Effective Practices for English Learners

BRIEF 5
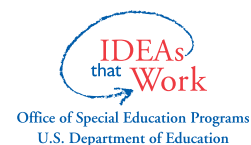
Professional Development to Support a Multitiered Instructional Framework

Support

Preferred Citation

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Multitiered Instructional Frameworks

Response to intervention (RTI) describes models that use data to inform decisions regarding delivery of instruction. Many RTI models closely align with three-tier models of instructional delivery, where Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum that all students receive, Tier 2 refers to supplemental support that some students receive, and Tier 3 offers an even more intensive level of instruction for students who do not demonstrate adequate improvement, given Tier 2 support. In practice, RTI and three tiers have become synonymous for many. Accordingly, this report uses "multitiered models" to describe the broad group of instructional approaches that depend on students' response to instruction as a primary indicator for planning ongoing levels of instructional intensity. This distinction acknowledges that the number of tiers in the model is not the critical feature. The important features in multitiered models are the use of appropriate, research-based reading instruction and interventions; assessment, screening, and progress monitoring of students in need of support; and culturally responsive teaching strategies and principles. These features can be implemented in any number of tiers, depending on the resources and needs that characterize a school, district, or state.

Professional Development to Support a Multitiered Instructional Framework

This document is the fifth in a series of briefs for school leaders, educators, and policymakers charged with implementing or supporting multitiered instruction that accommodates English learners (ELs). In this brief, three model demonstration projects (Cohort 5 of the Model Demonstration Coordination Center—see sidebar) share their framework for providing quality, evidence-based professional development (PD) that supports educators' efforts to understand and meet the needs of ELs. This brief emphasizes the importance of supporting educators within a multitiered instructional framework as they learn how to make data-informed decisions about—and deliver appropriate, multitiered instruction to—culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Audience

This brief is designed to support practitioners, instructional coaches, and policymakers in the design and delivery of PD within a multitiered instructional framework for ELs.

Practitioners: Classroom teachers and EL interventionists will find this brief helpful for understanding the features that typify the PD they should pursue as they strive to become better acquainted with multitiered frameworks and culturally responsive practices.

Instructional coaches and school leaders: The guiding principles discussed in this brief can help instructional coaches and school leaders identify areas in which to support teachers, frame supports provided to classroom teachers, and coordinate resources. The principles also can help coaches and school leaders identify areas in which they may need to develop additional expertise.

Policymakers: This brief will also inform district and school policymakers of effective PD practices, key topics for enhancing educators' knowledge, and the coordination of resources needed to provide an ongoing system of professional learning and instructional support for educators.

Cohort 5 Model Demonstration Projects

The three research projects that authored this report were funded in September 2011 by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. These projects make up what is known as Cohort 5 of the Model Demonstration Coordination Center (MDCC). Each of the research projects works with school districts that serve large populations of ELs.

Cohort 5 works to improve the outcomes of ELs in the primary grades by implementing tiered approaches that incorporate the following instructional features:

- Appropriate, research-based reading instruction and interventions for ELs
- Culturally responsive teaching strategies and principles
- Progress monitoring and data-based decision-making
- Professional development and strategic coaching for teachers

For more information, visit **www.mdcc.sri.com**.

Introduction

A multitiered system of support, when implemented successfully, provides a framework for educators to accurately identify students' learning needs, allocate resources to address those needs, and assess the impact of instruction on student learning and adjust resources and instruction accordingly. A *culturally responsive* multitiered system ensures that all students receive equitable and appropriate opportunities to

learn in each tier of instruction and that no group of students is overrepresented or underrepresented in the process of identifying literacy difficulties or disabilities.

The previous briefs in the series focused on the components of a multitiered model and their appropriate application to linguistically diverse populations. These components include assessment and data-based decision-making for ELs, principles of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and assessment, and evidence-based core and supplemental (Tier 2 and Tier 3) instruction for ELs. This brief is dedicated to the topic of PD to support a multitiered instructional framework. This brief describes the essential features of effective PD, outlines important PD topics for enhancing educators' knowledge of tiered instruction for ELs, and provides guidance in the delivery of effective PD to educators.

