

Evaluating Policies, Programs, and Strategies to Support English Learners

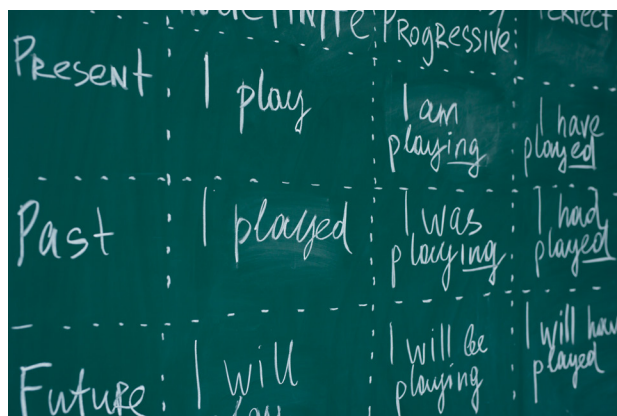
Client: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Overview

The 2015 Every Student Success Act (ESSA) required states to develop standardized reclassification policies for students leaving their English learner (EL) status. Changing a student's status from English learner to English proficient can affect institutional settings, language supports, and the opportunities available to students. Inappropriately timed reclassification can result in lower academic achievement and attainment, either when the change occurs too early for students to be ready for instruction in mainstream classrooms or too late for them to have opportunities to learn academic content. Successful reclassification, however, can have widespread benefits across the United States as roughly 1 in 10 students are classified as being English learners.

Insight is supporting a rigorous evaluation of the impacts of reclassification on student outcomes with the following research questions:

- What is the impact of reclassification on academic achievement and attainment for former EL students relative to EL students? How much do impacts vary across student subgroups? Across state or local policy contexts (e.g., criteria used for reclassification)?
- What is the impact of reclassification on the instructional opportunities and experiences of former EL students relative to EL students? How much do impacts vary across student subgroups? Across state or local policy contexts?
- What aspects of state or local policy or student characteristics and experiences are associated with variation in impacts?



- Are states and districts implementing statewide standardized entrance and exit procedures as intended?

The study will use a student-level regression discontinuity design to estimate the impact of reclassification. It will rely on state student records data, data from the National Student Clearinghouse, policy documents on exit policies, and a survey of state and district administrators. As a first step, Insight is working with administrative data on students from nine states to assess data quality and prepare the data for analysis. The data include academic achievement scores to determine reclassification status, academic performance across various subject areas and educational attainment, student background characteristics, and state and local policy contexts.

Products

Final report