

Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Definition and Guidance

Office of Language Acquisition

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# Introduction

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Each year, Massachusetts schools enroll an increasing and diverse number of English learners (ELs) with limited or interrupted formal education. Students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) often possess a variety of school readiness skills, sociolinguistic proficiencies, content knowledge, and academic ways of thinking different from students who have consistently attended Massachusetts schools. Interruptions in formal schooling may be a result of several factors that would impact a student’s ability to perform and achieve in a Massachusetts classroom with typical peers. These factors may include: variances in compulsory educational requirements, unavailability of schooling, civil unrest, migration trends, refugee experiences, family constraints, gender restrictions, economic circumstances, environmental considerations, or other variables. Limited schooling and associated socio-academic implications often pose more complex and variant challenges than those typically encountered among other ELs. However, SLIFE have often encountered more in their lives than many of their peers will ever experience. Districts should provide comprehensive instruction which capitalizes on students’ funds of knowledge and interests, creating opportunities to make significant progress to achieve educational goals including college and/or career readiness.

This document provides Massachusetts educators and stakeholders with guidance on practice and procedures to meet the language and academic needs of SLIFE. The guidance also addresses the definition, identification, and initial placement of SLIFE as follows:

* *[Part 1](#_Part_1:_)*describes the initial identification of SLIFE.
* [*Part 2*](#_Part_2:_) explains SLIFE guiding principles.
* [*Part 3*](#_Part_3:_Planning) provides SLIFE planning and instructional considerations.
* [*Part 4*](#_Part_4:_) describes SLIFE reclassification criteria and processes.

For further inquiries please contact the Office of Language Acquisition (OLA) at [el@doe.mass.edu](mailto:el@doe.mass.edu).

# SLIFE Definition

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Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) are English learners who have experienced interrupted education or have limited formal education prior to enrolling in the district. SLIFE usually come from a home in which a language other than English is spoken, have gaps in their education from their home country, and are at least two grade levels behind in reading and mathematics. They may have attended school in the U.S. but can have gaps in language and literacy due to ineffective or missing instruction. They are often at risk for dropping out of school and may need intensive support. In some districts, SLIFE are placed in existing ELE programs, such as SEI or transitional bilingual education, and receive additional supports to close educational gaps in their academic background. Other districts specifically design ELE programs for SLIFE, such as programs that include high intensity English and/or native language acquisition. Districts that wish to start new ELE programs specifically for SLIFE must complete the new ELE program proposal process, while districts that educate SLIFE in existing ELE programs do not.

A SLIFE student meets **all** of the following criteria[[1]](#footnote-1):

1. The DOE025 SIMS field indicates the student is an English Learner.
2. Is 8 to 21 years old.
3. ***Entered a United States school after grade 2, or***

