

Everybody's KIDS

News for all Pennsylvania educators
of English language learners

Spring 2016



WHAT'S NEW

Everybody's Kids

Welcome to the Spring 2016 edition of *Everybody's Kids*, a quarterly e-newsletter for all Pennsylvania educators of English language learners (ELLs), including administrators, content-area and classroom teachers, and ESL specialists.

Each issue will highlight upcoming professional learning opportunities, helpful research and resources, and timely topics in the field. Newsletters are delivered via email and archived on the ESL Portal for easy reference.

Federal Guidance Highlighting Rights of English Language Learners

In January 2015, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice released joint guidance addressing the rights of English

language learners (ELLs) enrolled in the nation's public schools through an open [Dear Colleague letter](#). This guidance, the first from the federal government in 24 years to specifically focus on the rights of ELLs, addresses the enduring achievement gap between ELLs and their native English speaking peers, stating, "It is crucial to the future of our nation that these students, and all students, have equal access to a high quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential."

To support this sentiment, the guidance document clarifies the Local Education Agency (LEA)'s legal obligations to ensure that ELLs can participate meaningfully and equitably in all aspects of school.

Upcoming PDE Professional Learning Opportunities

On-Site Events

ELD Standards in Action: Collaboration

May 10 - 11, 2016
PaTTAN Harrisburg

Dynamic Differentiation

June 1-2, 2016
PaTTAN Harrisburg

Webinars

PIMS ACCESS for ELLs Internal Snapshot Training Webinar

April 4, 2016 | 10:00AM – 12:00PM
April 11, 2016 | 1:30PM – 3:30PM

ACCESS 2.0 Score Report Interpretation Training Webinar

May 26, 2016 | 10:00AM – 12:00PM

PIMS Collection #4: LEP Program Survey and ELL End of Year Student Counts Internal Snapshot Training

June 15, 2016 | 2:00PM – 3:30PM
June 16, 2016 | 10:00AM – 11:30AM

For event details and to register visit www.ESLportalPA.info/professional-development.

Released in addition to the letter are supporting materials available at the [Office of Civil Rights' web page](#), including:

Ensuring English Learner Students Can Participate Meaningfully and Equally in Educational Programs (fact sheet)

Information for Limited English Proficient Parents and for Schools and School Districts that Communicate with Them (fact sheet)

[English Learner Tool Kit](#), developed to help state and local agencies meet their obligations to ELLs. Chapters include:

- Identifying All English Learner Students
- Providing English Learners with a Language Assistance Program
- Staffing and Supporting an EL Program
- Meaningful Access to Core Curricular, Extra Curricular Programs
- Creating an Inclusive Environment and Avoiding Unnecessary Segregation

- Addressing English Learners with Disabilities
- Serving English Learners who Opt-Out of EL Programs
- Monitoring and Exiting English Learners from EL Programs and Services
- Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Districts EL Program
- Ensuring Meaningful Communication with Limited English Proficient Parents

A PennLink with Pennsylvania-specific interpretive guidance regarding this document will be released shortly and posted on the ESL Portal.

Education Connections Online Learning Community

Created by the Center for Applied Linguistics in partnership with the University of Oregon, Education Connections is a new online learning community for ESOL professionals. Membership is free, and provides access

to a variety of online resources, including webinars, lesson planning tools, and a professional learning community focusing on standards-based instruction.

Archived webinar topics include:

- From NCLB to Next Generation College and Career-Ready State Standards: Supporting ELLs in an Era of Standards
- Dropouts, Dreamers, and Alternative Pathways to College: Creating Viable Options for Overage-Undercredited ELLs
- Whole School Success with ELLs and All Students

Join today at www.obaverse.net/edconnect/

RESEARCH, RESOURCES & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Raising Expectations for English Language Learners (ELLs) in the Era of Common Core

The Council of Great City Schools, a network of 67 large, urban school districts across the nation, has released *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*. The framework defines a new vision for English language development, shares examples of instructional delivery models and provides step-by-step guidance for selecting instructional materials that will accelerate the acquisition of academic language and grade-level content for all English learners.

With more than 1.2 million English language learners enrolled in its member districts, the council sought to develop an English Language Development (ELD) 2.0 Framework to address the challenges of fostering language acquisition while simultaneously equipping ELLs with college and career readiness through equitable access to content area learning.

In addition to explicitly discussing the increased academic language demands of the Common Core, the framework addresses ELD program models and delivery options, and presents a user's guide for evaluating instructional materials for use with ELLs. The main criteria for resource evaluation include confirmation that:

- Materials were designed for and validated for use with ELLs
- The philosophy and pedagogy related to English language acquisition establish high expectations
- There is an explicit and substantive alignment to the Common Core

To access the complete framework, including a resource evaluation rubric, visit the [Council of Great City Schools](#).

On April 22, 2015, the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium recorded the webinar [Using the ELD 2.0 Framework to Improve Instructional Programs for ELLs](#), which includes an in-depth discussion of the framework and details of its implementation by the School District of Philadelphia.



Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

Developed by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), this [practice guide](#) addresses evidence-based strategies for building the language and literacy skills necessary for elementary and middle school English language learners to succeed in the era of college and career readiness standards.

