


A Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners
Instructional Practice and Materials Considerations
Spring 2023

November 8, 2023



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About the Council

- Coalition of 78 of the nation's largest urban public-school systems
- Founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961
- Supports urban education through:
 - Legislation
 - Research
 - Instruction and management technical assistance
 - Communications
- Member districts enroll over a quarter of the nation's English learners (ELs)



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The WHY: Reality Revealed by SY 2019-20 Survey



Wide range of instructional materials and approaches for foundational skills instruction for ELs, usually not developed with ELs in mind.



Foundational skills instruction in English heavily focused on code-based skills, built on findings from research on how monolingual English-speakers learn to read English text.



Teachers usually augment district-provided resources or supplement with other materials without coherent guidance or support from research to address the multiple literacies that ELs bring to school.



Educators require knowledge about: (1) second language acquisition pedagogy, (2) early literacy/reading development in English, (3) how the English language works, and (4) contrastive linguistics—to build on the home language assets their students bring to school and to ensure literacy instruction is effective for ELs.

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Needs to Address

2. What does effective instructional practice for EL foundational literacy development entail?

Key Instructional Principles and Practices

3. What must instructional materials include to help teachers deliver effective foundational literacy instruction for ELs?

Theory of Action

Instructional Materials Criteria

1. What does "foundational literacy" mean for ELs (e.g., scope, connections to ELA, unique features, etc.)?



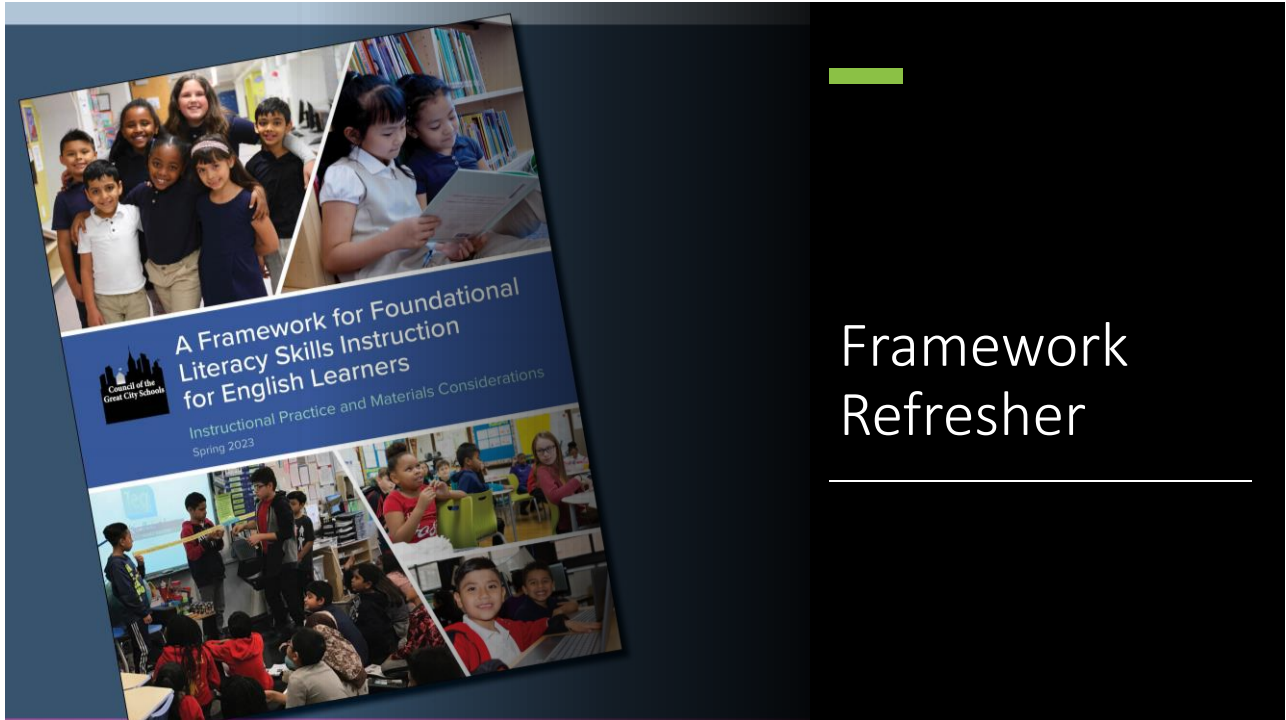
4. How do we use the framework and criteria to improve—