Essential Features of Effective PD

Teacher education is paramount to any meaningful reform for culturally and linguistically diverse students. The goal of PD within the multitiered models described in these briefs is to support teachers in becoming autonomous thinkers and practitioners, able to make informed decisions about how to best meet the language and literacy needs of ELs, as well as provide all students with meaningful, equitable opportunities to learn. As district and school leaders implement a multitiered model that optimizes outcomes for ELs, educators need ongoing professional support as they enhance their knowledge of best practices and refine their delivery of those practices. The following sections describe essential features of PD that, when integrated with educational improvement efforts, can provide the basis for powerful learning experiences for educators.

Base PD on Principles of Adult Learning

To begin, an approach to PD must be grounded in the goal of transforming professional practice, rather than merely layering new practices upon existing ones. To meet this goal, the following key ideas in adult learning theory should be at the foundation of all professional support.

- **Develop autonomous thinking.** Effective teachers acquire information, but also understand, interpret, and manipulate that information to solve teaching and learning problems. To successfully serve all students, adults must feel empowered to think independently in a collaborative context, rather than uncritically act on the perceived knowledge of others.[1] Thus, professional learning opportunities should be cognitively challenging, build on adults' diverse backgrounds and expertise, and enhance adults' capabilities to function as self-directed learners and autonomous thinkers.

- **Directly align learning with the work that adults do.** Adults seek meaningful learning opportunities that directly relate to their own professional goals and desires. Thus, learning opportunities should be job embedded, with direct implications for teachers' daily efforts to improve student learning.[2] Professional learning should include regular opportunities for teachers to integrate new knowledge within the context of real-life situations. Materials and instruction should reflect teachers' authentic experiences and include concrete examples of how a theory relates to current practice.[3]

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1   Mezirow, 1997
2   Kelleher, 2003; Knight, 2007
3   Englert & Tarrant, 1995

Align PD With Curriculum, Assessment, and School Reform Efforts

In addition to these key ideas in adult learning, an effective PD system aligns with school or district goals, specifically the reform efforts for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Administrators, staff members, and key stakeholders should have a clearly articulated vision for ELs, one that aligns with the programs offered (e.g., transitional bilingual education, one- and two-way dual-language programs, English as a second language) and the amount and quality of literacy support provided to ELs. These efforts should focus on both specialists and general education teachers, as core classroom teachers are the mainstream teachers of ELs served in pullout English as a second language programs and the primary instructors of ELs on monitor status after exit from special language programs. All PD needs to align with these overarching goals and endeavors and be consistent with school or district curriculum and assessment. PD that is integrated with school reform efforts, curricula, and assessment acknowledges both adult learning goals and student learning goals, so that it focuses on the effect of adult learning on student learning.[4]

Provide Ongoing and Job-Embedded PD

Similar to the students they serve, teachers master new practices through multiple opportunities to learn within meaningful and relevant contexts. These opportunities are most beneficial when they are connected across time, designed as part of a coherent campus improvement plan, and job embedded. Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, and Powers define *job-embedded* PD as PD "situated *in* schools that is always *about* the current work of schools."[5] In addition to being situated within teachers' work, teacher development has been shown to have positive effects on student learning when it is focused, intensive, and delivered over time. In a review of the research, Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley found that PD programs offering more than 14 hours of sustained learning opportunities for teachers showed positive effects, with the most significant effect found when 30 to 100 hours were offered over the course of 6 to 12 months.[6]

Foster Assessment and Self-Reflection

Assessment-centered learning environments "provide opportunities for learners to test their understanding by trying out things and receiving feedback."[7] Feedback is essential in clarifying teachers' conceptual understanding of instructional practices, in correcting misconceptions, and in translating new knowledge into action. Often, other educators and colleagues are key to this practice. Thus, professional learning should include structured opportunities for teachers to observe effective teachers, be observed, and speak with peers about the successes and challenges of implementing new practices.

Providing a framework and structured guidance in self-reflection and self-assessment is vital in producing teacher change, which in turn guides systemic reform efforts.[8] For example, the work of Ross and Bruce shows how the use of a teacher self-assessment tool can contribute to teacher growth and student achievement.[9] Along with the support of peer observation and feedback, teachers' regular assessment of their practice against a clear set of standards guided their implementation efforts and provided an avenue for teacher change.