Geared towards classroom teachers and administrators alike, this guide centers around four key recommendations:

1. Teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional strategies.
2. Integrate oral and written English language instruction into content-area teaching.
3. Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills.
4. Provide small-group instructional intervention to students struggling in areas of literacy and English language development.

In addition to the guide from IES, REL Southwest has developed a [facilitator's guide](#) to assist educator teams with professional development centered on effective integration of these strategies into the classroom. This comprehensive guide includes readings, activities, videos and handouts to support professional learning communities as they 'unpack' and apply the recommendations and strategies in the practice guide.

CLASSROOM TIPS, TRICKS & BEST PRACTICES

Bam! Radio – Classroom Q&A Podcast Series

Bam! Radio, the largest education radio network in the world, houses a wealth of educational resources organized in channels dedicated to classroom educators, administrators and parents. Located in the educator channel, the *Classroom Q&A* podcast series contains a variety of archived podcasts related to ELLs. Hosted by experienced educators and running approximately 10 minutes each, the podcasts cover a brief overview of a particular educational issue, as well as practical classroom tips or approaches for immediate implementation. A sample of

podcasts related to ELLs and organized by targeted audience follow:

Teachers:

- [The 10 Best Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary in the Classroom](#)
- [Teaching English Language Learners \(ELL\): Five Strategies That Work](#)
- [Making Science More Approachable to English Language Learners](#)

Administrators:

- [The Three Best Ways Teachers Can Encourage Support for English Language Learners](#)
- [ESL: What School Leaders Need to Know About English Language Learners](#)

New podcasts are added frequently.



With Dr. Andrea DeCapua



This quarter's Q&A Corner features Dr. Andrea DeCapua, an educator, researcher, and educational consultant with more than 30 years of experience in the field of TESOL. She specializes

in teacher training, working with struggling language learners and in developing intercultural awareness for classrooms in a global society. Author/co-author of five books, two of Dr. DeCapua's books focus specifically on students with limited or interrupted formal education.

To gain a greater understanding about her work, we asked Dr. DeCapua the following questions.

1) In the field of English as a Second Language, the most commonly used label for students is English Language Learner. In your work, you introduce the term *Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education*. Can you discuss the primary differences between an English Language Learner and a Student with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education?

English Language Learners are typically those students who come to our classrooms with formal educational backgrounds. This means that they enter our schools with grade-level content knowledge and age-appropriate literacy skills, and, because they participated in formal education in their home country, have the preparation to engage in school-based decontextualized tasks. What they do not have is English language proficiency. Those students with limited, interrupted or even no formal education, while not having English language proficiency, usually have other significant needs. Often these individuals have low or no literacy skills and do not have the content knowledge of their grade-

level peers. Furthermore, since these students have not participated fully in formal education, they are unfamiliar with "doing school" and all that entails. This may range from school basics such as knowing where to put one's name on a sheet of paper or how to hold a notebook to engaging in the academic ways of thinking that impact classroom tasks. For example, asking students to compare and contrast species or to identify the main idea of a story is based on abstract modes of thinking and reasoning that these students have generally not been exposed to because these are typically not evident outside the context of formal education. Consequently, there is often a deficit view because these students do not fit educators' assumptions about the capabilities of adolescent and adult students.

2) What types of unique characteristics or challenges do Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education bring to the classroom?

These students arrive with a great deal of knowledge and past experiences that have shaped their habits of mind, just like our participation in formal education has shaped ours. By virtue of having participated in very different learning environments, Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education have developed different ways of thinking and learning than those expected and valued in formal education. They still come to us with substantial prior experiences and knowledge. However, these assets are almost always invisible when viewed through the lens of formal education. The challenge for us as educators is to understand explicitly our assumptions and expectations about learning and teaching, and see how these differ from those students who experience interruption in their formal education. It is also our challenge to learn what their knowledge

assets are and to consider thoughtfully how to capitalize on such knowledge in the context of formal classroom settings.

3) You and your colleague, Dr. Helaine Marshall, have developed the Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm® (MALP®) to assist educators in bridging the educational and cultural gap for SLIFE students. What can you tell us about MALP®?

MALP® is a model that is designed to address the needs of teachers and students by recognizing the characteristics of students in transition to formal education. The model promotes culturally responsive, mutually adaptive instruction to lessen these students' experiences with alienation, disenchantment, and failure. MALP is mutually adaptive in that both the students *and* teachers adapt during the transition process to formal education.

In MALP®, we conceptualize learning as consisting of three components: *conditions, processes, and activities*. *Conditions for learning* are factors important to students that need to be present to foster a supportive learning environment. The second component is *processes for learning*; that is, how people prefer to interact with new information and perform learning tasks. The third component, *activities for learning*, refers to the tasks students engage in to develop subject-area competency and mastery. How the MALP model translates into classroom practices is described in my books, co-authored with Helaine Marshall, *Breaking New Ground* and *Making the Transition to Classroom Success*, available on [Amazon](#).

What do you think?

For any comments, questions or suggestions for future issues contact:
Anne Scoufalos, ESL Technical Assistance Coordinator
Center for Schools and Communities
(717) 763-1661 ext. 198
ESL@csc.csiu.org