



Strand 3: Supporting ELs with Disabilities: From IEP Development to Supporting Instruction

Donna Sacco: We are ready to begin supporting English learners with disabilities from IEP development to supporting instruction. I am Donna Sacco. I'm a Senior Technical Assistance Consultant with the American Institutes for Research. I have worked and still continue to do some work with the PROGRESS Center. I work for the Center for ELs, and within our Special Education Hub as well. Brenda, I'm going to let you go ahead and introduce yourself.

Brenda Arellano: Hi everybody, my name is Brenda Arellano, I'm a principal researcher with AIR. Many times, I have a background supporting English learners, and many years ago, I actually did a lot of work at the school district level, and in some of my early research supporting students with disabilities as well. So, I'm thrilled to be here with you all and thank you. I hope we have a great session.

Donna Sacco: Thanks, Brenda. So, we'd like to connect you back to, if any of you were in that opening session and heard about the beating the odds, we'd like to connect you connect you to the essential elements for sustainable school systems. in the PROGRESS Center's Beating the Odds report. We'll return to this graphic throughout our presentation, as it helps keep us grounded in those essential elements. And you'll find that we touch upon many of these essential elements throughout our presentation, such as ensuring access to effective general education curriculum, belonging for ELs, and staff collaboration in particular. So, for our presentation objectives, in today's presentation we will facilitate the exploration of considerations for developing high-quality IEPs for English learners or multilingual learners, examples of evidence-based practices for ELs with disabilities, and a teacher collaboration framework. Our agenda, and hopefully we'll stick to this, it'll be a little bit rough, so we're doing these welcome and introductions now, around 1:10 to 2:00, developing IEPs for ELs. At 2ish, we'll take a 10-minute break, and then from 2:10 to 3ish, evidence-based practices for ELs. Again, we'll have a 10-minute break and then come back for the collaboration framework. So, we'll try to stick to this schedule as much as possible.

Now. We want to hear from you. In the chat, please tell us, where are you from, what's your role, and what do you hope to learn today? I'm looking now. You can go ahead and put in the chat anything you like. Oh, Samantha from Utah, yay! I'll be there in October for the CLD Council for Learning Disabilities Conference. Sarah from Illinois, hello, Sarah Hogan. Rhode Island! Hi Emily! Great to see you here, Dr. Desi, Upstate South Carolina, ECE. Yay, Emily! Special Ed Coordinator from Georgia, yay, Sarasota Monica Lewis, yay! Nevada, I love this. I'm going to keep looking at this chat as we move along, because I'm going to want to keep referring to it and knowing more about you all as I go forward. Maine, great.

All right. Well, I'm going to move forward. We have a lot to get through today, so, developing IEPs for English learners. Here we're talking about that part of the graphic, the individualized instruction and support. This is something I bring up frequently, and Brenda's going to put in the chat box the actual link to these Fast Facts, and although they're a little bit older, it's the most current information we have. So, in May 2022, the U.S.



Department of Education released these fast facts about students with disabilities who are English learners, and the data from these Fast Facts tells us that in the 2020-2021 school year, 13.74%, so almost 14% of students in the U.S, were served under IDEA Part B. That's students who are age 3 to 21. Basically, elementary through high school. 11.78% so almost 12% of those students are English learners.

Now, this percentage is particularly significant in that when compared to all students served under the IDEA Part B, ELs are more likely to drop out of school, less likely to graduate with a regular diploma, and because the development and implementation of a student's IEP is intended to be reasonably calculated for the student to make appropriate progress in light of the students' circumstances, see, we're tying it all back to what the PROGRESS Center is all about, which is Endrew, 2017, that this IEP should be a roadmap for providing access to free appropriate public education. So, it stands to reason that if you've got an EL with an identified disability, that IEP should reflect the critical data, considerations, aids, and services that address the student's unique needs that are related to that intersectionality of English language development, or ELD, and the disability.

Well, I want to mention that IDEA does not dictate specifics for ELs in particular in the IEP, so over this, we're simply providing best practice, or suggestions, or considerations that you can include for ELs and IEPs. So, I'm not going to be discussing in this presentation at all the identification of ELs for special education services. Other than to point out where IEP development is within the special education process.

So, we have child find, the initial comprehensive evaluation, the eligibility determination, and then the IEP development. And I want to point out this two-pronged approach, requirement for the eligibility for special education. So, as those of you who've written a lot of IEPs know that for this, what the IDEA does say about eligibility requirements is that a group of qualified professionals and the parent of a child determined by whether the child meets that criteria for at least one of the 13 disability categories, and the two-pronged approach, as I said, needs special education and related services because of the disability. Not due to a lack of academic instruction, or, and this is where they do talk about English proficiency. Lack of limited English proficiency. So, that is, the EL was properly referred and assessed according to the requirements outlined in IDEA regulations. English language proficiency was assessed with those results, were included in the comprehensive evaluation. Multiple forms of data were used in the comprehensive evaluation, ensuring a culturally and linguistically responsive process was used in that eligibility. So, and that within that process, the eligibility decision-making team included people with expertise in educating ELs and language acquisition. It's a lot, right?

Okay, I'm looking at the chat, but I might have to come back to that as I continue through. I'm going to be looking at these three different screens throughout, so please bear with me. Alright. We're going to be dropping links to the PROGRESS Center's IEP tip sheets as we move through each of these components, but I just wanted to tell you we're going to be going through each one of these 7 required components of the IEP. The statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, statement of measurable annual goals, description of the monitoring plan used to measure progress toward annual goals, statement of special education and aids and services, explanation of educational settings, statement of participation and assessment, and projected date, frequency, duration, and location of services. So many of you probably have these, the software that helps you write IEPs, and these required 7 components, most usually are a part of it, so you can't miss out on those 7 requirements. We're just going to help you think about ways, best practices, in which to use them.

