Induction for Bilingual and English Language Development (ELD) Teachers

Induction of novice teachers is about equity of access for students to quality teaching. Because English learners and bilingual students are placed in both self-contained and general education classrooms, teacher induction should address the needs of ELD and bilingual teachers as well as the needs of general education teachers. In doing this, there are three key areas for focus:

- The needs of ELD and bilingual teachers;
- Skill development for general education teachers for supporting language acquisition for English learners;
- Skill development for mentors for supporting ELD in all classrooms (e.g., dual language education, OCDE Project GLAD®, SIOP, etc.)

Unique Needs of Novice ELD, Dual Language, and Bilingual Teachers

Novice ELD, dual language, and bilingual teachers often carry the dual responsibility of supporting both student language acquisition and core content learning. As with all teachers, these novice teachers need district and building leaders as well as their teacher colleagues to hold a collective sense of responsibility for their success and the success of their students. The extra demands of their roles require that induction leaders keep the scope of these novices’ work in mind when designing and developing induction programs to meet those needs.

The classrooms of ELD and bilingual teachers take varied forms. In bilingual education/dual language models, ELD and bilingual teachers lead the language and content instruction for all students in the general education classroom. In English-only instructional models, the ELD and bilingual teacher might provide small group instruction within a classroom, lead instruction in an ELD class, co-teach with a colleague, simultaneously teach core content, or provide pull-out instruction with small groups of students. Like other teachers in non-traditional classrooms, these teachers benefit from hearing leaders, trainers, and mentors speak to their unique contexts and teaching conditions.

Ideally, all teachers are advocates for equity. However, the responsibility for advocacy for English learners often falls on ELD and bilingual teachers. They become the voice speaking for access for linguistically diverse students and calling for inclusion of parents

Glossary of Terms

**English learners** Students whose primary language is other than English.

**English Language Development** Systematic instructional model designed to develop the English language proficiency of English language learners

**Bilingual education** Students learn language concepts and knowledge in their primary language while receiving instruction in English.

**Dual language education** Two-way language-learning model that provides content-based instruction to students in two languages: English and a language other than English.

**PLC** Professional learning communities

**OCDE Project GLAD®** Orange County Depart. of Ed. Guided Language Acquisition Design instructional model that integrates developing language proficiency and academic comprehension

**SIOP** Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol instructional model that addresses the academic needs of English learners
and families who may struggle to navigate the school and district. Mentors, coaches, and principals and other leaders can nurture effective advocacy in novice ELD and bilingual teachers by helping the teachers to identify their core values, form positive presuppositions about others, collaborate with allies, and understand how to grow their sphere of influence. They can have regular conversations with novice ELD and bilingual teachers about responsibilities they are taking on and what they can ask others to take on. Leaders also support these novice teachers when they work to establish school-wide equitable practices and develop general education teachers to advocate for equity as well. Collective responsibility for the success of English learners converts to collective responsibility for the success of novice ELD and bilingual teachers.

Advocacy for equity weaves through the multiple roles that ELD and bilingual teachers fill: teacher, case manager, staff support, and family/community support. Each role has a unique set of responsibilities and needed skills, and the demands of these multiple roles can contribute to teachers feeling overwhelmed and isolated. As classroom teachers, ELD and bilingual teachers need to be proficient with two sets of standards: English language proficiency and content. Often, they must find or create curriculum materials to meet students’ language and content learning needs, developing curricula and assessments for biliteracy development. This may involve drawing on multiple curricula and subjects for a single classroom of students. As case managers, dual language, ELD and bilingual teachers collaborate with school and/or district teams to ensure their students have equitable access to rigorous content learning in all parts of their school day. These teachers may be responsible for conducting language assessments, managing placements, and coordinating services for students. ELD and bilingual teachers are also often asked to provide professional learning for their colleagues and frequently are the ones schools and districts seek out to promote family engagement.

