

PSC Solution: TIP0024a

Date: 8/12/2010, Updated 7/21/2011

Application: ESS

School Year: 2009-2010, 2010-2011

File Specifications: N/X045 — Immigrant, N/X141 — LEP Enrolled

Solution Type: Technical Tip

Title: Determining the student Language Code using the ISO standard

Issue Description:

This article explains how to use the current ISO standard as a reference for classifying languages in ESS data files.

Although the ISO 639-3 standard is now available, SEAs should continue using ISO 639-2 for their source of Language Codes for SY 2009-10 and SY 2010-11. ISO 639-2 can be found at the following website: http://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/code_list.php

If a student has a home language that is not included in the list, try to determine the associated language family. The ISO 639-2 has many “Other” values that could apply to your state. When using these “Other” values please identify the other language in the Explanation field.

An example is students who speak the Maay language. This language is not included in the language list. According to the Ethnologue Web site (<http://www.ethnologue.com/home.asp>), Maay is a Cushitic language. The ISO 639-2 has a value for Cushitic (Other). In this case you would report your Maay speaking student count using the Cushitic (Other). In the Explanation field include a comment that the students in this category speak the Maay language.

In cases where you have language codes that are not amongst those accepted by ESS and do not map to another code that is part of the ISO 639-2, you should leave those students out of the count in category set B but include them in the Total of the Education Unit.

States are responsible for finding a way to standardize the data from their LEAs, so that it can be reported consistently in the EDFacts file submission. Some states send a “match list” to LEAs so that they report data consistently. This data is used for mandatory reporting to Congress in the Title III Biennial Report.