So, at this point, Brenda's going to share the, a whiteboard with you. And we're going to ask, how does your district or state address IEPs for ELs? Actually, Brenda, before you share that whiteboard, I just want to, like, note Massachusetts, you know, some states have a statewide form. Many states don't. Different school districts may use different software for their IEP writing, and one thing I did want to say is that, you know, the form that I used when I was a special educator and ESL instructor, the form that my school district used, you know, there wasn't always room for some of the things I'm going to talk about today, so I would add an addendum in a Word document with all the notes or things extra. So, I found ways within the software that my district was using to do that. But I was going to call out DESE, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. They redid their IEP statewide forms. And they changed. how, pieces of that IEP address the specific needs for English learners. So, they've provided some additional, space within that IEP form to answer particular questions about English learners.

So, I want to ask you, how does your district or state address IEPs? If you're from Massachusetts, let me know how it's gone in the last couple of years since you've started using the new forms. Is there any additional guidance for EL's IEPs that you've gotten? And do educators collaborate to align IEPs with the, if you have them, individual language plans, if you have those for English learners within your district? So, Brenda, go ahead, share that, that whiteboard. And it will have those 3 questions on it for you. Are you able to see the whiteboard?

Donna Sacco: Okay. There we go. We'll come back to that. So, you know, sometimes there isn't any differentiation. Maybe there might be when you're going through eligibility, but, you know, maybe there's nothing that is, policy or suggested procedures for writing an IEP. So, I'm going to share, this is an image from the PROGRESS Center, which talks about this internal consistency of the IEP with all of those seven components, so you're starting with.

Brenda Arellano: Donna, you're not, you're not sharing your screen yet.

Donna Sacco: Oh, my goodness, I am so.

Brenda Arellano: There you go.

Donna Sacco: I hit the screen I wanted to share but didn't hit the additional one. Sorry about that. So, this is an image that is from the PROGRESS Center, talking about how to keep all of those 7 required components of the IEP, that there's an internal consistency throughout the IEP, and PROGRESS Center, a lot of their work talks about this, making sure that all these parts, the present levels, speak to the statement of special education and services and aids, and the participation outside regular education, the date, frequency, duration, and location of services, that the statement speaks to the annual goals, and they speak to the statement of special ed, you know, so that there's this internal consistency through all of these elements of the IEP.

And today the first thing we're going to look at is that PLAAFP statement, because this is one of the most critical pieces of the IEP in a place where you really can get a lot of that information for the English learner included. Everything, this is the foundation, or the roadmap, and it's where everything is built from for the rest of the IEP. So, to ensure the IEP is a high quality. IEP should include, and I'm going to read this, but then Brenda's going to put in the chat the tip sheets on the PLAAFP statement from the PROGRESS Center. She's going to put one in English and one in Spanish, so you'll have each of those links there. Also, at the end of this slide deck, when these slides do get published. there's a slide at the very end with all of these links, and they'll also be on the webpage, so you can access them in multiple ways.

So, I'm going to read this. All PLAAFP statements should include a description of how of the disability's impact how the disability impacts the student's involvement and progress in general education. The student's disability-related needs that will be addressed in the IEP, the student's current level of performance that can be used as a baseline for those IEP goals. And additional information, such as strengths, previously successful and unsuccessful aids and services, and progress since the most recent IEP to support the development of IEPs. Now, that's what a well-written PLAAFP statement would contain, right? When we're thinking about PLAAFP statements for ELs, what more might we want to add to those PLAAFP statements? How does the student's English language proficiency affect special education and related services? What is the ELP score? What instructional practices have been effective in supporting the students' access to academic content, and the specific one I'm thinking about, you know, for those language scaffolds that might have been used successfully. What collaboration supports between the ELD instructor, the English language development teacher, the general education teachers, and special educators. are required. What are the culturally and linguistically sustaining instructional practices with which the student best learns? So how do these strategies support access? To the specially designed instruction, special education, the SDI, and what cultural background information is relevant to the development and implementation of the IEP.

So those are some additional pieces that you really want to link that intersection of the two, language development and the disability. You can also, you know, for families, sometimes, you can really get some very critical information from families, and sometimes it can be tricky to get some information from them. You can employ the services of a bilingual or multicultural social worker, if you have that within your school or district. They can help you learn more about the student, such as what's the student's formal education history? Has the student had interrupted formal education? Has the student's social-emotional well-being, what is that like? Did the student experience any trauma either coming to the United States, or once they got here to the United States? And what are the students' interests? What are the parents' and the students' interests and hopes for their future? So those are some of the things that you may be learning from families, from the students themselves, if they're if they are at the IEP meeting.

You know, I want to mention, again, to call out Massachusetts, they have some fantastic resources to look at for students with limited or interrupted formal education or SLICE. So, some of these students who do have the limited or interrupted formal education. They may be refugee children who are fleeing civil unrest or war, while others may have had inconsistent access to formal education in their home countries before coming to the U.S, and while life are diverse with interruptions in schooling there are a lot of different reasons they might have had those factors that conflicted with their education, why their education was interrupted, such as conflict in their country, migration, economic hardship, limited access to education in their home country. So, it's really important to identify any additional supports they might need beyond what a standard English learner might need in terms of services or a regular special education.

Oh, I love this, Emily. So, in Rhode Island, does the disability impact access to their IEP, and do they need SDI to support progress there? So, do they need SDI, specially designed instruction, special education, to help with their progress for advancing their language development, so I love that they do that in Rhode Island. Thank you. I'm going to move to the next component, but you can see how that present levels, the more information you have in the present levels, the more it will inform the rest of the IEP and what services are needed, the more that it will help you write these goals. So, for Component 2, Statement of Measurable Annual Goals. Best practices includes the following, these considerations. What is the condition under which the behavior or skill will be demonstrated? What is the target behavior for the student to be able to do? what is the level of



performance or proficiency that will demonstrate mastery of the goal? And so, Brenda again is going to put in those links. I think she already has here they are for In English, the, PROGRESS Center tip sheets on the annual measurable goals.

