



# **Re-Launching Reclassification: Introducing the Observation Protocol for Teachers of English Learners**

**January 30, 2024**

**California Department of Education**

Multilingual Support Division  
in partnership with the  
Region 15 Comprehensive Center



# Ways to Ask Questions



- Use the Question and Answer (Q&A) feature for **all** questions.
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) resulting from this session will be posted on the California Department of Education, or CDE's OPTEL Web page.

Email us at

[OPTEL@cde.ca.gov](mailto:OPTEL@cde.ca.gov)



# Today's Goal

To introduce participants to the Observation Protocol for Teachers of English Learners (OPTTEL) as a tool for re-envisioning reclassification to promote equity and consistency for all English learner (EL) students.





# Presentation Overview

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. California's Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students
3. The OPTEL: Re-Envisioning Reclassification
4. Results from the Field Test
5. OPTEL Benefits for Students, Teachers and Families
6. Closing



# Welcome and Introductions

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# Opening Remarks (1)

**Alesha Moreno-Ramirez**

Director,

Multilingual Support Division (MSD)





# Opening Remarks (2)

**Geqigula Dlamini**

Administrator,  
Language Policy and Leadership  
Office (LPLO), MSD





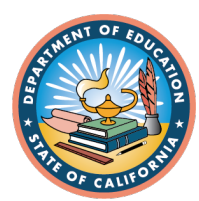
# Region 15 Comprehensive Center



- Regional Centers provide high-quality, intensive capacity-building services to state clients
- Support recipients to identify, implement, and sustain effective evidence-based programs, practices, and interventions that support improved educator and student outcomes







# Who is in the room?

- Please introduce yourself in the chat
- Feel free to share
  - your name, role, and local context
  - one reason why you're here today





# California's Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students

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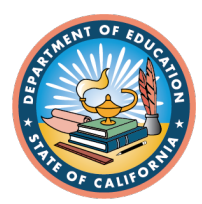
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# Multilingualism in California's Schools

Of California's 5.8 million students, 2.3 million (nearly 40%) bring the asset of a home language other than English to California schools. Of these:

- 1.1 million currently identified as **EL students** (19% K-12 population; largest in nation)
- 1.2 million either initial fluent English proficient or reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP)



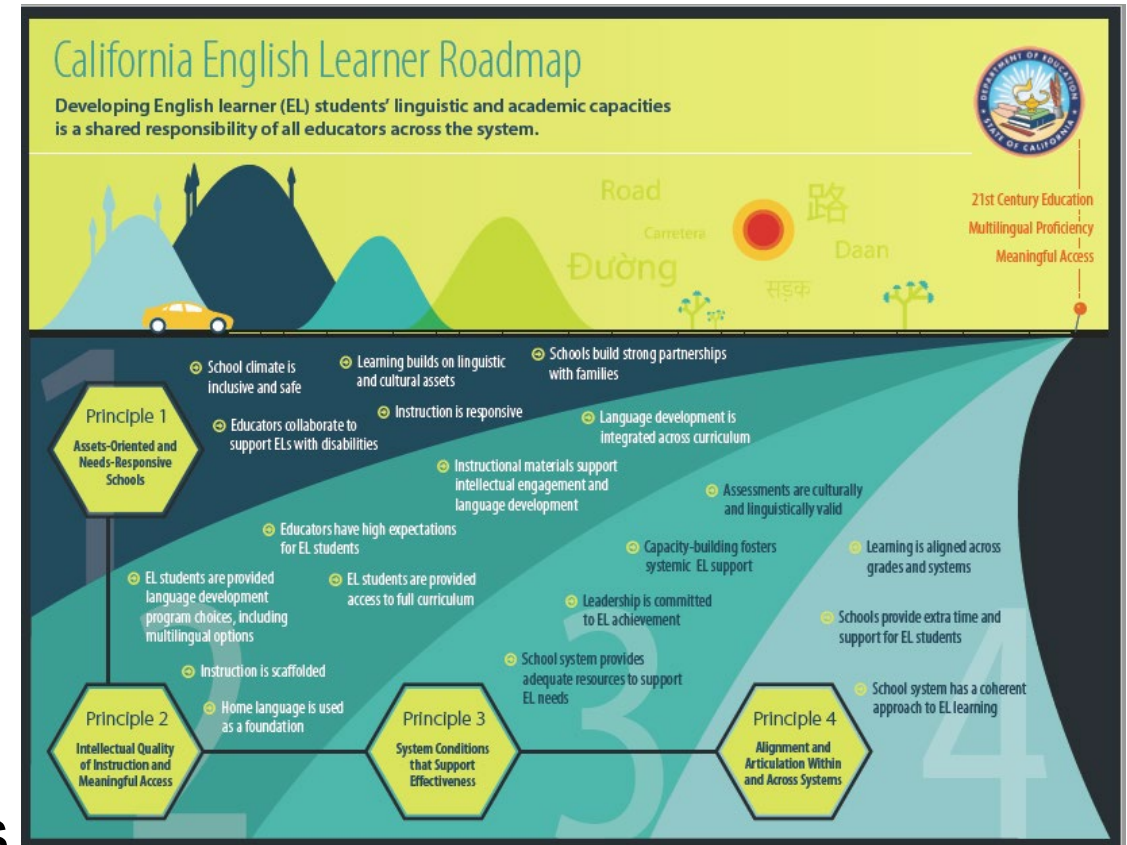
# Diverse English Learner Student Typologies

