



STRENGTHENING STUDENT EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

English Language Arts Menu of Best Practices and Strategies

2020



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

English Language Arts: Menu of Best Practices and Strategies

2020

Authorizing legislation: [RCW 28A.165](#) & [28A.655.235](#)

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Welcome

Students throughout the state of Washington receive tutoring, extra classes, summer programs, and other interventions with the help of funds from the Learning Assistance Program (LAP). The state of Washington invests several hundred million dollars per year in LAP to help students meet grade level standards. About 15.5 percent of students statewide are served by LAP.

In 2013, the Legislature passed a bill ([ESSB 5946](#)) requiring the [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) (OSPI) to improve the LAP system and K–4 literacy outcomes. Now, OSPI annually convenes expert panels to identify the practices that best help students grow and succeed academically. Their work informs the Mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), and Behavior Menu of Best Practices and Strategies. Each year, districts report on the academic growth of students receiving LAP services. Districts can either use the best practices from the menus, or provide data showing that their alternative practices are effective in achieving student growth. These provisions are detailed in [RCW 28A.165](#) and [RCW 28A.655.235](#).



The Legislature also passed a companion bill authorizing the [Washington State Institute for Public Policy](#) (WSIPP) to identify evidence-based and research-based best practices for student interventions. OSPI and WSIPP annually collaborate on the development of the menus.

We know an opportunity gap exists among different student populations. Poverty is a striking example of a factor that can significantly disrupt a student's learning. Students learning English as an additional language face the task of learning a new language and new academic content at the same time. Students who have, or are experiencing, trauma may exhibit behavioral anomalies that can interrupt their academic progress. Teachers are actively seeking ways to better support all students. Through the menus, the expert panels have identified best practices to reduce the opportunity gap among all students.

This report contains not only the menu of best practices, but also foundational content describing Washington State's literacy landscape and other initiatives designed to improve literacy skills for all students. It describes how a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework is critical for implementing a high-achieving educational system. It also explains how assessment data and reporting serve to continuously improve LAP and student outcomes. We have included a rich set of resources and references for those who wish to further explore the identified best practices.

We are starting to see the promise in this focused partnership between districts, Educational Service Districts (ESDs), OSPI, WSIPP, and the Legislature. This is the sixth year the ELA menu has been published, and each year the professionals who comprise the panel search the current literature for proven interventions to make improvements to the existing practices, and provide additional advice and support to teachers, student support staff, and school administrators who are implementing LAP with their students.

We have a duty to educate all students. Collecting the best strategies that districts use to reach those who need extra help is a great step toward meeting that responsibility.

Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

We thank you for your thoughtful read of this menu and for your ongoing commitment to serve students who need support the most.

*The Learning Assistance Program Team
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
June 2020*

Background and Philosophy

STRENGTHENING STUDENT EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

The Strengthening Student Educational Outcomes Act ([ESSB 5946](#)) passed the state Legislature in 2013. It required OSPI to convene an ELA panel of experts to develop a menu of best practices and strategies to provide additional support to students who have not yet met grade-level standard and are enrolled in the Learning Assistance Program. The same legislation also required the ELA panel of experts to develop a menu of best practices and strategies for K–4 ELA instruction. The 2013–14 ELA panel of experts and OSPI agreed many of the same strategies would be in both menus.

That’s why this 2018 ELA menu update targets two groups: LAP-served students in grades K–12, and all students in grades K–4. At the heart of the menu is a focus on accelerating student ELA performance. This menu highlights when a strategy is for K–4 ELA core instruction and when it is for ELA LAP. The practices align to WA ELA Standards, and they reflect the work of the National Reading Panel and the National Early Literacy Panel.

Under the law, districts must select a practice or strategy from the menu to serve students in ELA in LAP. Districts must first focus their LAP program on K–4 reading. Additionally, schools with more than 40 percent of students not meeting 3rd-grade ELA goals must also select a best practice or strategy to serve K–4 students. Districts have the option to select a practice or strategy from the ELA menu or they may use an alternative practice or strategy per OSPI guidelines.

In addition to the ELA menu, OSPI developed menus for math and behavior. These LAP menus are for students served by LAP in grades K–12. All three menus are updated annually by July 1.

To learn more about this process, please see the [project webpage](#).



Photo by Dick Milligan, WA Senate

LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The [Learning Assistance Program](#) (LAP) offers supplemental services for K–12 students scoring below grade-level standard in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. These supports focus on accelerating student growth so that students make progress towards grade level performance standards during the period of time they are provided services. These supports may include academic readiness skill development or behavior supports to address barriers preventing students from accessing core instruction. The intent is for LAP-served students to increase academic growth during the period of time they are provided services. Districts are required to use best practices when designing LAP programs to increase student achievement.

LAP K–4 Focus on Literacy

Districts must [focus first on K–4 students who have not yet met grade-level standards in](#) reading or are lacking the readiness skills needed for learning to read. The K–4 focus first on literacy does not mean that all LAP funds are to be used exclusively on K–4 literacy. OSPI guidelines allow that a district may meet the K–4 focus on literacy by ensuring that of the total number of K–4 students served by LAP districtwide, approximately 50 percent are students receiving ELA services. Districts are not capped at 50 percent. They may serve more students in K–4 ELA. Additionally, districts may serve less than 50 percent under specific [OSPI Guidelines](#).

LAP Eligibility

Districts identify the students eligible for LAP by using multiple measures of performance. These should include nationally normed assessments and/or state assessments to identify students scoring below grade-level standards for ELA or math. Other options to measure student eligibility include: teacher-made assessments, teacher observations, teacher recommendations, and parent referrals. Credits earned, grade point average (GPA), discipline referrals, and absenteeism are also potential measures.

Entrance and exit assessment data are used to measure student academic growth in ELA or math, regardless of whether the student receives LAP academic services or LAP behavior services. A student may receive LAP services for academic and behavior support or just behavior support.

Behavior Services

Districts may serve students who have not yet met grade-level standards in ELA or math with behavior services. These services are available for students when the district believes addressing behavioral needs would improve students' academic performance.

Prior to receiving LAP behavior services, students must have been identified, using multiple measures of performance, as scoring below standard for their grade level in either ELA or math. While additional indicators must be used to identify a student for behavior services, the impact

of behavior services is measured by growth in ELA or math. The assumption is that the provision of behavior services should positively influence student academic outcomes.

LAP Allowable Activities

Allowable LAP activities are guided by state statute (RCW 28A.165). They must be aligned to a best practice from the menu or an approved district alternative. Districts must use data to inform program development and integrate best practices and strategies to support supplemental instruction/services that accelerate growth for students who have not yet met academic and non-academic performance standards.

Allowable activities may include extended learning time, extra support in the classroom, educator professional learning, family engagement, and purchase of specialized learning materials. Additional assistance for students identified in 8th grade to successfully transition into high school may be provided through LAP. Graduation assistance is an option for 11th- and 12th- grade students who are not on track to meet graduation requirements. Academic readiness and Readiness to Learn (RTL) are also LAP-allowable activities. These terms are often confused and are defined separately below.

Readiness to Learn – Up to Five Percent

Up to five percent of a district's LAP base funds may be used for Readiness to Learn (RTL).

District RTL programs provide academic and non-academic supports for students at risk of not being successful in school. They may be offered by the district (in-house), or in partnership with community-based organizations. The goal of RTL community supports is to reduce barriers to learning, strengthen engagement, and ensure all students are able to attend school ready to learn. The school board must approve any community-based organization or local agency in an open meeting before LAP funds may be expended. However, if no external organization is involved and the district is operating their own RTL program, school board approval is not needed.

Students do not need to have been identified as scoring below grade-level standard in math or ELA to participate in Readiness to Learn programs. RTL programs are designed to serve students significantly at-risk of not being successful in school. Each district determines the eligibility criteria for participation in RTL programs.

Academic Readiness

As part of the academic readiness component, schools use LAP funds to support students with necessary preparation skills needed to engage in math or ELA content. Readiness is applicable for all grades. However, LAP does pay particular attention to early grade classroom readiness skills. K–2 readiness includes emerging literacy, early numeracy, and classroom preparedness

skills. Emerging research is showing that building early numeracy skills is a strong predictor of future academic success.

The [Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives and Dimensions](#) observation tool identifies core skills in the social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics domains essential for being ready for kindergarten. The panels strongly emphasized social emotional, cognitive, numeracy, and language skills as being necessary for K–2 readiness. Each panel also recognized the importance of incorporating *play* into K–2 readiness activities.

WASHINGTON STATE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY (WSIPP)

The 2013 Legislature directed WSIPP to “prepare an inventory of evidence-based and research-based effective practices, activities and programs for use by school districts in the Learning Assistance Program” ([Senate Bill 5034, Section 610](#)). The [WSIPP Inventory of Evidence- and Research-Based Practices: Washington’s K–12 Learning Assistance Program](#) classifies LAP strategies as *evidence-based*, *research-based*, or *promising* based on the average effects of identified interventions, a cost-benefit analysis, and other criteria. Both OSPI and WSIPP consider the two reports as companions. As such, OSPI and WSIPP coordinated their tasks to ensure that the content of both reports were consistent, while still adhering to the unique directives given to each agency.

Both agencies collaborated on identifying topics for consideration as best practices and strategies. Each year, WSIPP Research Associates have contributed as key participants in the expert panel sessions as non-voting members. They provided research references to the panel members, and solicited panel member input regarding effective practices. The two agencies then followed different, complementary processes to identify and classify practices for inclusion in each menu.

The identification of best practices and strategies in the OSPI menus was informed by WSIPP’s findings and ultimately determined by the expert panel. OSPI included notations indicating whether the practices included in the menu are *evidence-based* or *research-based*, as determined by WSIPP. Additional practices and strategies are included in the menu as *promising* based on the research reviewed by the panel of experts.

INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

Integrated Student Supports (ISS) promote students' academic success through a school-based approach. An ISS approach involves "developing or securing and coordinating supports that target academic and non-academic barriers to achievement" (Moore & Emig, 2014, p. 1). Current and emerging evidence suggests ISS has positive effects on student engagement, academic achievement, and social-emotional outcomes (Moore et al., 2017). In addition, ISS models like [Building Assets, Reducing Risks \(BARR\)](#) are associated with educators' increased feelings of self-efficacy and willingness to collaborate (Borman, Bos, O'Brien, Park, & Liu, 2017).

According to Child Trend's [Theory of Change](#), an ISS system enables educators to mobilize both academic (i.e. reading or math interventions) and non-academic (e.g. mental health, medical care, behavior intervention plans, or basic needs support) supports to promote students' academic success and overall health and well-being. Research in the interdisciplinary field of developmental science highlights risks to child development and learning, and offers insight into the protective factors most likely to mitigate those risks. Researchers at Boston College's Center for Optimized Student Support have synthesized these findings into [Principles of Effective Practice for Integrated Student Support](#) to guide implementation of effective systems of student support. There are several different models of ISS, but *integration* is the defining feature. In practice, integration involves aligning various supports to match students' needs and embedding the ISS program into all aspects of the operations of a school (Moore & Emig, 2014).

Integrated Student Supports in Washington State

In 2016, the Washington state legislature created the [Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol](#) (WISSP) through [4SHB 1541](#). The bill outlined a set of interdependent strategies for closing educational opportunity gaps, and was based on the recommendations of the State's [Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee](#) (EOGOAC). The bill charged the [Center for the Improvement of Student Learning](#) (CISL), within OSPI, with developing the [WISSP](#) and making [recommendations to the Legislature](#) to support implementation in districts across the state.

Core Components of the WISSP

The following components of the ISS framework adopted by the Legislature in 4SHB 1541 are included in the WISSP.

Needs Assessments: Professional staff (teachers, school counselors, social workers, etc.) assess students' needs and strengths to identify the areas in which they may need additional support. Additionally, staff conduct system level needs assessments at the school, district, and community level to identify existing resources and potential areas to build capacity.

Integration within the school: Existing school leadership and student support teams help to facilitate ISS in partnership with a lead coordinator. This level of integration requires the buy-in, support and engagement of school leaders. When a partner organization facilitates ISS implementation, the organization works closely with school leadership and staff to ensure effectiveness. To facilitate this level of integration, partner staff are based in the school or, at minimum, have office space within the district.

Coordination of Supports: School staff and partner organizations work together to connect students to existing supports in a timely manner. A central point of contact coordinates these efforts.

Use of Data: School staff use data to identify students' needs and strengths, to monitor their progress over time, and to guide future planning. Data may include academic assessment outcomes, discipline referrals, attendance records, home-language survey information, or other student level data.

Community Partnerships: Schools partner with individual community members, local businesses, health and social service providers, and other community organizations to address the needs of students and their families.

The Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol is not meant to replace existing systems of support such as Response to Intervention (RTI), School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Inter-connected Systems Framework (ISF), or other tiered-systems of support that address one or more domains of learning. Rather, the purpose of the protocol is to encourage schools to use needs assessments to identify students' academic and non-academic barriers to learning, collaborate with their community to secure additional resources for students and their families, use data to monitor progress, and strive for greater alignment across student support services and programs like LAP.

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MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a service delivery framework focused on problem solving and prevention for all students. MTSS is a holistic approach that connects all of the academic and non-academic interventions, supports, and services available in schools and communities to support instruction and eliminate barriers to learning and teaching. Multiple levels of instruction, assessment, and intervention are designed to support the academic and non-academic needs of ALL students within the MTSS framework. Common tiered frameworks in Washington include Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

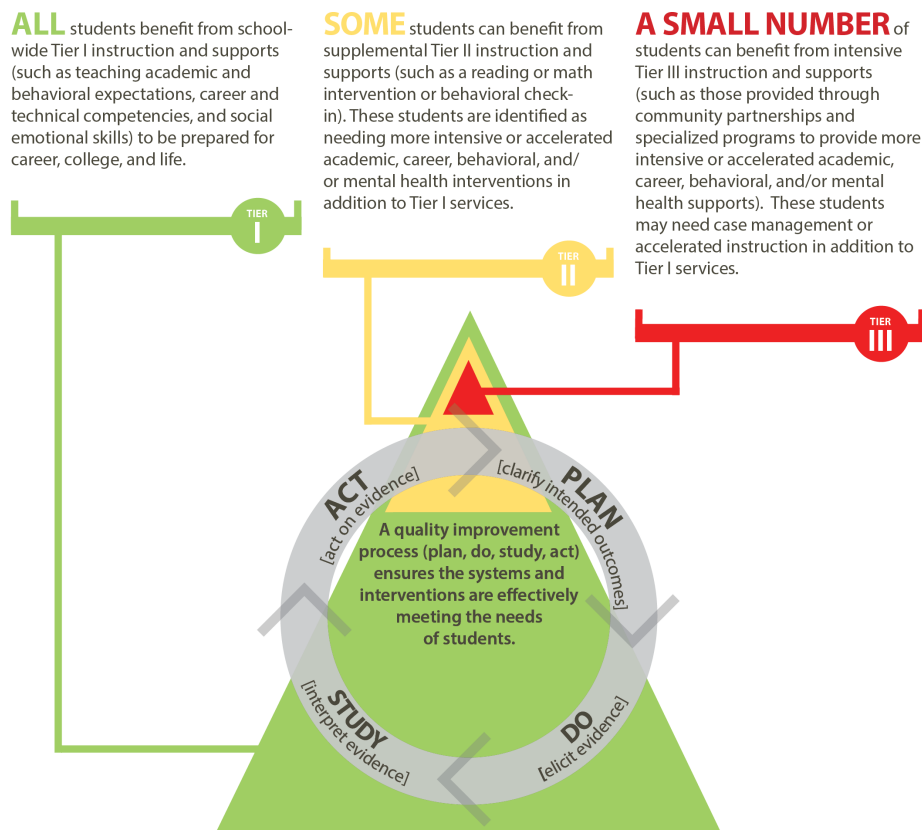


Figure 1. Multi-Tiered System of Supports, from OSPI.

Core Instruction

A positive school climate and high-quality core instruction are the foundation of successful MTSS implementation. Within a multi-tiered system of supports, educators use data-informed practices to support student outcomes. If more than 20 percent of students are not meeting grade-level expectations, a focus on improving core instruction is essential. To support students with a range of skills, abilities, knowledge, and interests, Meyer, Rose and Gordon (2014) suggest a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach. It is critical for educators to produce content, instruction, and assessments in a way that addresses the uniqueness of every student, and UDL provides a framework to do just that. By designing a flexible curriculum responsive to exceptional learners, teachers provide learning opportunities that are more accessible for all.

The UDL Guidelines are based on the idea that students are accessing three cognitive networks as they learn: *affective*—the “why” of learning; *recognition*—the “what” of learning; and *strategic*—the “how” of learning. [The UDL Guidelines](#) provide a matrix that unpacks the why, what and how into three levels of learning: accessing, building and internalizing. Concrete suggestions for incorporating each network into teaching provide educators with a way to rethink and transform the learning opportunities they offer their students. There are a number of websites with information about UDL and materials for coaches and teachers, including: the State Education Resource Center (SERC) tutorial on [Culturally Responsive UDL](#), [CAST](#), The [IRIS Center](#), and the [National Center on Universal Design for Learning](#). Additional UDL resources are available on OSPI’s [Educational Technology Program](#) page.

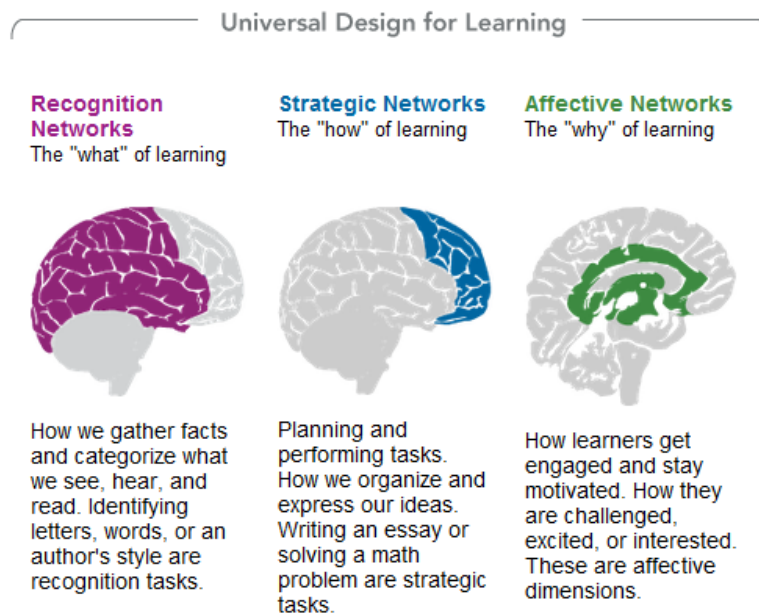


Figure 2. Retrieved from www.udlcenter.org. © CAST, 2011. Used with permission.

Tiered Supports

Within a multi-tiered framework, the tiers refer to supports students receive rather than students. For example, there are not tier 2 or tier 3 students. There are instead, tier 2 and tier 3 supports. In a three-tiered framework, **all** students receive tier 1 instruction, **some** students receive tier 2 services/support, and a **small number** of students receive tier 3 services/support. Normally, tier 3 academic services in an MTSS model are for both highly capable students and students who have not yet met grade-level expectations.

When students are not meeting their learning goals in the general education classroom, school improvement teams meet to discuss the best approach to provide effective differentiated instruction in the core curricula and interventions through a systematic support framework. Learning Assistance Program (LAP) allowable activities primarily provide students tier 2 and tier 3 supports. For the purpose of LAP, tier 3 refers to services intended to address the needs of students who have not yet met academic learning goals.

Number of students	Description of tier
<i>All</i>	Tier 1 is for all students and is designed to meet the needs of at least 80 percent of the student population. Differentiated instruction during core learning time is the first response for students who have not yet met academic and non-academic goals.
<i>Some</i>	Tier 2 is for students who need additional support to meet academic and non-academic goals. A standard assessment plan and clear criteria are necessary for successfully entering and exiting students from tier 2 interventions. Supports should be designed to quickly screen for and target students who need extra instruction or services to get back on track. This level of support is available to all students and typically addresses the needs of around 15 percent of a student population.
<i>A small number</i>	Tier 3 is for interventions that are individualized and intensive. Tier 3 interventions may take longer for students to meet learning goals. When tier 1 and tier 2 are implemented well, tier 3 typically addresses the needs of about five percent of a student population. Tier 3 supports are available for ALL students, as opposed to the common misunderstanding that they are reserved for students in special education.

System of Assessment

An important element of the MTSS framework, assessment creates data so that teams can make informed decisions. A well-designed assessment system must be both balanced and comprehensive and, most importantly, provide actionable information.

A *balanced* assessment system means that districts/schools engage in a variety of assessments, identifying specific assessments for different learning needs. While various types of assessments are useful for different purposes, districts should also analyze whether or not some types of assessments are used more frequently or receive more emphasis over the other types. Districts/schools should make adjustments if the system is out of balance. It is critical to ensure the results of an assessment are used for the intended purpose and not extrapolated or misused otherwise. For example, confusion between universal screening and diagnostic assessment can lead to misuse of results from screening measures. It is also important to note that different types of assessment can be used for more than one purpose and, generally, no one piece of assessment information can fulfill all purposes.

A *comprehensive* assessment system includes tools and processes that are specifically designed to address various stages of learning. Assessment tools include: universal screening, diagnostic data collection, formative assessment processes, progress monitoring, benchmark tests, and summative assessments. Assessments can be used to identify learning needs, investigate learning challenges, inform current learning, monitor learning progress, and verify learning.

A *comprehensive* assessment system should include:

Universal screening tools: These tools are used to identify all students who may potentially need more support. By design, universal screeners tend to over-identify students, meaning more students are identified as potentially needing additional support than are actually needing additional support in an attempt to not miss anyone who might benefit from additional layers of support. Screeners are used in many different ways—in everyday life, before an eye exam, during oil changes for cars, or when checking blood pressure. Universal screening takes place at scheduled intervals (e.g., at the beginning of the school year, every 8 weeks), and is followed by more targeted diagnostic assessment for students identified as potentially needing additional support. These screeners inform decision makers of whether or not diagnostic data collection is necessary. Screeners also serve the purpose of assessing how well all students are responding to core instruction and if modifications or adjustments are needed to the school-wide tier 1 plan.

Diagnostic data collection: Collecting diagnostic data can help identify the initial skill level for each student and can determine the need for supports, interventions, enrichments, and resources. Diagnostic data are collected before instruction or after screening occurs to identify

the appropriate instruction and/or intervention plan. Diagnostic data provides detailed information. Diagnostic data can help determine why a person's temperature is high, why the indicator light went on in a car, or whether a full eye exam is needed. For example, in reading, a diagnostic test may measure a student's ability to evaluate print, understand phonics, decode letters and sounds, recognize words, analyze word patterns and sounds, determine oral reading accuracy and fluency, and comprehend reading passages. Once the diagnostic data are available, educators can determine what to teach and select appropriate interventions.

Formative assessment processes: Formative assessment is not a single event—it is an ongoing process used by educators and students to assess learning and adjust instruction. The formative assessment process is deliberate and provides actionable feedback to improve students' learning. There are four main attributes of the formative assessment process:

- 1) clarify intended learning
- 2) elicit evidence
- 3) interpret evidence
- 4) act on evidence

As teachers embed the formative assessment process into their classes, student involvement is key. Students should understand the learning target and how what they are doing relates to their own learning. They should be able to self-reflect on their progress and set attainable and specific goals. Similarly, teachers evaluate what has been learned and adjust instruction accordingly.

Progress monitoring tools: Student performance and progress should be reviewed on a regular basis and in a systemic manner to identify students who are making adequate progress, at some risk of failure if not provided extra assistance, or at high risk of failure if not provided specialized supports. Progress monitoring is used to determine if students are responding to the instruction being provided. It is useful in determining the next level of instruction or intervention to be used with individual students, a small group, or an entire class. While formative assessment is closely linked to the immediate learning that occurs during a lesson, progress monitoring assesses what the student understands as a result of the unit of instruction. Progress monitoring occurs on a more frequent basis for students receiving tier 2 and tier 3 supports.

Summative assessments: Summative assessments are outcome-based assessments of learning that has already occurred. The goal of standardized summative assessments is to confirm and verify student learning and skill acquisition. Summative assessments are typically given once after an instructional unit, course, semester, program or school year to measure student attainment of desired learning outcomes (e.g., their progress toward meeting grade-level

standards). Examples of summative assessments may include final projects, midterm exams, or state assessments. Summative assessment data can be used to inform system-wide instructional decisions. Summative assessments are limited in providing adequate data to drive instructional decisions because they are given at the end of a unit, course, semester, program or school year. For the individual student, summative data results should be used in combination with other measures to inform instruction.

Benchmark assessments: A type of summative assessment, benchmark assessments can vary depending on purpose. In the intermediate grades, benchmark assessments are typically outcome-based, measuring students' skills and knowledge demonstrated by a specific period of time (e.g. end of unit test). At the elementary level, students are typically assessed on their progress toward skills that should build throughout the year (e.g., phonological awareness, spelling, or reading leading level). These assessments are administered at predetermined time points (e.g., October, January, March and June). Students' skills are viewed relative to a goal, or "benchmark," which indicates the desired progress toward end-of-year standards for that time point. The data from benchmark assessments should generally be used to inform instructional steps to improve student learning. This is different from formative assessment because benchmark assessments capture a snapshot of student learning rather than functioning as an on-going formative process. Benchmark assessments may also be used to evaluate programs, curriculum, and intervention strategies.

Some assessments can function with dual purpose. It's important to have a clear purpose and desired outcome when deciding which assessments to use.

TYPE	PURPOSE	Data Outcomes	Guidance
Universal Screening Tools	To IDENTIFY students who need extra support(s) – <i>usually for all students, but can be a targeted group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify or flag students who are struggling or at risk of failure who need further monitoring -Identify students who might have specific learning challenges (e.g., dyslexia) -Evaluate effectiveness of academic curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Data can be collected one or more times a year -When there is a summative assessment that provides individual student data, screeners are best applied to a specific group of students who might benefit from extra support(s)
Diagnostic Data Collection	To INVESTIGATE the specific needs for students identified as needing extra support(s) – <i>for some students</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inform educators about possible causes of student challenges -Identify appropriate focus for interventions -Explore and identify possible instructional and/or intervention approaches -Guide analysis of data points to use for progress monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The goal is to help educators plan effective and individualized instruction and/or interventions -Students can often provide meaningful insight about their learning strengths and needs; their self-assessments should be considered
Formative Assessment Process	To INFORM current instruction so teachers can adjust – <i>for all students, ongoing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reveals depth of understanding and partial or developing understandings -Provides feedback to educators about which strategies have been successful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student engagement is a key element -Formative assessment processes can vary greatly, from in-the-moment learning checks to classroom tasks – not all of these will be traditional “data” collection but will still guide and inform instruction
Progress Monitoring Tools	To MONITOR the progress of specific students who have been identified as needing extra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provides information about a specific group of students -Provides information about progress toward previously identified learning targets during a specific period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student engagement is a key element -Educators can use this combined with formative assessment processes for the whole group to more

TYPE	PURPOSE	Data Outcomes	Guidance
	support(s) – <i>for some students</i>	-Helps educators adjust instruction and/or interventions	closely monitor a specific student group -The method and amount of data should vary
Summative Assessments	To VERIFY learning has occurred – <i>for all students</i>	-Standardized test results to measure specific outcomes (e.g., grade-level standards) -To confirm what students know and are able to do at a specific time (e.g., end of year, end of unit) -Includes benchmark tests	-Because data provides information about individual students and groups, it can be used to make systematic decisions about instruction, curriculum and programs -Because the data only measures one single point in time, it should be used with other measures to gather a complete picture of student learning
Benchmark Assessments	To VERIFY learning has occurred by a specific time – <i>usually for all students</i>	-Standardized measure of specific outcomes at a specific point in time -To check what students know and are able to do at a specific point in time	-Can be used to inform and adjust instruction as these are usually at regular intervals through the school year -Districts will often use this to check systems and monitor student progress -Should align to year-long goals and school curriculum --Students should be part of this process (self-reflection)

Data-Based Decision-Making Teams

Decision-making within an MTSS framework is done with a systematic and comprehensive approach. This process includes decisions about the development of the MTSS framework, the selection of assessments used to identify students, the design of an implementation plan, and evaluation of a school or district's individual students' needs. Schools should thoughtfully create a plan that respects the school's unique culture, resources, and circumstances within a collaborative systemic approach.

Schools and districts will need to establish and monitor systematic structures, including a comprehensive and balanced assessment system. As teams engage in ongoing collaboration in data collection and analysis to address student needs, they should also develop a feedback process to evaluate the effectiveness of their MTSS framework and implementation.

Data collected can be used to inform instruction or to make decisions about tiered supports. Examining trends of data can help evaluate programs and guide decisions regarding instructional effectiveness, student responsiveness, and intervention adaptations or modifications.

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Implementation

BACKGROUND, RESEARCH, AND IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

The ELA menu was created to guide schools and districts as they develop supports and services for students who have not yet met standards in English Language Arts. It is critical to ensure best practices are used to design intensive intervention plans for students. These plans need to be implemented with fidelity because even proven practices, when poorly implemented, can fail to raise student educational outcomes.

Often, the word *fidelity* is viewed negatively; however, the LAP team encourages approaching fidelity in a similar manner as integrity or commitment. Implementation fidelity is about delivering an intervention as it was intended to be delivered according to the implementation team's plan.

The panel of experts recognizes that there are a number of steps that must be taken to ensure that the practices within the menus are implemented with fidelity across the state. Using implementation science is optional. This information is provided as a resource for buildings and districts.

Active versus Passive Implementation

New practices are implemented at the district/building level each year. Some are implemented with success, while others are not. All too often, promising innovations and practices are abandoned after just a year or two because the expected results were not actualized, and the best practice was viewed as ineffective. But, was the *practice* ineffective or was *implementation* ineffective?

As schools/districts select practices from the menu, the implementation plan and the degree to which the plan is delivered are key to successfully achieving the desired student outcomes. Active implementation is the direct result of action driven teams, purposeful planning, and systematic improvement cycles.

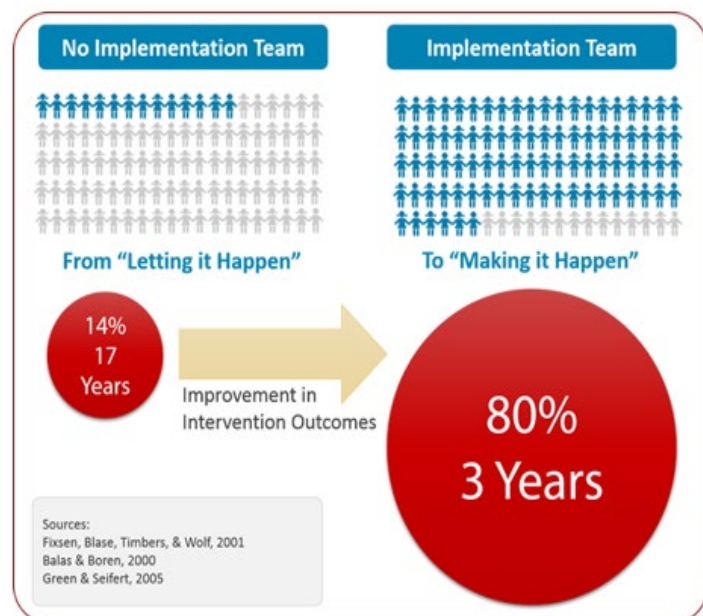


Figure 4. Used with permission from the National Implementation Research Network.

Figure 1 displays both passive and active implementation. When passive implementation occurs, it takes approximately 17 years to accomplish minimal results (14 percent). Whereas with active implementation, teams can move toward full implementation (with 80 percent effectiveness) in three years.

Implementation Science

Implementation science provides a framework to support the implementation of best practices in education. Implementation science values local conditions and context-specific issues with the assumption that one size will not fit all. Full implementation of best practices takes purposeful planning and time. Implementation science includes a systematic process to ensure full implementation is actualized. The frameworks include the what, how, and who to assist implementation teams with the process. The most effective implementation teams consist of decision makers and practitioners across the system to develop and review systematic improvement cycles.

The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) focuses on active implementation. The Active Implementation Hub (AI Hub) is a free resource available to schools/districts who want to deepen their understanding of implementation science and the power of active implementation. Modules on the AI Hub provide an overview of active implementation and include implementation drivers, teams, stages, improvement cycles, usable interventions, and fidelity checklists.

Plan, Do, Study, Act

The *Plan, Do, Study, Act* approach in implementation and improvement science and the *Plan, Do, Check, Act* approach in Lean organizations, are iterative improvement cycles that support active implementation. Iterative cycles are repetitive and use a trial-and-learning approach. In each cycle, implementation teams plan, provide the intervention, review the results, and identify areas for improvement. These teams review student outcomes and adult behaviors, specifically identifying if the intervention was delivered as intended by the plan, then teams identify specific actions to improve the plan.

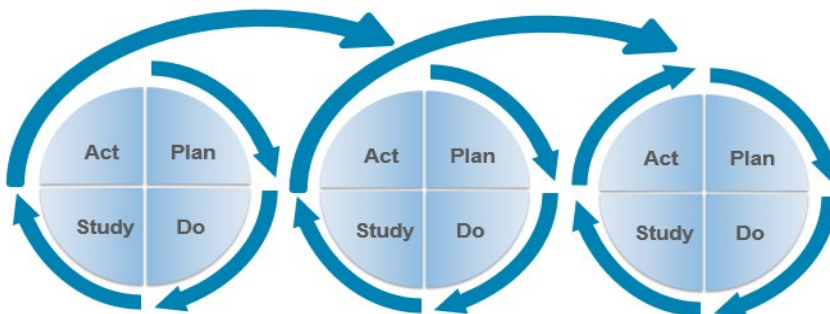


Figure 5. Used with permission from the National Implementation Research Network.

With each improvement cycle, implementation teams learn what went well and what needs to be adjusted to deliver the intervention more effectively in order to benefit student outcomes. Over the course of three active improvement cycles, the effectiveness of an intervention generally reaches 80 percent effectiveness.

Each phase of the *Plan, Do, Study, Act* cycle guides implementation teams:

- **Plan**—Implementation teams identify purpose, desired outcomes, and success criteria for implementation. Teams identify data and progress monitoring tools that will be used to measure the success of the intervention, who is responsible for collecting data, and when data will be collected and reviewed. Teams will identify challenges that may impact implementation (e.g., transportation, staffing, etc.) and specify how to move interventions forward.
- **Do**—Implementation teams execute the intended intervention plan. Educators complete intended outcomes according to the plan and collect data to ensure the intervention support was delivered.
- **Study**—Implementation teams reflect on the execution of the intended intervention plan. Teams review success criteria and outcomes. Reflective discussions include: what went well, what can be improved, and what unexpected barriers or surprises occurred.
- **Act**—Implementation teams apply learning to identify action steps to improve the process. Teams make targeted adjustments to the original plan to impact student outcomes. Implementation teams use these action steps to begin planning for the next cycle.