So, some additional things you can think about for ELs. What are the specific conditions under which behavior or skill will be demonstrated? So, these may have been included in the PLAAFP statement as strategies that have been beneficial to the student in accessing specially designed instruction. So, I guess, like, when you think about what Emily was saying, I think about, like, How is a student going to be able to access general education and their specially designed instruction? What ELD scaffolds can we use? And it goes both ways, as Emily was saying. But, when I think about writing goals, and this isn't an exhaustive list, but what you could add is conditions or strategies that are used within those goals, so when provided extended wait time, using a personal bilingual dictionary, when working with a peer who speaks the same first language, when provided sentence phrase frames with fading support over time. That's always a big one for me. You know, I think when I was a special educator, I wasn't always fading supports as quickly as I could have been.

You know, the special educator can always collaborate with the ELD instructor. Sorry about that. To learn which strategies are effective, and I think that's, you know, important to always keep in mind that collaboration, between the two. So, for monitoring the progress on goals, you know, it's really not going to look much different. that description of the monitoring plan, an IEP for an English learner as opposed to a student who's not an English learner, those they're going to look pretty much the same. I'd like to just reinforce that the IEP goals are focused on addressing the needs that require special education, or as we were talking about SDI, specially designed instruction and Related Services, so This helps separate them from the needs that require language services and supports, but I really think it's important for the IEP team members to ensure that they're looking at that language development alongside progress on goals, and collaborate with that ELD instructor, So that monitoring, both at the same time that there's an alignment of instruction for the student, that could provide key, keys to areas in which the student needs more support, and from whom.

So, we've got the, the, tip sheet, again, for monitoring progress in English and Spanish. Now, this is another image from the PROGRESS Center that is so awesome that it speaks about the statement of special education and aids and services, and I really encourage you to look at some of the additional resources from PROGRESS Center related specifically to these.

So we're looking at related services, and how that connects to special education or specially designed instruction to provide access and progress in general education curriculum. That, in addition, the supplementary aids and services in general education promotes progress, access to and progress in general education. All of that, we can also include program modifications or supports for school personnel, and all leading to what we want is that school and post-school success.

Now, the OSEP policy letter, which is also going to be in the links to our at the end of the slideshow, we have all our links, but there's a Cantrell2021 stated, it's crucial to the success of English learners with disabilities that teachers working with English learners with disabilities are trained on how to support English learners ELD in addition to their mastery of academic content, knowledge, and their specific special education and related services. That letter is a really critical one that you may want to, you know, ensure your school system knows about. But to support staff in implementing the IEP, this supports for school personnel, that's part of this statement of special education and aids and services. You know, it could include regular collaborative meetings

between special education staff and the ELD. And then under Related Services, IEP teams can actually consider including in this, and it would be part of related services a provision of parent counseling, parent training, families, training, In the family's native languages to assist them with understanding the special needs of the child and the skills to help them support the implementation of the IEP. So, those are things that, you know, I think when I was a special educator, I didn't understand that those pieces could be incorporated and included in the IEP in those areas, as I just mentioned.

The explanation of the educational setting, again, you know. Each IEP needs to have this explanation. And I think for ELs, the thing that's really important is the least restrictive environment for that particular student based on that student's individual needs is so critical that they are included in the general education classroom as much as possible. They need that pure language, those peer language models. They need to have multiple opportunities to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing across the course of the day. Multiple opportunities for response and for listening to high-quality, ex exchange, and to listening to their, their peers.

Now, for ELs, a state level, you probably all know this, a state-level language proficiency assessment is required. For example, 41 states and territories use the WIDA access test and the alternate access test for ELs who participate in alternate curriculum. So, the IEP team, and I gosh, really remember this working with the testing coordinator in my school, so there'd be so many special educators who, right before the WIDA exam, had to have an IEP meeting or have parents sign off on, they had forgotten to include when they were putting that participation in state and district-wide assessment in the IEP, they'd forgotten the WIDA access in my state. I taught in Virginia. You know, and so either for the access test or the alternate access, like, this is really something that educate special educators need to keep in mind. The IEP team has to consider all of the assessments that the students will, participate in, and I know for me, in my state, that frequently, what accommodations were allowable might change on an annual basis, so I have to check and make sure I knew, like especially as WIDA started moving more to online, forms of use. So, you really want to think about what are those accommodations that are allowable, and what does this one, you know, the individualized education program, what does this one student need to be able to access those assessments?

So, again, projected date, frequency, duration, and location of services. Brenda's going to put the tip sheets in there. Not a whole lot different for English learners, but it's just really important to think about you know, where these the English learners, how much are they going to be with their typically developing peers in the general education curriculum? Hearing language models, content, you know, so they're really getting the core instruction and opportunities to hear modeling.

So, reflection. Oh, wow, that was a lot, right? There's a lot, and I spoke very quickly, I know, but as we're looking at this, I want you to tell me how do you prepare staff for an IEP meeting? So, if you're the special educator and you're going to have an IEP meeting, how do you prepare the rest of the staff for an IEP meeting for an English learner? How do you prepare families of English learners for that IEP meeting? And what needs to be in place for those meetings? So, we're going to try the whiteboard again, but you know what? Go ahead and use the chat if you want to, or open your mic, whichever is easiest for you. So, Brenda, you want to open up the whiteboard again, and we'll see.

So, I'm going to talk about this because I think Kansas oh, great, thanks, Sarah.

One of the things that I find, or I found as a special educator, that was very difficult was helping everyone understand how to work with an interpreter, and how to prepare for that IEP meeting. So, Under IDEA Part B,



the development of the IEP must be a team effort, right? You don't come there with an IEP already and just, like, say, hey, sign! You know, the required members of the IEP team are the student's parents, at least one regular education teacher who's actually worked with the student and knows the student, at least one special education teacher of the student, a representative of the public agency or the LEA, An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, so that evaluation report is really important, other individuals who may have expertise related to the student at the discretion of the parents or the agency, and then the student when it's appropriate. Like, for an EL with a disability, it's critical to include one or more professionals who can interpret the assessment results, just as Sarah was talking about. As they relate to the differences in language acquisition and disability, you know, some of those characteristics can be very similar, and, you know, often when I'm working with teachers, I talk about, be sure that when you're using a strategy that might be really useful for a student with a disability and it might also be very useful to scaffold language acquisition, that you use it intentionally, so you know when you're using a strategy related to the disability, and when you're using a strategy that's related to helping the student access language development.

