

# Quick Reference Guide: Classroom Level Thriving in High School



## Encouraging Active Participation of English Learners in the School Community

Educators encourage ELs to participate fully in school life (e.g., in athletic teams, student government, clubs, and academic enrichment activities in addition to meaningful and rigorous classroom learning experiences).

Preparing English Learners (ELs) for active and successful participation in college, career, and civic engagement starts with supporting active and successful participation in high school. Educators play an important role in ensuring that ELs participate fully in and thrive in high school in preparation for future successes in adulthood. They help create equal opportunities for ELs to participate actively and meaningfully in the high school community in a variety of clubs, activities, sports, and enrichment opportunities. Educators can support EL participation by:

- Creating a welcoming, positive high school community where all students and staff view each other as integral parts,
- Encouraging ELs to try new things and take risks by joining a new club, activity, or team,
- Helping ELs identify and select activities that build on their interests and skills
- Collaborating with educators, support staff, and district and school leaders to remove barriers so ELs can join and participate in activities
- Raising awareness of various activities through inclusive practices such as interpretation and discussion,
- Inviting ELs and non-ELs members of clubs, activities, events, sports teams, and enrichments to share information about these programs and discuss their experiences in class to help ELs learn about opportunities
- Recruiting ELs who actively participate in activities to encourage others to join and to support them when they start.



*Active involvement in extracurricular activities [educates the whole student, cultivates leadership skills, increases socialization, and has social, emotional, and linguistic benefits that support student success in high school, college, and career.](#)*

## Nurture Self-Confidence, Ensure Participation, and Coordinate Resources

Educators nurture self-confidence and ensure that ELs participate in classroom and school activities; educators help to coordinate available school resources.

Educators collaborate in an on-going basis with colleagues, families, community members and organizations to create a thriving high school campus both inside and outside of the classroom. They seek ways to nurture ELs' skills, knowledge, habits of mind, and self-confidence through instruction and [build ELs' social, linguistic, and overall academic confidence so they can thrive in high school and succeed afterwards](#). Effective educators of ELs also ensure their classroom instruction creates innovative spaces and opportunities for students to [build agency, self-direction, and autonomy](#). In addition, they help coordinate active student engagement in the classroom and in the larger school community by:

- Knowing what activities, teams, clubs, and organizations their ELs are involved in, including knowing the time commitments these activities take
- Helping ELs to balance, plan, and manage their time, which helps develop essential skills for college, career, and future civic engagement
- Monitoring EL involvement in extra-curricular activities to ensure that they do not fall behind in their classes, and

- Coordinating with other educators, club advisors, coaches, and families to ensure that ELs continue to succeed in the classroom and thrive in all the different areas where they choose to participate

Benefits for ELs from active participation in extra-curriculars	Supporting EL involvement in a variety of school activities	Promote EL voice in school activities
<p>Increased confidence</p> <p>Outlets beyond the classroom</p> <p>Opportunities to meet more students in the school with common interests</p> <p>Student shared experiences beyond the classroom</p> <p>Forging a school community where each member is viewed as an active and integral part of the school community</p>	<p>Get to know each student's interests, experiences, and backgrounds</p> <p>Help make connections between ELs and a variety of school activities, sports, clubs, and enrichments based on their interests</p>	<p>Survey ELs to learn about activities they are involved in outside of school</p> <p>Survey ELs to learn about activities they are interested in for which there may be no club, organization, or team in the school yet</p> <p>Collaborate with colleagues, students, and families to create new clubs, enrichments, and teams that are reflective of student interests when possible.</p>

## Actions-at-a-Glance: Thriving in High School

Thriving in High School What can educators at the classroom level do?