- EL Students “on track”
- Newcomer students
- Long-Term English learners (LTELs)
- EL students at-risk of becoming LTEL (AR-LTELs)
- EL students with disabilities, or dually identified students
- EL students identified as gifted and talented
- RFEP students who have met the criteria for reclassification



# California English Learner Roadmap

- **Principle One:** Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools
- **Principle Two:** Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
- **Principle Three:** System Conditions that Support Effectiveness
- **Principle Four:** Alignment and Articulation within and Across Systems





# Reclassification

- Reclassification is the process whereby a student is reclassified from EL status to RFEP.
- Upon reclassification, students are exited from EL programs and services.





# The Intent: Equity and Consistency

- The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires states to develop standardized exit criteria for EL students.
- California *Education Code (EC)* Section 313.3
  - requires the CDE “to develop a standardized English language teacher observation protocol for use by teachers in evaluating a pupil’s English language proficiency.”
  - specifies that the OPTEL is to be useful for teachers' discussions with parents or guardians regarding students' progress toward English language proficiency.





# Reclassification Criteria

1. Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Overall Performance Level (PL) of 4, or Alternate ELPAC Overall PL of 3
2. Teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the pupil's curriculum mastery
3. Parental opinion and consultation
4. Comparison of the performance of the student in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills







# Reclassification Listening Session: "What is your current process for determining eligibility for Criterion 2?" (1)

## Samples from 83 responses:

- Grades (36 responses)/Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Local reading and/or writing assessments
- Meeting English Language Arts (ELA) *and* Math Standards



# Reclassification Listening Session: "What is your current process for determining eligibility for Criterion 2?" (2)

- "Teacher evaluation of content areas- student must be at grade level or above."
- "Using the ELD Part I Standards [...]. Students should be Expanding or Bridging on all 12 standards, and at least Bridging on 6 of the 12 standards. Teachers also look at ELD Part II Standards. [... The] student should be Expanding or Bridging on all 7 standards with at least Bridging on 3 of the 7 standards."



# Follow-up Question: "Looking at these results, what do you notice?"

## Sample responses:

- "It's all over the place"
- "Inconsistent"
- "These could block reclassification"
- "Very subjective"
- "Each district uses different reclassification requirements"
- "Using things that are NOT teacher criteria - such as CAASPP"



# Poll

In 2021, what percentage of EL students were reclassified?

- Under 10%
- 11–30%
- 31–50%
- 51–70%
- Above 71%





# Answer

In 2021, what percentage of EL students were reclassified?

- **Under 10% → Actual: 6.9%**





# **The OPTEL: Re-Envisioning Reclassification**

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# Intended Uses of the OPTEL

- **Reclassification Criterion 2: Teacher Evaluation**
  - Educators determine and document a student's English language proficiency via expressive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading)
- **Reclassification Criterion 3: Parent Consultation**
  - Parent Consultation Form (pg. 3 of the OPTEL tool) guides educators in consultation with parents/guardians of EL students regarding their progress toward English proficiency



# Important Points

- The OPTEL can be used instead of, not in addition to, what LEAs are currently using for reclassification Criteria 2 and 3.
- Use of the OPTEL is not required; implementation decisions are locally determined.