***Exited the United States for six months or more and did not attend school during that time.***

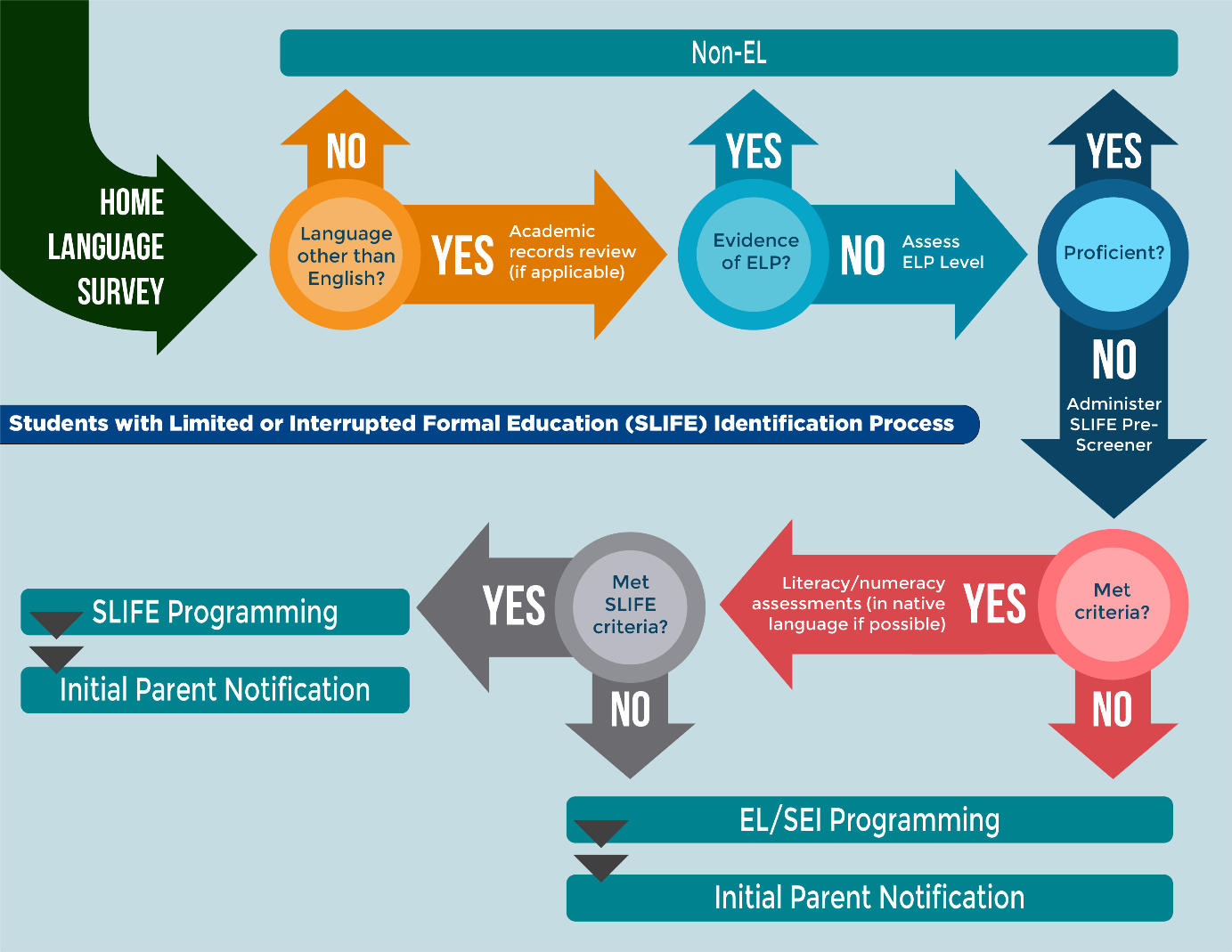
1. ***Prior exposure to formal schooling is characterized by one of the following:***
2. [***no formal schooling***](#_Appendix_D:_Glossary)***.***
3. [***interruptions in formal schooling***](#_Appendix_D:_Glossary)***, defined as at least two or fewer years of schooling than their typical peers.***
4. [***consistent, but limited formal schooling***](#_Appendix_D:_Glossary)*.*
5. Functions two or more years below expected grade level in native language literacy relative to typical peers.
6. Functions two or more years below expected grade level in numeracy relative to typical peers.

# Part 1: Initial Identification of SLIFE

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State laws require that all ELs receive instruction that is specifically designed with two overarching goals: English language development and academic content achievement. It is the district’s obligation to determine whether new students are ELs and to provide them with appropriate instructional structures. The following diagram provides a recommended process for determining whether newly enrolled students are SLIFE. An overview of each step follows the diagram:

**Flowchart for SLIFE Intake and Placement**



**Step 1: Administer a Home Language Survey**

The primary purpose of a [*Home Language Survey*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/resources/communications.html)(HLS) is to screen newly enrolling students to determine if they are potentially ELs. The HLS seeks to determine if a student has had exposure to a language other than English that may have impacted their English language development.

**Step 2: Academic Records Review (if available)**

Trained school district personnel should conduct a record review of submitted documents, particularly documents containing academic and English language proficiency information. If newly enrolled students transfer from another district within Massachusetts or a state within the WIDA consortium, it is possible that they participated in the annual language proficiency assessment, *ACCESS for ELLs.* If the test was administered within the **last** **calendar** **year** district staff can use these results in addition to student academic records to determine English language proficiency. A list of WIDA member states can be found at [https://wida.wisc.edu/](https://wida.wisc.edu/%20) .

If academic records are available and the student is classified as an EL, move to ***Step 5*** below.

**Step 3: Assess English Language Proficiency (if not determined in academic records)**

Based upon the HLS and record review, trained school district personnel administer the WIDA Screener when evidence of English proficiency is unavailable or inconclusive.

**Step 4: Determine EL or Non-EL Status**

Use the results of the WIDA Screener as outlined in the [*Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/) document found at to determine if the studentis an EL.

**Step 5: Administer SLIFE Pre-Screener to all identified ELs**

Administer the SLIFE Pre-Screener to the student and/or parent[[2]](#footnote-2) in the student’s/parent’s native language or through interpretation or translation by trained bilingual staff if necessary. For a sample SLIFE Pre-Screener see [*Appendix A*](#_Appendix_A:__1).

