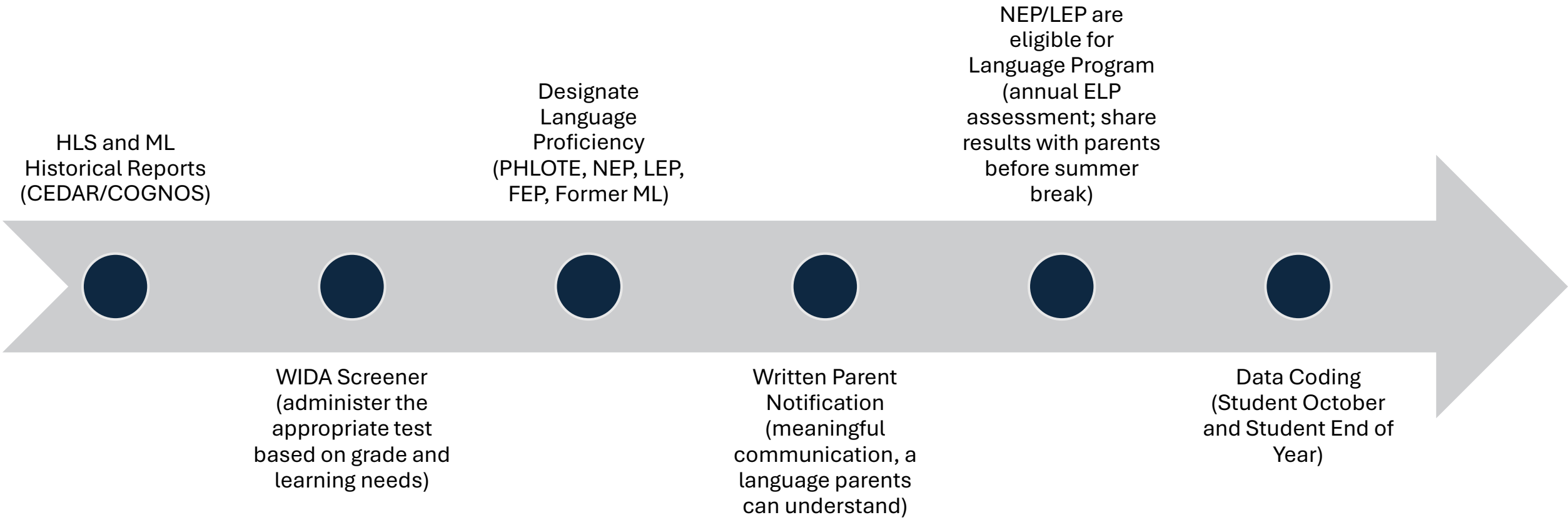
Agenda

- Standardized ML Identification Overview
- ELP Investigation & Parent Notification
- New Data Warnings
- Data Reporting Windows
- ML Historical Reports
- Exception Requests

Federal & State Requirements

Lau Remedies, 1975 (Case law, Civil Rights Act 1964)	Specifies approved approaches, methods, and procedures for **identifying and evaluating** students' English language skills
English Language Proficiency Act, CRS 22-24-105	Requires districts to identify and **report the number of MLs** in the district to the Colorado Department of Education
Senate Bill 109, CRS 22-24-106	One common assessment, WIDA Screener as the state mandated placement assessment must be used to **determine English Language Proficiency** (ELP) and if student is in fact a multilingual learner.
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), §§1112(e); 3116(b)	Requires recipients of Titles I and III to identify MLs and **notify parents** of the Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) available to students

ML Identification Overview



Legal Standards

State Educational Agencies (SEA) are directed to establish statewide entrance and exit procedures to be consistently applied across the State (Federal, Civil Rights Obligations, Title VI).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the 2015 Dear Colleague Letter authorize States to require Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to implement mechanisms and procedures that ensure the accurate and timely identification of potential Multilingual Learners (MLs) and the appropriate redesignation of ML students (NEP/LEP) to monitor status (FEP M1).