Improvement cycles vary in length. The improvement cycle may span across a single school year or for a specific amount of time (such as a quarter, trimester, or semester). Rapid improvement cycles generally range from 30–90 days. Implementation teams should discuss and determine which cycle is best to use with the intervention they are implementing.

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DISTRICT/BUILDING RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

AI Hub is a web-based resource that has been developed and maintained by the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) and NIRN at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. *Implementation Science Modules & Lessons* are available to assist implementation teams. The modules provide self-paced content, activities, and assessments that are designed to promote the knowledge and practice of implementation science and *scaling-up*, improving and expanding the impact of, best practices.

One tool within the AI Hub is the Hexagon Tool. The [Hexagon Tool](#) can help states, districts, and schools appropriately select evidence-based instructional, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions and prevention approaches by reviewing six broad factors in relation to the program or practice under consideration. NIRN developed the [Hexagon Discussion and Analysis Tool](#) for Implementation Teams to guide deeper discussions and address unique needs.

IMPLEMENTING SITE INDICATORS

PROGRAM INDICATORS

CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT

- Staff meet minimum qualifications
- Able to sustain staffing, coaching, training, data systems, performance assessment, and administration
 - Financially
 - Structurally
 - Cultural responsiveness capacity

- Buy-in process operationalized
- Practitioners
 - Families

FIT WITH CURRENT INITIATIVES

- Alignment with community, regional, state priorities
- Fit with family and community values, culture and history
- Impact on other interventions & initiatives
- Alignment with organizational structure

NEED

- Target population identified
- Disaggregated data indicating population needs
- Parent & community perceptions of need
- Addresses service or system gaps

EVIDENCE

- Strength of evidence—for whom in what conditions:
- Number of studies
 - Population similarities
 - Diverse cultural groups
 - Efficacy or Effectiveness

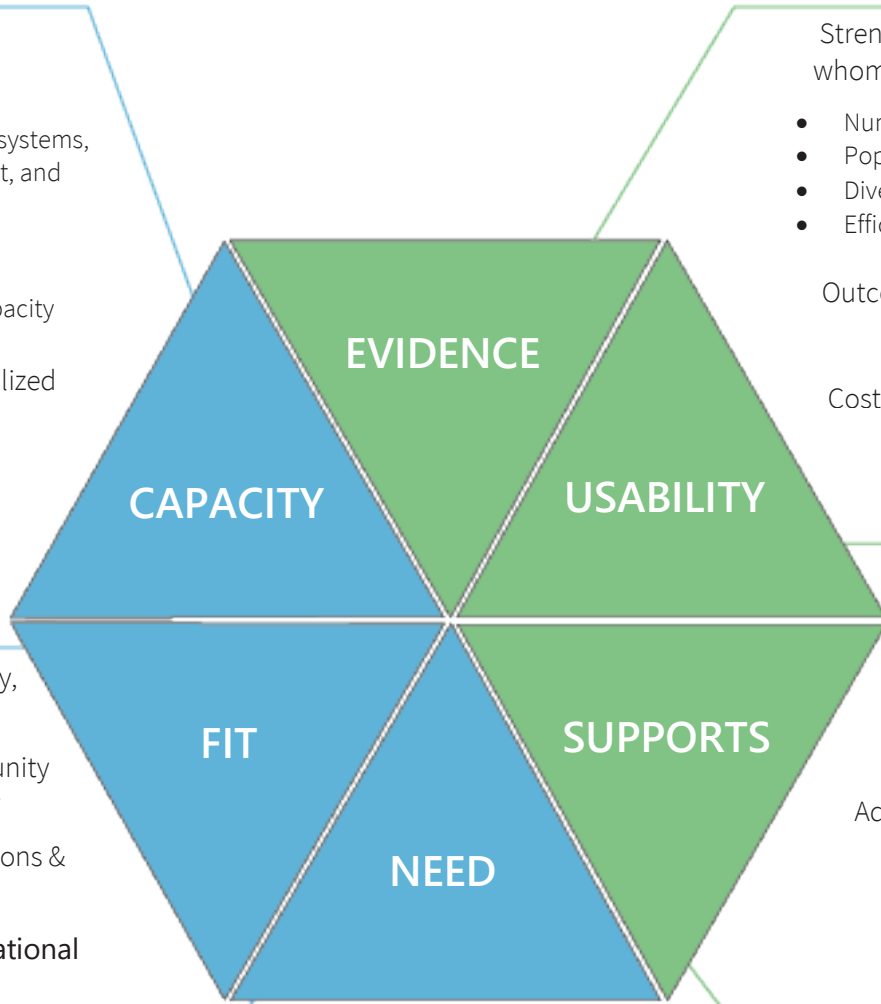
- Outcomes – Is it worth it?
- Fidelity data
- Cost – effectiveness data

USABILITY

- Well-defined program
- Mature sites to observe
- Several replications
- Adaptations for context

SUPPORTS

- Expert Assistance
- Staffing
- Training
- Coaching & Supervision
- Racial equity impact assessment
- Data Systems Technology Supports (IT)
- Administration & System



NIRN provides a [glossary](#) of terms for educators who are new to implementation science.

The [Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching](#) is grounded in improvement science and has several resources to accelerate learning and address problems of practice. Improvement science, which is part of Implementation Science, is a systematic learning-by-doing approach. The Carnegie Foundation, like the National Implementation Research Network, highlights using *Plan, Do, Study, Act* for implementation. The Carnegie Foundation provides a variety of resources for facilitating improvements in education, including teacher effectiveness. Resources recommended by the panel of experts for optional use are the [90-day Cycle Handbook](#), the [Six Core Principles of Improvement](#), and a [glossary](#) of improvement science terms.



Figure 7. [Image](#) used with permission from the Carnegie Foundation.

The Six Core Principles of Improvement

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Principles	Descriptions
1. Make the work problem-specific and user-centered .	Starting question: "What specifically is the problem we are trying to solve?"
2. Variation in performance is the core problem to address.	Focus on what works, for whom, and under what set of conditions.
3. See the system that produces the current outcomes.	Explore and think about how local conditions shape work processes . Share your hypotheses for change with others to help clarify your goal.
4. We cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure .	Include measures of key outcomes and processes to track if the implemented change is an improvement.
5. Anchor practice improvement in disciplined inquiry.	Try to use rapid cycles of Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) to learn and improve quickly.
6. Accelerate improvements through networked communities .	Find other partners and share what you learn in order to be more productive.

The Carnegie Foundation provides a [glossary](#) of improvement science terms and network improvement communities.

Content Philosophy (WA STATE LANGUAGE ARTS INSTRUCTION)

A Commitment to Supporting All Students' Language and Literacy Learning

Washington's literacy teaching landscape is as diverse as our charter, native, private, and public school districts. OSPI's mission is to provide funding, resources, tools, data, and technical assistance that enable educators to ensure students succeed in our public schools, are prepared to access post-secondary training and education, and are equipped to thrive in their careers and lives.

OSPI and statewide partners work to support literacy instruction by continually revising and improving the supports and systems available for educators to support building students' literacy skills. The *ELA Menu of Best Practices and Strategies* is one of a suite of literacy-focused initiatives and resources, which are described below. These resources provide a framework for the Washington State's equity-focused vision for literacy instruction.

Washington State Comprehensive Literacy Plan: Birth to Grade 12. This resource for parents, caregivers, teachers, and administrators provides support for fostering literacy from birth through grade 12. The sections of the document that are most relevant to the ELA Menu provide information on Washington State's approach to integrated student supports for literacy learning across home, school and community contexts. The document includes recommendations, accompanied by case examples, for a systems approach to fostering literacy learning. Tools and links to resources provide further support for implementing and maintaining a comprehensive literacy system.

Early Literacy Pathways. This document supports educators, caregivers and families in understanding and supporting Washington children's development in social-emotional development, cognitive development, language and literacy development, and reading and writing development.

Washington State ELA Learning Standards (ELA Standards). These standards, also known as the Common Core State Standards, establish grade-level expectations for the four dimensions of literacy (reading, writing, listening and speaking) as well as expectations for content area literacy (or disciplinary literacy) in grades 6–12.

English Language Proficiency Standards (ELP Standards). This document provides a language bridge to move multilingual students who qualify for English learner services toward full engagement and academic success while simultaneously addressing the increased rigor and language demands of the career- and college-ready standards. Becoming biliterate goes hand-in-hand with Washington State's definition of literacy. The ELP Standards make it clear that

language learning encompasses more than just grammar and vocabulary. Instruction is grounded in speaking and listening, and it must focus on receptive, productive, and interactive learning modalities in the context of rich content instruction.

ELP standards professional development modules. These five [modules](#) were created in partnership between ELPA21 members, [Understanding Language](#), and 16 educators, eight of whom are from Washington State. [Module 1](#) includes an overview of the ELP standards; [Module 2](#) focuses on inquiry-based task analysis; [Module 3](#) helps educators analyze and reflect the use of ELP standards in planning and instruction; [module 4](#) dives into the [ELP standards level descriptors](#); and [Module 5](#) focuses on using the formative assessment process to inform planning and instruction to support students' content and language learning.

Dual Language Toolkit. Washington State values bilingual education, and dual language programs are the priority model. These programs foster biliteracy in an environment where language and cultural assets are recognized as valuable resources for learning. The Dual Language Toolkit is a video series that provides information on building a shared vision for dual language programs, program planning, and implementation.

Dyslexia Panel. In accordance with [RCW 28A.320.260](#), OSPI convened a working group representing a range of stakeholders. The RCW defines dyslexia as:

“...a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities that are not consistent with the person’s intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological components of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities.”

The Panel will recommend “dyslexia screeners,” quick assessments to identify students’ strengths and needs in skills associated with dyslexia. A list of the recommended screeners will be available by June 2020. Beginning in the 2021–22 school year, school districts are required to administer a dyslexia screener to K–2 students.

Dual Language Steering Committee. This advisory group will help to guide the implementation of the statewide framework for K–12 dual language education. During the 2019–2020 school year, the committee will advise on proposed legislation, standards for biliteracy development, professional learning offerings, and bilingual educator development.

Washington State Seal of Biliteracy. The seal recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English.

Professional development opportunities. [OSPI ELA staff](#) and [Regional Literacy Coordinators](#) from across the state (including experts in K–4 literacy), representing the nine Educational Service Districts (ESDs), have jointly developed professional learning opportunities to strengthen WA state literacy outcomes. State literacy partners are poised to provide comprehensive and coherent opportunities grounded in the foundational literacy skills, academic language, standards, differentiated instruction, the formative assessment process, fundamentals of assessment, and student equity.

Dual Language Education

In [Superintendent Reykdal's vision for K–12 education](#), all students will have the opportunity to become proficient in two languages through dual language education. These programs begin in kindergarten and extend through 12th grade to fully develop language proficiency. Dual language programs can be either one-way or two-way depending on the student population. Two-way dual language programs have balanced numbers of multilingual students (many of whom qualify for EL services) and monolingual English speakers. One-way dual language programs are made of multilingual learners with the same language. In alignment with the [Early Learning and K–12 Dual Language law](#) and Superintendent Reykdal's vision, dual language programs focus on closing opportunity gaps and prioritize access for multilingual learners and Native American students.

Rationale for Dual Language Education. Longitudinal research on the outcomes of dual language programs shows that students have higher levels of cognitive flexibility and memory and are more competent to engage in the global economy (Callahan & Gandara, 2014; Olulade et al., 2016). When multilingual learners (many of whom qualify for EL services) develop strong literacy in their home language, they develop English literacy faster and with greater proficiency. Multilingual learners in these programs close opportunity gaps, even outperforming their peers in academic assessments in English (Thomas & Collier, 2012; Valentino & Reardon, 2014).

Simultaneous Biliteracy Instruction. Simultaneous biliteracy instruction refers to students receiving formal literacy instruction in two languages beginning in kindergarten (Howard & Sugarman, 2009). The model means that students are engaged in literacy in both English and a partner language (Spanish, Mandarin, Russian or Vietnamese) daily. Students learn foundational skills and comprehension strategies in both languages in formal literacy structures and across content areas. Instruction in one language builds off the other language, without repeating

content. This structure allows teachers to teach the similarities and differences between the languages.

For schools transitioning to simultaneous biliteracy instruction, planning the curriculum can be challenging. Schools must identify an effective structure for teaching literacy in two languages, and some try to impose a literacy plan intended for one language—English—to the partner language. These educators soon realize the great differences in the path to biliteracy, which require a different model of initial literacy instruction (Beeman & Urow, 2017).

Sequential Biliteracy Instruction. In sequential biliteracy instruction, students learn to first read and write in the partner language. Formal English literacy instruction begins at late 2nd grade or early 3rd grade. Recent studies show that a minimum of 50 percent partner language instruction is necessary to promote high levels of partner language proficiency for the native English speakers and to promote academic achievement for multilingual students (CAL, 2017). Successful programs tend to use a combination of instructional strategies with minimal separation of students by language proficiency level (Hamayan, Genesee, & Cloud, 2013; Howard & Sugarman, 2007).

Beyond making a decision of which language model to implement at a dual language school, Thomas and Collier (2012) emphasize the importance of the quality of instruction, meaning sheltering instruction to support the language acquisition and high-quality language arts instruction in both languages, including metalinguistic awareness and teaching for transfer across the two languages. The choice of language ratio in a school's program should take into consideration family and community needs, and connect with the resources available (teacher language proficiency and materials) in order to provide equitable instruction in the partner language.

Vision for Literacy Education

Students come to the classroom with a rich range of languages, dialects and communicative practices, or “literacies.” These ways with words—as well as other modalities—develop from birth through interaction with others and the world around them. For example, many children learn that red road signs say “stop” long before they can decode. And they understand the function of that word in that context through the lens of their everyday experiences with it. Children also write notes to express important ideas to the people in their lives before they are writing letters and will “read” their pictures and squiggly, letter-like forms with great purpose.

As children grow and experience environments that are saturated in communication, they develop the literacies that respond to the contexts and situations they encounter. Some of these literacies are closely tied to family and community traditions, such as history and cultural

knowledge that are passed through storytelling or music. Others occur at intersections with the many worlds in which children and youth participate—for example, the sports field, places of worship, online multiplayer games, friends, interest groups, social media and school. For example, teens might create memes, attend spoken word events, or write alternative narratives on a fanfiction site to challenge the stereotyping and dominant narratives that they experience through literature and in life.

When asked what kinds of literacy activities they engage in, however, young people typically do not name the myriad language and literacy practices that they engage with outside—and, unofficially—inside school. Literacy scholars suggest that this missed connection stems from a chasm between students’ language and literacy repertoires and the teaching of literacy in schools. Learning is a process of leveraging and building upon what we know, and it is therefore essential that literacy instruction connect to students’ lives and identities. If we, as educators, are to close opportunity gaps, we must come to know, respect and connect to students’ language and literacy repertoires.

Through thoughtfully planned opportunities to learn in school, children can deepen and expand these repertoires to include the complex, critical thinking articulated in the Washington State Standards. To scaffold deep engagement with new concepts and information, teachers need a deep understanding of reading and writing processes, literacy development, critical thinking, and research-based strategies for instruction and assessment. Highly skilled teachers use their knowledge of students, literacy, teaching and learning in flexible ways, creating productive, supportive, linguistically diverse and culturally sustaining learning environments. While a full exploration of these skills is not possible here, the sections below highlight some key features of equity-focused literacy instruction.

Laying the Groundwork for Equitable Learning Opportunities

Cultural competencies. To achieve a high-quality literacy education for *all* students, *all* educators must be able to work effectively in diverse settings. As educators, we must (at minimum) develop 1) knowledge and constant consideration of the sociopolitical context in which schools are situated and 2) knowledge of and constant responsiveness to our students, families and communities.

Educators must be willing to learn about systemic racism and inequities in the public education system and to develop culturally competent skills and mindsets ([EOGOAC](#), 2017). Professional learning opportunities aimed at increasing cultural competencies should focus on increasing educators’ knowledge of students’ cultural histories and contexts; students’ cultural norms, values and ways of being/thinking; community resources; and skills for designing instruction that is culturally responsive and sustaining ([RCW 28A.410.260](#)).

Teaching the whole child. In alignment with Superintendent Reykdal’s focus on the whole child, the Washington State vision for literacy education recognizes that social and emotional wellbeing has a significant impact on cognitive and academic development. Moreover, language and literacy learning is both academic and deeply personal. What we ask students to read, write and discuss—as well as how we ask them to do these tasks—is always intersecting with students’ identities, emotional states, experiences, and world views.

Effective educators consider students’ socioemotional wellbeing across a range of decisions, from arranging the physical environment to the ways in which they cultivate community in the classroom. They also know their students well. By making connections and building relationships with students, educators can foster a safer space in which trust and care can grow. A teacher’s expectations are also crucial. Students try harder when they know someone believes that they can succeed and cares about their success. They also feel more comfortable seeking help in academics and beyond. Positive student-teacher relationships have long-lasting effects on student outcomes.

Oral Language and Classroom Talk: The Foundation of Literacy Learning

Washington’s communities and schools are linguistically and culturally diverse. Our equity stance maintains that “each student, family, and community possess strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators and schools.” Schools can demonstrate this value by developing a welcoming, multilingual, multicultural environment. Through embracing multiple languages, schools can make space for multiple identities, foster relationships, and begin to build trust with communities that have been historically marginalized in schools and society.

This equity focus should also extend to the classroom. Effective teachers understand that there are cultural differences in children’s literacies, such as ways of participating in a group discussion or ways oral stories are structured. Effective teachers integrate these funds of knowledge into their teaching so that all students’ linguistic and cultural repertoires are seen as having value within the classroom and beyond.

Language—and, more specifically, oral language—is the foundation of literacy. It is the means through which we learn “higher psychological functions” (Vygotsky, 1978), which is most of what students learn in school. Educational research across the disciplines has revealed the positive impact of scaffolded classroom talk on learning—as well as the consequences of environments in which students do not have these opportunities.

There are several features of classroom talk that promote learning. Talk should always be in service of a real purpose, and students should know what that purpose is. When working in pairs and groups, students benefit from guidance about how to engage. For example, a discussion

protocol in science might provide some guidance for turn-taking as well as questions to consider that model disciplinary thinking. Multilingual students may especially benefit from language scaffolds that help them to initiate and respond to ideas. During whole-class talk, students need opportunities to elaborate on their ideas through wait time and questions that prompt them to say more.

Academic Language

In 1983, James Britton described reading and writing as “float[ing] on a sea of talk” (p. 11). More recent work has developed our understanding of just how true that statement is. Research in language, literacy and the disciplines has surfaced the important role of academic language in the process of literacy and subject-matter learning. Academic language is the language of textbooks and homework, the language found in assessments, and the language students are often expected to use in the classroom. Academic language has always been a part of school yet, until recently, it was neither identified nor taught in most classrooms. Efforts to address this oversight have been important to closing opportunity gaps across the grades.

Academic language is different in register, structure, and vocabulary from everyday language. It is at the heart of grade-level curriculum across content areas (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014). The three dimensions of academic language include vocabulary, sentence structure, and discourse (i.e., the broader structures that govern thinking and communication in an academic setting). While there are similarities in academic language across content areas, there are also differences. Highlighting these differences as part of instruction can help to unveil what students often experience as the mystery of teacher expectations. For example, making a claim about a character in a book (in language arts) and making a claim about how puddles disappear (in science) are similar in that they both require that the student produce some evidence and explanation. However, the nature of their evidence, the words and sentence structures used to explain their thinking, and the form—or genre—that their arguments take will differ.

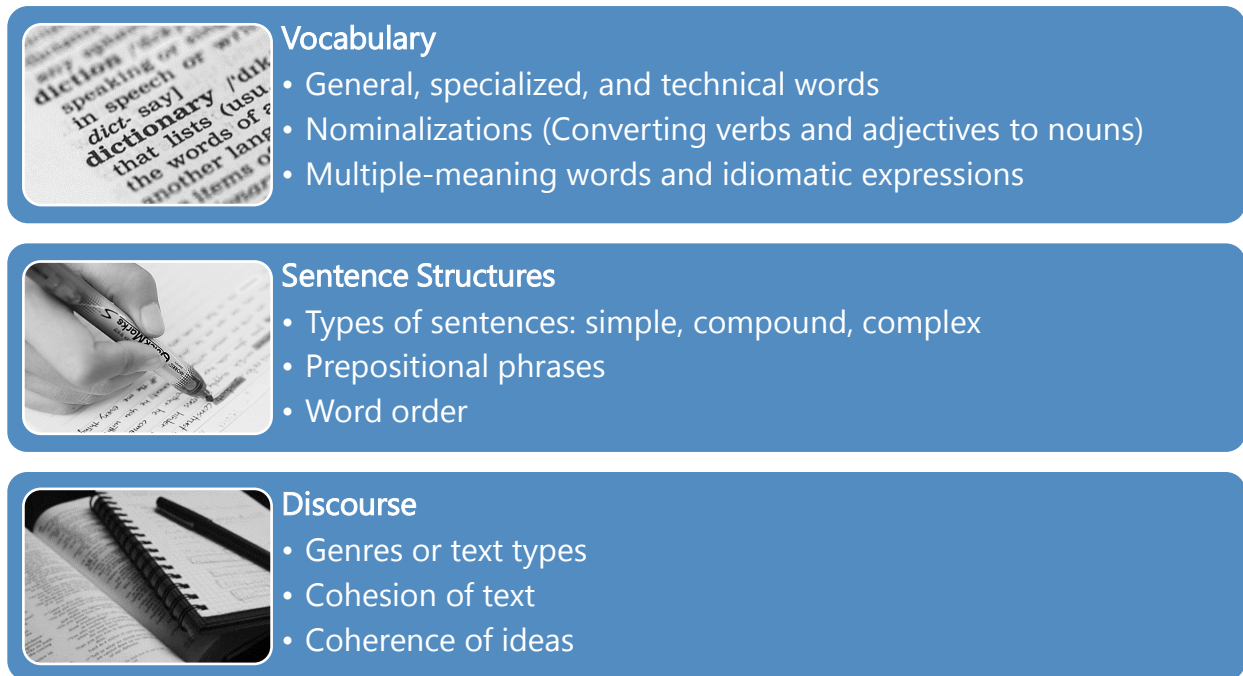


Figure 3. Dimensions of Academic Language. From: Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit (2014), *Academic Language in Diverse Classrooms: Definitions and Contexts*

Reading

Reading is a complex process that requires automatic skills, self-regulation strategies, and active sense-making with a range of texts and situations. In addition to skills and strategies, readers draw on their language, culture, identities, experiences and knowledge to make sense of what they read. Based on comprehensive literature reviews of reading instruction from kindergarten through adolescent students, Figure 4 illustrates the dynamic interplay of reader, text, activity and context in the comprehension process (Snow, 2002; National Reading Panel, 2000). In addition to capturing this complexity, the model can be a useful tool for teachers. The sections below unpack the ideas in Figure 4 and discuss their relationship to the teaching and learning of reading.

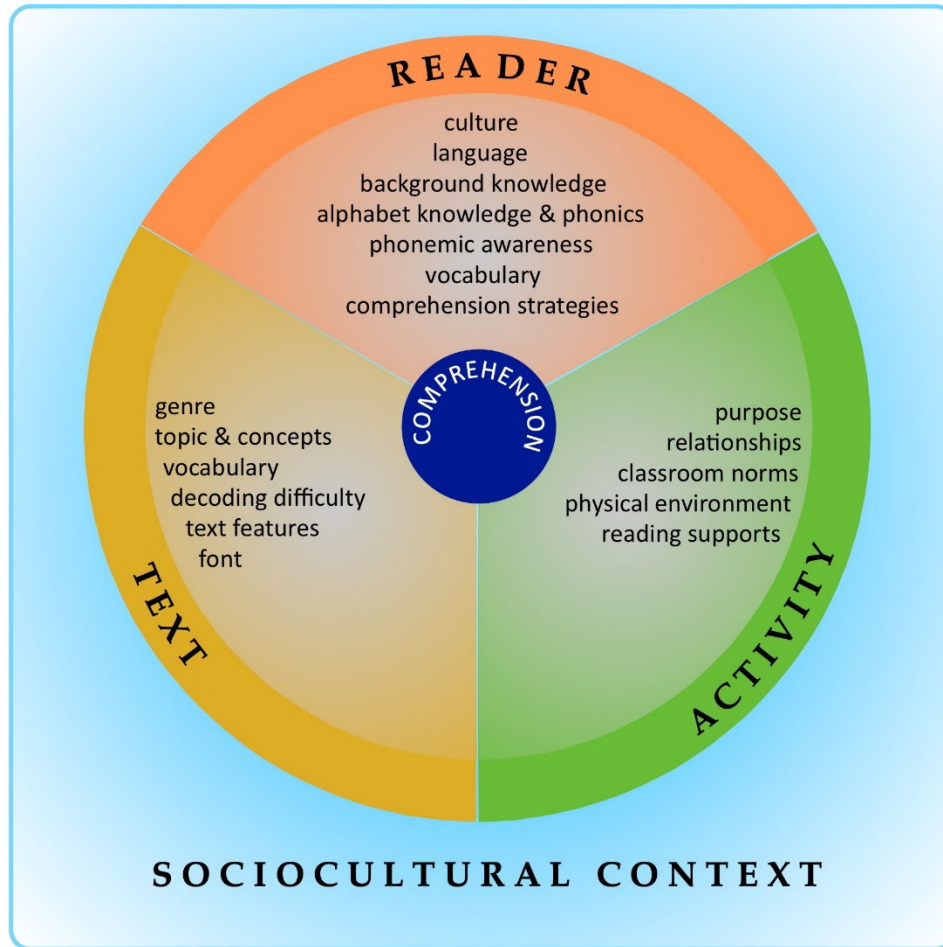


Figure 4. A heuristic for thinking about reading comprehension. Adapted from: Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for Understanding: Toward a research and development program in reading comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Readers. The reader segment of the diagram includes the student’s identities and experiences. It represents the reader’s interest and motivation, self-efficacy as a reader, and feelings about reading—both in general and in relationship to a particular reading experience. With all this impacting how a person comes to understand a text, the importance of taking a whole child approach to knowing students is clear. In particular, research has shown the important role of background knowledge in text comprehension.

The reader section also includes the “five pillars” for learning to read as identified by the National Reading Panel (2000) and explained in [Put Reading First](#): **phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies**. Extensive research in early literacy teaching and learning has shown that each of these components has a substantial impact on reading achievement (NELP, 2008; NICHD, 2000). In addition, alphabet knowledge (i.e., the alphabetic principle, letter names and letter sounds) plays an important role in early literacy development. Deep understanding of these essential literacy skills must guide educators

as they plan and develop appropriate and engaging reading instruction (Pittman & Dorel, 2014; Strickland & Shanahan, 2004). Appendix A provides more information about these building blocks of early reading.

There are many other skills that teachers need to create a thriving reading environment in K-12 classrooms, such as the ability to ask questions that lead to extended talk and strategies for eliciting student thinking—two essential practices to facilitate rigorous discussions, develop students' thinking strategies, and deepen their comprehension. As students progress through the grades, teachers must also understand and teach reading in the disciplines, including the range of purposes for reading and the strategies that students can use in service of those purposes.

Texts and activities. Teachers' decisions about texts and activities are informed by their knowledge of their students and grade-level reading expectations. For example, effective reading instruction requires educators to consider students' background knowledge. By attending to background knowledge, educators can make more informed decisions about text selection, create lessons that are relevant and motivating, and design appropriate learning supports. As another example, teachers might prepare to teach with a particular book by anticipating where students will be able to read automatically (skills) and where they are likely to mindfully respond to challenges (strategies). Anticipating students' strengths and challenges in navigating the text can help the teacher develop targeted objectives and design learning experiences with an appropriate mix of support and challenge.

The scaffolded reading experience (SRE) is a helpful framework for planning that prompts teachers to plan for reading supports before, during and after reading (Graves & Graves, 2003). Before reading, for example, a teacher might set a purpose for reading with the students, build and activate their background knowledge, or model a reading strategy. To provide support during reading, a teacher might mark stopping points in the text. Carefully planned, purpose-driven instruction at these stopping points can help students navigate particularly challenging aspects of the text and content. These moments can also provide an opportunity for formative assessment.

After-reading activities can help students to deepen their comprehension and broaden understandings. Graves and Graves emphasize the importance of coming back to the purpose for reading established at the outset. As students move from early readers into more challenging texts, this purpose should be linked to a broader endeavor, such as answering the essential question for a unit. These connections are one important way that teachers frame reading as a purposeful, meaning-making activity.

Writing

The Washington State ELA Standards highlight the importance of learning to read for different purposes and across a range of genres. They also highlight the crucial importance of writing for school, civic engagement and the workplace. The authors hoped that this substantial “shift” to more rigorous writing standards would lead to more attention to writing in the classroom, attention that has been long overdue. This section highlights some of the key ideas from research on the teaching and learning of writing.

Community, challenge and choice. Writing curriculum and tasks that balance autonomy, challenge and support are optimal for student learning. This balance provides a natural space for inclusion, differentiation and community building. Skilled teachers develop community and resources that help students to become more independent and work together. When students work together, they free up the teacher to provide focused support to students. Moreover, scaffolded peer-to-peer opportunities to write collaboratively, share work, and elicit and provide feedback all lead to improved student writing. These kinds of activities may be especially helpful for students who thrive in collectivist environment, while time for individual writing pursuits provides an entry point for students who orient toward individualism.

Unpacking texts and making rhetorical decisions. Teachers must help their students develop critical reading skills for writing, such as noticing the roles of texts in their schools, communities, and homes. For example, students might explore the role of different media in their lives and cultures. Students must also learn to look closely at how texts are constructed—from variations in structure within a genre to word choice.

In order to transfer these observations to their own writing, students must also learn how writers make decisions about genre, structure, sentence- and word-level strategies, and language conventions for particular audiences and purposes. For example, teachers may model their own writing process by thinking aloud as they write; coach into students’ writing decisions in one-to-one or small-group conferences; and compose with students, negotiating choices together as they go. This kind of instruction requires considerable knowledge of writing—even in the early grades. When teachers understand characteristics of texts and the purposes they can serve, they are well-positioned to help students develop this knowledge, too, and to leverage it for their own purposes.

Showing and scaffolding the writing process. Students also need scaffolding to engage in the writing process—and to understand how their process may differ by genre, audience or purpose. Because the complex practices that make up the writing process are often not visible to the learner, they can remain a mystery—particularly for students who struggle with writing. When we make these practices visible and provide supported opportunities to practice,

students' effort, self-efficacy, and writing quality improve. Providing this instruction requires descriptive and metacognitive knowledge of the writing process and an understanding of how this process may vary by person, writing task, and context.

Precise expectations and feedback. Effective writing teachers also respond to students' diverse interests and needs through ongoing formative assessment. When teachers provide feedback during the writing process (rather than at the end), students are more likely to learn from it. Students learn best when the tone of the feedback is positive and feedback is narrow in focus, clearly articulated, and appropriate for the student. Providing feedback in person is more likely to be effective, since students from elementary school through college have difficulty making sense of teachers' written comments. Scaffolds such as annotated models, checklists, and rubrics can serve as anchors for these conversations as well as students' ongoing work.

Providing Additional Literacy Support

All students should receive high-quality literacy instruction grounded in the use of research-based materials and instructional strategies that are implemented with fidelity. Still, even with a high-quality, rigorous core instructional literacy plan, instruction may not meet the needs of all learners. Within the [MTSS](#) framework, most students (approximately 80 percent) will be academically successful. However, if more than 20 percent of students are struggling to meet grade-level literacy standards, districts should re-examine their core instructional materials and strategies.

As a strategy for improving and accelerating the achievement of all students who have not yet met literacy standards, it is important to focus on students' foundational literacy skill development. Interventions should be aligned to and support core classroom curriculum, and classroom teachers and intervention specialists must collaboratively work together to support student academic and non-academic growth to meet grade-level literacy standards.

Too often, intervention programs are approached as remediation programs. This approach, although it may be well intentioned, actually slows down learning and widens the achievement gap. When interventions use a model that focuses on accelerating academic skills, students' academic progress is evident and their self-confidence and engagement increases. Through ongoing collaboration with classroom teachers, successful interventionists clearly articulate intervention goals and connect them to core classroom goals (Rollins, 2014).

In 2016, What Works Clearinghouse published a practice guide for supporting early readers: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#). [The resource describes four components for](#) teaching foundational reading skills to K–3 students that may be useful as a guide when planning interventions:

- “Teach student **academic language skills**, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge.
- Develop awareness of the segments of **sounds** in speech and how they link to **letters**.
- Teach students to **decode words** and analyze **word parts**, and **write** and **recognize words**.
- Ensure that each student **reads** connected text **every day** to support reading **accuracy, fluency, and comprehension**” (p. 2).

Technology benefits and limits. When used strategically, technology can provide students with opportunities to develop speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills and to access a variety of texts in a variety of mediums. Teachers must monitor student progress and adjust instruction based on formative assessment in all formats. Technology is a tool, not an intervention in and of itself. Technology alone cannot replace effective teaching or intervention activities. It must be a balanced supplement, especially with students who struggle with self-regulation and self-efficacy. Instructional programs for core or intervention, whether purchased or open educational resources, need to be aligned with standards, adequately scaffold learning, and provide a variety of rich texts and rigorous tasks. Access to multimodal digital texts expand learning opportunities for students but also open the need for students to learn to navigate these media. This digital literacy contributes to the student’s literacy in print media as well.

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ELA SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT, LAP ELIGIBILITY, AND LAP STUDENT DATA REPORTING

Students in grades 3–8 and high school take the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments aligned to the English Language Arts K–12 Learning Standards (also referred to as “the standards”). The state summative assessments determine students’ progress toward college and career readiness in English language arts. These summative assessments consist of two parts: a computer adaptive test and a performance task.

The learning outcomes represent ELA skills and knowledge that support students to be college- and career-ready by the end of their high school experience.

The evidence of students’ progress toward college and career readiness is provided by student performance on the items and tasks in the four assessment categories, referred to as Claims: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Research.

Claim 1: Reading. The student can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.