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4   Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009
5   Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, & Powers, 2010, p. 5
6   Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007
7   Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2004, p. 196
8   McCombs, 2003
9   Ross & Bruce, 2007

Build Capacity and Sustainability

Finally, PD that builds educator capacity and fosters teacher leadership is key in sustaining a multitiered instructional model for ELs. As educators enhance their knowledge and gain expertise in new practices, school leaders need to have systems in place for empowering educators to take on greater roles (i.e., through providing direct support to other teachers, serving on committees, or representing teachers and students in wider networks). When educators are supported in understanding school change, dealing with conflict, and creating productive professional communities, the ownership of educational reform effort is distributed and new practices are more likely to be sustained over time.

Important PD Topics for Enhancing Educators' Knowledge of Multitiered Systems of Support for ELs

Best practice standards and a clear set of professional learning goals related to those standards guide effective PD. For meaningful educational change to occur, educators often need to restructure their operating definitions of best practices and broaden their own instructional practice.[10] The previous briefs in this series are dedicated to the key components of a tiered model that optimize outcomes for ELs. These briefs may serve as guides for enhancing the foundational knowledge of practitioners, particularly in the areas of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, assessment and data-based decision-making, and the successful delivery of core and supplemental (Tier 2 and Tier 3) instruction for ELs. In the following sections, we describe important topics in professional learning that support the implementation of a multitiered framework for ELs. These topics can be drawn on to create a set of clear goals for practice and to drive PD planning.

Supporting Practitioners as Part of a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Framework

Cultural and linguistic responsiveness is at the foundation of an effective multitiered model for ELs and ensures that students are not disproportionately represented in the process of identifying literacy difficulties and disabilities. When school leaders and practitioners are culturally conscious and knowledgeable of the role that culture (including language) plays in teaching and learning, students' needs are more accurately identified and addressed though appropriate instructional practices. As described in Brief 3 and Brief 4 of this series, which focus on English as a second language and biliteracy instruction for ELs, meaningful change in the instruction of linguistically and culturally diverse students centers on the following key principles of culturally responsive pedagogy:

- Culturally responsive teachers understand the role of culture in how individuals think, learn, and communicate.[11]

- Culturally responsive teachers articulate an affirming attitude toward students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Students' primary languages and cultural backgrounds are seen as assets to learning, and teachers use those assets as conduits for new learning.[12]

- Culturally responsive teachers collaborate with students' families and communities and validate the cultural and linguistic knowledge students acquire from home and community experiences.[13]

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10   Sato, Wei, & Darling-Hammond, 2008
11   Villegas & Lucas, 2002
12   Gay, 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2008
13   González, Moll, & Amanti, 2013

Principles in Practice: Project ELITE, Texas

Project ELITE focused on supporting educators in making data-informed decisions and in optimizing core (Tier 1) literacy instruction for ELs. Due to the nature of these components, the project took similar, yet nuanced approaches to PD to support implementation across three campuses.

Conducting Structured Data Meetings

Project ELITE provided initial training to district leaders and multitiered model specialists on conducting successful data meetings and understanding the meeting protocols and materials. Project ELITE developed online training modules on the specifics of beginning-of-year, middle-of-year, and end-of-year meetings and made the modules available to stakeholders (leaders, specialists, educators) throughout the district. Project staff members extended professional learning by modeling data meeting practices and then providing job-embedded support to instructional administrators, as well as multitiered model specialists and teachers, as they undertook greater leadership roles in the process. Capacity and sustainability were built through a gradual-release model of support, so that stakeholders progressively took ownership of the model, further adapting it to address campus-specific needs.

Enhancing Core Literacy Instruction for ELs Through a Daily Read-Aloud Routine

K–3 teachers across campuses received direct teaching on the model at the beginning of the school year and then job-embedded PD throughout the year. Because project staff members worked at the individual teacher level in implementing instructional practices, the project capitalized on the campuses' established professional learning communities (PLCs) to integrate various strands of job-embedded PD. Those strands included direct teaching and modeling of the instructional practices during grade-level PLCs and a circular-coaching model in which teachers were observed, given feedback, and then brought back together in PLCs to discuss the successes and challenges of implementation. Additional job-embedded PD included self-videotaping of teachers delivering the routine and self-evaluation of their practice. The PLC framework provided a collaborative structure for teachers to share the findings of their self-evaluation, discuss common areas of needed growth and areas of success, and plan next steps. Capacity and sustainability were built through collaboration with instructional administrators, who gradually took ownership of the support model (coaching, observation, feedback, and PLCs).

