English Learner Implementation Support

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Supporting English Learners (ELs) requires more than meeting compliance requirements; it demands intentional planning, strong instructional practices, and ongoing collaboration across systems, schools, and classrooms. This chapter provides practical tools and best-practice guidance to help leaders design and strengthen EL programs from enrollment through graduation and beyond.

Each section offers clear explanations of how to implement required forms and processes, how to use data to inform decisions, and how to adapt instruction to meet the needs of ELs at every proficiency level. Topics include identifying and serving new students, selecting effective instructional models, developing Individual Language Acquisition Plans (ILAPs), monitoring language and academic progress, supporting former ELs, and creating pathways to postsecondary success.

By using this chapter as a guide, systems and schools can build cohesive, effective EL programs that ensure all students develop the language and academic skills needed to succeed in school and beyond.

New Students

A strong EL program begins with intentional practices that support students from the moment they enter a school system. The foundation of this work is the administration of a Home Language Survey (HLS) for every newly enrolled student. This survey is a critical first step in identifying students who may require language support services and ensures that no eligible student is overlooked. Once the HLS indicates a potential need, screening assessments should be conducted promptly so that placement decisions are accurate and timely.

Clear, supportive communication with families is essential during this process. Schools should notify parents of screening results, placement decisions, and next steps in a way that is easy to understand. Providing this information in the family's preferred language builds trust and helps establish a collaborative relationship from the start. Families should leave the initial enrollment process with a clear understanding of what services their child will receive and how those services will support both language development and academic success.

Once a student is identified and placed, leaders should coordinate schedules to ensure that language services are delivered consistently and without disruption. It is equally important to establish collaboration time among EL staff, classroom teachers, and other stakeholders so that instructional approaches are aligned and tailored to the students' individual needs. This coordination creates a seamless support structure from the first day a student enters the school. By prioritizing these steps for

new students, administrators set the stage for effective language development, strong academic progress, and meaningful family partnerships throughout the student's educational journey.

Ongoing Tasks

Sustaining a strong EL program requires intentional practices that are woven into the daily operations of a school. These ongoing tasks ensure that services remain alert to student needs, instruction is informed by data, and families are consistently engaged as partners in their child's education. One of the most critical responsibilities is establishing and maintaining clear procedures to screen all incoming students promptly. Timely and accurate identification allows schools to place students in appropriate language services without delay, setting them up for immediate support. Once identified, ELs must receive accommodations tailored to their language proficiency levels, and those accommodations should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect student growth and evolving instructional needs.

For students who are not demonstrating expected progress toward language goals, schools should implement and monitor ILAPs. These plans guide targeted adjustments to services and supports and help ensure that instruction corresponds to each student's unique learning trajectory. Administrators should also build structures that support teachers in using language proficiency data, progress monitoring results, and ILAP goals to plan daily lessons. Regular collaborative meetings give teachers a forum to discuss student progress, share strategies, and make instructional adjustments based on current data and classroom observations.

Family engagement is another cornerstone of effective ongoing practice. Schools must provide translated communications, including report cards, progress updates, and essential school information,so families have full access to their child's academic progress and educational opportunities. Communication should extend beyond academics to include information about after-school programs, school events, extracurricular activities, and community resources, helping families stay connected and engaged with the school community.

Leadership involvement is essential to maintaining the quality and effectiveness of EL instruction. Administrators should conduct regular classroom walkthroughs focused on language development practices and collaborate with teachers to strengthen instructional approaches. These observations provide opportunities to offer targeted feedback, identify professional learning needs, and ensure that language development remains a central component of classroom instruction. Together, these ongoing practices create a continuous system of support that advances language acquisition, promotes academic achievement, and builds strong partnerships with families throughout the school year.

Bi-Annual Tasks

In addition to ongoing practices, effective EL programming requires structured checkpoints throughout the year to assess progress and guide adjustments. At least twice a year, school leaders should facilitate comprehensive EL data meetings that bring together EL specialists, classroom teachers, and other relevant staff. These meetings are an opportunity to examine student growth holistically by reviewing language goals outlined in lesson plans, analyzing language proficiency data, and considering additional

indicators such as grades, attendance, benchmark assessments, and state test results. By looking across multiple measures, administrators and educators can identify trends, celebrate areas of growth, and pinpoint where instructional strategies or supports need refinement.

These scheduled reviews also ensure that no student's progress is overlooked, particularly for those who have exited EL services or whose families have chosen to opt out. Even after formal services have ended, schools have a responsibility to continue monitoring these students through classroom observations and data analysis. Regularly checking on their academic performance helps ensure that they remain successful and that any emerging challenges are addressed quickly.

Leaders should align bi-annual data reviews with existing school or system cycles, such as the end of semesters or grading periods, to integrate them naturally into the school's planning calendar. The insights gathered during these meetings should inform decision-making at every levelfrom classroom instruction and ILAP adjustments to professional learning priorities and resource allocation. By embedding these reflective checkpoints into the school year, administrators create a feedback loop that strengthens instructional practices and ensures EL services remain effective over time.

Notice for Parent/Guardian Wishing to Decline EL Services

Federal civil rights law requires schools to provide English language development services to all students identified as ELs. However, parents and guardians maintain the right to decline these services for their child. The *Notice for Parent/Guardian Wishing to Decline EL Services* form ensures that families make this decision with a full understanding of its implications and that schools remain compliant with state and federal obligations. Administrators should use this form as part of a structured process that prioritizes clear communication, documentation, and continued support for the student.

Before a family makes a decision, school staff should schedule a meeting to discuss the student's English proficiency results, explain how services support language and content development, and outline what services would entail. This conversation should be conducted in the family's preferred language, and interpreter and translation services must be offered to ensure full understanding. The meeting should also make clear that declining services does not remove the school's responsibility to support the student's language development or to administer the annual English language proficiency assessment.

If a parent or guardian chooses to decline services, the signed form serves as official documentation of that decision. It verifies that the family understands their child's eligibility for EL services, the potential benefits of participation, and their ongoing rights, including the ability to request services at any time in the future. It also confirms that no school personnel encouraged the decision and that translation and interpretation were offered. Once the form is signed, it should be securely stored in the student's cumulative file and shared with appropriate staff members, including EL specialists, classroom teachers, and administrators, so that instructional planning and progress monitoring can continue.

Even after a family declines services, schools remain obligated to meet the language and academic needs of the student. The student must continue to participate in the annual English language proficiency assessment, and teachers should use the results, along with other data, to inform instruction. Regular

monitoring of academic progress is essential, and the school team should collaborate to determine whether additional supports or instructional adjustments are necessary. Administrators should also consider scheduling periodic follow-up conversations with families to revisit the decision and discuss the student's progress, ensuring that support aligns with the student's needs.

Notice for Parent/Guardian Wishing to Decline

Student Name: **Grade:**
School Name: **School System:**

On _____ you were notified by your child's school that your child has been identified as an English Learner (EL), though a Home Language Survey administered to you upon enrollment and an English language proficiency screener administered to your child. Federal civil rights law requires schools to provide English language development services to all students who are ELs. These services support a child's English language and content acquisition so that the child may attain grade-level standards and achieve academic success.

You have expressed that you would like to decline your child's English language (EL) services. Note that parents/guardians have the right to decline services; however, schools maintain an obligation to ensure that the needs of ELs are met, which may include continuing to provide English language development services as deemed necessary by a child's team of educators. When a parent/guardian declines services, a student will still be administered an annual English language proficiency assessment until exiting by achieving proficiency.

Please complete the section below to confirm your understanding of the implications of declining your child's EL services.

I, _____, decline EL services for my child, _____.

I understand that my child's English proficiency assessment score indicates that he/she could benefit from English language development services and an Individualized Language Acquisition Plan.

I understand that the school system is still obligated to meet state and federal requirements, including annual English language proficiency testing.

This is my decision, and no one has encouraged me to decline EL services for my child.

I understand that I can change this decision at any time, and my child will receive EL services.

I was invited to meet with school staff regarding EL services. Yes No

I was offered interpreter and translation services. Yes No

_____
Print full name

_____ _____
Signature Date
Interpreter Name and Signature: _____

Providing ELs with a Specialized Language Program

In determining whether a program for ELs complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, USDOE Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has used the standard outlined in Castañeda v. Pickard, 648 F. 2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981). Under this standard, a program for ELs is acceptable if:

- The school system is pursuing a program informed by an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or, at least, deemed a legitimate experimental strategy [A Sound Approach];
- The programs and practices actually used by the school system are reasonably calculated to implement effectively the educational theory adopted by the school [Reasonable Implementation]; and
- The school's program succeeds, after a legitimate trial, in producing results indicating that the language barriers confronting students are actually being overcome [Evaluate for Outcomes] Id. at 1009-10.

Types of Programs

The statute does not mandate or forbid any specific type of program. It does, however, define scientifically-based research as research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to educational activities and programs (ESEA section 9101(37)). The EL must also have access to all additional services and programs available to other students.

Depending on each school system's program(s), English and content-area instructional programs may be concurrent or sequential. The plan must be comprehensive and provide ELs with appropriate English language development services, full access to subject matter content, and other generally available resources, including all other educational programs and extracurricular activities.

Instructional Models

Selecting and implementing the appropriate instructional model is one of the most critical decisions school systems make in designing effective programs for ELs. Each model reflects a different philosophy and approach to language development and content instruction, and the choice of model should be guided by student demographics, language proficiency levels, staff expertise, and program goals. This section provides an overview of common instructional models used to support ELs, along with implementation considerations to help administrators and educators select and sustain the most effective approach for their context.

Using Instructional Models Effectively

Instructional models are not one-size-fits-all. School systems may implement different models across schools or grade levels, depending on their EL population and available resources. It is also common for students to move between models as their language proficiency develops. Regardless of the model, all

programs must be grounded in evidence-based practices, aligned with Louisiana Student Standards, and designed to ensure that ELs have access to grade-level content while developing English proficiency.

