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The Purpose of the Three Levels in the “ELD Proficiency Level Continuum”

The CA ELD Standards define three proficiency levels—Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging*—to describe the stages of English language development through which ELs are expected to progress as they improve their abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English. Importantly, the language skills described in all three proficiency levels support ELs as they learn English language arts and develop literacy in history–social science, mathematics, science, and other school subjects.

The “ELD Proficiency Level Continuum” chart shows how ELs progress as they become fluent in English. Each proficiency level includes descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of English as a new language and of the “entry” and “exit” stages of the proficiency level. Teachers use this valuable information to choose appropriate learning supports, inform instructional decisions, keep track of academic progress, and reclassify EL students.** All schools in California will be using a test aligned to these standards to help determine when ELs are fluent in English, which means they no longer need specialized ELD instruction.

* The previous standards identified five levels of proficiency for ELs.

** Proficiency in English is one criteria identified in *Education Code 313* for ELs to be reclassified as fluent-English-proficient.



To help your student make progress in learning English:

- ▶ Keep speaking your first language with your child. All the words children learn in their first language will be useful when they are learning English.
- ▶ Tell your child stories you were told in your childhood, or read to your child in your first language—or in English.
- ▶ Encourage your child to read. Make regular visits to the library to keep reading material available at home. Independent reading is a great way to learn new vocabulary.

For more information on the CA ELD Standards and ideas for helping your student succeed, check out these resources:

- ▶ The California English Language Development Standards are available online at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>.
- ▶ The English Language Development Standards Resources Web page is located at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp>.
- ▶ The ELA/ELD Framework for California Public Schools is available online at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaldfrmwrksbeadopted.asp>.
- ▶ The California Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy are available online at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/finalelaccsstandards.pdf>.
- ▶ Common Core State Standards in Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Spanish Language Version are available online at <https://commoncore-espanol.sdoe.net/CCSS-en-Espanol/SLA-Literacy>.

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How Your English Learner Student Will Learn English:

The California English Language Development (CA ELD) Standards Kindergarten–Grade 12



In 2012, California adopted new ELD Standards. These standards promote the essential English language skills needed to do well in school. They clearly describe the progression of language knowledge, skills, and abilities that English learners (ELs) need in order to participate and succeed across all academic content areas. Teachers are using these standards to make sure ELs meet academic expectations at each grade level.

ELD Proficiency Level Continuum



Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learn to use English for immediate needs, and begin to understand and use academic language for the grade level, with substantial language support provided.

Expanding: Students at this level use their growing language skills in more advanced ways that are appropriate to their age and grade level, with moderate language support provided.

Bridging: Students at this level can independently use a variety of high-level English language skills and fully participate in grade-level academic activities in all content areas, with light language support provided.



Goals of the CA ELD Standards

The CA ELD Standards align with the expectations for achieving college and career readiness described in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. At all grade and proficiency levels, ELs must have full access to high-quality English language arts, mathematics, science, and social science content (as well as other subjects), at the same time that they are increasing their English language proficiency.

The CA ELD Standards support this dual effort by providing standards

- ▶ essential for language development and academic success;
- ▶ with clear connections to curriculum and assessments;
- ▶ aligned with the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy.

Expectations of English Learners—and of Teachers

The CA ELD Standards are organized into three parts. The first two describe specific expectations of ELs as they build on existing language skills and knowledge and progress toward full engagement with grade-level material in all content areas. The third part guides teachers to support students who may need basic reading and writing instruction.

Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways. English learners participate in meaningful and intellectually challenging tasks in three ways:

Collaboratively, by communicating with others about social and academic topics

Interpretively, by understanding written and spoken information

Productively, by writing or presenting to explain ideas and information

Part II: Learning About How English Works. English learners comprehend and produce academic texts in various content areas. English learners use language to create organized texts, expand and enrich ideas, and connect and condense ideas.

Part III: Using Foundational Literacy Skills. This section emphasizes how all teachers play a crucial role in developing the literacy of ELs. English learners at all grades require specialized instruction to learn foundational literacy skills, based on their age, previous literacy, and educational experiences. For ELs new to California schools in grades six through twelve, teachers also need to provide learning activities and materials to help students achieve all language skills, including literacy in English, as quickly as possible.

