



# Effective, Together! Collaborating during the Initial and Continuing Eligibility Processes for English Learners with Disabilities

## Shared Responsibilities, Part 2

# Presenter



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# Common Acronyms

1. **EL** – English learner – refers to a **student** identified as having a primary language other than English and qualifying for English language instruction based on eligibility scores from an ELP screener or assessment.
2. **EL/SWD** – English learner student with disabilities.
3. **ESOL** – English for Speakers of Other Languages - refers to the state-funded language instruction educational **program**.
4. **ELD** – English language development
5. **ELP** – English language proficiency, usually referred to as levels on a developmental continuum, i.e., WIDA ELP Levels 1-6.
6. **LEA** – Local Educational Agency
7. **MTSS** – Multi-tiered Systems of Support
8. **SST** – Student Support Teams

## Discussion:

What would special educators need to know about core instruction and MTSS for English learners?



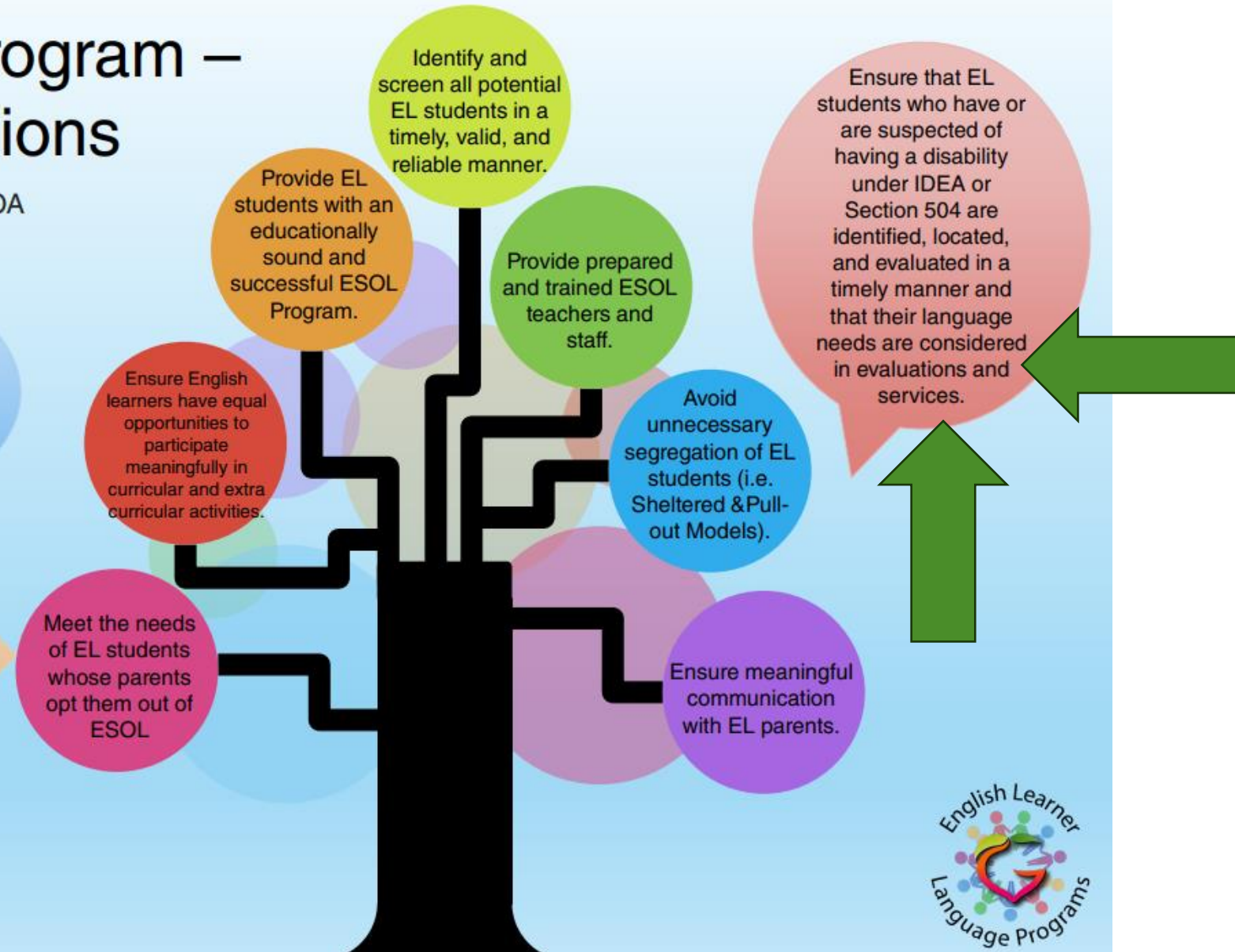


