



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Superintendents  
ESEA Title III MLP Coordinators  
District Test Coordinator – ELL  
District Test Coordinator – Primary  
District Test Coordinator – Alt  
Report Card/Accountability Coordinators  
PowerSchool IT Contacts  
Principals

**FROM:** Jewell Stanley  
Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability

**DATE:** September 4, 2024

**RE:** New Multilingual Learner English Language Proficiency or Reclassification Criterion

This memorandum is to provide an update regarding a previous memorandum, Multilingual Learner English Proficiency or Reclassification Criterion Proposal. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) submitted an amendment to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plan to update the English proficiency or reclassification criteria, often referred to as the ‘exit’ criteria for multilingual learners (MLs). The proposed amendment has officially been approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USED).

The new English language proficiency (ELP) assessment proficiency criteria is a composite score of 4.4+ on the annual ELP assessment, WIDA ACCESS. An overall score will showcase students’ progress in English language acquisition and more accurately represent grade-level proficiency. Additionally, MLs who meet the proficiency criteria will continue to receive monitoring services for four additional years to ensure that premature exit from the Multilingual Learner Program (MLP) does not occur and that students receive needed language support and accommodations.

The new ELP proficiency criteria will be effective with the 2023-24 (2024) administration of the yearly ELP assessment and moving forward, but not retroactive to previous ELP assessment administrations before 2024. Therefore, students will meet the proficiency criterion by scoring a composite score of 4.4+ on the ELP assessments, both the annual summative ELP assessment and the ELP screeners.

#### English Language Proficiency Screeners (WIDA Screener K-12)

- As of **July 1, 2024**, students who score a 4.4+ on the ELP screener (second semester of kindergarten through grade 12) for the **first time for initial identification** will not meet the eligibility criteria to receive MLP services. For further identification requirements and guidance, please see the [Title III Multilingual Learner and Immigrant Program Guiding Principles](#).
- Students who score an Oral Composite of 4.5+ in the first semester of kindergarten do not qualify for services. These students are coded an “M1-1st Year Monitor” in PowerSchool and monitored for four years.
- Any student screened and identified prior to July 1, 2024, for the MLP will continue to take WIDA ACCESS until they have met the new proficiency criterion.

#### English Language Proficiency Annual Assessment (WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS K-12)

- Beginning with the **2024 (2023-24 school year) administration of the WIDA ACCESS annual assessment**, students who scored a 4.4+ Overall will be reclassified to “M1-1st Year Monitor” status.
- The current proficiency criteria for WIDA Alternate ACCESS still remain as a P1+ at this time.

For questions, please contact the Title III/MLP team in the Office of Federal and State Accountability at [TitleIIIMLP@ed.sc.gov](mailto:TitleIIIMLP@ed.sc.gov).