

# ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Score Changes Information for Teachers

To meet the rigorous language demands of college- and career-ready state standards, WIDA is raising the bar for language proficiency. English language learners (ELLs) will need to demonstrate higher language skills in 2016–2017 to achieve the same proficiency level scores (1.0–6.0). Given that the content expectations in schools are increasing, students will also encounter more complex language expectations, and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 will now reflect that rigor.

## Will my students' scores decrease? How much?

They might. The possible drop in the scores will vary for each individual, due to the many different factors that impact student performance. WIDA expects that students in upper grades and those with higher proficiency levels will be affected most by the score changes.

## Which domains will be most impacted by the 2017 score changes?

Speaking expectations have increased the most, followed by Reading and Writing. Impact on the Listening domain will be minimal.

## What does this mean for me as a teacher?

First, you will need to reflect on what you know about your ELLs' progress, connecting what you see on their score reports to what you see in the classroom. To support ELLs' development of academic English as they are also engaging in challenging content learning, you may want to consider some of the following actions:

- Take the time to develop a full understanding of your students' new scores in order to create language acquisition goals and adjust your instruction as needed.
- Be prepared to discuss this with students and parents/family members to make sure they do not worry about any score decreases.
- Consider how a possible increase in the number of ELLs in your classroom may impact your program.
- Collaborate with general education teachers to plan ways in which they can support ELL students as they encounter increasing linguistic and academic expectations. This may include designing a new curriculum for the increased number of students in ELL programs with high proficiency levels.

## Who needs to know about the score changes and what should I tell them?

WIDA recommends discussing the new ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 score changes with all stakeholders, including students, parents and families, fellow educators, and administrators. Tell them not to worry and that this is an opportunity to review students' needs and set goals for their success.



## Key Takeaways

- The 2017 score changes are intended to ensure that students receive the services they need to meet the requirements of college- and career-ready state standards.
- The test items are not more difficult. Instead, the way students' scores are interpreted has changed to expect stronger performance.
- Some students' scores may decrease and the score changes may also cause an increase in the number of students receiving ELL services.

## How do I share assessment results with parents and families?

Take advantage of the WIDA resources developed to support your communication with parents and families. These tools may be especially useful when explaining why students may have experienced a drop in their scores or why they did not exit the program as expected. Teachers should also plan to communicate with older students about their scores, as they are more aware of the importance of the test and can take ownership of their learning.

## How will I know if my students made progress when comparing 2016 and 2017 scores?



The score lookup calculator is an online tool that allows educators to convert the previous year's scores to the updated score scale. Comparing the converted 2016 scores to your students' 2017 results will help you determine whether students made progress in their language development.

Which WIDA assessments apply the new score scale?	Which WIDA assessments do NOT apply the new score scale?
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0	Alternate ACCESS for ELLs
WIDA Screener Paper	W-APT
WIDA Screener Online	WIDA MODEL

The WIDA Screener (paper and online) was designed using the new score scale, whereas the W-APT and WIDA MODEL have not been updated. In districts that use the WIDA Screener in the 2017–2018 year, more students might be identified for ELL services.

## How do the score changes affect students who have recently exited the ELL program?

Students who recently exited language program support prior to the implementation of the new score scale should be closely monitored to ensure they are learning and using their language skills to show what they know and can do in the classroom and on content assessments. Educators who have concerns about a monitored student can check with their state education agency regarding processes for redesignating a student as an ELL.

If you have additional questions about your students' ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 scores, please contact the WIDA Client Services Center at [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us) or 1-866-276-7735.



### Educator Resources available at [www.wida.us/proficiency](http://www.wida.us/proficiency)

- Score Lookup Calculator
- Individual Student Score Notes template
- "Understanding Your Child's 2017 ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Scores" flyer translated into 47 languages
- Customizable PowerPoint presentations designed for use with colleagues and with parents/families
- Video and discussion guide, recorded webinars
- Student scenario flyers
- ELL leader interviews regarding the score changes
- Lesson plans for helping students develop awareness of their own language growth



Wisconsin Center for Education Research  
University of Wisconsin–Madison | 1025 West Johnson St., MD #23 | Madison, WI 53706  
Client Services Center toll free: 866.276.7735 | [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us)

[www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)