Each model described below includes a brief explanation, key features, and important considerations for implementation. Leaders should use this information to inform program design, guide staffing and scheduling decisions, and support teachers with the professional learning necessary to deliver high-quality instruction.

Program Type	Description	Implementation Notes
English as a Second Language	This approach is designed primarily to teach ELs English language skills. The program may also teach study skills and content vocabulary. The medium of instruction is English with little or no use of the native language.	English-only model Can be push-in or pull-out ESL-trained staff provide supplementary English instruction Teachers do not need to be bilingual
Content-Based English as a Second Language	This approach uses academic content areas as the "vehicle" for developing English language skills. English instruction is concurrent with subject matter instruction. English is used as the medium of instruction.	English-only model Pull-out instruction can supplement content area instruction
Sheltered English Instruction	An instructional approach similar to content-based ESL programs, with the focus of making academic instruction in English comprehensible to ELs. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, learning strategies, and other methods and resources to teach academic language and concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects.	English-only model Adjust language demands based on student proficiency level.
Dual Language/Two-Way Immersion	The main goal of this type of program is for students to develop proficiency in English and another language. Students receive significant instruction time in both languages. Classes that participate in dual language programs are usually comprised of roughly equal numbers of native English speakers and ELs.	Bilingual model Goal is to learn English while also learning content in the primary language. Transitioning to an all-English-speaking classroom is not necessarily the goal.
Newcomer Program	Newcomer programs are essentially separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed primarily to meet the needs of newly arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs for a set period of time before transitioning into other specialized language programs.	

Program Type	Description	Implementation Notes
Structured English Immersion	The goal of this type of program is to teach English skills in a progressively complex way so that ELs can succeed in the general education classroom. Instruction is entirely in English, although teachers and/or paraprofessionals have specialized training in meeting the needs of ELs, hold ESL certification, and may possess at least some communication skills in the primary language of the EL.	English-only model Teachers need specialized ESL certification Structured English Immersion (SEI) focuses on English language instruction, which means that ELs receive substantially less content instruction than their non-EL peers.
Transitional Bilingual Education Program	This type of program, also known as early-exit bilingual, mainly uses the EL's primary language as a medium of instruction early on. Students receive instruction in the native language so that they may access content as much as possible while acquiring English. The program maintains and develops the student's primary language while developing English proficiency, gradually transitioning from a bilingual to an all-English instructional program. Note that teachers must be highly qualified in any content area(s) taught.	Bilingual model This model is most easily implemented in systems with a large number of students who speak the same language. Students are grouped by their primary language. Teachers must be highly qualified in content and be able to speak the native language of the students.

All ELs should receive daily instruction using high-quality core curriculum.

Staffing and Supporting An EL Program

Key points regarding staffing of an EL program include:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must provide the personnel necessary to effectively implement the selected EL program(s); necessary personnel include teachers who are qualified to provide EL services, core-content teachers who are highly qualified in their field, as well as trained to support EL students, and trained administrators who can evaluate these teachers;
- LEAs must provide adequate professional development and follow-up training to prepare EL program teachers and administrators to implement the EL program effectively; and
- LEAs must ensure that administrators who evaluate EL program staff are adequately trained to meaningfully evaluate whether EL teachers are appropriately employing their training in the classroom in order for the EL program model to successfully achieve its educational objectives.

Professional Development

All school systems with a population of one or more EL students are required to provide professional development to teachers and administrators regarding research-based programming on how to serve EL students. It is the school system's responsibility to ensure that all teachers are implementing strategies to

serve EL students successfully during instruction using a high-quality curriculum. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has created a Professional Development (PD) vendor guide to help guide school systems in selecting recommended PD providers who will ensure that both EL and general education teachers are able to meet the needs of their ELs. This professional development can be funded by federal grant dollars, including Title II and Title III.

Grading ELs

Although school systems decide how an EL should be graded, ELs should not receive a failing grade in their content classes if their lack of English proficiency is keeping them from fully accessing the content. If an EL is receiving all accommodations and/or classroom modifications and is still unable to access the content, the student should be referred to the School Building Learning Committee (SBLC) for evaluation.

Level 1: Low-Incident EL Population Best Practices

School systems with a small EL population face unique challenges in providing comprehensive language development services, particularly when dedicated EL staff are limited or shared across multiple schools. However, even in low-incidence contexts, it is possible to design effective programming and instructional practices that meet EL needs and accelerate language growth. The key is to integrate language development into daily instruction, use flexible staffing models, and adopt approaches that allow general education teachers to take an active role in language support.

Instructional Model Considerations

For systems with a low-incidence EL population, **Content-Based English as a Second Language (ESL)** and **Sheltered English Instruction** are often the most practical and effective models. These approaches allow schools to embed language instruction into core content without requiring extensive separate programming. Content-based ESL integrates English language development directly into lessons in math, science, social studies, and ELA, while sheltered instruction uses scaffolds such as visuals, modeling, and structured discourse to make content comprehensible at varying levels of language proficiency.

Implementing these models effectively requires collaboration between general education teachers and any available EL support staff. Administrators should ensure that all teachers understand how to integrate language objectives into their daily instruction and how to adapt their teaching to support students at different proficiency levels. Professional learning should focus on strategies such as using sentence frames, explicit vocabulary instruction, structured speaking opportunities, and ongoing formative assessment to support both language and content learning.

Designing Integrated Language and Content Lessons

In a low-incidence setting, the most effective instruction embeds language development into grade-level content rather than treating it as a separate focus. Every lesson should include both **content objectives**, what students will learn from the curriculum, and **language objectives**, how students will use language to

access and demonstrate that learning. Teachers should identify the language functions, vocabulary, and structures students will need to engage in the lesson and plan opportunities to practice those skills.

Below is a suggested template for planning an integrated lesson:

Sample Integrated Language and Content Lesson Plan

- **Unit / Lesson:** Identify the unit and lesson title.
- **Content Objectives/Standards:** Specify the grade-level content knowledge and skills students will master.
- **Language Objectives:** Identify the language functions (e.g., describe, explain, compare) and domains (listening, speaking, reading, writing) students will practice.
- **Materials:** List content materials and language supports, such as visuals, bilingual dictionaries, graphic organizers, or sentence frames.
- **Key Vocabulary:** Identify essential academic vocabulary students will encounter and use.
- **Building Background / Links to Prior Knowledge:** Plan ways to connect new content to students' existing knowledge, experiences, or language.
- **Scaffolding / Accommodations:** Identify the scaffolds (e.g., visuals, modeling, simplified texts) and accommodations (e.g., extended time, small-group support) needed.
- **Lesson Delivery:** Describe how the lesson will be taught, how language and content will be integrated, and how students will practice new skills.
- **Review / Assessment:** Plan checks for understanding of both content and language objectives.

Lesson Planning Best Practices

The **Sample Lesson Plan Checklist** below can guide teachers as they design lessons that meet the dual goals of language and content development in a low-incidence setting. It ensures that instruction is intentional and standards-aligned to EL needs.

Content Focus and Language Objectives

- Clearly state content knowledge and skills aligned to grade-level standards.
- Include specific language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) students will use and practice.
- Emphasize key academic vocabulary and language structures.

Materials and Resources

- Use content-specific materials, manipulatives, models, and documents.
- Incorporate visual supports such as charts, diagrams, and multimedia.
- Provide bilingual resources (e.g., dictionaries, translation apps, labeled visuals).

- Use technology tools and language supports like word walls, sentence frames, and graphic organizers.

Vocabulary Development

- Activate or assess prior knowledge.
- Pre-teach and define critical academic vocabulary.
- Reinforce vocabulary with visuals, sentence frames, and repeated exposure in meaningful contexts.

Lesson Structure

- State and review learning objectives explicitly.
- Preview key vocabulary before engaging with content.
- Introduce and model new concepts with clear, scaffolded explanations and visuals.
- Model academic language through sentence frames, think-alouds, and guided practice.
- Provide structured opportunities for students to practice new language and content with peers and independently.
- Encourage students to explain their thinking verbally and in writing.

Assessment

- Use ongoing checks for understanding during instruction.
- Incorporate exit tickets, quick writes, or verbal responses tied to both content and language objectives.
- Use quizzes, projects, and performance tasks that assess language skills within academic content.

Differentiation

- Provide extra language scaffolds such as simplified instructions, word banks, or visuals.
- Adjust question complexity and task demands based on proficiency levels.
- Use collaborative structures like peer support and flexible grouping.
- Incorporate differentiated texts, supplementary practice, and adapted assignments.

Post-Lesson Reflection

- Reflect on whether students met both content and language objectives.
- Identify effective strategies and areas for improvement.
- Determine how well language supports aligned with student needs and plan adjustments for future lessons.

Key Takeaways for Low-Incidence Settings

In a low-incidence context, the most impactful EL instruction is not about creating separate programs but about building **capacity within core classrooms**. Administrators should prioritize professional learning that equips teachers with language-focused instructional strategies and ensures regular collaboration between general education staff and any available EL specialists.

Embedding language objectives into all lessons, providing intentional scaffolds, and using formative assessment data to guide instruction are essential practices. Even with a small EL population, these strategies ensure that language development is integrated into every part of the school day, creating a strong foundation for EL success.