So, those are, again, key things to keep in mind. So again, we have an Office of Special Education Program policy letter, the November 15th, that I referred to earlier that has some really good information in it for you. If English is not the parent's native language. the team or the local education agency has to ensure that the IEP process is made clear to parents. Well, how easy is that? You know, I remember when my daughter I wasn't a special educator yet, my daughter was in kindergarten and had an IEP meeting for speech therapy, and it was overwhelming to me. You know, here I am with a college degree, I speak English as a first language, and I get all these materials, and really, I think I understood about a sixteenth of what that whole IEP meeting was about. And imagine that you go in that and you do not speak the language.

Also, imagine there are over 100 languages that are spoken in the United States, so it may seem impossible to really you know, ensure that each family completely understands in their home language. So, some resources, such as language lines, if you're a rural community, are really helpful. Telephone translation. These all provide simultaneous interpretation that LEAs should work with the state education agencies to identify any resources that they have and require, but once you do get an appropriate interpreter, the whole IEP team needs to know how to work with interpreters.

Again, there are online resources for educators to access in the protocols, the behaviors for working with interpreters, and I really see this as being critical. To working with interpreters. I have stopped IEP meetings if the ELD instructor or instructor or ESL instructor for the student, for the school, was not at the meeting. I have stopped IEP meetings if there was not an interpreter for the parents. Not appropriate to have the student interpret for the parent in an IEP meeting, in an eligibility meeting. So, you know, all of these things are really important to keep in mind.

Now. Let's see what time it is. I think we actually have time for this. I'm so excited! So, this came out of my school district long after I left. But the Parent Resource Center and a dear friend of mine worked with families in Arlington, Virginia, where I worked for 12 years, certified in ESL and special education. They came up with this fabulous telenovela helping families who speak Spanish understand the special education process.

So, I'm going to put two different links in the chat. I don't know, Brenda, if you have both of them, but we did a Stories from the Classroom, I did a Stories from the Classroom for the PROGRESS Center, so one of them talks about the development of this telenovela. But I am going to share with you a little piece of the telenovela itself.

So let me bring this down It's called La Sopa de la And this is the link that brings you to the website. It's got, several episodes. And the people in these episodes are from the area. They are locals who, you know, their parents who have students with disabilities. I'm going to play just a little bit of this first episode for you, and I'm going to, like, do the opening and then cut ahead to a little bit later so that you can get a taste of, like, the high quality. You can use these in your school district. Unfortunately, they're only in Spanish. I keep thinking, well, maybe we could get subtitles in all languages. But here, let me play a little bit for you.

Brenda Arellano: Donna, are we do you want us to see the we just see the PowerPoint.

Donna Sacco: Oh, really? Yeah. Okay, let me try that again. Hold on one second, my friends. Yay. Put it on the wrong screen. Okay. There we go.

Brenda Arellano: Wait, we still see the PowerPoint.

Donna Sacco: Really? Yep. Okay, I'm going to stop sharing and start again, that's good to know. How's that?

Brenda Arellano: Yes.

Donna Sacco: Yay! Okay, sorry about that, everyone. These are the grandparents. I love that the grandparents are included. This is the community I knew where many of my students lived, so it's fun to see this.

Video in Spanish with English subtitles

Donna Sacco: So, I'm going to stop there, but I are you looking at the slides now, Brenda?

Brenda Arellano: Yes.

Donna Sacco: Okay, good. you get a good taste of what all of these are, and how helpful, you know, you can imagine how helpful families could find this, right? So, I can't say enough about how important it is to prepare all of those members of the IEP team for working with families who may not speak English proficiently but also, for helping the families to understand what's going to go on within those meetings. So, and hopefully your school district may have some, multilingual, resources and people to help. resource officers who can help with IEPs.

Brenda Arellano: And Donna, we're not seeing the slides anymore, we're seeing the PROGRESS Center Zoom.

Donna Sacco: So sorry. Do you see them?

Brenda Arellano: Yep.

Donna Sacco: Okay All right, hopefully that will stay like that. So, when I'm going to close out right now, before we take our break, and just have you thinking about that collaboration piece, you know, with an English learner with a disability. I think of this student as unique, as, you know, being really unique, just like this hand-woven tapestry. You know, it's colorful, it's complex. As an educator, we can accept that there'll always be continuous learning. You know, I didn't graduate, knowing everything I needed to know, and each year that I was a special educator with ESL certification, I needed to learn more about those unique qualities of each student and family and learn more techniques for whatever culture they're from to help with that cultural and linguistically sustaining work with each family. You know. No one educator can really develop this knowledge alone, so creating those partnerships and collaboration within the IEP team members, with the general educator, special



educator, ELD instructor, family, student, any of the related services provider social worker, school counselor. These all increase the chances for alignment across all areas of instruction in all settings to support the students. So, the goal for students is that they're able to access and benefit from the general education curriculum. And for an EL with disabilities, the critical role of the IEP and the ELD supports working together to meet the individual student's needs you know, those unique needs, that is of the utmost importance for each student. Different educators acknowledging and supporting the students' individual needs as an EL with a disability will lead to what we consider to be progress, and that is improved post-secondary outcomes in education, training programs, or competitive employment.

So, I want you to start thinking about this as we take a 10-minute break. When we come back, Brenda's going to provide some strategies for working with English learners, and I want you to think about, you know, when you're using a strategy, are you using it for the student to help with that disability-related need, or the English language development need? So, she's going to talk about collaboration, too.