Identification Procedures

Colorado's Standardized Identification Procedures require districts and schools to develop and document a 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.

- describe identification procedures and processes should a potential ML student enter the district or school at any point during the school year, even when none are designated or coded as ML are currently enrolled.
- retain and provide documentation (i.e., score reports, educator notes, rubric or other objective criteria) demonstrating ML identification procedures have been followed during CDE audits and reviews. Use the sample ID form or independently create a form found in the Standardized Identification Procedures document.
- evaluate HLS responses and data reports, administer the appropriate WIDA Screener and collect a body of 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 student enrolls after Student October Count).**

In State Transfers

Last school year CDE added WIDA ACCESS scores to Data Pipeline to help districts and schools make ELP decisions for enrolling students who have already been identified as ML and/or taken WIDA ACCESS. To support efficient enrollment and uninterrupted ELD instruction and programming, WIDA Screener administration is not required for:

- NEP and LEP students enrolled in K-12 transferring within CO
- Students with current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores found in CEDAR/COGNOS or included in transfer records from another CO district or WIDA State
- PHLOTE, FEP or Former ML students enrolled in K-12 transferring within CO who previously met identification or redesignation criteria

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 following identification timeline requirements.

NEP and LEP Students

Data reports indicate student is NEP/LEP and **current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores meet** the state's 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.

Data reports indicate student is NEP/LEP and **current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores do not meet** the state's 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.

Other Students

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.

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.

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 (41).

- Enrolling districts and schools are responsible to verify that score reports and records they obtain are within the current test administration year (obtain digital or hardcopy)
- When out-of-state WIDA scores are unavailable in a timely manner or the test year is unverifiable, administer the grade-appropriate WIDA Screener
- FEP student who previously met redesignated from K-12 education in CO or another WIDA State and returns after having lived outside the U.S. in a non-English-speaking country for 12 months or more, administer the WIDA Screener. The enrolling district or schools must 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.

Body of Evidence

- Collecting evidence is required when student's documented disability precludes* them from taking any WIDA Screener test domain. Evaluate local evidence in the non-tested domain(s) prior to determining student's ELP level. In addition, for very rare cases, when there is reasonable cause to believe WIDA Screener scores do not accurately reflect student's language abilities that directly effects eligibility for ELD instruction or programming, evidence must be collected, evaluated, and documented. *Screener accommodations are not available and do not support the student to overcome the impacts of their disability.

- Collecting evidence is not required when students are able to complete all four WIDA Screener test domains (students were not precluded from assessing the contents of the test). Evaluating evidence would be primarily used to inform instruction, scaffolds and supports but is optional.

Takeaways

Districts and schools must examine ML Historical Data reports in CEDAR/COGNOS which contain **current year WIDA ACCESS Overall and Literacy composite scores to determine enrolling student's ELP level** (i.e., eligible for monitor status or remaining in ELD instruction)

- When 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), administer the grade-appropriate WIDA Screener to determine LIEP eligibility.
- When the student has an official score report (WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Screener) from another CO district or WIDA State dated from the current year, screening is not necessary.
- When WIDA Screener accommodations are not going to assist the student to access the contents of the test and/or overcome the impacts of their disability, collect and evaluate local evidence in the non-tested domain before making ELP decisions.

Written Parent Notification

Districts and schools must notify parents and guardians of identified ML student in writing; in a language and format they can understand when seeking consent to enroll into LIEP. It must include the minimum essential elements that are required by ESEA for parent notification such as eligibility for language instruction and level of student's English proficiency (NEP/LEP); in the case of a student with a disability, how the LIEP will meet the objectives of the Individualized Education Program (IEP); specific exit requirements or cut score criteria for redesignation and information pertaining to parental rights that includes the right to decline a program or to choose another program or method of instruction.

