



Practical Guide for State Education Agencies to Promote Success of English Learners PreK-Grade 3

THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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Promoting Success for English Learners PreK-3: A Need for Guidance

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) published *Promoting the Educational Success for Children and Youth Learning English* in 2017 describing both the educational experiences and needs of young dual language learners (DLLs) and English learners (ELs)¹ in the U.S. The report provides a series of recommendations relative to each of 13 topics to advance policies improving early learning opportunities for DLLs and ELs. The report underscores the need to better prepare teachers working with this diverse population of learners not only in training and professional development, but also in decision making affecting both macro-level issues, such as standards, curriculum choices, competency frameworks, assessment policy, as well as more micro-level issues, such as general language and messaging used to communicate about English learners, culture, and language learning in classrooms. Diane August, one of the report's main authors/contributors, recently described the goal of the report as addressing three overarching principles to guide both policy and decision making for DLLs and ELs, including:

- I. Policy for ELs must be asset-oriented, where policy drives schools to be responsive and aware of students' strengths, needs, and identities.
- II. High-quality instruction is key in all areas, not strictly focused on language.
- III. Alignment and articulation both within and across systems is critical for creating policy that maximizes support for DLLs and ELs.

The purpose of this guide is to use these broad principles as a frame for SEAs creating policies and systems implementing recommendations of the National Academies report for DLLs and ELs from preschool through third grade. To this end, the guide will offer ideas about mapping current practices and systems to new policies and guidance to create cohesion as well as eliminate overlap and redundancy within local education agencies (LEAs).

History and Development of the Guide

Due to the complexity and expense of implementing effective policies for DLLs and ELs, state education agencies (SEAs) requested technical assistance with the research-based recommendations of the NASEM report, which go beyond the accountability and compliance focus of Title III requirements. In response, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) proposed developing a guide to help SEAs improve educator instruction and training of DLLs and ELs. This guide aims to support development of coherent, research-based policy by guiding thinking, discussion, data collection, and gap analyses of current practices and policies that can lead to more intentional decision making relative to young DLLs and ELs. Consequently, this guide prioritizes 6 of 13 big ideas presented in the NASEM report

¹ While we acknowledge that the terminology for children learning English varies by state, for the purposes of this guide we will refer to children aged 0–4 as “dual language learners” and (elementary school-aged) children 5–8 as “English learners” to align with the terminology used in the NASEM report.

to provide focused, actionable steps that SEAs can take. *The State of Preschool 2017* special report on state policies for young DLLs from the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) found that of nine policy requirements for effectively serving preschool DLLs, 26 state-funded programs out of a total of 60 lack any policy to support the DLLs enrolled in their programs.

Also, this guide prioritizes the significance of data collection at the state level, as several recent research reports note the extent to which this data on the implementation of policy specific to this population is missing.¹ For example, *The State of Preschool 2017* reports that of 60 state-funded preschool programs in the U.S., only 26 are able to report the home language of children being served in their programs. The lack of information about home language is just one example of missing data; these data gaps among state-funded preschool programs are perilous as they create missed opportunities to provide access and quality to DLLs in significant ways.

While the NIEER state preschool yearbook reports only state policy, there may be local policies or practices that do help inform opportunities for DLLs and create coherence across districts and grades. Increased awareness among SEAs of these policies and practices from PreK to grade 3 programs could facilitate development of relevant statewide policy. Indeed, this can only be done through systematic data collection and communications between and among SEAs and LEAs.

Intended Audience

State education agencies and early childhood education partners

Organization of the Guide

This guide addresses 6 of 13 areas of recommendation for policymaking identified in the NASEM *Promising Futures* report. These include:

- A. establishing a clear statement of philosophy and goals for DLLs/ELs;
- B. evaluating current assessment practices and establishing a clear process for identifying DLLs and assessing their developmental trajectory in both the home language and English and establishing guidance on choice of appropriate assessment practices;
- C. establishing guidance and recommendations for specific qualifications (including certifications) for teachers of DLLs and ELs to ensure that teachers are linguistically, culturally, and pedagogically trained to meet the needs of DLLs and ELs;
- D. establishing guidance on instructional practices such as language of instruction and curriculum choice between PreK to grade 3;
- E. establishing guidance on providing evidence-based resources and practices for increasing family participation in ways that are culturally responsive and that span PreK to grade 3; and
- F. establishing guidance on how to monitor both process and structural quality of program features that are specifically related to DLLs, supports for English acquisition, supports for home language maintenance, and cultural responsiveness.

Within each section are recommendations that embed the significance and research evidence for each topic. In addition, tables include both national and state-level resources that provide ideas and existing documents that can serve as examples. These also include an explanation of goals and ways that each is intended to help SEAs use and translate contents of the original report into policy and initiatives. When possible, state/program spotlights offer examples of programs that are already implementing policies that speak to the recommendations. Finally, there is a list of actionable steps for states to pursue in efforts to meet the recommendations of each goal.

A. Establishing a Clear Statement of Philosophy and Goals for DLLs and ELs

We recommend that states create a statement of philosophy or position statement to frame their desired approach toward teaching and learning for DLLs and ELs. Statements should include the language that states would expect to be reflective of how they want language and culture to be treated in efforts to create a cohesive system across districts and grades. **A statement of philosophy is critical in setting the tone for English language learner practices**, which can be politically charged and for which successful implementation of specific practices hinges on the attitudes and beliefs of not only policymakers, but practitioners as well.² While this kind of document may not constitute law, it can help create a cohesive culture within the state that informs guidelines, competency frameworks, and standards within and across grade levels (PreK to grade 3), which ultimately should become evident in practice for LEAs.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Create a statement of philosophy/position statement that highlights and celebrates the multidimensionality of DLL and EL populations.

Since the inception of bilingual education policies beginning with No Child Left Behind in 2001,³ states have worked to respond mainly to accountability requirements for their ELs in elementary and secondary school settings. Current policies for DLLs/ELs focus mainly on language of instruction and accountability. However, it is also suggested that states use a conceptual framework that recognizes the nexus among students, their languages, cultures, immigration, and home and community experiences as a way to position policy and ultimately learning environments. In the past, much debate has focused on how to best support English acquisition and how to decide if practices should incorporate continued maintenance of the home language, or if English acquisition should come at the expense of the home language.⁴ Implementing policies that not only allow the use of home language, but also encourage it requires consistent language that promotes these practices across many areas of state-issued guidance. To accomplish this, statements of philosophy/position statements should employ clear and specific language about the state's stance (and its rationale to support it) on language goals and multilingualism, and this language should be echoed in respective guidance documents and mandates. A good example of this can be found in [the joint policy statement](#) from the U.S. DOE and HHS whereby a stand-alone philosophy is expressed to provide foundations for other guidance and mandates.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Allow the philosophy/position statement to clearly articulate the state's approach to use of the home language for instruction and how state standards documents handle this.

A review of 21 states' early learning and development standards (ELDs) and policies for DLLs in preschool recently found that 13 of these states provided some kind of explicit statements of philosophy relative to their beliefs/approach with DLLs, mostly within the context of their standards.⁵ The report highlights New Jersey's and Rhode Island's language as exemplary, as both states carefully outline treatment of children's home language within their early learning standards. In these examples, states embed language about supporting home language throughout all of their guidance

to relay a clear message. Whether within existing guidelines or as a separate standalone document, a clear message of the state’s approach to educating DLLs and ELs is needed.

Ultimately, it is important that educators view the home language and cultures of DLL and ELs as an asset regardless of whether home language maintenance is an expressed goal of the school system or not. This is important given the research on the importance of cultural responsiveness as connecting students’ cultural, previous experiences, taps into the students’ prior knowledge.⁶ In one study of other studies, researchers found that culturally responsive settings included six overarching themes, five practices, and two teaching approaches.⁷ Specifically, these included the following.

Overarching Themes	Teaching Approaches	Instructional Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Instructional engagement o Culture, language, and racial identity o Multicultural awareness o High expectation o Critical thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Problem solving o Child-centered instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assessment o Materials

This frame can be useful in creating a uniform statement that can facilitate planning across subject-specific areas of the curriculum, the alignment of practices from preschool to grade 3, professional development of teachers, and monitoring.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Establish a blueprint for how personnel from multiple disciplines can collaborate and oversee the development of subsequent policy, guidance, and messaging efforts relative to DLLs and ELs.

