



**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MEMORANDUM**

**TITLE:** Elementary Guidelines for Reading Assessment and Screening Procedures for Intensive Instruction and Interventions at Grades 4, 5 and Grade 6 (as applicable)

**NUMBER:** MEM-5428

**ISSUER:** Susan Tandberg, Administrative Coordinator  
Office of Curriculum, Instruction and School Support

**DATE:** March 10, 2011

**ROUTING**  
Local District  
Superintendents  
Administrators of Instruction  
Principal Leaders  
Elementary Literacy Coach  
Coordinators  
Elementary Principals

**MAJOR CHANGES:** Assessment criteria for intensive instruction for intervention (Tier 3)  
English Language criteria/eligibility to include CELDT Level 3 in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grades.

**BACKGROUND:** The *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* recommends intensive, accelerated intervention for students in grades 4-12 who are at serious risk of reading failure. This is indicated by their extremely and chronically low performance on one or more literacy measures, i.e. phonemic awareness, decoding, reading fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies. As outlined in the District’s instructional plan, schools should use the problem-solving process to address the foundational skill deficits and accelerate student learning. Multiple measures of assessment should be used to determine appropriate levels of support for students.

Intensive instruction and intervention provides targeted and specific teaching, and generally includes the use of additional curricula, pedagogy, or instruction. Optimized academic engaged time, in a smaller group size, with greater frequency and duration is required. This instruction is based on student data to determine if students have responded to effective core instruction and interventions in Tier 1 and Tier 2. Tier 3 is for students with the most severe reading delays (typically about 5% of the student population).

Intensive instruction and intervention is not synonymous with special education services, but rather a critical step to provide students with a more narrowly focused curriculum that is targeted and intensive.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

**I. Identification by Screening Students:**  
The assessment process is used to gather information about students and make instructional decisions. Multiple measures should be used to determine if there is a need to increase instructional time, change presentation strategies or teaching techniques, and/or implement supplemental curricula.

The purpose of multiple assessment measures is to ensure an effective match of students’ needs to the appropriate intervention, identify why a student is having reading difficulty, determine what the next steps in instruction should be to remediate that difficulty, and monitor progress throughout the course of instruction.



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**A. Initial Screening**

The following data points should be used for the 2011-2012 school to identify students needing intensive interventions:

**Grades 4 and 5/6 Decision Points for EO, IFEP, RFEP Students and SWDs:  
(based on grade 3 assessments for students entering 4<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Elementary Pilot Schools Using COREK-12 Periodic Assessments	Elementary Schools Using SOAR Data, Unit 3
1. Periodic Assessment #1 score of Far Below Basic <b>and</b> 2. Periodic Assessment #2 score of Far Below Basic 3. Periodic Writing Assessment #1 and #2 score of 1 or below	1. Fluency rate at the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile or below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 3<sup>rd</sup> gr. Unit 3: 70wpm or below</li> <li>○ 4<sup>th</sup> gr. Unit 3: 89wpm or below</li> <li>○ 5<sup>th</sup> gr. Unit 3: 93wpm or below</li> </ul> 2. Vocabulary score at intensive: 5 and below 3. Periodic Writing Assessment (Unit 3) score of 1 or below

**Grades 4, 5/6 Decision Points for EL Students:**

It is expected that a student will make an annual growth of one year of language acquisition as measured by the CELDT.

The following data points should be used for the 2011-2012 school year for EL students:

- English Learners in fourth and fifth/sixth grades
- In school since Kindergarten, equating to a minimum of 5 years of consecutive instruction
- A CELDT score of 4 or 5, and a CELDT sub-score of 2 or below in reading and/or writing.
- For fifth/sixth graders a CELDT score of 3, and a CELDT sub-score of 2 or below in reading and/or writing. The Language Appraisal Team should assess these students.
- All students must meet the criteria of the above-mentioned periodic assessment or SOAR data points.

**B. Additional Screening Measures for Diagnostic Purposes**

To ensure that students' needs are explicitly addressed, the following additional measures are to be administered to determine levels of supports. Students who score at an intensive level in the following assessments, in addition to meeting the decision points in the above noted screens, should receive intensive instruction and intervention. Students who score at benchmark to strategic levels in the following mentioned assessments need further problem-solving analysis to determine the level and type of interventions required.



