# Quick Reference Guide: Classroom Level Shared Responsibility for English Learner Success

## Educators Create Inclusive Learning Environments

Educators create classrooms that are inclusive learning environments; with necessary supports, educators provide English learners (ELs) with opportunities to participate in classroom activities and cooperative learning experiences alongside their non-EL peers.

Inclusive classrooms are student-centered, learning environments that mirror the larger school culture and norms for supporting EL success. Educators support ELs and their peers by making expectations clear and helping students own their learning. Learning goals and classroom expectations are explicit and visible so that all students understand their roles, classroom learning routines and expectations. In these environments ELs engage with and learn concepts, academic practices, and related language as they collaborate with ELs and non-EL peers. Instruction is carefully designed based on principles of universal design, promoting inclusive approaches for students to demonstrate their knowledge through multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression. Instruction also reflects other effective practices for promoting ELs' language and academic success, such as working cooperatively on performance assessments and conducting research and inquiry tasks that apply learning to new real-world contexts. Educators give ELs opportunities to use the language they learn by interacting with non-EL peers in academically rich and meaningful ways that are appropriate for their language and grade level. They provide supports to ensure engagement with complex language and academic practices is meaningful and leads to learning. Supports and scaffolds are appropriate to the learner, task and learning objectives, drawing on what ELs already know and can do to support new learning. This builds their collaboration skills, critical lenses, and autonomy ELs need to succeed as learners and global citizens.

## Teachers Share Responsibility for EL Success Through Regular Collaboration

**Educators Share Expertise and Responsibility: Sample Collaborative Tasks**
- Co-plan, bringing each educator's expertise in lesson and curriculum design
- Co-examine student work exemplars from each classroom and decide on next steps together
- Co-assess language and content performance and growth
- Co-teach
- Observe instruction in each other's classrooms

All teachers including general education, bilingual education and ESL teachers communicate and collaborate regularly to provide effective instruction for ELs. In schools that effectively support ELs' success, ESL, content, Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) and bilingual educators regularly communicate and collaborate to plan for and monitor EL performance. In addition, teachers regularly communicate their common planning, assessment and student performance monitoring needs to their school principals, who are responsible for scheduling and protecting this time. Regularly monitoring and analyzing EL student work and performance data helps educators who collectively share responsibility for language and content instructional goals of the program, to jointly assess EL progress. It also helps them skillfully integrate language and content standards into instruction, tailor instruction to EL needs, and design effective scaffolds and supports to maximize learning. Planning for and assessing students together builds on each educator's expertise and supports a more comprehensive understanding of ELs' growth and next instructional moves. These regular communication and collaboration structures make sure responsibility for student success is shared by all educators. It also ensures key components of all English Language Education (ELE) programs (academic achievement and language development) are present in everyday instruction of ELs. Effective educators of ELs carefully select practical ways in which they can implement regular opportunities for collaboration and communication from a variety of arrangements to meet the needs of the students they serve and their specific context. They then support this collaboration by bringing data for analysis, engaging in shared tasks, implementing agreed upon strategies and reflecting on outcomes together.

## Educators are Clear About Shared and Role-Specific Responsibilities for English Language Development

All teachers including general education, bilingual education and ESL teachers are clear about their respective responsibilities for the language development of ELs: general education and bilingual education teachers scaffold language to support ELs to learn the content and ESL teachers provide systematic, explicit, and sustained language development instruction in the context of the content.

Schools and teachers benefit when the roles of each ELE program educator is clear. In Massachusetts, ESL teachers focus on language development within the context of content area standards, while bilingual and general education teachers focus

on helping ELs learn content and ways of thinking in each area (math, science, etc.) along with language needed to learn them. In this way, both sets of educators promote holistic language development that supports academic achievement and success in and outside of school.

In practice this means content and bilingual teachers are responsible for ELs achievement of grade-level standards, and support ESL teachers in their planning of content-aligned language units by discussing expectations, academic practices and content standards from the MA Frameworks. For their part, ESL teachers prioritize English language instruction and share their expertise by identifying high-leverage language that ELs need to learn for content success. They assist content and bilingual educators in identifying language demands and appropriate supports to help ELs at different English Language Proficiency (ELP) levels engage with and master concepts and ways of thinking. This type of systematic collaboration between ESL and other educators supports shared responsibility for the success of ELs.