Sample Integrated Language and Content Lesson Plan

Unit:	Lesson:
Content Objectives/Standards	Language Objectives:
Materials:	Key Vocabulary:
Building Background/Links to Prior Knowledge:	
Scaffolding/Accommodations:	
Lesson Delivery:	
Review/Assessment:	

Sample Lesson Plan Checklist		
Grade Level:	**Content Area:**	**Topic:**
Content Focus/Standards		
Language Focus		
Learning Objectives		
	Clearly stated concepts and skills related to the content	
	Aligned with grade-level standards or curriculum	
	Contains specified language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) that the students will practice.	
	Focuses on specific academic vocabulary and language structures	
Materials and Resources		
	Utilizes content-specific materials (manipulatives, models, documents, etc.)	
	Utilizes visual aids (charts, diagrams, videos, maps, etc.)	
	Provides bilingual/ESL resources (bilingual dictionaries, translation apps, visuals)	
	Utilizes technology tools	
	Provides language support tools (word walls, sentence frames, graphic organizers	
Vocabulary Development		
	Activates prior knowledge/pre-assess prior knowledge	
	Lists and defines critical vocabulary words necessary for understanding content and using academic English	
	Provides visuals, word walls, and sentence frames	
Lesson Structure		
	Explicitly states learning objectives	
	Previews key vocabulary	
	Introduces key concepts of the lesson with clear step-by-step explanations with visuals and demonstrations	
	Models academic language using sentence frames and think-alouds.	
	Scaffolds instruction using graphic organizers, guided practice, and other scaffolding strategies	
	Allows students to practice new content on their own or in pairs	
	Encourages students to explain their thought process aloud or in writing	
	Pairs students for peer practice	
Assessment		
	Checks for understanding throughout the lesson	
	Uses exit tickets or other assessments to show understanding of both the content and language objectives	
	Uses Quizzes and projects to assess both content knowledge and language skills.	
Differentiation		
	Provides extra language scaffolds (simplified instructions, visual aids, word banks)	
	Uses collaborative learning (peer support)	
	Adjusts questions or tasks based on student proficiency levels	
	Uses differentiated materials (simplified texts, extra practice, charts)	
Post-lesson Reflections		
	Did students meet both the content and language objectives?	
	What went well during the lesson?	
	What adjustments would make this more effective?	
	How well did the language supports align with the needs of ELs?	

Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP)

The ILAPis a critical tool designed to provide targeted support for ELs who require more intensive, individualized language development interventions. It is most commonly used for students who are not making expected progress toward language proficiency, newcomers who need additional scaffolds as they adjust to a new language and school environment, and long-term ELs whose language growth has plateaued. The ILAP is not a replacement for core EL services; rather, it serves as an additional layer of support that ensures instruction, interventions, and monitoring are tailored to the unique linguistic and academic needs of each student.

When to Develop an ILAP

An ILAP should be initiated when student data indicate that standard instructional supports and language development services are not sufficient to accelerate growth. This may include situations where

- a student's English language proficiency level has remained unchanged over multiple years,
- a newcomer requires foundational language development beyond what is provided in the core program, or
- classroom performance and formative assessments reveal persistent gaps in language skills.

The ILAP documents a focused plan to address these needs and ensures that educators collaborate intentionally to design, implement, and monitor interventions aligned with the student's profile.

Tailoring the ILAP for Newcomers and Long-Term ELs

While the ILAP follows the same structure for all students, how it is used, and the types of goals and supports it includes, should be guided by each student's language profile and educational background. Two groups often require distinct approaches: newcomers and long-term ELs.

Newcomers:

Students who are newly arrived to U.S. schools may have limited or interrupted formal education, varying literacy levels in their home language, and little to no exposure to English. For these students, ILAP goals should focus on foundational language skills and acculturation to the school environment. Instruction should emphasize oral language development, essential vocabulary, comprehension of classroom routines, and strategies for building literacy skills from the ground up. Goals may include demonstrating understanding of key classroom instructions, engaging in simple conversations, or writing basic sentences connected to grade-level content. Support strategies might include intensive small-group instruction, visual supports and realia, frequent opportunities for oral interaction, and scaffolds that build background knowledge while introducing academic language gradually. Collaboration among EL specialists,

classroom teachers, and counselors is essential to address both linguistic and personal needs during this transition period.

Long-term ELs:

Students identified as ELs for five or more years without achieving proficiency often require a different instructional focus. These long-term ELs may have strong conversational English but struggle with the academic language needed for reading complex texts, writing with precision, and engaging in extended discourse. ILAP goals for this group should target advanced language skills, including academic vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and discipline-specific language functions. Instruction should integrate explicit language objectives into content instruction and provide structured opportunities for extended speaking and writing. Strategies may include language-rich collaborative tasks, focused feedback on language use, targeted vocabulary instruction tied to complex texts, and scaffolded writing assignments that build toward grade-level standards. Regular progress monitoring and collaborative planning between teachers and EL specialists are essential to ensure that interventions address persistent gaps and support successful reclassification.

Section 1: Student Background and Proficiency Analysis

The first section of the ILAP captures critical background information, including personal, educational, and linguistic factors that influence language development. Educators should document the student's strengths to inform instruction and identify specific needs that require targeted support. For newcomers, this might include limited prior schooling or literacy in the home language, while for long-term ELs, it may reveal gaps in academic vocabulary or access to complex texts.

This section also includes an analysis of the student's current proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, based on the most recent English language proficiency assessment, such as the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT). Teachers and EL specialists should analyze this data to pinpoint which domains show growth, which are stagnant, and where targeted intervention is most needed. This analysis lays the foundation for setting meaningful, measurable goals in the next section.

Section 2: Goal Setting, Instructional Strategies, and Supports

Section 2 is the core of the ILAP, where educators develop specific, measurable goals tailored to the students' needs in each language domain. These goals should be grounded in Louisiana's English language proficiency standards and aligned with grade-level academic expectations. For newcomers, goals might focus on foundational language skills, such as understanding basic vocabulary and classroom instructions. For long-term ELs, goals may target higher-level language use, such as academic discourse, complex sentence structures, and subject-specific vocabulary needed to succeed in grade-level content.

Each goal must be supported by a clear plan for instruction, interaction, input, and assessment:

- **Input:** Identify the oral and written language the student will need and how they will access it through teacher modeling, scaffolded texts, or multimedia resources.
- **Interaction:** Plan structured opportunities for the student to use language meaningfully with peers and teachers, such as collaborative tasks, academic discussions, and structured conversations.
- **Assessment:** Define how progress will be measured across contexts (e.g., formative assessments, classroom performance, and targeted language tasks) to ensure growth is occurring.

Teachers should also specify supplementary materials, evidence of achievement, and supports for success. This includes outlining pedagogical strategies (e.g., comprehensive input, small-group instruction), language development approaches, and any necessary accommodations or modifications. These components ensure the ILAP translates directly into daily instructional practice rather than remaining a static document.

Section 3: Educational Programming

This section documents the type of instructional program and services the student will receive, such as Sheltered English Instruction, Content-Based ESL, Dual Language, or a Newcomer Program. The chosen program should align directly with the student's profile and goals. For example, a newcomer may benefit from placement in a structured newcomer program with intensive English language support, while a long-term EL may require specialized small-group instruction focused on academic language development. This section should also describe how services will be delivered and how they complement the student's individualized goals.

Section 4: Instructional Strategies and Scaffolding

The final section of the ILAP outlines specific strategies and scaffolds to support language development across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These strategies should be selected based on the student's needs identified earlier in the plan and may include visuals, sentence frames, bilingual dictionaries, adapted texts, text-to-speech software, or collaborative learning structures. Scaffolds must not only make content accessible but also promote active language use in meaningful contexts.

Collaboration is key to effective implementation. EL specialists and general education teachers should meet regularly to plan, align instruction, share observations, and adjust strategies as needed. This ensures that language development is embedded across content areas and that all teachers share responsibility for the student's growth.

Reviewing and Updating the ILAP

The ILAP is a living document and should be reviewed and updated regularly. At a minimum, teams should revisit the plan each semester, but more frequent reviews are recommended if data indicate slow progress or if student needs change. During these reviews, educators should analyze new assessment results,

classroom performance data, and observational notes to determine whether goals are being met and whether strategies remain effective. If progress is limited, the team should revise goals, adjust supports, or implement new interventions.

Consistent monitoring, collaboration, and responsiveness are essential to the success of the ILAP. When implemented with fidelity, it ensures that students who need the most targeted support receive it — allowing them to develop the language skills necessary for academic success and long-term achievement.

ILAP at a Glance

Purpose:
The ILAP is a targeted planning tool used to address the specific language development needs of ELs who require additional support beyond the core EL program. It helps educators design focused goals, align instruction, and monitor progress to accelerate language growth.

When to Use:

- A student is not making expected progress in one or more language domains.
- A newcomer requires intensive foundational language support.
- A long-term EL has plateaued in proficiency and needs targeted intervention.

What It Includes:

- **Student Background & Proficiency Analysis:** Identifies strengths, needs, and current language levels across listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- **Goals & Strategies:** Defines measurable language goals and details instructional approaches, opportunities for interaction, input strategies, and methods of assessment.
- **Educational Programming:** Outlines the program model and services that will support the student's goals.
- **Instructional Strategies & Scaffolding:** Lists specific supports and scaffolds tailored to the student's needs across all language domains.

Review and Update:

- Review the ILAP at least **once per semester** or sooner if progress data indicate a need for changes.
- Revise goals, strategies, and supports as the student's language proficiency and academic needs evolve.
- Ensure ongoing **collaboration between EL specialists and general education teachers** to align instruction and monitor progress.