If the results of the SLIFE Pre-Screener indicate that the student is potentially a SLIFE, then move to ***Step 6*** below.

If the SLIFE Pre-Screener results indicate that the EL is ***not*** SLIFE, refer to the [*Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/) for placement guidance.

**Step 6: Administer Literacy and Numeracy Assessments**

If the SLIFE Pre-Screener indicates limited or interrupted education, then administer native language literacy and numeracy assessments to determine if the student is academically functioning two or more years below expected grade level relative to typical peers. Trained school district personnel should administer the literacy and numeracy assessments[[3]](#footnote-3). Districts may purchase assessments, translate or interpret existing assessments, or develop assessments for this purpose. The student should be considered SLIFE if it is not practicable to provide native language assessments, and the SLIFE Pre-Screener indicates limited and/or interrupted education, until further assessments and data measures indicate otherwise.

**Step 7: Establish a School-Based SLIFE Placement Team**

Establish a cross-disciplinary, school-based team that includes EL educators, SEI or bilingual endorsed core academic content teachers, reading specialists, math specialists, adjustment/guidance counselors, administrators, and related service providers to make instructional placement decisions for SLIFE. To do this, the team should review SLIFE intake data, such as registration documents, HLS, ELP assessment(s), SLIFE Pre-Screener, literacy and numeracy assessments, and other pertinent records. The school-based team must communicate with parents when making these decisions.

**Step 8: Develop SLIFE Placement**

Instructional placement decisions for SLIFE considers, socio-emotional, cultural, academic, and linguistic factors among other variables, such as trauma[[4]](#footnote-4), migration considerations, and familial contexts.

Educate SLIFE in a culturally and linguistically responsive teaching environment consistent with their level of English language proficiency and academic needs. Instruction targets gaps in skills and knowledge that students may have as a result of limited or interrupted education. Instruction provides, but is not limited to:

* English as a Second Language, English Language Development/Sheltered Content Instruction
* Native language instruction or support, if possible
* High intensity literacy training
* Sheltered social studies
* Sheltered mathematics
* Sheltered science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
* Guidance and counseling services, including crisis counseling, as recommended by the school-based team in a language the student can understand (Title VI; EEOA, 20 USC 1703(f); G.L. c. 76, §5; 603 CMR 26.02)

For a sample guidance tool see [*Appendix E*: *The SLIFE Planning and Instructional Considerations Tool*](#_Appendix_E:_SLIFE).

**Step 9: Record SLIFE Designation in Student’s Profile**

Record student’s SLIFE designation in the student’s school profile, cumulative folder, and on SIMS Field DOE041.

**Step 10: Parent Notification**

Notify parents about their child’s ELP level, assessment results, and SLIFE designation decisions **no later than 30 days** after the beginning of the school year or within **two weeks** if the student enrolls in the school district during the school year using the parent notification form provided by the Department at LINK. Such notifications shall be provided in English and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand.

**Step 11: Develop a Student Success Plan**

A Student Success Plan (SSP) identifies the student’s language and academic goals. The SSP also establishes how to monitor academic and ELP progress. The SSP describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning, and what supports teachers and service providers will provide to ensure the student meets their educational goals.

Developing an SSP requires assessing a student’s ELP, numeracy/literacy skills, and academic profile while simultaneously considering the student’s ability to access the curriculum. Considerations should include how socio-linguistics and interrupted education affect the student’s learning. In all cases, tailor the SSP to the individual student's learning goals as identified during the EL evaluation process and school-based team recommendations.

For a sample oral SLIFE interview see [*Appendix B*](#_Appendix_B:_) and for a sample Student Success Plan, see [*Appendix C*](#_Appendix_C:_) of this document.

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# Part 2: SLIFE Guiding Principles

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Educators should consider the educational gaps in SLIFE students’ academic background to best meet their linguistic needs.