Students should be exposed to a broad range of high quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Carefully selected texts should range across genres, cultures, and centuries to provide access to literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with different text structures and elements. In addition to referencing key details and summarizing, students will need to be able to analyze and support claims, inferences, and conclusions with text evidence. Whatever they are reading, students should be able to show a growing ability to make multiple connections, consider textual evidence, and identify inconsistencies, ambiguities, and poor reasoning.

- [ELA/Literacy Standards, Appendix A](#) provides a three-part model for measuring text complexity, tools, and samples (p. 1–16).
- [Qualitative Rubrics for Text Complexity](#) provide a qualitative rubric for literary and informational texts that uses the text complexity measures discussed in the ELA/Literacy Standards Appendix A.
- [Navigating Text Complexity](#) provides a collection of text complexity resources, tools, and research developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), a multi-state organization.
- [Smarter Balanced ELA Content Specifications](#) provide rationale, evidence, and targets for ELA/Literacy Claim 1 (p. 26–35).
- Sample items aligned to Claim 1 are online at the [Smarter Balanced Sample Item webpage](#).

Claim 2: Writing. Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Students need to understand why they are writing and for what purposes and audiences. Students should be provided short and extended opportunities to produce a variety of shorter and longer pieces of writing for different purposes and audiences. Carefully selected instruction should promote writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions or arguments, demonstrating understanding of subjects, and conveying real and imagined experience and events. Skills such as the ability to plan, revise, edit, and publish, are applicable to many types of writing, and should result in argumentative, informative/explanatory and narrative text. Through the use of language and vocabulary, students should be encouraged to develop the style of their writing and adapt for various purposes and audiences. Students should also develop control over the conventions of Standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively.

- [ELA/Literacy Standards Appendix A](#) defines the three text types and the link between conventions, language and vocabulary, and the progression of language skills (p. 23–25; 28–31).
- [Smarter Balanced ELA Content Specifications](#) provides rationale, evidence, and targets for ELA/Literacy Claim 2 (p. 36–42).
- Example items aligned to Claim 2 are online at the [Smarter Balanced Sample Item webpage](#).

Claim 3: Listening¹. Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences.

Students should develop a broad range of useful oral communication and interpersonal skills. Collaborative work environments should encourage students to express and listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from various media sources, evaluate what they hear, and adapt speech to context, content, and task. In addition, students should contribute to meaningful conversations while providing accurate, relevant information; responding to and developing on what others have said; making comparisons and contrasts; and analyzing and synthesizing ideas appropriate to a particular topic. Students should listen to a variety of informational texts, non-print texts such as short talks/lectures, media messages, speeches, etc.

¹ The full name of Claim 3 is Speaking and Listening. Currently, students are only assessed on listening, which includes interpreting, analyzing, and using information delivered orally.

- [ELA/Literacy Standards Appendix A](#) identifies the role of speaking and listening in K–5 classrooms, the link between read-alouds and the reading-speaking-listening connection (p. 26–35).
- [Smarter Balanced ELA Content Specifications](#) provides rationale, evidence, and targets for ELA/Literacy Claim 3 (p. 43–45).
- Sample items aligned to Claim 3 are online at the [Smarter Balanced Sample Item webpage](#).

Claim 4: Research. Students can engage in research and inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

Students should use inquiry and critical thinking to produce new insights, perspective, solutions, and products. Writing or presenting on a topic should require students to make connections from reading varied sources. Students should become adept at gathering, analyzing, synthesizing and integrating information from various sources, evaluating and citing sources accurately, and interpreting findings. It is important for students to be able to filter information, evaluate the credibility of sources, analyze the underlying assumptions, and make thoughtful decisions based on their analysis.

- [Smarter Balanced ELA Content Specifications](#) provides rationale and targets for ELA/Literacy Claim 4 (p. 46–48).
- Example items aligned to Claim 4 are online at the [Smarter Balanced Sample Item webpage](#).

Smarter Balanced Assessment System

The [Smarter Balanced Assessment System](#) consists of three major components: formative assessment resources, interim assessments, and summative assessments. This complete system consists of resources to support student learning, check student progress, and measure student achievement in grades 3–8 and high school.

The [Tools for Teachers](#) provides educators with instructional formative assessment resources and professional learning resources aligned to the standards. These resources were created by educators for educators and can help guide implementation of formative assessment processes in the classroom.

Interim assessments can be used by educators and students to measure and guide student learning toward the expectations of the standards and are flexible to serve a variety of educator needs throughout the year. Interim assessments are available on the [Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program \(WCAP\) portal](#).

Practice and training tests for the Smarter Balanced assessment are available online. The training tests provide opportunities for students to practice navigating the tools and features of online testing. The practice tests provide students opportunities to experience grade-level content that mirrors the summative assessment. The [Smarter Balanced Practice and Training Tests](#) are for students and educators as they prepare for the Smarter Balanced summative and/or interim assessment.

The summative assessments consist of two parts: a computer adaptive test and a performance task. On the computer adaptive test, the questions a student receives are dependent upon a student's correct or incorrect answers. Adaptive tests are tailored to each student individually; they provide scores that are more accurate than fixed-form assessments, and identify evidence of student skills. The performance task includes source texts on a related topic, a research item to synthesize the information, and a full write task.

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium consists of multiple states working together to create and submit resources and to develop assessments. More than 4,700 educators across the consortium have developed and reviewed test items, established achievement levels, and contributed resources to the [Tools for Teachers](#).

If you are interested in receiving information about and/or participating in the work of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium with other Washington educators, please sign up for ELA assessment updates at [OSPI Email Updates](#).

Smarter Balanced Assessment System: LAP Student Eligibility and LAP Student Data Reporting
When identifying students for services, OSPI recommends using multiple measures.

Districts/schools may use [Smarter Balanced assessments](#) as one of these multiple measures to determine student eligibility for LAP. This could include use of the summative assessment, Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA), and Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB).

Smarter Balanced assessments are limited in monitoring student progress for LAP data reporting. The summative assessments are only administered once during the school year. Both the ICAs and IABs are fixed form assessments. The IABs only have a three-level classification on student performance. These features of the Smarter Balanced assessments do not provide the detail needed to monitor student progress or make determinations about student growth.

References

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, and Council of Chief State School Officers. [Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#). 2010.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. [Content Specifications for the Summative Assessment of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#). Los Angeles: Smarter Balanced, 2015.

Multiple Measures of Assessment for LAP

Students are identified as being eligible for LAP based on multiple measures or assessment. As identified earlier in the MTSS section of this report, establishing data-based decision-making protocols using a comprehensive system for assessment is important to identify and monitor students who need supplemental supports/services. The comprehensive system should include universal screening for all students, diagnostic data for students who are identified as potentially at-risk, progress monitoring, and formative assessment processes.

Washington is a local-control state and does not make recommendations on which assessments schools and districts should use to honor the needs and expectations in a comprehensive assessment system. Among others, the following assessment tools and resources are available to support districts and schools as they select assessments to support decision-making processes:

- **Universal Screening:** The National Center on Response to Intervention provides a [Screening Tools Chart](#).
- **Diagnostic Data Collection:** SEDL, an affiliate of the American Institute for Research, provides a [Reading Assessment Database](#).
- **Formative Assessment Processes:** Smarter Balanced provides access to formative assessment resources in the [Tools for Teachers](#) to Washington educators.
- **Progress Monitoring:** The National Center on Intensive Intervention at American Institutes for Research provides an [Academic Progress Monitoring – General Outcomes Measures \(GOM\) chart](#).

Dual Language Programs & Multiple Measures of Assessment for LAP

Student growth in dual language programs may look different than a student not in dual language, because these students are becoming bilingual and biliterate. Students enrolled in dual language programs require multiple measures of assessment in both languages in order to monitor progress towards meeting bilingualism and biliteracy goals of the program. The assessments should include both content and language assessments. Assessments in the partner language should not be just translations of the English assessment, but authentic assessments in that language.

When using assessments to inform practice, multilingual data analysis is essential in Dual Language. Assessments should be looked at side-by-side in order to view the students' full linguistic repertoire as an asset to inform instructional choices. Appropriate interpretation of the assessment outcomes involves understanding the research in dual language and establishing appropriate expectations for students who are taught and assessed in two languages (Howard et al., 2018)

Data-Informed student supports. Dual language programs are faced with different types of data-informed instructional decisions to make than schools of English-medium classrooms. Data from multilingual students tells different stories than monolingual students. It is essential to interpret data from a multilingual perspective and make instructional decisions that actually meet the need of students.

When a student is identified as needing additional support to reach standard in one or both of the languages of instruction it is important to first gather enough information to make the best instructional decisions for that student. There are times that a student may look like they are struggling, when they are truly just in the process of developing language in multiple languages and need time. Escamilla (2014) refers to this as the trajectory to biliteracy. Interventions for students' specific needs can be provided in either or both languages. If personnel is unavailable for both languages, schools may choose to serve the student in their stronger language (Beeman & Urow, 2014).

Resources

Beeman, K, Urow, C (2013). *Teaching for Biliteracy: Strengthening bridges between languages*. Caslon 2014.

Escamilla, K (2014). Examining the Longitudinal Biliterate Trajectory of Bilingual Learners *Bilingual Research Journal* 37(1):24-42 · April 201

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

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ELA Menu

OVERVIEW

The expert panels worked together with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to develop a comprehensive menu of best practices and strategies based on the most current evidence and rigorous research available. Panelists referred to the following WSIPP definitions for evidence-based, research-based, and promising practices.

Evidence-based

A program or practice that has been tested in heterogeneous or intended populations with multiple randomized, or statistically controlled evaluations, or both; or one large multiple site randomized, or statistically controlled evaluation, or both, where the weight of the evidence from a systemic review demonstrates sustained improvements in at least one outcome. Evidence-based also means a program or practice that can be implemented with a set of procedures to allow successful replication in Washington and, when possible, is determined to be cost-beneficial.

Research-based

A program or practice that has been tested with a single randomized, or statistically controlled evaluation, or both, demonstrating sustained desirable outcomes; or where the weight of the evidence from a systemic review supports sustained outcomes [. . .] but does not meet the full criteria for evidence-based.

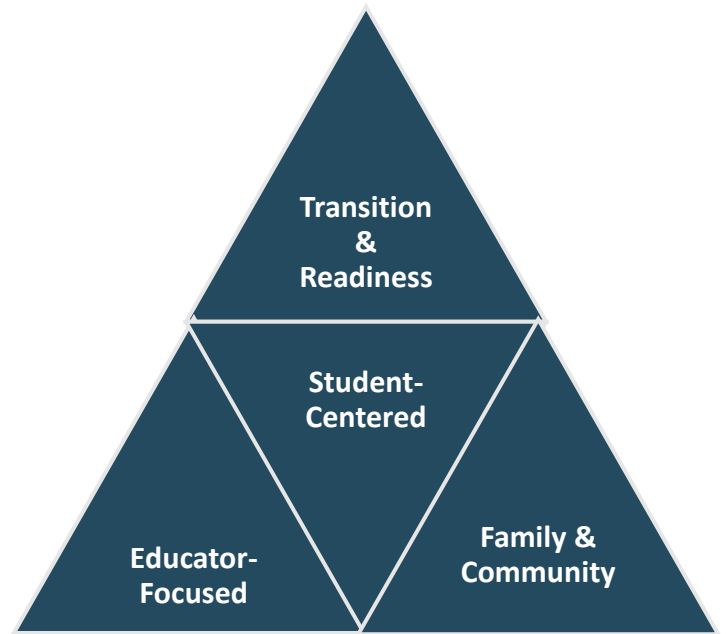
Promising

A practice that, based on research evidence, a well-established theory of change, or guidance from expert panels, shows potential for improving student outcomes but does not meet the criteria for classification as an evidence-based or research-based program. The expert panels and WSIPP collaborate to identify promising practices for inclusion in the inventory and the menus.

The English Language Arts menu lists practices and strategies that have been shown to support literacy improvement for students who have not yet met academic benchmarks. It is important to note that the work of the expert panel was to identify proven general practices and strategies, not recommend specifically branded programs that might include those practices. Districts considering adoption of programs or curriculum are encouraged to review the materials for alignment to the WA State K–12 ELA Learning Standards and best practices and strategies outlined in this menu. Schools are also encouraged to use the IMET and EQUIP rubrics to vet alignment of materials. Any chosen program or curriculum should be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure it effectively impacts student achievement.

Menu Organization

The menus have been organized into four broad categories of interventions. Student-centered practices and strategies directly involve the student, like peer tutoring, double dosing, or summer book programs. Educator-focused practices and strategies include activities like targeted professional learning and instructional coaches. Entries in the transition and readiness category are intended to prepare students to engage in learning, transition from middle to high school, and graduate from high school. Family and community practices and strategies include mentoring, family engagement, and P-4 community partners.



ELA MENU AT A GLANCE

Student-Centered Practices and Strategies

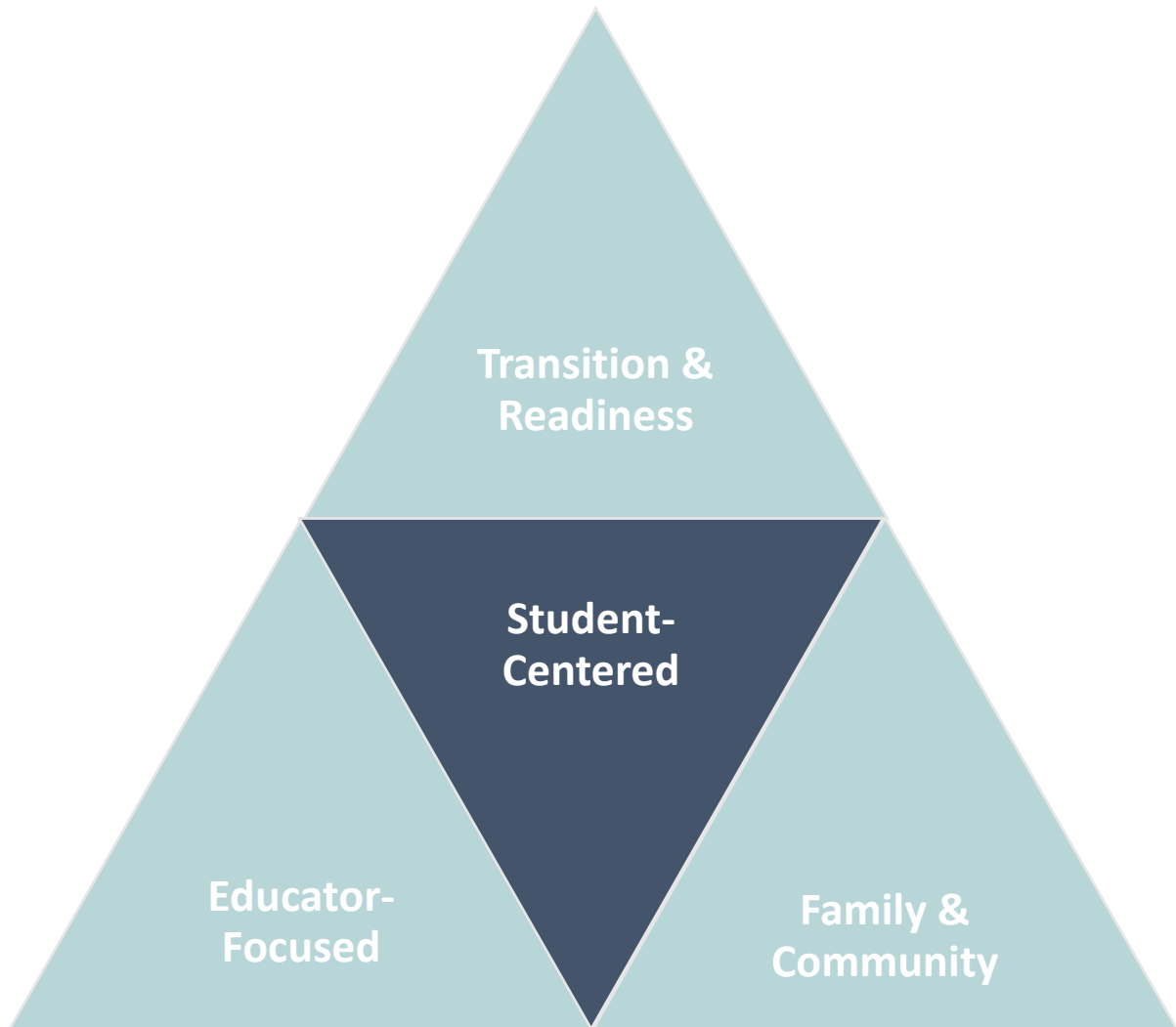
Before-After School Programs	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Double Dosing	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Summer Book Programs	<i>Promising</i>
Summer School/Programs	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Tutoring by an adult	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Tutoring by an Intervention Specialist	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Tutoring by a Peer	<i>Research-based</i>
Specialized Literacy Instruction for Students Receiving English Learner (EL) Services	<i>Evidence-based</i>

Educator-Focused Practices and Strategies

Co-Teaching	<i>Promising</i>
Consultant Teacher/EL Coaches	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Consultant Teacher/Instructional Coaches	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Consultant Teacher/Literacy Coaches	<i>Evidence-based</i>
Professional Learning Communities	<i>Promising</i>
Targeted Professional Learning	<i>Evidence-based</i>

Transition and Readiness Practices and Strategies	
Credit Retrieval and Mastery of High School Standards	<i>Promising</i>
Grade 8 to High School Transitions	<i>Promising</i>
Kindergarten Transitions	<i>Promising</i>
Family and Community Practices and Strategies	
Family Engagement	<i>Promising</i>
P–4 Community Partnerships	<i>Promising</i>
Community-Based Student Mentors	<i>Research-based</i>

STUDENT-CENTERED PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES



Before & After School Programs

Research emphasizes the importance of high quality out-of-school time learning opportunities for children's academic success in school, as well as their health and well-being. *Out of School Time* (OST) programs can support and promote academics, socialization, sports, and safe environments for children before- and after-school, on Saturdays, and during scheduled school breaks. Programs that focus on emerging foundational literacy skills and on-going speaking, listening, writing, and reading skill development can significantly impact student learning outcomes.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Design literacy enrichment activities that incorporate the arts, fitness, and technology, which can motivate student attendance and engagement while impacting literacy skill development.
- Provide targeted interventions before and after school for students who need additional literacy support and provide student transportation home from after-school learning opportunities to ensure students will be able to participate.
- Identify programs within your community that celebrate the backgrounds and cultures of the families and children in your school. Partner with these programs to enroll students and to support home language and literacy skill development.
- Design activities around literacy themes, author's work, or games. The club could focus on poetry, song writing, singing, and reading.
- Offer clubs before and after school, on Saturdays, and during regularly scheduled school breaks.
- Design project-based learning opportunities for students. Projects incorporate and develop speaking, listening, reading, and writing, while also developing critical thinking and cooperative learning.
- Create project-based, computer-assisted credit retrieval programs for students in grades 11–12 to complete before and after school.
- Partner with district food service and child nutrition providers to provide breakfast, lunch, or snacks to students, while LAP providers focus on literacy skill development. Target shared reading experiences and foundational literacy skill development to support students with feed the body and the mind activities.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students who have not yet met standard in reading, writing, speaking, and listening benefit from before- and after-school programs that target and offer opportunities for development in those areas.

- Cultural and linguistic interests of students should be part of the design of the program.
- Activities should be age appropriate to engage students beyond the school day.
- Elementary school students need: program time to be consistent throughout the school year and time in program is aligned to student needs.
- Middle school students need: credible/trained staff and programs that are independent from school, yet family connected.
- High school students need: funding collaboration, planning/cooperation from stakeholders, set objectives, connections to community/career readiness, and leadership opportunities.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Consider students' interests.
- Recruit district-level sponsorship.
- Provide an on-site coordinator.
- Establish sustainable funding.
- Partner with district food service and child nutrition providers to provide healthy snacks.
- Create a positive environment, dedicated to building connections with students.
- Provide training and technical assistance for staff.
- Establish goals with timelines for the program and students.
- Limit staff turnover.
- Align regular-day curriculum and assessment with hands on enrichment activities.
- Use individual/group data to target program design.
- Engage in ongoing progress monitoring.
- Make connections with schools and school day teachers.
- Encourage community involvement.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Structuring Out-Of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement](#)
- [The Evaluation of Enhanced Academic Instruction in After-School Programs Final Report](#)
- After School Alliance: [Literacy Brief](#) & [Toolbox](#)
- [Structuring Out-Of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement](#)
- [The Evaluation of Enhanced Academic Instruction in After-School Programs Final Report](#)

- After School Alliance: Literacy Brief & Toolbox
- Effective Out-of-School Time Programs: [Reading Rockets](#)
- Literacy in Afterschool Programs: [SEDL Report](#)
- [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)
- [School's Out Washington](#)
- [Buck Institute for Education \(BIE\): Project-Based Learning](#)
- [National Education Association Research Spotlight on Project-Based Learning](#)
- [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)
- [School's Out Washington](#)
- Buck Institute for Education (BIE): Project-Based Learning
- National Education Association Research Spotlight on Project-Based Learning

Supporting Research

In a review of studies on before- and after-school programs, WSIPP found that high-quality out-of-school programs are “evidence based”. Before- and after-school programs take all different shapes and forms. Some schools design and implement opportunities while others connect with external providers. Regardless of the program provider, *Out of School Time* (OST) opportunities can lead to positive outcomes for children and youth, as well as families, communities, and schools (Vandell, 2014).

The [National Center for Time and Learning \(NCTL\)](#) and [UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access \(IDEA\)](#) support *more* and *better* extended learning time and recognize that low-income students generally do not have access to extended enrichment opportunities outside of the typical school day (Del Razo & Renée, 2013). The [National Institute on Out-of-School Time](#) (2009) reports: (1) Quality programs improve school attendance, engagement in learning, test scores, and grades; (2) high-risk students who participate regularly in programs benefit the most; (3) the frequency and duration of participation increase benefits.

Several ELT programs that occur after-school are sponsored by community partners. These programs have many benefits to frequent students and families who participate regularly in after-school programs. Participation reduces stress for parents by knowing that their child is in a supervised activity after-school, and it reduces juvenile crime and accidents (NIOST, 2009).

The design of before- and after-school programs are unique to the schools and communities they serve. One example of an after-school literacy program co-exists with a free YMCA after-school program. This program is free to students and families because over 90 percent of the students qualify for the free and reduced lunch. Annual reports of student progress from 2001–

2004 identify nearly 40 percent of participating students achieved more than one year's growth on reading assessments. Student growth was connected to program attendance records. The primary design of the program focuses on one-on-one tutoring that targeted oral fluency and comprehension (Fleming, 2005).

Another example of a uniquely designed program used a project-based learning (PBL) model. Elementary, middle, and high school students participate in a minimum of four PBL assignments ranging from three to ten weeks throughout the year (Schwalm & Tylek, 2012). The use of PBL provides students with meaningful and authentic learning experiences. By selecting high-interest projects, students are intrinsically motivated to participate in a variety of literacy activities involved in the project. Using PBL during additional after-school learning time helps enhance literacy skills and prepares students for college and career readiness by developing communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration skills (Schwalm & Tylek, 2012).

Recently, there has been much debate on the placement of core literacy standards in after-school programs. Opponents believe that after-school activities should be designed around enrichment, leadership, arts, sports, and civics (Marten, Hill, & Lawrence, 2014). However, the Robert Bowne Foundation in New York City has offered quarterly forums for over ten years to support the development of quality OST programs. Through their work, they have concluded that OST programs already support core literacy standards and they recommend more and better partnerships between OST programs and schools to develop systematic strategies (Marten, Hill, & Lawrence, 2014). Focusing on the [CCSS-ELA Habits of Mind](#), OST programs can align the literacy skills necessary for students to be college and career ready while developing their individual skills in leadership, "problem-solving, perseverance, independence, and understanding other cultures" (Marten, Hill, & Lawrence, 2014).

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Double Dosing (Middle and high school students only)

Double dosing provides additional time during the school day for targeted LA intervention with a certified teacher. This “second dose” occurs during a regular class period, and enrollment is concurrent with a regular class period of core instruction. All students in double dosing programs must be simultaneously enrolled in core instruction and the support class.

Interventions are aligned with students’ identified literacy learning needs and the grade-level LA Standards taught during the core instruction period. Ongoing communication between the core classroom content teacher and the intervention specialist is crucial to the success of this model.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Identify what literacy skills are needed for students to accelerate learning and align materials and instruction to those needs. Review data regularly to ensure the materials are aligned to core instruction and program strategies are effective for each student.
- Provide pre-teaching aligned to core instruction so that students can participate more fully in their core ELA class.
- Establish routines for goal-setting and reflection to develop students’ self-regulation strategies.
- Create an additional instructional block in the master schedule for targeted interventions, more practice, and advanced learning opportunities so that students in double dose classes do not miss out on course offerings.
- Provide collaboration time for core and intervention teachers to co-plan.
- Pair computer-assisted skill building programs with educator support and to provide practice, to monitor student progress, and to communicate student progress with families.
- **Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning**
- Students who are just below grade-level proficiency experience the greatest positive impact.
- Students who are significantly below grade may require a more intensive intervention.
- Multilingual students benefit when instruction is in their home/primary language whenever feasible and is focused on building academic language and oracy.
- Emergent Bilinguals may not have background knowledge to understand literacy content. Find ways to connect LA lessons to students’ funds of knowledge.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Schools implementing this model must also consider the detrimental effects of tracking and streaming and create a plan that mitigates those effects.

- Create an environment where students can exercise choice in their selection of literacy materials, engage in critical conversations, and write for audiences and purposes that matter to them.
- Consider scheduling the double-dose intervention before the core class so that educators can pre-teach the concepts and skills students will encounter in their core class.
- Select educators to teach double-dose intervention who believe students can be successful, who work closely with core instructional educators, and who have deep pedagogical content knowledge.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Florida Center for Reading Research: [Elements for Effective Reading Interventions](#)
- Perspectives for a Diverse America: [Literacy Passages, Tasks and Strategies](#)
- [Self-study Guide for Implementing High School Intervention](#)
- [Readworks.org](#)
- [Academic Language Toolkit](#)
- Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)
- ELA Shifts
- [Newsela.com – English and Spanish articles](#)

Supporting Research

WSIPP reviewed five studies on double dosing at the middle and high school levels. They rated this intervention as “evidence-based.” Importantly, none of these studies examined double dosing in English Language Arts.

The academic focus during double dosing should be aligned to foundational literacy skills and the LA Standards. Additionally, alignment to the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards is necessary for students learning English as an additional language. Collaboration time among teachers is essential to develop clarity and coherence among the general education teachers and the staff members providing double dosing for students to meet ELA Standards. The intervention team (all the adults serving the student) should determine the instructional and assessment plans for each student to meet the instructional targets. The student’s ability to articulate the learning targets, along with ongoing progress monitoring and student self-assessment, will identify when these targets are met. Students should continue to receive services until they meet the learning targets identified for them by the instructional team.

In this model, students are identified as needing support, and their responses to interventions are measured on a regular basis. All students are screened at the beginning and again during the middle of the year. Students who have not yet met LA Standards receive additional instruction three to five times a week for 20–40 minutes in small groups. Their progress is monitored at least once a month (Gersten et. al., 2009). The report found a strong level of evidence that “intensive, systematic instruction on up to three foundational reading skills in small groups to students who score below the benchmark” works for students performing below benchmark (Gersten, et. al., 2009, p. 6). Proven instructional strategies with small groups of students is the best use of double-dosing time.

Mazzolini & Morely (2006) describe the benefits an extra period for literacy instruction within the regular school day has on accelerating literacy skills for middle and high school students who are reading one or more years below grade level. By regularly using vocabulary activities, mini-lessons, read-alouds, and independent reading practice, students experienced growth in reading achievement and reported increased self-efficacy and motivation to read. Additional time for students who struggle with speaking, listening, writing, and reading within the school day will require a design shift for scheduling.

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Summer Book Programs

In summer book programs, students can participate from any location during non-scheduled school time. These programs provide students with a choice of reading materials and access to books at home.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Use LAP funds to support your summer program by providing new books for LAP-served students to borrow during the summer. Students select books to borrow and bring back to school in the fall. These books may be used to stock LAP classroom libraries so that independent practice in reading continues throughout the school year.
- Identify community partners to support enrichment summer opportunities for students as an incentive for participating in summer reading activities. National and community partners can provide free books and other incentives for at-risk students.
- Partner with a local library to promote summer reading resources. Provide training opportunities for students and parents to use the library electronic resources to reserve books and search for e-books, audio books, magazines, and movies.
- Establish a summer literacy program that includes books and blogs. Blogging about summer books provides educators an opportunity to formatively assess student comprehension and interact with students. Teachers could be provided a summer teaching stipend to follow up and work with LAP-served students remotely/electronically during the summer.
- Design a K–2 program using numeracy and social-emotional development-themed books. Provide training for shared-reading opportunities and books for parents to borrow for the summer. Collect the books at the end of the summer during a summer book reading celebration.
- Establish a book mobile program and deliver books to low socio-economic areas. Seek community partners, grants, and volunteers to assist in the design and development of the program.
- Develop a system to mail a book to students every two weeks, and then have staff follow up with a phone call to each student to have a genuine conversation about what they liked about the book. Train staff members or volunteers (adults or high school students) to engage students in phone book talk conversations.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

Students who struggle with reading and reluctant readers benefit greatly when given a choice of reading materials.

- Students and families where English is not the home language may benefit from reading bilingual books to promote literacy in the home language and English language acquisition.
- Students identified for free and reduced-price lunch programs often have fewer books at home and gain added benefit with access to books.
- Students learning English as an additional language benefit from a mix of leveled books and audiobooks for language development and comprehension.
- All K–4 students benefit from multi-year summer book programs that start in kindergarten and continue for at least three years.
- **Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning**
- Provide multi-year programs designed to accelerate reading growth.
- Provide easy access to books for students and families.
- Allow students to self-select books to increase reading motivation.
- Seek grant funding to provide books for low-income, at-risk students.
- Engage families as partners.
- Use reading logs to measure progress toward goals (available online).
- Collaborate with community libraries.
- Provide external motivators to help with engagement (e.g., name in local paper or recognition by school board for amount of time spent reading over summer).
- Read out loud to primary students who are not independent readers.
- Provide guidance to students as they select books to ensure books are not too difficult.
- Encourage students to read a wide selection of genres.
- Create a schedule to open the school library during summer months.
- Provide families with meaningful strategies and resources that can be carried over and implemented at home, which ensures continuity of summer reading programs throughout the year, after the intervention has concluded.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- OSPI [Summer Programs Presentation](#)
- [Washington State’s Summer Reading Program](#)
- Cultivating Readers Family Guide for shared literacy activities.: [English & Spanish](#)
- Reading Rockets: [Get Ready for Summer!](#) Ideas for Teachers to Share with Families!

- Book Programs: Pizza Hut--[Book It!](#)
- Scholastic app—[Summer Reading Challenge](#)
- Barnes and Noble—[Summer Reading Program](#)
- Reading Rockets [resources for free books](#)

Supporting Research

Based on their review of summer book program studies, WSIPP rated them as “promising.” Research shows that students who do not read in the summer can lose two to three months of reading development, whereas students who do read tend to gain a month of reading proficiency during the same amount of time (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003). For decades, summer break has attributed to loss of reading comprehension skills and student academic outcomes in reading. From 1st to 5th grade, summer break can attribute to a loss of up to 1.5 grade levels (Whittingham & Rickman, 2015). Reading just five books over the summer can prevent summer learning loss (Heyns, 1978), and students who participate in multi-year programs show the greatest academic growth (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013).

Summer book programs promote students’ reading during the days they are not in school. Multiple strategies are starting to emerge to provide students access to books and choice of materials. Some programs hand the books out to students at the end of the regular school year or mail books to students throughout the summer, while other programs have establish digital device checkouts with a multitude of books loaded on the device (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013; Mitchell, 2016). Mobile book projects are also becoming more popular and the results of these projects are reducing summer reading loss and inspiring communities (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013; Genay, 2015; Groff, S, 2015).

In a study by Allington et al. (2010), elementary students self-selected 12 books each spring for a voluntary summer reading program over three consecutive years. Students who received books in this study “reported more often engaging in voluntary summer reading and had significantly higher reading achievement than the control group....[T]he reading gains of students from the most economically disadvantaged families in the study were found to be larger, perhaps because these students have the most restricted access to books” (p. 422). When students identified for free and reduced-price lunches participated in voluntary summer reading programs, their confidence increased in the classroom and their achievement scores were higher at the beginning and end of the following school year (Whittingham & Rickman, 2015).

In a 2008 summer book program study, 400 students in grades 3–5 displayed significant differences based on their research groups (Blazer, 2011). The research groups included: (1) students were not provided books, (2) students were provided books, (3) students were provided books and fluency scaffolding, and (4) students were provided books with fluency and

comprehension scaffolding. The study resulted in significant differences in the no books and the books with fluency and comprehension scaffolding groups. Black, Hispanic, and low-income students enrolled in the book program study group with both oral fluency and comprehension scaffolding showed average gains of four months of academic growth over the course of three months (Blazer, 2011).

Research suggests the following strategies will help schools develop successful summer reading programs (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2013; Blazer, 2011, p. 8–9):

- Review oral reading and comprehension strategies at the end of the school year with students individually.
- Review oral reading and comprehension strategies at the end of the school year with both students and parents together.
- Teach parents how to scaffold oral and comprehension activities at home.
- Review book selection activities to ensure books are just right for the reader at the independent reading level.
- Send at least eight books (that match each student’s reading level) home for the summer.
- Open the school library on designated days.
- Establish a bookmobile program.
- Send families packets, postcards, and books at regular intervals.
- Send summer letters with scaffolding skills and reminders.

Research on the impact of digital devices to enhance literacy skills during summer break is still new. Early research has found that adolescents using e-readers have reported changes in attitudes and motivation toward reading, students preferred to read on the e-readers, and reluctant readers are incentivized by using e-readers (Mitchell, 2016). In an 11-week summer book program for 6th grade students, *Nooks* were preloaded with books and checked out to students who struggled to meet grade-level reading outcomes. Two findings stood out in this study: students regularly used and benefited from the imbedded tools in the e-reader, and the e-reader provided more opportunities for reading because of its portability and convenience. Students reported the dictionary as the most used tool because it helped them understand the text and learn new words (Mitchell, 2016).

Many adolescent students prefer to read using a digital device, and teachers can motivate students by incorporating digital devices in reading and writing activities (Fink, 2012). With the added motivation, teachers can guide students to use their digital devices with academic intent

to explore their interest and develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills with a variety of apps and websites. Multiple websites provide free magazines and grammar games that can enhance summer reading activities, and various apps have recording tools for speaking activities. For older students, digital devices are becoming more practical based on their daily access to laptops, cell phones, and tablets; digital devices are also becoming more and more accessible to younger students (Fink, 2012).

