



ESOL LISTSERV

AUGUST 2025

Welcome to the 2025–2026 School Year: Clear Roles, Strong Systems, and Equitable Access for Multilingual Learners

As we begin a new school year, the Maine Department of Education reaffirms that collaboration, clarity, and compliance are key to ensuring every Multilingual Learner (ML) receives the education they deserve. Equitable access begins with clearly defined roles, certified staffing, and programmatic integrity across all districts.

Every school district in Maine is required to designate a [Director/Coordinator of Multilingual Programs](#), who has the authority to lead programming across all grade levels. This role is not optional; it is foundational. The Director/Coordinator must oversee key areas such as ML identification, ensuring that English language development (ELD) instruction is led by a 660 Certified educator, language access, and family engagement, while ensuring compliance with federal civil rights law (34 C.F.R. §100.3(b)(2)) and state requirements.

These requirements ensure ML students build English proficiency while fully participating in grade-level content learning. English proficiency is not a prerequisite for access to general education classrooms. ML students must remain in content-area courses with appropriate scaffolds and language support. To build shared capacity across roles, all educators are encouraged to engage in annual WIDA training. While time-intensive, these trainings are a critical investment in professional growth and educational equity.

For up-to-date data, visit the [Maine ML Data Dashboard](#) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) dashboard to make those informed, data-driven decisions that support multilingual learners. Regularly reviewing enrollment trends, language proficiency growth, and program participation can help guide responsive instruction, equitable resource allocation, and targeted support for student success.

[Maine Multilingual Dashboard](#) | [ESSA Dashboard](#)

For staffing guidance and an overview of roles and responsibilities, visit the [Maine Multilingual Service Provisions and Staffing Guidance](#) website. These are updated for district support in order to support Directors/Coordinators and school leaders in implementing compliant and effective ML programs. **To identify your district's Director/Coordinator of Multilingual Programs, visit [Maine DOE NEO Primary Contact list](#), search by Primary Contact and select Director/Coordinator of Multilingual Programs.**

Together, we can ensure that Maine's multilingual learners thrive. Let's begin this school year grounded in clarity, collaboration, and a commitment to equity. Supporting multilingual learners is a shared responsibility that requires the expertise and coordination of multiple teams. At the Maine Department of Education, various offices are dedicated to ensuring multilingual learners receive the resources, guidance, and support they need to succeed academically and socially. Below are updated contacts for key offices and personnel who work together to promote equitable access to education for multilingual learners and their families.

- Adult Education: Amy Poland (Amy.Poland@maine.gov)
- Assessment: Jodi Bossio-Smith (Jodi.Bossio-Smith@maine.gov)
- Alternate and ELP Assessment: Mechelle Ganglfinger (Mechelle.Ganglfinger@maine.gov)
- Early Learning: Nicole Madore (Nicole.Madore@maine.gov)
- ESOL: Jane Armstrong (Jane.Armstrong@maine.gov)
- Multilingual & Bilingual Education: Melanie Junkins (Melanie.Junkins@maine.gov)
- Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education: Leora Byras (Leora.Byras@maine.gov)
- Federal Team (ESEA/ESSA) Shelly Chasse Johndro (Shelly.Chassejohndro@maine.gov)
- Title III: Daniel Weeks (Daniel.Weeks@maine.gov)



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IMPORTANT UPDATES

Maine is not implementing WIDA Alternate Screener for the 2025-2026 school year.

WIDA ASSESSMENT FAMILY HANDOUTS

- WIDA created a brand-new [What is WIDA Screener?](#) handout for families.

This replaces the Explaining ELL Status and What Is Language Testing? flyers, which were retired July 1 2025.

- WIDA redesigned the [What is WIDA ACCESS?](#) and [What is WIDA Alternate ACCESS?](#) handouts for families, translated in multiple languages.

All these webpages include a “Resources to Share with Families” section.

Maine DOE Assessment

Technology Updates and Reminders

This was shared during the summer with all Assessment Coordinators.

