Multilingual Learners (MLs) Frequently Asked Questions

# What steps does the school need to take when a student that is potentially a Multilingual Learner enrolls?

[CSI Standardized Identification Process](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CSI-ML-Standardized-Identification_SY25.docx)

[CDE Identification & Placement Site](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/identification-placement)

* Every student’s family (not just those suspected of being MLs) must fill out a **Home Language Survey (HLS)** at the time of enrollment. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) suggests that the Home Language Survey (HLS) contain, at a minimum, the following three questions:
  + What is the primary home language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?
  + What is the language most often spoken by the student?
  + What is the language that the student first acquired?
* The Home Language Survey determines if there is a language influence other than English. If the school confirms there is a language influence other than English that is impacting a student’s level of English proficiency, the student should be assessed using a placement test.
  + Kindergarten first semester – Administer Listening and Speaking.
  + Kindergarten second semester – Administer all four domains.
* Placement testing must be conducted within 30 days of a student’s first day of school.
* Based on the results of the WIDA Screener and a Body of Evidence (BOE) the school must determine the English language proficiency level of each student.
* The school must notify, in writing, guardians of students with limited English language proficiency that their student is identified for English Language Development programming. Written notification should be in a language and format guardians can understand.

# Why do Kindergartners only take the Listening and Speaking domains of the WIDA Screener?

WIDA assumes that Kindergarten students don’t know how to read and write yet. Be wary of overidentifying students as MLs if you are looking at their reading and writing as Kindergarteners.

# The Home Language Survey (HLS) indicates there is no language influence other than English in the home, however, the school learns that there is in fact another language impacting the student’s language development. What do we do?

There are many reasons why a family might fill out the HLS indicating no language influence other than English. If there is a language influence other than English, even if the child does not speak the language, the school is legally obligated to screen with the WIDA Screener and analyze the results and body of evidence to identify the student. If the student is identified as NEP or LEP, they must receive ELD services.

# Can a guardian opt a student out of English Language Development (ELD) programming?

Yes. Schools must never recommend that parents opt out of programming, but the written notification must include an option for guardians to opt the student out of ELD.

# Can a guardian opt a student out of WIDA Screener or ACCESS for ELLs testing?

Guardians CANNOT opt a student out of the WIDA Screener or ACCESS for ELLs testing.

# How much time are we required to provide ELD services to students each day?

The Office of Civil Rights guidance suggests students should receive 45 minutes a day of ELD instruction. However, CSI schools have the autonomy to design programming based on students’ demographics, proficiency levels, staffing, and academic needs.

# When do I begin the redesignation process?

[CSI Standardized Redesignation Process](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CSI-EL-Standardized-Redesignation_2025-26.docx)

Once a school receives their ACCESS scores in the Spring, it is recommended that the school begin the redesignation process by reviewing student’s recent ACCESS scores and body of evidence. Students may complete their current language programming through the end of the year while redesignation considerations are being made. The school should begin new programming if appropriate starting the following year.

# When should the new designation be updated in our student information system (SIS)?

New designations for students within your SIS should only be done at the beginning of the school year during the October Count window. However, these decisions should be a result from the prior Spring/Summer’s redesignation process and should be completed in collaboration with the school’s submission team in order to ensure each student is accurately identified.