**(Sample letter to parents and guardians from a district or school leader)**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Protecting the health and safety of our students and teachers is our top priority, so we want you to know that this year ACCESS tests will only occur **if and when** state and local health orders, as well as district policies for COVID-19, allow students and staff to safely be in school buildings. Additionally, you, as a parent or guardian can make the ultimate decision on whether you feel it is safe for your child to go in to take the test. ACCESS is administered each year in Colorado and across the country to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade who are learning the English language.

If your children are learning remotely, you will be invited to send them to school to participate in the test, which is administered by a teacher.  However, we understand the [disproportionate impact seen by the communities with children who typically take ACCESS](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6948a3.htm), so you must consider your family’s health needs in making the decision to participate. We know that families have individual health considerations, including family members who are at higher risk, such as grandparents, so we understand if coming into our school buildings is not right for your children. **Whether your children come in for ACCESS testing is your decision, and no negative consequences will be imposed on your family should you choose not to send them.**

For those students who do test, like so many other things this year, our protocols for conducting the English language testing will look different in order to protect the health and safety of our students and teachers. Here are some steps we have taken to keep students and staff safe during the tests:

* We added additional health safety procedures during the test including, limiting the sharing of materials, sanitizing materials when possible, ensuring adequate spacing between students, increasing ventilation, and ensuring students and staff wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after the test.
* The dates during which the test can be given have been extended by the Colorado Department of Education, which gives us more flexibility to schedule the tests when it is safe for students and staff and more time to make plans for the best health safety practices.

We will continue to monitor health data for our community and will make any other changes to our ACCESS testing plans necessary to keep our students, families and staff safe.

**How ACCESS test results are used**

The ACCESS test provides important information for parents, teachers and school leaders about the progress our emerging bilingual students are making in learning English.

1. The test helps you and your child’s teacher monitor your child’s progress in learning English.
2. The test helps you and your child’s teacher know if adjustments are needed in instruction in order to help your child succeed in learning English.
3. The test helps teachers know when your child is proficient in English and no longer needs English language development classes or support.

[Consider adding district- or school-specific information about potential testing dates, who parents should contact with questions about the test or transportation, and how to indicate their child’s participation in the tests.]