



December 20, 2011

Dear English Learner and Bilingual Coordinators:

POLICIES RELATED TO CHANGES IN A STUDENT'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STATUS AND REPORTING TO CALPADS

Beginning in the 2009–2010 academic year, the California Department of Education (CDE) began collecting student-level data for students statewide through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). As many of you are aware, CALPADS collects several data elements related to English Learners. Two of these are:

- *English Language Acquisition Status (ELAS) Code*
 - EL (English Learner)
 - IFEP (Initially Fluent English Proficient)
 - RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient)
 - EO (English Only)
 - TBD (To Be Determined); and
- *English Language Acquisition Status Start Date* – The first day an English Language Acquisition Status for a specific student became effective.

Prior to the implementation of CALPADS, these data were collected in an aggregate form on the Language Census (R-30) for each local educational agency (LEA). Because these data were collected in an aggregate form, the CDE had no way to validate the integrity of the data being submitted and relied solely on LEAs to validate and certify that their data were accurate.

Now that the data are collected in CALPADS at an individual student level, there are some inconsistencies in the data that require your attention. The data indicate that when some students transfer in and out of schools and districts, their ELAS data does not follow them in a timely manner. This may cause a student who has already been assessed with the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to be retested and possibly designated with a different ELAS code. In some cases, students who had previously been reclassified (RFEP) to be designated as English Learners again.

In an effort to improve the integrity of the English Learner data at the local level and in CALPADS, the Language Policy and Leadership Office would like to articulate the policies that we plan to enforce by implementing business rules in CALPADS in the 2012–2013 academic year. Implementing these business rules in CALPADS will help

ensure that LEAs are notified when the English Learner data they are submitting may conflict with existing data for the student in CALPADS. LEAs should begin following the business rules outlined below when designating a student's ELAS:

1. Once a student's English language acquisition status has been designated as any of the following, it should never change in CALPADS except if the status was reported in error:
 - a. IFEP (Initially Fluent English Proficient)
 - b. RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient)
 - c. EO (English Only)

Rationale: Unless the data were reported in error, once a student's status is identified as IFEP, RFEP, or EO, it should never change even if the receiving district's criteria for determining "reasonable fluency" may vary from the prior district. For example, once a student has been moved from an EL status to an RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient) status, the student could never subsequently be designated as an English Learner again.

2. If a student's status is designated as EL (English Learner), the only allowable subsequent status is RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient).

Rationale: Once a student has been designated an English Learner, they should either 1) stay an English Learner until they have achieved reasonable fluency; or 2) be redesignated fluent English proficient once they have achieved reasonable fluency.

3. If a student's status is designated as TBD (To be determined), which is generally reserved for incoming students who have not yet been initially assessed with the CELDT, the subsequent status can be any of the following:
 - a. EL (English Learner)
 - b. IFEP (Initially Fluent English Proficient)
 - c. RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient)
 - d. EO (English Only)
4. For students whose English language acquisition status is being established for the first time, only the following statuses are allowable:
 - a. EL (English Learner)
 - b. IFEP (Initially Fluent English Proficient)

- c. EO (English Only)
- d. TBD (To be determined)

Rationale: A student's initial status can never be RFEP (Reclassified/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient)

The following table outlines these proposed business rules:

Blank (newly enrolled students)	EO, EL, IFEP, TBD	RFEP
EO	EO	EL, RFEP, TBD, or IFEP
IFEP	IFEP	EL, RFEP, TBD, or EO
EL	RFEP	TBD, EO, or IFEP

When any of these business rules are violated, LEAs will receive an error message in CALPADS. For the Fall 1 2012 data submission, these business rules will be implemented as a warning error message. This will allow LEAs to identify when they have incorrectly assigned an ELAS code to a student, and also to correct data entry errors.

What can LEAs do to prevent these anomalies from occurring before they are submitted to CALPADS?

1. When enrolling a new student into a school, perform a search on the student's SSID or demographic criteria to verify the student's current ELAS in CALPADS prior to administering the CELDT.
2. If the current ELAS data in CALPADS appears to be incorrect given information you've obtained about the student, contact the prior LEA to resolve the incorrect data.

Having consistent definitions will help ensure that students progress smoothly from one English language acquisition status to the next appropriate status, without duplication of effort by both the student and LEA staff. These new business rules in CALPADS will help improve the quality of the data in CALPADS and help improve local business practices involving the ELAS designation. We appreciate your cooperation and effort to improve local business practices and the quality of the data.

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If you have any policy-related questions, please feel free to contact Michele Anberg-Espinosa in the Language Policy and Leadership Office at 916-323-4872 or manbergespinosa@cde.ca.gov.

If you have any CALPADS-related questions, please submit your request to the CALPADS Service Desk at calpads-support@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Keric Ashley, Director
Educational Data Management Division

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