NEP/LEP students including opt-out and students with a documented disability are required to take WIDA ACCESS each year during Jan-Feb until they demonstrate English proficiency following Standardized Redesignation Procedures

Formal Opt Out

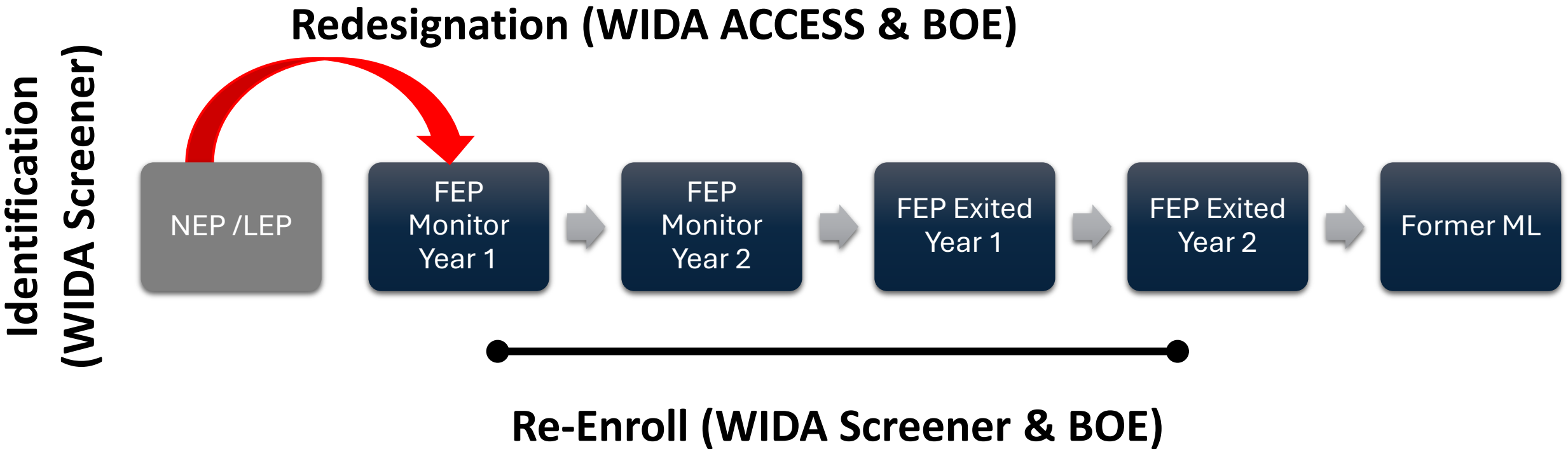
Parents or guardians have the legal right to formally **opt their child out of ML programs or particular services** at any time after receiving written notification in a language they can understand.

- Their 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 ML programs or services for any reason.
- **Formal opt-out documentation with parent or guardian signature is required** (data coding: language proficiency and not enrolled in an LIEP, Parent Choice (98)).

Opt-out students retain their ML designation (NEP/LEP) and are still expected to participate in WIDA ACCESS annually until assessment scores and a collection of local of BOE indicate they have achieved English language proficiency and can transition to monitoring status as Fluent English Proficient (FEP) as outlined in the Standardized Redesignation Procedures.

Districts and schools must review ML program opt-out documentation **and** WIDA ACCESS scores with parents or guardians on an annual basis. Test scores are released to districts and schools late April and must be share with parents before summer break (maintain all assessment records locally).

Language Progression Sequence



PHLOTE students do not appear on the language progression sequence. They are proficient in English, not eligible for ELD services/programs, and not required to take WIDA ACCESS.

English Language Proficiency

General rule that, after a student is identified as an ML (NEP/LEP), districts and schools may not remove the ML designation before that student scores proficient on the annual summative ELP assessment. Students are not eligible for redesignation (FEP M1) until they, 'satisfy the State's standardized statewide exit procedures' (Title I, Title III, ESSA).

