English Language Learner Specialist

A Guide to Your New Role

2023

School District #5
Southeast Kootenay

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Welcome to your new role at School District # 5, Southeast Kootenay.

As the new English Language Learning Specialist, you have become part of a team dedicated to shaping the minds of our young learners who decided to make our community their home.

This digital document will provide you with the information to guide you in your new role as English Language Learner Specialist.   This living document will provide an outline of the services and education that second language learners will receive as a student in our district.

The purpose of English Language Learner services is to create successful learning experiences and provide high quality, inclusive, and equitable instruction. As the Specialist, you will facilitate and deliver programming to support classroom teachers and educate our ELL students by:

- Assessing, supporting, and planning for student learning by identifying individual learning needs.
- Supporting multicultural students culturally, socially and emotionally.
- Collaborating with classroom teachers to provide inclusive instructional strategies and learning opportunities.

STATEMENT

THE GUIDE: AT A GLANCE

As part of our team, your expertise will support colleagues, students and families in our school community.

This guide will help you:

- plan for learning
- explore resources to support student growth and development of language and literacy across the curriculum
- provide quality based instruction based on equity frameworks and best practice
- collaborate and co-teach with colleagues to support multilingual learners in a diverse classroom environment
- provide creative and flexible learning opportunities that meet the needs of ELL students
- connect student learning to culture, language and background experiences
- be a culturally responsive educator by building connections with ELL students and their families

Explore:
[Next Generation ESL Toolkit](#)

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

POLICY AND PROGRAMMING

Policies and programming are an important part of setting clear expectations and providing quality education that is consistent, fair, and equitable for multicultural students.

POLICY GUIDELINES

FOR CONSISTENCY, QUALITY, AND EQUITY WHILE ALLOWING FLEXIBILITY IN THE SERVICES DELIVERED TO ELLS

COMPREHENSIBLE LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT

Creating interactive and engaging learning environments where students learn and practice conversational and academic language to enhance and support second language acquisition.

PURPOSEFUL LANGUAGE USE

Planning lessons and instruction to develop language skills while using specific language structures in all areas of the curriculum.

SUPPORT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Classrooms provide a safe, welcoming, and culturally rich learning environment which supports equality, identity, and diversity.

ATTENTION TO SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To support the development of the whole child, students practice and learn about social/emotional awareness.
(For example: self-regulation, problem solving, and confidence building)

CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM

Classroom learning supports second language acquisition and provides equal opportunities for learning. Students participate in meaningful lessons that make connections to grade specific curriculum.

TEAM APPROACH TO LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION

New ideas are forming around creating a co-teaching environment to better support ELL students. Evidence has shown that a team approach between Classroom Teacher and ELL Specialist enhances learning and second language acquisition.

The purpose of ELL services is to facilitate student success and inclusion in school with appropriate supports, assessments, and planning for their learning.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

ELL students need to be able to engage in grade level content that they understand and can make a connection to in order for learning to be meaningful and make sense. Additionally, tracking academic growth is an important part of gathering evidence needed for language services and information to guide classroom instruction.

01 Assessment Literacy

As a language assessment teacher, it is important to nurture a culture of learning by being flexible and intentional with assessment practices. To support this process, ongoing and descriptive feedback that is blended into the learning cycle, provides opportunities to communicate, collaborate and reflect on learning.

02 Communicative Competence

For students to achieve communicative competence they need plenty of opportunities to practice and develop the skills to competently and confidently understand and use language to communicate in school and in a variety of social situations.

03 Language Assessment Guide

This guide has been created to assist teachers in understanding the importance of each language domain and the different aspects to consider in the assessment of literacy. It addresses language and literacy competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing

EQUITY FRAMEWORKS AND PEDAGOGY

Equity for ELLs is providing high quality instruction that is meaningful and meets the needs of our multicultural learners by understanding what supports and strategies they need to be successful.

What does this look like?

- Language is developed through the process of learning.
- Collaboration between ELL Specialist and Classroom Teacher is essential.
- The learning environment is free from learning barriers.

Equitable Practices	Highlights
<u>BUILDING EQUITY TAXONOMY</u>	- empower students - instructional excellence - opportunities to learn - social / emotional engagement - physical integration of students
<u>UNIVERSAL DESIGN for LEARNING</u>	- multiple means of engagement - multiple means of representation - multiple means of action and expression - <u>UDL Strategies Toolkit</u>
<u>EQUITY RUBRIC</u>	A reflection tool for teachers that supports professional development for mindful integration of equity in the classroom and school community .