## 🎬 Actions-at-a-Glance: Shared Responsibility

| Shared Responsibility: What can educators at the classroom level do? |
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| <ul><li>Use cooperative learning structures and set regular classroom norms to support it</li><li>Promote student ownership of learning through student choice, reflection and self-assessment</li><li>Co-develop structures and protocols for regular communication and collaboration with other educators of ELs such as Professional Learning Communities, designated co-planning times, protocols for identifying language demands and sharing EL performance data, etc.)</li><li>Communicate collaboration and common planning time needs and rationale to school principals.</li><li>Co-write a team document outlining expectations related to each team member's role in supporting ELs that is aligned to the population of ELs served and specific ELE program at the school in collaboration with the school principal</li><li>Regularly share student work and analyze it along with other EL language and academic performance data to inform individual and joint planning</li><li>Share language and content expertise across instructional tasks (planning language goals and objectives, designing supports and scaffolds, identifying language needed to succeed across content areas and schooling tasks, etc.)</li><li>Unpack standards, texts, tasks, and assessments during co-planning to identify expectations and prioritize academic language instruction for ELs</li><li>Co-develop content area and ESL curriculum</li></ul> |

# Planning Resources

## DESE Practical Tools and Resources

The Next Generation ESL MCU Resource Guide Section 1.4 focuses on the collaborative aspects of any program for ELs and necessity for support of collaboration between language and content educators on a systematic basis.

The Collaboration Tool is a practical tool to guide content and language teachers in collaborative planning discussions. It draws on the expertise of each teacher and provides prompts for shared responsibility in planning of curriculum, instruction and assessment for their common English learners.

The Interactive Collaboration Tool Guide This interactive guide will walk you through how you can use the Collaboration Tool in curriculum development, starting with Focus Language Goals.

ESL Model Curriculum Units: Family Stories highlights how one district supported teachers' initiatives to purposefully share roles and responsibilities in planning and co-teaching ELs.

## DESE Guidance

English Learner Education Programs presents guidance for schools and districts serving ELs in Massachusetts.

Sheltered English Immersion Guidance provides guidance about these programs in Massachusetts and related expectations for educators (see the Importance of Collaboration on p. 4, ELD Happens all Day on p. 11-12, and a link to Spotlight for Collaboration and Co-teaching resources on p.10).

[Defining and Implementing Two Way Immersion Programs](#) provides guidance about these programs in Massachusetts and related expectations for educators (see Instructional Practices, p. 11).

[Guidance for Defining and Implementing Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) Programs](#) provides guidance about these programs in Massachusetts and related expectations for educators (see components of the program model, p. 12).

[Next Generation ESL Curriculum Resource Guide](#) provides guidance regarding several key aspects of effective instruction for ELs, including information about educator roles and responsibilities (see Defining ESL Instructions p. 17-18) and collaboration resources (see Unpacking Academic Language chart on p. 106, Looking at Student Work Protocol on p. 144, and Supporting Professional Learning and Collaboration on p. 170 – 174).

## Federal Resources

[English Learner Toolkit](#) provides guidance regarding civil rights and other legal obligations for EL instruction, resources for implementing effective programming for ELs, and a range of tools for self-assessment and growth (see Chapter 5: Tools and Resources for Creating an Inclusive Environment for and Avoiding the Unnecessary Segregation of English Learners  and Chapter 6: Tools and Resources for Addressing English Learners with Disabilities).

## Other Featured Resources

[What Makes a Good School Culture?](#) presents elements of a strong school culture including frequent interaction, communication and collaboration among educators.

[The UDL Guidelines](#) provides principles and exemplars of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and how they can inform planning, curriculum development, assessment and instruction.

[Collaborative Learning for ELs](#) provides ingredients or themes for success when designing collaborative learning activities for ELs.

[Serving English Learners with Disabilities: How ESL/Bilingual Specialists Can Collaborate for Student Success](#) provides a rationale and strategies for setting up successful collaboration between a variety of educators (content area, special education, ESL, etc.) on behalf of all ELs.

[Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSD) Special Education](#) offers protocols, templates, and other resources for co-planning and co-teaching (see Co-Teaching Checklist, Co-Teaching Expectations, And Co-Teaching Observation Guide and Debriefing Guide).

[ESL Co-teaching and Collaboration: Opportunities to Develop Teacher Leadership and Enhance Student Learning](#) presents a rationale for collaboration to support EL success and sample ESL and content area teachers co-teaching arrangements.

[Finding Time for Collaborative Planning](#) provides detailed descriptions and examples of six strategies for finding enough time for educator collaboration.

[Collaborative Teams Toolkit](#) provides tools for establishing productive collaborative teams of teachers and administrators working and learning together to help their students.