



Quick Reference Guide: Classroom Level Educators have the Resources They Need

Use Curricular Materials to Advance Academic and Linguistic Development

Educators have and use curricular materials that advance ELs' academic and linguistic development simultaneously and align fully to the content and rigor of grade-level standards.

The [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#) and [WIDA English Language Development standards](#) provide shared expectations of what ELs should know and be able to do at every grade level. Effective educators support ELs in meeting these expectations by [carefully developing, adapting and selecting](#) curriculum materials that build towards the knowledge, skills, and analytic practices embedded in these expectations is essential for EL success. They review materials to ensure they are:

- high-quality,
- rigorous, grade level appropriate, and standards-based,
- aligned to ELs' learning needs,
- focused on contextualized practice with language development (see the [ESL Model Curriculum Units](#)), and
- connected to the driving language demands, analytic practices, key academic practices, and learning targets derived from the curriculum frameworks.

Effective educators [regularly collaborate](#) around curricular materials selection, adaptation, and/or development. Before selecting or adopting materials for ELs, educators (content area, bilingual, ESL, special education, etc.):

- [collaboratively analyze curriculum frameworks and WIDA standards](#) for expectations,
- [identify the core learning targets](#), and
- [consider what the ELs already know and can do](#).

Effective educators also continuously monitor and assess the effectiveness of curricular materials and resources, revising and updating what is used to leverage strengths and meet the needs of the ELs they serve.

Massachusetts Definitions

Curricular materials are resources teachers use to facilitate sequences of learning experiences (e.g., lesson and unit plans, texts); also called adopted or written curriculum.

A curriculum is a sequence or progression of student learning experiences teachers facilitate using curricular materials as a foundation (not a script!); also called enacted or taught curriculum.

[Instructional Materials and Professional Development: Strengthening Curriculum in Massachusetts](#)

Intentional and Ongoing Professional Learning to Meet English Learners' Needs

Educators engage in intentional and ongoing professional learning that provides them with the necessary tools and strategies to meet the academic and linguistic needs of ELs.

As part of the [continuous improvement cycle](#) effective educators of ELs reflect on their own practice. They analyze student work samples, data, and lesson plans to identify areas improvement areas. They intentionally select and attend [high quality](#) professional learning opportunities that help them develop [the knowledge and skills](#) they need to support EL success. Educators participate in professional learning that is job-embedded, on-going, collaborative, and focused on a wide range of topics related to EL achievement (language demands in standards, asset-based and culturally responsive instructional strategies for ELs, formative and performance-based assessment, EL family engagement, addressing early signs of high school dropout, etc.). In addition, educators may also facilitate professional learning opportunities for peers at their schools and districts, which helps them grow as [teacher leaders](#).

Professional Learning Formats	
Job-embedded	Traditional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) • Peer collaboration • Peer observations, • Working with instructional coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses • Workshops • Connected sessions

Sample Professional Learning Topics

Contingent pedagogy and actionable feedback

Culturally responsive pedagogy

Lesson planning for simultaneous development of language & concepts/analytical practices embedded in the frameworks

Collaborative practices

Nuanced Scaffolding

Language driven formative assessment

Language forms and features

Bilingual and Dual Language lesson planning

Actions-at-a-Glance : Educator Resources

Educator Resources: What can educators at the classroom level do?

- Frequently communicate resource needs to school leaders, discussing how proposed resources will support EL academic learning and language development outcomes
- Collect evidence of the efficacy of curricular materials for ELs, including how they support EL attainment of goals
- Implement specific content and pedagogical knowledge and skills learned in EL-related professional development and measure the effectiveness of strategies implemented
- Engage in self-reflection to identify areas for improvement and where professional learning could support better teaching practice
- Participate in professional learning with other educators who teach the same group of ELs

Planning Resources

DESE Practical Tools and Resources

[Evaluation Forms](#) especially the education plan form, can be used to make intentional choices about professional learning in relation to their stated goals.

[Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation: Classroom Teacher Rubric](#) provides a self-reflection and assessment tool for teaching practice that educators can use to identify areas in need of improvement and select next steps for their professional learning based on their reflection. The rubric can also support collection of evidence of practice around all indicators.

[Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#) provide expectations of what students should know and be able to do in relation to the core content for each grade and content. Teaching to these standard helps guide instruction and ensure that all students are working towards the core expectations for each grade.

[Curriculum heat maps](#) showcase most frequently used curricular materials in the State. The curriculum heat maps can be used while making strategic choices about curricular materials for use in the classroom.

[Curriculum Ratings by Teachers \(Curate\)](#) presents ratings of curricular materials in terms of quality and alignment. Ratings are from other educators in the field. These resources can inform strategic choices about curricular materials for use in the classroom.

[Next Generation ESL: Model Curriculum Units](#) provides exemplar units that illustrate high-quality, rigorous curriculum units for use and implementation in the ESL classroom.

[English Language Education Leadership Networks](#) provides opportunities for sharing resources and instructional materials.

[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 rigorous, grade and level appropriate curriculum, instruction and assessment for their common English learners.

[The Interactive Collaboration Tool Guide](#) outlines how to use the Collaboration Tool in curriculum development, starting with the creation of Focus Language Goals.

DESE Guidance

[The Center for Instructional Support Instructional Materials and Professional Development: Strengthening Curriculum in Massachusetts](#) provides resources on curricular materials.

[Guidebook for inclusive practice](#) provides guidance educators can use for self-reflection and identification of professional learning.

[Educator Evaluation Teacher Leadership](#) highlights how educators can capitalize on strengths and become teacher leaders. Note the educator evaluation rubric indicates the importance of modeling practice for others as a teacher leader.

[Next Generation ESL Curriculum Project: ESL Curriculum Resource Guide](#) provides guidance and support for developing NGESL Curriculum that is rigorous, authentic, contextualized practice with language development (see the Theory of Action and Key Characteristics p. 10-12, the Discussion of the Collaboration Tool and creating Focus Language Goals p. 41-70, State Standards for All Students: EL Considerations p. 146- 149, and the Text Complexity Analysis Tool p. 149- 152).

Federal Resources

[English Learner Toolkit](#) All tools and resources are free and accessible via the internet and provide guidance on effective instruction of English learners.

[The National Academies of Science, Engineering, Medicine: Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures](#) This report provides recommendations on the effective instruction of English learners. Educators can use it to help self-reflect and identify next steps for professional development.

Other Featured Resources

[Continuous Improvement in Education](#) discusses continuous improvement including at the classroom, instructional, level. Professional development is situated in a cycle of continuous improvement.

[Teacher Development to Support English Language Learners in the Context of Common Core State Standards](#) presents potential professional learning to consider to improve teaching of ELs.

[English Learners Success Forum](#) provides resources such as the [Guidelines for Improving Math Materials for English Learners](#) and [Guidelines for Improving English Language Arts Materials](#) that can be used to assess the quality of curricular materials. Each guideline connects to additional resources that include practical strategies, scaffolds, and activities for instruction. It also includes a self-assessment tool for reflecting about current curricular materials (see [How well do your instructional materials support English Learners?](#)).

[Adapting Curriculum to Learners' Needs](#) provides an example of how one classroom teacher adapted the curriculum to better reach students.

[Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide for the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School](#) presets a five-step cycle that is useful for structuring professional learning communities that explore and implement effective practices for EL instruction. This toolkit includes a useful video series that include recommendations and showcase educators putting the recommendations into practice in a range of classroom contexts and settings.

[A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners](#) provides guidelines for selecting and developing high-quality rigorous curriculum materials for ELs.

[High-leverage principles of effective instruction for English learners](#) presents evidence-based practices for supporting ELs.

[Strengths-Based Instruction for English Language Learners](#) explores planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment taking a strengths-based approach.