

## Catawba County Schools ESL Department Procedures for Identifying Legal Name of Hispanic Students for Enrollment

The majority of our Hispanic students have two last names. The first last name is called the paternal last name, the last name of the student's father. The second last name is the maternal last name, the last name of the mother.

This has raised some issues dealing with student enrollment and student records. The students' legal names are as they appear on the Birth Certificate unless other documentation can be provided proving otherwise. Due to a large range of inconsistencies in the way students names have been recorded upon enrollment in the past, the following should be used as a guideline for future enrollments and should also be used as a guideline for correcting current students with the wrong name or incomplete name on their school records.

### Guidelines for identifying legal name of Hispanic students:

- Students should be enrolled with the name as it appears on the birth certificate.
- The paternal last name followed by the maternal last name is what appears on most Birth Certificates from Latin American countries.
- To facilitate the computer manipulation of data, it is recommended that the two last names be separated by a **hyphen** rather than a space.
  - There is no question about where the student's name fits into alphabetical listings.
  - This avoids the inappropriate dropping of one of the last names.
- Students or parents may indicate a preference for using one last name instead of the hyphenated combination, especially families that have resided in the U.S. longer.
  - The students **must** still be enrolled as the name stated by the Birth Certificate unless the family can produce other legal documents proving the validity of the preferred name. (Documents such as Social Security Cards, Tax Identification Number Cards, or documentation from Immigration and Naturalization Services).
  - Students born in the U.S. may have only one last name on their Birth Certificates. In this case the student again is enrolled as the name as it appears on the Birth Certificate.

Enrolling students by their legal names is of utmost importance. Many implications arise when a student's complete legal name does not appear on school records. For example:

- The names on Driver Eligibility Certificates do not match names on Birth Certificates and Social Security Cards when presented to DMV for Permits.
- The names on high school diplomas, transcripts, and other records do not match students' other documents and can cause problems with college admissions and employment.
- A student enrolled in one county school as *José Rodriguez* moves to another county school where he is enrolled by the name on his Birth Certificate, *José Rodriguez Sanchez*. The new school has difficulty accessing his data because they have enrolled him under two different names.

### ESL Teacher Responsibility in Identifying Students Currently Enrolled Under the Wrong or Incomplete Last Name:

- Compare all Hispanic students' names as they appear on all school records to the names as they appear on the Birth Certificate. (Cumulative folder check)
- Ensure that names that are incorrect are changed electronically through the NCWISE data manager for your school.
- Inform the students' guidance counselor, teachers, and any other school personnel involved of the change.
- If you are unsure whether a name should be changed or not, contact the parents. If the complete name as it appears on the Birth Certificate is not the preferred name of the family, other documents must be provided or the name needs to be changed in your school.
- Remember consistency is the important thing here. We do not have the power to assign legal names or change legal names. We do have the responsibility to ensure that all students are registered in our schools under the correct name.