Individualized Language Acquisition Plan

Student Name: Date of Birth:
Primary Language: Plan Start Date: Plan End Date:

Section 1: Student Background			
Personal/Education/Linguistic Factors:			
Strengths (What are my students' strengths?)		Needs (What are my students' needs?)	
ELPT Proficiency Levels: Analysis and Summary of Language Proficiency			
Listening:	Speaking:	Reading:	Writing:

Section 2: Goals (What does the student need to learn?)			
Classroom Strategies: How will I support successful goal achievement?			
Listening	**Planning** ***Proficiencies** (What skills and knowledge does this EL need to develop?)	**Assessment** ***Performance** (How will I determine this student's accuracy and fluency across a variety of contexts?)	**Teaching** ***Input** (What kind of oral and written input will I provide, and how will my EL have access to it?) *Interaction (What are the opportunities for meaningful interaction?)
Speaking	**Goal** **Rationale:** *Why is this goal important, and how is it aligned with the needs of the student?* **Supplementary Materials:**	**Acceptable Evidence of Achievement:** **Supports for Success:**	**Pedagogy:** *How will you teach this? (Comprehensive input/Strategies/Grouping)* **Language Development:** **Modifications/Accommodations:**
Reading	**Goal** **Rationale:** *Why is this goal important, and how is it aligned with the needs of the student?* **Supplementary Materials:**	**Acceptable Evidence of Achievement:** **Supports for Success:**	**Pedagogy:** *How will you teach this? (Comprehensive input/Strategies/Grouping)* **Language Development:** **Modifications/Accommodations:**
Writing	**Goal** **Rationale:** *Why is this goal important, and how is it aligned with the needs of the student?* **Supplementary Materials:**	**Acceptable Evidence of Achievement:** **Supports for Success:**	**Pedagogy:** *How will you teach this? (Comprehensive input/Strategies/Grouping)* **Language Development:** **Modifications/Accommodations:**

Section 3: Educational Programming		
Program Type		
☐ Sheltered English Instruction	☐ Content-Based English as a Second Language	
☐ English as a Second Language	☐ Dual Language/Two-Way Immersion	
☐ Structured English Immersion	☐ Transitional Bilingual Education Program	☐ Newcomer Program
Description of services to support:		

Part 4: Instructional Strategies and Scaffolding	
Strategies to Support	
Listening	Give directions in incremental steps, with clarification of new vocabulary Check often for understanding Slow down the rate of speech, repeat
Speaking	Individualized/small group instruction Extended time Provide word banks/sentence starters and sentence frames Bilingual dictionaries/translation apps
Reading	Visuals (graphs, pictures, charts, etc.) Bilingual dictionaries/translation apps Extended time Individualized/small group instruction Adapted assignments to match language proficiency level goals Modify the linguistic complexity of assignments and formative assessments Audio to accompany reading materials
Writing	Extended time Bilingual dictionaries/translation apps Extended time Individualized/small group instruction Allow students to do written assignments orally Print instead of using cursive Provide word banks/sentence starters and sentence frames Adapted assignments to match language proficiency level goals Modify the linguistic complexity of assignments and formative assessments
General	Administer testing in a small group setting Collaboration with general education and EL teachers Limit answer choices on multiple-choice activities/assessments
Other (specify):	

Scaffolding	
Listening	Pictures, diagrams, and charts to make connections between new vocabulary and concepts and their meanings Content-specific visuals (for example, labeling a diagram with content-specific vocabulary in both English and the native language of the student) Videos and multimedia with subtitles or closed captions Gestures and body language to reinforce vocabulary and concepts Explicit vocabulary instruction: pre-teach key vocabulary
Speaking	Sentence frames and starters Wait time for processing questions and formulating answers
Reading	Word wall Bilingual texts Text-to-speech software Differentiated text levels
Writing	Sentence frames and starters Peer editing Word wall Collaborative writing
General	Partner and peer interactions (for example, Think, Pair, Share)
Other (specify):	

BICS/CALP Checklist

The BICS/CALP Checklist is a collaborative tool used to assess a student's development of both **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)** and **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)**. BICS refers to the social language skills students use in everyday interactions, skills that typically develop within one to three years of exposure to a new language. CALP refers to the more complex, discipline-specific academic language needed to access grade-level content and engage in higher-order thinking, which often takes five to seven years to develop. Distinguishing between the two is essential for accurately understanding a student's language development and tailoring instruction to meet their needs.

Purpose and When to Use the Checklist

This checklist should be used as part of a comprehensive approach to understanding a student's language proficiency and academic readiness. It is particularly useful in the following situations:

- **Ongoing Instructional Planning:** To help teachers identify which language domains and skills need more intentional focus in daily instruction.
- **Screening and Data Review:** To provide evidence for building-level teams when discussing student progress, considering intervention needs, or identifying developmental patterns.
- **Special Education Consideration:** To support decision-making during special education evaluations by distinguishing between typical second language acquisition patterns, atypical development, and potential instructional gaps.

The checklist should be completed by individuals who are familiar with the student's language and academic performance, such as ESL teachers, classroom teachers, special education staff, or parents. Ideally, it is completed collaboratively as part of a team discussion to ensure multiple perspectives inform the analysis.

How to Use the Checklist

The checklist is divided into four language domains: **Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing**, and within each domain, it examines both BICS and CALP skills. For each skill listed, the evaluator indicates the student's current ability in both their first language (L1) and English by marking a "+" if the student demonstrates the skill or a "–" if they do not.

- **Listening and Speaking (BICS):** Focus on the student's ability to understand and use language in social and everyday classroom contexts. Examples include following basic directions, engaging in conversations, and naming familiar objects.

- **Listening and Speaking (CALP):** Focus on comprehension and use of academic language. Skills include following complex instructions, understanding key vocabulary tied to content, and using temporal and abstract language accurately.

- **Reading and Writing (BICS):** Look for foundational literacy skills such as recognizing environmental print, understanding print concepts, and demonstrating interest in reading and writing.
- **Reading and Writing (CALP):** Assess the student's ability to read and write for academic purposes, such as understanding text structure, using academic vocabulary, applying mechanics and conventions, and responding to grade-level tasks.

Evaluating both BICS and CALP in L1 and English allows educators to see how language development compares across contexts. For example, a student who demonstrates a skill in their home language but not yet in English is likely still in the process of language transfer. A student who struggles with the skill in both languages may need targeted instruction or additional assessment to determine underlying causes.

Interpreting the Results

The results of the checklist should not be used in isolation but as part of a larger body of evidence about a student's language development. Patterns in the data can reveal important insights:

- **Typical Second Language Acquisition:** Students often develop BICS quickly while CALP lags behind. A profile showing strong interpersonal communication but weaker academic language suggests instruction should focus on building discipline-specific vocabulary and language structures.
- **Instructional Gaps:** If a student shows uneven skill development, *particularly in reading or writing*, this may point to missed opportunities for targeted instruction or the need for additional scaffolds.
- **Potential Learning Concerns:** Struggles with skills in both the home language and English may indicate broader language development issues that warrant further investigation and potentially a special education referral.

The checklist is especially helpful when combined with other data sources such as language proficiency assessments, progress monitoring results, and classroom performance. Together, this data provides a fuller picture of where a student is on the continuum of language acquisition.

Using Checklist Data to Inform Instruction

The insights gained from the BICS/CALP Checklist should directly inform instructional planning and intervention design. Teachers can use the results to:

- Identify specific domains and skill areas needing additional support.
- Plan targeted instructional strategies to accelerate CALP development, such as explicit vocabulary instruction, structured academic talk, and scaffolded reading and writing tasks.
- Provide appropriate scaffolds for students still developing BICS, such as visuals, modeling, and sentence frames.

- Align instructional expectations with a student's current language stage while setting goals that push them toward higher levels of proficiency.

Additionally, the checklist can guide collaboration among EL specialists, general education teachers, and other support staff. Regularly revisiting and updating the checklist as students progress ensures that instruction remains responsive and aligned to their evolving language development needs.

Connecting the BICS/CALP Checklist to the ILAP

The information gathered through the BICS/CALP Checklist should directly inform the development of an ILAP for students who require more targeted support. By identifying whether a student's challenges stem from limited social language (BICS), gaps in academic language (CALP), or broader language development concerns, educators can set more precise goals and choose appropriate instructional strategies within the ILAP. For example, if the checklist shows that a student has well-developed BICS but struggles with CALP, the ILAP should prioritize explicit instruction in academic vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and content-area discourse. If gaps exist in both BICS and CALP, goals may need to focus on foundational language development alongside academic skills. Using the checklist results as part of ILAP planning ensures that interventions are accurately matched to student needs and that instruction is intentionally designed to support language growth across all domains.

Checklist of Language Skills for Use with Limited English Proficient Students

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills			Cognitive Academic Language and Academic Performance		
Listening	**L1**	**English**	**Listening**	**L1**	**English**
Follows classroom directions			Follows specific directions for academic tasks according to curriculum guide		
Points to classroom items			Understands vocabulary for academic tasks according to curriculum guide (i.e., word meaning, word synonyms for operations)		
Distinguishes items according to color, shape, size, etc.			Understands teachers' discussion and distinguishes main ideas from supportive details		
Point to people (family relationships)			Understands temporal concepts (e.g., do this first, second, last)		
Distinguishes people			Distinguishes sounds for		

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills			Cognitive Academic Language and Academic Performance		
according to physical and emotional states			reading readiness activities		
Acts out common school activities			Listens to a movie or other audio-visual presentation with academic content		
Distinguishes environmental sounds					

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills			Cognitive Academic Language and Academic Performance		
Speaking	**L1**	**English**	**Speaking**	**L1**	**English**
Gives classroom commands to peers			Asks/answers specific questions regarding topic discussions		
Exchanges common greetings			Uses academic vocabulary		
Names the classroom objects			Uses temporal concepts appropriately		
Describes classroom objects according to color, shape, etc.			Asks for clarification during academic tasks		
Describes people according to physical and emotional states			Expresses reason for opinion		
Describes what is happening when given an action picture of a common recreational activity			Actively participates in class discussions		
Appropriately initiates, maintains, and responds to a conversation			Volunteers to answer questions in class regarding subject matter		
			Recites ABCs, numbers 1-10		
			Participates in sharing time		

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills			Cognitive Academic Language and Academic Performance		
Reading	**L1**	**English**	**Reading**	**L1**	**English**
Recognizes common traffic/safety signs			Uses sound symbol association		
Recognizes familiar advertising logos (e.g., McDonald's, Coca-Cola)			Uses mechanics of spatial skills (i.e., top-to-bottom, left-to-right)		
Recognizes basic sight words			Understands rules of punctuation/capitalization		
			Understands reading as a process (i.e., speech-print relations, syllables)		
			Reads for comprehension		
			Follows along during oral reading activity and responds at his/her turn		
			Appropriate use of text (i.e., index)		
			Demonstrates an interest in reading		

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills			Cognitive Academic Language and Academic Performance		
Writing	**L1**	**English**	**Writing**	**L1**	**English**
			Completes written expression activities according to curriculum guide. Completes simple sentence frames. Generates simple sentences. Writes from dictation. Writes short paragraphs.		
			Transfers from print to cursive at the appropriate grade level		
			Understands spatial constraints of writing (i.e., lines, top-to-bottom, left-to-right)		
			Understands mechanics of writing (i.e., punctuation, paragraphing)		
			Demonstrates an interest in writing		

Elementary School EL Accommodations and Scaffolding

Intentional scaffolding and accommodations are essential to ensuring that ELs can access grade-level content and develop language skills simultaneously. Effective scaffolding is not a separate set of strategies — it is how instruction is delivered. Teachers should intentionally plan how students will engage with content in listening, speaking, reading, and writing based on their current proficiency level, gradually removing supports as students gain independence. This section guides how scaffolding should look across proficiency levels and how to use accommodations strategically to accelerate language development.

