



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: English Learner Administrators
School Counselors

From: Brenda Erbse, Director of Accountability
Adam Pitt, Director of English Learners & Migrant Education
Michelle Clarke, Director of Student, School and Family Engagement

Date: August 7, 2023

Subject: Cohort status for recently arrived English Learners

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has noticed an increase in the number of requests to change a student's cohort year due to the student being a recently arrived English Learner. For the purpose of this memo, IDOE defines a recently arrived English Learner as a high school age student enrolling in an Indiana school for the first time who had not previously been enrolled in a school in the United States. IDOE understands that these students may arrive with no paperwork as to coursework already completed and that this can make accurate grade level assignment difficult for schools. While the school should make every effort to place the student in the appropriate grade level, the IDOE is aware that changes must occasionally be made. Because of the potential impact on graduation rates, schools will have one (1) semester to correct the grade level and cohort of a recently arrived English Learner found to be placed inappropriately.

Schools must take the following steps within one (1) semester of the recently arrived English Learner's arrival.

1. Student should be evaluated by the school and placed in a grade level and courses that are in line with the results of the evaluation. Students often can be awarded credit for proficiency in their native language as a world language or academic course work in their native language. More information regarding the awarding of credits can be found on P. 14-15 of the EL Secondary toolkit (<https://www.in.gov/doi/files/Secondary-English-Learner-Toolkit-v2.pdf>).
2. Student's cohort/grade level placement should be re-evaluated to determine if adjustments are needed. Any subsequent adjustments to course enrollment are at the discretion of the school, and do not impact cohort placement.
3. If applicable, the student's grade level should be changed in the School's Student Information System. At this point, the school or corporation's data staff should be notified so that Realtime/Enrollment Mobility and other data collections are updated appropriately.
4. After the STN application center has been updated appropriately, notify the Office of School Accountability at schoolaccountability@doe.in.gov. Indicate that the student is a recently arrived English Learner, specify the country, confirm that the student has been reevaluated and what grade change was indicated. The Office of School Accountability will confirm the information submitted, and will make substantiated cohort changes.

Questions regarding this memo should be sent to schoolaccountability@doe.in.gov.