SLIFE guiding principles:

* Build foundational skills necessary to develop English language acquisition
* Bridge students’ background experiences to academic educational experiences and content in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
* Acknowledge and incorporate students’ existing skills and knowledge to facilitate connections to learning the necessary skills and academics to be successful 21st century learners
* Design equitable, intentional, responsive, and strategic academic programming
* Consider research-based instructional elements necessary for SLIFE academic success, such as thematic units, culturally responsive teaching, and project-based learning
* Provide socio-academic and socio-cultural supports through the school-based team

# Part 3: Planning and Instructional Considerations

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Planning and instructional considerations support the SLIFE’s transition to academic success as a 21st century student. Therefore, effective SLIFE instructional models should provide:

1. Thematically coordinated literacy and content courses;
2. Appropriate ESL classes as outlined in OLA guidance documents;[[5]](#footnote-5)
3. Intensive, consistent, and age-appropriate sheltered content or bilingual instruction, and ESL;
4. Trained ESL, SEI, or bilingual endorsed teachers that teach age-level literacy and numeracy skills for their students;
5. Enrichment opportunities that accelerate both their language acquisition and overall socio-emotional adjustment;
6. Supplemental support programs before or after school, and during the summer to accelerate academic progress and language acquisition; and
7. For secondary students, pathways to pursue career, post-secondary, vocational, and technical education (CVTE), a High School Equivalency (HSE), Testing Program or other alternative educational programs.

Strategically designed instruction builds on student assets and provides opportunities for peer learning and rich interactions to accelerate language acquisition and socio-emotional adjustment.

Students also attend supplemental support programs outside regular school hours to accelerate academic progress and language acquisition. With the support of the school level SLIFE placement team, students identify their goals and regularly monitor their progress toward high school graduation and beyond.

[*Appendix E:* *The SLIFE Planning and Instructional Considerations Tool*](#_Appendix_E:_SLIFE) is available to teams making instructional decisions for SLIFE.

# Part 4: Reclassification Criteria for SLIFE into former-SLIFE Status

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The decision to reclassify a student as former-SLIFE considers student progress and readiness.

Follow these steps to ensure appropriate reclassification.

**Step 1: Establish a school-based EL placement/SLIFE reclassification team**

Establish a school-based team to make effective instructional and assessment decisions for SLIFE. The team should include SEI, ESL, bilingual and special education teachers (when appropriate), guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, social workers, and other professionals who regularly interact with the student.

The school-based team must communicate with parents in a language they understand when making instructional and programmatic decisions for SLIFE.

**Step 2: Review relevant data to determine the student’s reclassification from SLIFE to former-SLIFE status**

Language acquisition settings where newcomer students are separated from the general education must have goals that should be met to avoid unnecessary segregation[[6]](#footnote-6). The school-based team should annually review student records for the following criteria they should meet in order to transition out of SLIFE status.

Students with at least an overall score of 2.0 on ACCESS for ELLs may be appropriate candidates to remove the SLIFE classification from SIMS DOE041.

***Relevant Data*.** School-based teams should evaluate and consider a range of evidence of the student performance when making a recommendation to reclassify students from SLIFE status, including:

* Scores on locally-administered reading and other academic assessments, or other District Determined Measures (DDMs)
* Scores on locally-administered diagnostic language assessments

academic grades and progress

* Written observations and recommendations of student classroom teachers
* Special education status (if applicable)
* Performance on MCAS content area tests
* Performance on ACCESS 2.0
* Attendance
* Social/emotional screening/measures
* Academic habits and behaviors as documented by educators and specialists working with the students

Evaluate these criteria to support and validate the preliminary decisions made each spring about student instructional programming, SLIFE classification and possible reclassification as former-SLIFE.

After evaluating available student data, if the school-based team determines there is sufficient evidence of a student’s ability to perform successfully within the ELE program, then the team should remove the student’s SLIFE classification and change the designation in the student’s cumulative folder and state Student Information Management System (SIMS).

**Step 3: Plan an instructional program for the English Learner**

Refer to the [*Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/) document for recommended ELE programming for ELs who are not SLIFE.

Student placement in the ELE program should align with the student’s goals. Older students should have access to the same opportunities as other students who may require alternative settings. These may include [credit recovery](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/massgrad/EvalBrief-CreditRecovery.pdf#search=%22credit recovery%22), [GED](http://www.doe.mass.edu/hse/comparison.html) and [HiSET](http://www.doe.mass.edu/hse/) preparation, [dual enrollment](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/initiatives/EarlyCollegeDesignLandscape.pdf#search=%22dual enrollment%22), and [school to career](http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/wib.html) options. Creative alternatives for credit recovery also include contextual learning options such as service learning, community-based learning, project-based learning, or community learning.