General WIDA ACCESS: 4.0 Overall AND 4.0 Literacy

WIDA Alternate ACCESS: 3.0 Overall AND 3.0 Literacy

The redesignation process begins with evaluating results from the summative annual ELP assessment. In addition to test scores, LEAs are required to collect local evidence demonstrating students' ability to meaningfully access grade-level content instruction without additional English language development services or linguistic supports.

New Data Warnings

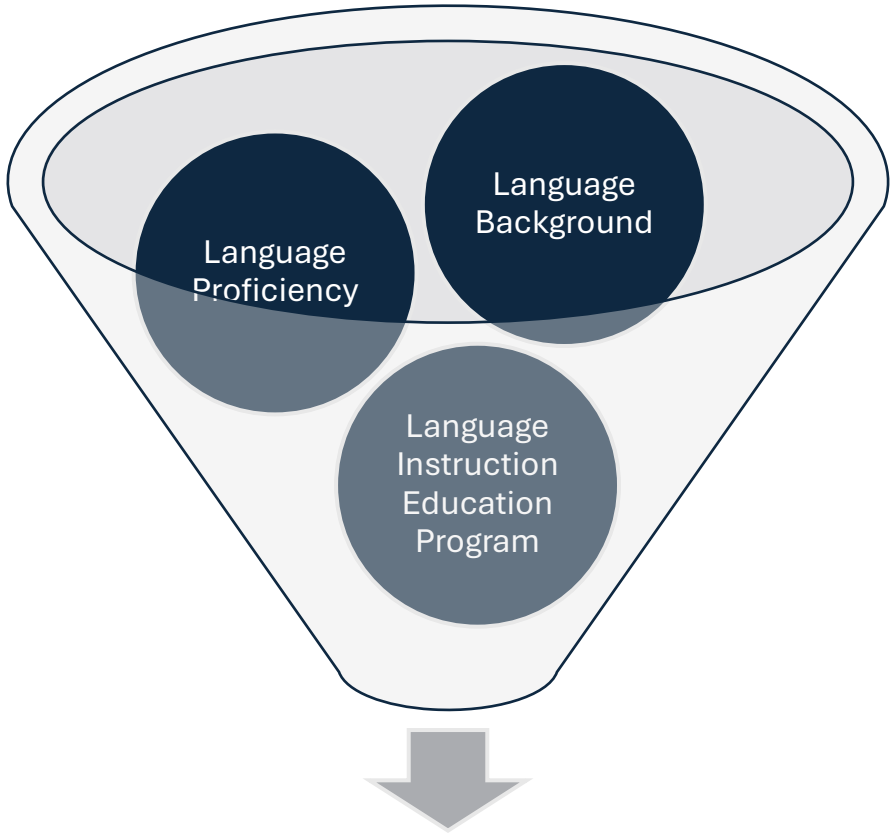
Students whose scores meet the WIDA ACCESS assessment criteria for English language proficiency in Overall and Literacy must be considered eligible for redesignation. SY26-27 Data Logic will now validate general ACCESS (4.0/4.0) and Alternate ACCESS (3.0/3.0) scores with language proficiency level (NEP-LEP-FEP) reported by district.

- ***Warning 583*:** Student has met redesignation criteria yet continues to be reported NEP/LEP. This data logic update notifies the reporting district that student is eligible for redesignation based on test scores. Example: Student scores 4.1 Overall and 4.0 Literacy but continues to be coded LEP.
- ***Warning 587:*** Student does not meet redesignation score criteria yet reported as FEP M1. This data logic update notifies the reporting district that student is not eligible for redesignation based on test scores. Example: Student scores 3.8 Overall and 3.9 Literacy but is coded FEP M1.