How to Use This Section

This guide is designed as a planning tool for teachers and instructional leaders. It outlines how instruction and scaffolds should shift as students progress from Level 1 (Entering/Emerging) to Level 5 (Bridging/Advanced). Educators should use these descriptions to design lessons that include meaningful language supports, align accommodations to student needs, and ensure that instruction builds on what students *can* do while pushing them toward more complex language use.

It is important to remember that proficiency levels do not define a student's potential; they describe a point on a continuum. The strategies below are most effective when paired with formative assessment data, ongoing progress monitoring, and collaboration between classroom teachers and EL specialists.

Level 1: Beginning – Building Foundations

Students at Level 1 have very limited English proficiency and require significant support to access instruction and communicate. Instruction should be highly visual, concrete, and supported by the use of the home language when possible.

- **Listening:** Use clear, slow, simple sentences and avoid idioms or complex grammar. Incorporate visuals, gestures, real objects, and icons to build comprehension. Provide native language support through bilingual dictionaries, translated materials, or peer translation. Check for understanding frequently using yes/no questions or gestures.
- **Speaking:** Focus on modeling and demonstration. Provide opportunities for hands-on activities, manipulatives, and multimodal learning. Use technology tools that support oral language development and pronunciation. Allow students to respond nonverbally as language skills develop.
- **Reading:** Pair words with visuals and modify assignments to reduce text complexity. Allow students to demonstrate understanding through matching tasks, picture selection, or drawing. Use technology tools with leveled books and visuals to build vocabulary and comprehension.

- **Writing:** Provide sentence frames, word banks, and visual word walls. Allow drawing as a form of response. Reduce writing complexity and length while encouraging attempts to produce written language. Use graphic organizers to support idea development.

Level 2: Early Intermediate – Building Early Language Use

Students at Level 2 are beginning to understand and use short phrases and simple sentences. They still require substantial scaffolding but are ready for more structured opportunities to use language meaningfully.

- **Listening:** Continue to use simplified language, visuals, and gestures, but begin introducing academic vocabulary. Model tasks and provide frequent comprehension checks.
- **Speaking:** Provide structured opportunities for oral language production through sentence frames, guided dialogues, and cooperative learning. Use technology that supports oral communication and fluency.
- **Reading:** Use leveled texts with visuals and provide pre-teaching of vocabulary. Include frequent opportunities to connect new content to prior knowledge. Continue pairing visuals with text and provide bilingual resources.
- **Writing:** Offer sentence starters and scaffolded writing activities. Encourage students to generate short sentences and complete sentence frames. Provide additional time for writing tasks and integrate technology tools for grammar and composition practice.

Level 3: Intermediate – Strengthening Academic Language

Students at Level 3 can communicate in simple sentences and are beginning to understand and use more academic language. Instruction should focus on increasing independence while building complexity in language use and comprehension.

- **Listening:** Introduce language objectives and post them visibly. Provide extended processing time and clarify instructions as needed. Use modeling, think-alouds, and explicit vocabulary instruction. Include multimedia supports and frequent checks for understanding.
- **Speaking:** Incorporate structured speaking opportunities such as turn-and-talk, oral rehearsals, and role-play. Begin shifting from sentence frames to more open-ended prompts that encourage extended responses. Provide feedback on language use and model academic language structures.
- **Reading:** Use leveled texts that introduce academic vocabulary and concepts, supported by audio versions and read-alouds. Scaffold comprehension through guided questions, cause-and-effect charts, and other graphic organizers.
- **Writing:** Use sentence frames and paragraph starters to scaffold writing. Model how to write paragraphs, explain processes, and structure responses. Incorporate guided writing, transitional word banks, and collaborative writing opportunities to support more complex output.

Level 4: Early Advanced – Refining Academic Skills

Students at Level 4 can engage in grade-level content with some support but may still struggle with academic vocabulary, figurative language, and writing conventions. Instruction should refine language use and ensure access to complex content.

- **Listening:** Pre-teach academic vocabulary, including tiered vocabulary and figurative language, and provide visual supports and examples. Offer flexible assessment options, such as oral presentations or visual projects. Use technology tools to support comprehension.
- **Speaking:** Incorporate guided academic discussions, such as Socratic seminars or accountable talk, to build discourse skills. Pair students with strong peer models and use question stems to deepen responses. Provide targeted feedback on language use.
- **Reading:** Use close reading strategies with annotated texts, guided questions, and partner reading. Clarify idioms and figurative language and provide scaffolds for analyzing complex texts. Focus on refining comprehension strategies and expanding vocabulary.
- **Writing:** Embed academic language supports such as sentence starters, transition word banks, and academic phrase lists. Provide paragraph and essay frames and mentor texts. Focus on editing, revising, and producing more complex sentence structures. Use technology tools for grammar and writing practice.

Level 5: Advanced – Preparing for Independence

Students at Level 5 are approaching fluency and can engage with grade-level content independently, though they may still need targeted support with nuanced language use. Instruction should focus on refining academic language, encouraging independence, and preparing students for reclassification.

- **Listening:** Offer occasional clarification of idioms, multiple-meaning words, and abstract concepts. Encourage leadership roles in group discussions and projects. Use multimedia to support higher-order listening comprehension.
- **Speaking:** Provide opportunities for collaborative work with native speakers and scaffold higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Encourage students to lead discussions and present information orally.
- **Reading:** Engage students with complex, grade-level texts supported by pre-teaching of vocabulary and comprehension checks. Use metacognitive strategies such as summarizing, questioning, and re-reading. Scaffold higher-order reading tasks and encourage independent reading for comprehension and analysis.
- **Writing:** Provide extended time for complex writing tasks and opportunities for editing and revision at a higher level. Focus on advanced academic discourse structures, precise vocabulary use, and writing conventions. Scaffold analytical writing tasks and use technology for grammar support and writing refinement.

Key Considerations for Implementation

- Scaffolding is most effective when aligned to student proficiency levels and intentionally embedded in daily instruction.
- Accommodations should evolve over time, beginning with intensive supports at lower levels and gradually shifting toward independence as students progress.
- Collaboration between classroom teachers, EL specialists, and support staff is essential to designing effective scaffolds and monitoring growth.
- Frequent formative assessments and classroom observations help teachers adjust scaffolds and ensure that language and content development progress together.

Middle School EL Accommodations/Scaffolding

As ELs enter middle school, they are expected to engage with increasingly complex academic content, abstract ideas, and discipline-specific vocabulary. Effective scaffolding ensures that language development continues while students access grade-level standards across all content areas. At this level, scaffolds should not only support comprehension but also foster the critical thinking, academic discourse, and independent language use needed for success in secondary classrooms.

This section outlines accommodations and scaffolds across proficiency levels for each language domain, *listening, speaking, reading, and writing*, and explains how supports should shift as students gain proficiency. The strategies provided are designed to integrate language development into daily instruction and help educators plan lessons that meet students where they are while accelerating their growth toward proficiency.

Level 1: Beginning – Building Access Through Intensive Support

Students at Level 1 have very limited English proficiency and require significant, consistent support to participate meaningfully in classroom instruction. Instruction should rely heavily on visuals, modeling, and the home language to build comprehension and confidence.

- **Listening:** Use visual supports such as charts, diagrams, labeled classroom materials, and dual-language glossaries to anchor new vocabulary and concepts. Deliver instructions step by step with visuals, modeling, and repetition. Speak slowly, use clear and simple sentences, and avoid idiomatic expressions. Provide frequent checks for understanding through yes/no questions, gestures, or visuals.
- **Speaking:** Create structured opportunities for oral language development using modeled sentence patterns and routines. Use bilingual resources and translation tools to support early communication. Technology tools that build pronunciation and fluency can help students gain confidence in speaking.

- **Reading:** Use bilingual texts, leveled readers, and texts with visuals to support comprehension. Provide extended time for reading tasks and allow students to demonstrate understanding through oral responses, visuals, or matching activities.
- **Writing:** Modify assignments to reduce writing demands (e.g., labeling instead of writing full sentences). Provide structured sentence starters, word banks with visuals, and paragraph frames. Encourage responses in multiple formats, including drawing or pointing, while gradually introducing written language.

Level 2: Early Immediate – Building Early Academic Language

Students at Level 2 are beginning to use short phrases and simple sentences. Scaffolding should expand their exposure to academic language while maintaining strong supports for comprehension and communication.