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### Appendix A: Sample SLIFE Pre-Screener

### Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

### Pre-Screener

**Directions:** *School personnel should complete the first box below after the Home Language Survey (HLS) and English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment results are evaluated, but prior to meeting with the student.*

| District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Location of interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interviewee: 🞐 Student 🞐 Parent 🞐 Other  Interview Language: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interpreter Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  SASID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Gender: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Notes: |
| --- | --- |

**If all four items are checked, then administer literacy and numeracy diagnostics.**

|  |  |  | **Criterion** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1.** |  | Identified as English learner in DOE025 SIMS field |  |
|  | **2.** |  | Aged 8 to 21 years |  |
|  | **3.** |  | EL entered a school in the U.S. after grade 2  OR  Exited the United States for six months or more and did not attend school. |  |
|  | **4.[[7]](#footnote-7)** |  | Extent of prior exposure to formal schooling is characterized by   1. no formal schooling   OR   1. interruptions in formal schooling   OR   1. consistent, but limited formal schooling |  |

### Appendix B: Sample SLIFE Interview

**Directions:** *School personnel should complete the box below prior to the interview.*

| District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Location of interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interviewee: 🞐 Student 🞐 Parent 🞐 Other  Interview Language: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interpreter Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  SASID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Gender: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Notes: |
| --- | --- |

**Directions:** *Conduct the interview when developing the student’s individual learning plan. Complete with the student and, if applicable, parent(s). Conduct outside the instructional school day. The interviewer should be a qualified professional who is proficient in English and in the student’s home language, or the school should arrange for an interpreter to be present.*

**Personal Information**

| Who raised you? Until what age? |  |
| --- | --- |
| Who do you live with now? |  |
| Who came with you to the U.S.? |  |
| Describe your country/home. |  |

**Prior School Practices**

| How old were you when you started school? |  |
| --- | --- |
| How many years did you attend school? (suggestion- list each year of schooling). How many hours each day? |  |
| Did you ever attend school in the United States?  If yes, when and for how long? |  |
| Where did you go to school? |  |
| What was your favorite subject? |  |
| Did you always attend school? Are there times you did not attend school? For how long? Why? |  |
| When did you stop going to school?  Date? Year? |  |

**Language Literacy / Numeracy / Technology Practices**

| Did you have books at school? What kind of books? |  |
| --- | --- |
| Do you like to read/draw/write? |  |
| What is your favorite book/magazine/website? |  |
| What do you use math for in your daily life? Do you like Math? |  |
| Do you have a computer/cell phone? |  |

**Directions:** *The following will help educators place students in electives and programs:*

**Outside Interests/Future Plans**

| What do you like to do outside of school? Eg., sports, music, crafts, art, work, cook, babysit? |  |
| --- | --- |
| What are your goals as a student? |  |
| Do you work now? What do you do? |  |
| What work would you like to do after high school? Would you like to go to college? |  |
| Are you interested in attending clubs and/or playing a school sport after school? |  |

### Appendix C: SLIFE Sample Student Success Plan

### EL Student Success Plan 20XX-20XX

### 

### XXX Public Schools XXX Elementary/Middle/High School

### Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ SASID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_

### Country of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Language(s): oral: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ written: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Student is SLIFE: Yes / No

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of ELE program:**  □ SEI □ TBE  □ TWI □ Newcomer  □ ESL class  □ pull-out □ push-in  □ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ periods of ESL[[8]](#footnote-8)  □ Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | □ SEI[[9]](#footnote-9)  Content areas: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | **Type of support:** □ para in-class support (circle: SPED, language, content)  □ Title I Reading □ Title I Math  □ Literacy Support  □ Tutoring □ Math  □ Title III describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  □ Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Language Accommodations (MCAS): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

IEP Goals: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

IEP Accommodations: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Educator overseeing plan: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SSP Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Attachments: □intake assessments □home language surveys □MCAS □ACCESS/Alt ACCESS

□local assessments □teacher input □other

*Student created self-description and goals:*

**Notes:** *What do we need to know about this student? What are her/his funds of knowledge, current learning goals? How is s/he adjusting to school, what interests or motivates him/her, what is her/his family situation, etc.?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ELP Benchmarks:** Prior ACCESS/Alt ACCESS\* level and year\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Difficulty Index (ACCESS only) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ACCESS/Alt ACCESS\* target (ACCESS only) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \*Alt ACCESS takers will have demonstrated progress if they increase proficiency level in one or more subdomains of the Alt ACCESS. They will not receive a Difficulty Index or ACCESS target as both are calculated only for ACCESS. | | | | | |
| **Quick peek:** MCAS Math and year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ MCAS ELA and year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  MCAS Science and year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | |
| **Local Assessments/measures and when given:** | | | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| **School Interventions:** Interventions for ELs include tiered systems of support - small group instruction, literacy instruction, etc. ESL is *not* an intervention. | | | | | |
| **Subject** | **Specific Goals** | **Intervention / Strategies** | **Intervention Monitoring Date** | **Monitoring Status** | |
| **Sufficient Progress** | **Comments** |
|  |  |  |  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |
|  |  |  |  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |
|  |  |  |  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |
|  | 🞎 |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Intervention Status** | 🞎  **Student is not progressing in a timely manner.**  Intervention/strategies to be revised: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 🞎 **Student is making some progress with:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intervention/strategies. 🞎 Continue with plan. **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 🞎 **Student has mastered and completed interventions.**  Student will no longer receive interventions/strategies. **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

