

ACCESS for ELLs Examination

Who takes the ACCESS tests?

ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is an English language proficiency assessment given annually to all English language learners (ELLs) in grades K-12.

What does the ACCESS Examination measure?

The ACCESS Examination is a standards-based assessment that measures a student's mastery of the English language in the areas of listening, reading, writing, speaking. All subtests are based on comprehension of both fiction and nonfiction text across the content areas of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science.

How long does the ACCESS Examinations take to administer?

The Listening, Reading, and Writing sections of ACCESS for ELLs are group administered tests. The Speaking section is individually administered. Each skill is a separate testing session over several days. Additionally, beginning in 2016-17 the assessment changed to an online test administration.

How many times a year is the ACCESS Examinations administered?

The ACCESS for ELLs is administered annually in early spring (January to March). Please contact your building administrator or principal for more specific information on times for testing.

How does the district use the results from the ACCESS Examination?

PDE specifies that the ACCESS for ELLs examination, along with other measures, such as the PSSA or Keystone exams, are used to determine student proficiency with English language acquisition and to determine the student's ability to exit the ELL program. Schools also use the ACCESS for ELLs to better understand students' strengths and needs in English Language Proficiency. Program evaluation is based upon the ACCESS for ELLs data.

How is the ACCESS Examination score reported?

Parents and guardians are notified of the student results during late summer and early fall by letter. Specific assessment results in the reading, writing, listening and speaking domains are reported. The results are reported on a scale of 1 – 6, with a score of 5 or higher representing mastery of the skill at a level that meets the state criteria for exiting an ESL program.

Where can I access my child's ACCESS data?

ACCESS reports can be provided by your child's ESL teacher. Additionally, the ACCESS scores are available in the Home Access Center (HAC). All parents can request an account for HAC using a current email address.