Research suggests that the acquisition of a second language takes between four and six years. In order to create systems that are supportive of DLLs as they move from preschool through the early elementary grades, it is important that the SEA provides clear expectations for the necessary collaborations among key stakeholders to help children smoothly transition as they move through the system. This is imperative for designing PreK to grade 3 systems that foster more aligned early childhood education philosophies that alleviate some of the current policy inconsistencies within states and between grade levels.⁸ To accomplish this, stakeholders from the following areas should be considered for work groups and advisory boards that can oversee state-level guidance.

- Early childhood coordinators/personnel
- Special education coordinators/personnel
- ESL/bilingual coordinators/personnel
- Content-specific personnel
- IT personnel
- Communications personnel
- Speech language pathologists (SLPs)

RECOMMENDATION 4: A widespread effort should be made to communicate the expressed goals of the philosophy statement to LEAs and stakeholders to ensure that the messages are consistently applied to practice.

It is not enough for SEAs to populate websites with information and resources. Intentional efforts to disseminate and alert LEAs are critical, particularly those related to establishing positive attitudes about linguistically and culturally responsive teaching. LEAs must know about newly developed documents and resources on the SEA website, and they must be given concrete ideas for how to share the information with teachers and families. Further, when new documents and resources merit professional development or specific training, action plans and accountability efforts are equally important.

Resources: Existing statements/frameworks for developing a statement of philosophy

Resource	Description	Goals
<p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education</p> <p><i>Joint Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children Who Are Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Programs</i></p>	<p>https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/eecd/dll_guidance_document_final.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines key recommendations for DLLs for children 0-5 • Explicitly states that both departments support the notion that increasing awareness of the benefits of bilingualism and supporting home language are essential • Provides resources 	<p>This document can be helpful in thinking about the language and topics that could be included in a statement of philosophy that can guide policies and culture.</p>
<p>Build Initiative</p> <p><i>State Early Learning and Development Standards/ Guidelines, Policies & Related Practices: How Responsive Are They to the Needs of Young Dual Language Learners</i></p> <p>(Espinosa & Calderon, 2015)</p>	<p>http://buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/BuildDLLReport2015.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the extent to which states' early learning and development standards (ELDS) reflect the needs of DLLs • Categorizes a sample of states on how well they reflect DLL needs in various aspects of policy • Includes direct reference to 13 states that have a statement of philosophy and links to where these can be found on their state website 	<p>This document links to individual states with strong statements of philosophy provides individual examples of how other states incorporate specific language and philosophies throughout their various policy pieces.</p>
<p>Hispanic Research Center</p> <p><i>Developing Culturally Responsive Approaches to Serving Diverse Populations: A Resource Guide for Community-Based Organizations</i></p>	<p>http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Cultural-Competence-Guide-V2.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a section on resources for defining and understanding cultural competency 	<p>This document provides very specific resources and definitions of cultural competency. It also offers specific considerations for making programs responsive to community needs on multiple levels.</p>

<p>California Department of Education English Learner Roadmap</p>	<p>https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/rm/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vision and mission statement to guide and support LEAs as they implement state board policy 	<p>The vision/mission of each of these state’s approach to DLLs/ELLs are prime examples of the kind of framework that can guide many other policy decisions. Use these to see how states have set the tone and communicated their vision.</p>
<p>New York State Education Department-Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies <i>Blueprint for English Language Learners (ELLs) Success</i></p>	<p>http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/blueprint-for-ell-success.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines eight principles to frame policy for all layers of the education field in New York state in order to prepare DLLs/ELs for success from PreK-12, including expectations for use of the home language 	

Spotlight—California, New York, New Jersey

California, New York, and New Jersey are selected as spotlights because they each provide examples of text that communicates a vision for their DLLs and ELs across various policy domains. Further, they illustrate how research can be used to support their statements. Each of these three states conveys a clear message about the state’s stance on supporting acquisition of English while maintaining and developing home languages when possible. Finally, all three strongly emphasize the importance of coherent systems between preschool and third grade.

California’s Department of Education issued *The California English Learner Roadmap: Strengthening Comprehensive Educational Policies, Programs, and Practices for English Learners* to guide LEAs as they implement their state board policy. In its “vision” statement, the department states that “English learners fully and meaningfully access and participate in a twenty-first century education from early childhood through grade twelve that results in their attaining high levels of English proficiency, mastery of grade level standards, and opportunities to develop proficiency in multiple languages.” **Through this guiding statement, the department offers a frame** for policies that affect individual children’s school experiences. Further, the department offers four principles to provide further guidance in specific areas along with the **research that supports why** it has been chosen. The site also includes examples of the principles in action from local school districts and programs. The framework shows **how** each example illustrates the respective principles, and it can also be used as a template or map for thinking about or reflecting on how programs can meet similar principles.

New York’s State Education Department’s Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies disseminated its *Blueprint for English Language Learners (ELLs) Success* to frame policy for all layers of the education field in New York state in order to prepare DLLs and ELs for success from PreK-12, including expectations for use of the home language. With eight guiding principles, the document aims to clarify expectations for policymakers, administrators, and practitioners. Links are included throughout to resources about creating a culture of appreciation for multilingualism in education settings. New York also is spotlighted in section C through a referenced report detailing the state’s journey toward more responsive practices for its DLL and EL populations.

New Jersey offers specific language regarding its philosophy on home language maintenance in its implementation guidelines for PreK to grade 3. It includes explicit language about supportive environments for DLLs and ELs in PreK to grade 3 as well as a summary of the research that supports this approach. To this end, each of a set of matching documents (*Implementation Guidelines*) includes a section on supporting DLLs/ELs and includes strategies and expectations about how this should be done. Further, all encompass the state’s ongoing theme of supporting the home language and valuing children’s home language.

NJ Program Implementation Guidelines:

Preschool, (p. 36) <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/guide/impguidelines.pdf>

Kindergarten, (p. 24) <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/guide/KindergartenGuidelines.pdf>

First to Third Grade, (p. 13) <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/rttt/ImplementationGuidelines1-3.pdf>

The joint statement by HHS and DOE provides **a template with potential headings and tips about important concepts and terms to consider** as well as language throughout the states mentioned in the Build report. Some common features include:

- explicit statements about bilingualism/biculturalism as a goal for DLL/ELs;
- explicit statement on the goal of achieving culturally responsive learning environments;
- research that supports the stance taken;
- definitions and establishing consistency of use of terms between PreK to grade 3;
- vetted options for language of instruction models that reflect/support the approach in the statement;
- vetted options for assessment that supports the approach in the statement; and
- vetted options for staffing that supports the approach in the statement.

Action Steps:

- Review statements about language development and acquisition already in your state’s policies. Think about whether the language is consistent throughout program guidelines, standards, competencies, assessment guidance, etc.
- Consider creating an explicit statement including the areas mentioned above to guide PreK to grade 3 policies, ensuring that stakeholders from each relevant department/ office/division (e.g., early childhood, bilingual/ESL, elementary) contributes.
- Consider an event and messaging that highlights the statement throughout the state so district administrators, teachers, families, and communities become familiar with the state’s approach toward languages and learning.

B. Establishing Guidance for Appropriate Assessment

We recommend that SEAs establish a systematic way to identify DLLs in preschool and subsequently assess their progress in English proficiency. Given the complexity of assessing DLLs and ELs, states should consider issues of language proficiencies, progress of general content knowledge and skills, and diagnosis of specific developmental delays. Each of these represents important-to-measure constructs requiring careful consideration to ensure results yield appropriate data.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Adopt a systematic way of identifying DLLs in preschool.

While there is a lack of available measures that explicitly and reliably assess each of the areas described above in meaningful ways, it is important to create a plan to use what is available to make the most accurate assessment possible. For DLLs in preschool, the most important issues are identification as a DLL and assessment of general content knowledge. The following considerations should be consulted as states create systemic ways to do this, along with potential ways to get at the information and the ideal timing of data collection for each.