***Parent Strategies:*** *(Steps/strategies that the student’s parents or guardians may take to help the student improve his/her skills)*

**Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Parent Information** | Parent has been informed of the content of the Student Success Plan after each monitoring update visit in a language they can understand via:  🞎 E-mail 🞎 Mail 🞎 Conference **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  🞎 E-mail 🞎 Mail 🞎 Conference **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  🞎 E-mail 🞎 Mail 🞎 Conference **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

### Appendix D: Glossary of Key Terms

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| **Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English learners (ACCESS for ELLs)** | A secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade who have been identified as English learners (ELs). It is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states (including Massachusetts) to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English. |
| **Culturally responsive teaching** | Culturally responsive teaching, also known as cultural responsiveness, “asks educators to examine commonly held beliefs about student learning and to use students’ cultural knowledge, prior experience, and frames of reference to create and sustain culturally responsive environments.  “Cultural responsiveness is a student-centered pedagogy of thoughtfully and respectfully integrating students’ cultures into all aspects of the learning environment, including, but not limited to, instruction, curriculum, and teacher-student and teacher-family communication. The school and classroom environment are not only equitable and bias free, they reflect students’ cultural identities in order to foster feelings of student safety, belonging, engagement, and intrinsic motivation.” -*Cultural Sustainability in our Schools & Classrooms, MA DESE, 2019* |
| **English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.** | ESL instruction provides explicit, direct, and systematic instruction to learn the English language that is intended to promote second language acquisition and English language proficiency. It includes learning outcomes in the four language domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. ESL instruction must be tailored to the students’ English language proficiency levels. In order to prioritize language needs, districts may group students of different ages and native language groups within the same ESL classroom. (G.L. c. 71A § 4). ESL instruction should be based on district-level ESL curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and integrates components of the WIDA ELD standards frameworks. |
| **English Learner (EL)** | A student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English (G.L. c. 71A § 2 (d)).The federal definition adds “whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language may deny the student the ability to meet state proficiency level on state assessments…or the opportunity to participate fully in society.” (No Child Left Behind Act, Title IX, § 9101 (25)). *Also known as English Learner student (Every Student Succeeds Act) and English learner (G.L. c. 71A).* |

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| **Formal Schooling** | **No formal**  **schooling** | The student did not attend school prior to arriving in the United States. |
| **Interruptions in**  **formal**  **schooling** | Two or more years of interrupted education. The student may have attended school in one location for a length of time, then moved to another location and accumulated a significant amount of time when not attending school. |
| **Consistent, but**  **limited**  **formal**  **schooling** | The student may have attended school in the United States for a length of time then moved to another country. Although education was consistent in duration and length, the student presents with gaps in education. The student completed compulsory education in the native country yet the native country’s school year (duration and daily school hours) is inconsistent with Massachusetts’ days per year and hours per day. |
| **Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)** | Sheltered English immersion is an English language acquisition process for young children in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language. Books and instruction materials are in English and all reading, writing, and subject matter are taught in English. Although teachers may use a minimal amount of the child's native language when necessary, no subject matter shall be taught in any language other than English, and children in this program learn to read and write solely in English. This educational methodology represents the standard definition of ''sheltered English'' or ''structured English'' found in educational literature. | |
| **SLIFE** | Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (“SLIFE”) are English learners who may have experienced interrupted education or have limited formal education prior to enrolling in the district. SLIFE students usually come from a home in which a language other than English is spoken, have gaps in their education from their home country, and are at least two grade levels behind in reading and mathematics. They may have attended school in the U.S. but can have gaps in language and literacy due to ineffective or missing instruction. They are often at risk for dropping out of school and may need intensive support. In some districts, SLIFE students are placed in existing ELE program, such as SEI or transitional bilingual education, and receive additional supports to close the educational gaps in their academic background. Other districts specifically design ELE programs for SLIFE, such as programs that include high intensity English and/or native language acquisition. Districts that wish to start new ELE programs specifically for SLIFE must complete the new ELE program proposal process, while districts that educate SLIFE in existing ELE programs do not. | |
| **Typical Peer** | A peer of similar age, socio-economic status, linguistic and cultural background. | |
| **WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards** | An English language proficiency standards framework developed by the WIDA consortium and composed of five standards that represent the social, instructional, and academic language that students need to engage with peers, educators, and the curriculum in schools. | |
| **WIDA** | A multi-state consortium which aims to advance academic language development and academic achievement of linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators. | |

