

TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Language Acquisition Department
2025 East Winsett Street, Tucson, AZ 85719-6942
Telephone: (520) 225-4600

September 10, 2013

Thomas Tyree, President
Arizona State Board of Education
1535 West Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: No. 74-CV-204-TUC-DCB

Dear President Tyree:

In compliance with the four-year Unitary Status Plan developed as part of the U.S. District Court consent decree referenced above, Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) urgently requests approval from the State Board for the implementation of a Reading Extension Option (REO) for English Language Development (ELD). The proposed option (described in the following pages) would be available to ELL students in our schools' ELD programs, starting in the spring semester of 2013-2014 and continuing through the 2016-2017 school year.

Under the proposed REO, the four hours of ELD required by state law would continue unchanged: four periods or 240 minutes (give or take the ten percent leeway specified by the Task Force), but the time spent in a segregated setting would be reduced. The REO also would comport with all other requirements established by the Arizona English Language Learner Task Force for the four-hour ELD model, except that English literacy development would be extended into the content area. This would allow for continued ELD instruction in an integrated setting while providing access to the Common Core with emphasis on informational texts.

If you should require additional information about the proposal, please know I would be happy to make an in-person presentation to the State Board.

With your help, we believe we can comply with the court's desegregation order while continuing to address the needs of our ELL students.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ignacio Ruiz, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ignacio Ruiz, Jr.
Director

PROPOSED READING EXTENSION OPTION

Proposed change: A Reading Extension Option to reduce the amount of time ELLs are segregated
Requested by: Language Acquisition Department, Tucson Unified School District
Target population: ELLs in grades K-12 (90% of whom are either Latino or African American)
Justification: Reduction in segregation of ELLs stipulated by the USP as follows:
"The District shall not assign students to classrooms or services in a manner that impedes the District from meeting its desegregation obligations" [Section (V) (E) (1)].

TABLE I: An illustration of the time allocation in the proposed Reading Extension Option

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT <i>READING EXTENSION OPTION</i>	
Segregated Grouping 2 hours or Periods	Integrated Grouping 2 hours or Periods
<i>Oral English Conversation/Vocabulary (30 min.)</i> <i>Grammar (30 min.)</i> <i>Reading (30 min.)</i> <i>Writing (30 min.)</i>	<i>Oral English Conversation/Vocabulary (30 min.)</i> <i>Grammar (30 min.)</i> <i>Reading (30 min.)</i> <i>Writing (30 min.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This extends literacy instruction into the content area in an integrated setting, allowing for the inclusion of two-year reclassified, OCR directive and mainstream students who would most benefit from the use of sheltered instructional techniques. All ELL students in the Segregated Grouping, as determined by their AZELLA test scores, will receive two hours of daily English Language Development that includes Oral English Conversation/ Vocabulary, Grammar, Reading and Writing using the <i>Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards</i>. All students in the Integrated Grouping will receive two hours of daily English Language Development through content instruction that includes Oral English Conversation/ Vocabulary, Grammar, Reading and Writing. Instruction will include the SIOP model and adhere to the <i>Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards</i> as well as the corresponding <i>Common Core</i> standards. 	

Additional information:

- TUSD uses a separate language arts adoption for ELLs, so mixing students during the hours of literary focus would defeat the integration purpose, as ELLs would still be segregated into an ELL-only reading group.
- SEI, ESL or BLE endorsed and highly qualified content teachers shall address the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards during science and social studies instruction.
- The Unitary Status Plan stipulates that TUSD shall provide additional professional development (PD) for teachers of ELL students. TUSD will develop PD sessions to equip content teachers with the ability to effectively address the ELP standards along with the respective content standards. This is a responsibility that content teachers in ILLP schools are already expected to carry out. The PD sessions would thus serve both groups of teachers simultaneously.
- The issue of ELL segregation is as crucial to African American students as it is to Latino students. One out of ten African American students in TUSD is identified as having a primary or home language other than English. Whether their primary language is a colonial tongue such as Arabic or French, or a native African language such as Kirundi or Somali, refugee-status ELLs currently suffer from the same severe dropout rates affecting other ELL populations in Arizona.

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Thomas Tyree, President
 AZ State Board of Education
 1535 W. Jefferson St.
 Phoenix, AZ 85007

2. Article Number

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COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

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