Intervention Supports	Highlights
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION	• provides quality and differentiated instruction • learning, materials, and resources are available to all students • all students become successful learners
MULTI TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT	• culturally responsive teaching framework • active learning engages students in the learning process • collaborative learning supports language development and social / emotional skills
TIER 2 INTERVENTIONS	• Evidence Based Tier 2 Intervention Practices for ELLs • Multitiered Instructional Frameworks that is culturally responsive • focuses on scaffolding, explicit teaching, and progress monitoring

Beyond the Lesson:

A deeper look into UDL and the implementation process and how it aligns with other frameworks.

LEADING FOR EQUITY

ELL Specialist: Teacher as Leader

The role of teacher as a leader is to build a team within the school with colleagues who want to learn more about how they can provide optimal learning opportunities for their students. The teacher as a leader works with colleagues and support staff to achieve change by seeking equitable learning opportunities for multilingual students. As a Specialist, your knowledge and expertise are essential to facilitate ongoing learning and planning to enhance and target instruction for ELL students.

Instructional Support

What is the role of an ELL Specialist?

The ELL Specialist enhances classroom instruction by:
- Collaborating with the classroom teacher to plan lessons.
- Provides additional language support in real time (small groups, partner, or individual).
- Targets instruction based on the language needs of the student.
- Monitors and assess student progress and growth alongside classroom teacher.

How does this benefit students?

The ELL Specialist who is consistently in the classroom also supports equitable learning for ELL students in a culturally rich learning environment. When co-teaching and planning occurs:

Learning is meaningful and relevant.
- language development is support in various ways

Instruction is scaffolded.
- explicit teaching and interactive lessons enhance learning

Assessment is consistent.
- progress monitoring is ongoing to track growth

Students take ownership of their learning.
- student voice and choice

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Teacher Leadership

Approaching instruction through multiple lenses provides us with the insight and opportunity to examine our practice so we can adjust it based on student progress and growth. In addition, collaboration with colleagues helps us to reflect, assess, and effectively plan lessons to ensure ELL students are reaching their academic potential.
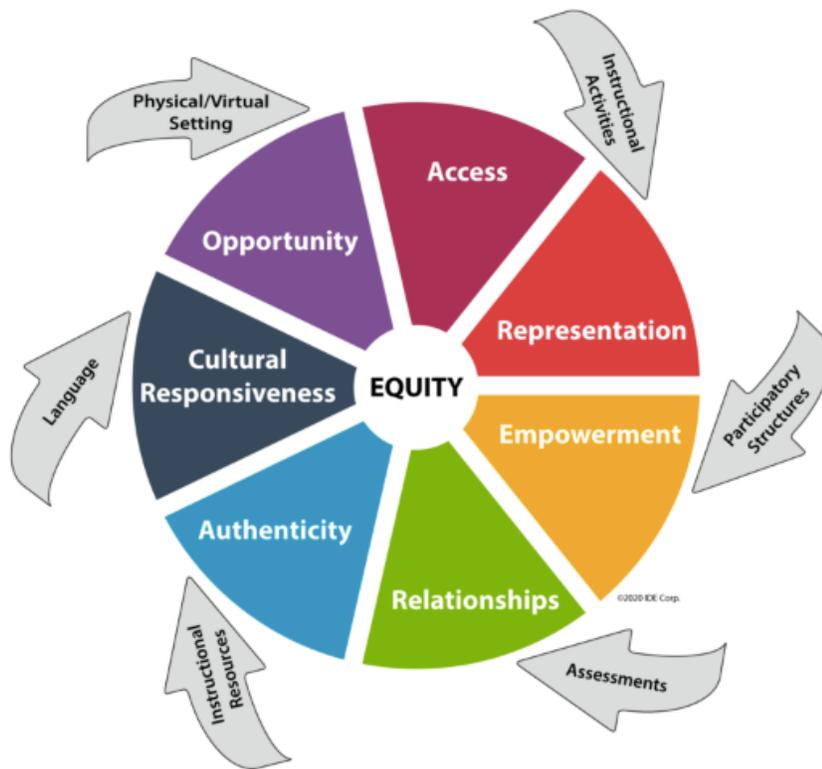

Image: Innovative Designs for Education (2022)

There are many benefits to being part of a co-teaching team such as sharing ideas, collaborating and creating lessons, and discovering new instructional strategies. A team based approach to learning fosters growth mindset with forward thinking with reflection and intentional teaching practices.

Cooperative and collaborative based instruction help guide lessons and supports personal growth in not only us, but also in our students.

Teacher Support Begins with Reflection

Building a professional learning network that reflects on what is working, what is not working, and things to do differently next time allows opportunities to hear different perspectives and experiences.

Collaboration allows room for discussion and professional growth. What will be your starting point?

What does equity for English Language Learners look like?

01 Physical Integration

Are students in the classroom?
Do they have access to all curriculum learning opportunities?
Is everyone involved in learning?

