

Blueprint for English Language Learners' Success



BLUEPRINT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS' (ELLs) SUCCESS

The mission of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) is to ensure that all New York State (NYS) students, including English Language Learners (ELLs), attain the highest level of academic success and language proficiency. We strive to ensure that all students' individual educational paths and socio-emotional needs are met in multiple languages leading them to college and career readiness. NYSED believes that all teachers are teachers of ELLs.

In response to the changing global economy, NYSED has adopted the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to provide students, educators, and parents with a set of clear expectations leading to college and career readiness. Over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of ELLs enrolled in NYS public schools, resulting in a current population of 213,178 students who speak over 200 languages. In order for these students to succeed, NYSED needs to provide schools with the appropriate scaffolds, home language assessments, and materials so that teachers can provide instruction that will enable students to meet rigorous standards. Under the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Part 154, the OBEWL affirms that it is not permissible to assume that unsupported immersion of ELLs into an English-speaking environment will enable them to succeed academically.

The NYSED P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) require that every teacher be prepared to teach academic language and challenging content to all students, including ELLs. All teachers must be skilled in how to support ELLs as they acquire content knowledge while also progressing towards English proficiency. It is imperative that all educators work across the content areas to ensure that all students meet the high demands of the CCLS.

The following principles were carefully developed as a statewide framework aimed to clarify expectations for administrators, policymakers, and practitioners to prepare ELLs for success, beginning in Prekindergarten, to lay the foundation for college and career readiness. These principles are intended to provide guidance, resources, and support to districts, schools, and teachers, as well as to promote a better understanding and appreciation of Bilingual Education, English as a New Language, and World Language Studies.



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The principles that guide the Blueprint for ELLs are:

1. All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners and need to plan accordingly by:

- Designing and delivering instruction that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for all diverse learners, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEP).
- Providing integrated language and content instruction to support language development through language-focused scaffolds. Bilingual, ESL, and other content-area teachers must collaborate purposefully and consistently to promote academic achievement in all content areas.
- Utilizing materials and instructional resources that are linguistically age/grade appropriate and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- Collaborating with school support personnel and community-based human resources in order to address the multiple needs of ELLs.

2. All school boards and district/school leaders are responsible for ensuring that the academic, linguistic, social, and emotional needs of ELLs are addressed by:

- Providing a clear vision for student success that includes high expectations for ELL student achievement and socio-emotional development, supported by a purposeful plan of action that provides multiple pathways to college and career readiness through high-quality programs that meet the needs of ELLs.
- Providing high-quality instruction for ELLs.
- Aligning and coordinating fiscal and human resources to ensure that the instructional plan is being effectively implemented.
- Providing high-quality supports, feedback, and direction to educators to improve their instructional practice.
- Providing a safe and inclusive learning environment that recognizes and respects the languages and cultures of all students.
- Ensuring that districts and school leaders are trained in meeting the needs of ELLs in order to cultivate a school culture of high expectations.
- Providing high-quality instructional and support services to ELLs with disabilities in alignment with their IEPs and current policies.

3. Districts and schools engage all English Language Learners in instruction that is grade-appropriate, academically rigorous, and aligned with the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core and P-12 Common Core Learning Standards by:

- Articulating specific content and language objectives.
- Integrating explicit and implicit research-based vocabulary instruction.
- Providing opportunities for students to discuss content and problem-solve with peers.
- Anchoring instruction by strategically using research-based practices (e.g., multimedia, visuals, graphic organizers, etc.).
- Providing special education supports, services, accommodations, and specially-designed instruction to meet the specific instructional needs of ELLs with disabilities.
- Designing, selecting, and implementing a high-quality curriculum that meets the needs of Early Learning ELLs, and supports the *New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core*, http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/nyslsprek.pdf.
- Using academic language and content-area supports to strategically move ELLs along the language development continuum utilizing *New York State Bilingual Common Core Progressions*, <http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-bilingual-common-core-initiative>.

4. Districts and schools recognize that bilingualism and biliteracy are assets and provide opportunities for all students to earn a Seal of Biliteracy upon obtaining a high school diploma by providing all students with:

- Opportunities to participate in language learning or language support programs that lead to proficiency in English and other languages.
- Opportunities to use and develop academic language and content knowledge both in English and a language other than English, including the student's home language.
- Rigorous Bilingual Education programs for ELLs aimed at maintaining and developing the home language and attaining English proficiency as well as biliteracy.
- Alternate pathways for those whose home language is low incidence and, consequently, the district does not have enough students who speak the same language to form a Bilingual Education program.

5. Districts and schools value all parents and families of ELLs as partners in education and effectively involve them in the education of their children by:

- Providing parents with resources that enable them to make informed decisions about their children's education.
- Providing parents with all pertinent information about their rights and program choices in a language and format that parents can easily understand and access.
- Providing training to parents in English and in their home language on effective strategies to support their children's learning in and out of school.
- Engaging parents as active participants, contributors, and cultural liaisons to the school community.
- Sharing with parents and family members the high expectations that schools have established for the education of all ELLs and engaging them in the pursuit and achievement of those expectations.
- Collaborating with the school support personnel and immigrant community-based organizations in order to address the multiple needs of families of ELLs.

6. District and school communities leverage the expertise of Bilingual, ESOL, and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) teachers and support personnel while increasing their professional capacities by:

- Creating intentional learning opportunities for all teachers to collaborate and design instruction, analyze student work, and develop rigorous lessons.
- Providing substantial and sustained opportunities for all teachers to participate in meaningful professional development that addresses the needs of ELLs, including home and new language development.

7. Districts and school communities leverage ELLs' home languages, cultural assets, and prior knowledge by:

- Regarding home languages as instructional assets and using them in bridging prior knowledge to new knowledge while ensuring that content is meaningful and comprehensible.
- Using home languages and cultures of ELLs to promote diversity pursuant to the Dignity for All Students Act (NYS initiative, effective July 2013), <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/>.

8. Districts and schools use diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices in order to measure ELLs' content knowledge as well as new and home language development to inform instruction by:

- Using NYS State assessments in conjunction with formative assessments.
- Using NYS State language proficiency data (from the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test [NYSESLAT] and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners [NYSITELL]) to understand where ELLs are along the continuum of language development and how to provide appropriate scaffolds for them according to their proficiency level.
- Employing authentic assessments that require sophisticated uses of language embedded in authentic and rich content.
- Utilizing appropriate tools to assess the needs and progress of ELLs with disabilities.
- Utilizing analytical rubrics that provide feedback on content knowledge and language development.
- Using home language assessments to inform instruction and demonstrate growth in Bilingual Education programs in which the home language is being used.