- a) materials selection and
- b) vendor materials?

a) Criteria Training for Districts

b) Publisher Feedback & Training

4



Framework Refresher

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Foundational Skills Instruction for ELs



Chapter I. Overview of Research



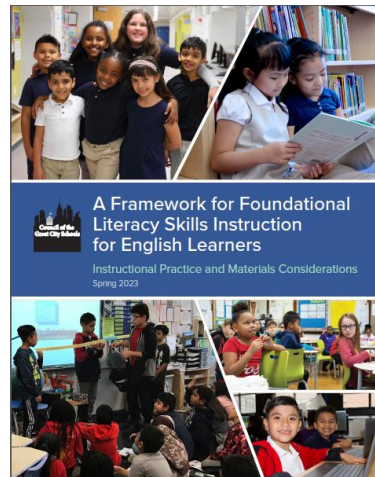
Chapter II. Envisioning Foundational Skills Instruction for English Learners: A Comprehensive and Connected Approach



Chapter III. What Teachers Need to Know about Language: A Linguistic Primer

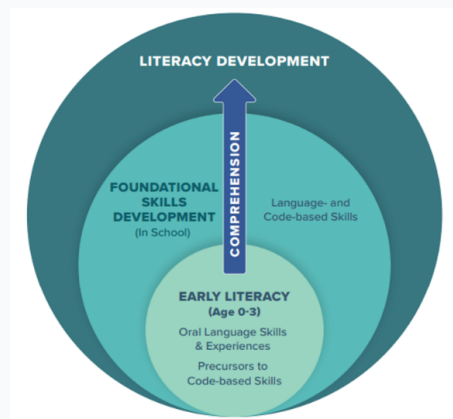


Chapter IV. Considerations for Selecting Instructional Materials to Teach Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction



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What do you recall about the pathway to language literacy?



Nobody has responded yet.
Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

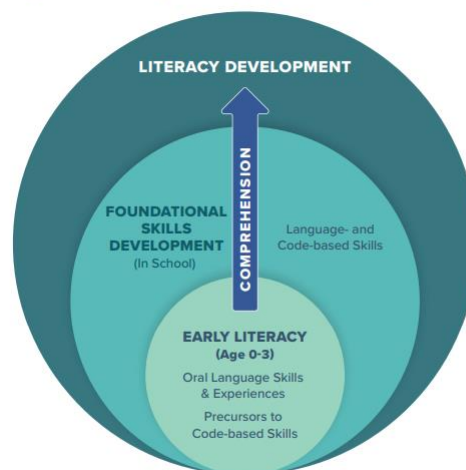
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Pathway to Literacy

- **English-speaking children:** Greater concordance between the oral language skills they possess and the language of instruction
- **English learners:** Non-concordance, making the transfer of their existing oral language skills less straightforward in supporting foundational literacy skill development in English

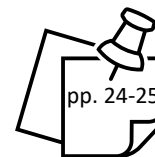
Figure 1. Pathway to Language Literacy



Based on Brown (2014), Storch & Whitehurst (2002), and Strickland et al. (2004).

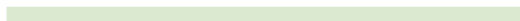
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Critical Components Emphasized



Language-based Skills

- Oral Language
- Comprehension and Meaning-Making
- Word Knowledge

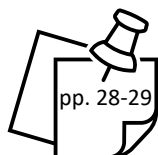


Code-based Skills

- Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
- Print Knowledge
- Decoding and Phonics
- Early Writing



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What do students learn about language?

Thinking about your district's current foundational skills approach, reflect on...

- What are you currently addressing?
- What are you not addressing?



Oral language and broad-based language skills

Understanding of the English language and how it may differ from their home language

Code-based skills to engage with texts in service of learning grade-level content successfully

How academic English works to convey meaning

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What are the building blocks of effective foundational skills instruction for ELs?