# ESOL Language Program – LEAs’ Legal Obligations

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and EEOA

1. Monitor and evaluate EL students’ progress in English and academic grade-level knowledge;
2. Exit them when they are proficient in English; and
3. Monitor exited students to ensure they were not prematurely exited.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the LEA’s ESOL Program to ensure EL students acquire English and that the program is reasonably calculated to allow ELs to attain parity of participation in the standard instructional program with a reasonable time period.



## OCR/DOJ EL Dear Colleague Letter

# Review of Last Month's Key Points when Evaluating ELs for Special Education

"LEAs must identify, locate, and evaluate ELs with disabilities in a timely manner."

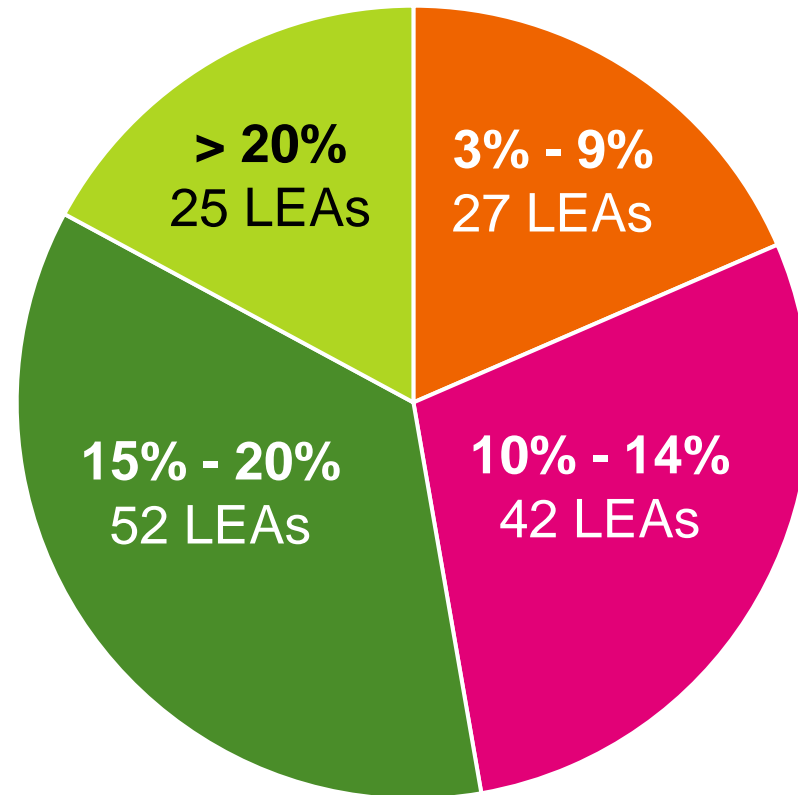
"Disability evaluations may not be delayed because of the student's limited English language proficiency (ELP) or the student's participation in a language instruction educational program"

"A student's ELP cannot be the basis for determining that the student has a disability."

[U.S. Department of Education, English Learner Toolkit, Chapter 6](#)