Data Point/Purpose	Tools/Data Sources	Timing
<i>Determination of language dominance</i> is important for deciding how to proceed with assessment of skill-specific domains.	Conversations with families	During enrollment or prior to the start of the school year
<i>Language background/experiences</i> are important for understanding how much experience children have with each language they have been exposed to.	Surveys and interviews with families that address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home language/s used • Amount of input children receive in each language • First exposure to English • Frequency of use of each language and with whom • Family estimate of language ability 	During enrollment or prior to the start of the school year
<i>Language proficiency assessments</i> allow teachers to understand how proficient children are in each of their languages and the best language for assessing what children know conceptually.	Tests that are appropriate for determining language proficiency. Depending on the goals of the state, this should be done in both the child's home language and English. Tests to determine language proficiency in English mean that English is then appropriate, but home language proficiency can also be important. Dual language testing (parallel testing) will gather information on both languages.	At the beginning of the school year and at designated points throughout the school year

RECOMMENDATION 2: Develop strict guidance for the assessments to be used for both language proficiency testing and skill-specific domains, including the language/s that should be used for each.

States should guide LEAs use of assessments for language proficiency for the purpose of identifying DLLs. While 35 states are part of the WIDA consortium, which systematizes identification and monitors progress through the ACCESS test, there is much variability in the assessments LEAs used. In fact, NIEER reports that some states still report that identification methods are “locally determined.” Further assessments geared at understanding what children know about domain-specific content should be different and when possible conducted in children’s dominant language to get a measure of knowledge rather than proficiency. Guidance given to LEAs relative to assessment should include the following parameters:

- organized use of special accessibility resources, including bilingual assessors, flexible response times, and appropriate setting, timing, and scheduling;⁹
- appropriate use of assessments that should be based on their psychometric/standardization characteristics and only for the purpose for which they were designed;
- leveraging of both standardized and formative assessments to give the most accurate language and literacy profile of young DLLs in order to inform instruction;
- use of both languages for literacy and phonological sensitivity outcome measures when appropriate versions of each are available; and
- consideration of both languages in formative assessments in order to maximize opportunities for children in the classroom.

Another important consideration for DLLs related to assessment is the widespread use of Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs), which are aimed at understanding what children know at the onset of kindergarten. Given the distinction between knowledge and language proficiency set forth above, it is crucial to consider how KEAs are structured and whether they can reliably assess this information about DLL/EL children. This is particularly important if the goal of KEAs is to inform programs and teachers on what children already know and can do and where they need to be supported to move to the next step. KEAs can also determine how proficient they may or may not be in English. Careful considerations should be made in creating/selecting KEAs regarding how results are disseminated. The following recommendations are suggested based on recent research/reports.¹⁰

1. Understand what children know and can do by assessing both English and the home language, particularly if home language maintenance is a stated goal of the program.
2. Utilize/allow appropriate accessibility resources and supports.
3. Ensure institutional capacity to assess children in languages other than English.
4. Consider using developmental rubrics so children can be placed in various levels of mastery and data can better inform teacher decision-making for planning lessons and activities.
5. Ensure teachers have sufficient training about how to administer KEAs to DLLs and use data purposefully in their practice.

Assessment of ELs in K-12

In compliance with federal legislation and to secure federal funding, assessment of ELs is required for accountability in three key areas: 1) identification as ELs enter school to flag them for additional services, 2) annual progress monitoring of English language proficiency, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, and English comprehension, and 3) annual progress monitoring of academic achievement in specific content areas, mainly focused on math and literacy. Meeting these demands requires thoughtful and intricate planning as well as an understanding of assessment that includes assessment validity and reliability. Yet the most critical component is that those creating policy understand the consequential nature of each decision, as every aspect of the identification of ELs and the monitoring of their progress has long-term implications for their academic success.

Considerations for Assessment of ELs

- o Under ESSA, ensure that entry into and exit criteria from services are consistent within the state.
- o Initial identification with use of a screener or a full ELP assessment must occur within the first 30 days of school enrollment.
- o If assessment of the home language is used, ensure the assessment is appropriate and utilize observation data to ensure validity.
- o One-time assessments and/or cut scores can carry high-stakes consequences, so when possible, multiple data sources should be used.
- o Appropriate and evidence-based standards should be used when assessing suitable progress of English language development for reclassification decisions.
- o Include accessibility resources when assessing ELs on academic achievement, and create policy that allows them to be used consistently within the state.
- o Use of formative assessments aligned between other high-stakes mandatory testing can be helpful to inform instruction in the classroom and still provide room for sensitivity to students' background knowledge when constructed by practitioners.

Resources: Guides for choosing assessments and screeners for DLLs and understanding experiences before PreK

Resource	Description	Goals
Head Start- Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) <i>Assessment of Young Dual Learners Webinar</i>	https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/assessment-young-dual-language-learners <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Sandra Barrueco presents on assessment of dual language learners and discusses home language use for assessment, and what assessments are helpful.• Webinar and slides are available.	This webinar and book provide basic explanations of terminology specific to assessment, including reliability and validity, and can provide needed background knowledge for policymakers and practitioners to make decisions about appropriate assessment.
<i>Assessing Spanish-English Bilingual Preschoolers: A Guide to Best Approaches and Measures</i> (Barrueco, Lopez, Ong, & Lozano, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an overview of various assessment considerations when working with young DLLs• Provides a synthesis of various assessment measures for children along with their normative information and variables to consider for each	
Head Start- Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) <i>Planned Language Approach- Gathering and Using Language Information That Families Share</i>	https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/gathering-using-language-information.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed to help programs identify DLL by framing questions that programs can use to find out about children’s past experiences with language• Provides questions, along with what can be learned from them and why they matter, and can be used in designing survey questions to gather information about families	While providing background knowledge about why certain questions are important for gathering data, this survey provides concrete questions that can be used in home language surveys, which are the first step to identification of DLLs.
<i>KEAs and DLLs/ELs</i>		
Educational Testing Services (ETS) <i>Potential Utility of Kindergarten Entry Assessments for Providing Evidence of English Learners’ Knowledge and Skills</i> (Ackerman, in press)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy report on findings of a comparative case study of nine states and how their KEAs include the following: items specifically targeted at DLLs, state’s allowance or mandates for supports/accommodations, policies about linguistic capacity of assessors, and research evidence for use of the KEA with DLLs• Findings reveal three kinds of state profiles and offer insights into decision making about choice of KEAs for DLLs	These reports give background knowledge about how KEAs are designed as well as ideas about how to think about them relative to DLLs and what considerations states looking to better their assessments should take. The definitions and language used in the reports are helpful in crafting policy and communication with teachers and families as well.
Migration Policy Institute (MPI) <i>Dual Language Learners A National Demographic Portrait and Policy Profile</i> (Park, O’Toole, & Katsiaficas, 2017)	https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/dual-language-learners-national-demographic-and-policy-profile <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a general portrait of DLLs, but also highlights specific policies and what states are doing to support DLLs and their families	

Identification, Monitoring, and Reclassification of ELs		
<p>US DOE</p> <p><i>ESSA- Assessments under Title 1, Part A & Title 1 Part B: Summary of Final Regulations</i></p>	<p>https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaassessmentfactsheet1207.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a final summary of EL assessment regulations 	<p>This document synthesizes the final regulations for assessment for sharing with work groups and to create plans that are responsive to the regulations.</p>
<p>CCSSO</p> <p><i>Re-examining Reclassification: Guidance from a National Working Session on Policies and Practice for Exiting Students from English Learner Status</i> (Linguanti & Cook, 2015)</p>	<p>http://www.schoolturnaroundsupport.org/sites/default/files/resources/reexaminingreclassificationguidance.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides specific recommendations on considerations for policies geared at the reclassification of ELs after they are identified and receiving services 	<p>This report provides current reclassification criteria across states in a review and offers explanations of why certain considerations matter. This can be used for developing working groups, consistent language in policy, and final decisions about what reclassification criteria a state will implement.</p>
<p>Center on Instruction</p> <p><i>Research-Based Recommendations for the Use of Accommodations in Large-Scale Assessments</i> (Kieffer, Rivera, & Francis, 2012)</p>	<p>https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED537635.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a synthesis of research aimed at assessing the efficacy of accessibility resources for testing 	<p>This summary provides the most updated list of findings on effective testing resources and suggests a final set of four supports based on research that qualified based on author criteria.</p>
<p>New York State Education Department (NYSED)</p> <p>English Language Learners (ELLs) Screening, Identification, Placement Review, and Exit Criteria</p>	<p>http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/ell-identification-placementhome-language-questionnaire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a flow chart for LEAs to uniformly screen and identify ELs: http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/bilingual/ellidchartrev.pdf Also includes a home language questionnaire for ELs and a home language profile for DLLs 	<p>Examples of straightforward guidance and documents are available for LEAs to access.</p>

Spotlight—*General Assessment Strategies for DLLs/ELs K-3*

Boston Public Schools provides teachers with a combination of formative and summative assessments all aligned by grade and content. This example addresses all of the areas discussed, with special attention given to alignment of screening and assessment in a coherent way as children move from preschool to grade 2. The site further illustrates how the district coordinates assessments and why they are done in a way that is accessible to teachers.