Ensuring that all students are provided equitable and appropriate opportunities to learn is critical to a tiered model that optimizes learning for linguistically diverse students. However, achieving cultural and linguistic responsiveness is not necessarily an easy or straightforward process; "it must grow out of the hard work of ongoing dialogue and negotiation among colleagues."[14] Thus, professional learning and growth in these areas need to include activities that identify and eliminate deficit approaches toward ELs and that offer ongoing opportunities for self-reflection, collaborative dialogue, and group deliberation and problem-solving.

Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making

Assessing students in a linguistically responsible manner is key in evaluating the effectiveness of core curriculum and instruction for ELs, in identifying the strengths and needs of ELs, and in providing a framework for making valid conclusions about ELs who are at risk for reading disabilities.

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14   Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 21

Brief 2 in this series, *Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making*, examines this topic and provides recommendations for enhancing practitioners' knowledge in the following areas:

- The purpose of key assessments within multitiered models (screening and progress monitoring) and issues of validity and reliability
- The relationship between the language of instruction, the language of assessment, and students' language proficiency
- The interpretation of assessment data for the purpose of making instructional decisions for ELs

Campus leaders and administrators may assess strengths and needs in these areas and incorporate a plan for enhancing educators' knowledge as part of campus reform efforts. An additional component of the assessment process is a system for collaboratively reviewing assessment data and planning instruction within and across grades, a practice that should be considered essential to teachers' professional growth and learning.

Data Review as Part of Professional Learning

At the foundation of an effective multitiered system of support is the systematic and regular review of assessment data for the purpose of planning instruction for ELs. A PD plan should include opportunities for practitioners to collaboratively review data, evaluate current instructional approaches, and integrate research-based practices that target student needs identified through data reviews. As part of a campus' PD system, administrators should protect regular time slots for grade-level teams to collaboratively address teaching and learning problems through the analysis of student assessment data. During these meetings, teachers and specialists engage in critical conversations around student data and share knowledge of evidence-based practices for ELs. Administrators should also plan meetings to consider data across grades to ensure that literacy curricula and instruction are vertically aligned.

To achieve the goals of these meetings, practitioners need a strong foundational knowledge of the purpose of each assessment administered; how to access and read student assessment data; how to draw valid conclusions about the needs of ELs based on assessment data; and how students' level of language proficiency, educational history, and the current language of instruction have an impact on conclusions about ELs' language and literacy needs. (See Brief 2 of this series for guidance in these areas.) An essential part of professional learning, collaborative data reviews are also a process by which practitioners can identify areas of knowledge in which they may need more professional learning and support.

English as a Second Language and Biliteracy Instruction for ELs in all Tiers of Instruction

To make informed, data-based decisions about ELs, teachers must be knowledgeable in two key areas. First, knowledge of language and the language-acquisition process can help teachers accurately identify the learning needs of ELs and differentiate literacy instruction based on those needs. Second, teachers need to understand how to deliver effective, evidence-based practices for language and literacy development in ELs' primary language, second language, or both. Briefs 3 and 4 in this series are devoted to the delivery of appropriate, evidence-based instruction for linguistically diverse students in each tier of instruction, in both English as a second language and bilingual instructional programs. These briefs may serve as a guide for creating a set of clear standards of best practice in these key areas.

Teacher Knowledge of Language and the Language-Acquisition Process

Cultural responsiveness includes linguistic responsiveness. Teachers must be knowledgeable of the role students' primary language plays in learning and literacy development. Linguistically responsive teachers understand that a student's primary language is an asset in second-language learning, and they employ effective instructional strategies for developing students' language and literacy skills in their first language, English, or both. PD topics that might be explored to enhance teachers' knowledge in this area include the following:

- The stages of second-language development, the different language behaviors associated with those stages, and how to differentiate instruction so that it is appropriate for students at various stages
- Best practices in native-language literacy development and second-language literacy development
- How to bridge native-language literacy skills to English literacy development
- How to differentiate linguistic and cultural differences from language or learning disabilities
- How to identify and eliminate deficit perspectives toward ELs and their families and communities

Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction for ELs

Along with the knowledge of the role of language in literacy development, educators must understand and integrate instructional practices that have been shown to be effective for ELs. Foundational components of successful literacy instruction for ELs in English as a second language programs include the following:

- Integration of the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) into daily literacy instruction
- Explicit and interactive approaches to literacy teaching
- Focus on oral language development
- High-quality instruction in each component of literacy: reading comprehension, vocabulary, reading fluency, phonological awareness, phonics, and writing