# Percent of EL/SWD at the State and LEAs

## Count of LEAs by Percent EL/SWD (146 LEAs with 30 or More ELs)

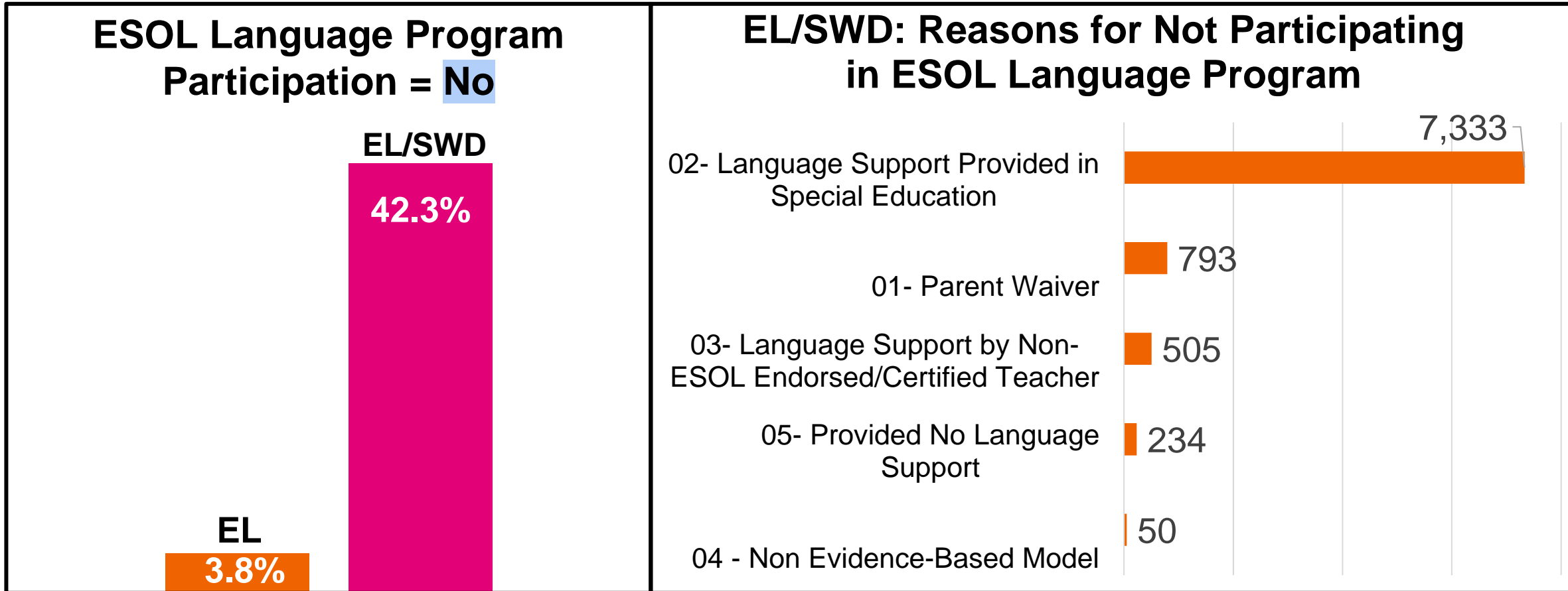


### State of GA: 14% EL/SWD

- # LEAs  $\leq$  14%: **69**
- # LEAs  $>$  14%: **77**

Source: FY 24 Oct FTE 1 Data Collection Cycle

# EL/SWD Participation in ESOL Language Program, 2023-2024



Source: FY24 Oct FTE 1 Data Collection Cycle



# What Does Research Say About Identifying ELs for Disability-Related Services?

- **Variability** in eligibility of ELs for Special Education services - **over or under-identification.**

(Artiles, Rueda, Salazar, & Higareda, 2005; Zehler et al., 2003)

- **Misidentification** - Four potential contributing factors:

- 1) Professionals' knowledge of second language development and disabilities.



- 2) Effectiveness of instructional practices.