Donna Sacco: I remember a really, powerful time when I was actually, helping a teacher out. I was in the classroom, I wasn't the teacher of record, but there was an English learner in the back of the classroom who was frequently, you know, I'd been observing this class time and time again for about 2 months off and on. During the week, and I'd see this English learner get into trouble a lot, be reprimanded often, and the general education teacher was teaching math when I was observing. And you know, she was teaching quadrilaterals, and he was really struggling, he'd been put in the back of the classroom, and I just whispered to him, quadrilaterals in Spanish, you know, trying to use those cognates. And he's like, she speaks Spanish! And then it's like, suddenly he came up, you know, and it's you think, like, for me, the reason I tell this story is it is such a little, teeny moment, right? And it changed things for that student, just that one little piece of recognizing the cognate and helping him see the four sides of a quadrilateral. And, you know, other times I came in, I think I was modeling for the teacher, too how she could use cognates, and how she could engage English learners in different ways, and we started then using more pictures with labels for the English learners. It was a school district where they had basically you know, two or three English learners one school year, and the next year, the school was over 50% English learners, because a large community moved into the town. And so, you know, things shifted, and teachers who'd been at that school for years didn't have the skills, you know? They didn't, hadn't been utilizing those kinds of things, right? I'm so sorry, I just wanted to step in and provide that one example, because for me, it was just so powerful.

Brenda Arellano: Yeah. So, yeah, that's great. So I think we're moving right along, which I think is great, and I'm wondering, Donna, if we kind of like, push through, and because I think we had scheduled a break.

Donna Sacco: I just I just moved it ahead, so, I am going to, go forward and start sharing my screen again. Sorry about that. And here we go. Sorry, I need to come back to this Okay.

Brenda Arellano: Yep. Alright, so Donna's been hinting at this a lot, even in her portion of this, but we're going to talk right now about staff collaboration, how it relates to the PROGRESS Center's essential elements. So now we're going to tie it in like, more specifically around a teacher collaboration process. So, thanks for hanging with us, I know we're going through a lot, but right now we're going to launch a short little poll, and we want us to we want you guys to tell us about, like. When you think about your experiences with teacher collaboration in the past, what were challenges, what were the successes? Like, how did it go? So, I'm going to go ahead and launch the poll. And let's hear from you all.



Donna Sacco: There we go. Let us know, like, thumbs up if you can see the poll, and oh, yep, people are participating, yay! We have 43% participation, let's keep going!

Brenda Arellano: Yay!

Donna Sacco: No opportunities to collaborate yet. Collaboration experience was fruitful collaboration experience. Okay! There were aspects of the collaboration experience that could have been improved. So, we're at 56%.

Brenda Arellano: Why don't we take about 20 more seconds, and then we'll close the poll down. Alright, we're going to go ahead and end the poll. Alright. Hopefully folks can see the results of the poll. So, it looks like about 6% said that they had no opportunities to collaborate. Another 18% said the collaboration experience was fruitful. About 41% said the experience was okay. And then, about 35% said there were aspects of the collaboration experience that could have been improved. So, it sounds like this is definitely an area where there's some room for improvement. So yeah, it's a great, it's a good topic that we can talk through a little bit. So yeah, let's go ahead and move along to the next slide.

So, you know, what does the research say about collaboration? So, you guys have had some a lot of you, sounds like, have had some experience with it. At least from the research perspective, what research has found is that, you know, when school staff have an opportunity to improve understanding and capacity to serve English learners by collaborating on planning and research, that, you know, that and when they have these opportunities to work together and they share their expertise, for delivering instruction. That some really great instruction and integration around language and content can happen. And so, we just want to dig into that a little bit more, we want to dig into a framework.

And, we want to see how we can integrate this all together around serving English learners, and even a framework for supporting dually identified students, and kind of bring it home, and maybe even get out of here a little bit early, and I'm sure nobody will complain about that. All right, so the resources that we share with you today were supported through the REL Southwest, where we developed this collaboration framework. We partnered with the school district, actually in New Mexico, and there was some really great collaboration that happened through that partnership, we really worked hand-in-hand, and they kind of, like piloted a lot of the framework and the resources, and they gave us a lot of great, great ideas, because they were on the ground doing this. And so, it was just a really great collaboration. Donna's going to drop the link in the chat. You can either scan that, or as we mentioned, all the resources will be available at the end of the chat. But, yeah, really take a copy of this. It has some great nuggets in there, and, and yeah, we're going to talk through the framework a little bit more in depth. Next slide.

Donna Sacco: I was just noticing in the chat that Sheila was saying, you know, teacher collaboration works best when there are opportunities to have embedded time within the school day. I don't know how many of you were in the, the session at the very beginning of the day today, and the Wyoming Middle School, where they were talking about how that was a critical part that they have, not had not even planning not only planning time, but time with their colleagues to do plan, so they could do their own personal prep, but then they had a whole period where they could do really strategic planning as a team. And, you know, that's something I never felt I had, but it requires the administrator to value that. Co-planning time, and it's really critical, so.

Brenda Arellano: Yeah, and I will say, I will add on to that, Donna, that, you know, the district that we worked with on this collaboration framework had very, very strong district support and leadership support. So that that was very critical, and they did do this at all different times in terms of that collaboration. Some of it occurred, you know, before school, after school, you know, some of our training, and, but the teachers themselves, when they met and did that collaboration, was all across the board, but they found ways to do this even asynchronously, but they made sure that some of these, like, structural and process components are in place, which I'll talk about. But they made sure that that structure was in place. So, we'll go through it. So they made it work for them, but it was just important that they made sure these components were there, and then they just came up with some great resources to share across with each other, because we know staff and teachers are busy, so how could they set up that structure so they don't they didn't always have to meet in person? So, I think that was really critical.

