

English Language Development Coaching Model

Guidance on Design and Implementation



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English Language Development Coaching Model

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Introduction

As the numbers of ELs continues to grow, districts are forced to accept larger caseloads, hire additional teachers or to take a step back and re-evaluate how it supports ELs. The ELD Coaching Model developed with attention to the latter. Specifically, it attempted to ask how schools can best support students as they integrate into the school community and work to meet Missouri's rigorous English Language Proficiency (ELP) and content standards.

The ELD Coaching Model

Several other issues compounded the issue are research-informed professional development activities required under the ESSA, a revised English language proficiency assessment and expectations set by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's state ESSA plan.

The ELD Coaching Model has several goals:

- To support ELs every lesson, all day, throughout the year
- Strengthen Tier I instruction
- Build capacity among all teachers to meet the needs of ELs
- Increase collective teacher efficacy
- Foster greater collaboration between general educators and ELD specialists

ELD Coaching Model Structure

The ELD Coaching model improves the way many schools traditionally operate ELD or bilingual programs. Importantly, the mindset changes. Whereas ELD teachers previously assumed the responsibility to improve English proficiency, with the ELD coaching model, all teachers view themselves as language teachers. Structurally, the model operates similar to other intervention programs and can best be visualized through the popular Response to Intervention (RtI) pyramid.

Tier I instruction is the focus and students are only pulled in specific circumstances. Rather than looking at all ELs as a group, teachers hone in on individual student characteristics paying careful attention to an EL's English proficiency levels. Missouri uses the WIDA assessments which places ELs on a scale from one to six. A 4.7 is the point where the majority of students will score proficient or advanced on our state assessments. A student in the one range has very different needs than a student who is in the four range.

With the ELD Coaching Model, students at the higher end of the WIDA scale will stay in the general education classroom all day. ELD and general education teachers collaborate to make lessons meaningful for all ELs in the classroom during Tier I instruction. Students at the lower end of the WIDA scale are pulled at specific points in the day to develop language for specific purposes. Specifically, survival language related to school, intensive English instruction, pre-teaching or re-teaching.

Setting the Stage

The first step is for district and building leadership to communicate the goals, purpose and format of the new program model with the building staff. Simply stated, without the support and consistent communication of the leader, the program model will not work.

Expectations for Effective Instruction

Research focused on effective instruction for ELs has increased dramatically over the past decade. Several researchers have published documents and resources to help schools address the needs of English learners. Choosing an existing model or developing a building- or district-specific model helps teachers focus on key strategies during collaboration. As a leader, deciding which to use is incredibly important and can be challenging. The following are a few of the examples.

Understanding Language

In 2013, the research group Understanding Language published [Six Key Principles for ELL Instruction](#). Those principles are:

1. Instruction focuses on providing ELLs with opportunities to engage in discipline-specific practices which are designed to build conceptual understanding and language competence in tandem.
2. Instruction leverages ELLs' home language(s), cultural assets, and prior knowledge.
3. Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds.
4. Instruction moves ELLs forward by taking into account their English proficiency levels and prior schooling experiences.
5. Instruction fosters ELLs' autonomy by equipping them with strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings.
6. Diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices are employed to measure students' content knowledge, academic language competence and participation in disciplinary practices.

In 2018, the research group WestEd categorized these principles and developed a walkthrough form to assist leader in monitoring the activities (see Appendix A). ELD specialists and content teachers can both use these forms to identify areas of growth and start conversations about effective EL instruction.

TESOL International

The TESOL International organization published [The Six Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners](#) in 2018. The six inter-related principles are essential guidelines that come from nearly four decades of research. The principles are:

1. Know your learners
2. Create conditions for language learning
3. Develop high-quality lessons for language development
4. Adapt lesson delivery as needed
5. Monitor and assess student language development
6. Engage and collaborate within a community of practice

Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol

The SIOP Model has been used across the country for nearly two decades. There is no shortage of resources and training materials available for this model. The SIOP Model consists of eight interrelated components. The eight components are:

1. Lesson Preparation
2. Building Background
3. Comprehensible Input
4. Strategies
5. Interaction
6. Practice and Application
7. Lesson Delivery
8. Review and Assessment

The model also consists of 30 features that dig deeper into each component. A sample SIOP checklist is included in Appendix B.