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- CORE Reading Maze Comprehension Test measures how well students understand the text they read silently. The maze task differs from traditional comprehension in that it is based completely on the text. After the first sentence, every seventh word in the passage is replaced with the correct word and two distracters. Students choose the word from the three choices that fits best with the rest of the passage. Go to [www.lausd.net/literacy](http://www.lausd.net/literacy) and click on CORE Reading Maze Comprehension Test to download all the testing directions, assessments, and scoring information.
  - Third grade intensive scores in spring measurement would score 7 or less correct words in a 3 minute read
  - Fourth grade intensive scores in a spring measurement would score 9 or less correct words in a 3 minute read
  - Fifth grade intensive scores in an end of year measurement would score 12 or less correct words in a 3-minute read.
- DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) measures fluency and accuracy in reading grade- leveled passages aloud as measured by words read correctly per minute. If the student has no SOAR data to support fluency levels this assessment should be administered. Go to <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/> to download all testing materials free of charge.
  - Third grade end of the year scores of 0-79 wpm are at risk.
  - Fourth grade end of the year scores of 0-94 wpm are at risk
  - Fifth grade end of the year scores of 0-104 wpm are at risk
- CORE Phonics Survey assesses phonics and phonics-related skills that have a high rate of application in decoding skills. Go to [www.lausd.net/literacy](http://www.lausd.net/literacy) and click on CORE Phonics Survey to download all testing directions, assessments, and scoring information.
  - Letter Names/Sounds 0-64 is intensive
  - 24 Item Reading and Decoding 0-24 is intensive
- Early Warning and At-Risk Summaries, accessed through MyData, will provide information on behavior and attendance, both of which may have distinct impacts on students' reading skills.

## II. Monitoring of Students Receiving Intensive Instruction and Intervention

Administration of the curriculum-based assessments of a replacement curriculum, and progress monitoring tools (DIBELS, CORE, etc) should occur a minimum of twice (2) per month to determine whether students are making adequate gains in achievement.

There should be an on-going use of assessment data to plan instruction, inform interventions, and gauge students' response to instruction and intervention. The intensive instruction and interventions need to be monitored consistently for outcomes.



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Students should move among instructional groups based on need and skill mastery. As such, if a student demonstrates adequate growth towards proficiency in reading, that student should be in a reading class receiving appropriate interventions in core curriculum.

### III. Implementation

It is the responsibility of each school site to provide and ensure academic interventions that are of high quality, sufficiently strong enough to address the identified student problem, and can be executed with integrity. While core content is the foundation for all instruction and intervention, differentiated support at this level may call for a supplemental curriculum. While a newly adopted Elementary English Language Arts Program may contain supports for differentiated instruction within the curriculum, it might not offer the intensity, frequency, and duration needed for students meeting the assessment criteria explained earlier.

As the District moves to a more decentralized system of operation, it will be the local district and school site's decision to use evidenced-based and validated methods and/or programs that will best meet the needs of students needing intensive interventions. Schools may choose to utilize a standard protocol intervention that is scientifically research-based and has a high probability of producing a change for a large number of students. *LANGUAGE! 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* and *Read 180* both fit this description, and have been used successfully in the District. Principals may use State and Federal Funds in the purchase of these materials. The Central District will continue to provide guidance on support for these decisions and offer professional development opportunities to schools using these two standard protocol interventions.

### IV. Infrastructure

As site administrators formulate matrices and make staffing decisions for the next year, these options for class formations should be considered:

- Intervention teachers may use a pull-out program, providing students with the intensive 3-hour literacy and ELD block of instruction.
- Register carrying teachers may pull-in students for the intensive instruction, while other teachers at the grade level are receiving students from that class for core instruction.
- Schools should NOT organize a self-contained class composed entirely of students needing intense interventions for social/emotional reasons. These students should be grouped for the language arts/ELD instruction for 3 hours daily, but should not be isolated from their peers during other times of the day.
- Intensive interventions require a dedicated 3 hours literacy block inclusive of ELD.



