ENGLISH LEARNER UPDATES NEWSLETTER: COVID-19 EDITION (4)

Information and Updates from the California Department of Education (CDE)

English Learner Support Division

Issue 6, April 24, 2020

New Weekly Format

This is the fourth of a **special series of COVID-19 English Learner (EL) Updates Newsletters focusing on school closures and services for English learners.** This newsletter will be disseminated **weekly** to keep you informed of new resources and guidance for supporting the English learners you serve.

This Issue Includes:

- **Technology:**
    - New closing the digital divide task force announced
    - Supporting students with technology for the computer science Advanced Placement (AP) exam
- **Funding:** Highlighted US Department of Education frequently asked question (FAQ)
- **Assessment:** Interim assessments now available for local educational agencies (LEAs) for distance learning
- **Webinars:**
    - Implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in a distance learning environment
    - San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools considerations for English learners and online learning webinar
    - New CDE COVID-19 webinars web page
- **Resources:**
    - New CDE COVID-19 communications web page
    - Links to resources on the CDE COVID-19 web page relevant to English learners

Technology

New Closing the Digital Divide Task Force Announced

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced a new task force to close the digital divide for California students who lack access to resources such as internet connectivity and devices. California State Senator Connie Leyva, the Chair of the Senate Education Committee, will co-chair this committee. The Closing the Digital Divide Task Force will help facilitate donations, create more publicity, and cast a bigger spotlight on those who can help. This task force plans to hold a public hearing where internet service providers may be called upon to testify on their efforts to improve internet access during the pandemic.

More information on this task force is available in CDE Task Force to Close the Digital Divide news release at https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr20/yr20rel21.asp.

Supporting Students with Technology for the Computer Science Advanced Placement AP Exam

Code.org is working with Amazon and the College Board to help ensure students who need laptops at home can finish their AP computer science course and take the exam this year. Students can register at https://collegeboard.tfaforms.net/74. Availability is limited and based on a first-come, first-served basis. Students can use the laptop for the AP exam and keep it afterwards—it is theirs to inspire ongoing learning.

This gift is made possible through a generous donation from Amazon Future Engineer for students who need laptops at home.

Funding

Highlighted Frequently Asked Question

Question: May a grantee or subgrantee continue to pay the compensation of an employee paid with grant funds from the Department during the period the employee is unable to work because his or her organization is closed due to novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Answer: Yes. Generally, a grantee or subgrantee may continue to charge the compensation (including but not necessarily limited to salaries, wages, and fringe benefits) of its employees who are paid by a currently active grant funded by the Department to that grant, consistent with the organization's policies and procedures for paying compensation from all funding sources, Federal and non-Federal, under unexpected or extraordinary circumstances, such as a public health emergency like COVID-19. Thus, if the organization pays, consistent with its policies and procedures, similarly situated employees whose compensation is paid with non-Federal funds during an extended closure, those paid with grant funds from the Department may also continue to be paid. However, an employee who is being paid with Department grant funds while the program grant activities are closed in whole or in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic may not also be paid for the time during which the program is closed by

the organization or another organization for working on other activities that are not closed down.

If a grantee or subgrantee does not currently have in place a policy that addresses extraordinary circumstances such as those caused by COVID-19, the grantee or subgrantee may amend or create a policy in order to put emergency contingencies in place for Federal and non-Federal similarly situated employees. If the conditions exist for charges to be made to the Federal grant, charges may also be made to any non-Federal sources that are used by a grantee or subgrantee in order to meet a matching requirement.

A grantee and subgrantee must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation as required by 2 CFR § 200.302 (financial management), 2 CFR § 200.430(i) (standards for documenting personnel expenses), and 2 CFR § 200.333 (retention requirements for records) to substantiate the charging of any compensation costs related to interruption of operations or services. At the same time, recipients should consider ways that employees paid with grant funds can support continuing activities, including distance learning opportunities for students served by the grant.

Response is from the April 8, 2020, "Select Questions Related to Use of Department of Education Grant Funds During the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019" fact sheet posted on the ED web page at https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/factsheet-fiscal-questions.pdf.

If you have additional questions related to the use of Title III funds during the COVID-19 crisis, please contact Geoffrey Ndirangu, Education Programs Consultant, Language Policy and Leadership Office, by phone at 916-323-5831 or by email at gndirang@cde.ca.gov.

Assessment

Interim Assessments Now Available to LEAs for Distance Learning

The CDE has opened the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for LEA staff to use as part of distance learning while schools are closed due to novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

How does this work? After the teacher starts a test session for students, the students can access the interim assessments on a nonsecure website with either the Chrome or Firefox browser. Accessing the interim assessments will be available through June 30, 2020.

Guides for teachers, students, and families about remote interim assessment administration are available on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Interim Assessment Administration Resources web page at http://www.caaspp.org/ta-resources/interim.html.

Webinars

Implementing UDL in a Distance Learning Environment Webinar

Date and time: April 24, 2020, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Description: Hosted by the CDE Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division in collaboration with the California UDL Coalition, this webinar will provide information on UDL, a framework that can assist in the planning of instruction through a lens of equity and inclusion, whether that instruction is delivered in a classroom or from a distance.

Presenters from the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Santa Clara County Office of Education will provide a broad overview of UDL and also guidance on integrating UDL principles as teachers plan and deliver instruction in a distance learning format.

Link: View this webinar via Facebook live at https://www.facebook.com/CAEducation/

San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Considerations for English Learners and Online Learning Webinar

Description: This recorded webinar focuses on how LEAs can support English learners with online learning. The webinar takes the Sobrato Early Academic Language article by Heather Skibbins, "6 Key Considerations for Supporting English Learns with Distance Learning" (available at https://bit.ly/SEALarticle), and breaks each of the six components down, providing practical resources that support educators with each step.

Links: View the recorded webinar at https://bit.ly/SBCSSwebinar or view the slides at http://bit.ly/ELDISTANCE.

New CDE Webinars Web Page

To make it easier to find past COVID-19 related CDE webinars, the CDE has created a new Coronavirus (COVID-19) Webinars web page at https://bit.ly/CDEwebinarsCOVID. This web page includes a comprehensive listing of all CDE webinars related to COVID-19 and includes links to recorded webinars.

COVID-19 Resources and Information

New CDE Coronavirus (COVID-19) State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) Communications Web Page

The CDE has created a new Coronavirus (COVID-19) SSPI Communications web page that includes all news releases and correspondence from Superintendent Tony Thurmond related to COVID-19. This page also includes links to all of the weekly emails to the field.

Links to Resources Relevant to English Learners on the CDE COVID-19 Web Page

Please visit the CDE Coronavirus (COVID19) web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/coronavirus.asp for the latest updates on information and resources regarding COVID-19 and California's response

- New COVID-19 Guidance for K–12 Schools http://staging.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/guidance.asp
  Links on this web page include resources for distance learning, school meals, special education guidance, and child care and student supervision.

- Getting Internet Access: Available Plans https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/availableinternetplans.asp

This web page provides a list of internet providers, including those offering free internet, with links to their web pages for more information.

- **NEW:** Coronavirus (COVID-19) Webinars https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/codiv19webinars.asp
  This web page provides links to all CDE webinars related to COVID-19 including the April 9, 2020, English Learner Support Strategies Webinar.

For questions regarding English learner programs and services, please contact the Language Policy and Leadership Office by email at ELSD@CDE.ca.gov or by phone at 916-319-0845. You may also visit the CDE EL web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/**.**

To subscribe to the EL Updates Listserv and receive this newsletter along with other updates, send a blank email to join-english-learner-updates@mlist.cde.ca.gov.