

ESOL LISTSERV

SEPTEMBER 2025

WIDA Screener Office Hours

Audience: School Administrative Unit (SAU) leadership and staff responsible for coordinating and/or administering WIDA Screener for multilingual learner identification.

Mondays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.
9/15, 10/20, 11/10, 12/8

Whether you're new to WIDA Screener or have questions about specific resources like the accommodation checklists, these sessions offer a space to learn, ask questions, and connect.

[Register HERE.](#)

WIDA Screener Checklist Spotlight

Legal Basis: Section 3111, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and Title I, Part A, Section 1111(b)(2) (G)

Identification and screening of students is addressed in Section 2 of the [Maine Lau Plan Template and Guidance](#). If a student's [Language Use Survey](#) reflects a primary/home language other than English (meaning that any of the three questions is answered with a language other than or in addition to English), an English language proficiency screener must be administered. To ensure consistent and equitable identification practices, school staff may not make subjective decisions about which students will and will not be screened.

An updated [WIDA Screener Checklist](#) is available on the DOE [Multilingual Learner Identification webpage](#).

New Exit Criteria for WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Maine's new exit criteria for multilingual learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities participating in the **WIDA Alternate ACCESS** has been established as an **overall Composite Proficiency Level of 4.0**. For resources surrounding WIDA Alternate ACCESS score reports, scale scores/proficiency levels, and communication with families, visit [WIDA Alternate ACCESS](#).

For more information about Alternate ACCESS, participation criteria, and Maine DOE's establishment of new exit criteria, contact **Jodi Bossio-Smith**, Director of Assessment, at jodi.bossio-smith@maine.gov

Maine DOE Contacts



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Enrollment Timelines

It is a federal requirement that all students who are multilingual learners be identified within 30 days of enrollment from the beginning of the school year. For students enrolling at the start of the school year, parents/guardians must be notified of their child's eligibility for English language development (ELD) services within the same 30-day period. After the start of the school year, SAUs must notify parents or guardians within two weeks of their child's identification and placement in ELD programming. ***There should be no delay in enrollment due to the screening process.***

Did you know?

WIDA Alternate Screener, a specialized English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment for newly enrolled students in grades K-12 with the most significant cognitive disabilities, was released to states on July 1, 2025. To ensure that comprehensive and applicable professional learning can be developed and effectively shared with SAU administrators and IEP teams, including multilingual educators, **Maine will not be utilizing the WIDA Alternate Screener during the 2025-2026 school year.** More information will be shared as it is available.

Language Use Survey

UPDATED for the 2025/2026 School Year

Legal Basis: Section 3111, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Title I, Part A, Section 1111(b)(2)(G)

A revised and updated Language Use Survey (LUS) from the Maine DOE is now available in **29 languages**, located on [Enrollment Resources webpage](#).

Each school administrative unit (SAU) must administer the LUS to the family/guardian of every student, pre-K through grade 12, enrolling in the SAU for the first time. The LUS must be ***included in the SAU's enrollment packet or online enrollment system.***

The purpose of the LUS is to identify potential students who are multilingual learners. The Multilingual Learner Identification Decision Tree provides guidance on its use. If any question is answered with a language other than English, the student must be administered an English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener. Please see the [Multilingual Learner Identification webpage](#) for information about the required screeners, training, and identification thresholds by grade level.



Get It Right from the Start: Updated ML Data Upload & Reporting Checklist

Accurate, consistent data collection and reporting are essential to identifying and supporting Multilingual Learners across Maine. The newly updated [Multilingual Learner Data Upload and Reporting Checklist](#) (August 2025) outlines the critical information SAUs must collect during the screening and identification process and how it should be uploaded into local student information systems. Please review and share this resource with all staff responsible for ML data collection, reporting, and compliance in your district.

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Maine DOE Assessment

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment Timeline

SY 25-26 includes the following updates:

- ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Administration
This year's administration window is 1/5/26-2/27/26.
- Paper based request form notification deadline is 10/24/25. This is for students who require paper-based materials per the IEP or 504 Plan.
- **NEW!** *Less than Four Domains (LT4D)* notifications can be submitted to the DOE starting 11/20/25. This is for students who qualify for participation and reporting of less than four domains due to a documented exceptionality.

Visit [DOE website](#) to access the SY 25-26 ELP Assessment Timeline which includes links to all notification forms.

WIDA Resources

NEW!

- [What to Know: WIDA assessments in the 2025-2026 school year](#)
- [Back to School 2025-2026 Update](#)
- [Plan Curriculum, Instruction and Classroom Assessment with **WIDA Language Charts**](#)
- [Family and Community Engagement Webpage](#) (includes translated resources)

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

WIDA 2025-2026 ACCESSIBILITY & ACCOMMODATIONS MANUAL

The [2025-2026 WIDA 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



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](#).

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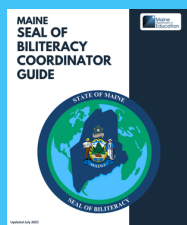
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RESOURCES IN 18 LANGUAGES



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

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. **Registration is required.**

To see the updated Coordinator's Manual and the New Resource kit, see the [Maine DOE Seal of Bilinguality page](#).

Community and Resource Updates

2025 Maine Chinese Language Conference

Saturday, October 11th 8:30-4:00 p.m., Husson University

Registration is now open! **Register HERE**



2025 NETESOL Conference

Join educators from across Northern New England for a day of learning, connection, and inspiration at the NNETESOL 2025 Annual Conference, *"Opening Doors Through Language and Literacy Instruction."*

Saturday, November 15th at Southern New Hampshire University

Register HERE



McKinney Vento

- McKinney-Vento and Foster Care: New 2025-2026 Monthly Office Hours available 3-4:00 PM on the first Thursday of each month, starting on September 4th. **Register here.**
- If a student is experiencing housing instability that presents as a barrier to accessing education, do you know who your local McKinney-Vento liaison is and how they can assist? **Click here** to utilize the Maine DOE's McKinney-Vento liaison search tool. Sign up for the McKinney-Vento newsletter **here** for additional resources and updates. Contact **signe.lynch@maine.gov** with questions.



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WIDA Webinar Offering

Instruction and Collaboration to Support Multilingual Learners with Disabilities

October 17, 2025 12-1:15 p.m. EST

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.

[Registration is required.](#)

WIDA Language Charts: A Brand-New Resource

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.

Check out the most recent article from WIDA
[Experts answer WIDA Language Charts Questions](#)



WIDA FACILITATED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINAR SERIES

- [Expanding Reading Instruction with Multilingual Learners](#): 10/6 and 10/20, 3-4:30 p.m.
Enrollment Deadline: September 26
- [When Language and Disability Meet: Planning Instruction to Support Multilingual Learners who are Dually Identified](#): 11/13 and 11/20, 3:15-5:00 p.m.
Enrollment Deadline: November 3

To register, visit DOE website: [ML Programs Professional Learning](#). Each session will be capped at 60 participants. Small cohorts are encouraged to attend: ESOL, SPED, content teachers, literacy specialists, building leaders, MTSS roles.