SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item# 12.1

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026

Subject: Supporting English Learner Success and Equity: Reclassification Decisions

Information Item Only
☐ Approval on Consent Agenda
☐ Conference (for discussion only)
☐ Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
☐ Conference/Action
X Action
☐ Public Hearing

Division: Multilingual Literacy Department

Recommendations:

1. Approve the adoption and implementation of the Observation Protocol for Teachers of English Learners (OPTEL) as part of the district's English Learner reclassification process to ensure compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) and California Education Code Section 313.3. OPTEL establishes a consistent, evidence-based process for documenting English language proficiency through teacher evaluation of expressive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) skills and for conducting required parent consultation using the Parent Consultation Form.
2. Approve Criterion 4 as a locally approved reclassification criterion. The following assessments may be used for reclassification purposes: CAASPP ELA and i-Ready ELA. In addition, include Benchmark Unit Assessments with a passing score for grades K–6 and My Perspectives ELA with a passing score for grades 7–12.

Background/Rationale: The Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) requires districts to implement standardized, objective reclassification criteria for English Learners. California Education Code Section 313.3 requires the use of a standardized English language teacher observation protocol to evaluate students' English language proficiency and to support parent or guardian consultation. The OPTEL satisfies these requirements by documenting teacher evaluation of students' receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) language skills and by guiding parent consultation.

The continued use of Criterion 4 without clearly defined, consistently implemented assessments has resulted in inconsistent and inequitable reclassification practices across the district. Historically, the use of basic skills measures under Criterion 4 has varied by grade span and site, particularly due to inconsistent administration of districtwide assessments such as i-Ready ELA and the limited grade-level applicability of CAASPP ELA, which is administered only in grades 3–8 and 11. These inconsistencies have restricted equitable access to reclassification opportunities for English Learners across the K–12 continuum.

As a result, some students who met Criterion 1 through the Summative ELPAC (Level 4) or Summative Alternate ELPAC (Level 3), and satisfied Criteria 2 and 3, were unable to reclassify solely due to unclear or unavailable measures under Criterion 4. In some cases, this required students to retake the Summative ELPAC in subsequent years despite having already demonstrated English language proficiency. This practice has contributed to prolonged English Learner status, decreased motivation, and inequitable outcomes that are inconsistent with California Department of Education guidance.

Approving Criterion 4 as a locally approved reclassification criterion, with clearly defined and developmentally appropriate assessments, addresses these concerns by establishing consistent, equitable measures across grade levels. Allowing the use of CAASPP ELA and i-Ready ELA, along with Benchmark Unit Assessments with a passing score for grades K–6 and My Perspectives ELA assessments with a passing score for grades 7–12, ensures that all students have access to valid basic skills evidence regardless of grade span. This approach supports consistent implementation, aligns with state requirements, and promotes equitable reclassification practices while maintaining rigorous expectations for English Learner success.

Financial Considerations: Implementation will be supported through Title III English Learner and Immigrant allocations. No additional general fund impact is anticipated.

LCAP Goal(s):
Goal 2-Improving academic outcomes for students

Documents Attached:
1. California English Learner Roadmap State Board of Education Policy: Educational Programs and Services for English Learners
2. English Learner Program Instrument
3. CA Practitioners Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities
4. 2025-2026 LCAP
5. OPTEL form

Estimated Time of Presentation: 10 minutes
Submitted by: Erin Findley,Interim Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Olga L. Simms, Multilingual Literacy Director
Approved by: Cancy McArn, Interim Superintendent