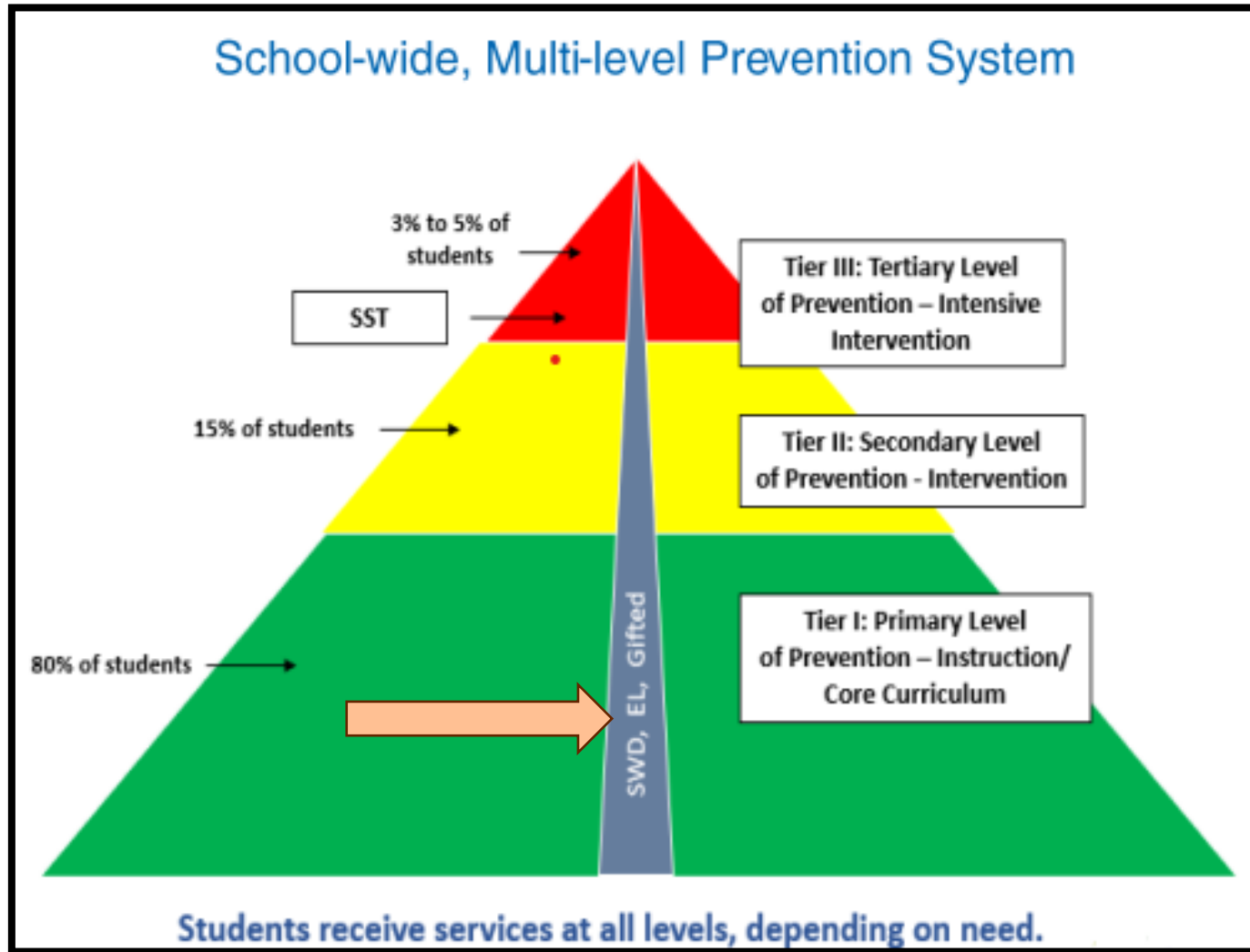
- 3) Effectiveness of intervention strategies.

- 4) Appropriateness of assessment tools.

(Sánchez, Parker, Akbayin, & McTigue, 2010)

[U.S. Department of Education, English Learner Toolkit, Chapter 6](#)

