



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

## Guidance Informed by the Latest Research and Emerging Best Practices

The Department regularly provides guidance informed by the latest research and emerging best practices to assist districts in meeting the needs of ELs.

In successful programs for ELs, stakeholders at every level—school, district, and state—are invested in ensuring EL success. Given the growing numbers of English learners, it is of the utmost importance that Department staff has a thorough understanding of the latest research regarding the impact of language, and culture, and other variables commonly associated with EL status in education. The Department sets the tone for shared responsibility and leads by example for districts and schools by ensuring that:

Department staff understands the demographic data and current achievement levels of ELs in Massachusetts

Department staff are coached and supported to approach EL education from an asset-based perspective

All Department initiatives include lenses that address the needs of ELs and their families in a meaningful way

Planning for EL success is coordinated across offices and divisions to maximize impact

Department staff seek ways to build their own linguistic and cultural competency.

The Department is thus positioned to support districts and schools in meeting the needs of ELs by regularly making evidence-based information broadly available.

## Forums for Sharing Best Practices

The Department convenes forums for districts to share best practices related to scheduling and equitable resources for ELs. The Department supports districts and schools by highlighting new research and emerging best practices, and capitalizes on opportunities to promote them with a broad range of stakeholders who then share ideas and address challenges over time.



In addition to populating [websites](#) with information and resources, additional efforts to disseminate and alert districts and educators about new policies, guidance, and promising practices are critical. When new documents and resources merit professional development or specific training, it is equally important for the Department to develop action plans and [accountability](#) efforts for both the dissemination and application of the new information.

## Incentives for Districts to Develop Strategies to Promote Shared Responsibility

The Department incentivizes districts to develop strategies to promote shared responsibility for EL success within their schools.

In addition to setting requirements and monitoring compliance in districts, the Department also provides incentives to promote shared responsibility and advance equity in districts and schools. This may include identifying opportunities to extend capacity through partnerships with foundations, other states, and outside groups (e.g., education support organizations, business community) or other incentives that promote shared responsibility at the local level.



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

Shared Responsibility: What can educators at the state level do?

- Provide guidance informed by the latest research, emerging promising practices, and [data](#) on educational achievement and attainment [by school-level, district-level](#), and [state-level](#), including disaggregated [data on ELs](#)
- Provide model processes, tools, and scenarios that help districts and schools apply the general guidance and inquiry process to their own contexts
- Facilitate leadership coalitions to advance the state’s Vision and Blueprint for EL Success
- Run various [networks](#) (e.g., by content area, by educational role, by region)
- Run listservs and distribute [newsletters](#) to share new information
- Foster dialogue among practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders to continuously improve policy and practice to ensure EL equity and success (for example, related to topics such as scheduling and equitable resource allocation for ELs)

## Planning Resources

### DESE Guidance

[ELE Program Guidance](#) provides information about different programs for ELs, including expectations for program components and roles of educators. These include the Guidance for Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Programs; the Guidance for Defining and Implementing Two Way Immersion Programs; the Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Definition and Guidance; and the Guidance for Supporting English Learners with Disabilities.

[Next Generation ESL Project: Curriculum Resource Guide](#) provides information about EL instruction, including a discussion of different programs for ELs in Massachusetts (p. 4-5); the state’s definition of ESL instruction, the role of ESL teachers, and how it relates to other components of instruction for ELs (p. 17-19); how ESL instruction and other EL program components can be arranged together, including scenarios (p. 19-35); and ways to promote shared responsibility through educator collaboration (p. 41-59) and professional learning (p. 169-175).

### Federal Resources

[English Learner Toolkit](#) Each chapter provides explanations of the civil rights and other legal obligations to ELs; checklists schools can use as self-monitoring tools; sample tools that may be used or adapted for use in schools to aid with compliance; and (4) additional resources that may provide further relevant information and assistance. All tools and resources are free and accessible via the Internet.

### Other Featured Resources

[The National Academies of Science, Engineering, Medicine: Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures](#) examines how evidence based on research relevant to the development of ELs from birth to age 21 can inform education and health policies and related practices that can result in better educational outcomes. This report makes recommendations for policy, practice, and research and data collection focused on addressing the challenges in caring for and educating ELs from birth to grade 12.