<https://sites.google.com/bostonpublicschools.org/earlychildhood/assessments?authuser=0>

Spotlight—*KEAs*

In a recent case study, Ackerman (2018) found that of nine state KEAs, only two (California and Illinois) included items specifically devoted to English acquisition and Spanish language development, along with variations in their scoring rubric for domains specific to DLL/EL children, so that developmental progressions are used to place children. In addition, three states (New

Jersey, Oregon, and Texas) provide fully bilingual parallel versions of their KEAs. This report sheds important light on various considerations when choosing KEAs, administering them, and the training teachers receive for using and interpreting results.

Action Steps:

- Have districts create an assessment map for child assessments, teacher/program quality, and standards from PreK to grade 3 to see how well each aligns with the next. Examine each carefully to understand a) what is being learned from each data point, b) whether data points are being used systemically, appropriately, and by whom, and c) if there are areas that are being missed for DLLs/ELs.
- Host learning tables where districts can come together to share what they learned about mapping their assessment systems for DLLs and ELs.
- Identify districts with well-aligned maps that can be showcased on the SEA's website or used as a model in some capacity.
- Conduct a statewide survey of kindergarten teachers to understand how the data gleaned from KEAs is useful to them in differentiating instruction to help DLLs/ELs, as well as how they understand accommodations that are to be used during assessments.

C. Establishing Guidance for Specific Teacher Qualifications

We recommend that states engage a workforce of teachers responsive to the experiences and interactions that DLLs and young ELs need. To do this, six overarching elements mentioned in the 2017 NASEM report must be considered: 1) teacher demographics, 2) federal policy, 3) state teacher certification policy, 4) teacher preparation in higher education settings, 5) teacher competencies, and 6) professional development. SEAs should understand each of these separately so policymakers can create pathways to establishing a more unified system for young DLLs and ELs related to the workforce.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Collect data about teachers serving DLLs and ELs.

While the field has called for better workforce data systems for early childhood generally,¹¹ this is especially imperative for improving outcomes of DLLs and ELs. A prerequisite to understanding how to create programs and pathways for change is an adequate system for collecting data relative to the workforce serving young DLLs and ELs, including the location of any training and professional development participation. This information could help SEAs at both state and local district levels understand what teachers know or don't know and then use that information to address professional learning, coaching, hiring, and certification improvements. Further, having detailed information about where teachers who are better prepared are within the states can help policymakers enhance hiring practices, recruitment, and retention in underserved areas.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Develop policy/guidance that ensures that teachers working with DLLs and ELs have specific training and qualifications.

Researchers have found that appropriate certifications and more specialized training yielded better long-term child outcomes for DLLs.¹² However, policies related to certification vary widely from state to state and often reflect either language-based certification or pedagogy, with culture largely excluded. Currently, only seven states require teachers of DLLs in PreK to have training or specific qualifications related to working with DLLs, and only three states require lead teachers to have a bilingual certification, license, or endorsement.¹³ Further, only Maine requires that program administrators have specific training or qualifications related to working with DLLs. The same report also found that only three state programs (Illinois, Delaware, and Oregon's supplemental Head Start program) require bilingual staff if a specified portion of children speak the same non-English language.

One way the field has dealt with this issue is by establishing teacher competencies describing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to provide effective education and care for children. In a gold-standard example, California has developed competencies specific to DLLs that also link to other documentation used by districts related to professional development and standards for children, encompassing the recommendations listed above. This is imperative because teachers need to be able to successfully recognize the trajectory of young children acquiring a new language and not mistake typical patterns of linguistic development with disabilities.

Though more research is needed, studies have identified key teaching practices and areas of knowledge associated with improved outcomes for young DLLs.¹⁴ These include:

- (a) understanding language development;
- (b) understanding the relationship between language and culture;
- (c) developing skills and abilities to effectively teach DLLs;
- (d) developing abilities to use assessment in meaningful ways for DLLs;
- (e) developing a sense of professionalism; and
- (f) understanding how to work with families.

Research has also indicated that teachers with the following characteristics were most effective in serving ELs.¹⁵

- They were certified to work with ELs, having completed required coursework in English language development (ELD) and assessment.
- In bilingual programs, they had high levels of language proficiency in students' L1 and were able to use it in their instruction.
- They demonstrated the ability to use assessment data to raise student achievement.
- They were familiar with state standards, able to align instruction with curriculum standards, had strong content knowledge, and had training in curriculum development.
- They were supportive of a collegial atmosphere for learning and improvement.
- They were familiar with the students' communities.
- They demonstrated a deep interest in and commitment to teaching.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Create guidance that prioritizes the need to hire bilingual teaching staff and establish mechanisms for currently employed bilingual staff to pursue certifications via professional development opportunities (career ladders).

Despite consensus in the field about the use of the home language to bolster English learning,¹⁶ a clear challenge is the lack of bilingual teachers. Therefore, monolingual teachers need to know specific strategies and competencies, and this is likely to remain important.¹⁷ Careful attention must be paid to recruiting, hiring, and sustaining a more diverse workforce for DLL and EL students from PreK to grade 3. Hiring questions should include those relative to the areas identified above as well as about candidates' understanding of the diversity of DLL/ELs, resources that could be helpful, ideas for modifications, and plans for working with families.¹⁸ Similarly, veteran teachers should provide ongoing mentoring and coaching to new teachers. In addition, plans for professional development that align with other features of practice, such as state competencies, curriculum, and assessment, can be key for retaining newly hired staff.

Resources: Data collection of teacher demographics, credentials, and professional development

Resource	Description	Goals
<p>Center for the Study of Child Care Employment</p> <p><i>The Workforce Data Deficit: Who It Harms and How It Can Be Overcome</i></p> <p>(Whitebook, McLean, & Austin, 2018)</p>	<p>http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2018/04/The-Workforce-Data-Deficit.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy brief about what data is needed on the early childhood workforce • Includes spotlights on states implementing promising practices 	<p>This policy brief includes suggested variables to include in data collection efforts and registry systems.</p>
<p>National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)</p> <p><i>Special Report: Supporting Dual Language Learners in State-Funded Preschool</i></p> <p>(Friedman-Kraus, et. al., 2018)</p>	<p>http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/YB2017-DLL-Special-Report.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes the most recent collection of data on state-funded programs to understand policies that are or are not in place specifically related to serving DLLs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enrollment of DLLs in preschool; - policy requirements related to serving preschool DLLs; - policies to support families of preschool DLLs; and - policies related to preschool staff qualifications for working with DLLs. 	<p>This data can provide insights about what data SEAs should consider systematically collecting to assess gaps in policy.</p>
<p>Build Initiative</p> <p><i>State Early Learning and Development Standards/Guidelines, Policies, & Related Practices: How Responsive Are They to the Needs of Young Dual Language Learners?</i></p>	<p>http://buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/BuildDLLReport2015.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines the extent to which states' early learning and development standards (ELDS) reflect the needs of DLLs • Categorizes a sample of states on how well they reflect DLL needs in various aspects of policy • Includes direct reference to 12 states that include teaching practices/strategies for working with DLLs and provides links to where these can be found on their state website 	<p>Each provides links to states or specific documents that include teaching practices/strategies for working with DLLs as a model for adding or editing state-level competencies.</p>
<p>Alliance for a Better Community</p> <p><i>Dual Language Learner Teacher Competencies (DLLTC) Report</i></p> <p>(Lopez & Zepeda, 2012)</p>	<p>http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/DualLanguageLearnerTeacherCompetenciesReport.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report designed to complement the California teacher competencies: https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/ececomps.asp • Details competencies for teachers elaborately by separating expectations by teachers' language abilities (bilingual or not), cultural competence, and experience working with young children • The goal is to differentiate practice to be able to tailor professional development to teachers more effectively. 	