As with any other program, the people implementing it should be a part of the conversation. The staff, including the ELD specialist(s), should have an opportunity to come to a consensus on an existing tool or a building/district-specific set of principles for quality instruction.

Classroom Assignment

Assigning ELs to classrooms has proven to be a contentious topic. From our experience, at the elementary level, there are two approaches with differing effects on the format of the coaching model.

EL Classroom Assignment	Approach
Cluster in one classroom	Individual collaboration and coaching. With this method, each teacher will receive personalized training and preparation to support ELs. This method is ideal for schools with smaller numbers of ELs and one ELD teacher.
Spread evenly among grade level classrooms	Grade-level collaboration and coaching. This method results in less individualization but prepares all teachers faster. This approach is ideal for buildings with larger numbers of ELs and two or more ELD teachers.

At the high school level, several other factors come into play. In our experience, coaching entire grade level teams has been the most effective. Over time, each grade level will be confident and comfortable designing meaningful lessons for ELs.

ELD Teacher Responsibilities

To begin, create a pie chart (see Figure 2.1) that shows the time commitment to each area: collaboration, targeted interventions, planning and other. ELD specialists have several other duties that need to be

represented. Initial screenings, ACCESS testing, translations, parent meetings, and other duties often make a significant dent in the amount of time a teacher has to work with students. Administrators should consider other options to take some of these duties off their plate. For example, ACCESS testing can be done by any district employee that has completed the online trainings.



Collaboration

As shown by Figure 2.1, collaboration is the primary component of the ELD Coaching Model and one that includes a variety of tasks. All students will benefit from a collaborative effort to strengthen unit plans and their delivery.

Task	Description
Unit Planning	ELD Specialists are provided time, ideally before a unit begins, to review existing unit plans and add resources, supports, scaffolds and tips.
Lesson Planning	ELD Specialists sit with grade level teams during lesson planning to provide guidance, resources, support and tips to use during instruction.
Observations/Feedback	Collaborators engage in non-judgmental, non-evaluative instructional coaching cycles. Collaborators can view a video or discuss a data-informed area of growth prior to a lesson. The ELD specialist observes the lesson, provides feedback and the cycle continues.
Student Shadowing	The ELD specialists shadows a student for part of the day collecting data on an individual student. Shadowing is a great way to collect data on struggling students or the general school experience of an EL.
Co-Teaching	Several co-teaching approaches offer the ELD specialist the opportunity to demonstrate effective EL instruction. At times, collaborators may wish to engage activity requiring two facilitators. Team teaching is a great method to model effective instruction.
Modeling	Simply stated, some strategies need to be modeled.

Targeted Interventions

The goal of the ELD Coaching Model is for ELs to be engaged in grade-level, discipline-specific work all day. However, students at lower proficiency levels, such as a 1.0-2.5 on the WIDA scale truly need dedicated time during the day for intensive instruction focused on English language development. Many newcomers will need survival language when they first arrive to school and this should happen individually or in small groups outside the general education classroom. Where appropriate, grade levels can be combined so the ELD Specialist can focus primarily on the collaboration component.

Planning

Fail to plan; plan to fail. With the ELD Coaching Model, it is advised that the collaboration and planning is done on made time, not on found time. Although this is easier said than done, planning for weekly, bi-weekly or monthly planning sessions is key to the program's success. Teachers have always found creative ways to collaborate; often with the use of technology. However, intentionally scheduling periodic in-person planning sessions and keeping that time undisturbed is a critical component of the ELD Coaching Model.

Other Duties as Assigned

Time is in short supply and there are several job responsibilities that diminish the amount of time ELD Specialists have to work with student and adults. Initial English screening when students enroll can be both unpredictable and time consuming. Additionally, the yearly WIDA ACCESS assessment takes time away from teaching and learning. Administrators should note that any district employee that has taken the mandatory online trainings can administer both the WIDA Online Screener and the ACCESS. For the ELD Coaching Model to work, the ELD Specialist must be available to both teachers and students.

Classroom Snapshot: Using the Key Principles for EL Instruction
 Classroom Walkthrough Form
 Adapted from WestEd (2018) and Understanding Language (2013)

Grade/Subject: _____ Number of Students/EL Students: _____/_____

Timeframe Observed: _____ - _____ Student Talk: _____ minutes _____ seconds

Classroom Set-Up: _____ Rows _____ Pairs _____ Small Groups _____ Other _____

Opportunities to Learn: Instruction provides ELs with opportunities to engage in discipline -specific practices to build conceptual understanding, analytical practices, and language competence simultaneously. Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds.