02 Social/Emotional Engagement

Are learners inspired and participating?
Who is engaged in the classroom?

03 Opportunities to Learn

Are you providing equal opportunities for learning in the classroom?
How are you meeting your ELL students learning needs?

04 Instructional Excellence

What interventions and additional supports are in place?
What strategies are teachers using during instruction?

05 Student Empowerment

Are your learners empowered?
Have they taken ownership of their learning?

EQUITY BASED INSTRUCTION

As the ELL Specialist, you will be sharing your knowledge and understanding of what equity based pedagogy looks like in the classroom in order to support language and literacy development for our multicultural students.

Equitable instruction provides a place and the space for students to have conversations and reach their academic goals. Classroom instruction develops communication skills by:
- encouraging participation and collaboration
- creating opportunities for deeper thinking
- providing a flexible learning environment for children to learn and grow

01   ### Instructional Equity
Zaretta Hammond shares important information about Instructional Equity for multicultural students.

02   ### Explicit Instruction
In this Podcast, Anita Archer shares her knowledge on how explicit instruction sets students up for success .

03   ### Evidence Based Instruction Webinar
Listen to Candace Ivanco's webinar that discusses how an evidence based approach to instructions supports English Language Learners.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TO CULTURALLY SUSTAINING

Culturally informed practice creates a learning environment that fosters a connection to culture and identity which supports language and literacy development.

_____

Culturally relevant practice values language and culture, provides learning materials that support identity, and invites the experiences of multicultural students into the classroom. Your cultural competence will be demonstrated through the connections you make with families and the relationships you build with your students. To create a culturally sustaining school community, our District goal is to develop long lasting relationships that reach out into the communities to ensure new families feel welcome and supported.

Connections to Families

Supporting Newcomer Families

"CHECK-IN" LIST
TO DETERMINE THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF FAMILIES COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY.

HOUSING
- [ ] Address:
- [ ] Expenses:
- [ ] Landlord Contact Information:
- [ ] Beds, Bedding, Towels
- [ ] Cookware, Utensils
- [ ] Furniture

FOOD
- [ ] Familiar Foods:
- [ ] Dietary Needs:

COMMUNICATION
- [ ] Phone Number:
- [ ] Alternate Phone Number:
- [ ] Translation Service:
- [ ] Emergency Contact:

TRANSPORTATION
- [ ] Housing close to transportation
- [ ] Training to use public transportation
- [ ] School bus for children
- [ ] Driver's License inquiry

INCOME
- [ ] Receiving Government Funding
- [ ] Length of Funding:
- [ ] Employment:

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
- [ ] Where to buy preferred foods:
- [ ] Place for Worship:
- [ ] Complete address and phone numbers written on cards for each family member

SPONSOR
- [ ] Name:
- [ ] Contact Information:

SKILLS FOR EMPLOYMENT
- [ ] Education:
- [ ] Experience:
- [ ] Potential Employment Opportunities:

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS
- [ ] Health:
- [ ] Dental:
- [ ] Medications:
- [ ] Health concerns/conditions:

EDUCATION
- [ ] Name of School:
- [ ] Contact information:
- [ ] Adult Education:
- [ ] Course Instructor:

Adapted from: Westernoff, Fern, et al. (2021) Chapter 3: Powerful Practices for Supporting English Learners : Elevating Diverse Assets and Identities. Figure 3.3. Corwin Press. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.queensu.ca/lib/queen-ebooks/detail.action?docID=6450323.

Click here to print the checklist.

GETTING STARTED

As the English Language Learner Specialist you will:
- work collaboratively to identify, assess, plan, and provided instruction to ELL students.
- share strategies and techniques with classroom teachers to support inclusive and effective instruction for multicultural students.
- consult with the classroom teacher in the assessment of all ELL students.
- meet with ELL families on a regular basis to maintain strong connections between school and home.
- coordinate and update Annual Instructional Plans with the School Based Team.
- initiate and complete progress reports throughout the school year.

We look forward to learning from you!

Your knowledge and expertise will help us to discover new and innovative ways to enhance our programming for English Language Learners in our schools. As part of our District Team, you will have opportunities to transform learning, share new ideas, and provide expert advice on how we can improve instruction, classroom supports, and connections with families.

The following may be of interest to you:

Documents to Review:

English Language Learner Programming

Learning Services: Inclusion for all Learners

Communication School to Home: Talking Points

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ELL Learning Standards

ELL Policy Guidelines 2018

How Educators Can Advocate for EnglishLanguage Learners Guide

Assessing Language and Literacy with Bilingual Students : Practices to Support English Learners

Project Zero Thinking Routine Toolbox

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