# OPTEL Tool Design

## Four-page fillable PDF:

- **Pages 1 and 2:** Designed for teachers to fill out to evaluate students' language proficiency levels
- **Page 3:** OPTEL Parent Consultation Form – designed to record consultations with parents/guardians about the students' progress toward English language proficiency
- **Page 4:** Glossary of terms



# **OPTEL Pages 1 and 2: Expressive and Receptive Skills and ELD Standards Addressed**

**A. Description of Receptive Skills: Listening and Reading  
Comprehension (Select one level from the choices below)**

**K-12 ELD Standards Addressed: Part I 1-8, Part II 1-7**

**B. Description of Expressive Skills: Speaking and Writing  
(Select one level from the choices below)**

**K-12 ELD Standards Addressed: Part I 1-4 & 9-12, Part II 1-7**



# Pages 1 and 2: Performance Levels

- **Level 1 - Emerging:** Substantial linguistic support needed to engage in grade-level learning
- **Level 2 - Early-Mid Expanding:** Moderate linguistic support needed to engage in grade-level learning
- **Level 3 - Late Expanding–Early Bridging:** Light linguistic support needed to engage in grade-level learning
- **Level 4 - Mid-Late Bridging:** Minimal linguistic support needed to engage in grade-level learning



# Overview of Page 3: OPTEL Parent Consultation Form



# Pause and Chat (1)

From the perspective of EL students and their families, how might this tool promote a consistent experience during reclassification across grade levels and in different contexts?





# **OPTEL Validation Study Results**

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# What Did Field Test Teachers Say About the OPTTEL?

Comments	Percentage
✓ <b>“Easy”</b> or <b>“Very Easy”</b> to use	<b>86.9%</b>
✓ <b>“Clear”</b> or <b>“Very Clear”</b> about how it should be filled out	<b>88.3%</b>
✓ Performance level descriptors were <b>“Clear”</b> or <b>“Very Clear”</b>	<b>89.8%</b>



# Teacher Survey Responses

- “The descriptors for each level really helped me to ‘see’ what kind of instruction, instructional supports, and activities should be considered and implemented to promote both expressive and receptive [skills and] content learning.”
- “I believe that the tool will help classroom teachers attain a better assessment of how students are progressing in language acquisition and demonstrating their abilities.”





# Results

**The OPTEL is a scientifically validated protocol.**

- ✓ **When observing the same students, educators gave students the same ratings the majority of the time.**
- ✓ **There was no evidence that educators' ratings were consistently different based on educator or student characteristics.**



# State Board of Education Approved

The OPTEL was unanimously approved by the SBE in November 2023





# **OPTEL Benefits for Students, Teachers, and Families**

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# Voice of the Regional English Learner Specialists (RELS)

## Antonio “Tony” Mora

- District Advisor, San Diego County Office of Education
- Region 9 (San Diego, Orange & Imperial) RELS Lead
- Member, OPTEL Advisory Committee





# Standardization and Consistency

- Validated, standardized tool to objectively observe EL students, including dually identified students
- Standardized tool will create opportunities for equitable and consistent evaluations of student language proficiency levels
- Determinations around reclassification criteria 2 and 3 can be more consistent





# Additional Benefits

The OPTEL can also be used:

- As a regular formative assessment tool to support EL student progress monitoring toward English proficiency.
- To inform effective language instructional practices.
- By institutions of higher education that prepare educators in teacher preparation programs.



## Pause and Chat (2)

What is something you are excited to share with your colleagues around the OPTEL's potential for recentering **equity in the reclassification process**?





# We Value Your Input!

To continuously improve upon our practice and to ensure future webinars meet your needs, please fill out this short survey.

<https://bit.ly/3UqvJgu>







# Closing

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# Resources and Supports

- Recording of today's Webinar
- OPTEL User Guide
- Webinar Professional Learning Series





**Thank you!**  
**For more information,**  
**email [OPTEL@cde.ca.gov](mailto:OPTEL@cde.ca.gov)**

