Quick Reference Guide: Classroom Level Academic and Linguistic Supports

Targeted Supports for EL Success

Educators provide targeted supports to ELs in addition to English language development and other core content instruction.
English Learners (ELs) can achieve grade level expectations with appropriate and purposefully selected supports and scaffolds. To provide targeted supports for ELs, effective educators:

- Are knowledgeable about content and language development and adept at using academic and linguistic supports to reach established learning targets
- Use backward design (See Section 4, p.9) for curriculum development
- Identify individual EL needs (linguistic, cultural, learning style, and background experiences)
- Integrate assessment results into instruction and plan assessments based on instructional goals
- Carefully consider appropriate supports to help ELs progress toward mastery of standards
- Use purposefully planned supports and assessments (macro scaffolding) and moment to moment supports and assessments (micro scaffolding) to gather data and gauge ELs' progress in relation to identified expectations and benchmarks
- Adjust supports based on EL progress data
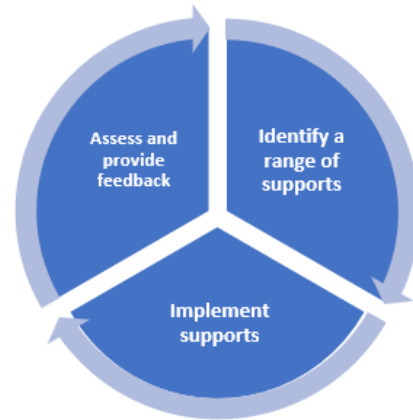
Effective educators of ELs use scaffolds and supports in a temporary way, to support learning and the development of self-directed, autonomous learners who actively gauge their own depth of understanding and make purposeful choices. Assessment that supports EL learning and engaged learners leverages feedback that is timely, actionable, and connected to initial expectations for learning to support progress towards grade level standards.

Tailor Instructional Supports and Services to Student Needs

Educators provide all ELs (including SLIFE, ELs with disabilities, and newcomers) with instructional supports and services tailored to their unique academic and linguistic needs.
Identifying and using appropriate supports for English learners starts with knowing ELs and understanding the assets they bring, their performance, and their needs. It also involves recognizing that supports are not one size fits all but must fit to student needs. Effective educators use a range of sensory, interactive, and graphic supports flexibly and tailor them to each ELs' unique learning and language development needs. This involves continually collecting data and tracking each EL's individual progress, including supports used and their effectiveness. Effective educators also collaborate closely with colleagues and stakeholders (EL parents, students, special educators, support staff, etc.) to plan responsive, personalized instruction, and to coordinate any additional services, supports, and instructional plans needed.

Careful identification and use of supports and services for:

SLIFE students

ELs with disabilities

Newcomers

Establishing Personalized Learning Goals for attaining English proficiency

Educators identify areas in which ELs need improvement and establish personalized goals for attaining English proficiency.
Educators carefully analyze EL data such as growth percentiles and progress indicators to identify areas of improvement. They use resources such as the Success Template to create a plan for ELs to establish and reach individual goals and benchmarks. Personalized learning goals are developed so ELs can become proficient in English and other languages, when applicable, and to reach other academic standards and milestones (such as graduation). If an EL has not made adequate

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Helpful Tips for Helping ELs Progress Towards Benchmarks

- Plan, assess and track progress of ELs including students who did not meet benchmarks in identified areas in need of improvement
- Partner with and involve families of ELs in developing plans
- Examine the effectiveness of the curriculum and materials utilized
- Identify areas in which ELs need improvement in relation to benchmarks
- Participate in professional learning and coaching to improve instructional practices
- Collect evidence of and analyze the effectiveness of instructional practices
- Identify resources and services available to help ELs improve in identified areas
- Obtain or develop appropriate supplemental materials to assist ELs who are struggling with attaining English proficiency
- Participate in collaborative EL support teams to share and collaboratively analyze evidence of EL progress in relation to benchmarks

Adapted from the Guidelines for the use of Benchmarks Toward Attaining English Proficiency

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progress in relation to their proficiency benchmark, educators collaborate closely with colleagues and stakeholders (ESL teachers, tutors, content teachers, EL parents, support staff) to carefully select any necessary interventions. They carefully implement interventions with fidelity and track for effectiveness, making adjustments as needed. Effective educators also promote EL ownership of learning and language development by actively involving them in assessing their own learning, establishing goals related to proficiency benchmarks and standards, and curriculum planning. Moreover, effective educators partner with EL families, sharing information about ELs' progress in relation to benchmarks and discussing learning goals, changes to the curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

🎬 Actions-at-a-Glance : Academic and Linguistic Supports

Academic and Linguistic Supports: What can educators at the classroom level do?
- Use backward design to identify key understandings, knowledge, skills, and language targets   - Design individual responsive instruction, supports, and assessments derived from identified learning targets   - Collaboratively gather and analyze evidence of ELs' current level of language proficiency (student work samples, observations, learning logs) and plan next steps for instruction   - Learn about typical needs of different EL groups (ELs with disabilities, newcomers, students with limited and interrupted formal education – SLIFE, gifted and talented, newcomers, etc.)   - Teach students metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies and how to use them for self-assessment and selection of scaffolds   - Use many forms of classroom and assessment data to measure EL progress and to plan instruction, supports, and interventions

Planning Resources

DESE Practical Tools and Resources

Next Generation ESL Resource Guide Section 4 guides educators in backward design considerations for curriculum for English Learners, some of which are similar for all students and others that must be considered for ELs, given differences in language development, organization of WIDA standards, organization of content standards and organization of MA Frameworks.

