

Louisiana Believes

EL Community of Practice: What CAOs and CTOs Should Know

February 2020 Collaborations

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Agenda

- Define the *EL Community of Practice*
- Explore the four focus areas of the Community
- Identify next steps

In order to reach this goal,
every day, students in Louisiana should...



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build knowledge
of the world,

read
meaningful texts,

express ideas through
writing and speaking, and

solve
complex problems.

Key Challenges Specific to English Learners

- English Learners are **not homogenous**. They come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, speak different languages, and have diverse educational experiences and expectations.
- English Learners enter our school system at **varying levels of English language proficiency**.
- Some English Learners enter our school system with **needs beyond language acquisition**, including trauma in some cases.
- Many teachers often feel **unprepared** and assume that they cannot teach content to English Learners if they **do not speak the same language**.
- Some EL teachers/instructional specialists **lack content knowledge** and provide language support services that are disconnected to or in isolation from core content.

EL Community of Practice

Turn and Chat:

1. Are you familiar with the community of practice model?
2. Do you belong to any?

A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

What is the *EL Community of Practice*?

The *EL Community of Practice* is a cohort-based learning opportunity where EL educators come together based on their specific system needs to gain guidance from the LDOE as well as others.

What shared passion or concern would the people who are part of the *EL Community of Practice* share?

What benefits are there to this model versus a traditional lecture and learn model?

Why is it best to use cohorts based on system needs?

Goals for the EL *Community of Practice*

We want to engage English Learner supervisors in conversations to identify key levers to improve outcomes for English Learners.

By May we will:

- draft a profile of who our English Learners are and what they need;
- develop a shared understanding of Louisiana's academic strategy and what it means for English Learners;
- develop a shared understanding of innovative approaches to English Learner programming in alignment with academic strategy (and how this can be reflected in SuperApp, budgeting, EL plans, etc); and
- identify the key resources that school systems need to ensure ongoing implementation of high-quality programming and family engagement.

EL Community of Practice: Focus Areas

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Focus Area 1: | Using screening and assessment data to build a district EL profile |
| Focus Area 2: | Planning for high-quality instruction and supports |
| Focus Area 3: | Engaging families effectively |
| Focus Area 4: | Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of EL programming |

The Cohorts

Participants were placed in cohorts based on their school system's EL population percentage and school system size.

| Cohort 1: High EL Percentage | Cohort 2: High EL, Small System or Medium EL Percentage | Cohort 3: Small EL Percentage |
|---|--|---|
| EBR Bossier Livingston Lafayette Calcasieu Tangipahoa Terrebonne St. Tammany | Ascension Union Caddo St Mary St John St Bernard Central Community Orleans charters and more | Assumption Allen Bogalusa City of Baker West Feliciana NOLA Public Schools Webster and many more |

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Focus Area 1

Using screening and assessment data to build a district EL profile (October 2019)

Communities of Practice:

- analyzed statewide EL data (from ELPT administration 2019);
- reviewed the potential EL enrollment process;
- discussed purpose of ELPS/ELPT; and
- explored school system EL data snapshots.

Are you involved in the EL screening process? If so, how?

The Potential EL

Basic steps for identifying ELs:

1. Use a [Home Language Survey](#) to collect information about language backgrounds on all students.
2. If the parent/guardian enters something other than English for **one** of the four main questions, conduct a [Family Interview](#) to gather more information.
3. Once the student has been identified as a potential EL, administer the English Language Proficiency Screener ([ELPS](#)).
4. If the student does not score proficient, [notify the parent](#).
5. ELPS student reports should be reviewed for program and instructional decisions.

The [English Learner \(EL\) Identification Flowchart](#) illustrates the process of identifying ELs.

ELs in the State

State EL Snapshot

There are over 28,000 ELs in Louisiana.

Over 80% of ELs identify as Hispanic/Latino, but not all of these ELs necessarily speak Spanish.

Only 24% of ELs are newcomers (less than 1 year).

The majority (close to 50%) of ELs are enrolled in grades K-3.

How many ELs are in your school system? What are their demographics?