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Summer School Programs

Summer school programs have the potential to accelerate the reading development of students who struggle to read and diminish summer reading loss. Summer programs extend the school year into the summer months and provide enriching opportunities to foster a love of reading and develop speaking, listening, and writing skills. Summer learning loss disproportionately affects low-income students. An academic summer program has the potential to minimize learning loss and result in achievement gains.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Create summer school programs that promote a balanced literacy model of reading and allow for student choice.
- Implement literacy summer school programs that affirm students' culture and identity by designing activities and selecting literature reflective of students' cultural backgrounds. If staffing is available, consider running a summer school program in the home language of the students.
- Invite community partners to participate in creating programs, naming, and highlighting their literacy talents.
- Combine literacy summer school programs with other content areas or enrichment opportunities such as Lego robotics, science, math, and theater to create excitement and engagement.
- Create a literacy summer camp focused on a theme. Students can dig into a topic through reading, writing, and talk.
- Create a project-based, computer-assisted ELA credit retrieval summer program for 11th- and 12th-grade students.
- Create a site-based summer school program in locations where students congregate during the summer to increase participation.
- Use LAP funds to purchase classroom libraries for summer school classrooms. These books can be re-distributed to LAP classroom libraries in the fall.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students from families of poverty may have few or no books at home and will benefit from a summer literacy program.
- Students who are reluctant to read, are building reading skills, or are learning English as an additional language, will benefit from engaging summer literacy opportunities.

- Students who are reading below grade-level proficiency standards and those who have not yet met grade level standards on state ELA assessments benefit from summer literacy programs.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Keep student/staff ratios small and support targeted interventions for students who have not yet met grade-level standards.
- Align summer instruction to the regular school-year curriculum and the Washington State Learning Standards.
- Provide professional learning to teachers and trained professionals to improve the quality and consistency of instruction in supporting best practices in literacy instruction.
- Hire experienced staff and provide professional learning opportunities.
- Provide differentiated instruction.
- Provide small group instruction and supports (3–6 students).
- Allow for student choice and teach how to select just right books.
- Provide sustained time for independent reading.
- Support connection to core and school-year instructional strategies and content.
- Partner with transportation services and provide transportation to and from summer learning opportunities.
- Partner with district food service and child nutrition providers to provide healthy snacks.
- Provide communication between the program and home, and encourage regular attendance.
- Encourage parents and families to read with their child daily and talk to their children about what they have read.
- Evaluate programs to ensure the summer program is effective at improving and sustaining student outcomes.
- Use observational data, youth, parent, and staff input, and student academic data to evaluate programs.
- Provide summer school opportunities over multiple summers.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- OSPI [Summer Programs Presentation](#)
- Summer Reading Camp [Self-Study Guide](#)

- Reading Rockets: [Get Ready for Summer! Ideas for Teachers to Share with Families!](#)
- Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD Online: [Making Reading Relevant: Read, Learn, and Do! \(K–3\)](#)
- [Washington State’s Summer Reading Program](#)
- [Every Child, Every Day](#) by Richard Allington

Supporting Research

A WSIPP review of summer school program studies found that they are “evidence-based”. Research on summer reading loss dates back to the early 1900s (Blazer, 2011). Not only are students who live below the poverty line less likely to participate in summer activities like going to the museum, camp or zoo, they are also less likely to go to the library or bookstore. Summer programs serve multiple purposes for students, families, educators, and communities. These programs are often designed to promote students who have failed or been retained, accelerate learning for students who have not yet met standard, prevent future academic problems, improve student and parent attitudes towards school performance, and provide academic enrichment. Program design should include enrichment activities that are hands-on and foster students’ creativity (Blazer, 2011). Summer learning should also provide different experiences than those provided during the regular school year. Allington (2013) discusses the importance of providing high- quality summer literacy opportunities for students from families of poverty in order to close the reading achievement gap.

Attending school-based, camp, and community programs has been found to be beneficial to students. However, those in low-income households are less likely to participate in these summer enrichment activities (Blazer, 2011). Research indicates over half of the participants in summer programs are white. It further indicates that Black (18 percent), Hispanic (14 percent), Asian (5 percent) and Native American (2 percent) students are poorly represented (Blazer, 2011, p. 4). The design of the summer program must appeal to the diversity of its students and families. Intensive summer intervention strategies, such as small group or one-on-one teaching using an evidence-based curriculum, can be delivered through *well-designed* summer Use observational data, youth, parent, and staff input, and student academic data to evaluate programs.

According to Duffy (2001), summer school programs have the potential to accelerate the reading development of students who struggle with reading. In this particular study by Duffy (2001) of 2nd-grade students in a summer school program, students improved in word identification, fluency, comprehension, perceptions of themselves as readers, attitudes toward reading, and instructional reading levels. This summer school program was designed and implemented according to the constructs of balanced literacy instruction—a short, explicit mini-lesson, independent reading, partner reading, shared reading and interactive read aloud,

shared/interactive writing and independent writing. Also included was accelerated teaching and responsive teaching—small group-guided reading, strategy groups, and conferring with students. Duffy (2001) warns though, that summer school, as a short-term intervention, should not be viewed as a quick fix for all students who struggle with reading. Some students will need ongoing literacy support during the school year to meet grade-level goals and to sustain their summer literacy learning.

Borman's research indicates that summer learning may be the primary intervention through which educators can prevent the cumulative widening of the reading achievement gap (Borman, 2000, p. 24). Local schools and districts should use data to design, develop, and evaluate programs to serve different student groups, including students with disabilities at various grade levels, multiple demographics, and students who are learning English as an additional language. Research conducted by Roderick, et al. (1999) demonstrates that participation in a summer program, in addition to the regular academic school year's curriculum, provides students with at least a short-term gain in standardized test scores (Roderick, Bryk, Jacob, Easton, & Allensworth, 1999). More recently, Kindron & Lindsay (2014), through a meta-analytic review of the research, found that increased learning time programs had a positive effect on students' literacy performance at the elementary school level, and it was especially beneficial for students performing below standard.

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Tutoring by an Adult

Adult tutors can be a strong supplement to a comprehensive literacy program. Carefully selected adult tutors can include paraeducators and volunteers. Tutors can provide targeted one-on-one or small-group instruction to meet the specific needs of students. All tutors should receive specialized professional learning to target students' literacy needs.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Provide a framework for literacy tutors. The framework will provide a foundation for training, monitor student progress, and will reduce prep time for teachers.
- Provide targeted training for all tutors prior to working with students. Training for tutors should be on-going and aligned to the foundational skills targeted during scheduled tutoring time. Tutor training should also focus on delivery strategies like wait time, student observation, data collection, coaching, correction techniques, etc.
- Partner with local university education departments and ESDs to provide literacy foundational skills training for educators and tutors.
- This is common with students in Dual Language settings learning an additional language. Additionally, instructional strategies to promote oral language practice will benefit comprehension.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

Students who are reading below grade-level proficiency standards and who have not yet met grade level ELA assessments.

- Students identified as needing additional language development support may receive simultaneous support for language and literacy.
- One-to-one and small group support are an appropriate, effective strategy for students in grade 3–12 who require significant acceleration of growth to meet grade-level standards.
- In dual language settings, students may receive literacy support in either language

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Select a research-based intervention model within a multi-tiered system of support that use individualized, diagnostic assessments to design appropriate developmental lessons for students.
- Provide a setting where distractions and disruptions do not interfere with productive engagement.

- Provide extensive and ongoing tutoring for all tutors that includes observation and correction techniques.
- Recognize that untrained tutors can have negative effects on learning.
- Schedule tutoring time that pairs students who have the greatest needs with the most skilled tutor.
- Provide one-to-one or small group tutoring, consisting of 3–6 students.
- Consider group size when reviewing student outcomes.
- Design and implement a highly structured program where knowledge is constructed from the integration of previously learned and newly acquired skill sets.
- Pair computer-assisted learning programs can be paired with adult tutoring models but should not replace adult tutoring interventions

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Utah State Office of Education: Star Reading Tutoring
- Reading Rockets: [Tutoring Strategies for the Primary Grades](#)
- [Keys to Effective Intervention](#)
- U.S. Department of Education—[Tips for Reading Tutors](#)
- [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)

Supporting Research

WSIPP found that adult tutoring programs range from evidence-based to research-based, depending on the structure of the intervention. Research has consistently shown that students benefit from tutoring programs that are *well-designed* and include professional training and coaching centered on the best practices in literacy development (Center for Prevention Research and Development, 2009; Elbaum et al., 2000; Ritter et al., 2009; Shinn, Deno & Fuchs, 2002; Slavin et al., 2011).

Adult tutors must be familiar with concepts associated with the essential components of reading such as: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Birsch, 2005; Erion & Ronka, 2014; Pittman & Dorel, 2014). For example, early literacy tutors should be trained to provide instruction with respect to alphabetic sounds (both consonants and vowels), blending letters, word recognition skills, and decoding unfamiliar words. Moreover, as students' literacy

skills develop, tutors must be well versed in strategies to enhance fluency, engage students in dialogue about reading and error correction processes, and support comprehension (Birsch, 2005; Pittman & Dorel, 2014). Both in and outside of the classroom, tutors can play an essential role in supporting literacy learning for students.

Tutoring as an intervention should be provided in addition to regularly scheduled core classroom instruction. Shorter sessions, multiple times a week, are more successful than longer sessions fewer times a week. The desired length of one-on-one tutoring should be 10–15 minutes, and multiple sessions should be at least three per week. The intensity and frequency of the session will allow the students who need more intensive instruction to become proficient in the relevant concept or topic (Allington, 2001; Center for Prevention Research and Development, 2009).

Tutoring can be implemented via a *pull-out* model, wherein the student is removed from the classroom in order to receive extra support or instruction, or via a *push-in* model, wherein intervention is provided by an adult tutor within the classroom itself. All students must have access to core literacy instruction; therefore, all supplemental *pull-out* tutoring models must be provided outside core literacy instructional time.

Very limited research exists in support of the effectiveness of the push-in model of tutoring (Gelzheiser, Meyers, & Pruzek, 1992). *Push-in* tutoring generally is implemented one of two ways. In one approach, the tutor works with an individual or groups of students to help them better learn from the lesson the classroom teacher is giving to the whole class; in another common model, the tutor provides *intensive re-teaching* of targeted lessons (Shanahan, 2008). Both *push-in* and *pull-out* models of tutoring must be targeted and based on student learning data, and aligned carefully to curriculum used by the classroom teacher (Shanahan, 2008). Careful planning and communication between classroom teacher and tutor is key to the effectiveness of literacy tutoring interventions (Shanahan, 2008). A lack of coordination and communication between teacher and tutor has been found to be a common weakness of both the *push-in* and *pull-out* models (Allington, 1994; Davis & Wilson, 1999; Dawson, 2014).

Overall, interventions should be designed around evidence-based and reliable diagnostic assessments administered at the beginning of the school year and throughout the intervention program for progress monitoring. Well-designed tutoring programs can improve students' literacy skills. From one-to-one instruction to small group instruction, tutors can accelerate academic outcomes (Hattie, 2012). Through carefully coordinated processes and Multi-Tiered System of Supports, students who require more intensive literacy instruction will develop proficiency (Allington, 2001).

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Tutoring by an Interventionist/Specialist

Highly trained literacy interventionists/specialists provide quality literacy instruction that support students who have not yet met LA Standards. Tutoring by an interventionist/specialist is supplemental to core literacy instruction and provides students additional learning time during the school day and during Out-of-School Time (OST) programs with a trained content expert.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Flex interventionists' time to start the workday earlier or end after school in order to serve students outside the regular-scheduled school day.
- Create an intervention/enrichment block within the master schedule to serve students who need additional literacy support. Ensure literacy interventionist works with students most at-risk.
- Create opportunities for classroom teachers and interventionist to develop a push-in or pull-out model for targeted literacy intervention support.
- Hire a language learning specialist to support paraeducators and interventionists working with multilingual learners. In a Dual Language setting, hire a bilingual Dual Language specialist to support paraeducators and interventionists working with emergent bilingual students.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students identified as needing additional language development support may receive simultaneous support for language and literacy.
- One-to-one and small group support are an appropriate, effective strategy for students in grade 3–12 who require significant acceleration of growth to meet grade-level standards.
- In dual language settings, students may receive literacy support in either language.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Select a research-based intervention model within a multi-tiered system of support that use individualized, diagnostic assessments to design appropriate developmental lessons for students.
- Ensure strategies and programs are evidence-based.
- Align student supports with core content work so students can see the connection across skills.
- For multilingual students in a dual language and non-dual language settings, focus on oral language, academic language, and vocabulary within the literacy intervention.

- Implement a highly structured program where knowledge is constructed from the integration of previously learned and newly acquired skill sets.
- Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills. This is especially important for emergent bilingual students.
- Build students' literacy skills through explicit teaching and modeling of strategies.
- Provide a setting where distractions and disruptions do not interfere with productive engagement. Provide frequent opportunities for shared-reading experiences for students who struggle with literacy skills.
- Establish a continuation of communication with families.
- Adjust teaching to meet students' needs based upon frequent diagnostic progress monitoring assessments.
- Schedule intervention time that pairs expert professionals with students who have the greatest needs.
- Provide frequent and ongoing-targeted professional learning for reading intervention specialists.
- Hire highly trained reading specialists to provide intervention to students struggling to read.
- One-to-one and small group tutoring, consisting of three (3) to six (6) students.
- Effectiveness of outcomes determines group size.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Keys to Effective Intervention](#)
- Utah State Office of Education: Star Reading Tutoring
- Reading Rockets: [Tutoring Strategies for the Primary Grades](#)
- U.S. Department of Education—[Tips for Reading Tutors](#)
- [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)

Supporting Research

WSIPP's review found that tutoring by literacy specialists is an "evidence-based" practice. Given what we know about the importance of an effective teacher in supporting student learning, it is perhaps unsurprising that these studies showed stronger gains, on average, than tutoring from

non-specialists. Literacy interventionists/specialists working in one-on-one and small-group contexts supplemental to core literacy instruction must be highly trained and pursue continuing professional learning (Gordon, 2009). If the intent is to accelerate students' literacy development sufficient to close the achievement gap, interventions must be planned such that the teachers who are experts on reading instruction deliver those lessons. Expecting less well-trained adults in the school to provide powerful instruction to the most difficult-to-teach students has little basis in theory or research. Good teaching is adaptive, and interventions require frequent modifications to groupings of students based upon regular progress monitoring results.

Literacy interventions should focus on [foundational literacy skills, which](#) include phonemic awareness, oral language (oracy), alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Birsch, 2005; NELP, 2008). In addition to working directly with students, another role of interventionists/specialists should be to work with classroom teachers to identify text at the best reading level for students who struggle to access content area materials. Even as difficult texts are required for students to be college and career ready, it is necessary to have text at the appropriate reading level for students who struggle with reading to scaffold their learning. According to Allington (2001), students need to have access to [engaging] books throughout the day that are at each student's independent reading level.

Procedures and routines within a predictable structure are crucial to intervention success; however, no two lessons will be identical because all students are different—even within small groups. Thus, interventionists/specialists need a deep knowledge of content, instructional pedagogy, and the concepts embedded in various practices in order to provide optimal services. Reading interventionists/specialists must be able to draw on their discipline-specific expertise to intentionally select the strategic actions that best match the needs of the specific reader and their learning goals. They must be able to teach for the transfer of skills and strategies necessary for successful classroom achievement.

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Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring involves the formation of same- or cross-age pairs of students who serve as a tutor and tutee in structured partner work. Each pair works to attain a shared goal within an interactive framework that is planned by the teacher. This partner work can be fixed, where the role of the tutor and tutee do not change, or it can be reciprocal, where role alternation occurs. Peer tutoring can provide academic and social benefits for the tutee as well as the tutor. For example, engagement increases when students can access tasks tailored to their strengths and needs. In addition, the one-on-one format allows for relationship-building and immediate feedback. LAP funds can be used to purchase appropriate instructional and progress monitoring materials needed for tutoring, support peer tutor training to establish instructional routines, and provide on-going teacher monitoring of the tutoring dyads.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Use peer tutoring to develop phonemic awareness, phonics and word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and spelling.
- Identify a site coordinator to work with educators to develop structured peer tutoring routines.
- Develop a training manual and/or anchor posters about tutoring routines to provide guidance and support for peer tutors.
- Schedule regular time for the site coordinator to train educators to establish peer tutoring routines and to model and observe these routines with students.
- Identify peer tutors that are in higher grades than prospective tutees when using a cross-age tutoring model. In general, peer tutors should have equal or higher skill sets than prospective tutees.
- Obtain evidence-based instructional materials and progressing monitoring materials for use within peer tutoring arrangements.
- Schedule peer tutoring time for 35 minutes on three to four days each week for elementary students.
- Schedule peer tutoring time for 35 minutes five times over the course of two weeks for high school students.
- Schedule a regular time for teachers to train peer tutors and provide guidance by designing an easy to follow template for tutors.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students in elementary, middle, and high school can benefit from peer tutoring arrangements (Jones, Ostojic, Menard, Picard, & Miller, 2017).
- Peer tutors and tutees benefit from peer tutoring arrangements.
- K–1 students benefit most from phonological awareness, decoding and fluency practices with focus on word level reading skills, word attack, word identification, and spelling activities.
- Students identified as needing additional language development support, such as emergent bilinguals, may need more practice with oral fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and background knowledge.
- Peer tutoring can be implemented in whole class (all students in the class are working in tutoring pairs) or single dyad configurations.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Consider the following to foster high academic achievement (Chau Leung, 2015):
 - Selecting participants from high school will be most effective, followed by post-secondary, elementary, and kindergarten
 - Selecting tutees that have high ability, followed by those with low, average, and mixed ability levels
- Conduct initial training of educators to implement peer tutoring using tutoring routines, tutor-tutee partnership monitoring, and progress monitoring data collection.
- Conduct initial training of tutors on the following:
 - Support targeted skill development (e.g., phonemic awareness) and implement the use of any instructional materials with fidelity (e.g. phonemic awareness).
 - Utilize data collection tools for progress monitoring.
 - Use tutoring strategies (e.g., how to respond with structured prompt, how to provide praise and error corrections).
 - Model study skills, communication skills, work habits, questioning skills, and other helpful academic behaviors.
 - Maintain confidentiality regarding tutee performance. Do not form competing teams (Chau Leung, 2015).
 - Obtain teacher support during tutoring arrangements based on a decision-making protocol.

- Match tutors and tutees with considerations given to reading skills sets, interpersonal skills, and gender (Chau Leung, 2015).
- Provide all teaching materials in an organized manner to each peer tutor.
- Provide templates for peer tutors to record daily activities.
- Participate in at least one tutoring session with each peer tutoring dyad at least one time per week. Assist in optimizing the peer tutoring experience.
- Incorporate a motivation system for students to use during peer tutoring time.
- Provide tangible rewards to support achievement (Chau Leung, 2015).
- Engage parents in the tutoring process (Chau Leung, 2015)

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Council for Learning Disabilities: Peer Tutoring](#)
- [Peer Tutoring Resource Center](#)
- Kids as Reading Helpers— [A Peer Tutor Training Manual](#)
- Provided feedback—[Austin’s Butterfly: Building Excellence in Student Work](#)
- Edutopia—[Analyzing Student Work: Using Peer Feedback to Improve Instruction](#)
- The Teaching Channel—[ELL Peer-to-Peer Tutoring](#)
- [Education Leadership Video with Nancy Frey: Peer Teachers](#)

Supporting Research

According to Zeneli, Thurston, & Roseth (2016), peer tutoring is a form of cooperative learning and can be implemented through peer-assisted learning, reciprocal peer tutoring, and cross-age tutoring. In a meta-analysis, same-age reciprocal peer tutoring was identified as being to be the most beneficial arrangement for peer tutoring followed by cross-age fixed role peer tutoring (Zeneli, Thurston, & Roseth, 2016). Tutoring is a versatile practice and can occur in alternative programs, resource rooms, before/after-school settings, during summer arrangements, and in general education classrooms (Bowman-Perrott, et. al., 2013).

Peer tutoring is effective across multiple demographics of students (Bowman-Perrott, et. al., 2013). The benefits of peer tutoring include improved social emotional outcomes (e.g. self-efficacy and confidence). Peer tutoring also improves student time on task and pacing by providing students with timely feedback and more opportunities to respond/participate (Shenderovich, Thurston, & Miller, 2015; Bowman-Perrott, et. al., 2013). Fuchs & Fuchs (2005) have found that reading skills improve when students cooperatively work together using well-designed routines. Peer tutoring is especially effective at improving peer relationships, personal

development, and motivation (Topping, 2008). Hattie notes research demonstrates that peer tutoring has numerous benefits for both the tutor and tutee (Hattie, 2009).

Peer-assisted learning is appropriate for all students and is often targeted at students in grades K–6 (What Works Clearinghouse, 2012). Students work together on literacy activities. Peer-assisted learning generally partners students based on literacy skill/ability levels (e.g., proficient students with non-proficient students) and students take on assigned roles of tutor or tutee (What Works Clearinghouse, 2012). When implementing peer tutoring arrangements, practitioners should combine organized structures, foundational skills in reading instruction, partner reading with story retelling, summarizing text (paragraph shrinking), making predictions (prediction relay), and group-reward contingencies to experience positive results (Gersten et al., 2007; Fantuzzo & Rohrbeck, 1992; What Works Clearinghouse, 2012).

Reciprocal peer tutoring (RPT) is an intervention strategy in which students alternate roles between the tutor and the tutee. RPT has a structured format where “students prompt, teach, monitor, evaluate, and encourage each other” (Fantuzzo, King, Heller, 1992, p. 332). RPT learning opportunities can be used to increase the learning time and opportunities within the classroom. This peer-tutoring model combines self-management methods, group reward possibilities, and promotes academic and social aptitude (Fantuzzo & Rohrbeck, 1992). Whenever RPT is used, keeping the group small is important. The lead teacher, or lead tutor, should determine the selection of tutoring groups based on the goal of the activities and the daily schedule (Gersten et. al., 2007; Fantuzzo & Rohrbeck, 1992).

Cross-age peer tutoring consists of older students, college/university students, and community volunteers who work with tutees; tutors are not certificated educators, but they are part of the tutees community (Shenderovich, Thurston, & Miller, 2015).

Research on peer tutoring in grades K–6 can be effective at improving student literacy outcomes. Based on Fuchs & Fuchs research and partnerships with the Center on Accelerated Student Learning (CASL), five conclusions can be drawn (2005):

1. Content for kindergartners and fluency building in 1st grade should be directed at younger students.
2. Teachers can implement peer tutoring in the classroom to impact reading instruction and skills.
3. Research supports positive and robust results in literacy outcomes for all students: low, middle, and high performers including students with special needs, English language learners, and free and reduced-price lunch populations.
4. No one pedagogical best practice reaches 100 percent of students; therefore, 10–20 percent of students will need additional academic supports.

5. Narrowing the focus on specific skill development during peer tutoring is recommended.

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Specialized Literacy Instruction for Students Receiving English Learner (EL) Services

Many students can benefit from specialized literacy instruction, however, because multilingual students are learning two or more languages, they require specialized instruction. Specialized literacy instruction for multilingual students relies on assessment-based planning to differentiate and individualize student literacy instruction based on the student's language and literacy needs. LAP can support multilingual students who qualify for EL services and students who have not yet met language arts standards.

LAP funds supporting multilingual students can include determining instructional support, differentiated instructional practices, and educator training to support the development of literacy skills. LAP can also provide additional language arts support for students enrolled in dual language programs. LAP can support professional learning opportunities and ongoing coaching for educators to implement language support strategies. When LAP funds are used to support students who qualify for EL services, services should be in addition to Basic Education funding and TBIP funding—not in place of those funds. In order to provide curricular consistency and maximize intervention time, schools may choose to provide integrated language and literacy interventions to students who qualify for EL services and LAP. Title III and LAP funds can be “braided” in order to provide this support.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Train all staff in language and literacy strategies to support multilingual students' language development.
- Develop language and content objectives for each lesson and explicitly share with students.
- Use the English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards to provide meaningful access to content for multilingual students.
- Implement a two-way dual language program to build upon the students rich language resources.
- Whenever possible, hire biliterate teachers who specialize in both language development and literacy.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- English Learner is a classification that encompasses a wide range of English language proficiency. Identify the EL's proficiency level and use the Achievement Level Descriptors to understand the student's English language skills.
- Students with EL designation for more than five years (sometimes referred to as “long-term English Learners”) need to have specifically designed, rigorous language and literacy instruction to address the academic gaps that they have accrued. See

[https://www.rcoe.us/educational-services/files/2012/08/NEA Meeting the Unique Needs of LTELs.pdf](https://www.rcoe.us/educational-services/files/2012/08/NEA_Meeting_the_Unique_Needs_of_LTEs.pdf)

- Multilingual students who are dual-served with English learner and special education supports benefit academically when there is intentional, systematic collaboration between the classroom teacher, language and literacy specialist, and special education teacher.
- Multilingual students come from a variety of rich cultural and linguistic backgrounds and benefit from primary language development and scaffolds to develop literacy in English.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

Scaffolds and instructional strategies

- Use songs, chants, rhymes, poems, texts with repetitive frames and read-alouds to facilitate phonemic awareness, the practice of language structures, and develop content knowledge.
- Use realia (objects or activities that bring real life to classroom learning), visuals, non-verbal support, and highly contextualized text to develop comprehension and academic vocabulary.
- Engage students in learning activities that build background knowledge and that make personal connections to the text.
- Focus phonological awareness instruction on English phonemes that are not present in the student's native language.
- Use anchor charts to support oral and written discourse.

Structures of academic language

- Explicitly teach English academic vocabulary and language skills.
- Provide ample opportunities for multilingual students to use, and be exposed to, new vocabulary through authentic task-based practices that foster comprehension and skill transfer.
- Deconstruct complex text and focus student's attention on grammatical and rhetorical structures to develop academic language.
- Explicitly teach metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies to support academic growth.
- Create opportunities for guided oral language practice with peers and adults who can model content-based discourse, participate in storytelling, and question-of-the-day oration activities.

- Provide multilingual students with opportunities to practice literacy strategies using age-appropriate, high interest texts that align with the student’s language proficiency level.

Making connections to primary language

- Allow students to negotiate meaning and clarity in primary language.
- Use the students home language to promote learning, this includes using native language texts, primary language thinking partners, and scaffolds to build English literacy skills.
- Use cognates, words with the same linguistic origins, from the student’s native language when teaching vocabulary.
- Use a holistic, well-rounded, approach to literacy and assess students’ literacy in all their languages (when possible) to identify gaps for targeted instruction.
- Use authentic texts written in your students’ languages.
- Use literacy materials that are designed to support both language development and literacy.
- Develop metalinguistic charts with students to identify similarities and differences between English and the students’ languages and dialects. Focus lessons on language differences will facilitate cross-linguistic transfer.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Institute of Education Sciences/Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory: [Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School](#) and the [Professional Learning Communities Facilitator’s Guide for Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School](#) with [handouts and videos](#).
- [OSPI Online Professional Learning to Support Multilingual Students: Academic Language Toolkit](#); [Dual Language Toolkit](#); [Funds of Knowledge](#) and [Home Visits Toolkit](#); and [English Language Proficiency \(ELP\) Standards](#) with correspondences to K–12 ELA, Mathematic, and Science Practices, K–12 ELA Standards, and 6–12 Literacy Standards. The 10 ELP Standards are designed for collaborative use by English as a second language (ESL)/English language development (ELD) and content area teachers in **both** English language development and content-area instruction.
- [Achievement Level Descriptors \(ALDs\)](#): ALDs describe what a student can do in relation to skills measured by and demonstrated on ELPA21. The ALDs are intended to be used by educators in personalizing instruction and interventions to meet the individual needs of the learner.

- U.S. Department of ED: The [English Learner Toolkit](#) is designed to help local education agencies meet their legal obligations to multilingual students who qualify for EL services and provide them with the support needed to attain English language proficiency while meeting college- and career-readiness standards. The [Newcomer Toolkit](#) is designed to help U.S. educators, elementary and secondary teachers, principals, and other school staff who work directly with immigrant students—including refugees and asylum seekers—and their families).
- Professional learning modules and [Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education](#); [Center for Applied Linguistics](#)
- Resources and tools for developing multilingual students' literacy skills; [Center for Teaching for Biliteracy](#)
- [Professional learning modules](#) about language learning and [tools](#) to build classroom-based assessments in the student's native language; [Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition](#)
- [Understanding Language: Research and Teaching Resources for Language, Literacy, and Learning in the Content Areas](#)
- [Colorín Colorado: Strategies, ideas, recommendations, resources, videos, and news from the ELL field.](#)

Supporting Research

Specialized literacy instruction for multilingual students provides a framework for instructional design and collaboration to support them through the complexity and increased cognitive load of learning two language registers (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007) and becoming proficient in English. Students who qualify for EL services have typically acquired their primary language and literacy skills in a language other than English. These students encounter greater challenges in school because they are faced with the challenge of simultaneously acquiring English and learning academic content. Without adequate support, these challenges lead to lower high school graduation rates for students in EL programs as compared to their peers who do not qualify for these services. (<http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/Dropout-Grad.aspx>). To address this challenge, educators need to understand the different levels of language acquisition within oral and language domains.

To the greatest extent possible, students' primary language and cultural background should be integrated into instructional practices to enhance comprehension and conceptual development. When feasible, bilingual instruction programs should be offered to strengthen students' literacy skills in both English and their primary language. Recommendations for success for secondary English learners also highlight the importance of student identity, identity groups, and the

creation of a community of learners (i.e., [Funds of Knowledge](#)) (Faltis & Coulter, 2008; Flores-Gonzalez, 2002; Walqui, 2000).

Recognizing native language skills as an asset is fundamental to designing effective literacy instruction for multilingual students. Assessing the student's native language literacy opens the door to using and developing these skills as they transfer to and can accelerate learning in English (Escamilla et al., 2013; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005). Educators can use students' home language to support academic learning even when instruction is primarily in English. This results in both academic and non-academic benefits in the classroom (Goldenberg, Hicks, & Lit, 2013). Additionally, when native language scaffolds are used, multilingual students develop greater brain density in areas related to language, memory, and attention which increase comprehension in English (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). When students learn to read in their home language, it benefits them as they learn to read in English (Goldenberg, 2013).

Research has shown that instruction in the essential elements of reading will have a greater impact on decoding and fluency for multilingual students than on comprehension (August & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux, Crosson, Kieffer, & Pierce, 2010) requiring intentional oral language support to develop this critical aspect of literacy. Difficulties with reading comprehension compromise learning academic language and can lead to achievement and opportunity gaps for multilingual students beginning as early as mid-elementary (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Providing instruction in oral language development in the student's native language and English builds a foundation and a bridge for the student's English literacy development (Beeman & Urow, 2013). As multilingual students are learning phonemes in their native language and in English, they benefit from increased time and instruction focused on phonological processing. Providing instruction on the similarities and differences in discourse structures in English and in the student's native language enables the EL to effectively transfer their native literacy skills to English literacy skills (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Educators must be aware of how oral language and literacy skills develop across different contexts (both in and out of school) as well as across the different academic content areas. Language proficiency levels vary greatly, both across grade levels as well as within the same age/grade level. Given these understandings, educators need to create learning environments where students are taught and have opportunities to use the content and academic vocabulary of the grade level curriculum (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014). EL students need ample opportunities for listening and speaking in the target language, and they require learning opportunities that integrate language across subject areas, thus increasing both depth and frequency of language use (Saunders, et al., 2013).

As multilingual students in the early grades are learning the foundational literacy skills alongside their native English-speaking peers, they are simultaneously developing the vocabulary, syntax, and constructs of an entirely new language system. As Pauline Gibbons notes, “many approaches and mainstream reading programs do not take into account the needs of multilingual students, since most are based on the assumption that learners are already familiar with the spoken form of the language” (2009, p. 83). For this reason, developing literacy with multilingual students must take into account the development of the student’s oral language skills in English. Oral language is a foundational literacy skill. For literacy development, research has shown that reading interventions have a minimal effect when time spent on oral language is not part of the intervention. A study by Klingner and Vaughn (1996) indicated “children with the potential to benefit most from the [reading] intervention had some initial reading ability and fairly high levels of second-language oral proficiency” (In August, et al., 2008, p. 163).

With close collaboration between the EL specialist and the classroom teacher, design language and content objectives for each lesson and explicitly share them with students (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2012) to magnify the connection between language, literacy, and content knowledge. Provide students opportunities to communicate orally about content in English to foster listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Lesaux, Crosson, Kieffer, & Pierce, 2010). To further support comprehension and skill transfer, provide multilingual students with context-embedded instruction and authentic task-based practices (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Models of Instruction

Strategies to support multilingual students are implemented in a variety of ways. Instructional models and programs can be implemented as English-only or dual language models. English-only models include *structured immersion* and *sheltered instruction* and are often used when EL student demographics in a building represent multiple languages. English-only models decrease the amount of native language supports as students develop their English language skills (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). Strategies in English-only programs include the use of background knowledge, graphic organizers, sentence frames, anchor charts, gestures, pictures, multi-media, and hands-on, interactive learning activities to develop academic skills and to build content knowledge (Goldenberg, 2013; Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). It is important to note that students in English-only programs can receive directions and support in their primary language as they work to develop their English language skills.

Bilingual models consist of *dual language* and *transition bilingual* models. These models differ in “intensity and length of time in which students participate” (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009, p. 7). The most effective bilingual model of instruction for multilingual students is to implement a two-way dual language program — classrooms with 50 percent of students who are strong in one language and 50 percent who are strong in the other. This model leverages students’ bilingual assets, develops biliteracy for all students, and produces the strongest long-

term academic outcomes for multilingual students and their English monolingual peers (Swenson & Watzinger-Tharp, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Since students in dual language programs are learning in two languages, their literacy trajectory at 3rd grade is slightly slower in developing than peers in English-only instruction. However, in 5th grade and beyond, multilingual students in dual language programs outperform their peers on academic assessments in English (Escamilla et al., 2013; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006; Swenson & Watzinger-Tharp, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Similar results were reported in a recent longitudinal study of the dual language programs in [Portland Public Schools](#) where students had an average of seven months of additional reading skills in 5th grade and an additional nine months in 8th grade compared to their peers who received English-only instruction.