Data Collection Windows

Connected Student Collection	Collection Type	2026-2027 Collection Window
Alternative Education Campus (AEC) Collection: Renewal Applicant File	Periodic	March/April 2027
Assessment SBD	Snapshot	April/May 2027
PWR Data Collection (WBL & IRC files)	Periodic	April to June 2027
READ: Spring Assessments file	Periodic	April to June 2027
SPED December	Snapshot	November 2026 to February 2027
SPED End of Year	Snapshot	May to September 2027
Student Attendance	Snapshot	April to July 2027
Student Discipline	Snapshot	April to June 2027
Student End of Year	Snapshot	May to December 2027
Student October	Snapshot	August to November 2026
Student Restraint and Seclusion	Periodic	April to June 2027
Summer EBT	Periodic	February 2027 (main collection); May-August 2027 (corrections window)
Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL)	Snapshot	February to September 2027
WIDA ACCESS SBD	Periodic	March 2027

3 Data Elements Collected about MLs in Student Demographic File



ML Data

Student Demographic Data Fields

Language Background

- Students who are NEP, LEP, FEP, FELL, or PHLOTE must have a language background other than English (ENG)

Language Proficiency

- Indicates student's English language proficiency (ability to speak, listen, read, and write in English)

Not an English Learner	English Learner
0 – Not Applicable 4 – PHLOTE, English Proficient (Primary Home Language Other Than English)	1 – NEP, Non-English Proficient 2 – LEP, Limited English Proficient 5 – FELL, Former EL 6 – FEP, Monitor Year 1 7 – FEP, Monitor Year 2 8 – FEP, Exited Year 1 9 – FEP, Exited Year 2

Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP)

- Indicates the type of English language instructional program used in the district

Coding Tips for Data Fields

Language Background	Language Proficiency	Language Instruction
ENG	0	00
Not ENG	NEP - LEP - FEP M1 - FEP M2	Not 00
Not ENG	PHLOTE - Former ML	00
Not ENG	FEP E1 - FEP E2	Any Code (use table below)

Code	Description
00	N/A
01	English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD)
02	Dual Language or Two-way Immersion
03	Transitional Bilingual Education or Early-Exit Bilingual Education
04	Content Classes with integrated ESL Support
05	Newcomer programs
97	Other
98	Not enrolled in a Language Instruction Program, Parent Choice

Annual Data Reporting

Student October	• Language Proficiency identifies students' ML status based standardized identification procedures • New coding begins 7/1 for students moving along ML Progression
During the Year	• WIDA ACCESS: Testing window occurs each winter (Jan-Feb) • Language proficiency is expected to still match Student October
End of Year	• Language proficiency coding remains same as October through 6/30 • All Spring student level data collections expected to reflect the same coding as Student End of Year
Summer	• Plan for next school year using CO's standardized redesignation procedures and cut score guidance • New coding begins 7/1 for students moving along ML Progression

Data Checks (Errors and Warnings)

Demographic File	Student End of Year	Errors	Warnings	Consolidated many errors and warnings into
• Compares language proficiency from current file to prior October	• Compares language proficiency in current OCT to current SEY	• Student's coding does not follow expected sequence and must be addressed	• Possible issues, encouraged for review	• Custom 'error details' to the error report to show the language proficiency and district code in the prior year for comparison to the current year

Common Errors for Exception Requests:
Student does not follow logical language proficiency sequence

