



State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminister Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

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TO: District Superintendents, State and Charter School Leaders
FROM: Deputy Commissioner Kelvin Roldán
SUBJECT: **Updated Multilingual Learner Exit Criteria**

Memo Overview and Background:

This memo provides school system leaders with strategic updates on the expanded criteria students may now meet to demonstrate English language proficiency and exit status as a current Multilingual Learner (MLL).

Rhode Island has seen the largest growth of MLL students in the nation over the past decade, with twice as many MLL students enrolled in SY23-24 compared to SY13-14. This growth has occurred across the entire state, with some communities outside of the urban core seeing 300%+ increases in MLL students.

Given the growing student population, RIDE created the [Blueprint for Multilingual Learner Success](#) and its accompanying [Strategic Plan](#) to help provide LEAs a clear roadmap to improve services and outcomes for MLLs.

As part of this effort, RIDE has been examining the success of our MLLs as they move through levels of English language proficiency. For the first time, based on 2023 RICAS ELA results, recently exited multilingual learners *outperformed* statewide student proficiency levels. Furthermore, the performance gap between recently exited MLL students and students who were never-MLLs on the RICAS ELA closed by 10 percentage points from 2018 to 2023. However, RIDE's analysis also revealed that some students who remain classified as MLLs for a longer than expected duration perform worse over time, despite demonstrating strong performance early in their academic careers. Following up on this analysis, **RIDE consulted and worked with national experts and reviewed other best-practice state policies as it pertains to criteria students must meet to demonstrate English proficiency and exit MLL status.**

Updated Exit Criteria:

Currently, students in grades 1-12 may exit MLL status if they have achieved an overall score of 4.8 or above on ACCESS or P2 for two consecutive years on the Alternate ACCESS.

Starting with students taking the 2024 ACCESS assessment, the criteria for students to exit MLL status have been expanded to include:

1. Kindergarten students will now be eligible to exit MLL status for the first time with an overall score of 4.8 or above; and,
2. Students in grades 1-12 may exit MLL status if the student has achieved an overall score of 4.8 or above; or,
3. Students in grades 3-8, 10, and 11 may exit MLL status if they achieve an overall score between 4.5 to 4.7 on the ACCESS assessment and have achieved a proficiency score on a state English Language Arts assessment (i.e. RICAS in grades 3-8, PSAT in grade 10, or SAT in grade 11) at “meets” or “exceeds” (Level 3 or 4) in that same year.

RIDE has determined that additional exit criteria for reclassifying MLL students will allow more students to exit MLL status and sustain their academic success. RIDE has therefore recently revised the *Rhode Island Multilingual Learners (MLLs) Screening, Identification, Placement, and Reclassification* guidance to include more options for reclassifying MLLs.

For all students exiting MLL status, the LEA must explain the decision to the parent/guardian of the MLL in the parents' preferred language.

For students who take the Alternate ACCESS assessment, overall Score of P2 for two (2) consecutive years applies through Alternate ACCESS results 2023. The WIDA Consortium is engaged in activities that impact reclassification through the Alternate ACCESS, including standard setting, in July 2024. RIDE will re-evaluate the exit criteria for students taking the Alternate ACCESS upon reviewing WIDA's updated guidance.

In addition to publishing the revised Guidance, RIDE will provide briefings on the new criteria for the MLL Directors/Coordinators in the Spring of 2024, and continuing communication regarding the students who may be potentially eligible using the new criteria through the fall of 2024 once more state assessment data becomes available.

LEAs are encouraged to plan accordingly. It is expected that LEAs and MLL Census data managers will exit students before October 1 to ensure accurate enrollment data.

If you have any questions regarding these updates to the MLL exit criteria, then please e-mail Flavia Molea Baker, MLL Coordinator at flavia.moleabaker@ride.ri.gov.