The Collaboration Tool supports collaborative development of instruction for ELs and collection of evidence of EL progress (see Thinking Space: Language as Action and Contingent Feedback on p.2).

Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) Toolkit provides ideas and tools for identifying ELs who may be at risk of dropping out.

How Do We Know Initiative provides information on how to gauge the effectiveness of strategies implemented.

Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practices Explores how to implement best practices aligned with Universal Design for Learning to maximize the accessibility of instruction.

DESE Guidance

Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Definition and Guidance provides information that can support planning instruction for SLIFE students (see SLIFE guiding principles on p. 7-8, Appendix E, and Appendix F)

Tools for Schools provides resources and guidance about the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support, which focuses on school improvement and establishing high-quality educational experiences for all students while meeting the academic and non-academic needs of students. Tools and resources also include information on targeted interventions and supports as needed.

Benchmarks provides information about benchmarks for attaining English proficiency and how they are used (see guidelines, Success Template, and Executive Summaries translated).

Supporting English Learners and ELs with Disabilities provides a collection of resources to learn more about ways to support and plan responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment for English learners with disabilities.

Guidance for Supporting English Learners with Disabilities provides information about instruction for ELs with disabilities (see Quick Reference Guides on identification of ELs as students with disabilities and identification of students with disabilities as ELs, IEP planning and development for ELs, and EL programs for dually identified students).

Federal Resources

English Learner Tool Kit Chapter 6 provides resources and tools for supporting and planning curriculum, instruction, and assessments for English learners with disabilities. Tools 1, 2, 3, and 5 are especially useful for informing classroom practices.

Newcomer Toolkit provides guidance, tools, and resources to support newcomers. Chapter 2 and 3 are particularly useful for creating an optimal classroom environment and planning appropriate and rigorous instruction for newcomers.

Other Featured Resources

English Language Development Standards provides a list of sample sensory, interactive, and graphic supports for ELs (p. 11).

Focus on ELLs with Disabilities: Providing Access to Complex Language provides strategies, guidance, and samples of planning responsive instruction for English learners with disabilities.

Understanding by Design (UbD) This ASCD resource created by Jay McTighe and the late Grant Wiggins provides a curricular planning framework used widely across the country by thousands of educators. It assists educators to get a handle on standards, to align programs to assessments, and guide teachers in implementing a standards-based curriculum that leads to student understanding and achievement. Massachusetts educators across the state worked with Jay to provide UbD professional development, and he has endorsed the Massachusetts adjustments to the thinking process for EL considerations as model for English Learners outlined in the template in the Next Generation ESL Resource Guide where both WIDA and MA Frameworks are integrated.

Releasing Responsibility discusses the gradual release of responsibility model and explores the benefits of utilizing it to promote autonomous learners. This resources prompts thinking about how to structure intentional use of supports to the curriculum and then gradually transitioning students to autonomous learners.

Meeting Students' Need Through Scaffolding provides sample scaffolds and supports for ELs and students with disabilities.

Attending to Language, Engaging in Practice: Scaffolding English Language Learners' Apprenticeship Into the Common Core English Language Arts Standards presents demands of content standards and offers guidance on how to support ELs as they engage with and meet rigorous standards expectations.

Scaffolding Instruction for English Language Learners: A Conceptual Framework explores the what and how of scaffolding and provides guidance on how to effectively scaffold instruction for ELs.

Putting scaffolding to work: The contribution of scaffolding in articulating ESL education presents a research-based model for scaffolding instruction for English learners.

UDL Principles and Related Guidelines presents principles and guidelines for planning and implementing supports for curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as ways to promote student self-monitoring of learning.

Guidelines for Educating Limited English Proficient Students with Interrupted Formal Education provides recommendations on best practices for the education of SLIFE students and features several resources to support instruction.

How to Support ELL Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFEs) presents recommendations for supporting SLIFE including suggestions for effective practices for classroom instruction.

High-leverage principles of effective instruction for English learners presents evidence-based practices to support ELs.

Formative Assessment as Contingent Teaching and Learning: Perspectives on Assessment as and for Language Learning in the Content Areas presents contingent pedagogy as an effective approach for EL instruction and discusses the role formative assessment plays in contingent pedagogy.

Leaders of Their Own Learning: Student-Engaged Assessment Videos explore ways to promote student self-monitoring of learning.

Helping English Language Learners Succeed with a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) provides an overview of MTSS systems and explores considerations and guidelines for determining supports for ELs.

How to Support ELL Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFEs) highlights the unique needs of SLIFE and explores strategies that schools and classroom educators can implement to meet their needs.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

[Focus on SLIFE: Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education](#) presents tips for connecting with SLIFE students and for improving instruction to support their success.