As part of annual technology updates, the DRC INSIGHT Chromebook application has transitioned from a Kiosk mode application to a Progressive Web Application (PWA). Districts have until July 31, 2025, to uninstall the Kiosk application and install the PWA application on their Chromebooks. After this date, students will be prevented from testing until installation is complete. Please make sure to complete this update prior to July 31 to ensure testing, including ACCESS Screening, is not interrupted.

- Please contact DRC Customer Service at (855) 787-9615 or wida@datarecognitioncorp.com with any questions.

Assessment Resources

- [Maine Comprehensive Assessment System \(MECAS\)](#). | Department of Education
- The [2025-2026 Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) for WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Screener is now available, along with other assessment resources, on the WIDA website: [Accessibility and Accommodations](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Learning to Read in One or More Languages: What Happens to the Brain, and How Can We Facilitate it](#) : Reading League Summit 2024 in San Diego, California
- [Language Access: Communicating with Multilingual Families](#) ESEA Network Webinar, October 2024
- [Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium \(MAEC\)](#)
 - [Working In Action: Supporting Multilingual Learners in Maine Blog Post](#): CEFAM visited educators at Maine DOE Multilingual Learner Advisory Council meeting in Augusta, Maine
 - **Coming Soon! [Family Engagement Assessment Tool](#)**

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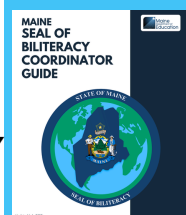
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RESOURCES IN 18 LANGUAGES



SEAL OF BILITERACY

UPDATED



Are you a School or District Seal of Bilinguality Coordinator, educator, administrator, student, family member, or community liaison committed to honoring bilingualism and multilingualism in Maine? Join us for monthly virtual office hours, held on the 4th Wednesday of each month from September 24, 2025, to June 24, 2026

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Join for timely updates and reminders, ensure equitable access for all eligible students, share and learn best practices, and foster statewide consistency and support. Whether you're confirming student eligibility, navigating implementation in your district, seeking guidance on assessments or documentation, or looking for meaningful ways to celebrate students' achievements, these drop-in sessions offer a welcoming space to ask questions, connect with peers, and access helpful resources.

New this Year: The [Coordinator's Guide](#) has been updated, and a [Resource Kit](#) is now available to help raise awareness and support communication in your schools and communities.

Community and Resource Updates

- [AUG 17](#) WIDA: The 2025 WIDA Annual Conference will take place October 27-30, 2025, in Seattle, Washington under the theme "Igniting Innovation for Multilingual Learners." New, need-to-know information is now available on the [WIDA Annual Conference website](#) including a program overview, registration rates (the Teacher Appreciation Week rate is available May 5-11), and details on the curated virtual track option and more.
- [AUG 17](#) Town Hall Meeting: Friday, August 22, 2025 | 10:00 AM ET
- You are invited to join the AERA Bilingual Education Research (BER) SIG Townhall for an engaging conversation on urgent issues in bi-/multilingual education in the United States. Listen as the panel explores questions about inclusion, innovation, advocacy, and what it means to be a radically humanizing and responsive scholarly space. [Register Here.](#)

ESOL Job Postings

If you are looking to post or explore ESOL positions, the following platforms are commonly used and accessible: Serving Schools, Indeed, Live and Work in Maine, and SchoolSpring.

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list, and we encourage you to explore additional platforms and networks.

- [ServingSchools](#)
- [Indeed](#)
- [LiveAndWorkInMaine](#)
- [SchoolSpring](#)

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WIDA Self-Paced Workshops are available until August 31, 2025. Visit the [WIDA Self-Paced Workshops webpage](#) to view workshop descriptions, estimated time to complete each course and more.

WIDA Resources

- [Aligning AI for Multilingual Learners: Integrating the WIDA ELD Standards Framework into Prompts](#) recording is available. Check out the recording to learn how to use AI effectively to promote content-based language learning for multilingual students.
- [Strategies for Supporting Multilingual Newcomers](#): Watch the recording for a discussion of the latest trends related to the fastest growing demographic across U.S. school systems. Learn how to engage in research-backed approaches to center multilingual newcomers' learning and participate in goal setting with multilingual newcomers and their families in mind.

