2018-2019 ELPA Excellence Award Report

Douglas County School District's ELD Program Description & Instructional Practices

Implementing Balanced ELD Programming in Douglas County School District

English language development (ELD) Specialists in Douglas County School District (DCSD) serve ELs using a balanced programming model. Balanced programming is designed to meet the specific needs of every EL at the following levels: NEP, LEP, Monitor Y1, and Monitor Y2. ELD programming in DCSD must include linguistic support at the Universal, Targeted, and Intensive level. ELs must receive ELD specific instruction **_in addition to_** English language development in the content areas as appropriate.

The most prevalent ELD model in DCSD is English as a Second Language (ESL); this is the selected model due to the number of languages spoken by families with ELs. ESL programming meets the needs of the individual EL in order to make content comprehensible and to focus on targeted English language development. ESL allows teachers to teach both content and English language development to a diverse population including numerous cultures and languages.

The following frameworks are to be considered a "menu" of options. ELD programs in DCSD may not contain every option below; however, all ELs must be served directly and consistently. ELD Specialists will design ELD Programming that meets the specific needs of their ELs, and support will occur at the Universal, Targeted, and Intensive levels. Every EL at the NEP and LEP levels will receive direct specific ELD instruction in addition to content embedded linguistic support; this includes ELs with Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs), Read Plans, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and 504s.

What does this look like?

Universal Linguistic Support for ELs

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). DCSD is currently in the process of systematically implementing SIOP professional development opportunities for all educators. The SIOP PD program was developed to help teachers make content material comprehensible to ELs. This model is the result of the work of Jana Echevarria, Maryellen Vogt and Deborah J. Short (2010). SIOP includes teacher preparation, instructional indicators such as comprehensible input and the building of background knowledge. It comprises strategies for classroom organization and delivery of instruction. The resources include the SIOP observation tool for administrators so they can support the system in implementing the practice of sheltered instruction throughout the school.

> "This model allows teachers and administrators to work collaboratively to develop school-wide practices that will improve the achievement of ELs. The SIOP can be implemented in classes with heterogeneous populations of ELs and native English

speakers." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 35*

Sheltered English, Specially Designed Academic Instruction (SDAIE), or Structured Immersion. This model is effective for students from any language background. Instruction is classroom based, delivered in English and adapted to the students' proficiency level. Focus is on content area curriculum. It incorporates contextual clues such as gestures and visual aids into instruction, as well as attention to the language demands of the topics and activities. These strategies are applicable in all environments where students are learning through their second language. Both the Classroom/Content Teacher and the ELD Specialist support students using SDAIE strategies.

> "May more easily serve student populations with a variety of native languages, as well as students who speak conversational English and fall into different English proficiency levels. Students are able to learn content and develop English language skills simultaneously." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 34*

Universal and Targeted Linguistic Support for ELs
All of the following frameworks are implemented in collaboration with pertinent school staff, including the Classroom/Content Teachers, Special Education Service Providers, Gifted Education Facilitators, and other staff members as necessary. DCSD fully supports *flexible clustering* of ELs in regular education settings, *collaborative teaming and planning*, and the *consideration of the needs* of every student and his or her family.

Collaborative Push-In English Language Development. English Language Development (ELD) is a model that specifically focuses on developing English Learners' proficiency in English and the language of the content areas, particularly in the domains of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. ELD instruction is direct, specific, and separately planned for and administered by qualified and endorsed ELD Specialists. "In ELD instruction, language is the primary objective and content is secondary" (Saunders, Goldenberg, and Marcelletti, 2014, p. 14). In Push-In ELD, English Learners experience targeted ELD inside the regular classroom setting according to their specific linguistic needs. Push-In ELD may be connected with the content currently experienced in the classroom, and the focus is ELD. Collaborative push-In ELD provides opportunities for the ELD Specialist to work with clustered ELs, small groups, and individual ELs in order to meet specific student needs.