Nobody has responded yet.
Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

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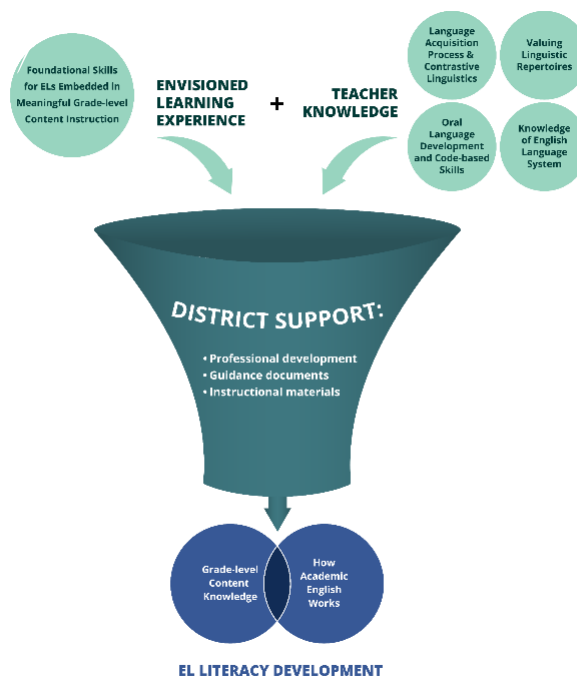
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Theory of Action

When **teachers value and leverage the linguistic repertoires** that ELs bring to school and teachers are **equipped with knowledge** about—

- How the English language system works,
- How ELs develop English as a new language, and
- Comprehensive approaches to literacy,

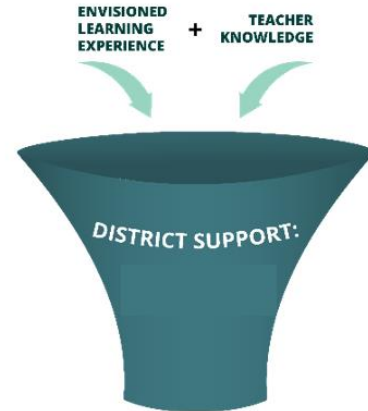
teachers can **create learning experiences** that **build content knowledge** and **foundational skills instruction** that supports student understanding for how academic English works.



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Reflection: What is your current reality?

	Current	Desired	Action Steps
Theory of Action			
Goal for EL Literacy Development			
Envisioned Learning Experience			
Teacher Knowledge			
District Support			