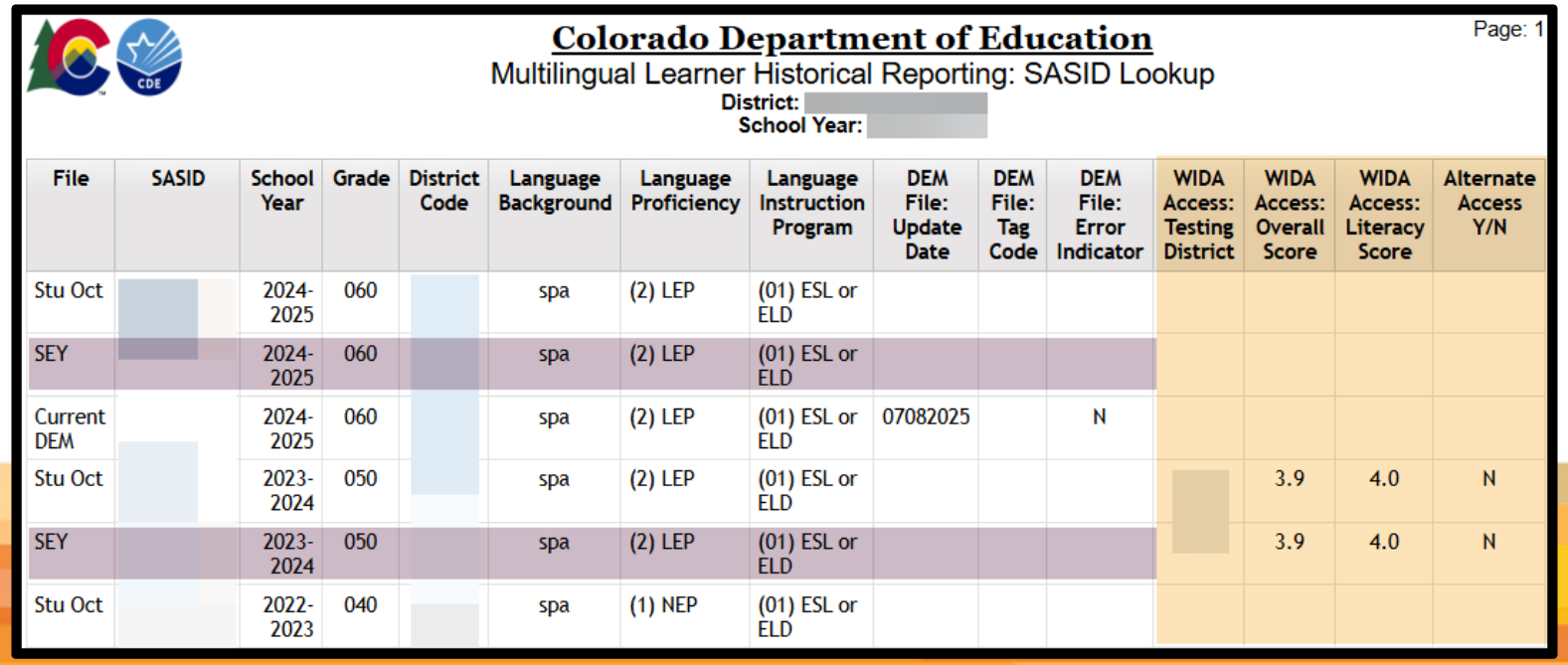
Current Year	Prior Year	Error	Sequence
FEP M2 (7)	NEP (1) or LEP (2)	Missing FEP M1 (6) year	Student must complete a full year of M1 prior to being coded M2
FEP (6,7,8,9)	NA (0)	Missing NEP (1) or LEP (2) or PHLOTE (4) year	Requires ML reporting prior to being coded FEP
NA (0)	NEP/ LEP/FEP/Former ML/PHLOTE (1-9)	Changes to English Only	Review ID guidance

NEP> LEP> FEP M1> FEP M2> FEP Exit1> FEP Exit 2> Former ML

COGNOS/CEDAR

Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: SASID Lookup

- WIDA ACCESS scores for prior year (if available) now included in this report
- Student End of Year (SEY) rows appear when there is an active SEY collection to allow LEAs to see approved sequence changes occurring mid-year
- Report now includes most recent school year at the top, then reflects prior school years in descending order
- *Data User IdM Role = Student Interchange, LEA User*
- *Optional Viewing Only IdM Role = Student Interchange, LEA Viewer*



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Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: SASID Lookup

District: [redacted]

