



Prince William County

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Providing A World-Class Education*

Dear PWCS Family:

Earlier this fall, the Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) Office of English Learner Programs and Services communicated with families of English Learners about their participation in *ACCESS for ELLs* (ACCESS). We want to take this opportunity to provide you with some information about this assessment and why it is administered.

ACCESS is the collective name for the suite of assessments that the Virginia Board of Education has adopted to help monitor students' English language development and satisfy annual federal testing requirements. During ACCESS, students are assessed in the four language domains of *Reading, Writing, Speaking* and *Listening*. The results from ACCESS provide our staff with valuable information that aids them in making important instructional and programmatic decisions about your student. More specifically, ACCESS results help us monitor students' English language development and determine when multilingual learners have attained English language proficiency as defined by the Virginia Board of Education.

ACCESS will be administered at your student's school between January 12, 2021 and April 16, 2021. Because ACCESS is part of Virginia's accountability system, it must be administered onsite at schools under secure testing conditions. During ACCESS, all health and safety guidelines related to COVID-19 will be followed, including appropriate distancing and wearing a face-covering. Students that are receiving instruction in-person will be assessed on days when they are physically present in schools. Families of students that are receiving instruction 100% virtually are asked to communicate with staff at their student's school to schedule a day and time for their student to participate. Please note that, if families elect to exclude their student from ACCESS this year because they have concerns related to COVID-19, that student will still be provided services associated with their status as an English Learner. However, please also note that, if they do not participate, then they will not be eligible to exit the English Learner program because of the rules, which have been adopted by the Virginia Board of Education.

The best way to prepare your student for ACCESS in Spring 2021 is to encourage them to do their best. When ACCESS results are available, a report of your student's performance will be available for you to review. If you have any questions about ACCESS, please visit the following link to the ACCESS website:

<https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/access>.

Sincerest regards,

Paul F. Parker, PhD  
Supervisor of Testing

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