Foundational components of successful literacy instruction for ELs in transitional bilingual or dual-language programs include the following:

- Developing students' oral and literacy skills in the native language, with a core Spanish curriculum that builds development in each of the language domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)
- Providing structured English as a second language instruction to support the acquisition of social and academic English
- Providing a systematic program of instruction that supports connections between L1 and L2 literacy

As part of campus or district reform efforts, leaders may assess staff members' strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas and then integrate appropriate topics into the PD plan. Further guidance in the planning and delivery of effective literacy instruction for ELs is provided in Brief 3 and Brief 4 of this series, which can be used as resources for ongoing professional support.

Principles in Practice: Project ESTRE²LLA, Texas

Project ESTRE²LLA focused on improving teacher knowledge and instructional practices by building teacher capacity. Teachers of ELs received job-embedded professional development (JEPD) relevant to their individual, grade-level, and school needs. JEPD was appropriate because the schools operated as PLCs and planned together to teach the same content. The JEPD model involved ongoing needs analysis informed by both teacher and student data and the identification of mutually agreed-upon literacy-related topics for professional learning. The model followed a recursive cycle of professional learning, observation, coaching, feedback, modeling, demonstration, and collaboration.

Student data indicated a need to improve core instruction to reduce the number of ELs in need of supplemental instruction; therefore, JEPD focused on evidence-based literacy practices for ELs, differentiation of instruction in Tier 1, and the use of data to target instruction for individual students. Teachers were encouraged to analyze data and use formative assessments to measure their students' current level of performance weekly.

In Year 1, participating teachers received intensive JEPD every 2 weeks with extensive support. Teachers enhanced their content knowledge and instructional practices, and student achievement improved. Teachers reported that JEPD was beneficial and relevant to their particular needs in teaching ELs.

In Year 2, a needs analysis identified the most pressing needs at each school. School and project personnel agreed on PD topics. School coordinators conducted observations and coaching. Teachers reported improving their knowledge and instructional practices and found JEPD to be beneficial.

One key component of the Project ESTRE²LLA JEPD model was flexibility—flexibility in identifying the needs of the group and of the individual teachers and providing the professional learning and differentiated support needed at the group and individual levels. In this way, the pace of the professional learning was structured around the group and individual teachers' learning. The JEPD model was structured with built-in time for collaboration between peers as part of learning, planning, and implementing, and coaching and feedback as part of follow-up to professional learning to assist in or observe implementation. These supports continued until changes in teacher practice were evident. The success of the JEPD was facilitated by the numerous supports built in to the model and the ongoing needs analyses.

Delivery of Effective PD Practices Through an Ongoing System of Support and Collaboration

Helping general educators incorporate essential concepts and teaching methods into the delivery of literacy instruction for ELs often presents major challenges. Providing classroom teachers with the "what" of best practices for ELs must be followed with an effective process for the "how."

Most likely, teachers will engage in independent learning as part of their PD. This independent learning might include attending a conference or workshop on a particular topic or participating in various campus activities in which an expert provides direct training on instructional principles or other topics. The goal of an effective, sustainable PD system is to extend that type of learning through ongoing, job-embedded support. Practitioners are most successful in making an impact on student achievement when they are provided a system of sustained support as they enhance their knowledge, integrate new knowledge into practice, and refine new instructional practices over time.

A system of continuous professional support can include a variety organizational activities, and leaders may coordinate resources in a variety of ways. In the following sections, we outline some possible strands that can be integrated to facilitate coherent professional learning for educators.

Professional Learning Communities

Broadly speaking, professional learning communities (PLCs) involve the collaboration of individuals with a shared interest in education. For example, grade-level teachers may form a PLC for the purpose of sustained, collaborative professional learning to address the achievement of ELs. In PLCs, teachers meet regularly to analyze their current practices and discuss ways to refine those practices by reviewing and sharing evidence related to student learning and effective instruction.[15] A key benefit of PLCs is the peer support provided to practitioners as they test new practices, reflect on their implementation, and share successes and challenges. Also, due to the shared-leadership component of PLCs, autonomous thinking is valued and teachers are encouraged to draw on the diverse expertise of colleagues as they work together to enhance outcomes for ELs. Finally, because PLCs are often campus based, practitioners can build their own bank of knowledge that integrates the collective experiences that occur within their unique school or district context.[16]