<p>National Association of State Boards of Education</p> <p><i>Supporting a Diverse Early Childhood Workforce for Dual Language Learners</i> (Hao & Syed, 2018)</p>	<p>http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Hao-Syed_ECE-and-DLL_Final.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides five recommendations for state boards to push the agenda to diversify the workforce for early childhood education through credentialing, professional development initiatives, and teacher preparation programs in states where boards approve teacher preparation programs 	<p>This report provides very direct recommendations for leveraging state boards of education to advance state policies for increasing the knowledge-base and recruitment of needed staff people for DLL populations.</p>
<p><i>Massachusetts Teacher Workforce: Status and challenges Report</i> (Owens, 2010)</p>	<p>https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/rappaport/files/owens_teachers.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate student project that became a report to the MA Department of Elementary and secondary education Describes the demographic landscape of teachers in Massachusetts, turnover and mobility patterns by district, distribution of effective teachers across districts and subjects, and history of state incentive programs and initiatives and how they worked 	<p>The report provides many ideas for what data to collect about teachers and how it can inform decision making about what teacher characteristics look like by district and who they are serving.</p>
<p>New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE)</p> <p><i>Self-Assessment Validation System (SAVS)</i></p>	<p>http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/savs/SAVSFormerAbbott1617.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SAVS is collected by NJ DECE to annually account for various standards of program implementation. Districts assess themselves in seven areas, including professional development (see p. 18) and report to the state. The purpose of this document is to encourage districts to look at themselves introspectively but also to gather statewide information on how districts are carrying out each piece. All areas of assessment require documentation and evidence to support districts when ratings themselves. 	<p>This document provides a concrete example of what data to collect on programs to monitor all the areas covered.</p>

Spotlight—New York

In efforts to realize its plan for ELs, New York State Education Department (NYSED) offered several pathways to develop its current teacher workforce and widen the pipeline of new teachers. In a 2016 policy report,¹⁹ Janie Carnock of New America documents how the department conceived of plans to change the outcomes of ELs as well as the department’s process and progress. Carnock documents the following as key steps NYSED took with professional development and teacher recruitment.

- Offering a massive open online course (MOOC) where City College of NY partnered with Stanford Graduate School of Education, led by Kenji Hakuta, to provide a baseline to practitioners about ELL development linked to the blueprint.
- Urging institutions of higher education to encourage candidates to seek bilingual extensions.
- Increasing contracts for its intensive teacher institutes in bilingual education (ITI-BE) from 5 to 10 universities.
- Launching fast-track certification programs.
- Establishing eight Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERN) to provide TA to districts and teachers.

Action Steps:

- Compile the data already available about teachers and assistant personnel working with DLLs/ELs, PreK to grade 3. See what data points are missing from the suggested list and where.
- Plan a way to embed this kind of data collection at budget submission time.
- Make plans for how to meet with districts/learning tables with degree-granting institutions to talk about how to fill voids of certified and/or bilingual teachers in places where they are needed based on results of data collection, and collaborate for student-teaching experiences.

D. Establishing Guidance on Instructional Practices for PreK to Grade 3

We recommend that states adopt and clearly communicate their stance on home language use for instruction and goals for home language maintenance. Use of home language for instruction in all education settings has been frequently debated. While the debates vary in their underlying points, each side agrees that ultimately the goal is for children to become proficient enough in English to close language achievement gaps in the elementary grades.²⁰ Essentially, what differs most among the debates is which process is best designed to increase academic outcomes in the long run. To this end, each side presents data and theory on why use of home language helps or hinders the acquisition of English. Advocates of English only argue that more time-on-task with English yields faster and better results for English acquisition.²¹ The other side bases its argument on language transference theory,²² suggesting that content instruction and the development of vocabulary and background knowledge in the home language establishes a strong foundation from which a second language can be built as concepts are learned, and vocabulary can later be translated and more easily learned.²³ Others further argue that maintenance of home language is important for continued family relationships, which have indirect impacts on student achievement.²⁴

Overview of Models

There are three general “language of instruction” models: English only, bilingual/transitional, and dual language.²⁵ **Home language maintenance, or the lack of it, is the objective that uniquely defines each of the models.**

- English only (or monolingual immersion) models teach exclusively in English with limited supports in the home language.
- Transitional programs isolate DLL children from their English-only peers and offer most of the instructional day in the home language. English is provided as a second language service intermittently with the ultimate goal of transitioning children into English monolingual classrooms.
- Dual language models are considered a truly bilingual approach in which teachers systematically and intentionally teach in both languages so children develop proficiency in both languages. In the dual language model, both DLLs and monolingual English peers are taught together, allowing everyone the opportunity to interact and be fully immersed in both languages.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Establish a clear policy about the language goals of your SEA and whether they include home-language maintenance or not.

As mentioned, a well-articulated policy at the program level to consistently guide teachers, coaches, principals, and others is necessary to create congruency between PreK to grade 3. Specifically, this entails implementation of “explicit language goals” to orient all levels of a program in like directions.²⁶ In addition, this also includes considerations for hiring bilingual

staff, ensuring that programmatic language goals are explicit, and that staff are comfortable with use of the home language and home culture for instruction if that is indeed a goal. Finally, it includes collaboration among multiple offices within SEAs, including early childhood education, elementary education, and bilingual education.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Ensure that attention to language and culture transcend grades from PreK and beyond by aligning curriculum and standards.

Curriculum

An important distinction is that early childhood curriculum is more of a philosophy-based guidance informing how activities and subjects are implemented in unstructured ways. This is the underlying assumption of curricula such as Creative Curriculum, High/Scope, Tools of the Mind, and Curiosity Corner. However, other curricula that are content specific have also emerged whereby units of study are more prescribed and target language and literacy, math, and science.²⁷ Still within and among each of these, the following elements seem to cut across many of the curricula surveyed.

- Maps to standards, assessments (students and teachers), and competencies from PreK to grade 3
- Provides balance between child- and teacher-directed learning opportunities
- Allows discussions and collaboration among students to create authentic dialogue opportunities
- Allows opportunities for student choice
- Allows opportunities to integrate subjects
- Focuses on vocabulary development across content areas
- Allows integration of oral and written language
- Allows inclusion of home language and culture
- Links to family engagement opportunities/experiences
- Provides opportunity for projects and hands-on learning experiences

Resources: Language models, curriculum, and the alignment of PreK to grade 3

Resource	Description	Goals
Head Start-Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) Planned Language Approach- <i>Classroom Language Models: A Leader's Implementation Manual (Birth-5)</i>	https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pps-language-models.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defines various classroom language models and provide recommendations for which to use with various age groups Provides resources for how to choose and implement each along with a schedule for planning a dual language model 	This manual can help with understanding the components of various language models and how to implement each.
New Jersey Department of Education <i>A Guide to New Jersey English Language Learner (ELL) Programs.</i> <i>A Description of Program Types as Defined by N.J.A.C.6A:15 (K-3)</i>	http://www.nj.gov/education/bilingual/policy/programs/guide.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Jersey's guidance on use of language assistance programs in grades K-12 based on student population and district size 	Provides definitions and models an example of state language that can be used or copied
<i>Curriculum and PreK to grade 3 Alignment</i>		
What Works Clearinghouse	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW/Index <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information about specific curricula/ interventions that are considered effective based on results of empirical research studies 	Interactive applications allow you to select and compare interventions based on student characteristics, including age, home language, etc., to consider what might best suit specific populations.
University of Washington <i>Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches</i> (Kauerz & Kaufman, 2013)	http://depts.washington.edu/pthru3/PreK-3rd_Framework_11x17.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A self-reflective guide/framework for programs to develop PreK to grade 3 approaches 	While the tool does not expressly mention DLLs, this piece can potentially be incorporated into a similar document for reflection and planning of practices and policies that would benefit DLLs systematically from PreK to grade 3.
Center for Applied Linguistics <i>Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (3rd Edition)</i>	http://www.cal.org/resource-center/publications-products/gp3-pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guides dual language (two-way immersion) programs through planning, self-reflection, and improvement with tools and checklists 	This resource includes literature reviews and seven guiding principles.