### Appendix E: SLIFE Planning and Instructional Considerations Tool

The SLIFE Planning and Instructional Considerations Tool provides discussion points for school and district teams to consider as they develop pathways for SLIFE or evaluate current SLIFE practices. Indicator title link to the following page that cites research to provide opportunities for deeper learning and exploration of best practices for SLIFE. Educators may also refer to the list of resources in [Appendix F](#_Appendix_F:__1).

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| **The** [**School/District SLIFE Placement team**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/SLIFE-Guidance.pdf)**:**   * Designs supportive procedures and systems * Implements systems and procedures that:   + identify and assess potential SLIFE   + place students, and   + facilitate family communication * Reviews student progress and service monitoring regularly |
| **Social Emotional and Community Supports**   * Leadership builds and sustains culture that embraces SLIFE as valued contributors to school and community * Access to all guidance and counseling services * Leverage home/family partnerships:   + conduct home visits;   + bilingual parent liaisons,   + coordinates with community agencies,   + mentorship programs * Health services connect families with medical, dental, and trauma counseling |
| [**Curriculum and Instruction**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/SLIFE-Guidance.pdf)   * Intensive, consistent, and age-appropriate ESL and sheltered content * Embeds systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction in rich, contextualized, and meaningful curriculum   + Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction   + Thematically coordinated courses optimize learning outcomes * Addresses gaps in skills and knowledge * Rigorous instruction meets grade-appropriate standards in Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks * Native language supports learning outcomes * Addresses and supports social-emotional concerns that arise from migration, trauma, or familial dynamics * Includes supplemental support programs and enrichment opportunities (before or after school, and during the summer) * Provides professional development opportunities for educators |
| [**High School, College and Career Pathways**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance/SLIFE-Guidance.pdf)   * College and career pathways offer credits toward graduation * All existing programs accessible for SLIFE * Partners with adult education, higher education, and technical training |

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| **SLIFE Student Success Plan (SSP):**   * Student academic profile includes   + Intake assessment data   + Oral SLIFE interview results * Addresses socio-linguistics, culture, and effects of interrupted education * Program of study is equitable, intentional, responsive, and strategic academic * Equitable, culturally and linguistically responsive progress monitoring meets student language and academic goals |

**School‐based SLIFE Placement Team**

Districts establish a district‐level SLIFE team that includes central office and school leadership comprising ELE, bilingual, curriculum, student services, and administrators. This team meets regularly to establish district‐wide systems for SLIFE. Preparation includes communication with local refugee and immigration services, contracting professional development about the new population, identifying budget sources, and designing policies and protocols for educating SLIFE. *(DeCapua, 2009; United States Department of Education, 2016).*

The district team ensures that each school teaching SLIFE has a school‐based placement team1 assigned to communicate with the students, parents, and staff to support SLIFE Furthermore, the school‐based team develops an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and ensures that appropriate ELE programming, college and career pathways, socio‐emotional, and community supports are available for SLIFE.2 *(WIDA, 2015).*

**Social Emotional and Community Supports**

Research conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers recommends that schools/districts “Build environments that respond to the immediate social, cultural and linguistic needs of immigrant adolescents with limited schooling and use the full resources of the community to support immigrant students." *(CCSSO, 2004).*

**Curriculum and Instruction**

The SLIFE component of the ELE program may require a consideration of the educational gaps in the students’ academic background to best meet the linguistic needs of SLIFE students. It requires a specially designed rigorous ESL curriculum, taught by ESL teachers who understand the students' culture, with carefully selected opportunities for inclusion. (Robertson & Lafond, date unknown; 3. *USED & USDOJ, 2015; Castañeda v. Pickard, 1978.)*