Focus Area 2

Planning for high-quality instruction and supports (December 2019)

Communities of Practice:

- discussed viable EL program models for Louisiana students;
- gained an understanding of how to instruct ELs;
- developed strategies for supporting ELs; and
- reviewed assessment and classroom accommodations.

EL Program Models

| LDOE Recommended EL Program Models | Other Models (may be used as well) |
|---|--|
| <p>Two-Way Immersion/Dual Immersion--ELs and native English speakers are taught together in Spanish and English (starts at 90/10) until both groups are bilingual and biliterate.</p> <p>Structured English Immersion Program--ELs are placed in mainstream content classes and provided with language supports to help them access the academic content.</p> <p>ESL/Newcomers--Classes are taught specifically to develop English, bridge content, and familiarize students with the school climate.</p> <p>EL Coach--May be used in all models. A specifically trained EL specialist works with content teachers to map out appropriate supports for their ELs.</p> | <p>Transitional Bilingual Education -- ELs academic development is supported temporarily with native-language instructions as students acquire English through ESL.</p> <p>Maintenance Bilingual Education -- ELs maintain and develop their native language as they acquire English (usually goes through 8th grade or beyond).</p> <p>ESL/Content Teacher Co-Teaching -- ELs are taught with non-ELs in a cooperative learning/teaching environment.</p> |

What EL program models are in place at your schools?

How are ELs being supported in their core classes?

Why Can't We Just Translate?

[AVB \(Spanish\)](#) - pg. 9:

[AVB \(English\)](#) - pg. 9:

What could I have done to
make this more accessible?

Focus Area 3

Engaging Families Effectively (March 2020)

Communities of Practice will learn that effective family engagement:

- is a key factor in school success and student achievement;
- requires meaningful collaboration between schools, families, and the community; and
- entails partnerships that reflect an understanding of the great diversity among families and differences in cultural and socioeconomic conditions.

1. Why is it important to engage families?
2. How do we engage families when there is sometimes a language/cultural barrier?

Cohort Involvement and Summit

Within their cohorts, participants will create a rubric for determining the effectiveness of EL programming in their schools/school systems.

Cohort members will be invited to attend the Teacher Leader Summit session for their specific group to evaluate and refine these rubrics.

ESSA Requirements

Schools must:

- communicate with parents;
- inform parents of EL status and program type;
- give parents access to teacher's credentials (if requested);
- give parents access to school report card; and
- conduct outreach to parents of ELs.

Ideas for Increasing Family Engagement

1. Make school a welcoming place for non-English speaking families.

- Provide signs in parents' native languages.
- Have a translator available (not a student).
- Minimize questions about documentation/status to what is necessary.
- Talk to them. Get to know them.

2. Communicate regularly with EL families.

- Translate any documents/correspondence that goes home.
- Translate registration documents/handbooks/welcome packages.
- Do robo-calls to the homes you identify as needing another language.

3. Give EL families numerous opportunities to engage with the school.

- Offer parenting/English classes in the evenings.
- Host a newcomer night.
- Invite them to be a part of events.

In what areas is your school doing well?

In what areas could your school improve?

Focus Area 4

Monitoring and Evaluating the Effectiveness of EL Programming (May 2020)

This goes beyond SPS and statewide accountability measures.

EL programming may change based on the needs of your EL population and after determining how effective the program(s) was/were the year before.

We are working within the cohorts to create measures of effectiveness that include attendance, participation in specific EL program models, content and ELPT scores, observations, and more.

1. How do you know if EL programs and practices are effective in your schools?
2. What measures are you using to assess their effectiveness?

[Chapter 9 of the EL Toolkit](#)

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Next Steps

- Identify the representative who has been attending the *EL Community of Practice*. Determine areas for collaboration.
- If your school system does not have anyone attending the EL Community of Practice, contact alice.garcia@la.gov to be added to next year's series.
- Seek out three EL students at your schools. Talk to them about whether they are being held to high expectations with appropriate supports. These are amazing students who are bringing so much to our classrooms.
- Visit [LDOE's English Learner Library](#) for additional resources.

If you have questions, email alice.garcia@la.gov.