<p>Expanding Children’s Early Learning (ExCEL)</p> <p><i>The Challenge of Sustaining Preschool Impacts: Introducing ExCEL P-3, a Study from the Expanding Children’s Early Learning Network</i></p> <p>(McCormick, Hsueh, Weiland, & Bangser, 2017)</p>	<p>https://www.mdr.org/sites/default/files/ExCEL_SustainingPreschoolImpacts.REV_.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First brief in a series exploring approaches for sustaining preschool gains beyond PreK in a partnership between Boston Public Schools (BPS), the University of Michigan, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education 	<p>This report does not expressly target DLLs, but since it examines curriculum features, instruction formats, individualization opportunities, and PD quality, it can serve as a model for thinking about PreK to grade 3 alignment and sustaining positive outcomes for DLLs.</p> <p>This report also outlines how the previous curriculum used by BPS differs from the focus curriculum being used now, which can serve as a model for planning and mapping curriculum features of any kind.</p>
<p>New York City Department of Education</p> <p><i>Units of Study (Pre-k and K)</i></p>	<p>http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/educators/prekunits.htm</p> <p>http://proxy.nycboe.org/Academics/EarlyChildhood/educators/prekunits.htm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC’s department of education utilizes units of study to provide city programs with theme-based lesson plans that include vocabulary words, family engagement ideas, and rich text that are culturally diverse. 	<p>These are concrete examples of program models for curriculum elements and alignment across grades.</p>
<p>Boston Public Schools Department of Early Childhood Education</p> <p><i>Focus on Learning Curriculum (P-2)</i></p>	<p>https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/earlychildhood</p> <p>https://sites.google.com/bostonpublicschools.org/earlychildhood/curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boston public schools’ curriculum developed to create alignment from PreK to grade 2 • Emphasizes discourse and inquiry, project-based learning, feedback, relationships, and community in keeping with the principles of various frameworks, including culturally and linguistically sustaining practices • All are linked to Massachusetts curriculum framework and common core state standards with related professional development and coaching 	

Spotlight—*Boston Public Schools*

In K-3 settings, the most challenging piece of implementing developmentally appropriate curricular change has been scheduling. *Children at the Center: Transforming Early Childhood Education in the Boston Public Schools*²⁸ explores how Boston Public Schools (BPS), incorporated features of high-quality early learning into kindergarten, specifically with respect to the schedule. In an effort to align PreK to grade 3, BPS has developed and implemented a curriculum that gradually builds on the principles of early childhood and developmentally appropriate practice from grade to grade. All of the features listed above are included in the model, which incorporates both homegrown elements (focus on early learning curriculum units) with some more commercialized components (e.g., Reading Street).

Action Steps:

- Take stock of districts' PreK to grade 3 organizational structures to see how the SEA can foster articulation among districts to develop a more tightly linked continuum that can better support DLLs/ELs. Find out which divisions need to work together to create more coherent policies.
- Consider approaches like those in Boston or New Jersey to create guidelines addressing DLLs/ELs across grade levels and foster the components described above.

E. Establishing Guidance on Providing Evidence-based Resources and Practices for Increasing Family Engagement

We recommend that states create a strong framework to guide and monitor districts in their efforts to engage families of young DLL and ELs. Family engagement for DLLs in early childhood settings has been shown to yield significant outcomes for children over their academic lives. Generally, the literature notes two key elements for engaging families of DLLs. The first is **addressing issues of supportive interactions among families in their homes to promote the development of skills and competencies for school success** (e.g., book reading, dinner conversations, trips to the supermarket, etc.). The second reflects **ways families interact with schools, care providers, etc. for the purpose of informing decision making at school and supporting learning at home**.²⁹ Either way, the key to successful family engagement is a shared understanding between schools and families about the goals and communication about how learning can be extended out of school. The following recommendations should be considered in developing a comprehensive plan that can further family engagement.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Collect family background information to share with teachers working with children prior to the start of school.

To successfully support families, it is critical that the programs serving them get to know them. For young DLL children, it is also important to consider that information regarding language background experiences and developmental progress is less important than understanding children's individual cultures, customs, interests, and preferences, which can serve as familiar topics for discussion and planning that teachers can build on. This is particularly important when children enter school for the first time, and knowledge of this information can support schools/teachers in their efforts to establish relationships and community. Further, programs need to know the language goals that families have for their children in order to design an asset-based plan of action that will easily be supported by both teachers and families.³⁰

RECOMMENDATION 2: Develop a compendium of evidence-based resources/programs that can help increase family engagement at home from PreK to grade 3.

While there are known avenues to helping families engage with schools, it is also critical to take into consideration recent research findings showing that interventions focused on increasing DLL families' engagement **at home** successfully increase child outcomes at school. Building families' understanding of how they can be engaged in their children's learning at home is an important goal. In one recent analysis of parent education programs in preschool, researchers found that programs that included modeling and opportunities to practice activities with children increased children's pre-academic skills.³¹ Another study found that for linguistically diverse families, successful parent engagement at home includes the following four overarching features.³²

- 1) Explicit focus on school-readiness skills, including social emotional, literacy and numeracy
- 2) Opportunities for parents to observe and practice activities presented to them during an intervention
- 3) Supports and materials to use at home
- 4) Intentional use of strategies to minimize barriers to participation in the intervention (e.g., child care, meals, transportation, convenient meeting times)

Providing districts with templates for newsletters and communication to send to families could also maximize the implementation of such recommendations. The following are suggestions for the type of content that schools should be encouraged to share with families to maximize family engagement at home and that take into account the features expressed above.

- Curriculum topics being covered and advance notice of upcoming topics
- Suggestions for local places to visit and online resources related to the topic of study
- Titles of books read aloud in the classroom and how they connect to the topic of study for each subject
- Book recommendations appropriate for children’s level of reading proficiency
- Concrete suggestions of activities that reinforce math activities at home
- Key vocabulary words being taught with definitions and translations
- Information on how to access support (e.g., online resources/how-to videos) when needed for completing work at home
- Information on how children are assessed and the purpose of each assessment used
- Assessment results and suggested activities for continued progress
- Information on the ways to engage with the school over the course of the school year (e.g., activities where parents will be invited, topics where guest speakers would be welcomed, projects that will involve parental input)

Further, just as with curriculum models for programs, SEAs can offer suggestions for evidence-based family engagement [intervention models](#) that can be implemented.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Develop an evidence-based set of resources for helping districts/schools to reach out to families that include positive messaging/communication for including language and culture at school.

Research has identified factors that hinder engagement of families of DLLs. Programs seeking to successfully engage families of DLLs need to be acutely aware of these in order to design programs that are engaging, well received, and, most importantly, used by the families of young DLL students. This **research has also shown that discrepancies in expectations between linguistically diverse**

families and schools create misunderstandings and misperceptions about DLL families' willingness to be involved in school life. Particularly, families' understanding of how they should be involved differs from the behavior expected by school administrators and teachers (e.g., participating in classrooms, trips, homework, etc.). Researchers argue that these forms of engagement neither recognize nor value other cultural forms of engagement minority families may share with their children that indirectly affect attitudes and beliefs about education, such as instilling a strong work ethic through conversation and example.³³ Another barrier families expressed, and perhaps one of the most obvious, is how the lack of bilingual staff inhibits comfortable communication about their children. Moreover, families new to the U.S. or the U.S. educational system have reported feeling intimidated particularly if their experiences with formal education are limited, and **some research has shown that, generally, linguistically diverse families simply feel unwelcome in schools.**³⁴ Educators need to be particularly aware of these barriers, keeping in mind the biggest hurdle, home language, is also the most important factor in a child's continued success.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Develop and implement a family engagement rubric/self-assessment for districts to report to the SEA.

Consider implementing self-assessments to create awareness among LEAs about the extent to which they are deeply collaborating with families. The following is a list of potential indicators for such an assessment; some can be answered with "yes" or "no" and others warrant more detailed answers.