Yeah. So, you know, the what we're going to be discussing today, it comes from a couple of some of the strategies come from I alluded to some of these earlier, because there's some great strategies in some of these practice guides, so one of them is from this Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary School. Also, there's another report by the National Academy of Sciences. It's a summary of research on key practices for serving ELs. So, content comes from both of their both of that. Next slide, Donna. And also, the evidence-based framework for teacher collaboration. We really got, the evidence base really from, a research base around teacher collaboration within schools around how to enhance English learner students' language and literacy develop development. There was a small, randomized field trial of school-based professional development focused on language and literacy skills for elementary-aged Latino English Honor students. We also gleaned a resource from WIDA on serving, defining collaboration for multilingual learners. So yeah, just making sure that we're getting high-quality evidence, and not just kind of throwing anything at you all. So, next slide.

So, I alluded to parts of this framework that really were really important, like, for this one district in particular that we collaborated with, they set up they were sure to set up these structures, right? And so, part of those structures were setting up structural features, where we need to set up a time for meetings, and we need to develop some group rules and norms, right? Who's going to be, kind of running the meeting, setting the agenda, who's going to be I don't know, taking care of their resources. And then also setting up some process features. How are we going to communicate with each other? How are we going to be engaging in relationship building? Because you're oftentimes, they were working across teams, and you know, the framework talks about this, but especially, as Donna was alluding to earlier, we're talking about, like it could be cross-grade, it could be across roles, so, like, maybe it's that ELD coordinator, it's working with the special ed teacher, maybe it's working with the gifted and talented teacher, working with those grade-level teachers, right? So how are we going to build those relationships, and not just see them as kind of like, well, you come and pull out my student for, you know, half hour, 45 minutes, or something like that, but really building genuine, collaborative relationships, and having that mutual respect for each other. So that's very key for this framework. Next slide.

Okay, so, some of the features of the framework is that these collaborations are they're conceptualized as cycles that are also supported by language goals. And so, you know, the four there's four cycles that are co-planning, co-teaching, co-assessing, and co-reflecting. And so, we'll dive into each of these a little bit more. So, why don't we go to the next slide? So first, let's talk a little bit about co-planning. So, the purpose of the co-planning cycle is for educators to this is really, like, let's stop at the beginning and take some time to really develop what are those appropriate plans for pursuing our content. and language goals.



So, this is a really important cycle. Those key activities that are occurring at this at this cycle is to really think about what are our language and content goals for that are for common students, but really, like, especially for our English learner students, or dually identify students, really. And this is where the collaboration really comes into play across grades, across teachers that share those common students. And, and another activity is where it's important to, like, review those instructional resources, you know, your lessons, your materials, or distributing the instruction among the participants. This is where folks really come together and maybe look at those guiding questions and say, okay, what's the content that's going to be taught? What features of the content might be more challenging for our EL students, or our dually identified students? And what are those instructional approaches can be brought to bear?

On those features, and what are the specific ELD goals, or, you know, what are those specific goals for our duly identified students that can be served by certain approaches around this content? So, this is a really important part of that cycle. Next slide.

So, the next phase of this cycle is co-teaching. And this is the phase when the instruction really is taking place with the students, right? And think about the context in which the, in which the teaching is occurring, the role of the teacher, and the ways in which to be responsive to the student contributions during instruction. And within the collaborative framework. We give examples of various models of co-teaching, so I mean, you can't see it here, but, you know, if you download the framework, we oh, you really can't see it here. But we even have, like, little, little yeah, like, various different kinds of models of co-teaching that folks can engage in. And what's less important is, like, which of these co co-teaching models you engage in. But what is really important here is really how are you all integrating academic core content, language, and literacy goals, for students? And also thinking about how those ELD supports are getting embedded into the general education classroom, right?

That's really the core of what's important here. And really thinking about, too, like, what are the applications to consider for the dually identified students? So, this should be done in ways that are engaging both English learner students and non-English learner students in that language learning activities and really enforcing those ELD targets during the ELD specialist time or your dually identified students. So, really going back to those, those learning goals, you know, really thinking about that. And then even going back to what we talked about earlier with the vocabulary instruction, and those, you know, what are those target those target words, or those target learning goals? So, yeah, just thinking about those, you know, those specific targets, learning targets. Okay, next one. Okay, so this third phase is co-assessing, and I kind of hinted at some of this earlier in the small A's, and so did Donna, but this is in the collaborative teaching context. It's focusing on, you know, implementing those formative assessments, so that way you to support you as educators in understanding Where's your instruction succeeding? Where can it be improved?

And, you know, also it's important to be considering and integrating the conversation around assessment throughout the cycle. So, for example, at the planning stage, really having conversations to focus on the goals for instruction, on how are you going to assess both language and content understanding. And then, really, the key here is to focus on collaboration and to facilitate that shared responsibility among assessment, right? How is the ELD coordinator also working together? Maybe if they're dually identified with a special education teacher, how are they both working with the general education teacher, right? Again, that shared responsibility, that collaboration. How was how is everybody talking about that shared responsibility? Like, if the language if the student isn't quite meeting those language goals. All right, how like, what discussion needs to happen, or what data do you does everybody need to be looking to make sure the student is meeting those goals, and like, like,



what's the plan, if they're if the student is quite not quite moving along as expected? Alright, so, then the last step in this cycle is called, co-reflecting. So, and this this process is really just a chance to reflect and evaluate the formative assessments, right? Sometimes we get data, but we don't have a chance to think about it. And this is why there's purposely a cycle on this, to really think about the prior step with colleagues. To talk through this, and then think about how does the collaboration cycle is, what can we think about adjusting or improving for the next cycle? And then when you're reflecting on the assessment cycle, you consider, you know, this might be an opportunity for those of you that are WIDA states. Maybe, how can we bring in the WIDA can-do descriptors, for instance, to track student progress? Is there other data that we might want to look at? You know, is this an opportunity maybe to pull out the student's IEP, for example? What other relevant data can we bring in that would be useful for the upcoming cycle? Maybe there's a piece of data that would really help us to inform our planning for the next again, it's, you know, cyclical for the next co-planning cycle.

