



Quick Reference Guide: District Level Educators with the Resources They Need

Data-Informed Budgeting and Processes for Effective Curriculum Adoption

District leaders and school committees use data to develop a budget that includes a predictable adoption cycle for culturally responsive curricular materials that adequately support the needs of ELs.

Districts curriculum adoption cycles that lead to the adoption of materials that support the needs of English Learners (ELs) consider key elements such as [standards alignment](#), a specific focus (such as [cultural responsiveness](#) or fit with EL needs), [coherence](#) across the district, and integration of effective strategies for EL instruction. Curricular materials that promote EL success leverage the assets they bring (linguistic and cultural backgrounds, etc.) and address their need for content learning and language development. To support the adoption of this type of curriculum, district leaders can gather relevant data about EL performance and needs across the district to inform adoption cycles. In practice this may mean analyzing EL student performance data in each area (ESL, content areas, bilingual classrooms) and developing a process for evaluating whether current curriculum materials are meeting the needs of ELs in each area. It also may mean making predictions about specific areas in need of new materials and determining curriculum materials needed to implement new instructional strategies or English Language Education (ELE) program changes such as adding a bilingual program. District leaders also connect this type of analysis to annual budgeting and regular cycles of curriculum adoption to make sure EL needs are addressed throughout the process rather than as an afterthought. In addition, district leaders can engage with EL families in the selection and review process to ensure cultural responsiveness. They can leverage [English Language Parent Advisory Council](#) conversations to inform the curriculum adoption process. This can help with promoting partnerships with EL families to ensure the new materials are used to support EL development at both home and school.

Characteristics of Next Generation ESL Curriculum

- Planned and dynamic
- Explicit and visible
- Rigorous and integrated
- Differentiated
- Collaborative and dialogic
- Explicitly teaches language and thinking

[Next Generation ESL Curriculum Resource Guide p. 12](#)

Intentional and Ongoing Professional Learning About Tools and Strategies

District leaders provide and monitor intentional and ongoing professional learning that provides educators with the necessary tools and strategies to meet the academic and linguistic needs of ELs.

Intentional and ongoing professional learning helps support curriculum implementation and effective instructional practices for ELs. District leaders can support EL success by providing the type of collaborative, high-quality professional learning focused on the needs of ELs. Such professional learning can help educators unpacking a new resource for the first time, reviewing a familiar curriculum to meet the needs of a new set of ELs, and learn and practice new instructional strategies and tools. For example, district leaders may establish [professional learning communities \(PLCs\) focused on improving EL outcomes](#) across the district. PLCs can help develop long-term, collaborative relationships between educators to support practices for improving instruction such as researching strategies to impact EL achievement, completing peer observations, and analyzing student work. A PLC can help keep educators focused on a common EL success goal and incorporates teacher leadership and peer accountability for maintaining high expectations for EL success. Effective district leaders provide these opportunities and monitor their effectiveness. They identify instructional improvement areas from EL performance data or educator evaluation plans, develop targeted professional learning plans, and gather data about the implementation of learned strategies and EL growth to evaluate whether professional learning was effective.

Sample Collaborative Professional Learning Focus for Educators of ELs

- Gathering a team of ESL and content area educators to unpack the [MA Curriculum Frameworks](#) and identify potential challenges to understanding content and academic language focus for ESL and content area units in a district curriculum map
- Using the [Interactive Collaboration Tool](#) to co-plan instruction for a particular group of ELs throughout a school year
- Using shared protocols for looking at EL work in one content area, identifying EL needs and how they vary by subgroup (ELs with disabilities, newcomers, long-term ELs, [students with limited or interrupted formal education](#)), and selecting specific strategies to implement as a team to target needs by subgroup

Actions-at-a-Glance: Educator's with Resources They Need

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

- Ensure curriculum adoption cycles include ELE program (Sheltered English Immersion, ESL, Transitional Bilingual, etc.) curriculum resource needs
- Allocate enough funds for selection of effective curriculum for ELs across all content areas and programs
- Engage EL families in curriculum review and selection processes
- Communicate curriculum changes, and the reason for any changes, to EL families and relevant community members
- Provide professional learning that supports collaborative implementation of newly adopted curriculum materials for ELs
- Monitor the impact and effectiveness of EL curriculum materials and related professional learning through classroom observations and review of EL performance data
- Use PLCs or other collaborative structures to engage educators in developing an understanding of culturally responsive curriculum that meets the needs of ELs, how to select it, and how to implement it
- Involve diverse teams for educators who work with ELs (ESL, content area, special education, bilingual, specialists, etc.) in curriculum materials review and adoption cycles

Planning Resources

DESE Practical Tools and Resources

[Ensuring Curricular Coherence](#) describes three types of curricular coherence that support student learning: vertical coherence, aligned tiers of instruction, and cross-subject coherence.

[Resource Allocation and District Action Reports](#) (RADAR) offers a suite of excel-based tools to assist districts in prioritizing resource allocations.

[Aligning Curriculum to Massachusetts Standards](#) supports teachers, coaches, administrators, and curriculum developers in aligning curriculum to the Massachusetts Standards.

[Adoption, Implementation, and Effects of Curriculum Materials](#) discusses teachers use of curriculum materials, available information about the quality of materials, and how districts can best support teachers in implementation.

[The Collaboration Tool](#) supports collaborative curricular planning with the intentional, simultaneous development of language and the content and analytical practices embedded in the curriculum frameworks.

[Curriculum Ratings by Teachers](#) (Curate) provides educator ratings of curricular materials in terms of quality and alignment and can be used to make strategic choices about curricular materials.

[How Do We Know Initiative](#) provides resources for helping district leaders evaluate the likelihood that a strategy will succeed and measuring whether implementation of chosen strategies is working. These tools can be used to evaluate curriculum selection and implementation strategies.

[Next Generation ESL Project: Curriculum Resource Guide](#) provides guidance for developing standards-aligned, high-quality ESL curriculum with a focus on the simultaneous development of content and language, and for setting up effective professional learning communities focused on improving EL outcomes (see p. 169-173).

[Next Generation ESL: Model Curriculum Units](#) provide exemplar ESL units that illustrate high standards and expectations for EL instruction and videos showcasing the units in action in classrooms across the state.

[Text Inventory Handbook](#) provides guidelines for selecting curriculum materials, including ideas for selecting materials with equity and culturally responsive teaching approaches in mind (see p. 14-15).

DESE Guidance

[Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#) provides clear and shared expectations for what all students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade and serves as a foundation for adopting and/or developing grade-level and age-appropriate rigorous curriculum for ELs.

[Guidance for English Learner Parent Advisory Councils](#) (ELPACs) provides information about ELPACs, including information for EL families in a several languages.

Federal Resources

[Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School](#) provides research-based strategies for helping ELs acquire language and literacy skills and ideas for implementing them.

[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](#) provides guidance for educator teams in implementing evidence-based strategies for supporting EL academic language and literacy development.

Other Featured Resources

[EQuIP](#) (Educators Evaluating the Quality of Instructional Products) provides rubrics for assessing curriculum materials' alignment to Common Core State Standards. Adapted EQuIP rubrics with a consideration for ELs are included in the [Next Generation ESL MCU Resource Guide](#) (see p. 117-122).