

## **INSTRUCTION**

### **Education for English Learners**

#### Definitions

English learner means a student who is age 3-21 years, who is enrolled or is preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school, and whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the student the ability to meet state academic standards, the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate fully in society. An English learner may include a student who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; a student who is Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas, who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or a student who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant.

Native speaker of English means a student who has learned and used English in his/her home from early childhood and English has been his/her primary means of concept formation and communication.

Long-term English learner means an English learner who is enrolled in grades 6-12, has been enrolled in schools in the United States for more than six years, has remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive years as determined by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or any successor test, and scores far below basic or below basic on the English language arts test of the California Standards Tests or any successor test.

English learner at risk of becoming a long-term English learner means an English learner who is enrolled in grades 5-11 in the United States for four years, scores at the intermediate level or below on the CELDT or any successor test, and scores in the fourth year at the below basic or far below basic level on the English language arts test of the California Standards Tests or any successor test.

English language classroom means a classroom in which the language of instruction used by the teaching personnel is overwhelmingly the English language, and in which such teaching personnel possess a good knowledge of the English language.

English language mainstream classroom means a classroom in which the students either are native

English language speakers or already have acquired reasonable fluency in English.

Sheltered English immersion or structured English immersion means an English language acquisition process in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for students who are learning the language.

Bilingual education/native language instruction means a language acquisition process for students in which much or all instruction, textbooks, and teaching materials are in the student's native language.

### Identification and Assessment

Upon enrollment, each student's primary language shall be determined through use of a home language survey.

Any student who is identified as having a primary language other than English as determined by the home language survey, and who has not previously been identified as an English learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English proficiency using the state's designated English language proficiency test for initial identification.

The state assessment shall be administered in accordance with test publisher instructions and 5 CCR 11511-11516.6. Variations and accommodations in test administration may be provided to English learners pursuant to 5 CCR 11516-11516.6.

Any student with a disability who is identified as an English learner shall be allowed to take the assessment with those accommodations for testing that the student has regularly used during instruction and classroom assessment as delineated in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan. If the student is unable to participate in the assessment or a portion of the assessment even with such accommodations, an alternate assessment for English language proficiency shall be administered to the student as set forth in his/her IEP.

### Parental Notifications

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians of their child's results on the state's English language proficiency assessment within 30 calendar days following receipt of the results from the test contractor.

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians shall be informed of the placement of their child in a structured English immersion program and shall be notified of an opportunity to apply for a parental exception waiver.

The parent/guardian of a student participating in, or identified for participation in, a language instruction program supported by federal Title I or Title III funds shall receive notification of the assessment of his/her child's English proficiency. Such notice shall be provided not later than 30 calendar days after the beginning of the school year or, if the student is identified for program participation during the school year, within two weeks of the student's placement in the program. The notice shall include all of the following:

1. The reason for the identification of the student as an English learner and the need for placement in a language acquisition program
2. The level of English proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement
3. A description of the language acquisition program in which the student is, or will be, participating, including a description of all of the following:

- a. The methods of instruction used in the program and in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and a native language in instruction
  - b. The manner in which the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the student
  - c. The manner in which the program will help the student develop his/her English proficiency and meet age-appropriate academic standards for grade promotion and graduation
  - d. The specific exit requirements for the program, the expected rate of transition from the program into classes not tailored for English learners, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school if applicable
  - e. Where the student has been identified for special education, the manner in which the program meets the requirements of the student's IEP
4. Information about the parent/guardian's right to have the student immediately removed from a program upon the parent/guardian's request
  5. Information regarding a parent/guardian's option to decline to enroll the student in the program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available
  6. Information designed to assist a parent/guardian in selecting among available programs, if more than one program or method is offered
  7. Parent/guardians also shall be notified of the results of any reassessments.

#### Parental Exception Waivers

A parent/guardian may, by personally visiting the school, request that the El Dorado County Office of Education (EDCOE) waive the requirements pertaining to the placement of a student in a structured English immersion program if the one of the following circumstances exists:

1. Students who already know English: The student already possesses good English language skills, as measured by standardized tests of English vocabulary comprehension, reading and writing, in which the student scores at or above the state average for his/her grade level or at or above the fifth-grade average, whichever is lower.
2. Older students: The student is age 10 years or older, and it is the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that an alternate course of study would be better suited to the student's rapid acquisition of basic English skills.
3. Students with special needs: The student already has been placed, for a period of not less than 30 calendar days during that school year, in an English language classroom and it is subsequently the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that the student has special physical, emotional, psychological or educational needs and that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the student's overall educational development.

Upon request for a waiver, the Superintendent or designee shall provide to the parents/guardians:

1. A full written description, and a spoken description upon request, of the intent and content of the structured English immersion program, any alternative courses of study and all educational opportunities offered by EDCOE and available to the student, and the educational materials to be used in the different educational program choices.

