

### GENERAL RECLASSIFICATION (EXITING) FROM ESL

Dear Parent/Guardian,

You are receiving this letter because your student's English proficiency has improved. As such, your student **may** be a good candidate for reclassification (exiting) from the English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

In order to qualify for reclassification (exiting) from ESL, students must achieve a **4.5 or above** on the 2020 ACCESS test. As such, it is very important that your student **take the 2020 ACCESS exam**, which will be administered at your student's school sometime between January 6 and February 21, 2020.

Reclassification decisions are also dependent on teacher input. Specifically, teachers at our school will evaluate your student's English skills sometime between now and April 2020. If your student's teachers determine that your student has **sufficient English proficiency** to succeed in school without ESL support, and your student scores a 4.5 or above on the 2020 ACCESS test, s/he may be reclassified.

If your student is reclassified, s/he will no longer be eligible to receive direct support from an ESL teacher. Instead, your student will only receive general support from teachers, and his/her academic performance will continue to be monitored.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about the reclassification process, and **does not** mean your student is reclassified. ACCESS results will be shared with you in June 2020, and final reclassification decisions will be shared with you in October 2020. Any changes to ESL services would not begin until the 2020-21 school year.

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## RECLASSIFICATION (EXITING) FROM ESL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What does it mean to be an English Learner?

An English Learner (EL) is a student who has been identified as needing English language supports. These supports are provided through the Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP), commonly known as English as a Second Language (ESL). The goals of ESL are to (1) help students gain English proficiency, and (2) ensure all students can access grade-level content.

### 2. What exactly is the purpose of the ESL program?

The purpose of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program is to help your student learn English so that s/he will be able to comprehend daily lessons, participate socially in school, and meet grade-appropriate academic standards for grade promotion and graduation.

### 3. How was my student identified as an English Learner?

When parents/guardians enroll students in The School District of Philadelphia (SDP), they complete a "Home Language Survey." Based on the responses to the survey, an English proficiency test may be administered to your student in order to determine if s/he is in need of English language supports.

### 4. What is the ACCESS exam?

ACCESS for ELs® is an assessment that measures your student's English proficiency. This assessment is given between January and February of each school year and is administered either online or by paper and pencil. Students receive a score of 1.0 - 6.0 (6.0 is the highest). A small group of ELs with IEPs take the Alternate ACCESS exam, which is an alternative version of ACCESS.

### 5. What exactly is tested on the ACCESS exam?

ACCESS measures students' English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These areas are commonly referred to as "domains." Each domain generates a score which, taken together, produce an overall composite score, also known as your student's English proficiency level.

### 6. What does it mean to be reclassified (exited) from ESL?

Students are reclassified when evidence (ACCESS test scores and input from teachers) indicates that the student is proficient in English. After students are reclassified, their academic performance is actively monitored by the School District of Philadelphia for two (2) years, and monitored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for four (4) years. If it is determined during the first two years of monitoring that the student is struggling academically as a result of persistent language barriers, then the student may be re-designated as an active English Learner and re-enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

### 7. How do I know if my student is a good candidate for reclassification?

If your student is proficient or close to proficient in academic English (ACCESS score of 4.5 or above), and is making progress towards meeting grade-level standards, s/he may be a good candidate for reclassification.



**8. Will my student continue to receive English language supports if s/he is reclassified?**

Students who are reclassified receive general support from teacher(s), but do not receive English as a Second Language instruction or any other additional, English Learner-specific supports.

**9. Where can I learn more about the reclassification process?**

You can view the criteria for reclassification on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website at <https://www.education.pa.gov/>. Once on the website, search for the document titled "Reclassification, Monitoring, and Redesignation of ELs."