- Post flyers, posters, and other sources of information about clubs, events, and activities ensuring it is more inclusive and accessible through translation and/or discussions with interested students
- Use technology to make posts about opportunities on classroom social media or class websites, in ELs native language when appropriate
- Create a student engagement/participation resource section in the classroom to feature different activities and events
- Help ELs navigate aspects of being involved such as how to join, figuring out the logistics, nominating or recommending the student where needed, knowing who to contact, and connecting with the faculty advisor and/or coach
- Collaborate with district and school leaders and community organizations to address barriers to participation such as lack of access to transportation and financial barriers
- Address language barriers through interpretation and [translation](#), and support participation by connecting ELs with other engaged students
- Address [bias, harassment and/or bullying](#) because of EL or immigrant status by promoting a school culture of [tolerance](#), anti-bullying campaigns, and educational opportunities for all students to develop appreciation of diverse cultures, languages, and backgrounds

## Planning Resources

### DESE Tools and Resources

[Leaders of Their Own Learning: Student-Engaged Assessment Videos](#) explores ways to promote student self-monitoring of learning.

### DESE Guidance

[Extra-Curricular Activities](#) presents state law and its expectations of ensuring equal opportunity and access to extra-curricular activities.

[Next Generation ESL Curriculum Project: ESL Curriculum Resource Guide](#) presents information for developing asset-based effective curriculum for ELs (see the Theory of Action and Key Characteristics on p. 10-12, which explores promoting student agency and Attending to the Role of Critical Stance and Social Justice in ESL Curriculum Development on p. 157-160).

[Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education \(SLIFE\) Definition and Guidance](#) provides guidance on practice and procedures to meet the linguistic and academic needs of SLIFE.

[Supporting English Learners and ELs with Disabilities](#) provides resources to support development of responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment for ELs with disabilities to ensure all students thrive.

[Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#) provides resources, tools, and materials for raising awareness and to prevent discrimination and bullying.

## **Federal Resources**

[English Language Learner Toolkit Chapter 4](#) provides information, resources, and guidance on ensuring equal opportunity to curricular and extra-curricular activities for ELs. [Chapter 10](#) provides suggestions and information about interpretation services (see p. 8 – 13).

[Dear Colleague Letter](#) highlights the importance of ensuring that schools provide equal opportunities and access to activities for ELs.

[Newcomer Toolkit Chapter 4](#) provides information and resources for schools and classrooms to use to help prevent discrimination, stop perpetuation of stereotypes, and raise awareness in their schools and classrooms.

## **Other Featured Resources**

[The Importance of Extra-Curricular Activities for ELLs and Immigrant Students](#) presents interviews with educators and ELs on the value of extra-curricular activities for English learners.

[Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association](#) provides information on student involvement in sports and can help support student involvement.

[Building Students' Sense of Agency](#) explores the importance of student agency and ideas for how to promote it.

[Sparking Student Agency with Technology](#) presents students who were able to develop a deep sense of student agency by examining a problem that resonated with them and posing solutions.

[Schools to Learn From: How Six High Schools Graduate English Language Learners College and Career Ready](#) showcases six high schools with strong college and career outcomes for ELs. This resource also provides information about promising instructional practices for ensuring ELs thrive.

[Personalization and UDL: A Perfect Match](#) presents ways to use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to promote active engagement and self-monitoring of learning.

[ELLs in Middle & High School](#) provides resources to help meet the needs of ELs in middle and high school.

[Advanced Course Enrollment and Performance Among English Learner Students in Washington State](#) presents research about differences in the numbers of ELs enrolled in advanced courses in relation to similarly prepared non-ELs and provides implications and considerations for how to increase the numbers of ELs enrolled in advanced courses.

[Building Capacity to Promote College- and Career-Readiness for Secondary-Level English Language Learners](#) presents promising practices and policies needed to ensure ELs are college and career ready. Educators can use this resource to reflect on the practices in place in their school and district.

[How to Support the Social-Emotional Needs of Middle/High School ELLs](#) presents social-emotional needs of ELs and can inform educators in helping ensure all ELs thrive in high school.

[Teaching Tolerance](#) provides a wealth of resources, including lesson plans, to promote tolerance, create welcoming learning spaces, and raise awareness.

[Best Practices for Adolescent ELLs](#) explores promising practices for adolescent ELs, including school-wide practices.

[English Language Learner Instruction in Middle and High School](#) presents effective strategies for teaching ELs in high school.