Co-Teaching. Co-teaching and collaborative instructional practices are an essential element of DCSD's ELD programming. Collaboration leads to lesson planning and instruction tailored to both linguistic and academic needs of ELs. In an effective co-teaching model, the students view both instructors as equals and benefit from the lower student-teacher ratio. Co-teaching in DCSD involves a variety of models including parallel teaching, team-teaching, rotations, etc. This enables opportunities for both ELD

specific instruction and content-embedded instruction to occur in a consistent setting. Co-teaching provides opportunities for the ELD Specialist to work with small groups and individual ELs in order to meet specific student needs.

> "Two teachers in a classroom help meet the linguistic and academic needs of the EL population. Both teachers benefit from learning from one another: the content teacher learns about meeting linguistic needs and the ESL teacher learns more about the curriculum." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 36*

Professional development for co-teachers includes an introductory course to get the partnership started successfully from the beginning, as well as follow-up support from the ELD team and the school's professional development team.

Targeted and Intensive Linguistic Support for ELs

DCSD's newcomers, ELs with special needs, gifted ELs, and ELs with specific programming needs that differ from the typical EL in the school are served through the school's Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). DCSD strives to meet the needs of a full continuum of ELs, ranging from those who struggle the most to those who need the greatest degree of challenge. Targeted and intensive support may be implemented in push-in groups, other small group structure, or with individual students based on specific needs. Targeted and intensive support includes intentional progress monitoring of student growth and need, and is generally a temporary support structure.

Sheltered Content Courses. Depending on the needs of English Learners in a specific setting, some schools may need to provide sheltered content courses specifically designed for ELs. For example, it may make sense to offer a sheltered American History course for ELs so the teacher can tailor the language and content to their needs. DCSD uses Sheltered Content Courses when receiving secondary NEPs who do not yet have the linguistic capacity to be successful in the typical content courses. NEPs taking Sheltered Content Courses may take the course in lieu of the regular education course. Current DCSD Sheltered Content Courses include:
- Middle School
  - ESL English
  - Other ESL / ELA courses as appropriate
- High School
  - ESL English I and II
  - ESL Ancient Civilizations (NCAA approved)
  - ESL United States Government (NCAA approved)
  - ESL United States History (NCAA approved)

In order to maintain the "least segregative" model possible (US Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter, 2015), it is not recommended to schedule an EL in sheltered content courses when the EL has the potential to succeed in the typical course with ELD support.

"This model easily serves student populations with a variety of native languages as well as for students who speak conversational English and fall in a variety of English language proficiency levels. Students are able to learn content and develop English language skills simultaneously. Sheltered content courses allow teachers to tailor whole-class instruction to meet the linguistic and academic needs of the ELs." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 35*

ELD Classes. These courses are designed to develop students' English language proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Schools group students based on language proficiency and individual academic needs. ELD courses must be taught by teachers with ESL teaching certificates who have a strong working knowledge of English language arts standards. *DCSD ELD Classes are generally entitled "ESL Resource" or "ESL Elective".*

"ELD classes develop student's language proficiency in all areas – reading, writing, listening and speaking. Ongoing formal and informal assessment data are used to appropriately place and transition students through the levels of the ELD courses." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 36*

Flexible Pathways. Flexible pathways allow ELs to follow appropriate programming that accelerates their English development and allows them to progress in content area coursework (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). To meet graduation requirements, students may follow a path that differs from their native English-speaking peers. For example, a student may be ready to enter a general education math class before they are ready to enter a general education social studies class. Effective programs allow students to enter mainstream classes by subject, when they are able.

Other strategies that create a pathway to graduation include:
• Awarding appropriate credit for courses taken in the home country
• Ensuring that students receive English credit for ELD classes
• Allowing extended time for graduation
• Offering summer courses

This approach "allows students extra time to be able to acquire both core content knowledge and English language development. It builds on student strengths and goals. Students can transition to mainstream in different subjects at different times, depending on their progress." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 37*

Temporary Pull-Out English Language Development. English Language Development (ELD) is a model that specifically focuses on developing English Learners' proficiency in English, particularly in

the domains of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. ELD instruction is direct, specific, and separately planned for and administered by qualified and endorsed ELD Specialists.   "In ELD instruction, language is the primary objective and content is secondary" (Saunders, Goldenberg, and Marcelletti, 2014, p. 14). In Pull-Out ELD, English Learners *temporarily* experience targeted or intensive ELD instruction outside the regular classroom setting according to their specific linguistic needs.