Offer intensive English language development courses and sheltered content instruction and offer literacy and/or academic instruction in the native language. Sheltered content‐area instruction for SLIFE focuses on English language development through the medium of academic content, so that students can work on language learning and subject learning simultaneously. Most importantly, instructors are familiar with the specific needs of SLIFE and their families. *(Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004.)*

**SLIFE Student Success Plan (SSP)**

“…teachers and schools need to build complete portraits of English language learners with interrupted education. A portrait can include the student’s academic history, linguistic history, and family and cultural history. This information can inform decisions in regard to programming, course selection, and instructional needs of the student.” *(WIDA, 2015.)*

A SLIFE SSP identifies the SLIFE’s language and academic goals and establishes how to monitor academic and ELP progress. The SLIFE SSP describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning, and what teachers and service providers will provide to ensure the student meets his/her educational goals. The SLIFE Guidance Document provides a sample SSP that can be adapted to local requirements4.

**High School, College and Career Pathways**

Research conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers recommends that schools/districts “create structures that transcend high school academic departmental divisions to support simultaneous linguistic and academic development. Align high school programs with higher education and adult education.5” *(CCSSO, 2004.)*

1 Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education Definition and Guidance. The school‐based SLIFE Placement Team includes EL educators, core academic teachers, reading specialists, math specialists, adjustment/guidance counselors, administrators and related service providers.

2For additional information related to the specialized knowledge required by team members see WIDA Focus on SLIFE, p.2.

3 See section titled Ten Ideas for Providing School‐wide Support to Students with Interrupted Formal Education, items 5‐8.

4 Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education Definition and Guidance. The Sample ILP starts on page 18.

5 ibid, Items 4, 9, and 10 discuss ways to support older SLIFE.

### Appendix F: Resources

# DeCapua, A., Smathers, S., & Tang, L. (2009). Meeting the Needs of Students with Limited or Interrupted Schooling. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

New York State Education Department. (2011). [Guidelines for Educating Limited English Proficient Students with Interrupted Formal Education](https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/sife_guidelines.pdf). 12‐13. Albany, NY: State Education Department. Retrieved from [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/sife\_guidelines.pdf.](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/sife_guidelines.pdf)

Robertson, K. & Lafond, S. [How to Support ELL Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFEs)](http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/how-support-ell-students-interrupted-formal-education-sifes). Colorín Colorado. Retrieved from [www.colorincolorado.org.](http://www.colorincolorado.org/) April 14, 2017.

Spaulding, S., Carolino, B., & Amen, K. (2004[). Immigrant Students and Secondary School Reform: Compendium of Best Practices](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED484705.pdf). Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved from [http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED484705.pdf.](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED484705.pdf)

U.S. Department of Education. [Newcomer Toolkit](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf). (2017). Retrieved from  [https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf .](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf)

U.S. Department of Education & Department of Justice. (2015). [Dear Colleague Letter: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf). Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>

U.S. District Court for Southern District of Texas. (1978). Castañeda v. Pickard Court Decision.

WIDA. (2015[). WIDA focus on SLIFE: Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education](https://wida.wisc.edu/resources/students-limited-or-interrupted-formal-education-slife). WIDA Focus Bulletins. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research. Retrieved from  [https://wida.wisc.edu/resources/students-limited-or-interrupted-formal-education-slife .](https://wida.wisc.edu/resources/students-limited-or-interrupted-formal-education-slife)



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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner

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1. These criteria were developed based on research conducted by the SLIFE guidance team. It includes information drawn from state and federal laws and Colorín Colorado, New York City Public Schools Guidance, and other state guidance, as well as research conducted by Andrea DeCapua and Helene Marshall. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Parent refers to the student’s parent or legal guardian. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. School districts may use a selection of literacy and numeracy assessments including SLIFE developed assessments, pre-unit assessments, grade/school/district generated assessments, end-of-the-year assessments, etc. with rubrics and scores that indicate grade-level performance. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Trauma may include, but is not limited to, exposure to child labor, human trafficking abuse, gang involvement, displacement, separation, war, and/or natural disaster. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. OLA guidance documents are located at:[http:/www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/guidance/) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Office of English Language Acquisition, Dear Colleague Letter, January 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Refer to *Formal Schooling* in *Appendix B: Glossary of Terms* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ESL, Newcomer, SLIFE, TWI, and TBE may only be taught by an appropriately licensed instructor. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. No core academic teacher can be assigned to provide SCI to an EL unless the teacher holds the SEI Teacher Endorsement or will obtain it within one year. The district must make every reasonable effort to avoid assigning an EL to more than one non-endorsed core academic teacher during the student’s enrollment in the district. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)