Access all upcoming and previously recorded WIDA webinars through your WIDA Secure Portal account: [Webinars](#) | [WIDA Secure Portal](#)

WIDA ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS MANUAL UPDATED FOR 2025-2026

The [2025-2026 Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) is now available on the Resources/Recursos page on the WIDA website.

This year's updates include:

- An updated description of the Braille (BR) accommodation for WIDA ACCESS Paper, which includes the Speaking domain beginning in 2025-2026
- The new Low Vision Script (LV) accommodation for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten

This summer, WIDA made updates to some of their assessment family handouts and the "Assess" pages on the WIDA website.

- WIDA refreshed and combined the content on our three WIDA Screener webpages (Online, Paper, and Kindergarten) into one [WIDA Screener](#) webpage. The page now includes guidance for educators on preparing for, administering and scoring WIDA Screener, and information about WIDA Screener scores.

To learn more about updates to WIDA Screener Online and Paper, access the August 5 2025 webinar recording through your WIDA Secure Portal account: [Webinars](#) | [WIDA Secure Portal](#)

- WIDA refreshed and combined the content on our three WIDA ACCESS webpages (Online, Paper, and Kindergarten) into one [WIDA ACCESS](#) webpage. Visit this page to compare test features and scores for each of the WIDA ACCESS assessments.
- WIDA moved all the content from the WIDA Alternate ACCESS Scores and Reports webpage onto the [WIDA Alternate ACCESS](#) webpage.

2025-2026 WIDA Screener Online Administration

The 2025-2026 administration of WIDA Screener Online is open on WIDA AMS. Permissions for the new WIDA Screener administration will be assigned to existing users prior to this date. All Speaking and Writing responses from the 2024-2025 administration year must have been scored by Thursday, June 26 before the 2024-2025. Prior to this date has been changed to read-only.

- For questions related to WIDA AMS, please contact DRC Customer Service at wida@datarecognitioncorp.com or (855) 787-9615.

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WIDA: UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting Writing Growth for Multilingual Learners

Writing instruction is an integral part of supporting multilingual learners' academic growth. This webinar explores how to leverage the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework to guide explicit language instruction. You'll leave with practical strategies to help multilingual learners build the skills they need to be confident and effective writers. Join professional learning curriculum specialist Hetal Ascher to dive into this topic.

August 28, 2025 1-2 pm EST

Register [here](#).

Instruction and Collaboration to Support Multilingual Learners with Disabilities

In this WIDA webinar, you'll explore instructional planning and collaborative practices designed to meet the diverse strengths and needs of multilingual learners with disabilities. You'll gain tools to support both language development and accessibility, along with strategies for fostering collaborative planning that brings together multiple perspectives to better understand the intersection of language and disability. Join professional learning facilitator Lori Hanna and professional learning curriculum specialist Emily Kurth.

October 17, 2025 12-1:15 pm EST

Register [here](#).

WIDA Language Charts: A Brand-New Resource

NEW The WIDA Language Charts are a brand-new resource that can help educators understand and communicate the expectations of the revised ACCESS for ELLs assessment (WIDA ACCESS), which everyone will use in the 2025-2026 WIDA testing year. These charts are a significant step in connecting WIDA assessments to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. The new charts make the Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs) clearer, more actionable and directly connected to classroom instruction.



SAVE THE DATES

WIDA Facilitated Professional Learning Opportunities for Maine Educators

- *Expanding Reading Instruction with Multilingual Learners:*
Must attend 10/6 and 10/20, 3-4:30 p.m.
- *When Language and Disability Meet: Planning Instruction to Support Multilingual Learners who are Dually Identified*
Must attend 11/13 and 11/20, 3:15-4:45 p.m.

Stay tuned for more details on how to register. Each session has capacity for only 45 participants. Teams are encouraged to attend: ESOL, SPED, content teachers, literacy specialists, building leaders, MTSS roles.