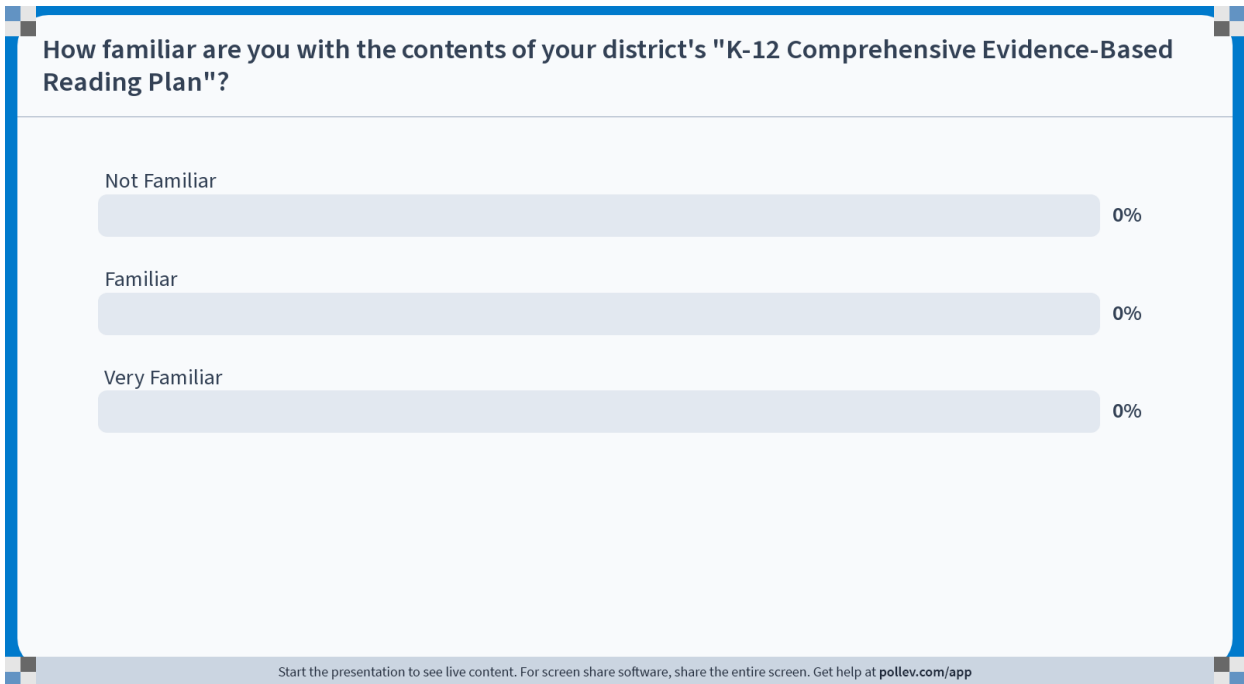


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The Florida Context

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K-12 COMPREHENSIVE EVIDENCE-BASED READING PLANS

6A-6.053 District K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan

Annually, each school district is required to submit a K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan (CERP) approved by the applicable district school board, charter school governing board or lab school board of trustees, for the specific use of the evidence-based reading instruction allocation by June 15. A district school board may use the format developed by the department or a format developed by the district. District-developed CERP templates must include all of the CERP requirements described in [Rule 6A-6.053, F.A.C.](#) The District K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan must accurately depict and detail the role of administration (both district and school level), professional development, assessment, curriculum, and instruction in the improvement of student learning of the B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards as provided in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C. This information must be reflected for all schools and grade levels and shared with all stakeholders, including school administrators, literacy leadership teams, literacy coaches, classroom instructors, support staff and parents.



[2023-24 K-12 CERP Template](#) (Word)

District K-12 CERP Reflection Tool

The District K-12 CERP Reflection Tool is incorporated in Rule 6A-6.053, F.A.C. The purpose is to promote reflection regarding current strengths and challenges in the implementation of the district's K-12 CERP, spark conversations among staff and facilitate identification of areas for improvement to support revising K-12 CERP for implementation in the succeeding school year. Each school district is required to submit a District K-12 CERP Reflection Tool by May 15.

[District K-12 CERP Reflection Tool](#) (Word)

[2022-2023 District K-12 CERPs](#)

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Family Engagement (Rule 6A-6.053(11), F.A.C.)

In accordance with s. 1008.25(5)(e), F.S., parents of students identified with a substantial reading deficiency must be provided a read-at-home plan, including multisensory strategies, that the parent can use to help with reading at home.

A graphic titled "READ-AT-HOME PLAN RESOURCES" featuring a photo of a woman reading with a child. Below the title is a circular logo with a stylized 'S' and a sunburst. The text below reads: "A read-at-home plan is required to be provided to parents of any K-3 student who has been identified with a substantial deficiency in reading. The Florida Department of Education has compiled resources that each school district must include into a read-at-home plan provided to the parent of a student who is identified as having a substantial reading deficiency. A read-at-home plan includes information and resources connected to the essential components of reading: oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. These resources are available in an electronic format that is accessible online, and a hardcopy of such resources must be provided by the school upon parent request. To access these resources digitally, click on each link provided below."/>

READ-AT-HOME PLAN RESOURCES

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What is your level of involvement in developing your district's "K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan"?



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Connections to Leverage



Understand the content of your district's "Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan," particularly as it pertains to English learners.

