

ACCESS For ELLs Test Window Extension

DESE is extending the testing window for the ACCESS for ELLs assessment to provide districts four additional weeks to complete testing. The test window goes from January 11, 2021 through April 2, 2021.

We recognize there are several challenges to testing that are unique to this year; students participating in full or part time remote learning and social distancing protocols chief among district concerns. As WIDA does not provide remote testing of ACCESS, students will need to test at the district. This one month extension allows districts to test students in smaller groups or individually.

A few districts have expressed concerns about students who are participating in remote testing. Some districts they plan on bringing in students one at a time for a small time frame to take a portion or all of the test – with the idea of limiting student exposure. Others are planning on having small groups of students come together. Each district will have to determine a plan that fits best with their circumstances.

When scheduling keep in mind while each domain can be completed in about an hour, this test is not timed and students can take as much time as they need. Kindergarten ACCESS must be administered individually and can generally be completed in about an hour. Alternate ACCESS must also be administered individually and each modality generally takes about 30 minutes.

Another concern for some has been having enough staff to complete testing. For Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, yes the administrator should be EL certified as those assessments are given individually. However, for online ACCESS, the Test Administrator does not have to be EL certified. The test administrator is there to make sure students get logged into the system, monitor administration and help with any technical issues. While it would be preferable that the administrator is familiar to the student, as long as the TA is a district employee and has gone through training they do not need to be EL certified.

Finally, the extension of the test window has caused some of the other dates on the ACCESS calendar to change. This includes changes to the deadlines for test setup, additional materials ordering and the deadline to ship physical materials back to DRC. It also changes the pre- and post-reporting data validation windows and the dates on which districts will now receive data. For a complete list of dates, please see the DESE EL Assessment page - dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/assessment/el-assessment

If you have questions about the extension or ACCESS testing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,

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