2020-2021 Maryland's ACCESS for ELLs/Alt ACCESS for ELLs Administration FAQs During COVID-19 (Updated on 2/24/21)

Testing Dates

11/23/20-5/28/21	WIDA AMS test setup available for test sessions
1/25/21 or 3/22/21*	Districts receive test materials
1/25/21-5/21/21	Additional test materials ordering window in WIDA AMS
2/1/21-5/28/21	Test window (Students enrolled after 5/7/21 will not be tested.)
6/4/21	Deadline for shipping completed test materials to DRC
TBD	Districts receive reports--Online
TBD	Districts receive reports--Printed

* Based on the ACCESS/Alt ACCESS survey answered by local school systems (LSSs).

This document was created based on the questions received from ESOL coordinators and local accountability coordinators.

- **Is there a waiver process for ACCESS administration? If so, what is the process?**
  As English language proficiency assessments (ACCESS and Alt ACCESS) are federally mandated, unless USED allows a waiver due to COVID-19, there is no waiver process. This is not a decision that can be made by MSDE.

- **If a school or a grade level is not opening for in-person activities or instruction, are ELs in that school or grade level required to take ACCESS?**
  LSSs may provide parents/guardians the **option** to bring students into the building to take ACCESS/Alt ACCESS.

- **What are the options for parents who do not wish to allow their child to come to the school building for in-person activities or instruction due to health concerns?**
  LSSs may provide parents/guardians the **option** to bring students into the building to take ACCESS/Alt ACCESS.

- **What are the ramifications for ELs not taking the test?**
  ELs will not be subject to any consequences for opting out of the assessment.

- **Will non-certified staff have the ability to administer the assessment due to COVID-19 and flexibility needs with scheduling?**
  No. Due to test security and accountability, only certified staff can administer the assessment.

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- **If we utilize specialists or other school personnel to administer ACCESS, would they need to take the WIDA quizzes?**
  Yes. Any new test administrators (TAs) will need to complete the training, take quizzes, and get certified to administer the test. Please refer to the ACCESS for ELLs Online and/or ACCESS for ELLs Paper checklists for additional information regarding TA requirements.

- **How do you recommend we maintain cohorting, given the nuances of the testing – particularly, kindergarten one-on-one testing?**
  We have extended the testing window to provide greater opportunities for school systems to test ELs in smaller groups, cohorts, or individually, adhering to CDC and State of Maryland health guidelines.

- **Is there a way that we can be provided the kindergarten kit material measurements so we know what size protective sheets to order in advance?**
  There are many different components in the kit. The small picture cards are the ones that you may want to put in protective sheets. If you want to disassemble test booklets, the pages in the booklet will fit in a protective sheet. The small picture cards can also be laminated.

- **Can the entire assessment (all 4 language domains) be administered in a single day?**
  Yes, although it's not recommended due to student fatigue factors.

- **Will the time limit of 2 days between the two testing sessions be required, or is it allowed to have a longer length of time in between test sessions due to hybrid or small group schedules?**
  The time limit of 2 days between two testing sessions is a recommendation. Due to COVID, schools may have flexibility and may have longer lengths of time in between test sessions.

- **If prioritization of testing groups is necessary, do you have recommendations for which groups?**
  MSDE doesn't have recommendations for prioritizing testing groups.

- **Will the decision that the assessment cannot be given virtually be revisited?**
  This is not MSDE's decision. WIDA has stated that changing the administration of ACCESS/Alt ACCESS to a virtual environment is not possible.