Graduation Guidelines
Work Group Reports and Recommendations
DRAFT   Executive Summary: Special Populations – ELL STUDENTS   DRAFT

INTRODUCTION:

The figures below are indicators of the changing demographics of the U.S. population and the new challenges and opportunities for school districts.

- 12.9 percent of the U.S. population in 2010 was foreign-born, and in Colorado, 9.8 percent of the population is foreign-born;
- In 2011, 8% of the foreign-born children were of school age (3 to 19 years old). Of those, 87% were enrolled in school. Between 1980 and 1997, the number of children of immigrants enrolled in U.S. schools nearly doubled, from 10 percent to 19 percent of the entire student population;
- In 2010, 53.1 percent of the U.S. foreign-born population was from Latin America;
- In 2010, 16.3 percent of the U.S. population was Hispanic. Between 2000 and 2010, the U.S. Hispanic population increased by 43 percent, which is four times the growth of the overall population—the overall U.S. population grew by 9.7 percent in that same time period;
- In 2010, 20.7% of Colorado's population was Hispanic. From 2000 to 2010, Colorado's Hispanic population increased by 41.2 percent; Colorado's total population increased by 16.9 percent in that same time period;
- More than half of children born in Denver in 2001 were Hispanic.
- • In 2010, 62% of the population who spoke a language other than English at home was Spanish speakers.
- In 2011, 36 percent of Hispanics were born outside of the U.S., increasing the chance that their primary languages were not English. Hispanics had a lower median age than the population as a whole: 35.1 percent were younger than 18.
- In 2011, Hispanics comprised 20% of the U.S. student population which is an increase from 16 percent in 1999.
- In 2012, 32.3% of Colorado students were Hispanic
- 50,000 students move from district to district every year

According to US Census data 83.4% of the English Learners are Hispanic. However, this does not mean that all Hispanic students are English learners, and that all English learners are Hispanic. The number of foreign-born people in the U.S. has increased substantially over the past 10 years, increasing from 31.1 million in 2000 to 40 million in 2010.

This increase in the number of EL students in our schools has profound implications for how schools structure and deliver educational services. Achievement differences between EL and non-EL students begin as early as kindergarten and continue through high school. The EL high school completion rate has not changed substantially in the past several years, and the dropout rate remains unacceptably high.

DEFINITION: English Learner (EL)

An individual who, due to any of the reasons listed below, has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English language and therefore, difficulty in accessing academic content being taught solely in English and/or the ability to fully participate fully in the larger U.S. society. Such an individual:

(1) was not born in the United States or has a native language other than English;
(2) comes from environments where a language other than English is dominant; or
(3) is an American Indian or Alaska Native and comes from environments where a language other than English is dominant, and has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency.

Definition taken from National Center for Education Statistics IES 2013 Report: "The Condition of Education 2013".

See also the definition of Limited English Proficient provided under section 9101 (25) of the ESEA" (US Department Of Education, 2010, p. 20)[1]

RECOMMENDATIONS and KEY MESSAGES

High School counselors
The school must provide ELs with frequent access to staff, including grade advisors, guidance counselors, social workers, intervention specialists, librarians and mentors, and welcome strong parent and community involvement. Build the school community by engaging families and using neighborhood resources to strengthen EL services and opportunities for college and career guidance. Walqui (2007) found that secondary school counselors too often equate limited proficiency in English with academic limitations and act as gatekeepers to more challenging academic credit-bearing courses that lend more postsecondary options. Begin with the end in mind and create a plan for ELs' success.

Navigation of Secondary Systems and Structures
As needs grow more diverse among adolescent learners, all qualified middle and high school teachers must know the basic principles of second language literacy instruction, understand second language acquisition and cross- cultural contexts, and provide English Learners with content-based instruction through academic language. This requires an administrative commitment to provide deep and sustained opportunities for professional development. Administrators should meet with EL staff regularly to

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[1] Section 9101(25) LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT- The term limited English proficient, when used with respect to an individual, means an individual — (A) who is aged 3 through 21; (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school; (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual — (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in section 1111(b)(3); (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

analyze and strengthen instructional strategies such as scaffolding, a method that helps students to access difficult content, use of appropriate materials and connections to student experiences.

High School Administrators
Successful schools effectively target resources, position themselves with key constituencies and provide strong guidance so ELs receive high quality instruction in environments that are safe, supportive and connected to the broader school community. A school culture mindful of the contribution that students from diverse cultures and experiences make fosters learning and achievement (Faltis & Coulter, 2007). A strong school leadership team must build structures and schedules for a comprehensive service model for students. They must engage guidance counselors and EL teachers in planning and professional development that addresses cultural sensitivity as well as instructional goals.

