Using ACCESS for MLs: Gifted Identification

OFFICE OF GIFTED EDUCATION

ACCESS for MLs

ACCESS for MLs is a suite of English language proficiency assessments for students who have been identified as multilingual learners (MLs). The assessments are grounded in the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards and given annually to all NEP/LEP K-12 multilingual learners in Colorado. Language proficiency develops over multiple years, and is dependent on many factors, including age, educational experience, personality, and opportunity.

The ACCESS Overall composite score is the most comprehensive indicator of performance in language acquisition and may be used as qualifying evidence for gifted identification. The ACCESS Literacy composite score (reading and writing) may also serve as qualifying evidence. While individual domain scores cannot be used for qualification, they are useful as a component of the body of evidence to support programming for a student's strength area(s).

ACCESS scores may be used as qualifying evidence through any one of the following:

1) **Accelerated Achievement (Proficiency Score):** If a student increases their Literacy or Overall composite score by 2.0 or more from one year to the next (e.g., 1.0 to 3.0 or higher); or

2) **Accelerated Trajectory through ELD Program:** If a student exits the ELD program at an accelerated pace (e.g., 3 years vs. 6 years from newcomer to monitor status). Because AUs may not receive the complete ELD history, this pathway is recommended only when the student starts as a newcomer in the AU. "Newcomer" specifically refers to a student at the beginning level of English language acquisition (e.g. NEP level).

3) **Growth Percentiles (SGP):** If a student demonstrates growth at the 95th percentile or above in any year, and that growth shows a trend of sustained excellence.

Recommended Data Collection

The following table shows the key ACCESS data involved in the gifted identification process. Please collaborate with your ELD specialist for a better understanding of your AU's ML process.

ACCESS Data: *Literacy Proficiency Scores* *Overall Proficiency Scores*	EL Trajectory *(example of trajectory for a gifted ML student)*	Growth Percentiles %-ile
Year 1 (newcomer)	*NEP*	--
Year 2	*NEP/LEP*	Year 1 to 2
Year 3	*LEP*	Year 2 to 3
Year 4	*M1*	Year 3 to 4

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What pathways can be used for identification?
Per ECEA Rules, multilingual learners may be identified in the area of General Intellectual Ability [12.01(16)(a)(i) and 12.01(16)(a)(ii)] or Specific Academic Aptitude-World Language [12.01(16)(b)(i) and 12.01(16)(b)(ii)], by demonstrating an accelerated language acquisition rate as measured by:

a) **Accelerated Achievement:** If a student increases their Literacy or Overall composite score by 2.0 or more from one year to the next (e.g., 1.0 to 3.0 or higher); or
b) **Accelerated Trajectory:** exiting the EL program in approximately half the time as measured by CDE's standard trajectory (e.g., 3 years vs 6 years from newcomer to monitor status); or
c) **Growth Percentiles (SGP):** showing annual growth at the 95th percentile or above in any year.

Is ACCESS for MLs considered an "achievement" or "performance" assessment?
It depends. If you are using the proficiency scores, those are considered to be achievement metrics. However, accelerated trajectory and SGP growth percentile are considered performance metrics.

WIDA changed ACCESS scoring in 2017. How does this impact the use of ACCESS data?
The revised scoring is based on more robust performance expectations; therefore, it is recommended to use data only from 2017 to the present. In order to compare apples to apples, don't mix pre- and post-2017 data.

How does the Kindergarten ACCESS data compare to Grades 1-12 ACCESS data?
The structure and scoring of the kindergarten test is significantly different from the grades 1-12 test. Therefore, the achievement or growth data may show inconsistencies.

Can WIDA Model or Screener results be used for gifted identification?
No. For qualifying data, use summative assessments rather than diagnostic or progress monitoring measures. However, these other data points could be included as supporting data in the body of evidence.