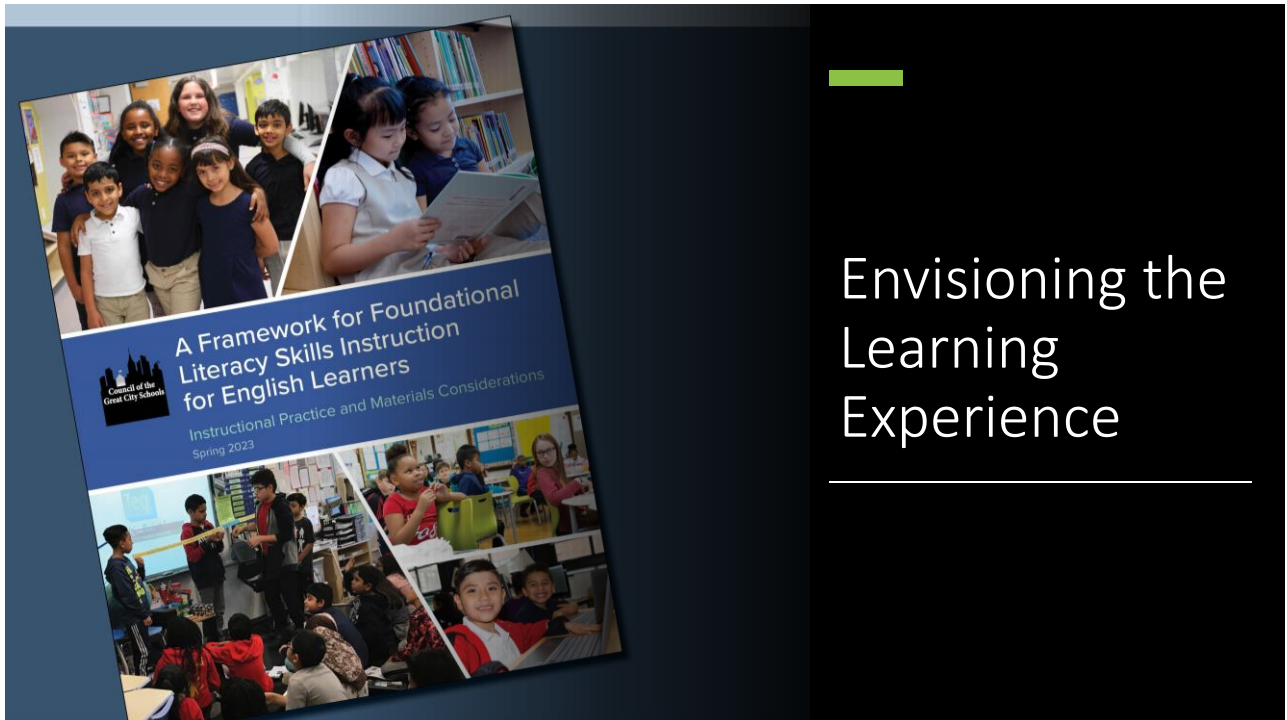


With your district's plan and your involvement in developing/reviewing the plan in mind, consider—

Components that need to be bolstered to provide a "comprehensive and connected" approach.

Supports, through the plan and/or beyond the plan, to facilitate foundational skills instruction for English learners.

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Envisioning the Learning Experience

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What is the current focus of your district's foundational skills approach for ELs? (Select a point on the green bar.)



Language-based Skills

- Oral Language
- Comprehension and Meaning-Making
- Word Knowledge

Code-based Skills

- Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
- Print Knowledge
- Decoding and Phonics
- Early Writing

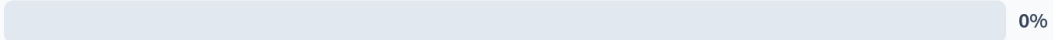


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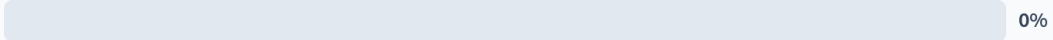
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What aspect/s of language is/are addressed in your district's current foundational skills approach?

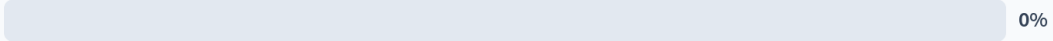
Oral language and broad-based language skills



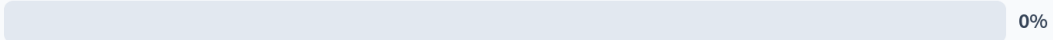
Understanding of the English language and how it may differ from home language



Code-based skills to engage with texts in service of learning grade-level content successfully



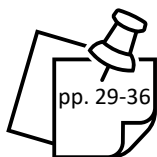
How academic English works to convey meaning









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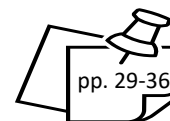
Guiding Principles for the Foundational Skills Development of English Learners



-  The linguistic repertoire of ELs and registers of English are valued and leveraged.
-  Grade-level content serves as the anchor for foundational literacy skills development in service of mastering spoken and written academic language.
-  Meaning-making and comprehension are prioritized.
-  Mastery of academic English expands student linguistic identities.
-  Language-based and code-based skills are developed simultaneously.
-  Comprehension of text is signaled by students' ability to read with the proper expression to convey meaning, not solely speed and accuracy.