- Use of a community needs assessment
- Use of a family needs survey
- Use of a home language survey
- Use of home language survey data with teachers
- PD opportunities for teachers related to family engagement
- Programs/technology used to encourage family engagement at home
- Use of translation for communication
- Availability of translators
- Workshop offerings for parents
- Parent-teacher/school meeting opportunities and frequency
- Systematic use of communication mechanism to update families
- Examples of documents sent home to relay home language policies
- Use of curriculum to celebrate and include linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom
- Examples of documents/newsletters to send home containing information related to curriculum and specific classroom activities
- Strategies used on social media/digital platforms to update families on activities and to provide resources

Resources: Supporting Family Participation

Resource	Description	Goals
<p>IES-Regional Educational Lab Program</p> <p>Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education</p>	<p>https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=4509</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resource for schools to build relationships with families and communities and to support families 	<p>To increase school leadership and staff awareness of the process needed to increase family engagement, including activities that can help in PLC or PD settings</p>
<p>Head Start- Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/multicultural-principles-early-childhood-leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of research-based multicultural principles and guidance on how leaders can implement these principles into programs in order to effectively serve children and their families 	<p>To learn about recent research on key multicultural principles and how to implement these in programs</p>
<p>Head Start- Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Planned Language Approach-Family Background Information</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/gathering-using-language-information.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of guiding questions to ask families to gather background information on children's language experiences prior to PreK 	<p>To learn specific questions that can be included in home language surveys and to learn how to best communicate with families</p>
<p>Head Start- Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/pfce-interactive-framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A framework for guiding program efforts toward building systems that integrate engagement 	
<p>OELA</p> <p>English Learner Toolkit-Ensuring Meaningful Communication with Limited English Proficient Parents</p>	<p>https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap10.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools and strategies for encouraging family-school partnerships 	
<p>Child Trends</p> <p><i>Reaching and Engaging with Hispanic Communities: A Research-Informed Communication Guide for Nonprofits, Policymakers, and Funders</i></p> <p>(Torres, Guerra, Caal, & Weilin, 2016)</p>	<p>https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016-51LatinoCommunicationsGuide.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five framework components about effective communication strategies with Hispanic communities based on research and focus groups 	<p>To learn specific communication strategies for working with Hispanic communities that can be incorporated into messaging and encouragement of family engagement</p>
<p>Child-Parent Center Program P-3</p> <p>Family survey</p>	<p>http://cpcp3.org/uploads/4/1/9/1/4191814/fna.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A family survey on parent involvement and engagement checklist 	

<p>WIDA</p> <p><i>The Early Years: Asset-based, Language-Focused Family Engagement for Dual Language Learners</i></p>	<p>https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusOn-EY-Family-Engagement-DLLs.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the importance of asset-based family engagement with families of children who are DLLs by presenting research and offering ideas for bridging the research to practice 	<p>To incorporate questions that can be added to a family interview</p>
<p>Hispanic Research Center</p> <p><i>Developing Culturally Responsive Approaches to Serving Diverse Populations: A Resource Guide for Community-Based Organizations</i></p>	<p>http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Cultural-Competence-Guide-V2.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes resources for choosing interventions for diverse populations, including linguistic and cultural adaptations and translation resources 	<p>To learn specific sites and organizations that can provide information on how to develop materials that are linguistically and culturally appropriate</p>
<p>CEELO</p> <p><i>State Approaches to Family Engagement in Pre-K Programs</i> (Dahlin, 2016)</p>	<p>http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ceelo_policy_brief_family_engagement_2016_03_final_web_updated_2016_11.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information on approaches to family engagement and strategies to support implementation 	
<p>CEELO/New America</p> <p><i>All in the Family: Supporting Students Through Family Engagement in ESSA</i> (Dahlin, 2017)</p>	<p>https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-EngagingParentsDevelopingLeaders-2016.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog on overview of family engagement and use of ESSA to promote family engagement 	<p>Outlines ideas and provides links to helpful resources and tools</p>
<p>California Department of Education</p> <p><i>Family Engagement Toolkit-Continuous Improvement Through an Equity Lens</i></p>	<p>https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit supporting an integrated district approach to planning and executing effective family engagement activities • Includes tools for use, research, examples, and additional resources 	<p>Provides tools and steps for understanding family engagement as well as planning and executing a family engagement team, vision statement, data collection, and activities that focus on equity</p>
<p>New Jersey Department of Education</p> <p><i>Community Assessment Profile</i></p>	<p>http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/savs/cna/profile.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NJ’s community assessment guidelines for surveying communities to understand specific populations and how to leverage existing resources to provide responsive programs • Includes links to two other assessments from outside agencies 	<p>Provides a community survey that can be modified or used along with links to several others</p>
<p>New York State Education Department</p> <p>English Language Learner/ Multilingual Learner Parent Resources</p>	<p>http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/english-language-learnermultilingual-learner-parent-resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED’s site with resources for families, including guides about identification testing and progress monitoring 	<p>Provides various resources for EL families and an example of how a website can be used to provide information and messaging to families</p>

<p>New York State Education Department</p> <p>List of Mathematics Modules PreK-12</p>	<p>https://www.engageny.org/resource/translated-modules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED's site of mathematics modules from PreK-grade 12 translated into five different languages and including module overviews, lessons, and some assessments 	
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Action Steps:

- Survey districts to understand what practices are already in place relative to family engagement.
- Highlight promising practices.
- Include use of a family needs assessment in each district and include in a self-assessment system that is reported to the SEA.
- Carefully select members for a family engagement team and use a toolkit/framework to create a plan based on data and resources.
- Incorporate family engagement indicators into your QRIS.

F. Establishing Guidance on Monitoring Process and Structural Quality Specifically for DLL and ELs

We recommend that states incorporate measures to specifically monitor the quality and presence of program/classroom-level supports for DLLs and ELs. These should incorporate both structural and procedural aspects of quality, use of home language for instruction, and ways to measure the extent to which classrooms are culturally responsive. The monitoring of these practices should also take into account the degree to which these supports are aligned from preschool through grade 3.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Incorporate tools that accurately and fairly assess program/classroom supports of DLLs as part of program evaluation.

In its recent report and call to action, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council outline a need for “assessments to gauge the quality of the learning environment” for DLLs.³⁵ The potential to use tools this way can help identify specific strategies that are supportive of DLLs. This is especially necessary, as studies suggest that teachers do not provide the amount of linguistically responsive instruction necessary to strongly support young DLLs who are learning English or to maintain home language.³⁶ Further, while assessment tools (i.e., ECERS-3 and CLASS) have generally helped shape quality in the early learning field, they have been criticized for failing to address how language and culture can affect student-teacher interactions.³⁷ **Tools not specific to DLL learner needs may negatively rate interactions between teachers and children when teachers are teaching responsively to the needs of DLLs.** Measurement tools of supports for DLLs need to be sensitive to evidence-based language strategies with particular attention paid to vocabulary development and consideration of socio-emotional supports that allow children to feel appropriately challenged without creating anxiety. Further, **tools that capture these complex supports may also provide guidance for educators and coaches about DLL language developmental trajectories and how to differentiate their teaching based on knowledge of students’ language abilities and culture.** The following are areas of consideration for specific measurement of quality for DLLs.

Structural Considerations for DLL Classroom Environments

- o Displays include pictures of families, routines, and relevant material to the children in the classroom.
- o Books accessible to children are reflective of children’s languages AND cultures.
- o Learning materials in centers are reflective of children’s cultures and home life.

Process Considerations for DLL Classroom Environments

- o Intentional focus on use of new words alongside more familiar words and word-specific instruction that is contextually embedded in the content, rather than use of new words in isolation.³⁸

- o Use of many words throughout the day to frame actions, procedures, and objects.³⁹
- o Engaging children in extended conversations throughout the day so that there are up to five exchanges between teachers and children.⁴⁰
- o Wait time to allow children to speak: teachers know when to talk, when to listen, and how to illicit deeper and longer responses from children appropriately.
- o Appropriate choice and delivery of books that support vocabulary acquisition in English while still engaging DLLs; books with text well matched to illustrations so teachers can refer to them to help students learn the words used in the text.⁴¹
- o Conversations about books and how to engage children in meaningful experiences that integrate books and language throughout routines and other lessons before, during, and after book reading.
- o Use of supports such as gestures, manipulatives, and facial expressions to clarify word meanings to foster comprehension.
- o Literacy-, math- and science-focused lessons delivered to small groups led by a teacher to foster the extended discourse needed to bolster language learning for DLLs.
- o Opportunities for children to participate with English speakers including both teachers and peers.⁴²

RECOMMENDATION 2: Incorporate tools that accurately and fairly assess program/classroom supports of ELs as part of program evaluation.

