California Department of Education
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# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 15, 2023

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Addressing Transitional Kindergarten and Long-Term English Learner Students in the Accountability System

This memorandum provides an introduction for the California State Board of Education (SBE) on two student populations that will be a part of the 2024 California School Dashboard (Dashboard): Transitional Kindergarteners (TK) and Long-Term English Learners (LTELs). This memorandum outlines the policy considerations to the SBE ahead of the California Department of Education’s (CDE’s) presentation of the Dashboard workplan at the March 2024 SBE meeting.

## Summary of Key Issues

The Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 created TK, the first year of a two-year kindergarten experience, which initially was available for students born between September and December. The Act also gradually changed the kindergarten entry date from December 2 to September 1, so all children would enter kindergarten at age 5 by 2014. In 2021, legislation was passed that expands TK access for all four year old children by the year 2025–26. Per the intent of the Legislature, many local educational agencies (LEAs) currently use a modified kindergarten curriculum for TK instruction that is age and developmentally appropriate and based on California's Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks. The Legislature charged the CDE with updating the Preschool Learning Foundations, in part to reflect prekindergarten in a school setting. Accordingly, the forthcoming document will be renamed to the Preschool/TK Learning Foundations in recognition of TK being a prekindergarten program for four-year-old children.

Beginning in the 2023–24 school year, the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) is collecting TK data as a separate grade level from kindergarten to facilitate the reporting of TK student data and to meet the intent of California Education Code (EC) Section 60900(d)(4)(A) which requires data for TK students to be collected separately from kindergarten students. This memorandum provides an overview of reporting TK students in the Dashboard.

Additionally, Senate Bill 141 (Chapter 194, Statutes of 2023) requires that LTELs be reported as a student group on the Dashboard and defines an LTEL for accountability purposes to mean a pupil who has not attained English language proficiency within 7 years of initial classification as an English learner.

Note: *EC* Section 313.1 uses a separate definition for reporting the number of LTELs on an annual basis on the CDE’s website. The definition in *EC* Section 313.1 is also used for reporting on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) website, as required by Assembly Bill 1868 (Chapter 907, Statutes of 2022). Specifically, *EC* Section 313.1 defines an LTEL as an English learner to which all of the following apply:

(1) (A) Is enrolled in any of grades 6 to 12, inclusive.

(B) Has been enrolled in schools in the United States for six years or more.

(C) Has remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive prior years, or has regressed to a lower English language proficiency level, as determined by the English language development test identified or developed pursuant to Section 60810, or a score determined by the Superintendent on any successor test.

(D) For a pupil in any of grades 6 to 9, inclusive, has scored far below basic or below basic on the prior year’s English language arts standards-based achievement test administered pursuant to Section 60640, or a score determined by the Superintendent on any successor test.

(2) A pupil for which the required testing results are not available for either subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (1) shall not have that criteria applied and such pupil shall not be excluded based on that criteria.

This memorandum provides options for inclusion of LTELs as a student group within all state indicators on the 2024 Dashboard.

## Attachment(s)

* Attachment 1: Defining Grades on the California School Dashboard: Identifying Transitional Kindergarten Students on Future Dashboards (2 pages)
* Attachment 2: Adding a New Student Group to the California School Dashboard: Identifying Long-Term English Learners on Future Dashboards (1 page)

## Attachment 1

### Defining Grades on the California School Dashboard: Identifying Transitional Kindergarten Students on Future Dashboards

### *Background*

California Education Code (EC) Section 48000(d) defines Transitional Kindergarten (TK) as the first year of a two-year Kindergarten program, and not specifically as a grade level. Beginning July 1, 2023, for the 2023–24 academic year, the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) started collecting TK data as a separate grade level from kindergarten to facilitate the reporting of TK student data and to meet the intent of EC Section 60900(d)(4)(A) which requires data for TK students to be collected separately from kindergarten students.

### Effect of TK Data on the Dashboard

For accountability purposes, TK students are included in the Dashboard as follows.

* The directory details for districts and schools on the Dashboard is based on information from the California School Directory (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/SchoolDirectory/>). Specifically, since TK is not considered a grade level, the “grades served”, which is the low- and high-grade levels offered and reported in the district and school details on the Dashboard, this section will remain unchanged.
* Currently, there are two state measures that report outcomes for Kindergarteners: Suspension Rate and Chronic Absenteeism state indicators. The CDE will explore the continued inclusion of TK in these indicators for the 2024 Dashboard.
* The English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI) measures progress toward English language proficiency by comparing English Learner students’ results from the current Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) and Summative Alternate ELPAC to the prior year Summative ELPAC and Summative Alternate ELPAC results. The ELPI applies to LEAs and schools that have 30 or more Summative Assessment ELPAC and Alternative ELPAC takers in grades 1-12 with an overall performance level in both the current and prior year. With the ability to distinguish TK students in CALPADS, the SBE may want to consider expanding the ELPI to include Kindergarten students and measure their progress from TK to Kindergarten.

The CDE will include these considerations in the 2024 Dashboard workplan and discuss them with policy, technical, and educational partners for feedback. However, since this is the first year of the disaggregated data collection in CALPADS, the CDE does not have historical data to analyze the impact of these actions. The CDE would be able to provide the impact analysis to the SBE in early 2025, following the release of the 2024 Dashboard on December 1, 2024.

## Attachment 2

### Adding a New Student Group to the California School Dashboard:

### Identifying Long-Term English Learners on Future Dashboards

### Background

The addition of a new student group, Long-Term English Learners (LTELs), to the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) will impact all state indicators that currently share the results of student groups at the school and local educational agency (LEA) level: Suspension Rate, Graduation, College/Career, Chronic Absenteeism and Academic Indicators. Uniquely, it will also impact the English Learner Progress Indicator, as it will add a second student group to this indicator’s solitary student group, English Learners.

### Considerations for the 2024 Dashboard

A LTEL is defined for accountability purposes as, “as a pupil who has not attained English language proficiency within seven years of initial classification as an English learner.” On the current Dashboard, these students would belong to both the English Learner (EL) student group as well as the LTEL student group, as well as their respective race/ethnicity or eligible program student groups.

While the population of EL and LTEL students may be distinct among certain schools and LEAs, there may be a possibility of duplicative and mirrored populations of ELs and LTELs in high schools and high school districts. This would come about when there are no new ELs entering the upper grades, and therefore all ELs will meet the criteria to also be LTELs. The CDE will explore how prevalent this occurrence is within the state and share those findings with the SBE.

Senate Bill 141 provided that LTELs are a significant student group with only 15 students at the LEA level, so this may mitigate the impact as well. CDE will also explore the impact on both the EL and LTEL student groups by utilizing prior year Dashboard data.

The CDE will include these considerations in the 2024 Dashboard workplan and discuss them with policy, technical, and educational partners for feedback.