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Understanding the Starting Point for Improvement



Principle	Self-Rating (0-5)	Stop	Continue	Start
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

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Grades K-5 Decision Tree

Elementary schools (K-5) must teach reading in a dedicated, uninterrupted block of time of at least 90 minutes daily to all students. The reading block will include whole group instruction utilizing an evidence-based sequence of reading instruction and small group differentiated instruction in order to meet individual student needs.

Beginning of year data
 IF: Student meets the following criteria at the beginning of the school year:
 (Enter assessment criteria that will be used.)

THEN TIER 1 Only

Core Instruction
 Indicate the core curriculum and how the program is supported by strong, moderate, or promising levels of evidence.

List performance criteria that indicate Tier 1 is sufficient for at least 80% of students.

Explain how the effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction is monitored.

What procedures are in place to identify and solve problems to improve effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction?

Performance criteria that prompt the addition of Tier 2 interventions for students not meeting expectations/benchmarks during the school year:

Beginning of year data
 IF: Student meets the following criteria at the beginning of the school year:
 (Enter assessment criteria that will be used.)

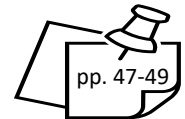
<https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/readingplan.stml>

Decision Trees through an ELL Lens

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Step 1: Define the district context. To select and implement instructional materials appropriately for ELs, the selection committee needs to define the context within which the materials will be used. This context includes—

- the school district's vision and desired or intended outcomes for English language development or English language acquisition, including in foundational skills;
- the instructional context for the *types of educators implementing the materials—classroom teachers, ESL/ELD teachers, interpreters, etc.*
- how foundational skills instruction is integrated into the district's language arts curriculum; and
- how the foundational literacy skills instruction is integrated into the district's instructional materials for FI D and FI A instruction.

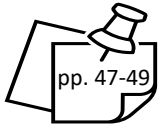


Step 2. Define the program features or approach for foundational literacy skills instruction (in general and specifically for ELs). Programs for foundational literacy skills instruction—part of an EL's language instructional program or English language arts curriculum—are defined by a number of considerations that influence the purpose, uses, and users of instructional materials. These considerations are—

- **Program model for ELs or instructional approach for ELD.** What is the program model and instructional approach for ELD?
- **Integration of foundational skills.** How does foundational skills instruction fit into the overall literacy and/or English language development program?
- **Student grouping.** How will students be grouped for foundational literacy skills instruction—by grade level, English proficiency level, home language, etc.?
- **Duration.** How many minutes of instruction are allocated for foundational skills instruction? How does it fit into the overall literacy and/or English language development program?
- **Instructor(s).** Who will teach foundational skills—bilingual teachers, ESOL teachers, general education teachers with ESOL endorsement, content/support specialists, tutors, etc.?
- **Assessment.** What evidence of learning will be collected? What is the type, purpose, and time needed for assessments; and what structures exist for collecting, analyzing, and using assessment data, and supporting teachers in responding to assessment results?

Does your district's reading plan consider ELLs?

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Reviewing the "District K-12 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Reading Plan"

Component	Currently in Reading Plan	EL Needs to Address
Step 1: District Context Vision and desired or intended outcomes for English language development or English language acquisition, including in foundational skills		
Instructional context for the types of educators implementing the materials — classroom teachers, ESL/ELD teachers, interventionists, tutors, etc.		
How foundational skills instruction fits into ELD instruction for ELs as well as the English language arts curriculum		
How the foundational literacy skills materials are expected to work or align with instructional materials for ELD and ELA instruction		



District Support

District-aligned Instructional Supports and Resources Explicitly Addressing EL Needs

Teacher-designed and -led instruction anchored in grade-level content that dynamically responds to the evolving learning needs of ELs requires the following targeted and multi-layered district resources and supports—



Professional learning. Teachers need high-quality, relevant, and ongoing professional learning that continues to build their capacity around providing foundational skills instruction to students whose home language is not English, equipping them to respond to the educational needs of ELs (California State Board of Education, 2012). Professional development must also be aligned with (and/or complement in a coherent way) the district's overall professional development plan, particularly around foundational skills and literacy.



District guidance. Any district guidance and resources provided to teachers for developing literacy and grade-level content knowledge should also be coherently articulated or aligned to meet the needs of ELs.

