TITLE: Reclassification of English Learners, Elementary Schools

NUMBER: REF-1848

ISSUER: Esther Wong, Assistant Superintendent Planning, Assessment and Research

DATE: August 8, 2005

PURPOSE: The purpose of this reference guide is to provide schools with the criteria, process and procedures used in the reclassification of English learners in grades K-5.

MAJOR CHANGES: This reference guide replaces Memorandum No. 1416 dated December 8, 2004, titled Reclassification of English learners, Elementary Schools.

After students have met all reclassification criteria and the school generates a “Parent Notification for Reclassification” letter, this action will automatically change the LEP classification to RFEP.

INSTRUCTIONS: I. INTRODUCTION

State law (Education Code sections 313, 60810, and 60812) requires districts to administer the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to students whose home language is not English. The purpose of the CELDT is to identify new students who are English learners (EL) and to assess their progress annually toward acquiring English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing until they reclassify as Fluent-English Proficient (FEP).

The Annual CELDT is one of several criteria that the District must consider when determining if English learners, including students with IEPs, are ready for reclassification from Limited-English Proficient to Fluent-English Proficient (LEP to FEP). Other factors include teacher evaluation, parent opinion and consultation and performance in basic grade-level skills. The District must use the English-Language Arts (ELA) section of the California Standards Test (CST) to determine performance in basic grade-level skills. An alternate reclassification process has been developed for English learners with severe to moderate disabilities receiving an alternative curriculum (Attachment E).

This reference guide outlines the criteria that school personnel must use in reclassifying English learners, including ELs with disabilities, and the procedures for entering the information into the school’s Student Information System (SIS). Procedures for entering information will be revised with the implementation of the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS).

II. CRITERIA FOR RECLASSIFYING ENGLISH LEARNERS
A. Grade 1-2 Reclassification Criteria: (Attachment A)

1. The student has an Annual CELDT overall performance level of 4 or 5 based on the listening-speaking skill area only, and has completed ELD 4 based on mastery scores of 3 or 4 on the ELD Assessment Portfolio for all listening-speaking, reading, and writing standards and is working towards mastery of ELD 5 standards.

2. The Language Appraisal Team has judged that the student will be successful in a mainstream English program based on Elementary Progress Report marks of 3 or 4 in Language Arts and Math. Please note: The Language Appraisal Team alone cannot reclassify students. ELs must meet all criteria as described in this reference guide.

3. The student has met the grade level goals for each 6-8 week Language Arts benchmark assessment (Open Court or Reading Mastery).

4. The parent has been consulted and notified that the student is eligible for reclassification using the district’s Notification of Reclassification letter that is generated by SIS.

B. Grades 3 – 5/6 Reclassification Criteria: (Attachment B)

1. The student has demonstrated English proficiency on the Annual CELDT by achieving an overall performance level of 4 or 5 and skill area scores of 3 or higher in listening-speaking, reading and writing, and has completed ELD 4 based on mastery scores of 3 or 4 on the ELD Assessment Portfolio for all listening-speaking, reading, and writing standards and is working towards mastery of ELD 5 standards.

2. The teacher or Language Appraisal Team (LAT) has judged that the student will be successful in a mainstream English program based on Elementary Progress Report marks of 3 or 4 in Language Arts and Math. Please note: The Language Appraisal Team alone cannot reclassify students. ELs must meet all criteria as described in this reference guide.

3. The student has demonstrated basic grade-level skills on the California Standards Test (CST) by achieving scores in the Basic, Proficient or Advanced performance range on the English Language Arts (ELA) section of the test.

4. The parent has been consulted and notified that the student is eligible for Reclassification using the district’s Notification of Reclassification letter that is generated by SIS.

III. ANNUAL CELDT SCORES

The Annual CELDT results do not automatically reclassify a student; however they serve as
the primary criterion for identifying potential candidates for reclassification. When an English learner receives an Annual CELDT overall performance level of 4 or 5 and requisite skill area scores of 3 or higher for the current year, the Annual CELDT results will be automatically downloaded into SIS Screen 5 in the following fields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>315</td>
<td>English Post Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320</td>
<td>English Post Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>321</td>
<td>English Post ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317</td>
<td>Oral RS/Lvl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>316</td>
<td>Read RS/Lvl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>318</td>
<td>Wrtg RS/Lvl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** CELDT results will be deleted from the above mentioned fields if the CELDT scores from a more recent administration are too low for reclassification. Only current CELDT scores may be used for the purpose of reclassification.

SIS may be used to assist in identifying English learners who are eligible for reclassification based upon the criteria described in Section II and in notifying their parents.

**IV. USING SIS TO IDENTIFY ENGLISH LEARNERS ELIGIBLE FOR RECLASSIFICATION**

A. Eligibility Roster for Reclassification: (Attachment C)

From the Main Menu, select Screen 14 (Report Menu), Option 25 *Reclassification Eligibility*. This option provides a roster of English learners who are potentially eligible for reclassification based on ELD Portfolio, CELDT and CST/ELA criteria.

The roster will list all eligible ELs, even if some of the reclassification criteria are missing in SIS. However, the school must find the missing information and enter it into the appropriate fields in SIS in order to generate the parent notification letter.