Supporting Classroom / Content Teachers
Co-Teaching
In a Co-Taught setting, opportunities to model best practice are used to continually improve and refine instruction for ELs. Both the ELD Specialist and Classroom/Content Teacher learn from one another, and the focus on language development is highlighted.

Collaborative Planning
DCSD ELD Specialists often collaborate with a variety of staff members to plan instruction that embeds linguistic support for ELs, analyze data to determine next steps for students and whether current practices are effective, monitor learning goals for students, and collaboratively design programming that will address specific student needs.

Coaching / Mentoring
ELD Specialists implement and voice their expertise in language development in a variety of coaching and mentoring conversations. DCSD Effective coaching programs are designed to respond to the particular needs of students, improve instructional capacity and develop structures for a collegial approach. ELD Specialists provide resources, expertise, opinions, and suggestions regarding best practice and supporting ELs at the Universal level.

> "Coaching holds the potential to address inequities in opportunities for ELs by providing differentiated, targeted supports to their teachers. A combined focus on content, language and use of data encourages high quality instruction that reaches ELs." *Guidebook on Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Services for English Learners (ELs), p. 37*

DCSD's English Language Development Plan (*please note, DCSD's ELD Plan was written to be implemented through the 18-19 school year, and it is currently being updated)

DCSD ELD Professional Learning Opportunities
For ELD Specialists
DCSD currently offers quarterly training for ELD specialists as a whole team. All learning experiences leverage the strengths and gifts ELs bring to the learning environment. Learning opportunities include ACCESS 2.0 and WIDA Screener training, and specific learning pathways through the lens of:
- Culturally responsive and equitable instructional practices for ELs.

- Leveraging student stories, identity, and language.
- Family and community engagement and empowerment.
- Trauma and ELs.
- Newcomer programming.
- Lesson / unit sharing.
- Observation protocols.
- Collaboration and co-teaching.
- Book studies and discussion groups.
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports.
- Coaching and mentoring.
- Professional development facilitation and adult learners.
- Dually identified ELs.
- Gifted ELs.

For All Educators

DCSD currently offers a variety of courses that directly address English Language Development and the needs of English Learners. The following are courses currently offered at least two times per year, and educators may register through Inspired. All courses are offered in hybrid, face to face, and online formats. DCSD has already created 103 hours of coursework directly related to instructing and supporting English Learners.

- Federal and State Law and Requirements: 5 hours
- Culturally Responsive Classrooms: 5 hours
- Instructional Design for English Learners - Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (32 total hours)
  - Introduction to SIOP: 8 hours
  - SIOP 1: 8 Hours
  - SIOP 2: 8 Hours
  - SIOP 3: 8 Hours
- Is it a SPED Issue or Language Acquisition? 8 hours
- English Language Development: Foundations: 5 hours
- Academic Conversations: 8 Hours
- WIDA CLIMBS: 40 Hours over 5 days
- Collaboration and Co-Teaching: Focus on English Learners: 8 Hours
- ELD PD Packs for School Use and Online Modules

DCSD will continue to develop and refine courses to support teachers with implementing instruction that successfully supports English Learners.

DCSD ELD Data Analysis

The data from the English Learner (EL) subgroup is analyzed as part of the Unified Improvement Plan and School Improvement planning processes. The district's Systems Performance office provides Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) for English Language Learners and other meaningful disaggregated data for schools to review. District leadership provides support to building leadership in analysis of ACCESS results. Formative and summative data is monitored and evaluated collaboratively by teachers and building leaders.