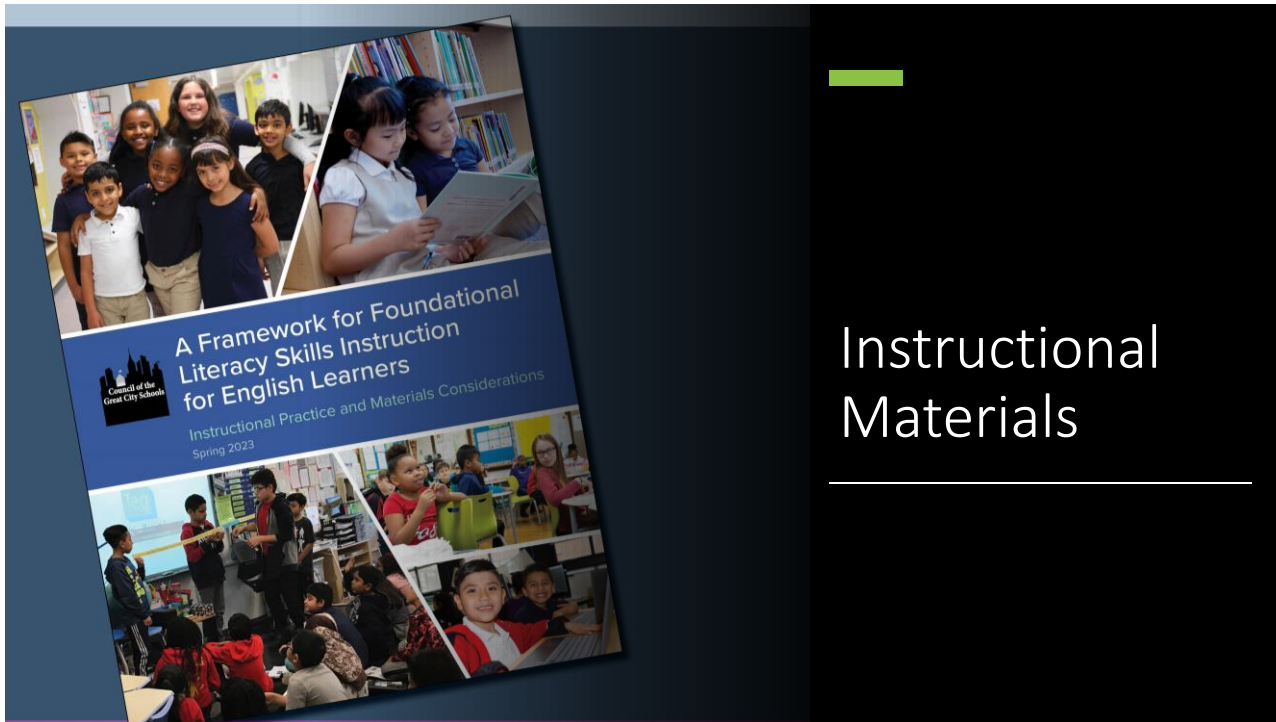


Instructional materials. The central role that teachers play is supported by quality instructional materials that facilitate engaging learning experiences. These learning experiences build grade-level content knowledge and simultaneously develop oral language and foundational skills for ELs. District-adopted materials, approved lists of texts, or guidance for the adoption of instructional materials to support foundational skills instruction should explicitly include features that address the needs of English learners.



	Current Approaches	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Professional Learning			
District Guidance			
Instructional Materials			





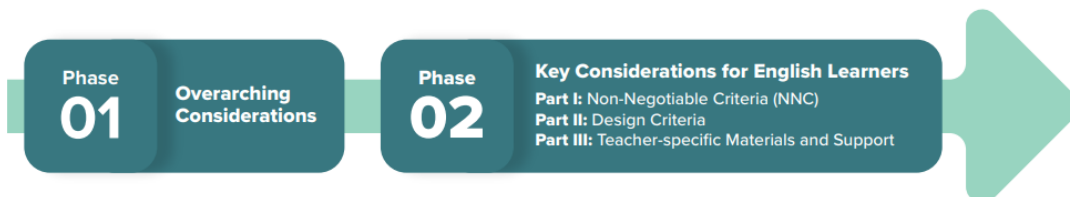
Instructional Materials

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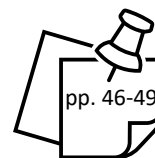
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Figure 3. Phases of the Instructional Materials Review Process



1. Define the district context.
2. Define the program features or approach for foundational literacy skills instruction (in general and specifically for ELs).
3. Define district needs.
4. Assess the underlying approach for EL instruction and the validity of proposed materials.
5. Determine alignment with the district’s approach to ELA/ELD and foundational skills instruction for ELs and student needs.
6. Decide which materials advance to Phase II.