B. Parent Notification Letter for Reclassification (Attachment D)

Once the student has met all the reclassification criteria, print the *Notification of reclassification* letter (Screen 14, Option 26). The *Notification of Reclassification* letter will be generated in English, and if Field 39 on Screen 3 indicates that the parent’s primary language is Spanish, the letter will be printed in both English and Spanish. **Please photocopy and keep on file. If the letter is lost, SIS will be unable to generate a second copy. Letters should be kept on file for a minimum of five years.**

If parent’s primary language is other than Spanish or English, the letter in the appropriate language must be completed by hand, attached to the English letter, signed by the principal and sent home. Attachment D provides the *Notification of Reclassification* in Armenian, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
In a few cases it may be difficult to get a signed notification letter returned. In such cases, the school must demonstrate it has made an effort to contact the parent. Annotate a copy of the letter with the dates it was sent (a minimum of 2 attempts), and note the time and date when a telephone contact was made, and then place this annotated letter in the student’s cumulative record.

V. OFFICIALLY IDENTIFYING THE ENGLISH LEARNER AS AN “RFEP” IN SIS

After completing the procedures described in Section IV and the decision is made to reclassify the student as Fluent-English Proficient, enter the information listed below in SIS. If schools do not enter this information, it will affect the school’s RFEP counts for various surveys and reports that are conducted throughout the school year.

A. Enter the appropriate dates in the following SIS fields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screen 5, Field 314</th>
<th>Teacher Recommend Date</th>
<th>When the teacher/LAT judge the student is ready for the mainstream English program (ELD 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screen 5, Field 323</td>
<td>Reclass to FEP Date</td>
<td>When the school prints the parent notification letter and sends it home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen 5, Field 322</td>
<td>Parent Inform Date</td>
<td>When the signed parent notification letter is returned and filed in the student’s cumulative record (CUM).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
1. Once the “Parent Notification for Reclassification” letter is generated from SIS the language classification will automatically change from LEP (Field 162) to RFEP.

2. Only one copy of the parent notification letter will print from SIS, therefore the school is responsible for making a copy of the letter to place in each student’s CUM, which will be replaced when the original is returned signed by the parent/guardian.

B. A reclassification label must be printed from SIS and affixed to the student’s cumulative record. To print a reclassification label, go to Screen 15, Option 14. If a label was not generated at the time of reclassification, a receiving school may request a label from the school that reclassified the student. This can be accomplished by returning the retired student to an active status. Please call SIS for assistance.

In some cases, an English learner receiving special education services may be reclassified using an Alternate Reclassification process. This would apply in cases where the student’s overall academic and linguistic needs bear little resemblance to those of a typical English learner, the implementation of English Language Development (ELD) strategies would be inappropriate, and language development strategies using the Communicative Observation Matrix (COM) are a major part of the IEP.

**Note:** For additional information regarding the COM please see Bulletin No. M-120, *Guidelines for English Learners with Disabilities* (K-12) dated April 3, 2000.
VI. ALTERNATE RECLASSIFICATION PROCESS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES

A. Alternate Reclassification Criteria:

Alternate Reclassification primarily applies to English learners with severe disabilities that would never be able to meet standard reclassification requirements and for whom Master Plan services such as ELD, Content-Based ELD, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), and Primary Language Instruction/Support would be of no instructional benefit. In a limited number of cases, Alternate Reclassification may be applied to English learners with mild to moderate disabilities, including those identified as low-verbal/non-verbal. To be considered for reclassification under alternate criteria these students must receive special education services through Special Day Program (SDP) and the IEP team must be convened to make a recommendation on the basis of the following alternate criteria:

1. Student is enrolled in a public school for at least five years.

2. Section M of the IEP reflects that the student participates in an Alternate District Curriculum (AC) designed to prepare the student to access the district’s general education curriculum.

3. Student is unable to meet standard reclassification criteria due to documented disability.

4. Student demonstrates English proficiency comparable to that of peers classified as English-Only (EO) with the same or similar disability.

5. Student shows progress toward meeting previous linguistically appropriate goals and objectives commensurate with his/her ability (i.e., COM goals and objectives).

6. IEP goals and objectives reflect the communicative language development needs of the student, and specific English Language Development strategies and grade level support methodologies such as Content-Based EDL, SDAIE, and/or are no longer beneficial or appropriate in meeting these goals.

B. Alternate Reclassification Form: (Attachment E)

The IEP Team would complete the Alternate Reclassification for English Learners with Disabilities tracking form, and include it as a numbered page of the IEP. The statement “Alternate Reclassification” should be written on the first page of the IEP along with the IEP recommendation date. Subsequent IEPs would continue to document this IEP Team’s decision in the same fashion. An authorized (BCLAD/BCC or CLAD/LDS/SB1969/SB395) teacher/specialist must participate in the portion of the IEP meeting in which the Alternate Reclassification for English Learners with Disabilities is completed, and a copy of the completed form must be forwarded to your regional Special Education Support Unit Administrator for approval.
RELATED RESOURCES:  
• BULL-M-120, *Guidelines for English Language Learners (ELs) with Disabilities (K-12)*, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction and Curriculum, dated April 3, 2000.

ASSISTANCE:  
For information regarding the CELDT, please call Eva Garcia, School Information Branch (213) 241-2450. For assistance with Elementary SIS, please call (213) 241-4617. For information regarding reclassification, please call your Local District EL Program staff. For information regarding Alternate Reclassification contact your regional Special Education Support Unit Administrator.