

**To: Members of the State Board of  
Education & Early Development**

**January 22, 2026**

**From: Deena M. Bishop, Ed.D., Commissioner**

**Agenda Item: 3**

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♦ **ISSUE**

The board will be asked to approve regulations 4 AAC 34.055. Update Alternate ACCESS proficiency levels.

♦ **BACKGROUND**

- The ACCESS and the Alternate ACCESS assessments are the tools used to measure the English language proficiency of English Learners (ELs) and track their progress toward achieving full English proficiency.
- Historically, and currently, ELs participating in the Alternate ACCESS assessment have lacked a defined path to reclassification as "Not EL" due to the absence of established exit criteria.
- Recent Peer Review feedback from the U.S. Department of Education has mandated that we develop exit criteria for this student population. This is necessary to ensure compliance with federal requirements that all students must be given the opportunity for annual reclassification.
- The proposed exit criteria were developed through a comprehensive and rigorous process, designed to ensure an equivalent degree of rigor for reclassification compared to EL students who take the standard ACCESS assessment. The development process involved:
  - Analyzing the scale and meaning of proficiency levels on the Alternate ACCESS assessment.
  - Seeking criteria that maintain rigor equivalent to the reclassification standards for students who do not take Alternate ACCESS.
  - Reviewing and analyzing the exit criteria established by other states for this specific population of students.
  - Comparing the performance of students taking Alternate ACCESS at various proficiency levels with the performance of non-EL students on the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment (the state assessment for English language arts and math for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities).
  - Incorporating input from relevant stakeholders.
  - Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Feedback: Consulting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to ensure the technical soundness of the proposed criteria.

♦ **OPTIONS**

Seek more information.

Approve the posting of proposed regulations

♦ **MOTION**

This is a work session item. Action will be taken in Agenda item 11 of the business meeting.