Both English-only and bilingual models focus on using effective instructional strategies. These strategies overlap with what is effective for all students and focus on (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009; Goldenberg, 2013; Saunders, et al., 2013):

- Oral language development
- Cooperative learning
- Explicit literacy instruction
- Differentiated instruction
- Actionable feedback
- Graphic organizers to support comprehension
- Academic language
- Background Knowledge

Studies show that students in both English-only and dual language models benefit from additional time focused on explicit language instruction, specifically time devoted to listening and speaking increases oral language proficiency (Saunders, et al., 2013). When deciding which model to implement, “decision-makers should look both at the language of instruction (i.e., bilingual or English-only), and at an instructional program’s specific elements to ensure that multilingual students receive the optimal instruction to facilitate their English language and literacy development as well as their academic success” (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009, p. 22). When schools and districts focus on academic success goals for multilingual students, they have higher levels of student achievement (Saunders, et al, 2013).

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Harvard: Harvard Family Research Project, [A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships](#), and [Harvard edX—Introduction to Family Engagement in Education](#)
- National Network of Partnership Schools: Dr. Joyce Epstein, [Six Types of Involvement: Keys to Successful Partnerships](#) and [PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment](#)
- OSPI: [WA State Title I, Part A website](#), [Funds of Knowledge and Home Visits Toolkit](#)
- REL: Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Young Children: Engaging Diverse Families Project](#)
- [Washington State Family and Community Engagement Trust](#)
- [High Expectations](#)
- [Washoe County School District and University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension: Literacy Tip Sheets for families](#)
- [Colorin Colorado](#): resources offer tips on helping your child learn to read, succeed in school, and learn a new language. They also provide information about the U.S. school system and share ideas on how to build a relationship with your child’s teacher and school.

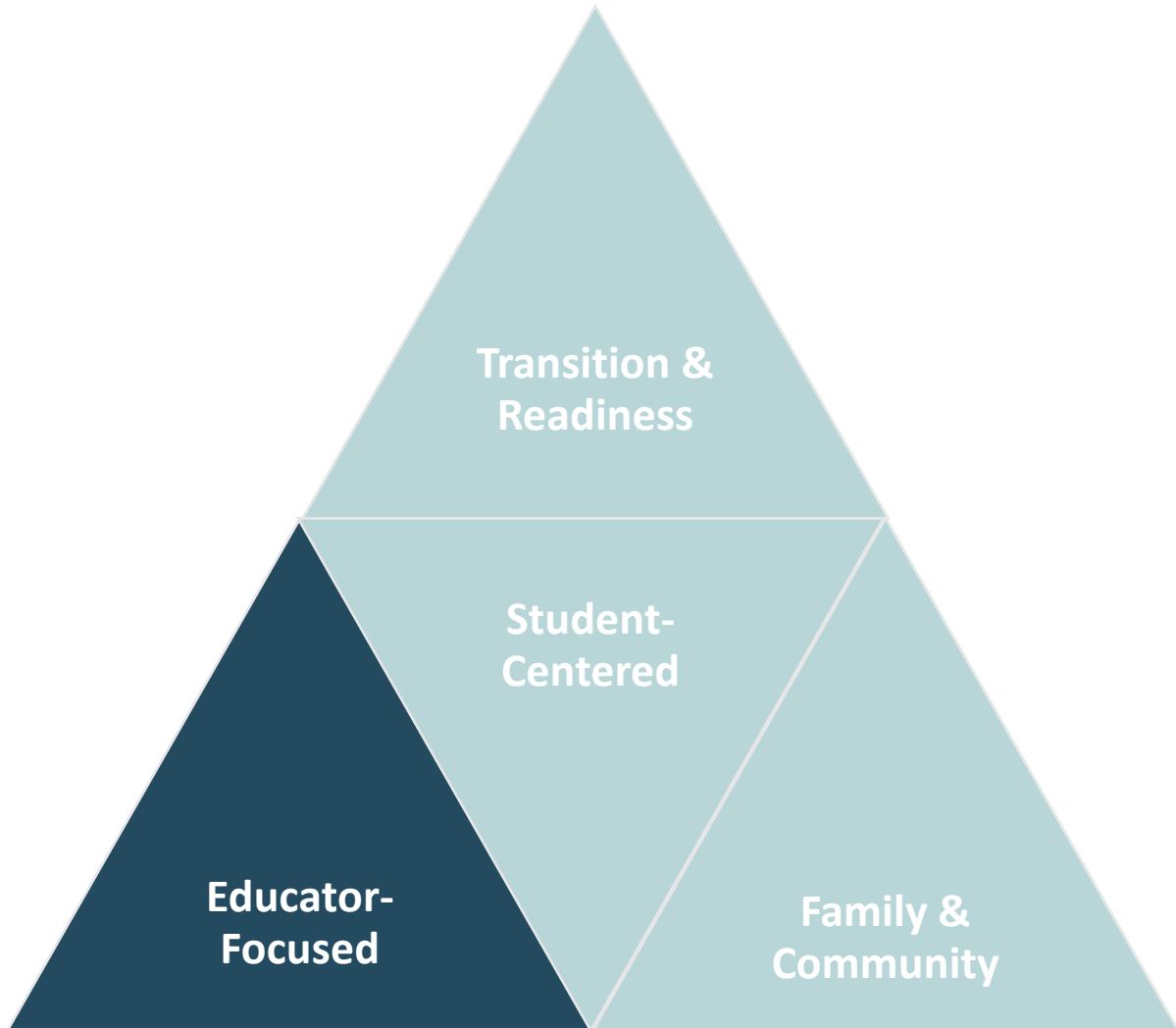
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EDUCATOR-FOCUSED PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES



Co-Teaching

As a pedagogical strategy, co-teaching arrangements consist of two certified educational professionals in one classroom. As a partnership, co-teaching is designed to enhance access to core grade-level instruction for all students. Generally, co-teaching partnerships consist of a general education educator and a certified specialist.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Partner a language learning or bilingual specialist or special education teacher with a grade-level or content-based teacher (K–12) to co-plan, co-teach, co-assess, and reflect on students' literacy skills.
- Collaborate with grade-level teams in support of integrating best practices for English learners and students with disabilities or students with dual services (e.g., special education and language support).
- Create a flexible collaboration time for educators to partner for the entire day or for a designated block of time during the day.
- Support a variety of co-teaching arrangements for the literacy block, such as pairing a classroom teacher with a language learning specialist, speech and language therapist, media specialist, gifted and talented/highly capable teacher, or special education teacher.
- Partner a first-year teacher with a veteran teacher who can also mentor and support the new teacher as they co-plan, co-teach, co-assess, and reflect together.
- Provide co-teachers with a coach to support their co-teaching partnership.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students learning English as an additional language benefit from the additional linguistic, academic, and socio-emotional support.
- Students with disabilities who are in a push-in or inclusion model benefit from access to core literacy instruction.
- Students in low-performing demographics subgroups benefit from additional differentiation and support in literacy instruction.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Provide training on co-teaching model.
- Provide adequate planning time for co-teacher to plan together (co-teaching requires more planning than solo teaching).
- Establish collaborating norms and strategies.

- Require agreement and openness to participate.
- Establish systematic and periodic feedback and evaluation of the model.
- Develop strong co-teaching working relationships.
- Provide coaching, administrative support, and needed resources to co-teaching partners.
- Develop effective strategies to assess the effectiveness of the co-teaching partnership.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- NEA: [6 Steps to Co-Teaching](#)
- University of Minnesota—[What is Co-Teaching?](#)
- [6 Models of Co-Teaching](#)
- [Co-Teach America](#)
- [Self-study for Implementing Early Interventions](#)

Supporting Research

Co-teaching originally started as a practice designed to provide students with disabilities access to grade-level core instruction by partnering a special education teacher with a general education teacher (Friend, 2016). Co-teaching can also be successful when partnering with a Language Learning Specialist with general education teachers (Beninghof & Leensvaart, 2016; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2016). Co-teaching partnerships that include a teacher who specializes in and focuses on meeting the needs of students who have not yet met ELA Standards can benefit student educational outcomes.

Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2013) define co-teaching as “two or more people sharing responsibility for teaching all of the students assigned to a classroom.” While Friend (2014) provides a slightly different definition, defining the arrangement as being dependent on the characteristics of the students’ individual needs and the services provided. According to Friend, a co-teaching arrangement would include a general education teacher and an educator with specialization for students who struggle. Examples might include a special education teacher, a Language Learning Specialist, a speech and language therapist, a media specialist, or a teacher of gifted and talented/highly capable students.

The benefits of co-teaching reach further than student academic growth. As a result of co-teaching, educators who participate in this partnership tend to reflect more on individual instructional strengths and areas for improvement with their co-teaching partner, thus improving their educational practices (Chanmugam & Gerlach, 2013; Simmons & Magiera, 2007). In addition, co-teaching improves instructional practices through its in-depth, all-inclusive, collaborative approach that improves teacher effectiveness (Chanmugam & Gerlach,

2013; Beninghof & Leensvaart, 2016). Educator relationships are enhanced by bringing equal value to the individuality that each educator brings to the classroom (Friend, 2016).

Co-teaching partners can take six different approaches in the classroom (Friend, 2016; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2016):

1. **Station Teaching:** Each teacher works at a station while students rotate through teacher guided and independent areas. Each teacher will work with every student as students rotate through the stations.
2. **Parallel Teaching:** Working in two groups, teachers present instruction in different ways using different strategies.
3. **Alternative Teaching:** One teacher teaches whole group while the other teacher pulls small groups for re-teaching, pre-teaching, enrichment, etc.
4. **Teaming:** Teachers co-instruct the lesson together.
5. **One Teach, One Assist:** One teacher leads whole group instruction while the other moves around the room re-directing student behavior, re-explaining directions/concepts, and answering questions individually.
6. **One Teach, One Observe:** While one teacher leads whole group instruction, the other teacher collects observational and formative assessment data.

For students, the benefits of co-teaching re-emphasize students' right to specially designed instruction, recognizing multiple instructional strategies are needed for all students to be successful. For students learning English as an additional language, co-teaching allows students to stay in the class with their native-speaking peers instead of being pulled out and segregated for language instruction (Beninghof & Leensvaart, 2016). Co-taught classrooms "aim to create a classroom culture of acceptance, in which learning variations and strategies to address those variations are the norm" (Friend, 2016, p. 21). Because of its positive results in achievement gains, most notably in language arts and reading, co-teaching is recommended at both the elementary and the secondary level (Simmons & Magiera, 2007).

Researchers have determined that co-teaching is a promising pedagogical strategy applicable to all students, with and without academic difficulties (Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Co-teaching, as defined above, is a viable model that will intensify instructional practices, provide access to core literacy instruction, and increase student achievement in ELA for all students. While this practice has been explored in the context of providing services for students identified for special education for over 30 years, a recent resurgence of interest has been the result of current reform demands. Research supports that co-teaching improves instructional practices with its in-depth, all-inclusive, collaborative approach to improve teacher effectiveness (Chanmugam & Gerlach,

2013), and specially designed instruction can be embedded in every co-teaching approach (Friend, 2016).

Ongoing, long-term professional learning is necessary to enhance the effectiveness of coaching. “Simply placing two educators together in a classroom does not result in effective co-teaching” (Beninghof & Leensvaart, 2016, p. 71). Establishing a framework for co-planning can help teachers effectively come together as they co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess. For example, one co-planning framework includes three phases for instructional planning (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2016):

Phase 1: Pre-Planning is completed separately. Each educator reviews and plans for the learning targets and standards, possible content and language objectives, materials, resources, and learning tasks.

Phase 2: Collaborative Planning is done completely together. Co-teachers come together with their pre-planning ideas in an agreed-upon meeting (e.g., face-to-face, by phone, Skype, etc.). During this meeting, educators confirm targets, standards, objectives, etc., and they discuss how they will co-teach the lesson. They also identify challenging concepts and skills students will face.

Phase 3: Post-Planning is completed separately. After establishing roles and responsibilities, each teacher follows through on assigned tasks for the lesson (e.g., scaffolding activities, prepping stations, finding materials, etc.).

The roles of the teachers are shared and lessons are planned based upon the identified needs of the students. Co-teachers take on various roles, from partner teaching the same lesson to teaching the same lesson using different strategies.

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Consultant Teacher/Coaches: Dual Language (DL) and English Language (EL) Support

EL and DL coaches work with classroom teachers to maximize student learning and achievement for students learning English as an additional language, or learning multiple languages simultaneously through a dual language model. EL and DL coaches can provide professional learning and coaching in language and literacy acceleration to meet ELA Standards and across content areas to support the language learning needs of students. EL and DL coaches can work with educators to effectively impact student outcomes for LAP-served students who have not yet met ELA Standards.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Establish a coaching model for your school/district with a system to identify areas for language learning growth and receive individual/team coaching.
- Provide coaching for language proficiency standards across content areas, throughout the day (e.g., coach models use of strategy during literacy block, in science, in math).
- Use gradual release of responsibility model with language learning strategies acting as coach models, co-teachers, and independently coaching educators.
- Coach co-plans with teachers as they implement literacy strategies and language objectives with content standards to target students language development needs.
- Provide opportunities for coaches to work with all educators (classroom teachers, paraeducators, and volunteers) to support students' language learning needs. Target strategies for whole group instruction, small group, and one-on-one intensive interventions.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- K–4 EL/DL coaches can identify and assess language and literacy needs for multilingual students.
- K–12 EL/DL coaches can help pinpoint gaps in multilingual students' language learning.
- K–12 EL/DL coaches can support developmentally appropriate instructional activities and interventions for multilingual students.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Provide administrative support and guidance regarding the short and long-term planning of EL/DL coaches.
- Ensure the work of the EL/DL coach is aligned to the broader vision of the school and the multi-tiered supports in the building.
- Provide the foundation upon which the EL/DL coach can improve, enhance, and develop teachers' efficacy in both literacy and content-based instruction.

- Provide time to review, reflect and adjust techniques; and on agreement, share with staff as an example of successful implementation.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Characteristics of Effective Literacy Coaching](#)
- [Self-study Guide for Implementing Early Literacy Interventions](#)
- Instructional Design Framework: [Literacy Design Collaborative](#)
- [Learning Forward](#): The Professional Learning Association, site for National Council of Professional Learning.
- [Washington Education Association](#)

Supporting Research for Dual Language (DL) and English Language (EL) Coaching Support

Like other instructional coaches, EL and DL coaches collaborate with classroom teachers to maximize student learning and achievement for multilingual students. Over the past decade in Washington, the number of multilingual students who qualify for English Learner services has increased. A unique pedagogy is necessary for teachers teaching multilingual students learning to read and write in a new language (Escamilla, 2007).

Specific details surrounding the general professional duties of coaching are outlined above in the section on *Instructional Coaches*. Moreover, EL/DL coaches are also faced with a variety of unique demands that may not typically be encountered by content specific coaches. Examples of such demands include (but are not limited to):

- Designing instructional approaches within a framework that is designed to support multilingual students.
- Assessing students' language needs according to the English language proficiency standards.
- Focusing on students' oral language development while simultaneously incorporating literacy skills.
- Identifying techniques for supporting students from varying language proficiency levels.
- Accommodating the needs of students from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Familiarizing themselves and staff with the student's first language.
- Working with teachers from multiple content areas and grade levels.
- Finding resources for primary language support.
- Acting as "cultural brokers" between home and school interactions.

Stemming from these demands, EL/DL coaches are best supported when provided with explicit professional learning opportunities that cater to their professional contexts (Burkins & Ritchie, 2007). Specific areas for EL/DL coaching professional learning opportunities include:

- Explicit language learning or bilingual instruction techniques.
- Effective language scaffolding methods.
- Language demands across content areas.
- Sheltering instruction.
- Family engagement strategies.
- Translanguaging strategies that draw on students' home languages.
- Effective collaboration strategies to communicate with colleagues.
- Differentiated instruction techniques.
- How to create meaningful language opportunities.
- How to build oracy and background knowledge.
- How to build on students' funds of knowledge.
- How to analyze text for cultural responsiveness. .

Effective EL/DL coaching also involves working closely with school literacy coaches, while being mindful of supporting multilingual students in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. Of particular importance for EL/DL coaches is helping classroom teachers draw on their students' cultural background and funds of knowledge and promoting the use of students' primary language in learning activities (Escamilla, 2007). Many EL students understand more than they are able to express in English both orally and in writing; thus, "[c]oaches need to understand that reading comprehension for second language learners may mean that students understand more in English reading than they are able to discuss" (Escamilla, 2007). This understanding will help coaches work with teachers who fear that allowing students to use their full linguistic repertoire will slow down their English language learning. In fact, learning is enhanced when multilingual students have opportunities to draw on all their language resources in school (Escamilla, 2007).

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Consultant Teacher/Coaches: Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches focus on personalized and team-centered professional learning that is often embedded during the school day. To increase student achievement, coaches support staff, identify leadership needs, and facilitate decision making around instruction (e.g., instructional materials choices, data analysis/formative assessment, technology integration, instructional/pedagogical strategies). The goal is to increase educator instructional expertise and to effectively impact literacy outcomes for LAP-served students struggling to meet ELA Standards.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Provide data coaching by training staff, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), grade-level teams, and individuals on how to use universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, formative assessment processes, and progress monitoring tools. Model, co-assess, and provide feedback as teachers assess students and use data for planning instruction.
- Support educators (classroom teachers, paraeducators, volunteers, etc.) through a push-in model. Coaches will observe, co-plan, co-teach, etc., to develop educator literacy skills and strategies.
- Establish a coaching model for your school/district. Identify how educators can safely identify areas for growth and receive individual/team coaching. Ask educators what instructional support is needed and determine which adult learning style will be effective to implement new instructional skills and strategies. Establish criteria for reciprocal feedback between coaches and educators by designing a template with talking points for coaches and educators to ensure coaching is targeted and effective.
- Establish coaching cycles, based on grade-level need, where an instructional coach models differentiation strategies in the classroom, then coaches educators to implement strategies through ongoing non-evaluative feedback as educators master strategies.
- Support PLCs in the process of identifying targeted professional learning needs for students who have not yet met ELA Standards. Coaches lead data analysis processes, lead student progress monitoring, establish protocols for lesson design aligned to standards/claims, and incorporate formative assessment processes to identify individual needs of learners.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- K–12 coaches must be proficient in content standards.
- K–12 coaches must be proficient in research-based teaching strategies.

- K–12 coaches must be proficient in diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring and data analysis.
- K–12 coaches must be able to plan and model lessons with teachers.
- K–12 coaches must be able to plan and model differentiation with students.
- K–12 coaches must understand and apply appropriate principles of adult learning theory.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Build trust with staff through frequent communication and collaboration.
- Connect coaching to current practices and on-going content initiatives.
- Use gradual release of responsibility model with effective instructional strategies as coach models, co-teaches, and independently coaches teachers.
- Teach research-based strategies for identified needs of learners.
- Focus on student progress through data oriented teaching and learning.
- Provide feedback to teachers through lesson observation and video reflection as they teachers implement new strategies.
- Allow for review, reflection and adjusting techniques; and on agreement, share with staff as an example of successful implementation.
- Use videos and modeling as a tool for successful coaching.
- Establish evaluation criteria for evaluation of the coaching model.
- Monitor effectiveness of coaching program with assistance from school/district administration.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- IES: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade and K–3 Foundational Skills Professional Learning Communities Facilitator’s Guide \(2016\)](#)
- IES: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#)
- [IES: Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [IES: Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Learning Forward](#): The Professional Learning Association, site for National Council of Professional Learning
- [Self-study Guide for Implementing Early Literacy Interventions](#)

- Achieve the Core: [Understanding the ELA/Literacy Shifts](#)
- [Smarter Balanced Digital Library](#): Formative Assessment Process Modules
- [Characteristics of Effective Literacy Coaching](#)
- Instructional Design Framework: [Literacy Design Collaborative](#)

Supporting Research: Instructional Coaches

Coaching has been identified as the specific training component within professional development models that has the highest impact on understanding, skill attainment, and application of skills (Hattie, 2012). Instructional coaches may specifically target meeting the needs of students identified for LAP services by providing professional learning in instructional strategies and decision making. Coaching should be student and data centered with a direct link to improved literacy outcomes (Sweeney, 2010). The WSIPP review rated Instructional coaching as an “evidence-based” practice.

Coaching may be in a 1:1 setting with small groups or in larger cross-content groups. Coaching may include modeling best practice with students and classes, conducting learning walks, engaging in book studies, or other focused actions that reflect the data-driven needs for the learners in the building (Shanklin, 2006).

To ensure credibility with novice as well veteran teachers, instructional coaches should have demonstrated successful teaching histories (Blachowicz et al., 2005). Along with the requisite knowledge of standards, differentiated instructional practices, and assessments, an instructional coach must also have a deep understanding of the components of effective coaching (L'Allier et al., 2010; Shanklin, 2006). The knowledge, skills, and dispositions of coaching specifically for instructional coaches are strongly recommended (Biancarosa, 2010).

For strongest impact, coaches should be supported by the system. Building principals should intentionally structure the learning culture that support instructional coaching. Principals should closely monitor the roles of the instructional coaches to ensure the activities support teachers in improving their practice. “Studies suggest that coaching may need to be embedded in broader efforts to build professional knowledge if it is to be most useful” (Darling-Hammond, et al. 2009, p. 12).

Instructional coaches designated to support K–4 literacy outcomes should be proficient with the ELA Standards, instructional practices, programs, and assessments to the degree to which they can plan and model lessons with teachers (Biancarosa, 2010). Strong knowledge of foundational reading skills, a continuum of literacy learning, differentiation methods, and instructional strategies for acceleration are critical to support teachers working with students who have not yet met ELA outcomes.

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Consultant Teacher/Coaches: Literacy Coaches

These coaches specialize in literacy instruction and foundational literacy skills. Literacy coaches have depth of knowledge and training in literacy and are adept at identifying students *at-risk* of not meeting literacy benchmarks. In order to support acceleration of student achievement in literacy, literacy coaches work 1:1 with a classroom teacher or with a team of teachers to target specific professional learning to meet the needs of LAP-served students.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Develop literacy coaching cycles, with grade-level teams of teachers, for coaches to model and plan for implementation of research-based strategies for literacy acceleration (e.g., guided reading, shared reading, oral language development, etc.). Set collaborative goals for desired outcomes of the coaching cycles and review frequently to guide coaching decisions and measure effectiveness.
- Identify groups of students not proficient in ELA Standards; provide ongoing coaching for teachers of students needing specialized instruction in foundational literacy skills instruction.
- Regularly meet with staff, PLCs, grade-level teams, and individually to model use of literacy assessment tools: universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, formative assessment processes, and progress monitoring tools. Model, co-assess, and provide feedback as teachers assess students and use data to differentiate instruction.
- Establish a literacy-coaching model for your school/district. Identify how educators can safely identify literacy areas for growth and receive individual/team coaching. Ask educators what foundational literacy skills they need to develop as educators and implement a “push-in” coaching plan to model, co-teach, and observe new skills and strategies. Establish criteria for reciprocal feedback between coaches and educators by designing a template with talking points for coaches and educators to ensure literacy coaching is targeted and effective.
- Provide opportunities during the school day that allow for modeling and co-teaching with time for reflection and feedback.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- K–4 literacy coaches must be proficient in pedagogy and instruction to support early literacy skills development for students who have not yet met ELA Standards.
- K–12 literacy coaches must be proficient in pedagogy and instruction for students who have not yet met ELA Standards.

- K–12 literacy coaches must be proficient in English language acquisition and elementary literacy instruction to support newcomer students, including students with interrupted formal education and “long-term English learners.”
- K–12 literacy coaches must be proficient in using research-based teaching strategies for students who have not yet met ELA Standards.
- K–12 literacy coaches must be proficient in using evidence and research-based diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, data analysis, and gap analysis tools for students who have not yet met ELA Standards.
- K–12 literacy coaches must be able to plan and model lessons with teachers for students who have not yet met ELA Standards.
- K–12 literacy coaches must be able to plan and model interventions with students who have not yet met ELA Standards.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Provide administrative support, guidance, and goals regarding the short and long-term planning of literacy coaches.
- Use gradual release of responsibility model with effective literacy instructional strategies as coach models, co-teaches, and independently coaches teachers.
- At the secondary level, literacy coaches should be knowledgeable of elementary literacy instruction and English language acquisition to support students not yet at grade level.
- Define and develop a literacy coaching plan for the building.
- Provide training and coaching to paraeducators around effective small group instruction.
- Ensure that work is aligned to the broader vision of the school and the multi-tiered supports in the building.
- Provide administrative support to set the foundation upon which the literacy coach can improve, enhance, and develop teachers’ efficacy in reading instruction.
- Connect coaching to current practices and on-going literacy initiatives.
- Build trust with staff by providing resources, instructional support, and demonstration of lessons.
- Provide frequent communication and collaboration opportunities for staff.
- Teach research-based strategies that are reproducible by teachers.
- Focus on student progress.
- Provide feedback to teachers through lesson observation and video reflection.

- Provide time to review, reflect and adjust techniques; and on agreement, share with staff as an example of successful implementation.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Self-study for Implementing Early Literacy Interventions](#)
- IES: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#) and [K–3 Foundational Skills Professional Learning Communities Facilitator’s Guide \(2016\)](#)
- IES: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#)
- [IES: Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [IES: Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Learning Forward](#): The Professional Learning Association, site for National Council of Professional Learning
- Achieve the Core: [Understanding the ELA/Literacy Shifts](#)
- [Characteristics of Effective Literacy Coaching](#)
- Instructional Design Framework: [Literacy Design Collaborative](#)
- [Smarter Balanced Digital Library: Formative Assessment Process Modules](#)

Supporting Research: Literacy Coaches

Student success in literacy improvement is dependent on teachers’ abilities to use strategies and interventions that meet the differentiated needs of all learners. The National Reading Panel (2000) describes this simply as *a complex task* that necessitates much professional training. Evidence supports literacy coaching increases student literacy success (Shanklin, 2006). The term *literacy coach* refers to one who has specialized knowledge/training in literacy instruction, which may encompass specific intervention with reading and writing instruction. The focus of work is to support acceleration of student achievement in literacy via working with the classroom teacher and collaborating with teams. The literacy coach should be available to work with all staff across content areas and experience levels. By creating a cohort of teachers from across the building, a learning community develops and teachers learn from each other (Shanklin, 2006).

According to the International Reading Association, “[Literacy] coaching is a powerful intervention with great potential; however, that potential will be unfulfilled if reading coaches do not have sufficient depth of knowledge and range of skills to perform adequately in the coaching role” (International Reading Association, 2004, p. 4). To have a positive impact on student achievement, literacy coaches will have deep training and experience in research and evidence-based literacy instruction, including intervention and assessment strategies.

Additionally, literacy coaches will work with educators to impact outcomes for students struggling to meet ELA Standards. Literacy coaches are collaborative members of the larger faculty who work cohesively among staff to provide rich literacy support for students.

Like other coaches (e.g., EL and instructional), literacy coaches collaborate with educators to maximize student literacy learning and achievement. Data analysis of students' learning outcomes guides coaching. Data comes in the form of formative, classroom-based, interim, and summative assessments (Shanklin, 2006). Specific details surrounding the general professional duties of coaching are outlined in the section on *Instructional Coaches*. Some of the demands of literacy coaches who specialize in meeting the needs of students who have not yet met ELA Standards are similar to content-specific coaches. Literacy coaches must:

- Have specialized knowledge that goes beyond teaching reading; is best to have certification or advanced training in pedagogy for literacy.
- Build collaborative and trusting relationships that honor confidentiality and effective communication.
- Spend a majority of their time with educators observing, videotaping, modeling, conferencing, and co-teaching.
- Encourage and guide teachers to reflect on their instructional practices and evidence-based research (Shanklin, 2006).
- Support a core set of literacy activities that deepens understanding of literacy and foundational reading skills and teachers' instructional practice.
- Set goals and direction of the literacy program and support the structural changes necessary for buildings/districts to achieve increased literacy outcomes (Shanklin, 2006; L'Allier, 2010).

Successful literacy coaches will ensure the school has a clear, site-based literacy plan that is linked to district growth goals. Literacy coaches ensure on-going, job-embedded professional learning is available to all educators who work with students who have not yet met ELA Standards. Literacy coaches lead study groups, co-teaching, adult learning time, and guidance on Response to Intervention and Multi-Tiered System of Supports to improve literacy instruction and learning. Literacy coaches are supportive, not evaluative; they help guide teachers in reflection activities and identify areas for educator growth (Shanklin, 2006).

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Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

PLCs capitalize on the positive effects of collaborative learning. PLCs can be defined as a group of educators that meet on a regular-basis. In PLCs, educators collaborate toward a shared goal to improve academic practices and processes in the classroom and school in order to support literacy outcomes. For a PLC to be funded through LAP, the goal must be to support LAP-served students. The support can include determining instructional supports, differentiating instructional practices, implementing an early warning system, and developing formative assessment processes to support student growth.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Establish PLCs with a shared vision and goals focused on student learning and educator professional learning. Invite paraeducators, special education staff, educators who support multilingual students, behavior specialists, and interventionists to participate. Educators will identify the ELA skills students need to improve ELA outcomes and identify which skills are needed for continued professional learning for staff. PLCs will develop an ongoing continuous learning plan for educators to acquire these skills to support students who have not yet met ELA standards.
- Use PLC time to focus on best practices and strategy implementation (e.g., foundational literacy skills, text complexity, working with tutors, etc.) for students served by LAP. Develop an ongoing continuous learning plan, establish observable success criteria, and schedule walk-throughs for PLC members to observe colleagues implementing best practices. Use PLC time to share self-reflections, discuss observations, utilize data to inform instructional and provide feedback on implementation practices.
- Meet bi-weekly or monthly to review student work, analyze data to inform instructional to ensure a lens of the ethnically diverse learner, underrepresent student. Focus on those who have not yet met grade-level standards, anticipating student misconceptions, and identifying instructional strategies teachers will use to support student learning in ELA.
- Design PLCs with a focus around ELA target standards/claims, formative assessment processes, and student progress monitoring. Use common formative assessments as a resource to inform educator professional learning needs, and to develop targeted intervention plans for students who have not yet met grade-level standards.
- Develop a cross-disciplinary PLC using the common Literacy standards for ELA and History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects to support students who struggle with literacy across content areas by focusing on academic language, professional learning, and implementing academic language.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- Language Learners benefit from culturally responsive classroom strategies that are integrated into pedagogical approaches as a result of focused learning on cultural competency in a PLC. Students in a Dual Language setting benefit from classroom strategies that incorporate biliteracy beliefs and approaches to instruction.
- Adult instructional practices improve when educators intentionally identify and implement practices, strategies, content and assessments that engage and represent the needs of all learners, including historically underserved or underrepresented students.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Create a collaborative culture: classroom, building, district, and region.
- Address specific cultural differences through PLCs to promote a collegial understanding of the demographics of the school, district, and community.
- Develop collaborative teams who work interdependently and hold each other mutually accountable to achieve a clear and shared: mission, vision, values, and goals.
- Invite support staff to PLCs to increase awareness of the needs of the population(s) identified and discuss how to support students through targeted academic and non-academic strategies.
- Implement a continuous improvement model that focuses on procedure, practice, policy and outcome data. Ensure educators review multiple data points of formative and summative data regularly to monitor student progress. Review and adjust educator practice when students are not demonstrating growth.
- Focus on a single theme or idea frequently, over an extended period of time, rather than expending energy on ad hoc individual student work.
- Align with current frameworks or initiatives such as Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP), school improvement plans, and National Board certification to improve educator effectiveness.
- Focus on reviewing student work, anticipating student misconceptions, and identifying instructional strategies educators will use to support student learning.
- Establish a regular schedule for collaboration time with clear objectives for each session to support students who have not yet met standard in ELA.
- Provide initial and ongoing professional learning for all PLC participants.
- Establish clear agendas and protocols to maximize the effectiveness of the PLC.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [PLCWashington](#)
- [All Things PLC](#)
- [Marzano Research: Tips from Dr. Marzano – Collaborative Teams That Transform Schools](#)
- [Rutgers University Center for Effective School Practices: Measurement instruments for assessing the performance of professional learning communities](#)
- [Learning Forward: The Professional Learning Association](#)
- [K–12 Blueprint: Professional Learning](#)
- [Regional Educational Laboratory Program: Professional Learning Communities Facilitator’s Guide](#)
- [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Self-study for Implementing Early Interventions](#)
- [Smarter Balanced Digital Library: Formative Assessment Process Modules](#)

Supporting Research

A professional learning community, or PLC, can be defined as a group of teachers, administrators, coaches, or school staff (or a combination of people in these roles) that meets on a regular, planned basis with the explicit goal of collaboratively improving practices in the classroom, school, and district in order to improve student learning outcomes. PLCs must be based on clearly articulated, shared goals for student achievement and school improvement (DuFour & DuFour, 2012). An effective professional learning community is more than just a given group of educators learning together—rather, it is a process of continuous improvement that requires engaged inquiry, reflection, planning, analysis, and action (DuFour & DuFour, 2012; Killion & Crow, 2011). The goal of PLCs is to improve the effectiveness of educators in order to directly impact student learning.

Educators working as part of a professional learning community should work collaboratively in alignment with the school’s comprehensive improvement plan. To establish an effective PLC, educators must develop an agreed upon set of norms. Developing norms together, sets the stage for the collaborative culture needed for PLC success. Collaborative PLCs encourage sharing, reflecting and risk taking. Teams who are not trained to have collegial conversations may become frustrated, resulting in less productive PLCs. Educators need skills for facilitation,

having collegial conversations, building shared norms, and discussing teaching practices (Wood, 2007). Examples of how educators can de-privatize practice include, but are not limited to: lesson sharing, establishing and using protocols, peer observation and reflective dialogue, as well as examining research around best practices. Blankstein (2010) suggests six essential principles for schools with PLCs:

- Common mission, vision, values and goals;
- Ensure achievement for all students;
- Collaborative teaming focused on teaching and learning;
- Using data to guide decision making and continuous improvement;
- Gaining active engagement from family and community; and
- Building sustainable leadership capacity.

Once the foundation of trust is in place, the PLC team can support the evaluation of student learning data and focus on a clear set of goals to improve student achievement.

In order for professional learning communities focused on improving outcomes for students to be successful, they must have strong administrative support (Akopoff, 2010). According to Barton and Stepanek, "Principals exert considerable influence over the successful implementation and continued functioning of PLCs." School leaders can support PLCs by building a climate of trust and mutual respect, supporting de-privatization of practice and professional growth (Little, 1993, Kruse, Louis, and Bryk, 1995, and McLaughlin and Talbert, 2001). Key success factors include creating time for teams to focus on student data, observe and reflect on instructional practices, and plan interventions for students who have not yet met standard (Reynolds, 2008). Jones et al., (2013) emphasize the role of the school principal in facilitating PLCs, being an instructional leader who models what they want educators to do, and facilitating a positive school learning culture. For teacher collaboration to be meaningful, DuFour (2008) highlights that leaders ensure:

- Teachers have time to meet built into the schedule,
- Clear priorities are given for collaboration,
- PLC participants develop an appropriate knowledge base for decision making,
- Professional learning is provided and differentiated for teacher participants, and
- Clear expectations for assessing instructional impact on student achievement are made.