- **Listening:** Use step-by-step instructions paired with visuals and partially completed graphic organizers. Repetition and routines help reinforce sentence structures and language patterns. Incorporate explicit vocabulary instruction with visuals, gestures, and kinesthetic activities.
- **Speaking:** Provide guided speaking opportunities such as think-pair-share, choral reading, or structured partner work. Allow students to rehearse oral responses before speaking and use native language planning when possible. Use technology to build oral fluency and pronunciation.
- **Reading:** Use leveled or adapted texts with visuals and audio support. Scaffold reading comprehension with matching activities, cloze tasks, and graphic organizers such as story maps or cause-and-effect charts. Repeated exposure to language through different modalities supports retention and transfer.
- **Writing:** Provide sentence starters and word banks that include visuals and native language translations. Modify writing tasks with structured formats like cloze activities or fill-in-the-blank responses. Encourage collaborative writing and peer support to build confidence and fluency.

Level 3: Intermediate – Building Complexity and Independence

Students at Level 3 can communicate using simple sentences and are beginning to grasp academic concepts. Instruction should shift toward more complex language use while gradually reducing scaffolds.

- **Listening:** Break instructions into smaller, manageable chunks and include checkpoints. Pre-teach key academic vocabulary using visuals, synonyms, and context-based examples. Incorporate frequent comprehension checks and allow students to demonstrate understanding in multiple ways.
- **Speaking:** Provide structured opportunities for academic talk through partner or small group activities, collaborative projects, and oral presentations. Use sentence starters and language frames to guide responses and begin teaching language functions such as explaining, comparing, and summarizing.

- **Reading:** Introduce grade-level texts with supports such as glossaries, guiding questions, and summaries. Use annotated texts and scaffolded reading tasks to support comprehension. Model how to approach complex texts and provide frequent opportunities for students to respond in writing and discussion.
- **Writing:** Scaffold writing tasks with paragraph frames and graphic organizers. Model how to structure summaries, explanations, and arguments. Focus on expanding sentence complexity and using precise vocabulary. Provide guided writing practice and targeted feedback to support language growth.

Level 4: Early Advanced – Refining Academic Language Skills

Students at Level 4 can engage with grade-level content but still require targeted support for more advanced language tasks, particularly around academic vocabulary, figurative language, and writing conventions.

- **Listening:** Clarify complex academic language, idioms, and figurative expressions with brief explanations, visuals, and real-world examples. Continue explicit vocabulary instruction, focusing on Tier 2 and Tier 3 words. Use multimedia and authentic listening tasks to deepen comprehension.
- **Speaking:** Facilitate structured academic discourse through Socratic seminars, debates, and collaborative discussions. Provide academic language frames for expressing opinions, making arguments, and drawing conclusions. Encourage peer feedback and self-reflection on language use.
- **Reading:** Use close reading strategies with annotated texts and text-dependent questions. Teach annotation skills explicitly and focus on vocabulary acquisition in context. Scaffold analysis of text structure, tone, and purpose.
- **Writing:** Support academic writing with outlines, graphic organizers, and sentence starters. Use mentor texts and model structures for opinion writing, analysis, and argumentation. Provide targeted feedback on grammar, syntax, and text structure, and use mini-lessons to address common errors. Incorporate metacognitive strategies to help students monitor and reflect on their language growth.

Level 5: Advanced – Refining and Extending Language Proficiency

Students at Level 5 are approaching fluency and can access grade-level content with minimal support. The focus at this level is on refining language use, encouraging independence, and preparing students for reclassification and success in high school.

- **Listening:** Offer minimal support, such as vocabulary glossaries or brief explanations of idioms and academic terms. Provide opportunities to engage with complex, grade-level texts and tasks that require critical listening and analysis.

- **Speaking:** Emphasize higher-order speaking tasks such as debates, Socratic seminars, and formal presentations. Provide specific feedback on tone, register, word choice, and precision. Encourage students to monitor their own language growth through self-assessment and reflection.
- **Reading:** Support independent reading and research by providing note-taking templates, source evaluation guides, and graphic organizers. Scaffold strategies for analyzing author's purpose, argument structure, tone, and bias. Encourage annotation and close reading for deeper analysis.
- **Writing:** Focus on advanced writing skills such as varying sentence structure, refining academic vocabulary, and strengthening cohesion. Use rubrics, checklists, and peer review to support revision and editing. Provide feedback on higher-level writing elements, including argument development and stylistic choices.

Implementation Tips for Middle School Classrooms

- Scaffolded instruction should evolve with student proficiency, beginning with highly supported approaches and gradually shifting toward independence.
- Collaboration between content teachers and EL specialists is critical to ensure scaffolds are aligned with both language and content goals.
- Explicit teaching of academic vocabulary and language structures is essential at every level.
- Frequent formative assessment and reflection help teachers adjust scaffolds and target instruction effectively.
- Providing opportunities for authentic language use (e.g., discussion, writing, collaboration) helps ELs transfer skills to new contexts and prepares them for success beyond middle school.

High School EL Accommodations and Scaffolding

At the high school level, ELs must master increasingly complex language and academic skills to access rigorous coursework, graduate prepared for postsecondary opportunities, and succeed in college and careers. Effective scaffolding at this level not only supports language development but also builds critical thinking, academic discourse, and discipline-specific literacy. Scaffolds should be intentional, aligned with proficiency levels, and designed to gradually release responsibility to students as they progress toward independence.

This section outlines recommended accommodations and scaffolds for each proficiency level across the four language domains, *listening, speaking, reading, and writing,* and explains how instruction should evolve to meet students' linguistic and academic needs.

Level 1: Beginning – Building Foundations for Access

Students at Level 1 are beginning their English language journey and require intensive support to access grade-level content. Instruction should focus on building foundational vocabulary, comprehension, and communication skills through highly scaffolded lessons and frequent opportunities for interaction.

- **Listening:** Use visual supports such as charts, diagrams, timelines, dual-language glossaries, and labeled classroom materials to anchor new learning. Deliver instructions step-by-step with visuals, clear and simple language, and frequent repetition. Check for understanding often using yes/no questions, gestures, or visuals. Incorporate technology tools that support auditory comprehension through videos, captions, and vocabulary practice.
- **Speaking:** Model sentence patterns and provide structured sentence frames to support oral responses. Use repetition and predictable routines to build confidence. Allow nonverbal responses or matching activities while encouraging students to attempt verbal communication. Use bilingual resources and peer translation to support understanding and participation.
- **Reading:** Provide leveled texts with visuals, bilingual glossaries, and native language resources. Allow students to demonstrate comprehension through oral responses, visuals, or matching tasks. Provide extended time and assess comprehension in flexible ways, such as identifying main ideas through pictures or labeling diagrams.
- **Writing:** Modify assignments to reduce writing demands, such as labeling instead of full sentences or selecting multiple-choice responses. Use sentence frames, word banks with visuals, and structured writing supports. Provide additional time for written tasks and incorporate technology tools that reinforce grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills.

Level 2: Early Intermediate – Building Early Academic Language

Students at Level 2 are beginning to use short phrases and simple sentences and can engage more actively with instruction when provided with targeted supports. Instruction should focus on expanding vocabulary, building sentence-level language, and supporting comprehension across all content areas.

- **Listening:** Provide bilingual supports, including dual-language glossaries and anchor charts, and use explicit vocabulary instruction with visuals, word walls, and interactive activities. Use technology to reinforce auditory comprehension and vocabulary development.
- **Speaking:** Offer guided speaking opportunities through structured pair or group work and modeled responses. Provide partially completed examples to show how to answer questions, describe processes, or engage in academic conversations. Use bilingual supports for brainstorming and planning before speaking tasks.
- **Reading:** Use simplified and supported texts, including leveled readers, adapted texts, and audio versions with visuals. Incorporate guided reading and interactive read-alouds with comprehension questions. Provide extra time and offer alternative assessments, such as oral presentations or projects with visuals, in place of extended written work.
- **Writing:** Modify assignments and assessments with cloze tasks, sentence frames, or graphic organizers. Accept alternative forms of work such as lists, drawings, or oral explanations. Provide structured writing supports like content-specific word banks, bilingual glossaries, and graphic organizers to plan and structure writing tasks. Incorporate technology tools for writing practice and language reinforcement.

Level 3: Intermediate – Strengthening Academic Language and Literacy

Students at Level 3 are able to communicate in simple sentences and are developing the skills needed to access more complex academic language and concepts. Instruction should focus on expanding vocabulary, introducing academic language functions, and gradually increasing independence.

- **Listening:** Deliver clear, chunked instructions supported by visuals or examples. Ask students to restate or paraphrase directions to confirm understanding. Teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary explicitly, using context, visuals, and real-life connections.
- **Speaking:** Provide structured opportunities to practice academic language using sentence stems for key functions such as explaining, summarizing, agreeing/disagreeing, and drawing conclusions. Incorporate collaborative activities with structured roles and expectations for language use.
- **Reading:** Use leveled or adapted texts that include glossaries, bolded terms, guiding questions, and visuals. Incorporate small-group instruction focused on vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and text structure. Provide frequent comprehension checks and scaffolded reading tasks.
- **Writing:** Support writing with sentence starters, paragraph frames, and transition words. Allow flexible assessment options, such as oral responses, visuals, or graphic organizers, alongside written tasks. Provide explicit instruction on how to write topic sentences, use evidence, and revise writing. Use guided writing and co-writing activities to model strong written responses and scaffold independent work.

Level 4: Early Advanced – Refining Academic Language and Analysis

Students at Level 4 can access grade-level content with support but may still struggle with academic vocabulary, figurative language, and writing conventions. Instruction should refine academic language use, deepen comprehension of complex texts, and strengthen analytical reading and writing skills.