So really that, that, that's the collaboration cycle, and as I mentioned, if you if you look, if you download the, collaboration framework, there's examples of templates that the, you know, our the teachers in the that participated with us use in terms of, like, agendas or teacher reflection logs, activity lessons and games that they used. Like, it was really great, like, some of those teachers, like, they did things through the collaboration cycle, like, they were having their students, like, they were doing, like, oral history projects, and, they were doing some of the things we're talking about, like, they were having, like, they would pick target works, words as part of that oral history project, they were English learner students, and so they were incorporating target words that they wanted the students to use in those oral history projects, sharing out about their family histories, and then they were using, like, Flipgrid to record themselves on the Flipgrid to tell their oral history projects, but they had to, like, be sure they were choosing particular vocabulary words.

And then, you know, the teachers were getting together across grades and figuring out, how are we going to, you know, plan my upcoming, ELA grade-level planning, and then they were talking about it, and bringing in the ELD teacher, or bringing in the gifted and talented teacher, whereas they hadn't previously done that, and the feedback we heard was, you know what, I and this sounds bad, but they were like, I hadn't necessarily seen so-and-so as a resource, like, in terms of planning. Now, all of a sudden, like, they begin to see their teachers as resources, instead of just somebody that would come in and pull out my kid for 45 minutes or sit and work with this kid. So yeah, it you know, it's I think it's a great framework, and yeah, so we hope you can find some of these resources useful. So, we want to do a little activity with you all.

Donna Sacco: Brenda, I was just... I think I just stopped sharing, did I?

Brenda Arellano: I think that's a great idea.

Donna Sacco: And then come back and do that activity you have, because it's a really great activity. If you all are game, we could use the breakout rooms.

Brenda Arellano: I like that.

Donna Sacco: Well, Brenda and I will talk about that, um, during the break, but let's take a 10-minute break, and then we'll come back and do an activity around water rights in New Mexico, which is, I really like this framework. And then we'll provide some more resources for you that are related to English learners with disabilities or English learners who are struggling academically and behaviorally. So.



Brenda Arellano: So, this is one of those, there's not really right or wrong answer, this is really just, like, a like, a think-through activity. This is an example activity that we did with, we had a literacy project, with a with one of our partnerships in New Mexico, and it's just an example unit we did called Water Rights in New Mexico, and so the idea was just having our educators think about If you had a unit and you had your students think about, you know, students would be exploring the various factors that have led to water scarcity in New Mexico. Of course, this is a big deal for us in New Mexico, and how this water scarcity impacts the state's diverse communities. One culminating task for this model unit could be asking students to independently write an informational essay that explains the factors that have led to water scarcity in students' communities. And how the water scarcity is affecting students and their communities' well-being.

Okay, so yeah, part one is writing an informational essay, another part of that would be students have to collaboratively create a student's water bill of rights. So, that would be the student's task. And now, what we're asking you all to think about, go ahead and yeah, we want you just to think about, if you were a teacher in this position how would you collaborate, you know, thinking about those collaboration cycles that I shared with you all? How would you begin to think about, how could I collaborate across grade level, potentially? Maybe with an ELD coordinator, or a special educator, related services, or other specialists that support ELs or dually identify students and peer content?

So, thinking about that collaboration in mind, so pick one area for there's I have a couple questions here. Just pick one of those. And jot down some of your ideas. So, one of those prompts could be either what kinds of instructions or language goals would you identify for unit, for this unit, for ELs or dually identified students? Or how would you develop a lesson or material to support English learners or dually identified students? And we'll go ahead and drop those prompts in the chat. Now, what we're going to do is, we're going to break up into some small groups. And so, you can just discuss this with your small group, just, like I said, just choose one of these, and let's just have a discussion with your peers.

Brenda Arellano: Yeah, I would love to just I don't know if folks are able to unmute, or if you're able to drop in the chat what you all talked about, like, I was just with one other person, but we had a good chat about, like, what are some, like, collaboration techniques that we could talk through with the other educators in terms of how to adapt this potential unit to accommodate students, and so we had a really good discussion. So, but I'm just curious what you all talked about. So, I want to hear from you all, not me. So please, either.

Sheila Palombo: Our group did a really great job talking about, like, front-loading with vocabulary, talked about different ways that they can, you know, culminating tasks would be maybe pictures, or, of course, we had some idea thrown in. Thank you, Donna, we didn't think about the poetry, that was great. And, you know, with the UDL, and just talked about ways that they we chunk it, like giving them so much of the assignment at a time and having checkpoints. To where they would, you know, turn in that part, we check it, we work with them, and just, you know, kind of helping them if they can't write the essays, maybe having other things that they can do. To be able to help them, you know, collaborate with the students, talking, you know, verbal, being able to maybe verbally tell you, and you document it for them. So, we just talked about ideas like that.

Brenda Arellano: That's great. Thank you. Thank you for sharing. That's wonderful. Anybody else want to share?

Donna Sacco: You can also put it in the chat if you're shy.



Brenda Arellano: Let's see, Emily said, to help students realize how water affects well-being, we thought they could work in groups, or work with their families to make a log of how often and in what way they needed water. Or even water as an ingredient in a product during the day. Great. Thank you for sharing. Anybody else want to share what your group talked about? I know in my group, we talked about, Perhaps, you know, working with the ELD coordinator, is there a way to, like, have sentence starters for students? To have them, what were some of the other strategies we talked about? I totally forgot my partner's name, I apologize, I think it was Robert. Help me out, Robert. I know we talked about graphic organizers, short-term memory here.

Robert Hiliker: Yeah, I think you captured almost all of them that we discussed, and letting students pick how they might express their water bill of rights, like, giving them more than one option. For how they might advertise their Bill of Rights. Like, video, or visuals, or.

Brenda Arellano: Yeah, that's right. We talked about how do we bring it back to those the visual reinforcements, so yeah, giving them the options. with the visuals.