Providing a clear framework for how a school's professional learning communities fit into the larger districtwide goal of improving student achievement can help build leadership capacity. PLCs can also reach beyond the building level to provide collaboration and support districtwide. Forming collaborative teams across the district develops a collective responsibility for student

learning and it leverages educator expertise from across the district (Barton & Stepanek, 2012; DuFour & Reeves, 2016).

The fundamental purpose of PLCs is to transform traditional school systems by establishing collaborative cultures focused on building capacity for continuous improvement. These collaborative cultures welcome new ways of thinking and learning (Fullan, 2006). Therefore, collaboration must be embedded into the school culture as an essential component. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2009), collaboration is one of four characteristics of professional learning that positively impacts student achievement. DuFour and Reeves (2016) draw attention to four essential questions that drive the work of collaborative PLCs:

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How will we know if they have learned it?
3. What will we do if they have not learned it?
4. How will we provide extended learning opportunities for students who have mastered the content?

Educators working in an effective PLC, driven by the guiding questions above, must continually reflect on the ways they are working together to explore which practices are leading to effective results and to ensure that each practitioner has the skills and support to get there (DuFour & Reeves, 2016).

PLCs are action oriented and have a strong focus on bridging the knowing-doing gap (DuFour & DuFour, 2012). Using a continuous improvement model, educators participating in a PLC review each action and evaluate it for effectiveness. In other words, effective PLC teams focus on evaluating student learning data, a shared vision, and a clear set of goals to monitor progress impacting student achievement (Nelson, et al. 2010, Jacobson, 2010). A shared focus on learning, collaboration, and reflective dialogue put into practice through a cycle of continuous improvement expands educator knowledge and practice which can result in enhanced student learning (Dimino, Taylor & Morris, 2015, Fullan, 2006). Hord and Sommers (2008) note that PLC success depends on the application of what is learned about practice.

PLCs should pursue measurable goals and evaluate the success of these goals by looking at evidence of student achievement (DuFour, 2004). When professionals form a collaborative learning community with an explicit shared focus on student achievement and school improvement goals, they purposefully engage in professional learning that has tremendous potential.

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Targeted Professional Learning

Targeted professional learning are experiences that focus on improving teaching practices in a particular content area and a particular grade level in order to meet student needs. Targeted professional learning should be explicitly aligned to student learning goals, student achievement, and school improvement. The focus of targeted professional learning, when funded by LAP, should include behavioral strategies, pedagogies, and skills that will support students who struggle to meet grade-level standards.

The focus of targeted professional learning, when funded by LAP, should include instructional strategies, pedagogy, and literacy content that will support students who have not yet met grade-level standards. It is important to note that there are a lot of professional learning opportunities that can benefit all students, not just students who struggle. If the intent is to support LAP-served students, other forms of targeted professional learning that may benefit all students can be used. For example, LAP Funds can support targeted professional development for kindergarten educators, early learning providers, and caregivers of students in areas where WaKIDS data identify student needs.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Identify foundation literacy skills educators need to develop/improve. Seek professional learning opportunities through the local ESD or with a literacy coach well versed in these skills to target professional learning of staff.
- Provide a summer institute on foundational literacy skills and follow-up with facilitated on-going classroom observations of literacy strategies being implemented. Ensure participants are provided time to connect throughout the following school year. Have members participate in observational walk-throughs in teams of three to five to observe and provide feedback to improve teacher practices. Provide professional learning opportunities on practices that connect students' home languages to the language of instruction.
- Create a flipped professional learning summer camp. During afternoon workshops, educators (e.g., classroom teachers, paraeducators, volunteers, etc.) participate in workshops to implement foundational skills strategies for students have not yet met ELA Standards. During morning summer program sessions, educators are observed and coached on implementation as they work with students one-on-one or in small groups. Schedule a new skill/strategy each week.
- Establish lesson study cycles that include bi-weekly or monthly sessions where teachers collaboratively plan lessons for accelerating reading with an identified group(s) of readers. Sessions could include professional learning on how to use data, how to

differentiate and plan additional lessons for identified students, how to use specific literacy strategies, and how to set goals for learners and monitor their progress.

- Provide time for grade-level/content-based teams to work with a coach on lesson planning and observe each other teaching the lesson. Follow up with team feedback on observations and identify areas for continued improvement.
- Identify staff literacy development needs and target learning opportunities for all educators (e.g., classroom teachers, paraeducators, volunteers, etc.) working with students. For example, foundational literacy skills, K–2 readiness, or balanced literacy.
- Deliver targeted professional learning for grade-level or content-based teams, and then have teams cross-collaborate to identify common goals and strategies.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- K–4 educators who would benefit from explicit instruction in foundational literacy skills.
- K–12 educators who would benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding of the WA K–12 ELA Learning Standards.
- K–12 educators who would benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding of the English Language Proficiency Standards.
- K–12 educators who would benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Formative Assessment Process. K–12 Dual Language educators would benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding on biliteracy practices and multilingual approaches to assessment analysis.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Provide theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and classroom support as part of ongoing professional learning opportunities.
- Focus on specific data, literacy skills, or instructional strategies rather than a general approach.
- Design learning aligned with school improvement goals, student achievement data, and professional learning for the educator.
- Focus on modeling strategies for teachers and opportunities for hands-on professional learning that builds literacy skill development knowledge.
- Ensure collaboration within PLCs is focused, follows protocols, and monitored.
- Plan for professional learning that is ongoing and supports educators.
- Align professional learning plans to standards for professional learning to develop systemic, sustained, high-quality professional learning.

Resources Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Self-study for Implementing Early Interventions](#)
- IES: [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade and K–3 Foundational Skills Professional Learning Communities Facilitator’s Guide \(2016\)](#)
- [Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade](#)
- [Learning Forward](#): The Professional Learning Association, site for National Council of Professional Learning
- [Smarter Balanced Digital Library: Formative Assessment Process Modules](#)
- Achieve the Core: [Understanding the ELA/Literacy Shifts](#)
- [Characteristics of Effective Literacy Coaching](#)
- Instructional Design Framework: [Literacy Design Collaborative](#)

Supporting Research

Research is clear that highly effective teachers make a difference in student success and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009). Therefore, it is worthwhile for schools and districts to invest in high-quality professional learning that strengthens educators’ knowledge of ELA content and pedagogy, and effectively impacts student literacy outcomes. The WSIPP review rated targeted professional learning opportunities as an “evidence-based” practice.

While professional learning opportunities are vital for teacher engagement and motivation for improvement, not all professional learning opportunities effectively impact student literacy outcomes equally. Research identifies targeted professional learning as producing the best results on student outcomes. According to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy report (Pennucci, et al, 2015) and Linda Darling-Hammond’s studies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2007; Garet et al, 2001), professional learning is most effective when it is targeted, which involves expertise on behalf of educators. Targeted professional learning includes a focus on standards and goals specific to learners, data that informs instruction, and instructional strategies specific to the content.

The McREL Report (Snow-Renner & Lauer, 2005) states that providing professional learning that is long lasting, content-focused, and based on student and teacher performance data takes more time and effort to implement in comparison to less effective types of professional learning opportunities. In addition, Garet, et al. state (2001), “[a] professional development activity is more likely to be effective in improving teachers’ knowledge and skills if it forms a coherent part of a wider set of opportunities for teacher learning and development” (p. 927). Thus, successful

professional learning takes time and is part of a coherent and comprehensive plan to improve student and educator performance (Darling-Hammond, 2009).

Research also contends that to improve student achievement through professional learning, the work should be contextualized. Darling-Hammond explains that educator professional learning improves student achievement when it is focused on “the concrete, everyday challenges involved in teaching and learning specific to academic subject matter, rather than focusing on abstract educational principles or teaching methods taken out of context” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009, p. 10). In addition, professional learning needs to be sustained; that is provided as an ongoing, systemic process informed by evaluation of students, and the needs of teachers and schools. Research by Joyce and Showers (2002) supports the importance of ongoing, adult learning through a continuum in which participants learn from a presentation of theory, observe demonstrations, apply and receive feedback around a practice, and are ultimately provided with coaching or other classroom supports to self-evaluate according to learner-centered goals (Joyce, 2002). This model of transfer for adult learning and professional learning identifies the importance of educators needing ongoing, professional learning that is relevant, job-embedded, and supported over time.

Drawn from research and evidence-based practices, Learning Forward’s standards for Professional Learning (Learning Forward, 2011) aim to support a systemic and sustained professional learning system. Seven standards describe the characteristics of effective professional learning which may be used as a consumer guide for educators and school systems as they plan and prepare for high-quality, targeted professional learning. The standards for Professional Learning (Learning Forward, 2011) encompass goals related to learning communities, leadership, data, resources, learning design, implementation, and outcomes. Such standards support schools and districts in their efforts of planning, facilitating, and evaluating the effectiveness of professional learning.

Below is a list of professional learning formats that support ongoing, targeted, data-driven, job-embedded professional learning for literacy improvement for educators targeting students who have not yet met ELA Standards.

- PLCs: a group of educators that regularly meet to analyze data, collaborate on student achievement, and set goals for instruction.
- Lesson study: a professional learning practice that involves educators collaboratively planning lessons based on data and student needs, and observing evidence of student learning in action.

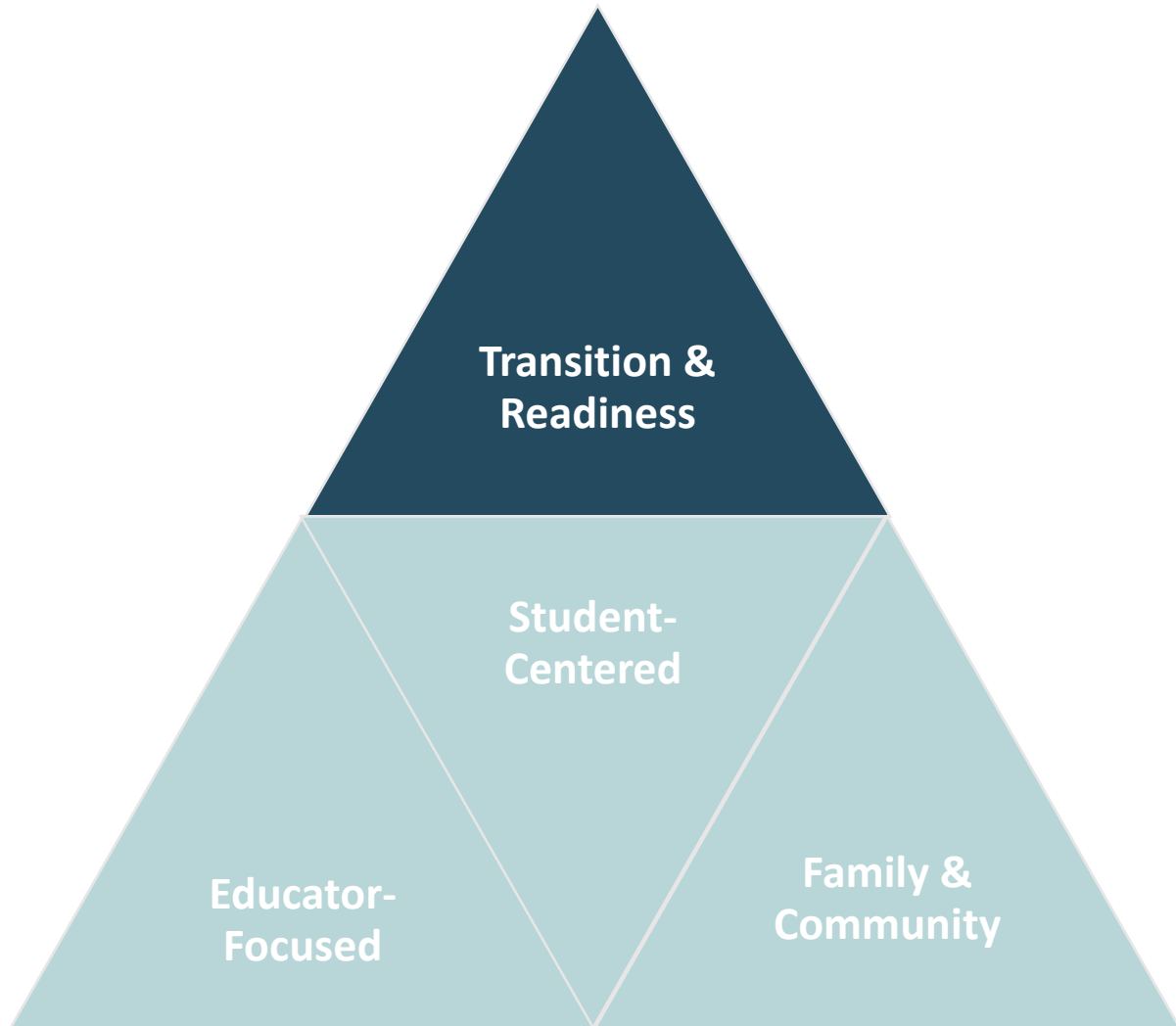
- Facilitated observations: may also be referred to as learning walks or instructional rounds whereby a group of educators participate in classroom observations based on a problem of practice or focus related to the instructional core (the students, the teacher, the task).
- Ongoing workshops or coursework: workshops/courses based on an identified content need; coursework is ongoing and over time.
- Online networks: a professional group focused on specific content that strengthens professional expertise.
- Targeted literacy coaching: literacy coaching that involves modeling, working with assessments, observation and feedback, co-planning, and conferencing makes a difference in reading and writing achievement (Elish-Piper and L'Allier, 2011).

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TRANSITION AND READINESS PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES



Credit Retrieval and Mastery of High School Standards

Credit retrieval for students who have not yet met graduation requirements is a promising practice. Students may be at-risk of not graduating because of not earning credit in courses due to unsatisfactory grades and insufficient attendance. Other students graduate, but then need to immediately enroll in remedial community college courses before starting regular freshman level work.

LAP funding can be allocated for these programs targeting 11th- and 12th- grade students at-risk of not graduating or meeting state standards on the high school assessments. It is important that these specialized ELA programs provide innovative structures that are rigorous (targeting ELA speaking, listening, reading, and writing), develop a growth mindset, and focus on college and career readiness.

Credit retrieval, or credit recovery, allows students to retake ELA courses, stay in school, and graduate on time. Credit retrieval programs may be offered in a variety of formats and times such as online, face-to-face, and through a blended-learning approach. Credit retrieval programs allow students to retake coursework for which credit was not earned.

Note: OSPI does not establish the criteria for 11th- and 12th- grade students in Washington State. Districts set this policy (e.g. by age of student or by student credit accumulation). The OSPI CEDARS manual for data reporting lists age as a suggestion for determining grade-level, with age 16 as of August 31 for 11th grade and age 17 as of August 31 for 12th grade. It is recommended that eligibility for LAP credit retrieval be based on age.

Practice Possibilities: Ideas to Consider When Planning:

- Use LAP funds to support during, after, and summer school programs for ELA credit retrieval. Funds can be used to cover teacher salaries, teacher prep time, paraeducator support, reading, and other instructional materials, and applicable professional learning opportunities.
- Online courses or hybrid courses that are designed to be individualized and self-paced should not be left up to the student to complete without support, but designed to provide students' support from an ELA teacher well versed in the Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for ELA who can effectively coach and motivate students. Be explicit with students about developing effective study skills and self-management strategies when engaging in online courses, as well as established timelines with multiple check in dates for course completion.
- Offer a 4th-year transition course to support 12th-grade students who have not yet met standard on the assessments, but do intend to enroll in post-secondary coursework after high school. Transition courses provide an opportunity for students to focus on the

mathematics they will need to be successful in credit bearing courses in college. For successful post-high school transitions, courses may include *Bridge to College* or *Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)*.

- Provide ELA online course work and blended learning opportunities, which may be more appealing or accessible for particular students.
- Create an alternative to whole class instruction and activities. Assess and think about what barriers caused students not to receive ELA credit. Design and deliver instruction that meets similar learning course objectives while accounting for previous learning barriers.
- Develop an ELA project-based learning program. Project-based learning has projects central to the curriculum, are focused on a question or problem, require students to investigate, are student-driven, and are authentic. Whereas some students find the student-centered nature of project-based learning to be motivational, others find it a barrier to learning.
- Create a project-based, computer assisted ELA credit retrieval program for 11th- and 12th-grade students. Out-of-School Time (OST) credit retrieval can be available for students before/after school and during the summer.

Demographic Considerations: Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Services are only for 11th- and 12th-grade ELA students.
- Students in the process of adjudication could benefit from additional education opportunities, such as skill centers, while they transition into their regular high school setting.
- Students already experiencing transition as a result of homelessness, military relocation, medical treatment, or foster care placement may require a variety of additional support services as they transition into or out of high school.
- Students learning English as an additional language may need ELA support to meet graduation requirements. Credit retrieval courses should be designed to provide differentiated support. For example, EL supports may include use of visuals or a focus on vocabulary instruction.
- High school migrant students may benefit from opportunities to access credit retrieval, tutorial support, and additional time to submit assignments.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Identify and support high school students early when they are at-risk of not graduating.
- Provide rolling enrollment in ELA credit retrieval courses.

- Provide counseling and tutoring services for students in ELA credit retrieval courses.
- For courses which are graduation specific (such as Algebra, Geometry, American History, Biology), use previous course objectives to ensure rigor.
- For courses which are not graduation specific (such as English, third year of math, electives), design objectives with an emphasis on student choice and on building skill deficits.
- Provide dual credit options (i.e., American History and ELA credit using speaking, listening, writing, and reading standards).
- Students who have struggled to earn ELA credit often benefit when given content format choices (such as print, video, audio, etc.).
- Develop pre- and post-testing to ensure students can demonstrate mastery of the ELA skills learned in the previous attempt to pass the course, and allow students to complete coursework not yet mastered.
- Create a systematic structure for online and blended programs.

Resources: Tools for Planning

- [Self-study Guide for Implementing High School Intervention](#)
- [Buck Institute for Education \(BIE\): Project Based Learning](#)
- [National Education Association Research Spotlight on Project-Based Learning](#)
- [Bridge to College](#)
- [Advancement Via Individual Determination \(AVID\)](#)
- [Center for Change in Transition Services](#)

Supporting Research

Credit retrieval, or credit recovery, is a LAP-allowable service under [RCW 28A.320.190](#). Credit retrieval refers to alternative ways for 11th- and 12th-grade students to earn high school credit toward graduation after a student has completed a course and not earned credit on the initial attempt. Credit retrieval is a promising practice because it provides a time during and outside school for additional learning opportunities (D’Agustino, 2013). These opportunities may better suit students who struggle with regular attendance, essential literacy skill deficits, are learning English as an additional language, need additional time and support to complete ELA coursework, have specific learning disabilities (such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and ADD/ADHD—sometimes undiagnosed), or are disconnected from school. Credit retrieval programs are often used to keep students in school and on track for graduation (Watson and Gemin, 2008).

Credit retrieval programs may be designed in a variety of formats.

One possible credit retrieval format is to implement an online program. As Franco and Patel (2011) note, “Key features of success for high school students in virtual learning programs are the development of self-regulative strategies and the ability to guide their own learning.” Unfortunately, other students “engaged in online programs have not sufficiently developed these attributes, making it more difficult for them to be successful” (p. 18).

Another possible credit retrieval format is to present material via alternative whole-class instruction. Here the design often differs from the classroom design where the student previously did not earn credit. Some design changes which have been implemented with an attention to increasing student credit retrieval success are providing smaller class sizes, different curriculum (than what was previously taught), and essential skills development. The use of different instructional material that is more appropriate for the target population provides students a second chance to engage with the content and improve their chances for achieving success. By using pre- and post-assessments to measure growth and attainment of the relevant standards, both students and teachers can feel more confident that essential skills are being developed. Students who have not yet met standard benefit from smaller class sizes as they receive more individualized attention from the teacher and support in areas of skill deficit (Malloy et al, 2010).

Not surprisingly, some educators have blended online and traditional classroom instruction with some success. It stands to reason that if some credit-retrieval students struggle because they lack regulatory controls, then having a highly qualified educator available to develop and implement instruction (as well as offer individual tutoring) would increase student success. As Watson and Gemin (2008) have explained, “The blended approach is important because it provides expanded student support and face-to-face contact. The online component—whether fully online or blended—provides 21st century skills to a group of students who often have less-than-average exposure to computers and technology” (p. 15).

A fourth possible credit retrieval format is to implement a project-based learning approach. According to 2016 data published by the [Education Research & Data Center](#) (ERDC) in the [High School Feedback Report](#), 19 percent of Washington state high school graduates enrolling in 2-year and 3 percent enrolling in 4-year post-secondary institutions had to take some level of pre-college remedial coursework. Students assigned to remedial courses are less likely to earn their post-secondary degree or credential (Vandal, 2010). High school transition courses may provide opportunities for high school students to shore up their math and ELA skills prior to graduation and bypass remediation. These courses have their best success when targeted towards students who intend to pursue college and are close to, but have not, quite demonstrated mastery of high school math proficiency on assessments. Professional learning for the participating high school faculty on the specific transition curriculum is another key factor for success (Barnett, 2016).

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Grade 8 to High School Transitions

Grade 8 transition readiness is a promising practice. ELA transition readiness opportunities refer to programs intended to support successful literacy transitions from 8th grade to high school. Students identified for support might benefit from one or more of the following: motivation, self-efficacy, speaking, listening, reading, writing, and foundational literacy skills. For the purpose of LAP, high school transition programs begin in the 8th grade and may continue in the summer and through 9th grade. In some cases, when over one-third of the incoming freshman students experience one or more early warning indicators (excessive absenteeism, failing a course in the first quarter, or receiving a suspension), LAP funds may be used for school-wide transition programs.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Create an 8th-grade student mentor system where each student is assigned a high school peer mentor. Mentor/mentee activities could be scheduled monthly, over the course of the school year, or during the summer and into 9th grade.
- Design a 9th grade transition readiness academy to support LAP-served students identified in grade 8. For example, provide intentional academic and social-emotional learning supports including team teaching, student advisories, and diagnostic assessments to monitor student progress through grade 9.
- Partner with local service groups (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, etc.) to establish mentoring and service learning projects.
- Design and implement a summer academy for incoming freshman. This program should introduce students to the expectations regarding academics, activities, school culture, and the habits of success needed for high school.
- Put a student monitoring system in place that tracks 8th-grade students' progress to identify students at the beginning of the school year. Invite students to club activities and provide ongoing transition support throughout the school year and continue club activities to support students in 9th grade.
- Design an 8th-grade course that focuses on the skills and habits of mind needed to be successful in a high school environment. For example, a program like [Advancement via Individual Determination \(AVID\)](#) may be particularly effective for transition readiness. AVID's professional learning for educators focuses on cultivating a positive learning environment and instructional strategies in reading, writing, and speaking.
- Some middle schools may identify a significant portion of their students for transition services based on early warning systems or based on the experience of prior 8th-graders who have transitioned to 9th grade. For example, a district would be concerned if over a

third of a middle school's 8th-graders, upon entering the 9th grade, were identified with one of the following indicators: failing English language arts in the first quarter, missing more than 10 days of school in the first quarter, or a suspension in the first quarter. In these situations, consider school-wide transition programs such as freshman academies, authentic learning experiences, and intentional integration of ELA within other content areas.

Demographic Considerations—Educator Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students and families who are recent immigrants may benefit from additional encouragement and support that is responsive to their academic, cultural, and social-emotional strengths and needs as they transition into the U.S. education system.
- Students already experiencing transition as a result of homelessness, military relocation, medical treatment, or foster care placement may require a variety of additional support services as they transition into high school.
- Students and families from American Indian/Alaska Native communities may benefit from a teaching environment that focuses on cooperation instead of competition, has Tribal cultures represented in the classroom, and utilizes culturally responsive teaching methods. In accordance with state requirements under RCW 28A.320.170, school districts should support effective implementation of the [Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State curriculum](#) (STI) which focuses on teaching about Tribal history, culture, and the government of Tribes whose boundaries lay within Washington state. Consistent with the legislative intent of RCW 28A.320.170, high school transitions services can be designed to “improve the experiences” American Indian/Alaska Native students have in WA schools and to ensure all students in WA are informed “about the experiences, contributions, and perspectives of their tribal neighbors, fellow citizens, and classmates” ([SSB 5433](#), Section 1). For example, in collaboration with local Tribes, school districts may integrate expanded and improved STI curricular materials and related activities into core instruction, summer programs, and supplemental services.
- Students learning English as an additional language and their families may benefit from early support towards understanding high school graduation requirements pertaining to language acquisition and credit accrual.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Design transition interventions with models that accelerate learning.
- Provide both content and non-content supports for students. Attention to growth mindset, motivation, and counseling can help enable learning.

- Embed specific practices like goal setting, progress monitoring, and authentic learning involving real-world, complex problems and their solutions into designed supports.
- Ensure counseling services are available for students who are struggling with the transition to high school.
- Improve communication channels between middle schools and high schools, both within the district and between neighboring school districts.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [Advancement Via Individual Determination \(AVID\)](#)
- OSPI: [Gear Up Washington State](#)
- [Education Northwest: A Practitioner’s Guide to Implementing Early Warning Systems](#)
- [Great Schools Partnerships: Ninth Grade Counts: A Three-Part Guide to Strengthening the Transition into High School](#)
- Washington Student Oral Histories Project: Listening to and Learning from Disconnected Youth
- [The University of Texas at Austin, Charles A. Dana Center: Academic Youth Development \(AYD\)](#) and [AYD Factsheet](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education: Newcomer Tool Kit](#)
- [Supporting Successful Transitions to High School](#)

Supporting Research

Researchers emphasize that ninth grade is a critical year for students because academic performance is a strong predictor of future academic achievement and the failure rate for students in grade nine is higher than other grade levels (Bottoms, 2008; Easton, Johnson, & Sartain, 2017). Therefore, to address 9th-grade failure in a proactive manner, districts and schools should consider having a robust grade 8 transition readiness plan in place. Across grade levels, behavioral needs of students are frequently linked with deficits in academic performance which, at the high school level, can become a barrier to graduation (Bruce, Bridgeland, Fox, & Balfanz, 2011). Because students’ academic and behavior needs are interrelated, schools must address a variety of academic and behavioral situations that affect student learning (McIntosh, Flannery, Sugai, Braun, & Cochane, 2008).

Students exhibiting behavioral challenges in the school setting are at increased risk for dropout, especially when they experience exclusionary discipline as a consequence for behavioral infractions (McIntosh, et al., 2008). Recent national and state reports have documented the extensive use of exclusionary discipline, which disproportionately affects students of color and has multiple negative impacts on students and their communities (Morgan, Salomon, Plotkin, &

Cohen, 2014). Dropping out of high school is a process that begins well before students enter high school, and there are identifiable warning signs at least one-to-three years before students actually drop out. Research shows that identifiable early warning signs are evident up to three years prior to when a student actually drops out (McIntosh, et. al, 2008; Burrus & Roberts, 2012).

Feldman, Smith, & Waxman (2013) interviewed students who dropped out and found the majority of students follow a four-phase process including: initial disengagement, early skipping, more serious truancy, followed by actual dropping out. Early warning indicators (course failure, truancy, and discipline referrals) continue to be the best predictors of dropping out for all ages. Specific behavioral risk factors for dropout include, truancy, not completing schoolwork, suspension/expulsion, involvement with juvenile justice, substance abuse, mental health, and being victims of bullying (Dalton, Glennie, & Ingels, 2009; Smink & Reimer, 2009).

The reasons for students falling off the graduation track during their first year of high school can be attributed to social and developmental adjustments, structural and organizational changes, and increased academic rigor experienced as a result of the transition (Erickson, Peterson, & Lembeck, 2013). Dr. Robert Balfanz, a researcher at Johns Hopkins University, is one of the nation's leading experts on high school dropouts. His work suggests that behavior should be considered in addition to attendance and course performance. Districts and middle schools systematically reviewing the ABCs (Attendance, Behavior, and Course performance) can identify those at-risk of dropping out and help put them on the path to graduation. An intentional focus on the middle grades' transition program is essential due to the difficulties that students' experience with social, emotional, cognitive, and physical changes, which often exacerbate the transitional concerns (Andrews & Bishop, 2012; Balfanz, Herzog, & Iver, 2007; McIntosh, et. al 2008; Somers, Owens, & Piliowksy, 2009). Students need to be explicitly taught the skills and behaviors needed for high school success. 9th grade specific courses are a great place to house the teaching of problem-solving skills, behavior expectations, time management and organizational skills, and self-advocacy (Bottoms, 2008).

In most cases, a well-designed transition program for LAP-eligible students can be a successful intervention strategy. In instances where a school has over one-third of their 9th- grade students at-risk for failure, LAP funds can be used for a school-wide transition program. School-wide transition programs have also been successful at improving student performance and decreasing drop-out rates for all students. One model, freshman academies, provides focused support for 9th-graders. The academies group students and intentionally provide academic and social supports including team teaching, student advisories, and diagnostic assessment to monitor student progress (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007).

According to a recent study, "teacher teams [core content teachers who share the same students throughout the day] are the most effective model for easing the transition to high school and

preparing freshmen for success” (Habeeb, 2013 p. 20). While many schools can employ this type of model, it is important to note that others may struggle to meet the demands of incoming freshmen; therefore, whatever model used must include support that is flexible, positive, goal-oriented, efficacious, and empowering (Habeeb, 2013). Traditional remedial classes are not effective in supporting successful transitions; instead, transition interventions that effectively prepare students for high school operate on a model of accelerated learning (Herlihy, 2007). Transition interventions should address not only academic content but also increase student engagement, advance social-emotional learning, develop a growth mindset, and reward academic risk-taking.

Students identified for a transition-to-high-school program might need support with the following: motivation, self-efficacy, mathematics skills, growth mindset, and conceptual mathematical understanding. A transitional program, therefore, needs to be able to engage all students in productive ways with English language arts. The intervention should address not only ELA content but also increase student engagement, develop a growth mindset, and reward academic risk-taking.

Whatever strategies schools choose to support incoming 9th-grade students should be rooted in results—reduced failure rates, improved achievement, and increased graduation rates. If schools are dedicated to designing and implementing successful transition programs, the outcomes will be visible in the statistics, and more importantly, in the attitudes, motivations, and accomplishments of the students.

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Kindergarten Transitions

Supporting kindergarten transitions is a promising practice. Transitioning through kindergarten is a time when behavioral, emotional, and social changes impact all students and their families. Communities, schools, families, and educators can increase the likelihood of a successful student transition by providing academic and non-academic support services. Kindergarten transition opportunities provide support to students and their families for successful transitions from in-home care, daycare, relative care, pre-school, ECEAP, or Head Start.

LAP funds may support transition to kindergarten through a number of different strategies. Districts are encouraged to set up data-sharing opportunities with early learning providers and families to be able to identify the children who may need additional transition support prior to the start of the kindergarten year.

Note: Washington state statute starts LAP eligibility at kindergartners. As such, kindergarten transition strategies funded with LAP should start after a child has enrolled in kindergarten. They may start prior to the first day of school. LAP allowable funding options for children enrolled in kindergarten, and identified as needing extra support, may include:

- In late spring/summer, educators can conduct family engagement and home visits.
- Provide transition programs during the summer, before kindergarten start.

LAP funds could be used throughout the year for professional learning time between early learning providers (preschool and childcare) and kindergarten teachers to focus on strategies to improve the academic readiness of students arriving at kindergarten. LAP funds for this professional development should be focused on foundational early skills alignment (social emotional, numeracy, and literacy) focused on the providers serving students most in need of kindergarten transition support. WaKIDS data is a great resource for districts to use to identify students for services and content for instruction and professional learning.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Establish a program that allows pre-kindergarten and kindergarten educators to create a transition plan with a focus on sharing student data, aligning curriculum, and supporting strategies for transitioning students.
- Create an outreach program that promotes early kindergarten registration, conducts needs assessments with families, finds and connects families with resources, and provides a safety net of support for the first several months a child attends kindergarten.
- Provide opportunities for families to visit elementary schools before children begin kindergarten by inviting students and families to participate in school events, school tours, school lunch, library time, and recess.

- Develop summer transition programs, or kindergarten camps, that focus on incoming kindergarteners who may not have attended a pre-school program. Allow time for kindergarten students to become familiar with teachers, buildings, classrooms, and routines.

Cultivate a peer connection program that arranges for pre-school children and kindergarten children to meet, play, and connect within a classroom or outside the classroom at a community event.

Provide opportunities for teachers to share WaKIDS results with parents and provide activities parents can engage in with their children to support areas of need as identified by the WaKIDS assessment.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students and families who are new to the school system benefit from a friendly environment where families are valued as decision makers regarding their own child's education and school programs.
- Migratory families may benefit from programs that help students learn about school routines and ease the separation from home to school; families benefit from learning about activities and strategies families can do in the home to strengthen their child's education in the classroom.
- Students and families who are learning English as an additional language benefit from a welcoming environment where responsive two-way communication, in the language spoken by the family, is facilitated. Students and families in a Dual Language program setting benefit from seeing all of their languages and cultures valued throughout the school environment.
- Students and families who qualify for free and reduced-priced lunch benefit when they are connected to resources and information related to family services.
- Students and families who participate in Head Start or ECEAP programs benefit when standards, curriculum, support services, and assessments from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten are carefully aligned.
- Students who struggle with emotional and social issues that may hinder a successful transition benefit from peer connections that continue from pre-school into kindergarten.
- Students and families from American Indian/Alaska Native communities may benefit from a teaching environment that focuses on cooperation instead of competition, has Tribal cultures represented in the classroom, and utilizes culturally responsive teaching methods.