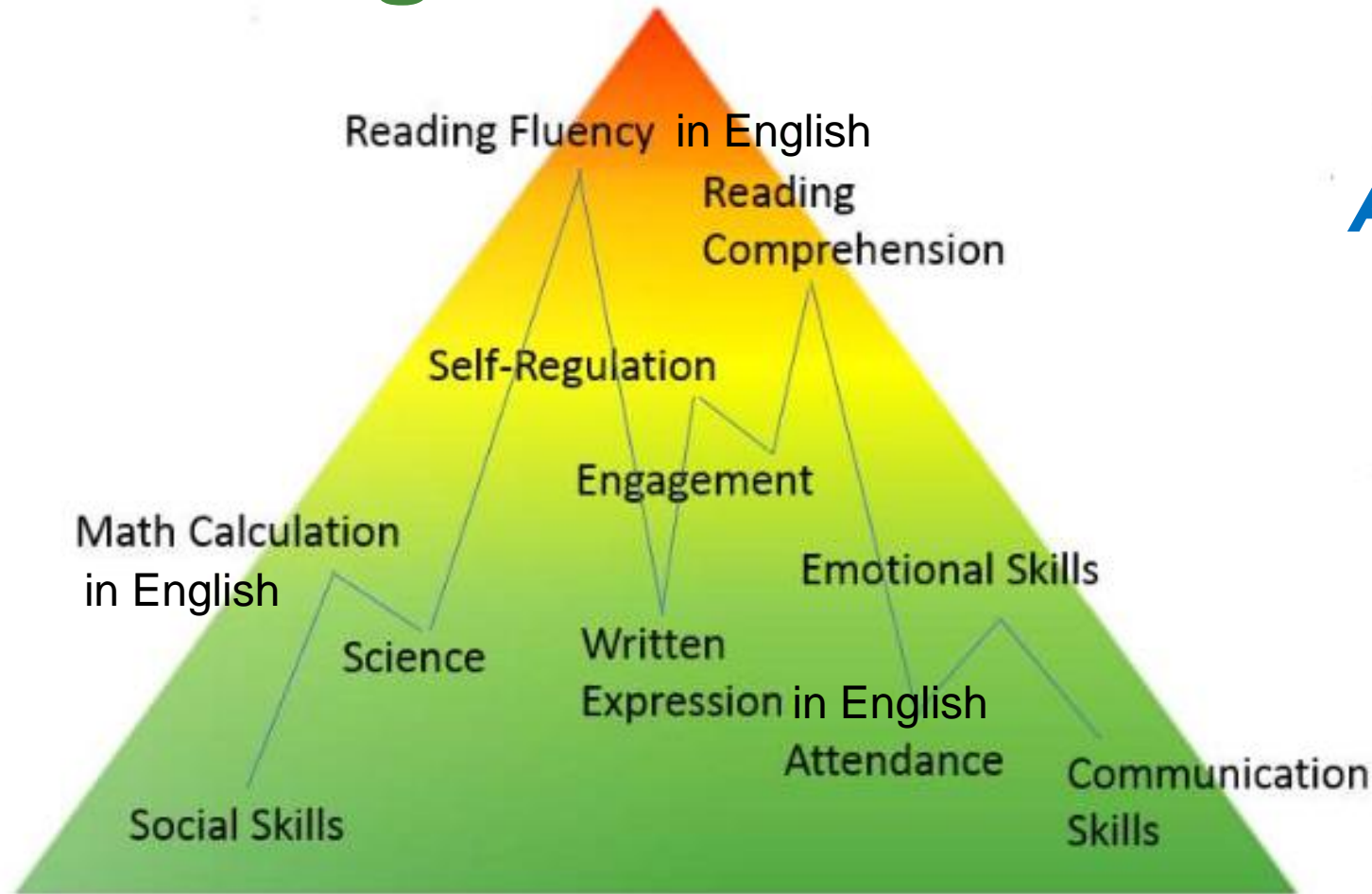
# MTSS for EL Students



**Remember:  
Interventions are  
tiered, not students!**

[Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students – Fact Sheet](#)

# Looking at the Whole EL Child



***At which Tier do we support the EL student's need for English language development?***

**Students receive services at all levels, depending on need.**

# Tier 1: Effective Core Instructional Practices for ELs

## Schools Systems Provide Educators:

- EL-focused professional learning for all teachers working with ELs -
  - Connecting content and language learning.
  - Differentiating instruction by ELP levels.
  - Teaching ELs from an asset-based approach.
- Appropriate levels of staffing for the ESOL Language Program.
- Appropriate instructional resources for core ESOL instruction.

## Educators Provide ELs:

- Sufficient opportunities to learn academic English in core instruction in the interpretive and expressive language modes.
- Comprehensive, evidence based-language and literacy instruction in core curriculum, connected to the [WIDA English Language Development Standards, 2020 Edition](#).
- **Integrated ELD:** Push-In/Collaborative or Sheltered Content (middle and high school).

# Tier 2: Specific Language Intervention to Supplement Core Instruction

## Instruction for ELs

Supplemental English language instruction or language-focused intervention:

- In small groups.
- Targeted to specific language domain(s).
- Evidence-based, linguistically-aligned interventions and high leverage practices.

## ESOL Delivery Models

### Designated ELD:

- Scheduled ESOL courses.
- Resource Center/Lab.
- Push-In/Collaborative during small group interventions,
- Newcomer Programs (middle and high school).



# Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Intervention

## Instruction for ELs

- For EL students who have not responded to primary or secondary levels of intervention.
- Small groups or individuals as needed.
- Skill-based interventions provided by trained and skilled interventionist.
- Frequent progress monitoring.
- SST may be initiated.

## ESOL Delivery Models

- **N/A**
- ESOL educators are collaborative partners to consider differences between **2<sup>nd</sup> language acquisition** and **learning disabilities**.

# Sharing Responsibility for EL Students

Multidisciplinary teams represent all stakeholders involved in educating EL students with or without disabilities.

Processes to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate instruction are implemented effectively for EL students at all MTSS tiers.



Procedures for SST and Special Education referrals for EL students are clearly established and understood by educators.

Supports and resources for EL instruction and intervention are intentionally designed to meet EL students' language and disability needs.

# Future Discussion:

What would special educators need to know to effectively collaborate with language educators during the referral process and beyond?





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