Continuous Improvement

Spotlight on Interventions for ELs
A TITLE IIIA AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

It’s 4:30 Tuesday afternoon, and students are actively engaged in learning. Laughter fills the room as Gianna shouts, “Bingo!” It is the last activity of the day before the buses arrive to transport the English learners to cluster drop-off locations throughout the district. The students are participating in Gilmer County Schools’ Title III After-School Program for English Learners. Dedicated teachers facilitate activities that build on students’ listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills with the goal of increasing language proficiency.

All active grade K-8 English learners are invited to participate in the program: two hours per day, twice a week for six weeks in the fall and five weeks in the spring. In collaboration with the school nutrition department, students are provided a snack to begin each session. Parents participate in a Kahoot competition testing comprehension skills during the culminating activity.

Holding my hand as we walked to the bus, Juan asked, “Ms. Patterson, why can’t we stay after every day?” This is the greatest testament to our program.

For more information, contact Ms. Lindy Patterson, Gilmer County Schools, Director ESOL & Federal Programs — lindy.patterson@gilmerschools.com

Steps for Continuous Improvement
FOCUSING ON ENGLISH LEARNERS

1. Identify Needs—Understanding the EL population and English language proficiency (ELP) data, exploring areas where EL students might be overlooked, ensuring leaders are asking the right questions to make informed decisions.

2. Select Interventions—Researching and selecting the best possible evidence-based interventions for EL students.

3. Plan Implementation—Scheduling, training, identifying resources, monitoring and support

4. Implement Plan—Implementing with quality, fidelity, intensity, and consistency

5. Examine Progress—Ensuring ongoing, valid and reliable measures

For more information, visit the ESOL Directors’ Munch & Learn website and watch the January Effective Interventions for ELs webinar or contact Amy Alderman, Program Manager, School & District Effectiveness, at aalderman@doe.k12.ga.us.
Focus on EL Students
IN EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM

Effective Leadership—Scheduling, data analysis, data entry, culture/climate

Coherent Instruction—Providing effective Tier 1 instruction, daily English language instruction, collaborative planning, effective monitoring

Professional Capacity—Attracting and developing professionally qualified ESOL staff and ensuring staff collaboration

Supportive Learning Environment—Developing and monitoring a tiered system of supports, providing EL students with wrap-around, culturally-responsive services

Family & Community Engagement—Welcoming all families and the community, communicating effectively with EL families, and empowering families with resources.

Visit the School & District Effectiveness (SDE) Office of School Improvement, Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement website for more information. Or contact: Amy Alderman, SDE Program Manager, aalderman@doe.k12.ga.us

Professional Qualifications (PQ)
ESOL TEACHERS

PQ: Teachers who teach ESOL courses and provide ESOL services must meet the professional qualifications established by the Local Education Agency (LEA). LEAs must continue to meet schools’ civil rights obligations to English learners. (Guidance and applicable investigation reports are available through the Office of Civil Rights.)

ESSA In-Field: To be considered in-field for ESSA reporting purposes, teachers who teach ESOL courses or provide ESOL services must hold ESOL Endorsement, an ESOL (P-12) certificate, hold a degree in ESOL, or have completed 21 semester hours of ESOL coursework.

Reporting Responsibilities: Ensuring that ESOL Delivery Models and ESOL teacher data reflects current year Data Collections’ reporting guidance.

For more information contact Dr. Karen Cliett, kcliett@doe.k12.ga.us or visit the Professional Qualifications & ESSA In-Field Reporting website.

Schools Legal Obligations
HQ TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS

“School districts have an obligation to provide the personnel and resources necessary to effectively implement their chosen EL programs. This obligation includes having qualified teachers to provide language assistance services, trained administrators who can evaluate these teachers and adequate appropriate materials for the EL programs.

At a minimum, every school district is responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate number of teachers to instruct EL students and that these teachers have mastered the skills necessary to effectively teach in the district’s program for EL students.” Dear Colleague Letter: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents (January 2015), pg. 14.

Visit the Office for Civil Rights EL Resources website for more information.
Professional Learning

Planning with the ELD Standards Framework
2-PART LIVE WEBINAR SERIES

From February to April, 2021, WIDA facilitators will train ESOL teachers in each RESA region how to use the new WIDA ELD Standards framework resources for instructional planning.

By 2022-2023, all ESOL teachers in all ESOL courses and delivery models should be using these resources as a tool to support planning for English learners’ engagement in the language of Georgia’s Standards of Excellence appropriate for students’ levels of language proficiency.

Teachers who cannot participate in the 2-Part Webinar Series should complete the eLearning course: Engaging with the WIDA ELD Standards, 2020 Edition, housed in the WIDA secure portal’s eLearning Center.

Visit WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops for more information or contact your System Testing Coordinator for a WIDA secure portal login.

Self-paced eLearning Courses
SLDS PLO PLATFORM

1. Practicing Academic Language: Providing Opportunities for Students to Interact Effectively is designed to enhance educators’ professional capacity to provide EL students with authentic and challenging opportunities to practice academic language, using all four language domains – listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

2. Connecting Academic Language to Student’s Prior Knowledge, Language, and Culture is designed to provide educators with instructional strategies to connect new language learning with English Learner students’ background knowledge, language, and culture.

3. Understanding Academic Language: Ensuring Content Standards are Comprehensible is designed to provide educators with research-based principles and instructional strategies that can be used to ensure English learner (EL) students comprehend the language of content necessary to be successful in school.

Visit the EL Language Programs’ Professional Learning website for more information or contact Dr. Ariana Magee (ariana.magee@doe.k12.ga.us) or Dr. Jacqueline Ellis (jellis@doe.k12.ga.us).