Strategies for Implementation— Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Promote academic readiness and emerging literacy, language, numeracy, and social emotional skills families can practice at home. WaKIDS data can help inform these practices.
- Establish protocols for collecting data from pre-kindergarten programs to support early intervention.
- Provide families tools and support to be advocates for their children. In a Dual Language setting, provide families information about the goals and structure of the program. Provide them information of how to support learning multiple languages from home.
- Provide funds to purchase support materials for age-level readiness practices.
- Provide time and funding for collaboration between pre-kindergarten and kindergarten staff, families, and community members to establish a district-wide transition plan for students entering kindergarten.
- Provide time and resources to promote ongoing connections among children, families, in-home, daycare, and pre-kindergarten providers with elementary schools.
- Identify a coordinator to oversee kindergarten transition programs, connect with families/early childhood centers, and monitor progress.
- Provide training for kindergarten educators to further develop an understanding of the norms, practices, and procedures of pre-school education.
- Provide training for educators on culturally sensitive and anti-bias pedagogy, curriculum, early childhood development, and evidence-based practices.
- Provide services tailored to the cultural, linguistic, and learning needs of students and their families.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Institute for Educational Leadership: [Case Studies of Early Childhood Education & Family Engagement in Community Schools](#)
- Child Care Aware of Washington: [Collaboration with Principals and Child Care Providers](#)
- Kindergarten Questionnaires and Checklists: Bellingham Public Schools- [Kindergarten Parent Questionnaire](#) and [Teacher Questionnaire](#); Washington State Department of Early Learning [Kindergarten Checklist](#)
- [The Early Childhood Community School Linkages Project](#)
- OSPI: [WaKIDS](#), [Washington State Full-Day Kindergarten Guide](#), [Early Literacy Pathways](#), [Early Numeracy Pathways](#), and [Early Learning and Development Guidelines](#)

- University of Washington’s Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences [Love, Talk, Play](#)

[Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, and Schools](#)

[Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning](#)

[Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children](#)

[Erickson Institute Resources for Early Learning: Programs and Services](#)

Supporting Research

Kindergarten transition is a crucial time for young students and families. Transition programs can set the stage for how families will handle their children’s future educational experiences by engaging them in the transition to kindergarten. Kindergarten students in particular need of additional support and care when transitioning as changing learning environments present new challenges: new academic expectations, different school structures, and new social interactions with peers and adults. Families, educators, and community partners can use effective transition activities to create supports and connections across pre-kindergarten and kindergarten settings. (LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2008). These practices should begin prior to kindergarten and take into account the cultural, linguistic, and learning needs of individual students and their families (National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement, 2013).

Key guiding principles should be in place as a framework for kindergarten transition success (Sayre & Pianta, 2000, p. 2):

- Foster collaborative relationship building among educators, families, and students;
- Promote continuity between pre-school and kindergarten systems;
- Focus on family strengths to develop school support; and
- Focus on the individual needs of the student.

Building capacity for students, families, and schools is essential. Children’s successful transition to kindergarten relies upon building relationships with a variety of people, including families, day care providers, pre-school educators, and elementary educators (La Paro, Kraft-Sayre, & Pianta, 2003). Family connections, whole child assessment, and early learning collaboration are key components of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills ([WaKIDS](#)). Research supports using these three components as the foundation for best practices in successful kindergarten transitions.

Transition to kindergarten activities needs to establish effective communication between pre-school/pre-kindergarten settings and elementary schools (La Paro, Kraft-Sayre, & Pianta, 2003, Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearns, & Leavell, 2010). Fostering collaborative relationships and two-way communication among stakeholders support successful and seamless transitions for students.

The culture in an elementary school may be more formal than the typical culture of a pre-school (Connors & Epstein, 1995; Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 1999), which makes communication between the two settings more crucial to help students and families navigate the new environment. "These environments should also work together to ensure that standards, curriculum, support services, and assessments from pre-kindergarten settings to kindergarten are carefully aligned" (Bohan-Baker & Little, 2002; Kagan & Neuman, 1998; Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003, Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearns, & Leavell, 2010).

Communication with Families

Kindergarten transition plans that promote family participation prior to the start of the school year have been associated with students having increased self-confidence, school enjoyment, and overall happiness with the kindergarten experience (Hubbell, Plantz, Condelli, & Barrett, 1987). Transition to kindergarten should include opportunities for students and families to learn about the new setting, build relationships, and experience continuity in curriculum and assessments within their new setting. Children show greater school readiness (Hubbell et al., 1987; LoCasale-Crouch, Mashburn, Downer, & Pianta, 2008), reduced stress at the beginning of school (Hubbell et al., 1987), and stronger academic growth over their kindergarten year (Ahtola et al., 2011; Schulting, Malone, & Dodge, 2005) when such opportunities are offered.

Outreach to families should be done in a personal way before students enter kindergarten (Pianta et al., 1999; Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearns, & Leavell, 2010). Families are more likely to be involved in their student's kindergarten year when schools actively engage families in the transition process and recognize the families' efforts to participate (Schulting et al., 2005). Outreach with families that is established in pre-kindergarten programs promotes positive relationships and emphasizes early on that families are valued partners in their child(ren)'s education (La Paro, Kraft-Sayre, & Pianta, 2003). Schools and educators can smooth the transition to kindergarten by engaging families in meaningful ways. Families gain confidence from helping their children adjust to new schools. (Van Voorhis et al., 2013, p. 117). One way to support early family engagement is to establish family visits between kindergarten educators and school staff prior to the beginning of the school.

Research by La Paro, Kraft-Sayre, & Pianta (2003) showed that despite barriers families may face, when offered opportunities to interact with the transition process, such as meeting with educators prior to the beginning of the school year and visiting kindergarten classrooms, families almost always participated and believed that these opportunities were helpful. When asked, families can offer educators knowledge about their children to support classroom routines and can help reinforce essential academic and non-academic skills at home (Ferretti & Bub, 2017; Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearns, & Leavell, 2010). Students who experience more stability in their early school settings, and in the relationships with the adults in these settings, perform

better socially and academically (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Ponitz, 2009; Tran & Winsler, 2011) during their kindergarten year and beyond.

Regardless of a student's skill level, positive relationships between schools and families support children's academic progress (Kraft-Sayre & Pianta, 2000). Establishing relationships with community partners, pre-kindergarten learning partners, and kindergarten educators may help provide resources to and support for students and families during the kindergarten transition. "Peer connections that continue from children's pre-school years into kindergarten also can help ease children's transition to school by being a source of familiarity and an avenue for building social competencies" (Kraft-Sayre & Pianta, 2000). These types of adult and peer relationships support social and emotional competencies in young students that aid in their school success (Kraft-Sayre & Pianta, 2000).

Community Partnerships

Pre-school and kindergarten programs can make the transition for families smoother by aligning pre-school and kindergarten policies and practices (Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearn, & Leavell, 2010; NCDEL, 2002). "Connecting early childhood programs with the K–12 educational system is a proactive strategic plan to increase student achievement" (Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearn, & Leavell, 2010, p. 1). Consider including the following stakeholders as part of the district kindergarten transition team (Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearn, & Leavell, 2010):

- Elementary school principals,
- Kindergarten and local pre-school educators,
- Families (include multiple demographics and include pre-school and private school families),
- School board members,
- Child care providers,
- Higher-education professionals,
- District leadership (e.g. Title I director, special programs coordinator, etc.),
- School district PTA/PTO president, and
- Other community organization representatives (e.g. tribal leaders, Head Start supervisor, healthcare providers, etc.).

By inviting multiple partners to be part of the planning and implementation of kindergarten transition practices, districts can focus on "increasing achievement, by using a unified approach that honors existing efforts and builds on the strengths and resources in your community" (Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearn, & Leavell, 2010, p. 27).

It is also important for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten educators to participate in ongoing professional learning opportunities together to support social emotional and academic competencies necessary for school success and achievement (NCDEL, 2002). Promoting professional learning on culturally sensitive and anti-bias pedagogy, curriculum, early child development, and evidence-based practices ensures that educators receive the supports needed to fully engage students and families both academically and non-academically (Henderson and Berla, 1994; Epstein 2001; Weiss, Caspe, & Lopez, 2006; Halgunseth, 2009).

Student Success

“Teachers report that nearly half of typically developing children experience some degree of difficulty during the transition to kindergarten” (Ferretti & Bub, 2017; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000, Rimm-Kaufman, et al., 2000). In any classroom, there are students achieving beyond the grade-level standards and students not yet achieving the grade-level standards. The goal is for all students to meet the end-of-year expectations, and when necessary, to recognize that stages of development are based on experiences and not solely defined by age or grade. It is essential to take into consideration the learning progressions necessary for student growth by planning intentional experiences, selecting appropriate materials, and determining the best instructional approaches to meet students’ academic and non-academic learning needs. In order for the unique learning needs of students to be met, educators must understand the social-emotional, language, literacy, and numeracy needs of each student.

Educators and researchers recognize that social-emotional competencies and skills related to school preparedness develop early in life. A recent study reports that children who enter kindergarten with underdeveloped social-behavioral skills are more likely to be identified for special education services, suspended or expelled from school, and retained to repeat grade-level standards (Bettencourt, Gross, & Ho, 2016). While focusing on social-emotional development in early childhood is critical, social-emotional learning (SEL) can take place throughout a student’s primary and secondary education. Research indicates that SEL programs can positively influence a variety of student educational outcomes across grade levels (Durlak, et al., 2011).

High-quality instruction in language and literacy skills is vital to students’ academic and non-academic success. Children start developing language and literacy skills at birth; *emergent reading* skills and *early reading* skills start around age three ([Early Literacy Pathways](#), 2016). Oral language skill development helps students as they begin to develop and progress reading and writing skills. As students enter kindergarten, oral language skills are connected to later gaps in both reading and writing (Coll, 2005; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). English language development for students learning an additional language is also grounded in oral language skill development and needs explicit instruction; by providing instruction in oral language development in a student’s native language, educators can build a foundation for literacy and a

bridge for the student's English literacy development (Beeman & Urow, 2013). For additional information, research, and best practices on oral language, alphabet knowledge, and phonological awareness refer to [ELA Menu: Appendix A](#).

Mastery of early math concepts (number sense and counting) upon school entry is the strongest predictor of future academic success (Duncan, 2007). Learning to make sense of mathematics early helps build future math proficiency. Students transitioning to kindergarten should have opportunities to make sense of math ideas including number concepts and quantities, number relationships and operations, geometry and spatial sense, patterns, and measurement and comparison. For more information on math progressions for early learners, refer to [Learning Pathways in Numeracy](#). An important success factor, and an important tie-in to early literacy, is to get children to communicate their ideas and explain their thinking about mathematics in their natural language. By providing opportunities for students to share their thinking, educators can assess what concepts students understand, and they can identify gaps in students' mathematical understanding.

Families, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten programs can provide opportunities to develop social-emotional learning, language, literacy, and numeracy skills through play, songs, books, games, and other daily routines. For more information on social-emotional learning, early literacy, and early numeracy, please refer to the [background and philosophy](#) sections in the menus of best practices and strategies.

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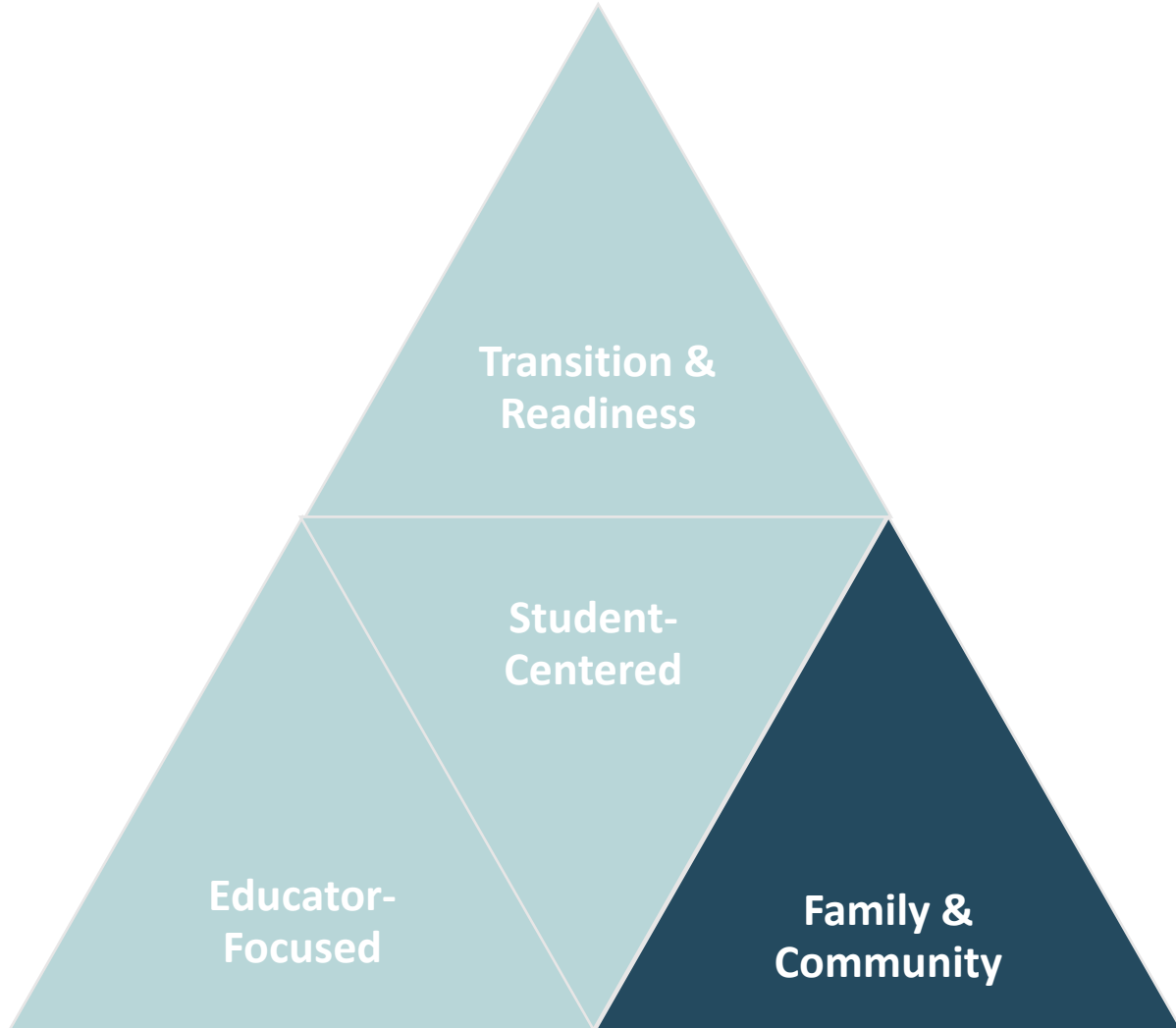
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FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES



Family Engagement

Family engagement is a promising practice. Family engagement involves two-way communication in which families and educators come together as equal partners to engage in decision-making processes. Family literacy support on emerging reading and literacy strategies can help students improve listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills as they progress through the early elementary years. All families engage in social activities to support the development of language and communication. These activities lay the foundation for literacy development in school and life. The more parents and caregivers understand their role in supporting literacy, the more successful they can be in preparing their children for successful literacy experiences and learning.

Family engagement involves collaboration between families and schools toward increasing student success. Family engagement can occur during the regular school day (within the school building or outside of school), within families' homes, or within the community. LAP funding may support family engagement programs to improve the academic outcomes of participating students. The following menu entry provides a robust list of research-based practices and possibilities, including family engagement coordinators and modeling instructional strategies families can provide at home.

Practice Possibilities: Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Create a culturally responsive family leadership program and invite families to join the school improvement planning process. To ensure joint decision-making, ask families to make recommendations to support and promote family engagement practices.
- Provide a space within the school where educational staff can support families and students in literacy. This space could be available for families to convene before, during, and after school. For example, invite families to participate in literacy skill building in the library at the beginning of the school day.
- Create a plan to host monthly family literacy events. These events should have targeted literacy goals and provide time for families to practice literacy skill building. When possible, provide tips/materials for families to continue practicing the literacy strategies learned at the event at home.
- Create literacy games for students to play at home. Families can support skill development by repetitively playing the games in English and in the student's home language.
- Establish a home-visit program where educators engage families. Family preference should determine if visitations occur in the home or at another mutually agreeable

location. Home visits present educators with opportunities to develop authentic and meaningful relationships with families.

- Provide educators with professional learning opportunities on the effective use of funds of knowledge. Funds of knowledge are the knowledge and skills a student learns from their family and cultural background. Apply this learning when designing school policies, ELA instruction, family engagement activities, and volunteer opportunities.
- Use technology to support positive ongoing communication with families. Take a photo with each student on the first day of school and share it with the family. Continue to send positive visual updates bi-weekly/monthly on students engaging in literacy activities. Older students can share assignments and accomplishments electronically with their families.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students without immediate family members in their lives, such as students experiencing homelessness or students in transitional situations, should be welcome to participate in family engagement activities and be encouraged to invite friends or other persons they consider family.
- Families with adverse experiences in schools may require prolonged and intentional positive feedback from school staff before the family will engage in regular, meaningful communication with the school.
- Students with negative feelings about literacy benefit from seeing family members and other trusted adults engaging in literacy activities and expressing positive attitudes about reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- K–4 family literacy support results in students being more likely to complete high school and go on to college.
- Family engagement in schools starts to decrease as early as grade 3.
- Multilingual families may benefit from personal invitations, translation and interpretation services, and guided support.
- Migratory families benefit from information about the school, community, and services their children can receive as they may be new to the area and unsure how to access resources.
- Students and families from American Indian/Alaska Native communities may benefit from Title VI–Indian Education funded support services.

- Students and families from American Indian/Alaska Native communities may benefit by participating in extra-curricular Tribe-sponsored events such as read-arounds, pow-wows, culture nights, youth leadership programs, and Tribal Journeys/canoe families.
- K–12 students who struggle with reading benefit from listening to and discussing text.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Welcome all families. Create a family friendly school learning community that is inviting and authentic.
- Design activities and talking points for parents to support oral language and at-home reading expectations.
- Focus on getting to know students and families during home visits.
- Establish opportunities for students to read the same book.
- Consider ways to provide workshop and family night information to those who could not attend: podcasts, online videos, and other formats aligned with parent resources at home.
- Advertise events through multiple modalities: personal invitations in the family’s home language, emails, social media, phone messages, and postcards.
- Establish a positive relationship with families during the first few weeks of school by making phone calls and using authentic outreach efforts.
- Hire a family/community liaison to explicitly connect and communicate with families about the resources available within the community.
- Design support for families around reading skills, homework, student progress-monitoring, and conversations about academic and non-academic supports.
- Communicate using the family’s home language when sharing information about events, expectations, and available resources and materials.
- Give families timely notice and schedule flexible meeting times to provide families with irregular work schedules more opportunities to participate.
- Identify families where English is not the home language and provide interpreters at events to support these families.
- Design activities and games for students to take home to play with their families.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Harvard: Harvard Family Research Project, [A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships](#), and [Harvard edX—Introduction to Family Engagement in Education](#)

- National Network of Partnership Schools: Dr. Joyce Epstein, [Six Types of Involvement: Keys to Successful Partnerships](#) and [PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment](#)
- OSPI: [WA State Title I, Part A website](#), [Funds of Knowledge and Home Visits Toolkit](#)
- REL: Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Young Children: Engaging Diverse Families Project](#)
- [Washington State Family and Community Engagement Trust](#)
- [High Expectations](#)
- [Washoe County School District and University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension: Literacy Tip Sheets for families](#)

Supporting Research

Families can and do make a difference in the academic and social-emotional lives of students. School-based family engagement efforts can have a positive impact on K–12 student academic achievement (Jeynes, 2012). However, effective family engagement practices ultimately support improved student academic and non-academic outcomes (Casper & Lopez, 2006). “When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement” (Henderson and Mapp, 2002, p. 8).

- Family engagement strategies are built on the foundation that:
- All families have goals and dreams for their children.
- All families have the capacity to support a child’s literacy outcomes.
- All families and educators are equal partners.
- Educational leaders are responsible for engaging partnerships (Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007).

The Washington State Governor’s Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) recommends developing and sustaining meaningful, culturally responsive school and family partnerships. The [OEO Family and Community Engagement Recommendations](#) (2016) highlights the importance of genuine, authentic relationships between diverse groups of families, educators, and community members to support student success in schools.

Family and community *engagement* strategies are more inclusive than *involvement* strategies. Consider the following (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Graham-Clay, 2005):

Involvement means to include as a necessary condition. Involvement strategies tend to coincide with meeting requirements and lack a true partnership. Family and community involvement strategies often result in **one-directional communication**. This looks and feels like educators passing on information to families.

Engagement means to pledge or to make an agreement. Engagement strategies work to develop relationships and to build trust. Family and community engagement strategies ignite **two-way communication** and brings families and educators together as equal partners in the decision-making processes. This looks and feels like teamwork.

Communication with families is vital to promote collaboration between students' home and school settings, and provides the direct benefit of increased student achievement. However, barriers can and do exist that limit effective communication with families. Schools need to consider socio-economic conditions, cultural and linguistic factors, disability-related needs, and other family characteristics when strategizing how to overcome barriers to effective communication and collaboration with families (Drummond & Stipek, 2004; Cheatham & Santos, 2011; Tucker & Schwartz, 2013). Schools should make a considerable effort to promote collaboration by using multiple means of communication (Graham-Clay, 2005; Cheatham & Santos, 2011). Often families only receive communication from the school when their child has done something wrong. The perspectives of families with a history of negative interactions with the school can inform communications plans if their input is valued (Tucker & Schwartz, 2013). Effective two-way communication with families can be implemented in a variety of ways to strengthen collaboration between school and home.

It is important to have a well-organized family engagement plan around partnership with families (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Family and community engagement can include a variety of activities and events. When planning family and community activities/events, it is important to include and invite families and community members in all aspects of planning and implementation stages (OEO, 2016). Joint decision making and responsibility are key components to successful partnerships. When planning events, it is also important to have targeted learning goals and time for participants to practice and receive feedback on the desired outcomes. For example, the learning goal of a literacy event may be to provide families with shared reading strategies to support literacy at home. This event would be designed to provide strategies, examples of the strategy in use, and time for family and community participants to practice and receive feedback on implementing these strategies (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013).

Home visits can be beneficial for all students K–12, especially for new-comers to a district and for those transitioning into a new building. These meetings can occur before the school year begins, and they can take place in the student's home or at an agreed-upon location in the community. As families and educators meet for the first time, these conversations should not be

an overload of information based on expectations and rules. Instead, these meetings should be conversational and focused solely on the child. One question educators can ask families to start these conversations would be: "What are your hopes and dreams for your child?" It is important for families and educators to build a foundation of trust and respect.

One example of home visits could occur at the beginning of the school year when kindergarten teachers meet with families and early learning providers to talk about each child's strengths and needs. The Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, or WaKIDS, brings families, educators, and early learning providers together to support each child's learning and transition into public schools. These meetings are beneficial to students, families, and educators and can take place in neutral locations. They can also increase student attendance and family participation in additional school activities and events (Flamboyan Foundation, 2011; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013).

Family and community engagement includes all of the various ways families and communities effectively support a child's learning and healthy development. Family members are a child's first teachers, and literacy development begins at home. Engagement strategies should target multiple stages of a child's literacy progression, and they should be consistent with, and inclusive of, a child's home language and culture (Wessels & Trainin, 2014). A focus on intergenerational family literacy, working with the family rather than the child or the adult separately, provides the greatest impact. Effective programs might provide early childhood interventions, early parenting strategies, and increased adult literacy in addition to guidance for parents in the development of their child's literacy skills (St. Pierre, Layzar & Barnes, 1995; Wasik & Fierrmann, 2004, p. 3). Family engagement strategies involving learning activities at home are more likely to have a positive effect on both student achievement and social-emotional development (Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, & Lloyd, 2013).

Well-designed family engagement programs "should be ongoing, culturally relevant, responsive to the community, and target both families and school staff" (O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2014). Using a student's home language and providing families with strategies to support cognitive development that are explicit and culturally responsive empower families to take an active role in supporting their student's literacy development (Wessels & Trainin, 2014). High interest informational text can promote comprehension skill practice among parents, caregivers, and children and should also be included in effective family literacy activities. (Pinkham and Neuman, 2012). Hosting family literacy workshops is one way to guide parents in literacy activities such as participating in shared reading, working on fluency, and using electronic resources to enhance literacy skills at home (Mort, 2014). Family workshops can increase literacy dialogue at home by modeling literate behaviors (Mort, 2014). Family nights can also introduce parents to school and community resources, ways to provide homework help, and other ways to support the school

curriculum at home, each of which can greatly benefit student literacy achievement through family support (Waldener, 2004; Blazer, 2011; St. Clair et al., 2012; Wessels & Trainin, 2014).

Intervention activities that students can practice at home should be the same activities students are working on in the classroom (Mort, 2014). This ensures that students are familiar with the tasks and can go home and successfully practice the literacy development skills with their families. For example, students experience valuable practice time and build literacy confidence when they take home books they have already read with success in the classroom. Word games are another effective strategy to increase student engagement in word activities at home. Students learn how to play the game in class, and then they take the game home and teach their family how to play. By designing games and establishing at-home literacy routines for students, educators can help families create positive literacy experiences outside of school (Mort, 2014).

It is important to establish family academic supports early in order to establish long-lasting effect on student reading achievement. For example, a family literacy program for migrant kindergarten families showed significant academic gains for students at the end of 1st grade, as well as at the end of 5th and 6th grades (St. Clair et al., 2012). This culturally sensitive program provided family workshops with an adult educator to support student literacy development at home. Additionally, families were provided with materials to support literacy learning at home: letter and word identification games, books, and electronic talking books. By teaching migrant families how to support their child's language skills, schools can establish a positive collaborative effort with families that will result in increased language and literacy development at home (St. Clair et al., 2012).

As schools/districts review student outcome data, it is important to include families and community members that represent the diversity of the school. Team members should represent the demographic needs of all students. Data-based decision making and goal setting improve when educators and community members work together. One suggestion is to have an action team for partnerships (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). An action team should consist of teachers, administrators, parents, and community partners, and be proactively connected to the school council or school improvement team. The focus of the partnership is to promote student success, develop the annual plans for family engagement, evaluate family engagement, and develop activities to include all families in the school community.

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P-4 Community Partnerships

Establishing community partnerships is a research-based practice. Community involvement and partnership not only yield positive results in upper grades, it also has a strong correlation to positive student outcomes for younger children. While there may be different local structures and compositions of community partnerships, many of these components are foundational to the success of this intervention practice to support literacy development. P-4 community partnerships funded with LAP funds must have a focus of supporting LAP-served students.

Program Possibilities

- Enhance library and community center partnerships by hosting cross-staff and volunteer activities. Invite library staff to lead activities (e.g., shared reading, book talks, how to access digital resources, etc.) during literacy night activities. Plan grade-level events onsite at the library.
- Invite families and community partners to share cultural traditions through oral storytelling, poetry, songs, and crafts during monthly literacy events.
- Develop partnerships for discounted and free admission fees one day a month with local children’s museums, zoos, etc., for students and families enrolled at your school. Students will have the opportunity to participate in multiple speaking and listening activities. These experiences build background knowledge for reading comprehension and provide ideas for writing topics.
- Grow strong wrap-around support for children by building decision-making teams of community partners, families, and school personnel to support working together.
- Partner with community organizations to provide a network of support for students and families to develop foundational literacy skills in the community.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students and families learning English as an additional language benefit from the additional linguistic, academic, and socio-emotional support provided by community partners.
- Students who have not yet met ELA Standards benefit from additional literacy support from community partnerships.
- Students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch programs benefit from community support and resources that support literacy.
- Students in elementary school literacy intervention programs benefit from building and sustaining community partnerships.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Focus on working with community and parents versus seeking involvement only.
- Establish goals for short-term actions and activities.
- Establish long-term goals and work trajectory.
- Establish a measurement point in the school year to evaluate the work and processes.
- Use individual/group data to target program design.
- Identify school staff to be stable and ongoing leads throughout multiple years.
- Partner with local healthcare leaders.
- Identify (where possible) family/community lead for a school year.
- Identify student assessment communication protocols to share information with parents.
- Apply for community grants and establish sustainable funding.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- Community in Schools Washington [Model](#)
- Build [Initiative: Community Development Toolkit](#)
- [Washington Reading Corps](#)
- [ReadingPartners.org](#) [\[Video\]](#)

Supporting Research

Community involvement in schools is a long-standing indicator of a school's success across the country. The goal is to engage community involvement, and grow a partnership in which the school and community members work together to create *action* and to *support* children (Ferlazzo, 2011). The most successful partnerships are developed between schools, communities, and families (Jacobson & Blank, 2015). How these partnerships develop is important. Merely engaging family and communities in superficial activities will not improve students' experiences in the same way as developing deep, authentic, and sustainable collaborative partnerships (Ferlazzo, 2011).

Some community-based programs are established and sustained at individual school sites, while other community-based programs span across districts. What this looks like might be different for different schools and communities. Generally, community-based partnerships can be categorized into three types of programs (NEA, 2011):

1. Community and family programs include community organizations, community residents, and families.
2. Family engagement-focused programs.

3. Wrap-around programs that promote social and health services.

Community-based organizations provide structures and offset costs to implement programs. Across Washington, schools are implementing community-based partnerships with various community organizations. The [Washington Reading Corps](#) is a statewide service program committed to improving early literacy and reading outcomes. Reading Corps members serve in schools to provide tutoring and to build capacity for schools to benefit from additional community volunteer involvement. Members also focus on strategies to enhance family engagement in literacy activities. Several Washington schools work with [Page Ahead](#). This community-based partner supports family engagement strategies, summer book programs, and early learning centers as they prepare students for kindergarten readiness.

Community-based partners focus on family engagement, and they approach family engagement programs strategically. Family involvement coordinators, parent-teacher organizations, and parent-school community teams coordinate and support family engagement in schools/districts, unlike traditional family involvement activities where schools send home fliers telling parents what to do, offer parenting classes, refer students to local tutoring programs, seek parent approval for compliance, and hold annual Fun Nights (NEA, 2011). Community-focused schools focus on family engagement. They seek input from families and community members, and they listen to the input. Community-based partners and schools take a shared ownership approach to family engagement and school improvement (NEA, 2011).

Community-based wrap-around supports reduce barriers to learning by establishing purposeful partnerships between community organizations and schools (Blank & Villarreal, 2015). Social and health services are provided resulting in improved student attendance and learning outcomes (NEA 2011, Jacobson & Blank, 2015). Support services may include connecting families to foodbanks and programs that support basic nutrition and shelter needs. Health, eye, dental, and social/emotional services also support student achievement in the classroom. Whenever possible, providing space within the school or within walking distance from the school allows families the opportunity to access wrap-around supports. Schools/districts may use case managers and family and community advocates to support community-based wrap-around services.

Building a strong communication structure is vital to establishing strong P-4 community partnerships. The tone of communications outreach can directly influence the strength of relationships. Effective communication and relationship building starts with listening (Ferlazzo, 2011). Encouraging a system that fosters structures so parents and communities not only receive information but can also provide feedback and express concerns is a strong first step (NEA, 2011; Ferlazzo, 2011).

Ideas to build communication structures can cross a range of methods and approaches. Choosing what makes the most sense for the needs of the local community is key. Taking stock of which methods have the highest impact (e.g., weekly email or monthly mailed report, quarterly meetings or bimonthly *town halls*, etc.) can help teams make efficient choices for maximum impact and efficacy. Regardless of methods, reciprocal communication built on trust is the most effective (Ferlazzo, 2011; NEA, 2011).

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Community-Based Student Mentors

Community-based student mentoring is research based. It is defined as a positive relationship between a non-parental adult (or older youth) and a younger child or youth. Community-based mentoring usually takes place outside the school day with longer sessions and strong mentor-mentee relationships built over time. The structure of the mentoring experience requires goal setting and may include a variety of social, cultural, and academic activities. Community-based student mentors can support literacy development for students who have not yet met ELA Standards. Community partnerships funded with LAP funds must have a focus of supporting LAP-served students.

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Identify possible community connections to support literacy and create a mentor program pairing a non-parental adult to a younger child or youth, provide training for mentor and mentee, develop guidelines for meetings/outings, and create tools for reflection and feedback on the program goals.
- Identify students who might benefit from a community-based mentor to support literacy, do a needs assessment with individual students to gather information to help find the community mentor, set up meetings/events with the students' needs/ interest as the foundation, and gather feedback and reflection on program goals.
- Connect with local libraries, faith-based organizations, and community youth outreach programs to find, train and use adult non-parental mentors who will then connect with identified students who would benefit from a mentor-mentee relationship.
- Partner with Boys and Girls Club and provide transportation after school to support literacy mentoring programs.

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students who have not yet met ELA Standards.
- Students who have not yet met ELA graduation requirements.
- Multilingual students (particularly those who qualify for EL services) benefit from opportunities to converse with native English speakers.
- Students with specific needs: single-parent homes, families in poverty, students who struggle emotionally, socially, and academically and have not yet met ELA Standards.
- Students who come from stressed and busy households and are struggling to meet ELA Standards.
- Students who may need a positive adult role model (for various reasons) and are struggling to meet ELA Standards.

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Activities should be developmentally appropriate and focus on developing speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills.
- Seek parent permission and involve parents in creating goals and activities.
- Provide mentors and mentees regular opportunities to meet and to participate in shared activities over an extended period of time.
- Encourage mentors and mentees to set goals and consistently revisit and adjust goals.
- Screen mentors and identify students who may benefit from the program.
- Identify the characteristics desired in mentors and actively seek out mentors who will commit to the program.
- Provide training for mentors and mentees.
- Monitor and gather feedback on the program to ensure it remains effective.
- Use a mentor coordinator who schedules activities, communicates with families, and recruits/trains/supports mentors and mentees.

Resources—Tools for Planning

- [The ABCs of School-Based Mentoring](#)
- [Impact Evaluation of the U.S. Department of Education’s Student Mentoring Program](#)
- [National Mentoring Partnership](#)
- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of America](#)
- [United Way of America](#)
- Community Partner [Toolkits](#)

Supporting Research

Mentoring programs may be broadly categorized as school based or community based. In school-based mentoring, mentors typically meet with mentees one-on-one during or after the school day and engage in both academic and nonacademic activities. Community-based mentoring occurs outside of the school context. Community-based mentoring sessions are typically longer than school-based mentoring activities. In addition, community-based mentor-mentee relationships often are longer in duration than school-based matches (Herrera, 2011).

Mentoring experiences can take many forms. The structure of the mentoring experience is often influenced by the goals of the mentoring program and may include a variety of social, cultural, and academic activities. Mentors and mentees may spend time studying and going to local events, but may also spend time navigating issues for the mentee such as problems with time

management, conflicts with a teacher, relationship issues, or family problems (Larose et al., 2010). The types of activities may vary based on the age and needs of the mentee. "In late adolescents, activities focused on personal and professional identity, autonomy, time and relationship management, and skills development are believed to meet the needs shared by many young people. Mentoring program managers must ensure that the objectives of their programs and the nature of the activities in these programs strongly reflect the developmental needs of their clientele" (Larose et al., 2010, p. 138).