Indicators we can see:	Evidence: If you check a box, note key details of what you saw and heard	Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Students interacting around key content-area ideas, using analytical practices. <input type="checkbox"/> Students engaged in verbal interactions focused on central content-area practices (analyzing, asking questions, elaborating, justifying, critiquing, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Students making connections among or between disciplinary concepts/ideas (synthesizing, explaining, generalizing, hypothesizing) <input type="checkbox"/> Students making arguments using evidence to support reasoning or claims <input type="checkbox"/> Students' core materials/learning tasks are rigorous, at grade level <input type="checkbox"/> Students engaged in grade-level core content aligned to MO Learning Standards Expectations 		

Asset Orientation: Instruction leverages ELLs home language(s), cultural assets, and prior knowledge. Instruction moves ELLs forward by taking into account their English proficiency level(s) and prior schooling experiences.

Indicators we can see:	Evidence: If you check a box, note key details of what you saw and heard	Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Students connecting and integrating ideas using language(s) (home and/or English), cultural assets and prior knowledge. <input type="checkbox"/> Students deepening understandings by building on prior knowledge/ideas or the ideas of others. <input type="checkbox"/> Students negotiating meaning using peers as resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Students using multimodal materials and scaffolds for purposeful learning of content. <input type="checkbox"/> Students engaged in productive struggle with complex text/task/ideas using learning supports and analysis tools for a purpose. <input type="checkbox"/> Students refining their communications using formulaic expressions, representations, metaphors, and multiple examples. <input type="checkbox"/> Students acknowledging and valuing the ideas of peers. <input type="checkbox"/> Students encouraging and/or promoting peers to express ideas in their home language. 		

Developing Autonomy: Instruction fosters ELLs autonomy by equipping them with strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings. Formative Assessment practices are employed to gather evidence and guide (both teacher and students) productive next steps to support learning conceptual understandings, analytical practices and language development simultaneously.

Indicators we can see:	Evidence: If you check a box, note key details of what you saw and heard	Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student engaged in well-structured invitations to participate in productive struggle <input type="checkbox"/> Students engaged in productive struggle to accomplish tasks in the "zone of proximal development" <input type="checkbox"/> Students apprenticing into content-area discussion. <input type="checkbox"/> Students offering peers respectful, accurate and useful feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Students making adjustments in learning tactics and language use in light of descriptive feedback received from peers or teacher. 		

Were there any opportunities for improvement during the lesson.

Appendix B – SIOP Tool

(Adapted from Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000; 2004; 2008)

Grade/Classroom: _____ Date: _____ Observer: _____

Directions: Rate each area of the lesson and cite examples or observations in the comments section.

Lesson Preparation	4	3	2	1	NA
1. Content Objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students.					
2. Language Objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students.					
3. Content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students.					
4. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful (e.g., computer programs, graphs, models, visuals, etc.)					
5. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency					
6. Meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities					
Comments:					
Building Background					
7. Concepts explicitly linked to students' background experiences.					
8. Links explicitly made between past learning and new concepts.					
9. Key vocabulary emphasized.					
Comments:					
Comprehensible Input					
10. Speech appropriate for students' proficiency level					
11. Clear explanation of academic tasks					
12. A variety of techniques used to make content concepts clear					
Comments:					
Strategies					
13. Ample opportunities provided for students to use learning strategies					
14. Scaffolding techniques used assisting and supporting student understanding					
15. A variety of questions or tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills.					

Comments:					
Interaction					
16. Frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion.					
17. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives.					
18. Sufficient wait time for student responses consistently provided.					
19. Ample opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in L1 as needed.					
Comments					
Practice and Application					
20. Hands-on materials and/or manipulatives					
21. Activities provided for students to apply content and language knowledge					
22. Activities integrate all language skills.					
Comments:					
Lesson Delivery					
23. Content objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery.					
24. Language objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery.					
25. Students engaged approximately 90%-100% of the period.					
26. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to students' ability level.					
Comments:					
Review and Assessment					
27. Comprehensive review of key vocabulary.					
28. Comprehensive review of key content concepts.					
29. Regular feedback provided to students on their output					
30. Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all objectives.					
Comments:					