



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

September 16, 2015

Dear County Superintendents, District Superintendents, and Direct-Funded Charter School Administrators:

ACADEMIC CRITERION FOR RECLASSIFICATION

On December 3, 2013, the California Department of Education (CDE) provided guidance regarding the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 484 (Bonilla) to address concerns regarding the academic criterion for reclassification in the 2013–14 school year. AB 484 suspended the California Standards Test and the California Modified Assessment in English language arts and mathematics.

On August 8, 2014, the CDE provided additional information with examples of the adjustments reported by local educational agencies (LEAs) to their reclassification criteria to ensure reclassification continued to be established in a way that allowed for the “effective and efficient conduct of the language reclassification process” in accordance with Title 5, Section 11303 of the *California Code of Regulations (5 CCR)*.

For the 2015–16 school year, the reclassification criteria, pursuant to California *Education Code* Section 313, remain unchanged:

1. Assessment of English language proficiency, using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the state test of English language development; and
2. Teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery; and
3. Parent opinion and consultation; and
4. Comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age.

LEAs are to use these four criteria to establish local reclassification policies. You may refer to the existing state guidance in the *2015–16 CELDT Information Guide* (pages 17 to 21).

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In spring 2015, LEAs administered the first operational Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. This year's test results will establish a baseline for the progress students are expected to make over time. However, LEAs may use these results, if they choose, as a local measure of the fourth criterion.

In terms of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), the results for 2014–15 may be used locally as the fourth criterion for reclassification in 2015–16. Senate Bill 725 (Hancock) was signed as urgency legislation and chaptered into law on August 26, 2015. This law allows for a student completing grade twelve in 2015, who has met all other high school graduation requirements, to receive a diploma without meeting the CAHSEE requirement. However, a local reclassification policy could still use last year's CAHSEE results.

LEAs also may identify local assessments to be used to determine English learners (ELs) who are meeting academic measures that indicate they are ready to be reclassified. Regulations (5 CCR, sections 11303 Reclassification and 11308 [c][6] Advisory Committee) also specify that any local reclassification criteria must be reviewed by the school district committee on programs and services for ELs.

If you have questions regarding the reclassification policy, please contact the Language Policy and Leadership Office, by phone at 916-319-0845. For more information on reclassification, please visit the CDE Resources Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/el/resources.asp>.

For questions related to the assessment of ELs, please contact the English Language Proficiency Assessments Office, by phone at 916-319-0784 or by e-mail at CELDT@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Lupita Cortez Alcalá, Deputy Superintendent
Instruction and Learning Support Branch

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