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## V. Multi-Operational Considerations

The tiered approach of instruction and intervention is based on the practice of providing high quality pedagogy, curriculum, and materials matched to the needs of the student. As school sites design intensive instruction and intervention plans, the following operational questions should be considered:

- What materials/resources are needed?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the entire staff to effectively implement the intervention?
- How will the interventions be monitored for outcomes?
- How will students with disabilities served in special day programs be integrated into the interventions?

Fourth grade students who have received a year's instruction in a standard protocol intervention program, such as *LANGUAGE!*, should continue from where their instruction left off, as they move into fifth grade. Students new to the program should begin with Book A. This may create two sections of instruction, those students new to the program, and those continuing within the program. Any student who has completed both Books A and B at the elementary level should move back into core instruction, and receive the necessary supports and interventions (Tier 2) within core instruction. Book C from *LANGUAGE! 4<sup>TH</sup> Edition* is not appropriate in the elementary level.

### ASSISTANCE:

For assistance or further information please contact Literacy/Language Arts Specialist Debra Conejo at [debra.conejo@lausd.net](mailto:debra.conejo@lausd.net) or by phone at (213) 241-4230  
For assistance with English Learner issues contact Language Acquisition Coordinator Dr. Dona Lawrie at [dlawrie@lausd.net](mailto:dlawrie@lausd.net) or by phone at (213) 241-5582



**Grading Policy for Students Receiving Intensive Instruction and Interventions**

The Elementary School Progress Report is implemented by all schools to provide a system-wide method for reporting student progress and providing data on student achievement of the standards. Policies on scoring practices have teachers evaluate students on the degree to which they are progressing toward achieving grade-level standards.

The 2010-2011 school year initiated Tier 3 instruction using an intensive curriculum for the students in grades 4 and 5/6, for whom data show are working several grade levels below in reading. These students have not responded to Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 interventions, so they should be receiving an intensive supplemental curriculum from that used in core instruction.

These curricula, which are grounded in the content standards, must meet certain criteria in terms of frequent progress monitoring, and extended intensive instructional time. Tier 3 curriculum may include the use of *LANGUAGE!*, *Read 180* and *System 44*, or could be designed by the school site.

When grading these students on the School Progress Report, it must be understood that the Tier 3 supports focus on instruction in the foundational reading elements, many of which are taught exclusively in grades K-2.

**Achievement:**

The District’s policy is that teachers are to evaluate students in the areas of achievement and effort. As outlined in BUL-2332.4, dated July 31, 2008, “achievement” scores indicate student *progress* towards **grade-level** state and District learning standards in reading, writing, listening and speaking:

- 4 Advanced (Exceeds Standards)
- 3 Proficient (Meets Standards)
- 2 Partial Proficient (Partially meets the standards)
- 1 Not Proficient (Unable to meet the standard)

**Effort:**

Scores for effort indicate how the student is striving toward achievement of standards covered in their given curriculum:

- 4 Strong (Always)
- 3 Consistent (Usually)
- 2 Inconsistent (Sometimes)
- 1 Poor (Rarely)

All assessments and grading criteria used should be measured in terms of the standards mastered and the effort and growth demonstrated by the student. In terms of **achievement** students making adequate progress in Tier 3 interventions may not *meet* grade-level standards, however they may be *approaching* grade-level standards. The amount of **effort** a student puts into their work in a Tier 3 class should be evaluated solely within the context of that class, and is not dependent on the student meeting grade-level standards. Principals and/or teachers should have already informed parents about the differentiated curriculum and instruction their children are receiving, along with the data/assessment results to substantiate the need for the replacement program. Parents should have a clear understanding of the intervention program and how the school progress report describes their student’s progress as measured against mastery of grade level standards. A mark that is less than “meets standards” does not necessarily mean the student is not performing well in the Tier 3 curriculum, it simply indicates the student is not yet at grade-level reading.



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Please find attached a correspondence, in English and Spanish, that could be used to explain to parents the purpose of the replacement curriculum and the grading practices used as students make progress towards grade-level standards in literacy.

Additionally, by accessing the following links, you may download English or Spanish brochures, Teaching and Learning in a Multi-Tiered Framework for Instruction. These brochures will give parents further understanding of the instruction and supports their student is receiving.