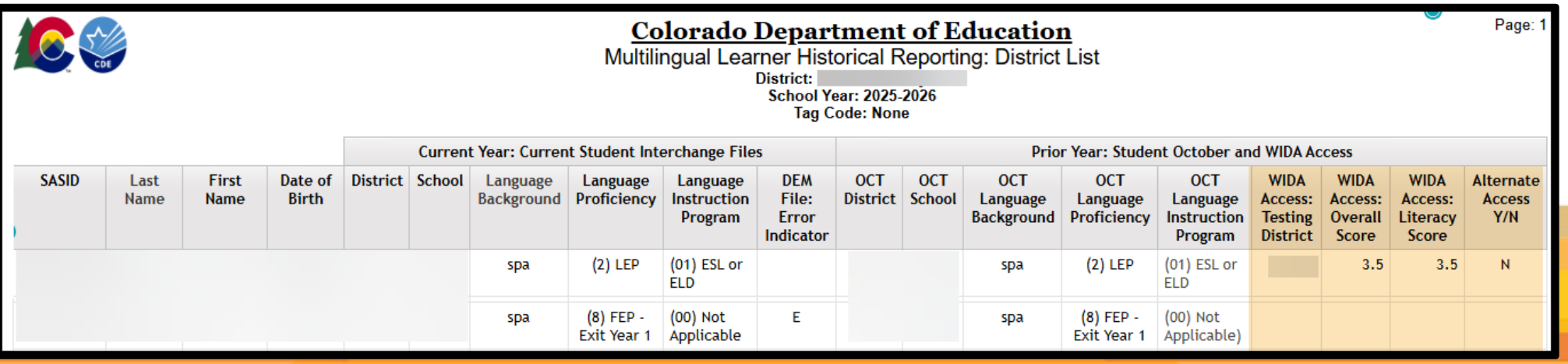
School Year: [redacted]

File	SASID	School Year	Grade	District Code	Language Background	Language Proficiency	Language Instruction Program	DEM File: Update Date	DEM File: Tag Code	DEM File: Error Indicator	WIDA Access: Testing District	WIDA Access: Overall Score	WIDA Access: Literacy Score	Alternate Access Y/N
Stu Oct	[redacted]	2024-2025	060	[redacted]	spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD							
SEY		2024-2025	060		spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD							
Current DEM		2024-2025	060		spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD	07082025		N				
Stu Oct		2023-2024	050		spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD				[redacted]	3.9	4.0	N
SEY		2023-2024	050		spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD					3.9	4.0	N
Stu Oct		2022-2023	040		spa	(1) NEP	(01) ESL or ELD							

COGNOS/CEDAR

Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: District List

- Must upload both a Student Demographic and a Student School Association file before this report will reflect data
- Includes prior year Student October and WIDA ACCESS data for students in your current student interchange files
- Includes **ALL students** with Student Interchange records, including students whose language background is 'ENG' in the current year and prior year.
- **Tip:** Use the 'extract excel data' download option to download an excel spreadsheet that can be sorted/filtered
- *Data User IdM Role = Student Interchange, LEA User*
- *Optional Viewing Only IdM Role = Student Interchange, LEA Viewer*



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Multilingual Learner Historical Reporting: District List

District:

School Year: 2025-2026

Tag Code: None

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				Current Year: Current Student Interchange Files						Prior Year: Student October and WIDA Access								
SASID	Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth	District	School	Language Background	Language Proficiency	Language Instruction Program	DEM File: Error Indicator	OCT District	OCT School	OCT Language Background	OCT Language Proficiency	OCT Language Instruction Program	WIDA Access: Testing District	WIDA Access: Overall Score	WIDA Access: Literacy Score	Alternate Access Y/N
						spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD				spa	(2) LEP	(01) ESL or ELD		3.5	3.5	N
						spa	(8) FEP - Exit Year 1	(00) Not Applicable	E			spa	(8) FEP - Exit Year 1	(00) Not Applicable)				

Reporting Exceptions

Reporting Exceptions refer to overriding Data Pipeline errors. CDE occasionally overrides these business rule errors because, although errors are legitimate, the case needs to be corrected to accurately reflect the student's educational history.