School-based and community-based mentoring has been found to have a positive effect on student academic outcomes. In a study of mostly middle school African American male students, researchers found an Afrocentric mentoring program to be effective in fostering academic achievement and success in the participating mentees (Gordon et al., 2009). In a five-month Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring program, mentees experienced modest short-term academic gains (Herrera et al., 2011).

Other important benefits include: improved self-esteem levels, better relationships with other adults, more clarity in both academics and future college and career outlook (Community Tool Box, 2015). Community-mentoring programs offer innovative options for both mentor and mentees by building partnerships that may lead to valuable life skills. Mentor programs can break down stereotypes, promote teamwork, and help create a culture of community diversity.

Research shows that to build lasting and effective community-mentoring programs, specific factors must be considered. Community partners must be identified and approached to determine commitment level, willingness to contribute financially, and ability to assist in finding and training mentors. Next, youth recipients of mentoring need to be approached and connected with the "best-fit" mentor. This step is critical to the success of not only the mentor/mentee relationship, but also the program as a whole. These relationships take hard work, open minds, flexibility, and a promise to communicate and problem solve as a team (The Community Toolbox, 2016).

Trust is the final factor when building a lasting community mentoring program. Trust among the stakeholders; trust between the mentor and mentee; and trust in the process. Young people often have trust issues with adult authorities, therefore, mentors need to be sensitive to this possibility and be willing to build the relationship slowly. Open communication, consistency, and positive encouragement are key to building trust while also promoting responsible feelings and actions.

The above elements, combined with the principles of mentoring outlined in [*The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*](#), will ensure a quality program that will instill confidence in the youth who are served. These principles (listed below) should be the foundation upon which any fruitful program is built.

Principle	Description
Recruitment	Recruit mentors and mentees by relaying a realistic description of the programs elements and goals.
Screening	Screen mentors and mentees to determine commitment, time, and personal characteristics needed to form a lasting relationship.
Training	Training must focus on ensuring that prospective mentors, mentees, and their parents or guardians have the basic knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to build a safe and effective relationship.
Matching	Matching helps create appropriate mentoring relationships by using strategies most likely to increase the odds that the relationship will be safe and effective.
Monitoring and Support	Monitoring and support is critical to mentoring as relationships develop and need to be adjusted to changing needs. Support may also include additional training when needed.
Closure	Closure is a normal stage in a mentoring relationship and mentors and mentees should be able to prepare for closure and reflect upon their experience with the relationship.

These principles are the pillars of community-based mentoring programs that will impact students academically, emotionally, and socially.

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Conclusion

The ELA menu will be updated annually, no later than July 1, each calendar year. Interested stakeholders are invited to submit recommendations for intervention practices, along with related research references, for consideration by the expert panel for possible inclusion in subsequent menus. It is important to note that if new research emerges that disproves the effectiveness of a practice that has historically been included in this report, the practice may be removed and no longer allowed under LAP guidelines. Public comment forms are available on the [project webpage](#) on OSPI's website.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY SKILLS

Combining the findings from the National Reading Panel (2000), National Early Literacy Panel (2008) and National Council on Teacher Quality (2014), guidance on early literacy skills instruction and interventions is essential to our success to increase 4th-grade reading achievement scores. Educator understanding of these skills is essential for the successful implementation of best practices and strategies in K–4 literacy classrooms and K–12 literacy interventions.

The National Reading Panel identifies five pillars of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The Washington state literacy vision supports the five pillars and includes oral language and alphabet knowledge as being essential components of the foundational literacy skills. High-quality instruction in the foundational literacy skills is vital to students' literacy success. Each component is directly correlated with an early predictor of literacy success (NELP, 2008; NICHD, 2000). Deep understanding of essential foundational literacy skills must guide professionals as they plan and develop appropriate and engaging instruction and supplemental services for students who have not yet met literacy standards and for their teachers through professional learning opportunities (Pittman & Dorel, 2014; Strickland & Shanahan, 2004).

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) provides additional information on the following areas: oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, phoneme-grapheme correspondence, and fluency.

Oral Language

Research demonstrates that oral language ability impacts children's success in learning to read, as well as overall academic success (Coll, 2005; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). "Oral language is the foundation of learning to read and write" (Roskos et al., 2009, p. 1). The English oral language ability of children as they enter school varies widely and may be impacted by various cultural factors (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Crawford-Brooke, 2013). Some factors affecting English oral language development can include:

- Exposure to language and print
- Opportunities to expand their background experiences
- Opportunities for oral conversations

Early gaps in reading ability and language development that result from a weak foundation in English oral language can continue throughout a student's academic experience (Crawford-Brooke, 2013; Fielding et al., 2007; Juel et al., 2003). However, lack of oral language exposure

should not be interpreted as a learning disability. Proficiency in a language other than English is also powerful. Families should engage their children in the strongest language of the home, and schools should engage their students in the strongest language of the classroom.

Speaking a second language in the home is very beneficial to oral language and literacy development. Families should be encouraged to speak languages in which they are fully fluent to aid oral language development, especially vocabulary and concept understanding. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all important skills for learning. Therefore, children who have had a wide variety of language experiences will bring a stronger, intuitive, knowledge of how language works.

Oral language is an integral part of learning to read and write (Coll, 2005; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002; Crawford-Brooke, 2013); literacy instruction must therefore incorporate a focus on oral language for all students. Beginning readers use their oral vocabulary to make sense of the words they see in print. Readers must know what most of the words mean before they can understand what they are reading. Because students' vocabularies are an essential factor in student success in school and beyond (Beck & McKeown, 2007), students also need to be exposed to a wide variety of words and texts and to solid blocks of time for independent reading. One's use of oral language enables students to learn not just in literacy but also in all areas (Munro, 2009).

According to Kirkland and Patterson (2005), the development of oral language may be facilitated through an authentic environment for students to engage in conversations and thoughtfully planned oral language activities. For example, classrooms should be print-rich and include student work. Print on the walls should be functional, instructional supports (e.g., anchor charts, visual word walls—with picture support), signs for routine activities, (e.g., marking lunch choices), and all should be accompanied by picture support. Time should be scheduled for routine opportunities for students to converse with each other, such as a ritual class meeting at the end of the day for students to discuss challenges and successes of the day, and book clubs throughout the day and across content areas. Thoughtfully planned oral language activities may include think-alouds where oral language is modeled, shared reading, reader's theater, daily news, book clubs, turn and talk, and interactive read-alouds. "Teachers can no longer afford to squeeze a read-aloud book between lunchtime and bathroom break. Because reading aloud is so important to language development, we must systematically and explicitly plan for its use in the daily routine" (Kirkland & Patterson, 2005, p. 393).

For successful oral language implementation, the classroom environment must be supportive and nurturing. Specific time designated for listening and speaking activities must start in kindergarten or, even better, in preschool. Using the precise language of the content is important because development of language needs to be simultaneous with content learning.

Not only does attention to oral language help develop language and reading, it benefits writing. Students benefit from talking about what they are thinking and what they plan to write before attempting to write.

Phonological Awareness

Reading success in English, especially decoding, is connected to phonological awareness. Listening, rhyming, and identifying sounds in oral words or pictures are early literacy skills that help develop successful readers of English (Sullivan-Dudzic, Gearns, & Leavell, 2007). Phonemic awareness can be stimulated through parent-child activities [such as] playing rhyming games and reading rhymes (Pressley & Allington, 2015).

The most advanced area of phonological awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds—phonemes—in spoken words, called phonemic awareness. With phonemic awareness comes the understanding of the idea that spoken words can be broken down into sounds. Before children learn to read print, they need to become aware of how the sounds in words work. They must understand that words are made up of speech sounds (phonemes), the smallest parts of sound in a spoken word. Based on a simple view of reading, research suggests that two types of striving readers emerge—poor decoders and poor comprehenders. The group of poor decoders may not have strong skills in phonological awareness (Elwér, et al., 2013).

Equally important to understand is that phonemic awareness is not critical in all languages. For example, Spanish is taught by syllables, not by single sounds. Therefore, a student who reads and writes in Spanish may not demonstrate phonemic awareness in English, even though the student is a reader and writer (Hernandez, 2015).

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) (p. 19–20) describes various aspects of phonological awareness and ends with a general progression of phonemic awareness development in grades K–2. Note that this progression refers to spoken language, not print.

All aspects of phonological awareness, including the sophisticated aspects of phonemic awareness refer to spoken language:

- Phoneme Identity (Spoken Language)
- Phoneme Isolation (Spoken Language)
- Phoneme Blending (Spoken Language)
- Phoneme Segmentation (Spoken Language)
- Phoneme Addition (Spoken Language)
- Phoneme Substitution (Spoken Language)

- Phoneme Deletion (Spoken Language)

Phonemic Awareness can be developed through spoken language activities:

- Identify and categorize sounds
- Blend sounds to form words
- Delete or add sounds to form new words
- Substitute sounds to make new words

Phonemic awareness instruction is usually taught in kindergarten and sometimes continued in 1st grade. Early readers can show they have phonemic awareness in several ways. The basics include:

- Recognizing which words in a set of oral words start with the same sound
- Isolating and saying the first or last sound in a spoken word
- Combining or blending the separate sounds in a spoken word in order to say the word
- Breaking up or segmenting a spoken word into its separate sounds
- Representing each phoneme when spelling (e.g., doktr for doctor)

Alphabet Knowledge (AK)

The NELP (2008) recognizes alphabet knowledge (AK) as an essential component in literacy and an early predictor of literacy success. Jones & Reutzel (2012) identify AK as “an essential prerequisite for developing early reading proficiency” (p. 448). Studies have shown that AK is a predictor in reading proficiency of multilingual students. AK is also thought to be a predictor of reading proficiency in students who are genetically at-risk for dyslexia. (Jones & Reutzel, 2012, p. 449).

AK instruction has been predominately based on what has *traditionally* been done and not research-based best practice. For example, teaching a letter a week in sequential order of the alphabet is not a research-based best practice, and it has many disadvantages. Teaching a letter a week has been criticized because it takes 26 weeks to teach (Mort, 2014). Research has identified numerous factors that influence and can enhance AK instruction that are highly effective for all students. For example, research regarding the advantages of the letters in the student’s name, alphabetic order (at the beginning and the end of the alphabet), letter frequency, letter pronunciation, and consonant phoneme acquisition order, can inform AK instruction (Jones & Reutzel, 2012).

When students have AK, they develop the foundation for early decoding, spelling, and working toward comprehension (Jones & Reutzel, 2012; Strickland, D.S. & Shanahan, T., 2004). It is,

however, essential to remember that saying a word correctly does not mean that one understands the word or concepts. Some students will be able to say words or decode words without understanding what they are reading (Riddle Buly & Valencia, 2002; Valencia & Riddle Buly, 2004). Riddle Buly and Valencia have identified various profiles of readers, which are important to consider when working with students, especially students who are adding English as an additional language. AK can be supported in a variety of ways at home such as letter puzzles, reading to children, and talking about the book and the words and letters, alphabet games, alphabet songs, and carefully selected electronic programs. In addition, it is a common focus of children's television shows, storybooks, and computerized applications (Pressley & Allington, 2015).

Suggested tips for instruction: (1) frequent, brief, explicit, and repetitive instruction, (2) letter-a-day instructional cycles, (3) 10/20 review cycles, (4) name, sound, upper/lower case, and text identification, (5) each pacing cycle has a different sequence, and (6) focus on difficult-to-learn letters in additional pacing cycles and reviews (Jones & Reutzel, 2012).

Phonics (Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences)

Phonics comes from the term graphophonics, meaning the relationships between symbol and sound. When simply referred to as *phonics*, the definition can be muddled.

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) refers to this area as phoneme-grapheme (or sound-symbol) correspondence, and is a more accurate label for this foundational area. Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondence defines the relationship between written letters and the spoken sounds that those letters represent. Conclusions from decades of research in reading related to grapheme-phoneme correspondence are summarized in the following set of recommendations:

- Teach every letter-sound correspondence explicitly. Research supporting this idea is simply overwhelming. Children who have been taught explicitly to decode words are far more likely to decode words successfully in the early grades than children who have had limited experiences.
- Teach high-frequency letter-sound relationships early. Successful materials tend to involve students in activities in which they can experience immediate and ongoing success. A successful grapheme-phoneme correspondence program gets children reading as soon as possible by teaching the highest frequency relationships early.
- Teach sound-blending explicitly. Students do not necessarily understand how to connect the phoneme-grapheme connections in unfamiliar words. Students with explicit teaching outperform those who have had little or no training.
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- Teach sound-blending explicitly. Students do not necessarily understand how to connect the phoneme-grapheme connections in unfamiliar words. Students with explicit teaching outperform those who have had little or no training.
- Teach students how to chunk words.

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) (p. 22) provides three useful principles for chunking longer words into syllables:

Fluency

Reading fluency is the ability to read with appropriate rate, expression, and accuracy. Allington (2006) describes fluency as “reading in phrases, with appropriate intonation and prosody—fluency is reading with expression” (p. 94). Rasinski defines fluency as the bridge between grapheme-phoneme relationships and comprehension. Reading with a lack of fluency is directly associated (correlated, but not causal) with lower reading comprehension. Rasinski (2002) suggests that fluent readers simply read more than those who struggle with reading because they are self-motivated and they read for pleasure (Rasinski, 2002), thus they get more practice with reading. Signs of reading disabilities begin with decoding and develop into slow, dysfluent, inaccurate reading (Kiuru et al., 2013). High-quality reading fluency instruction “lays the foundation for success in reading” (Rasinski & Zimmerman, 2013).

Although Classroom-based Measurements (CBMs) that measure words correct per minute (wcpm) are commonly used, they have been identified as being problematic. Allington (2006) notes that practicing speed-reading of words and non-words to increase students’ wcpm “does not improve text-reading performances (p. 95)”. To be efficient readers, students must have many opportunities to practice appropriate intonation, prosody, and phrasing (Allington, 2001; Rasinski, 2006) and lots of opportunity to read text independently. Recent research shows that wcpm in upper elementary grades and beyond has only a moderate correlation to comprehension, with a higher correlation as an accurate performance indicator for primary-aged students (Hunley, et al., 2013; Valencia, et al. 2010). However, it is important to understand that a correlation is simply a relationship; it does not show that fast reading creates stronger readers: what it does suggest is that strong readers are likely to read faster.

The misunderstanding of fluency has led to many educators focusing on speed and accuracy, since these are easily measured, without consideration of the other critical components of fluency described by Allington (2006), and cited above, as “reading in phrases, with appropriate intonation and prosody—fluency is reading with expression.” If speed and accuracy are used in isolation as a screening tool, it is imperative to understand that false negatives are likely to occur

when calculating wcpm. What that means is that students who are actually at-risk are not identified. Valencia, et al. (2010) report, “findings of under-identification parallel several other studies of screening accuracy using wcpm oral reading measures...rates ranged from 15 percent to as high as 47 percent, depending on the benchmark used” (p. 287). When students are screened for rate and accuracy, nearly half of the students identified receive the wrong intervention (Valencia, et al., 2010). This results as a misunderstanding of the purpose of a screening measure.

According to Allington (2001), “[w]e cannot get too carried away with a focus on reading rate” (p. 71). We must be careful not to lose sight of all the indicators of oral reading fluency: rate, accuracy, and prosody; or, as Dawn Christiana, from Bellingham Public Schools, likes to say, “rate is not a teaching point.”

Fountas and Pinnell (2008) describe [fluency in six dimensions](#), with descriptions and rubrics for each dimension:

1. Pausing—how the reader is guided by punctuation to reflect meaning.
2. Phrasing—how the reader groups words to reflect meaning.
3. Stress—how the reader emphasizes words to reflect meaning.
4. Intonation—how the reader uses expression to reflect meaning.
5. Rate—how the reader uses appropriate rate—not too fast and not too slow—to reflect meaning.
6. Integration—how the reader uses 1–5 together to reflect meaning.

Rasinski (2004) describes an analogy between reading aloud and giving a speech: the reader, like the speaker, uses the voice in a variety of tones, speeds, and expressions to capture the attention of the audience. “Speaking in appropriate phrases, emphasizing certain words, raising and lowering volume, and varying intonation help the listener understand what the speaker is trying to communicate” (Rasinski, 2004, p. 2). Just like giving a speech, reading aloud is a performance task that can be intimidating for some students, especially those with anxiety, striving to read, and those who speak English as an additional language. Thus, oral fluency is important when reading to others, and may be an indicator of internal fluency. However, it is critical to remember that the purpose of fluent reading, as a developing reader, is that fluency in our heads assists us as readers to understand the author’s meaning. The goal is for students to read fluently and with meaning—it is an essential learning component for students to become proficient readers (Rasinski, 2002; Rasinski 2013).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge can be a predictor of reading fluency and comprehension success (Hickman, et al., 2004). Students' depths of knowledge in vocabulary varies significantly when they start school. The number of vocabulary words a student starts with on the first day of school can be as low as zero (for students who do not speak English as their primary language at home), and it generally ranges from 5,000 words to 20,000 words. Vocabulary knowledge is highly correlated to the family's socio-economic status (Marulis & Neuman, 2010), and it can be acquired in multiple ways: by listening, speaking, reading, writing, and sight (word practice) (International Reading Association, 2002). "The relationship between vocabulary is thought to be reciprocal—knowing more words facilitates successful comprehension, while successful comprehension and wider reading lead to opportunities to learn more words" (Lesaux, et al., 2010, p. 197).

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) (p. 32) provides information on vocabulary acquisition and the three tiers of words.

Jensen (1998) supports that vocabulary skills start developing in infancy when adults talk to, sing to, and read to children. Natural approaches to vocabulary acquisition are effective strategies for multilingual students; however, the classroom cannot easily replicate primary language learning experiences (Jesness, 2004). Tim Rasinski (2014) advocates using poetry and songs to build vocabulary. A careful balance of formal study and natural approaches enable multilingual students to acquire active knowledge. Younger students benefit more from natural techniques, and intermediate students require a more explicit approach. Educators need to decide which words are best taught naturally and which words are best taught analytically. Vocabulary acquisition requires a significant time allotment for students to be successful. Larger classes need to have English-speaking volunteers and assistants to support vocabulary acquisition (Jesness, 2004).

Reading Standard 4 and *Language Standards 4, 5 & 6* explicitly focus on vocabulary in English language arts. Vocabulary can be an indirect focus, but it is a necessary comprehension tool across multiple content area standards (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Vocabulary knowledge is "emphasized...more than 150 times" in the Common Core Standards (Manyak et al., 2014, p. 13).

Learning vocabulary is multifaceted. It is both implicit and explicit. Vocabulary instruction should be provided both directly and indirectly to support all areas of learning (International Reading Association, 2002). The National Reading Panel (2000) recognized there is not a single approach to teaching and learning vocabulary and suggests the following to support vocabulary instruction:

- Direct and indirect instruction,
- Repetition

- Rich contexts
- Active engagement

Manyak et al. (2014) recognize that vocabulary instruction outcomes are dependent on high quality implementation of research-informed instruction and activities—simply applying these techniques and strategies “does not in and of itself guarantee efficient and effective vocabulary instruction” (p. 22). For example, in more than 50 studies where educators implemented Marzano’s *the six-step process* for teaching vocabulary, student outcomes varied from negative effects to gains greater than 40 percentile points (Marzano, 2009). In reviewing these studies, the findings show that implementing the strategy as it was intended had a greater impact on student outcomes than when educators adapted, changed, or modified the delivery of the strategy. Vocabulary interventions that are taught explicitly versus passively also have better results (Marulis & Neuman, 2010). Explicit vocabulary interventions have the greatest effect on students with lower vocabulary knowledge, and interventions that combine explicit vocabulary instruction with implicit instruction (e.g. exposure in books and oral language) had that largest effect size (Bowne, Yoshika, & Snow, 2017).

It is important to identify when educators are not using best practices to support vocabulary learning. For example, instructional time devoted solely to completing worksheets and looking up word lists are not best practice; unfortunately, Fisher and Frey (2014) report that during vocabulary instructional time this practice occurs 39 percent of the time. Moreover, in lower elementary classrooms, vocabulary instruction is often taught during read-aloud times, but this strategy only results in 20-40 percent improvement on target words. “Few read-aloud interventions have shown effects on general vocabulary knowledge” (Silverman & Crandell, 2010).

Providing students with “more opportunities to interact with and process word meanings have been found to be the most effective at supporting both learning of the words taught and growth in overall receptive vocabulary” (Bowne, Yoshika, & Snow, 2017). Some effective strategies to support vocabulary instruction include:

- Connecting words to personal experiences
- Comparing and contrasting words
- Providing simple definitions of words
- Creating and answering questions about words
- Connecting words to photos, videos, and books
- Making relationships between words (e.g. synonyms/antonyms)
- Teaching words in groups and word families (Bowne, Yoshika, & Snow, 2017)

Effective vocabulary instruction should be part of rich routines, provide explicit definitions and examples with anchor experiences to support active and deep processing. Vocabulary instruction needs to be multi-faceted and varied for all students. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work for two reasons: (1) students come to classrooms with various depths of vocabulary knowledge, and (2) words simply “differ in nature, ranging from concrete nouns like peninsula . . . to densely conceptual terms like democracy” (Manyak et al., 2014).

Comprehension

Mastery of foundational skills in literacy is directly correlated to successful reading comprehension. Fluency and vocabulary knowledge are both strong predictors of student success in reading comprehension. When approaching interventions for reading comprehension, it is necessary to also assess the student’s proficiency in fluency and vocabulary to ensure the intervention services provided meet the individual needs of the student. It is important to scaffold the interventions accordingly to ensure the reading intervention is comprehension-focused and not decoding-centered (Watson et al., 2012).

[Appendix A of the ELA Standards](#) (p. 27) highlights the need for ELA classrooms to explicitly make the connection between oral and written language because listening comprehension surpasses reading comprehension in the early grades.

The What Works Clearing House Practice Guide (2010) on [Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd grade](#) outlines five recommendations that support reading comprehension. These recommendation are:

- “Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies;
- Teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend , learn, and remember content;
- Guide students through focused, high quality discussion on the meaning of text;
- Select texts purposefully to support comprehension development; and
- Establish an engaging and motivation context in which to teach reading comprehension.”

Having the ability to process information to analyze text, to synthesize text, and to draw conclusions from text are strategies that can be practiced and supported in the classroom both orally and in writing. Activating prior knowledge, or schema, is one of the most effective ways to help students connect to text and build understanding (Messenger, 2015). Background knowledge enhances reading and reading builds background knowledge for future reading experiences; prior knowledge helps the reader understand plot and conflict, make inferences, and draw conclusions (Lemov, 2017). Research supports explicit instruction benefits for students

who have not yet met reading comprehension standards (Watson et al., 2012). Writing about texts also strengthens reading comprehension (Shanahan, 2014).

Current studies specify that direct teaching of text structure and exposure to informational text is beneficial to students as early as pre-school (Culatta et al., 2010). Close reading of complex text is essential for college and career readiness, and is correlated to reading proficiency success (Boyles, 2013). Close reading is a strategy that invites students to examine texts. Close reading provides students opportunities to expand their schema by connecting the reader's background knowledge and prior experiences to the text. Close reading also builds stamina and essential reading habits needed for complex, independent practice. Strategies for close reading include: using short passages (from a few paragraphs to a couple of pages), providing opportunities for re-reading text, annotating text, identifying areas needed for clarification, modelling reading, leading text discussions, asking text-dependent/specific questions, and focusing on observing and analyzing text (Fisher & Frey 2012; Boyles, 2013).

The following reading strategies can help guide scaffolding for reading comprehension (Messenger, 2015; Watson et al., 2012):

- Activate prior knowledge
- Make predictions
- Draw conclusions
- Ask questions
- Make inferences
- Synthesize text
- Build fluency
- Develop vocabulary
- Self-regulation
- Text structure

Shanahan (2014) encourages the following five steps to support student reading success:

- Students should read extensively during instruction across content areas
- Teachers should scaffold guidance and support of grade-level text to increase stamina and rigor
- Texts should be rich in content and challenge students' reading ability
- Students need to explain their answers by using text evidence to support claims
- Students need to write about (summarize and synthesize) texts

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APPENDIX B: 2020 EXPERT PANEL

Due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, OSPI did not convene a panel of experts for the 2020 menu updates. Instead, the LAP team worked with WSIPP and internal OSPI staff to make minor content revisions.

Julia Cramer, M.P.A. (2018–20) is a research associate with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy and conducts research for the state legislature with a focus on K–12 education policy. Her work includes developing an inventory of evidence- and research- based programs for use by school districts in the Learning Assistance Program. Along with the LAP inventory, Julia’s research has also focused on National Board Certified teachers in Washington, paraeducators, school safety and security funding, and early childhood education programs. In addition, Julia is a member of the K–12 Data Governance group that oversees development and implementation of an education data system in Washington State.

APPENDIX C: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Expert Panel Members

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Alice Murner	Cape Flattery School District	Principal, Neah Bay Elementary	2014
Alma Duran	Pasco School District	Director of Special Programs	2018
Amy Mesick	Vancouver Public Schools	LAP Intervention Coordinator	2017, 2018
Amy Thierry	Smarter Balanced	Assistant Director	2018
Angela Borza	Monroe School District	ELA K–5 Teacher	2019
Ann Teberg	Whitworth University	Associate Professor of Education and Director of Student Teaching	2017
Annie Pennucci	WSIPP	Research Associate	2014, 2015
Cheryl Vance	ESD 113	Regional Literacy Coordinator	2014, 2015
Christine Clausen	Everett School District	Literacy Curriculum and Assessment Specialist	2016
Cynthia Chaput	Federal Way Public Schools	Dean of Students	2016
David Tudor	Washougal School District	Curriculum Director	2014, 2015
Dawn Christiana	Bellingham Public Schools	Director, Teaching and Learning	2017
Debra Knesal	Central Avenue Elementary	Principal	2014
Erick Johnson	Washington State University Tri-Cities	Assistant Professor of Bilingual/ESL Education	2014
Erin Chaplin	Yakima School District	P-12 Instructional Director	2014
Glenda Sederstrom	Northeast Washington ESD 101	Coordinator for the Center for Special Education Services	2014, 2015

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Jeffrey Dunn	Deer Park School District	High School Teacher	2016, 2017
John Mitchell	Oakwood Elementary	Principal	2014
Jordan Montalvo	Highline School District	Spanish Dual Language Specialist	2019
Julia Cramer	WSIPP	Research Associate	2018
Justin Young	Eastern Washington University	Assistant Professor, Director of English Composition Program & Writing Center	2015, 2016
Katharine Overhauser-Smith	Michael Anderson Elementary	Literacy Specialist	2017
Kathy Shoop	Northwest ESD 189	Assistant Superintendent	2014, 2015
Kimberly Witte	PineCrest Elementary	Elementary Teacher	2015
Leilani Thomas	Concrete School District	Special Programs Director	2016, 2017, 2019
LaWonda Smith	Puget Sound ESD 121	Director K-12 Learning, Leadership and Student Success	2019
Liisa Potts	EdReports.org	ELA Director	2016
Lisa Markussen	Edmonds School District	Learning Support and Title I/LAP Reading Specialist	2019
Lindsey Backus	ESD 123	Regional Literacy Coordinator	2019
Linda Wert	Spokane School District	Coordinator of Special Programs	2014, 2015, 2016
Lori Inman	Mead School District	Secondary ELA Content Specialist	2016
Mary Atkinson	Mukilteo School District	Visual Art	2017
Marsha Riddle Buly	Western Washington University	Professor	2016, 2017, 2018
Mary Boyle	Pateros School District	Special Programs Director	2017

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Matt Lemon	WSIPP	Research Associate	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
Michele Vegas	North Thurston School District	Elementary Teacher	2017
Mike Jacobsen	White River School District	Curriculum Director	2014
Molly Branson Thayer	University of Washington	Director of Quality Youth Development	2016
Nancy Duffey	Wenatchee School District	Director of State and Federal Programs	2014
Pamela Pottle	Bellingham School District	ELA Coach	2014
Patricia Jones	Woodland School District	Instructional Coach/LAP Coordinator	2017
Rachel Dibble	Yakima School District	Assessment Specialist	2015
Roger Chow	Tacoma School District	Curriculum and Instruction	2014
Sara Shaw	Stevens Elementary	English Language Development (ELD) Teacher/Trainer	
Saundra Hill	Pasco School District	Superintendent	2014, 2015
Stephanie Strachan	Western Washington University	Assistant Professor	2018
Ted Howard II	Garfield High School	Principal	2015
Teri Ann Barlow	Renton School District	Secondary Teacher	2016
Terry Lyon	Lawton Elementary	Elementary Teacher	2015
Theresa Kendall	West Valley School District	Categorical Programs/K-4 Literacy Administrator	2016, 2017
Todd Johnson	Capitol Region ESD 113	Director, Center for Research and Data	2015, 2016
Wendy Blocher	Renton School District	Learning Assistance Program Facilitator	2016

OSPI Staff, National Advisors, and Consultants

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Aira Jackson	OSPI	Director, K–12 ELA	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Alyssa Westall Ibañez	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Bilingual Education	2017, 2018, 2019
Amy Ripley	OSPI	K–12 Literacy Specialist, Learning and Teaching	2014, 2015
Amy Thierry	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP ELA and Research	2015, 2016, 2017
Amy Vaughn	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP Math and Research	2014, 2015
Andrea Cobb	OSPI	Executive Director, Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL)	2014, 2017, 2018, 2019
Anne Gallagher	OSPI	Director, Learning and Teaching Mathematics	2014
Annie Pennell	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP	2020
Anton Jackson	OSPI	Director, Assessment Development	2020
Ben King	OSPI	Communications Consultant	2019, 2020
Beth Simpson	OSPI	ELA Assessment Specialist	2015
Carrie Hert	OSPI	Executive Assistant	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Caryn Sabourin Ward	National Implementation Research Network	Senior Implementation Specialist	2015, 2016
Dean Fixsen	National Implementation Research Network	Co-Director	2014, 2015
Deb Came	OSPI	Director, Student Information	2014
Dixie Grunenfelder	OSPI	Director, K-12 System Supports	2016, 2017, 2018

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Estela Garcia	OSPI	Administrative Assistant	2017, 2018
Faith Rackley	OSPI	Secretary Senior, Title I, Part A, Highly Capable & LAP	2020
Gayle Pauley	OSPI	Assistant Superintendent, Special Programs and Federal Accountability	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Latifah Phillips	OSPI	Director, Office of Native Education	2019
Gil Mendoza	OSPI	Deputy Superintendent, K–12 Education	2014, 2015, 2016
Greg Williamson	OSPI	Director, Student Support	2014
Helen Malagon	OSPI	Director, Migrant Bilingual	2014
Jami Peterson	OSPI	Executive Assistant	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Jason Miller	OSPI	Assistant Director, Title I, Part A/LAP	2020
Jess Lewis	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Behavior and Discipline	2014, 2015
Jessica Vavrus	OSPI	Assistant Superintendent, Learning and Teaching	2014, 2015
Joan Johnston Nelson	OSPI	EL Trainer and Consultant	2015
John Bresko	OSPI	Program Supervisor Special Education	2014
Jon Mishra	OSPI	Director, Title I, Part A/LAP	2020
Jordyn Green	OSPI	Data Analyst, Student Information	2015, 2016, 2017
Joshua Lynch	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Student Discipline and Behavior	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Judith Mosby	OSPI	Director, Student and School Success Reading Instruction, Assessment, and Implementation	2014, 2015
Julie Chace	OSPI	Administrative Assistant	2015, 2016

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Justin Young	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP ELA and Research	2014
Kathe Taylor	OSPI	Assistant Superintendent, Learning and Teaching	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Kelcey Schmitz	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Integrated Student Supports	2017, 2018, 2019
Kevan Saunders	OSPI	Administrative Assistant	2015, 2016
Kimberlee Cusick	OSPI	Secretary Senior, LAP	2015, 2016, 2017
Kristi Coe	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP Math and Research	2017, 2018, 2019
Larry Fazzari	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Title I, Part A/LAP	2017, 2018, 2019
LaWonda Smith	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Title I, Part A/LAP and Consolidated Program Reviews	2014
Liisa Potts	OSPI	Director, Literacy and Professional Learning Integration	2014, 2015
Maja Wilson	OSPI	ELA Assessment Specialist, Assessment Development	2020
Maria Flores	OSPI	Program Manager, Accountability and Research	2014
Mea Moore	OSPI	Director, Migrant Bilingual	2015, 2016
Michael Kamil	Stanford	Emeritus Professor	2014
Michaela Miller	OSPI	Deputy Superintendent	2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
Molly Berger	OSPI	ELA Specialist	2017, 2018, 2019
Patty Finnegan	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Bilingual Education Special Projects	2019
Paula Moore	OSPI	Director, Title I/LAP and Consolidated Program Reviews	2016, 2017

Name	Organization	Title	Year(s)
Penelope Mena	OSPI	Program Supervisor, Title I, Part A/LAP	2017, 2018, 2019
Porsche Everson	Relevant Strategies	President, Project Facilitator	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
Rachel Hart	OSPI	Professional Learning Integration and State Implementation Specialist	2015, 2016
Robin Munson	OSPI	Assistant Superintendent, Assessment and Student Information	2014
Samantha Diamond	OSPI	Research Analyst, LAP	2017, 2018, 2019
Sheila Gerrish	OSPI	Program Supervisor, LAP	2020
Shelley O'Dell	OSPI	ELA Assessment Specialist	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
Tania May	OSPI	Director, Office of Special Education	2019
Wendy Iwaszuk	OSPI	Program Supervisor and State Transformation Specialist	2015

APPENDIX D: LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
AI	Active Implementation
AK	Alphabet Knowledge
AVID	Advancement Via Individual Determination
CAST	Center for Applied Special Technology
CBMs	Classroom-Based Measurements
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CEDARS	Comprehensive Education Data and Research System
CISL	Center for the Improvement of Student Learning
CLP	Comprehensive Literacy Plan
DLD	Digital Learning Department
EL	English Learner—the federal term for multilingual students who qualify for language supports.
ELA	English Language Arts
LA	Language Arts
ELP	English Language Proficiency
ESD	Educational Service Districts
ESSB	Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill
IAB	Interim Assessment Blocks
ICA	Interim Comprehensive Assessment
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
ISS	Integrated Student Supports
LAP	Learning Assistance Program
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
NCTM	National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
NELP	National Early Literacy Panel
NIRN	National Implementation Research Network
OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
OST	Out of School Time
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study, Act
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTI	Response to Intervention

Acronym	Definition
RTL	Readiness to Learn
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
SISEP	State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices
TPEP	Washington State Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
WISSP	Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol
WSIPP	Washington State Institute for Public Policy

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