- **Listening:** Clarify complex language, idioms, and figurative expressions, and pre-teach academic vocabulary in context. Use think-alouds to model cognitive processes and visual supports to explain abstract concepts. Incorporate multimedia resources and authentic listening tasks to deepen comprehension.
- **Speaking:** Facilitate collaborative learning experiences such as structured group work, academic discussions, and debates. Provide language stems and models for expressing arguments, comparisons, and conclusions. Use frequent formative check-ins to assess oral language development.
- **Reading:** Support reading of complex texts with annotation strategies, text-dependent questions, and explicit instruction in citing evidence and identifying themes. Provide graphic organizers for note-taking, argument mapping, and literary analysis. Scaffold close reading tasks and model strategies for analyzing text structure and meaning.

- **Writing:** Support academic writing with rubrics, mentor texts, and scaffolded outlines. Provide sentence starters for transitions and argumentation, and offer flexible output options such as oral presentations, outlines, or drafts with feedback. Use structured peer review and targeted feedback to refine writing and language use. Incorporate metacognitive strategies to encourage students to reflect on their progress and set goals.

Level 5: Advanced – Refining Language for College and Career Readiness

Students at Level 5 are approaching fluency and can access grade-level content independently with minimal support. Instruction should focus on refining academic language, strengthening disciplinary literacy, and preparing students for postsecondary success.

- **Listening:** Provide minimal support, such as vocabulary glossaries and brief clarifications of idioms or unfamiliar terms. Encourage critical listening tasks that require evaluating arguments, analyzing tone, and identifying author's purpose.
- **Speaking:** Offer advanced speaking opportunities such as debates, Socratic seminars, and formal presentations. Provide targeted feedback on tone, precision, and language register. Use self-assessment tools and reflection prompts to encourage students to monitor and refine their language growth.
- **Reading:** Engage students with complex, grade-level texts and support independent research. Provide tools such as note-taking templates, source evaluation guides, and annotation strategies for analyzing author's purpose, argument structure, and bias. Scaffold tasks that require synthesis and evaluation of multiple sources.
- **Writing:** Focus writing instruction on advanced academic language and style, including varied sentence structures, precise word choice, and discipline-specific terminology. Provide supports such as rubrics, mentor texts, revision conferences, and peer review. Offer targeted feedback on organization, argumentation, and writing conventions. Use technology tools for grammar refinement and writing practice.

Key Considerations for High School Implementation

- Scaffolding should evolve over time, beginning with intensive supports at lower proficiency levels and shifting toward independence and complexity at higher levels.
- Instruction must emphasize discipline-specific language, academic discourse, and higher-order thinking skills to prepare students for college and career demands.
- Collaboration between EL specialists and content-area teachers is critical for integrating language objectives into instruction across subjects.
- Ongoing formative assessment and student self-reflection are essential to monitor progress and inform instructional decisions.

- Authentic, real-world applications of language (e.g.,research, presentations, debates, and writing for different purposes) deepen language skills and support successful transitions beyond high school.

EL Classroom Look Fors

This section helps leaders, coaches, and teachers recognize the practices that make grade-level content accessible to ELs while developing language. Use it for walkthroughs, peer observation, or self-reflection. During a visit, collect brief, specific evidence next to each look-for (what students/teacher said or did, artifacts viewed, and impact on access to content and language). Debrief by naming strengths first, then 1–2 targeted next steps.

Organization of the classroom

Classroom climate and routines

The teacher interacts in ways that honor varied communication styles, allowing purposeful wait time, supporting turn-taking, and maintaining appropriate proximity. Routines are predictable: students know how to start work, transition, access materials, and close a lesson. The tone is welcoming and academically focused.

Seating and space

Seating arrangements allow both focused independent work and frequent partner/small-group talk. You may see pairs or table groups organized for purposeful collaboration (e.g., think-pair-share, peer feedback, small-group instruction). Materials (word walls, labeled manipulatives, anchor charts) are visible and usable.

Learning objectives

Both a **content objective** and a **language objective** are posted in student-friendly language and referenced during the lesson. The language objective specifies the domain(s) — listening, speaking, reading, writing — and a function (e.g., *explain, compare, justify*) students will practice with target vocabulary or structures.

Use of time

Lessons follow a clear arc — **launch** → **model** → **guided practice** → **collaborative practice** → **independent application** → **quick check/closure** — so students can anticipate what comes next and stay engaged.

Sheltered English Instruction: look-fors during instruction

Access to prior knowledge

Academic concepts are connected to students' experiences and background knowledge. Teachers prompt for what students already know and surface key ideas before introducing new learning.

Materials matched to proficiency
Supplemental materials align to both developmental and English proficiency levels: manipulatives, visuals, realia, photos, charts/graphs, graphic organizers, and appropriately leveled texts help make input comprehensible without reducing rigor.

Input within proficiency range
Teacher talk, directions, and texts are calibrated to students' proficiency: shortened sentences when needed, paraphrases, rephrasing with visuals, and strategic native-language support. Key vocabulary and language structures are explicitly **introduced, displayed, rehearsed, and revisited**.

Depth and accuracy of content
Content remains on-grade-level. The teacher probes understanding, surfaces and corrects misconceptions through guided discussion, examples/non-examples, and brief checks for understanding.

Varied teaching moves
Instruction blends direct teaching, modeling/think-alouds, facilitation, and guided practice. Students see and hear what success looks like through exemplars, rubrics, and modeled language frames.

Adult and peer support
Students gain access through timely support from the teacher or other adults (interventionist/para) and from structured peer interaction. Support fades as students demonstrate independence.

Purposeful student interaction
Students work in pairs or small groups to **inquire, explore, explain, and solve**, using content vocabulary and sentence frames to articulate ideas. Tasks require application, synthesis, and evaluation — not just recall.

Questions that scaffold up
Questions are sequenced to include all learners, beginning with highly supported prompts and moving toward more abstract, open responses. Teachers prompt rephrasing and justification ("Say that again using *because…*").

Multiple ways to show learning
Students demonstrate understanding through speaking, writing, drawing, graphic organizers, models, demonstrations, and short constructed responses. Opportunities to **apply new knowledge** are built into the lesson.

Language across the four domains
Activities intentionally engage **listening, speaking, reading, and writing** within the same lesson (e.g., read → discuss → write), aligned to the posted language objective.

Feedback and error treatment
Teachers prompt **self-correction** in an affirming way ("Try that again — use *past tense*"), give concise,

timely written/oral feedback, and avoid overwhelming students. Students use feedback to revise, rehearse, and improve clarity and accuracy.

Explanations and examples of indicators

Classroom climate & seating

- Seats are arranged so students can collaborate and also receive targeted small-group instruction.
- Example: Level 1 students practice teacher-modeled sentence frames in a teacher-led group while peers use frames in cooperative tasks.

Learning objectives

- Objectives are introduced at the start and revisited at closure.
- Example speaking objective: *"I can state the main idea and two details using the words **main idea** and **detail**."*
- Example reading objective: *"I can describe a character's emotions using text evidence."*
- Example writing objective: *"I can revise a persuasive paragraph using correct present and conditional verbs."*

Instructional moves

- Teachers pre-teach and recycle **tiered vocabulary** with visuals and brief practice.
- Direct instruction follows a clear sequence: model → guided practice with frames/organizers → independent try → feedback.
- After partner reading or summarizing, the class debriefs to build metalinguistic awareness (e.g., noticing how a frame changes precision).

Grouping structures

- **Paired work:** partners selected by task/need practice a target function (compare, explain, justify).
- **Small groups:** often homogeneous for a brief skill focus (e.g., past tense verbs; interpreting a data table).
- **Cooperative learning:** 3–5 students produce a shared product; roles are defined; the teacher circulates and intervenes as needed.
- **Instructional conversations:** a teacher-facilitated small group digs into a text or problem while other groups work independently.

Quick observation guide (use with "Comments/Evidence")

1. **Objectives visible & referenced** – Note exact wording and when they're revisited.

2. **Input comprehensible** – Capture one example of how vocabulary/structures were introduced and supported.
3. **Student talk & tasks** – Record who is talking (teacher vs. students), the language frames or academic verbs used, and the level of cognitive demand.
4. **Scaffolds matched to proficiency** – List the supports you saw (organizers, visuals, frames) and which students used them.
5. **Checks for understanding** – Note the CFUs used and how instruction shifted based on responses.
6. **Feedback & revision** – Cite one instance where feedback led to a clearer or more accurate student response.
7. **Evidence of all four domains** – Briefly note how listening, speaking, reading, and writing showed up.

Sample evidence stems (to streamline notes)

- *Objectives:* "Content — compare renewable vs. nonrenewable; Language — 'explain using **because**.' Both referenced during guided practice."
- *Vocabulary:* "Pre-taught **photosynthesis, chlorophyll** with diagram; students used terms in pair explanation."
- *Scaffold:* "Level 2 group used sentence frames: 'The main cause is…'; Level 4 group used open prompts."
- *Interaction:* "Think-pair-share → jigsaw; 80% student talk during collaborative phase."
- *CFU:* "Whiteboards + quick sort; teacher re-modeled passive voice after 60% incorrect."
- *Feedback:* "Prompted self-correction — 'Try past tense: *was/were*'; student revised sentence."
- *Output:* "Choice board — diagram with labels or 5-sentence explanation; both aligned to objectives."

Monitoring Academic Progress of Former EL Students

Monitoring students after they exit EL status is an essential part of ensuring long-term success. Federal law requires that former ELs be monitored for **two consecutive school years** following reclassification. During this period, schools must track both academic and linguistic progress to ensure students are meeting grade-level expectations without specialized EL services. This process is not simply a compliance task — it is an opportunity to identify and address barriers early, prevent academic slide, and, if necessary, reclassify students for additional language support.

Purpose and Use of the Monitoring Form

The **Monitoring Academic Progress of Former EL Students** form provides a structured tool for documenting a student's progress across key academic areas (English, math, science, and social studies) during the two-year monitoring period. It should be used **at least once per semester** and updated with input from classroom teachers, EL specialists, and other relevant staff. The form captures both qualitative observations (e.g., classroom participation, oral language use) and quantitative indicators (e.g., attendance, homework completion, assessment data).