2. For a request for waiver pursuant to Education Code 311(c) for students with special needs, notification that the student must be placed for a period of not less than 30 calendar days in an English language classroom and that the Superintendent must approve the waiver pursuant to El Dorado County Board of Education (Board) guidelines.

The principal and educational staff may recommend a waiver to a parent/guardian for a student 10 years or older and a student with special needs. Parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of any recommendation for an alternative program made by the principal and staff and shall be given notice of their right to refuse to accept the recommendation. The notice shall include a full description of the recommended alternative program and the educational materials to be used for the alternative program as well as a description of all other programs available to the student. If the parent/guardian elects to request the alternative program recommended by the principal and educational staff, the parent/guardian shall comply with EDCOE procedures and requirements otherwise applicable to a parental exception waiver, including Education Code 310.

When evaluating waiver requests pursuant to Education Code 311(a) for students who already know English and other waiver requests for those students for whom standardized assessment data are not available, other equivalent assessment measures may be used. These equivalent measures may include local assessments, local standards and teacher evaluations.

Parental exception waivers pursuant to Education Code 311(b) for students 10 years or older shall be granted if it is the informed belief of the principal and educational staff that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the student's rapid acquisition of basic English language skills.

Parental exception waivers pursuant to Education Code 311(c) for students with special needs shall be granted if it is the informed belief of the principal and educational staff that, due to the student's special physical, emotional, psychological or educational needs, an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the student's overall educational development.

Each waiver shall be considered on its individual merits with great deference given to parental preference for student placement.

The principal or designee shall act upon all parental exception waivers within 20 instructional days of submission to the principal. However, parental waiver requests pursuant to Education Code 311(c) for students with special needs shall not be acted upon during the 30-day placement in an English language classroom. These waivers shall be acted upon no later than 10 calendar days after the expiration of that 30-day English language classroom placement or within 20 instructional days of submission of the waiver to the principal, whichever is later.

Any individual school in which 20 students or more of a given grade level receive a waiver shall offer an alternative class where the students are taught English and other subjects through bilingual education techniques or other generally recognized educational methodologies permitted by law. Otherwise, the students shall be allowed to transfer to a public school in which such a class is offered.

In cases where a parental exception waiver pursuant to Education Code 311(b) or (c) is denied, the parent/guardian shall be informed in writing of the reason(s) for the denial and advised that he/she may appeal the decision to the Board if the Board authorizes such an appeal, or to the court.

Waiver requests shall be renewed annually by the parent/guardian.

### Reclassification/Redesignation

EDCOE shall continue to provide additional and appropriate educational services to English learners for the purposes of overcoming language barriers until they:

1. Demonstrate English language proficiency comparable to that of EDCOE's average native English language speakers.
2. Recoup any academic deficits which may have been incurred in other areas of the core curriculum as a result of language barriers.

English learners shall be reclassified as fluent English proficient when they are able to comprehend, speak, read and write English well enough to receive instruction in an English language classroom and make academic progress at a level substantially equivalent to that of students of the same age or grade whose primary language is English and who are in the regular course of study.

The following measures shall be used to determine whether an English learner shall be reclassified as fluent English proficient:

1. Assessment of English language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the state's English language proficiency assessment.
2. Participation of the student's classroom teacher and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions related to the student.
3. Parent/guardian opinion and consultation. Parents/ guardians shall receive notice and a description of the reclassification process, including notice of their right to participate in the process. Parent/guardian participation in the process shall be encouraged.

The Superintendent or designee shall monitor the progress of reclassified students to ensure their correct classification and placement.

Students shall be monitored for at least two years following their reclassification. As part of this evaluation, the Superintendent or designee shall identify whether the student needs any additional academic support to ensure his/her language and academic success.

### Advisory Committees

When there are more than 50 English learners in EDCOE's student programs and at each school with more than 20 English language learners, parent/guardian advisory committees shall be maintained to serve the advisory functions specified in law.

Parents/guardians of English language learners shall constitute committee membership in at least the same percentage as their children represent of the total number of students in the school.

EDCOE's English language advisory committee shall advise the Board on at least the following tasks:

1. The development of an EDCOE master plan of education programs and services for English learners, taking into consideration the school site plans for English learners.
2. EDCOE needs assessment on a school-by-school basis.
3. Establishment of an EDCOE program, goals and objectives for programs and services for English learners.

4. Development of a plan to ensure compliance with applicable teacher or aide requirements.
5. Administration of the annual language census.
6. Review of and comment on EDCOE's reclassification procedures.
7. Review of and comments on the written notification required to be sent to parents/guardians pursuant to 5 CCR 11300-11316.

In order to assist advisory members in carrying out their responsibilities, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that committee members receive appropriate training and materials. This training shall be planned in full consultation with the members.

Legal References:

Education Code 306, 310, 311, 313, 440

5 CCR 11302-11303; 11307-11309

5 CCR 11511-11516

20 USC 6312, 7012

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