When a student's ML history falls out of alignment with the standardized language progression, a reporting exception may be used to realign the student's history within the progression.

NOTE: Reporting exceptions that occur mid-year (after October count) to correct a student's coding within the progression often require a follow-up exception at the beginning of the following school year to fully correct the progression due to the nature of the business rules designed to compare the prior year October to the current year October coding.

The request template is required for all ML exception requests. It is critical that information included in the required fields for the DEM and Snapshot exceptions tabs matches the error detail report for the error code, error type, district code, school code, grade level, and SASID fields to ensure the exception processes correctly. For more information reference the Multilingual Learner Coding Guide

Common Exception Examples

- **Student does not speak a language other than English or student is not ML**
  - Consider providing: District has mis-identified the student. District's robust documentation and body of evidence demonstrates this recently identified ML student (*2 reporting years or less*) is not eligible for language instruction.
- **Student incorrectly identified as ML student, code student as PHLOTE**
  - Consider providing: Student was screened in the district on ‘date’. Documented screener scores and body of evidence indicated student is fully proficient in English. Student should have been coded as PHLOTE to begin with and was never provided ML services.
- **Student's Language Proficiency is FEPM2 (7) (skipped FEP M1 in progression in records - coding)**
  - Consider providing: Student took ACCESS/ALT ACCESS during ‘school year’. Conference with ELD Team/Dept, documented scores and body of evidence indicated should have been redesignated to FEP M1 last school year. Code as FEP M2 now. Student had mid-year exception approved in Student End of Year Collection.
- **Student was LEP last year but after October Count so was not reported in October Count with a language. This year, they moved to FEP Monitor 1 (6)**
  - Student was LEP last year but after October Count so was not reported in October Count as a LEP student. Student was screened upon enrollment after report deadline (Student October). Screener and body of evidence indicated student is fully proficient in English. This year, they moved to Monitor 1 (6). Student had mid-year exception approved in Student End of Year Collection.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is defined by state and federal laws as information that alone, or in combination, personally identifies an individual
  - Includes direct identifiers (i.e. SASID, student names)
  - Includes information when combined is identifiable
- Colorado's Student Data Transparency and Security Act outlines requirements for how Student PII is collected, used and shared
  - See CDE's data security and privacy site for more information
- Syncplicity
  - Secure file transfer site used to communicate PII with CDE collection leads
  - Each collection lead maintains their own Syncplicity folder and can assign rights to that folder
    - Student End of Year, Student October, and Attendance all utilize the same primary folder with subfolders to organize the collections
    - Primary Syncplicity Folder: *District Code – DISTRICT NAME – Student*



Upcoming Data Training Webinars

2026-2027 Student Interchange Overview Training

This training session is being offered in two identical sessions (7/20/26 and 8/14/26). Topics include general data respondent information, student interchange files and process, 2026-2027 changes, timeline, business rules, and much more.

- 7/20/2026, 9:00-10:30am, registration required
- **8/14/2026, 1:00-2:30pm, registration required**

2026-2027 Student Interchange Overview Training (ppt)

Resource: Registering for Training Webinars (PDF)

CDE Contacts & Offices

CLDE Office Website (Identification and Screener)

- Contact Doris Nguyen at brock-Nguyen_d@cde.state.co.us or 720-626-6175
- CLDE List Serv Emails, contact Janet Turnmeyer at turnmeyer_j@cde.state.co.us

Data Pipeline Website

- Student Interchange Website
- Student October and Student End of Year Sites
- Contact Collin Slutzky at StudentOctober@cde.state.co.us or 720-760-3569
- Contact Regan Ward at StudentEndOfYear@cde.state.co.us

Assessment Office Website (WIDA ACCESS)

- Contact Heather Villalobos Pavia at Villalobos-Pavia_H@cde.state.co.us