Donna Sacco: I love that idea of the video, you know, because I always think about, like, what are students' strengths? So, there are students who are really great, and I mentioned this in one of the groups, really great at music. So, like, with a water bill of rights, I can just imagine a song or a commercial, you know, that someone could create, if you have students who are, you know, so inclined. One of my favorite students, like, he loved acting, and it's really how I taught him to read, was through Reader's theater, because he, had a lot of difficulty, but he would be so much more motivated to learn the vocabulary, to learn the steps of what he needed to do if it was related to somehow creating a video, or a play, or a poem, or a skit, you know? So,

Brenda Arellano: Yeah. And I think this was we just talked about how this is, like, just such a great opportunity where, of an example where, you know, the general classroom teacher, a great opportunity to talk with the ELD teacher, or if they're a dually identified student, you know, having a disability, or an EL student, okay, how do I coordinate with the ELD coordinator? Or let's say they have a reading disability, like, at what layer do I need to think about that, you know, how do I support them with their disability? Like, do they need extra time? Or, you know, like, what do they need to make sure we're being supportive of them? Or, you know, what do I need to think about in terms of you know, their primary language, their home language, versus, you know, English, and so, like, that is just where that great collaboration can come in. And, you know, just really seeing all of those different teachers and resources within this process. Well, thank you, everybody, for, you know. being part of that, and just I know for some of you it's late, so thank you for engaging in that. I'm going to pass it to Donna; she's going to share some great resources with you all. Yeah, okay.

Donna Sacco: Well, I'm going to come back to questions in a second. Actually, I wanted to provide some additional, and I'm going to be putting all four different additional pieces I'm going to put in the chat. I wanted to share some additional resources. And these are 4 different links. And I will start with, can you see that, or am I going to have to stop sharing?

Donna Sacco: Okay, great. So, this is the National Center on Intensive Intervention at AIR, and I know Emily Klein is very familiar with this, and maybe some others of you are as well. But you might not know where there are resources that are particular to students who are English learners. So, if you go to their main page, so I is [intensiveintervention.org](https://www.intensiveintervention.org). I just always put in Google NCII, and it comes up right away. And I go to Resource by Audience. And here we have, resources whoa, how did that just change? Oh, special topics, I'm sorry. It's under special topics. And intensive intervention and English learners. So, as you look at intensive intervention and



English learners, there are several, resources here. I'm going to resource flood you right now, but I want you to know where to find some things that could be very helpful. So, when we think about students, working with intensive intervention or data-based individualization as we use at NCII, we're thinking about those students who may or may not have a disability, but they may be struggling. And within this portion of it, the special topics, intensive intervention for English learners.

There's a brief that I, wrote with two of my colleagues, in fact, they, on the, RTI site, when there used to be RTI site, they had written a resource for ELs and RTI, and I approached them, Julia Esparza-Brown and Amanda Sanford, I approached them to say, hey, let's do this update for multi-tiered systems of support for multilingual learners, and so, in here, it really walks you through a lot of scaffolds for students who struggle, who are English learners, may or may not have disabilities. It also provides, like, some ways to look at, within MTSS, like. One thing that we discuss are, true peers, and we really worked with Sharon Vaughn to discuss sorry to be scrolling like this, I shouldn't do that, but we really worked with Sharon Vaughn to think about what are true peers, and we changed Julie had really coined the phrase. true peers. And we worked with Sharon Vaughn to really think about new ways of thinking about true peers. So, we walk through, like, a data meeting where we have students in their first language, Spanish in this case, where they have a reading, probe, as a progress monitoring tool. We've got the students and their language proficiency scores, who are ML, those with IEPs, and we look at their data, right? And to come up with an idea for true peers.

So, these are the grade level line for all students. And then we have here, true peer line for all similar multilingual learners. Then we have Chasito's progress, and he's very similar to true peers, but then we track the progress as we progress monitor with Panchito and we see that he's not in alignment with his true peers. And very far from ever closing the gap here for any of them. And so, we talk about using the PLUS enhancement system, and different ways of adapting instruction, and within every 6 to 10 data points, looking to see, like, have there been improvements? If not, then making an adaptation. So, what might you improve? I, I just, there's a lesson frame in there, so you know, it gives you something to think about. We also have several other tools that I wrote for English learners in particular, but, there are clarifying questions if you've done any of the data-based individualization work, so clarifying questions, considerations for English learners, like, what are some of the questions you could ask about why this student is not performing in the way you expect? So NCII is one of the resources I wanted to point out to you. Let me go into another one. Oh, darn. I have way too many things open on my screen here, guys.

So, then the other one is that we have at AIR, the EL Center. AIR, so, you know, please, Rebecca Bergey leads that. We have lots of our research and resources here. We have an early literacy program for dual language learners called the COLTS program. For early literacy, it enhances oral language development skills, so I encourage you to look at our website and look at some of the projects we've worked on. Then, one of the things that we have done more recently is the Multilingual Learner Toolkit. And I, you know, so I put all of these different links in the chat for y'all, but these are resources to support, pre-K through 3rd grade, and you know, it can walk you right through how to use a starter guide, instructional strategies, best practices, resource search, and that's really, pre-K through 3rd grade, so that'll give you some ideas. But, this multilingual toolkit, we worked with another company to put this together. Then, in addition. Here it is. If you do not know about the OELA Toolkit. This is the OELA toolkit for English learners. They have a Newcomer toolkit as well, but Chapter 6 in here, and I'm just going to click Chapter 6, this gives you more, and this is more geared towards if you're looking at eligibility. So, you know, I've been doing this intersection of English learners and special education for more than 20 years. I've done research and writing about it. I taught it, you know, all of the students that I



worked with in Arlington, Virginia, the majority of those students, the majority of my caseloads were normally English learners. And you know that, that really, like getting into understanding, is it difference or disability? Is this a characteristic of a learning disability or a characteristic of language acquisition? They look so similar, and how are we going to tweak that, you know, parse that out and figure out, is this a disability? So this chapter I think has some good tools for that, And, you know, I highly recommend downloading it, so that you have it in your toolkit of, the whole the whole EL toolkit from OELA, Office of English Language Acquisition at the Department of Education is really helpful, but this particular chapter is for students with disabilities.

