



## **Technical Advisory Panel on Uniform National Rules For NAEP Testing of English Language Learners**

### **Report to the National Assessment Governing Board**

On behalf of Californians Together, a coalition of 23 statewide professional, parent, and civil rights organizations focused on improving policy and practice for English Learners, the following input is provided in response to the report of July, 2009.

#### **General Comments:**

The Panel and Department are to be congratulated for producing a set of recommendations that for the first time recognize the unique linguistic needs of English language learners taking the NAEP assessments. In addition, the goal to standardize the inclusion of English language learners and the accommodations that should be available is the direction desperately needed by each state. It is hoped that these recommendations would serve as a starting point to also inform the work around high stakes assessments for the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind.

#### **Executive Summary:**

3) Insert after the word “proficiency”, *years in the US schools, program type and home language proficiency*.

We agree that disaggregating by English language proficiency is critical but for districts and schools to be able to use the data for program improvement they need to know which cohort of English learners are doing well and which need strategic support. Students scoring at the beginning proficiency level and who have only been in US schools for 1 ½ years versus those who has been in US schools for 6 years or more need something completely different to accelerate their academic achievement. Collecting additional demographic data will support targeted instruction and program improvement.

#### **Page 4 – Recommendations:**

We agree with the panel’s recommendation but suggest that in addition the following be considered to determine who should be or should not be tested.

*Recent immigrants (two years or less in US), speakers of indigenous languages, students with little or no prior schooling, student from war-torn countries with interrupted education and students with irregular attendance without two consecutive years of US schooling (high mobility) should be exempted for two years. The state English language proficiency test should serve as a proxy for both the general exemption for the less than 12-month students and those in this new recommendation.*

### **How are ELL Students to be Tested?**

A rubric should be created to assist states on deciding the best accommodations for their students. The rubric should list the three English language proficiency levels of beginning, intermediate and advance and then list which EL responsive accommodations might best support the students at the different proficiency levels.

Page 5 top paragraph at the end of the second line after the word “proficiency” insert, *years in US schools, program type and home language proficiency.*

### **New Framework for Spanish Language Literacy:**

We strongly urge the inclusion of this recommendation be a part of the Uniform National Rules. For schools and districts that have students developing biliteracy as a goal for their education, it is critical the NAEP assessment have valid and reliable measures in English and Spanish. NAEP should be a part of the federal structure that is supporting the development of bilingual/biliterate students prepared with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.

Respectfully submitted by,

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President