Each semester, educators should review the following components:

- **Attendance and Tardy Data:** Patterns in attendance can reveal barriers to learning or engagement that impact academic performance.
- **Language and Content Skills:** Teachers should assess students' ability to comprehend spoken and written English, participate in discussions, and express ideas orally and in writing.
- **Homework Completion and Class Participation:** These indicators reflect a student's ability to access instruction independently and sustain academic behaviors without specialized language support.
- **Behavior and Engagement:** Consider whether student behavior supports academic progress, particularly as it relates to self-advocacy, participation, and collaboration.

Interpreting Monitoring Results

At the end of each semester, the monitoring team should meet to review the student's performance and select one of the following determinations on the form:

1. **Student Meets Grade-Level Standards:** The student is performing successfully without specialized EL services and is progressing as expected.
2. **Language Is *Not* a Significant Barrier:** The student is not meeting grade-level standards, but language proficiency is not the root cause. The team should refer the student to the **Student Support Team (SST)** to explore other potential factors (e.g., academic gaps, learning differences).
3. **Language *Is* a Significant Barrier:** If English proficiency continues to hinder the student's academic success, the team must consider **reclassification**. This may include re-administering screening assessments, revisiting the student's language development plan, and determining whether re-entry into EL services is appropriate.

Action Steps and Follow-Up

When additional support is needed, teams should document clear next steps on the monitoring form. Possible actions include:

- **Referral to the System Accountability Team** to discuss potential reclassification.
- **Targeted interventions** such as tutoring, remediation, or summer school focused on identified skill gaps.
- **Parent communication** to ensure families understand the student's progress and available supports.
- **Other interventions** tailored to individual student needs, such as mentoring or specialized instructional supports.

All decisions and actions should be documented on the form and signed by the relevant staff members (e.g., classroom teachers, EL coordinator, counselor, or administrator).

Best Practices for Monitoring Former ELs

- **Collaborative Review:** Engage multiple perspectives (general education teachers, EL specialists, support staff) to get a comprehensive view of student performance.
- **Data-Informed Decisions:** Pair classroom observations with assessment data, grades, and language proficiency results to ensure decisions are evidence-based.
- **Family Engagement:** Communicate progress and any concerns with families in their preferred language, and involve them in planning next steps.
- **Proactive Intervention:** Do not wait for a student to fail before intervening. Early supports during the monitoring period can prevent academic gaps from widening.

Former EL Progress Monitoring Form

Student Name: Home Language: Date Reclassified:

DOB: School: Years in US Schools: Monitoring Year:

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Attendance		
Tardy		

	☐ Semester 1		☐ Semester 2			
English	Homework completion	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
	Participates in classroom discussions					
	Comprehends spoken English					
	Expresses ideas orally					
	Comprehends written English					
	Expresses ideas in written English					
	Expresses ideas in writing					
	Behavior is conducive to effective progress					
		Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Math	Homework completion					
	Participates in classroom discussions					
	Comprehends spoken English					
	Expresses ideas orally					
	Comprehends written English					
	Expresses ideas in writing					
	Behavior is conducive to effective progress					
		Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always

Science	Homework completion					
	Participates in classroom discussions					
	Comprehends spoken English					
	Expresses ideas orally					
	Comprehends written English					
	Expresses ideas in written English					
	Expresses ideas in writing					
	Behavior is conducive to effective progress					
		Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Social Studies	Homework completion					
	Participates in classroom discussions					
	Comprehends spoken English					
	Expresses ideas orally					
	Comprehends written English					
	Expresses ideas in written English					
	Behavior is conducive to effective progress					

Please, check the one that applies:

☐ On (date) _____ a review of the student's performance indicated that he/she meets grade level academic standards.

☐On (date) _____ a review of the student's performance indicated the language proficiency IS NOT a significant reason the student is not meeting grade level academic standards. Student was/ will be referred to Student Support Team on (date) _____.

☐On (date) _____ a review of the student's performance indicated that language proficiency IS a significant barrier preventing the student from meeting grade level academic standards.

Action Steps (check all that apply)

☐ Refer to System Accountability Team to discuss EL status ☐ Tutoring
☐ Remediation ☐ Parent communication ☐ Summer school
☐ Other (please, explain)

Signature/Title	Signature/Title
Signature/Title	Signature/Title
Signature/Title	Signature/Title
Signature/Title	Signature/Title

Retention Guidelines for ELs

Retention of EL students should **never be based solely on English language proficiency**. Language acquisition is a developmental process that occurs over time, and retaining a student does not accelerate that growth. In fact, inappropriate retention can negatively impact academic confidence, language development, and overall school engagement. Instead, schools should focus on adjusting instruction, scaffolds, and supports to meet each student's linguistic and academic needs within their current grade level.

Before retention is considered, a collaborative team, including ESL staff, classroom teachers, and relevant support personnel, should thoroughly review the following factors:

- **Length of Enrollment:** Determine whether the student has been enrolled for at least one full academic year. Students new to U.S. schools often experience a "silent period" lasting several months, during which limited English production is typical and should not be misinterpreted as a lack of academic potential.
- **Instructional Access:** Confirm that academic content is being delivered with appropriate scaffolding, accommodations, and/or modifications across instruction, assignments, homework, and assessments.
- **Documentation of Supports:** Ensure that strategies, accommodations, and modifications have been documented, including the dates of implementation and results. Discussions with ESL or Title III staff should be part of this process.
- **Alignment of Instruction to Proficiency Level:** Verify that the student has consistent access to instruction tailored to their language proficiency level. Instruction should be differentiated, scaffolded, and designed to build both content knowledge and language skills.
- **Sufficient ESL Services:** Review whether beginner and intermediate students are receiving at least one hour of ESL instruction daily, and whether more advanced students receive targeted support to make instruction meaningful.
- **Grading Practices:** Consider whether flexible grading approaches — such as rubrics or contracts that align with the student's language proficiency level — are being used.
- **Coordinated Support Services:** Confirm that the student has access to supplemental services, such as tutoring, intervention programs, or additional language development support, as needed.

Retention policies should never hinge on a single piece of data or criterion. Instead, a holistic review of the student's progress, instructional context, and access to services is essential. **Retention will not accelerate language acquisition**, which occurs naturally as students progress through grade-level content with the right supports. Every effort must be made to ensure that EL students receive appropriate instructional strategies, targeted language development, and coordinated interventions that allow them to remain with their age-level peers and continue their academic and linguistic growth.

Consideration	Guiding Questions	Evidence/Notes	Completed
Enrollment Timeline	Has the student been enrolled in the system for **more than one full academic year**? Has the "silent period" been considered in evaluating language development?		
Instructional Access	Has the student consistently received **scaffolded, accommodated, and/or modified instruction** in classroom lessons, assignments, homework, and assessments?		
Documentation of Supports	Are **strategies, accommodations, and modifications** documented with implementation dates and outcomes? Has there been consultation with the ESL/Title III coordinator?		
Alignment to Proficiency Level	Is instruction **aligned to the student's English proficiency level**, with evidence of differentiated supports and progress monitoring?		
ESL Services Provided	Are beginner/intermediate students receiving **at least one hour of ESL instruction daily**? Are advanced students receiving sufficient targeted language support?		
Grading Practices	Are **flexible grading practices** (rubrics, contracts, alternative assessments) used to reflect language development alongside content mastery?		
Coordinated Services	Has the student received additional support services (e.g., tutoring, small-group intervention, language development sessions)? Are these documented?		

Holistic Review of Data	Has the team reviewed **multiple data sources** (formative assessments, benchmark data, teacher feedback, language growth data) before considering retention?		
Family Engagement	Has the student's **family been informed and engaged** in discussions regarding academic progress and support options before retention is considered?		

High School Equivalency: Designing the Relationship between LDOE & Louisiana's Community & Technical College

For some EL students whose educational journey requires a different pathway to graduation, pursuing a **High School Equivalency (HSE)** credential can provide access to continued learning, workforce preparation, and future success. This pathway should be considered carefully, based on a student's individual needs, goals, and circumstances, and always as part of a comprehensive planning process that includes educators, counselors, and families.

A strong partnership between **school systems**, the **LDOE**, and the **Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS)** ensures that students receive coordinated support throughout this transition. Through the **WorkReady U Adult Education Program**, LCTCS offers a range of services that prepare students for the HSE exam while building the skills needed for long-term success. These services include:

- **Adult education and literacy instruction** tailored to each student's readiness level.
- **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education** to strengthen language proficiency and civic engagement.
- **Workforce preparation and workplace literacy** to connect education with future employment opportunities.
- **Integrated education and training** aligned with high-demand career fields.

Some school systems offer HSE programming locally. Students participating in local programs would not exit the school system.

Because the time needed to complete an HSE program depends on a student's skills at entry, collaboration is key. System staff, ESL educators, and counselors should work closely with LCTCS partners and families to design an individualized plan that supports both academic and linguistic development.

Schools and systems play a vital role in this process by:

- Identifying students who may benefit from an HSE pathway based on their individual progress and goals.
- Providing **clear, translated communication** to families about the HSE option, including its structure and outcomes.
- Coordinating with **local WorkReady U providers** to ensure a smooth transition and ongoing support.
- Continuing to monitor student progress and address any barriers during program participation.

Systems can locate adult education providers by visiting the LCTCS WorkReady U website and navigating to the **"Find a Program Provider"** section. Early collaboration and thoughtful planning ensure that students transition into the HSE pathway as a strategic step toward future success, *not an endpoint.*

Chapter Resources
• Improving Outcomes for English Learners: Louisiana's Framework • LA Connectors for English Learners • Developing a School System PD Plan • Louisiana Academic Content PD Vendor Guide


DIVERSE
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