Can I use WIDA levels instead of the 2.0 increase in Literacy and/or Overall composite scores?
No. The achievement increase is the important metric here. A student could be at the high end of WIDA's level 1 and move to the low end of level 3 (e.g., 1.8 to 3.2 resulting in a score increase of only 1.4). We have included an overview table of the WIDA levels for your information below:

WIDA ACCESS for MLs Levels

Level	Descriptor	Score Range
1	*Entering*	**1.0 – 1.9**
2	*Emerging*	**2.0 – 2.9**
3	*Developing*	**3.0 – 3.9**
4	*Expanding*	**4.0 – 4.9**
5	*Bridging*	**5.0 – 5.9**
6	*Reaching*	**6.0**

What data should be used for the accelerated trajectory pathway?

Use the student's first four (4) years of ACCESS data. A gifted multilingual student would likely move to monitor status by the third or fourth year as measured by ACCESS. The fourth year of data is used only to verify the student has moved to monitor status.

Why is it recommended to use the trajectory pathway only with newcomer students?

When students enter the AU at higher levels of proficiency, it may be unclear how long they have been in program, thereby making it difficult to accurately measure their trajectory. The complete ELD history is needed to determine how many years it takes the student to exit the program.

What is the recommended process for using ACCESS Growth Percentile (SGP)?

When using ACCESS SGP, consider two or more consecutive years of growth percentile data to capture language development trends. Growth at the 85th percentile or above is considered significant and should be included in the body of evidence.

Which growth data can be used as qualifying data for gifted identification?

There are three (3) types of growth data provided by CDE – only one of which can be used as qualifying data:

Measure	Acronym	Definition	Eligible for Colorado Gifted Identification
Student Cohort Growth Percentile	**SGP**	*Calculated using cohort-based methodology. Growth represents academic progress relative to students in same annual cohort*	**Yes**
Student Baseline Growth Percentile	**SGP-Baseline**	*Calculated using baseline methodology. Growth represents academic progress relative to students in prior historical cohort.*	**No**
Adequate Student Growth Percentile	**AGP**	*Required for this student to be considered "on track to standard."*	**No**

Notes:
- *WIDA's ACCESS for MLs achievement results are released in May.*
- *CDE's ACCESS growth data are released in July/August.*

Where can I find SGP growth percentile data?
ACCESS growth data must be requested from the AU's District Accountability Contact.

Why are the skills of listening and speaking excluded as qualifying data?
For a majority of multilingual learners, listening is typically the first skill to develop rapidly in the language acquisition process. As a result, many students tend to score at a high level in the listening domain. In the speaking domain, the pace of development may vary considerably depending on the quality of instruction and opportunities for practice. For these reasons, the listening and/or speaking scores are not reliable measures for the purpose of gifted identification.

Can individual domains be used to qualify a student?
No. While individual domain scores do not currently constitute a qualifying piece of evidence, they may be useful as a component of the body of evidence to support programming for a student's strength area(s).

How does this guidance align with the Seal of Biliteracy?
For a World Language identification, it is recommended that those districts who have adopted the Seal of Biliteracy consider using that data to further develop a qualifying body of evidence.

How can students learning languages <u>other</u> than English also qualify for gifted identification?

Accelerated Achievement: Per ECEA Rules 12.01(16)(a)(i) and 12.01(16)(a)(ii), students learning any language may be identified in the area of General Intellectual Ability by demonstrating an exceptional capability and/or potential as indicated by twice the expected annual progress in one year through either an overall composite score (all four domains) or a literacy composite score (reading and writing).

Exceptional Growth: Per ECEA Rules 12.01(16)(b)(i) and 12.01(16)(b)(ii), students learning <u>any</u> language may be identified in the area of Specific Academic Aptitude-World Language by demonstrating an exceptional capability or potential as indicated by either of the following:
a) an increase of twice the expected annual progress in one year through an overall composite score (all four domains) or a literacy composite score (reading and writing); or
b) scoring at or above the 95th percentile or in the advanced range on a criterion or norm referenced language assessment (see the CDE Matrix of Commonly Used Measures).

Where can I find more information regarding gifted identification law in Colorado?
The Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) Rules can be found on the Colorado Department of Education, Office of Gifted Education website under the Laws and Regulations tab.