[http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA\\_LAUDS/LAUDSDNET/OFFICES/RESPONSE\\_INTERVENTION\\_HOME/RTI\\_PARENTS/LAUDS%20RTI%20BROCHURE.PDF](http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUDS/LAUDSDNET/OFFICES/RESPONSE_INTERVENTION_HOME/RTI_PARENTS/LAUDS%20RTI%20BROCHURE.PDF)

[http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA\\_LAUDS/LAUDSDNET/OFFICES/RESPONSE\\_INTERVENTION\\_HOME/RTI\\_PARENTS/LAUDS%20RTI%20BROCHURE%20IN%20SPA.PDF](http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUDS/LAUDSDNET/OFFICES/RESPONSE_INTERVENTION_HOME/RTI_PARENTS/LAUDS%20RTI%20BROCHURE%20IN%20SPA.PDF)

For questions or clarifications please contact the Literacy/Language Arts Specialists:  
Debra Conejo, Alison Pickering, Jaimi Krielaart, or Catrisa Booker at (213) 241-6444



**SAMPLE PARENT LETTER**

**Progress Report for Tier 3 Replacement Curriculum**

This Tier 3 replacement curriculum, \_\_\_\_\_, focuses on instruction in the foundational reading elements. In Tier 3 interventions, grade-level standards are not taught to mastery, as students at this level need first to master earlier grade-level skills.

The District’s policy requires that teachers evaluate students in the areas of achievement and effort.

**Achievement:**

Scores indicate student *progress* towards **grade-level** state standards in reading, writing, listening and speaking:

- |   |                    |                              |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 4 | Advanced           | Exceeds the standard         |
| 3 | Proficient         | Meets the standard           |
| 2 | Partial Proficient | Partially meets the standard |
| 1 | Not Proficient     | Unable to meet the standard  |

In terms of **achievement**, students making adequate progress in Tier 3 interventions might not *meet* grade-level standards, however they may be *approaching* grade-level standards.

**Effort:**

Scores for effort indicate how the student is striving toward achievement of standards covered in their given curriculum:

- |   |              |           |
|---|--------------|-----------|
| 4 | Strong       | Always    |
| 3 | Consistent   | Usually   |
| 2 | Inconsistent | Sometimes |
| 1 | Poor         | Rarely    |

The amount of **effort** a student puts into class work in a Tier 3 curriculum is evaluated within the context of that class, and is not dependent on the student achieving grade-level standards.

**Reporte de progreso para currículum de Escalafón 3**

Este currículum de reemplazo, \_\_\_\_\_, tiene como enfoque instruccional los elementos fundamentales de la lectoescritura. En las intervenciones de Escalafón 3, los estándares a nivel de grado actual no se enseñan a nivel de dominio, ya que los estudiantes a este nivel necesitan dominar primero las destrezas de los niveles anteriores.

El Distrito requiere que los maestros evalúen a los estudiantes en las áreas de **logro** y **esfuerzo**.

**Logro:**

Las notas de logro o aprovechamiento indican *progreso* del estudiante hacia los estándares en lectura, escritura, audición y habla:

- |   |                          |                              |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 4 | Avanzado                 | Sobrepasa el estándar        |
| 3 | Proficiente              | Alcanza el estándar          |
| 2 | Parcialmente proficiente | Alcanza en parte el estándar |
| 1 | No proficiente           | No alcanza el estándar       |

Con respeto al **logro**, es posible que los estudiantes que tienen un progreso adecuado en su curso de intervención *no* estén alcanzando todavía los estándares de su nivel de grado, pero puede que estén *acercando* los estándares de su nivel.

**Esfuerzo:**

Las notas de **esfuerzo** indican cómo trabaja el estudiante hacia las metas de su currículum.

- |   |               |             |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| 4 | Fuerte        | Siempre     |
| 3 | Consistente   | Normalmente |
| 2 | Inconsistente | A veces     |
| 1 | Débil         | Pocas veces |

Se evalúa el **esfuerzo** que hace un estudiante en una clase de currículum de Escalafón 3 dentro del contexto de la clase, y la nota no depende del logro de estándares de su nivel actual.