In addition to analyzing achievement and growth data through the DPF and SPF, the DCSD ELD team asks every ELD Specialist to analyze and submit a "program evaluation" spreadsheet for each school they serve. In this document, we ask ELD Specialists to identify and document a school level linguistic and literacy focused assessment to use to monitor individual student progress. This allows our team to create assessment cohorts in schools, feeder areas, regions, and across the district through which we analyze and compare growth and achievement to the data included on the DPF and SPF. The program evaluation spreadsheet provides formative and summative information, and assists in identifying areas of strength and need at the school and program level.

DCSD ELD Community Supports and Family Partnerships

Partnering with Families: Engage, Grow, Celebrate

DCSD's ELD Department aims to partner with families in order to establish relationships, implement instruction and programming, and support students and families in the educational environment. The primary goal of the DCSD ELD Family Outreach Framework is to authentically and meaningfully connect with families, foster their inclusion and meaningful participation in the school experience, and support each family's unique needs through a culturally inclusive and responsive framework.

Engage: Each family, along with other stakeholders, must have the opportunity to be engaged in and connected with their child's school and the community it serves. DCSD's framework invites families to be a part of the educational community during the school day, outside the school day, and in in the community.

Grow: Each family, along with other stakeholders, must be offered the opportunity to learn and grow. DCSD's framework provides multiple opportunities for families to learn about a variety of student supports such as literacy, 21st century classrooms, and district and community resources for academics, health and wellness, mental health, special programming.

Celebrate: Each family, along with other stakeholders, must be honored, celebrated, and supported in order to foster a successful educational experience from pre-school through the twelfth grade. This includes celebrating academic performance and achievements, academic growth, and educationally related passions, interests, and strengths.

Fiscal Resources
Colorado State Funding allocated to Districts

DCSD's ELD team leverages state allocated funding for staffing, subscription based instructional materials, and professional development. DCSD's budget office staffs the ELD program at a 1:30 teacher to student ratio. This affords ESL teachers the ability to implement collaborative balanced programming that meets the unique needs of a full continuum of learners.

Title II, III, and other Grants

DCSD's ELD team leverages Title funds for professional development pathways, ELD Teacher Lead stipends, an additional ELD Team Lead who focuses primarily on family engagement and professional development, and the implementation of Reading Together as a supplemental literacy support for English Learners before or after school.

ELPA Excellence Award

The additional, one-time ELPA Excellence Award funds have been leveraged to pilot summer literacy and language opportunities for English Learners; to enhance translation and interpretation services with updated interpretation devices; for parent advisory committee training for parents of English Learners; and, for WIDA workshops and other professional development opportunities not already provided by DCSD focusing on culturally responsive practices that benefit English Learners.

Post-Secondary Practices (for secondary schools and districts only)

Post-Secondary Planning and Supports for Students and Families

The DCSD ELD team supports students to first envision their futures, plan for them, and guide students and families take the necessary steps to realize their goals. The ELD team supports schools with post-secondary planning in the student's ELD Plan, and this connects with the ICAP. Additionally, the ELD team coordinates field trips for middle and high school ELs with a goal to expose all students to a variety of career, military, vocational, technical, college, and university options. The ELD team coordinates and hosts supported application, essay, scholarship, post-secondary planning, and FAFSA completion sessions, and leverages relationships with post-secondary agencies to support students and families served by the ELD team.

The DCSD ELD team intentionally monitors and analyzes graduation rates and post-secondary decisions, partners with schools and agencies to ensure every student has access to information and opportunities, and collaborates with the Career and Technical Education coordinator to streamline programming and supports for secondary students.

Other Practices or Any Other Effective Program Elements

Teachers and School Staff

ELD Specialists / ESL Teachers provide support to classroom and content teachers to implement culturally responsive and linguistically comprehensible instruction throughout the school day. ELD Specialists hold or are in the process of obtaining either a Linguistically Diverse Education (prior to the spring of 2012) or Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Endorsement from the state of Colorado (See Appendix A). ELD is supported by ELD Specialists through direct linguistic instruction and through the use of the World Class Instruction Design and Assessment (WIDA) Standards Framework. ESL Specialists focus on English Language Development (ELD):

● as the ELD content area,
● in academic content, and
● in social and instructional language.