Researchers have increasingly emphasized that classroom learning environments for ELs need to have multiple opportunities for promoting language building. To continue the ground covered in PreK as DLLs, **ELs in K-3 need ongoing opportunities to build, understand, and explore broad conceptual knowledge. However, recent research has cited how seldom this actually happens in K-3 settings as standardized tests and other accountability efforts have created cultures of rigid learning environments focused on language, literacy, and math as isolated subjects.**⁴³ For example, a recent study of K-3 classrooms in New Jersey found that children spent 44 percent of their school day in whole group learning and only 5 percent in small groups where children could work collaboratively. Looking specifically at language and literacy skills, the majority of time, 13 minutes, was spent identifying words, phonics, and word work; less than five minutes, on average, was spent learning vocabulary words, 11 minutes was spent reading to children, and seven minutes was spent on reading comprehension skills.⁴⁴ Clearly more time spent in discussions with opportunities for feedback with teachers is key for ELs to develop vocabulary that can, in turn, contribute to reading comprehension and other skills needed for success in later grades.

Some measures of classroom environments can highlight the extent to which these practices are in place, but none specifically address aspects of quality that benefit ELs the most in grades

K-3. Yet these measures can help identify how children are spending the day, which can begin to show where ELs can be better supported. Further, **none of the most often-used teacher evaluation frameworks explicitly seek evidence of teacher practice specific to ELs. Such practices include a teacher’s understanding of student backgrounds, understanding of language demands that accompany learning tasks, and specific skills to utilize adequate scaffolding when using English.**⁴⁵

In contrast, research investigating interventions, including elements of the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) framework in elementary schools, has found significant impacts for ELs in various empirical studies.⁴⁶ Though done in third and fifth grades, this study found that a culturally responsive model based on conversation (instructional conversation intervention, or IC), engaged students in authentic conversation based on the principals of the CREDE framework. Specifically, when teachers provided IC instruction twice weekly, including 30 minutes in small groups, across content areas by integrating vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and reading comprehension with social studies, science and math, student outcomes improved on a test of language. Further, this type of integration with subjects has also been shown to create wider opportunities for the development of content knowledge. Using CREDE’s five pedagogical standards could be important in modifying teacher evaluation frameworks already in use.

Similarly, a study of a research-practice partnership (e.g., First School) includes use of the same data to measure various aspects of classroom experiences and provides usable data for teachers and administrators to frame change. The project yielded promising outcomes, as teachers spent increased time on oral language, vocabulary development, collaborating with peers, working in small groups, and metacognition.⁴⁷ As the researchers noted, the classroom environment’s physical space is also a critical factor in this kind of change, as children need to be able to move about their environment to execute agency and construct knowledge. Again, while promising, the use of a specific data collection tool fostered these changes.

Taken together, the salient features of classroom quality for ELs include the following.

- o Displays, literature, and topics for learning that are reflective of languages and cultures
- o Classroom arrangements that foster child-directed learning
- o Multiple opportunities for extended conversation and discussions
- o Small group learning experiences
- o Opportunities for student choice
- o Opportunities for students to collaborate
- o Integration of subjects

Resources: State, program, and classroom observation measures of quality for DLLs/ELs

Resource	Description	Goals
<p>Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Defining and Measuring Quality in Early Childhood Practices that Promote Dual Language Learners' Development and Learning</i></p> <p>(Castro, Espinosa, & Paez, 2011)</p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/zaslow-chapter-11.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book chapter describing the features to consider when assessing quality of practices for DLLs 	<p>To learn background knowledge about the elements of high-quality practices for DLLs; includes a brief synopsis of measures for assessing practice specific to DLLs</p>
<p>Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Program Preparedness Checklist</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/program-preparedness-checklist-v-5.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start's assessment tool for programs to reflect on systems and services provided to DLLs and their families • Includes 13 sections that span communication, curriculum, environments, family partnerships, screening, and assessment 	<p>To learn how other programs are held accountable for services provided to DLLs</p>
<p>Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Planned Language Approach- Organizational Capacity Checklist</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pps-organizational-capacity-checklist.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A checklist for self-monitoring of implementation of high-quality language and literacy practices; includes program-level questions and school, parent, family, and community engagement goals 	
<p>Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)</p> <p><i>Dual Language Learners Program Assessment (DLLPA)</i></p>	<p>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/guide-dual-language-learners-program-assessment-dllpa/dual-language-learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A self-assessment for Head Start, child care, and PreK programs to assess their management systems and services to maximize participation of children who are DLLs 	
<p>Child Trends</p> <p><i>Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education Settings: Compendium of Measures, 2nd Edition</i></p> <p>(Halle, Vick Whittaker, & Anderson, 2010)</p>	<p>https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/complete_compendium_full.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complete guide to quality measures for early childhood programs • Provides a matrix of assessment tools including program targets, purposes (e.g., improvement, monitoring/accreditation, and research/evaluation) 	<p>To learn about all the available measures and their purposes to consider implementation of observational measures in specific state programs to provide data what instruction children receive and how it can be improved</p>

<p>Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE), University of California at Santa Cruz</p> <p><i>Activity Setting Observation System</i></p>	<p>https://cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt5010t7g4/qt5010t7g4.pdf?t=lqrkk6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An observation tool to collect data on how children spend their day in the classrooms based on Vygotskian theory 	<p>To learn how observation measures can examine the way students spend their time in elementary classrooms and how this data can inform practices that are more supportive of ELs</p>
<p>CREDE</p> <p><i>Rubric for Observing Classroom Enactments of CREDE's Standards for Effective Pedagogy</i></p>	<p>http://educationalimpact.com/resources/etdc/pdf/7e_SPC_Rubric.pdf</p>	
<p>Migration Policy Institute (MPI)</p> <p><i>Quality for Whom? Supporting Diverse Workers in Early Childhood Quality Improvement Systems</i> (Sugarman & Park, 2017)</p>	<p>https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/supporting-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-children-and-workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy brief with specific information on how states can use QRIS systems to capture program elements that are beneficial to immigrant families based on interview research and lists of states that are implementing indicators relative to DLLs specifically 	<p>To learn strategies that can be used to ensure accessibility, fairness, and accurate representation of program elements valuable to culturally and linguistically diverse children and families in QRIS</p>
<p><i>Universal Design for Learning in the Early Childhood Classroom, Teaching Children of all Languages, Cultures, and Abilities, Birth-8 Years</i> (Brillante & Nemeth, 2018)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book providing concrete ideas on incorporating language and culture into classrooms 	<p>To provide examples of strategies and materials to list in guidance documents and for guiding professional development</p>

Action Steps:

- Develop a checklist that informs districts of the practices specific to DLLs/ELs.
- Invest in training on one of the tools from the compendium to collect data that can inform coaching, professional development, and program improvement.
- Incorporate supportive practices for DLLs into the QRIS in meaningful ways.
- Conduct a study of classroom quality for DLLs and ELs in preschool and in K-3 using tools specifically designed for this purpose to understand areas that are well supported and those that are in need of further development. This can also help reveal gaps in practice between preschool and K-3.

Putting it All Together

Implementation of these recommendations requires planning and collaboration. To do this, SEAs must agree on what the internal stakeholder engagement will look like and how the pieces will be woven together. Specifically, it will be important to leverage ESSA requirements to create policies that can foster overlap in efforts for each area of recommendation across the PreK to grade 3 continuum for students. The following is a suggested plan of action.

- 1) Consider what existing data can inform the implementation of at least some of the recommendations at the SEA level.
- 2) Determine what data are missing to make decisions about what is needed.
- 3) Explore how the existing data is being used and who has access to it.
- 4) Disseminate information/resources that exist but may not be familiar to all stakeholders.
- 5) Determine who the collaborators should be for each recommendation area.
- 6) Determine what work is already being done, where efforts can overlap, and how systems can come together to further efforts from PreK to grade 3.
- 7) Combine opportunities when possible to dovetail funding sources that can help with implementation.

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