Developing a Graduation Plan
From the day a student arrives at high school, guidance counselors should begin developing a graduation plan. This plan gets developed mutually with the student and should be reviewed and updated at least once each year, preferably once each semester/quarter. Changes to the plan are ongoing and based on the student's progress during that period. The EL's graduation plan may not look like one for a native English speaker; ELs may take more math-based sciences such as chemistry and physics before taking biology, which may be contrary to the prescribed sequence for native English speakers.

Districts could consider these demonstrations of academic proficiency:
    Native language assessments
    Transcripts from other countries
    State mandated assessments in student's native language
    Individual Career and Academic Plan is the cohesive plan

Districts could consider Endorsed Diplomas
    English Proficiency & World Language
    Native language proficiency in Math
    Native language proficiency in Science
    Native language proficiency in Social Studies

Other recommendations/considerations:
    Allow more time to complete course work
    Provide Opt-Out Procedures
    Provide Graduation Pathways

TOOLS and RESOURCES

Guidebook on Designing, Delivering, and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), Colorado Department of Education, December 2014.

Alternative opportunities to gain knowledge
- **Mean What You Say:** Defining and integrating personalized, blended and competency education. International Association for k-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)

http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/iNACOL-Mean-What-You-Say-October-2013.pdf

- **A K-12 Federal Policy Framework for Competency Education**, *Building Capacity for Systems Change*. Competency Works, Issue Brief
  http://www.competencyworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CompetencyWorks_A_K-12_Federal_Policy_Framework_for_Competency_Education_February_2014.pdf

Credit recovery and competency-based programs
- **Clearing the Path:** Creating innovation Space for Serving Over-Age, Under-Credited Students in Competency-Based Pathways
  http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/ClearingthePathReportJan2011.pdf

OPPORTUNITIES/ CHALLENGES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
Time & opportunity **Mobility** **Different Proficiencies – Background educational experience** **Students are competent but NEP/LEP in content**	• Flexible time as needed – using additional years beyond 18 as provided by law. • Balance need for students to acquire English language AND push them toward advancement (i.e. industry certificate and concurrent enrollment) • Honor students' previous academic experiences (transcript review, etc.) • Ensure that districts have well defined, research-based LIEP and ELD programming that ensures access to CAS & CELP and build academic language. • Students should demonstrate English fluency • Consider unique and innovative ways to consider credit transfer and transcript information. • Provide districts with supports and tools to understand relationship between students' previous academic experiences and receiving districts' graduation requirements • Look into ways to integrate appropriate programming plans into ICAP for ELs • Ensure that high quality Newcomer programming is provided to those students who arrive with interrupted education (addresses acculturation, language and content)
Pathways to demonstrate knowledge	• Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate content area knowledge in their native language, as well as accept alternate demonstrations beyond listed assessments • Capstone: align project/portfolio to the CAS (as in CT) and allow students to show their content knowledge with language supports/scaffolds or in their native language • Should end-of-course assessments be added to the menu?

	• Would ICAP be a way for students to map out the END POINT for their unique college and career read demonstrations?
Access to content classes/scheduling **Connecting courses to academic requirements**	• Classroom instruction – PD to develop language and access to content for ELs (think of South HS model) • Offer advanced courses in languages other than English • Have highly qualified teachers (in content and CLD) at all academic levels
Limited class offerings by school district	• Recommendations for rural districts?
Demonstrations of learning in another language	• 80% Spanish speaking population – state could support other language assessments • Partner with other countries; access to their assessments – global workforce/IB programs. Translate their tests • Capture learning from other country's transcripts • Consider language other than English to assess. i.e 1) honor prior assessments 2) create assessments in native languages, and/or 3) count PARCC and CMAS tests that are given in Spanish • Support AP courses in native language. Is AP offered in other languages? Would College Board consider creating them? • TOFEL assessment
Age	• Other states age requirements. • Consider extending age limit beyond 21 – look at other state requirements. • Allow ELs additional time (after turning 21) to demonstrate proficiency in English, as well as in content areas -- ensure that ELs are not tracked into this type of path -- build a plan based on need.
Expectations for ELs Most higher education institutions require world language; need for multilingual employees.	• Add world language requirement for all students • Offer Seal of Biliteracy
Credit recovery: Adequate/appropriate to meet competency requirements	• Personalized learning tied to Blended learning and Competency-based • Students are not held to seat-time requirements • Students are allowed to use their L1 to demonstrate content knowledge
Systems	• Ensure that districts have adequate support and resources in transitioning to new graduation guidelines, including implications for substantially changing systems during all four phases

	• Ensure that CDE has the appropriate resources to appropriately support districts in transitioning to new graduation guidelines, including the implications for districts substantially changing systems during all four phases