PLCs can also provide a framework for sustained learning and follow-up support in key areas for campus improvement identified as part of a school's reform efforts for culturally and linguistically diverse students. For example, as practitioners are provided with opportunities to enhance their foundational knowledge of the key components of tiered models for ELs (e.g., linguistically responsive assessment and data-based decision-making, evidence-based (bi)literacy instruction for ELs), PLCs can serve as a structure for ongoing support as teachers apply new knowledge to their practice and develop expertise. As a structure for ongoing guidance, PLCs can serve as a venue for integrating other strands of PD activities described in this section, as these communities can provide the foundation for collaboration and follow-up.

Coaching

Research shows that coaching improves the effectiveness of teacher development.[17] As part of job-embedded PD, instructional coaches support teachers in learning research-based practices and incorporating them into their regular instruction. Effective coaching also involves meaningful, targeted feedback to improve the impact of teachers' instruction on student learning. Within a multitiered model, coaches may work with teachers to enhance their delivery of core and supplemental instruction through modeling of effective instructional practices for ELs, support in reviewing and interpreting student data, and guidance in making data-informed instructional decisions. PLC activities can enhance the effects of individual coaching because they (1) provide a place for coaches to introduce, directly teach, and model new practices, and (2) serve as a collaborative framework for educators to share relevant knowledge gathered from the coaching process (i.e., observation, mentoring, feedback).

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15   Croft et al., 2010
16   Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009
17   Cornett & Knight, 2009

Principles in Practice: Project REME, Colorado

A variety of factors facilitated the improvement in literacy practices for ELs in this project, including the following: (1) a well-established university-school-district collaborative partnership; (2) district administrator, principal, and teacher buy-in (e.g., educators' willingness to develop action plans from a culturally and linguistically responsive literacy guide and actively participate in PD and coaching); (3) delivery of a collaborative coaching model by researchers, school district coaches, and school mentor teachers; and (4) PD that was engaging and responsive to the nuances of different school contexts. The REME team invested in developing relationships with all educators involved at the district, school, and classroom levels, and continually solicited formal and informal feedback. REME researchers experienced some challenges in differentiating PD content for schools with very different needs and models of instruction (i.e., one of the three REME pilot schools emphasized dual language, and the other two used an English as a second language model).

Within these parameters, the following five-step process was used in REME to support teachers' implementation of literacy instruction for ELs:

- Teacher self-examination of use of essential literacy practices in Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction for ELs, using a research-based self-examination English as second language instructional practices tool

- Identification of action items based on tool results to strengthen and advance incorporation of essential literacy practices into Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction

- Classroom implementation support in the form of coaching, workshops, and mentoring

- Observations to document implementation of action items and related essential instruction practices in Tier 1 and Tier 2 literacy instruction for ELs

- Continued self-examination, action item development, coaching support, and observations (i.e., developed instructional practices tool was used for ongoing self-examination, coaching, and creation of action items and observations)

Observation and Reflection

Two key sources for teacher learning are teachers' own practice and their interactions with other teachers.[18] As teachers expand their knowledge of effective instructional practices for ELs, they can be further supported through both peer and self-observation opportunities. As part of their PLC activities, teachers can make regular visits to one another's classrooms, view videotaped lessons of exemplary instruction, or engage in self-observation by videotaping and analyzing their own teaching. These practices can extend teachers' knowledge of how to deliver specific instructional strategies and provide opportunities to analyze components of an instructional practice that would be hard to pinpoint otherwise.[19] Research has shown that "collegial analysis, reflection, and constructive critique of videotaped lessons" can change educators' knowledge, practice, and effectiveness.[20]

Analysis of Student Work and Data

Because the goal of all PD is the improvement of student outcomes, professional learning activities should be tied to analysis of student learning outcomes. This analysis is crucial when teachers are re-

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18   Bransford et al., 2004
19   Sherin, 2004
20   Sato et al., 2008, p. 693

sponsible for teaching skills and content in two languages and/or have responsibility for English as a second language development in both the oral and written language domains. Data-based decision-making is the fabric of an effective multitiered model for ELs, and the cycle of problem-solving relies on the ongoing review of student data to identify instructional needs, allocate resources accordingly, and assess students' response to instruction.