Support for novice ELD and bilingual teachers should include and be coordinated among multiple providers (e.g., mentor, ELD specialist, dual language program lead, department head) to ensure messages and assistance are consistent, efficient, and comprehensive. When these novice teachers are singletons in their buildings, leaders may need to be creative to provide opportunities for collaboration with others who share similar contexts and challenges.

All novice teachers need frequent, focused, timely formative feedback as they hone their skills. A common concern of bilingual teachers is receiving meaningful feedback when the observer is not proficient in the target language (language other than English). There are observation focuses that are valuable even when not speaking the target language (e.g., instructional time in the target language, student accountability for using the target language, student understanding of learning targets, use of instructional time, amount of student practice, and use of instructional groups). Principals and other observers can be strong coaches for novice bilingual teachers by eliciting observation focuses, identifying which ones can be addressed without knowing the language, which ones someone else can support, and
identifying who might be able to provide feedback about instruction in the target language. Finally, video of instruction is a powerful tool for teacher reflection, collaborative conversations, and self-assessment.

Teachers of color fill a higher proportion of the ELD and bilingual education teaching force than they do of the general education teaching force. They are often culturally and linguistically diverse as well. These factors may contribute to novice teachers feeling more on the “outside” than their general education peers. They need support from mentors of color as well as opportunities to connect with others in similar contexts. As with general education teachers of color, ELD and bilingual teachers of color should be not relied upon for all racial and cultural work in a school or district.

Language Acquisition Skill Development for Novice Teachers and Mentors
Novice general education teachers and mentors need
- An understanding of the state law (RCW 28A. 180.030) that requires a bilingual education model for English learners.
- An understanding of their district ELD and bilingual education program models.
- A clear district expectation that all teachers provide accessible instruction for language learners.
- Opportunities to develop their skill in creating and teaching language and content objectives.

Examples of Support for the Roles of Beginning ELD, Dual Language, and Bilingual Teachers

**Classroom Teacher**
- Foster PLCs with 1) colleagues who also work across grade levels, content areas, and languages of instruction and 2) core teachers to allow time for advocacy and collaboration. This often requires providing separate PLC times to accommodate multiple needs.
- Help teachers create, purchase, and adapt materials aligned to language and content standards to meet student needs.
- Provide structured opportunities for guided observations of and reflection on skillfully taught ELD or bilingual classrooms.
- For ELD and general education teachers who share students, prioritize common planning time that includes progress monitoring.

**Case Manager**
- Provide time and opportunity to collaborate with school and/or district teams.
- Use administrative assistant time to reduce demands of scheduling and paperwork required for annual assessments, placement, etc.
- Offer side-by-side support early in the year to coordinate the work with dually qualified students (e.g., special education).
- Encourage leaders to listen to and support novice teachers’ advocacy efforts for students and families.
- Nurture a school-wide expectation of honoring, recognizing, and developing students’ home languages.
Leader for Colleagues and Other Adults

- Intentionally foster collaborations between ELD and bilingual teachers and their general education peers. Articulate roles of the teachers and why they're working together.
- Build time into schedules for monthly meetings between teachers and paraeducators, and coach beginning teachers in effective use of that time.
- Encourage building leaders (e.g., principals, coaches) to communicate a school-wide expectation of and commitment to language acquisition and access for all students before asking novice ELD and bilingual teachers to provide professional learning for the staff.
- When using a co-teaching model, be explicit about expectations, roles, and responsibilities for co-planning and co-teaching.

Advocate for Families

- Invite participation on family engagement teams without relying on novice teachers to organize, lead, and run events.
- Share with families the research and long-term outcomes of English learners participating in dual language education as compared to English-only instructional models.
- Assist teachers and families in connecting with key groups and locations in community (immigration support organizations, community centers, community leaders, worship centers).
- Provide a community mentor such as a parent leader or community stakeholder.
- Identify support personnel to assist with administrative duties.
- Encourage district staff to coordinate services for families across programs and to coordinate family events to reduce number of invitations and commitments (e.g., Title I, LAP, math night).
- Provide clear direction to office staff for providing language access for families.