For teachers, collaborations around student work and data are an important part of professional learning and should be well integrated into school and district PD efforts. Team-based analysis of student work gives teachers opportunities to analyze hard evidence of student learning through the critical review of assessment data, classroom artifacts, and instructional interactions. Teachers then discuss the findings, speculating about the practices that affect student outcomes and sharing that knowledge with colleagues. Also through data reviews, teachers can identify areas of both student need and teacher need, which can drive the school PD agenda.

Analysis of the Ongoing Impact of PD

Finally, district and school leaders should engage in the ongoing process of measuring the effectiveness of PD practices on teacher change and student outcomes. Desimone suggests the usefulness of a core conceptual framework for PD that focuses on the critical features of the activity shown to be related to desirable teacher and student outcomes, such as those outlined in this brief.[21] Educational leaders should measure the extent to which (1) teachers experience these core features, (2) their knowledge and skills in instructing ELs increase, (3) their beliefs around culturally and linguistically diverse students change, (4) their delivery of language and literacy instruction improves, and (5) student learning improves. Just as these processes are important to student learning, the review and analysis of data related to teacher change is critical to supporting a multitiered framework that meets the language and learning needs of ELs.

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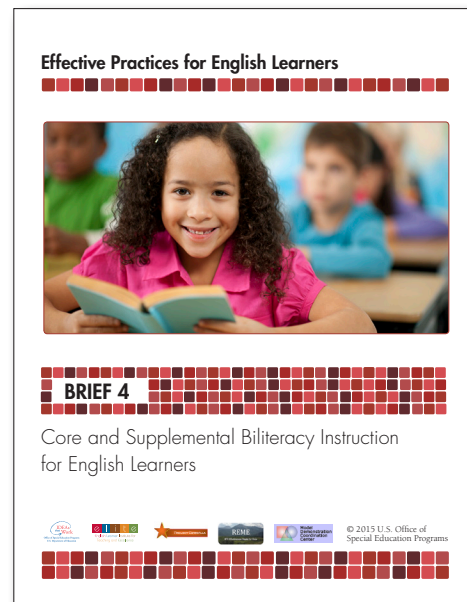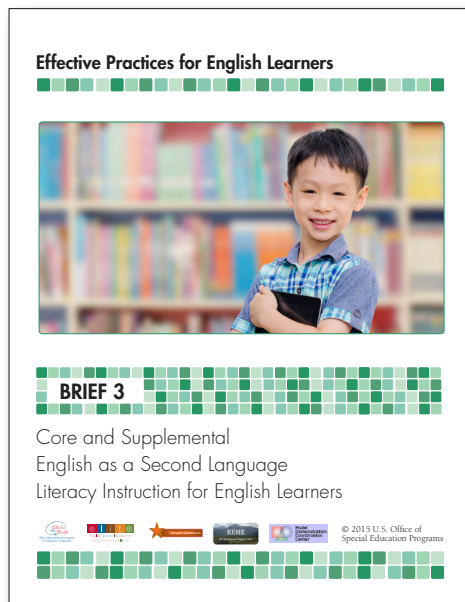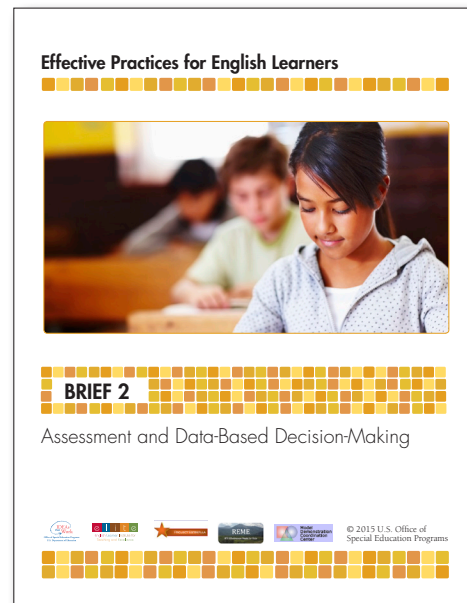
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21   Desimone, 2009

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For Further Guidance

This brief is part of the *Effective Practices for English Learners* series. The goal of this series is to assist administrators, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in implementing or refining a campus-wide model for improving the academic achievement of ELs in the primary grades. Other briefs in this series address key issues in implementing multitiered systems of support for ELs and can be consulted for further guidance.

Effective Practices for English Learners

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Through a Multitiered Instructional Framework

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