BEFORE LOOKING AT MATERIALS








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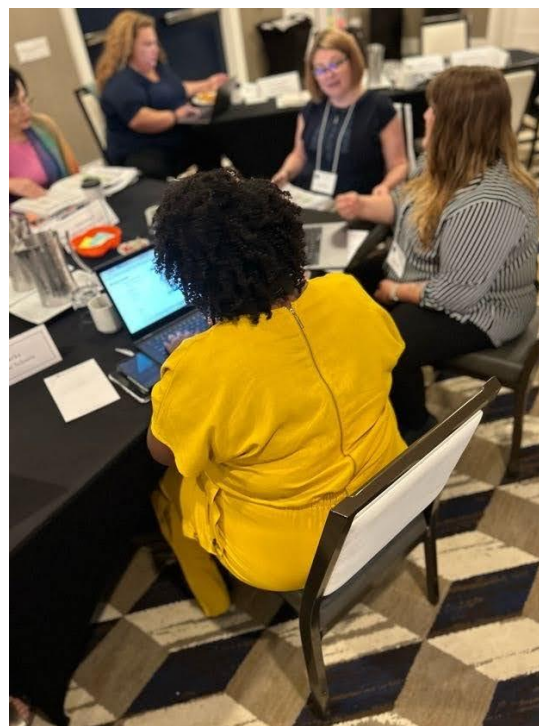
Figure 4. Phase II Review Process



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Most Prevalent Concerns/Findings

-  Lacking connection to grade-level content in broad, multi-grade materials
-  Materials for upper grades tend to assume existing knowledge of book handling, early writing, etc.
-  Many materials take isolated, skill-building approaches to target specific foundational skills (i.e., phonemic awareness)
-  Skill-building focuses on code-based skills without connection to broader language
-  High expectation/burden for teacher planning to integrate foundational skills and connect to grade-level content



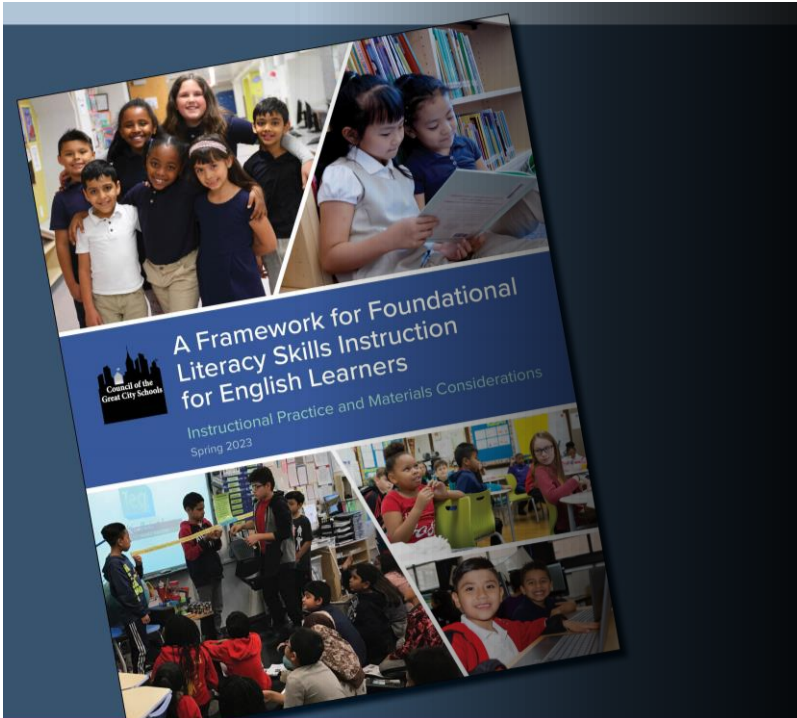
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What other challenges have you seen with foundational skills materials for ELs?

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Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

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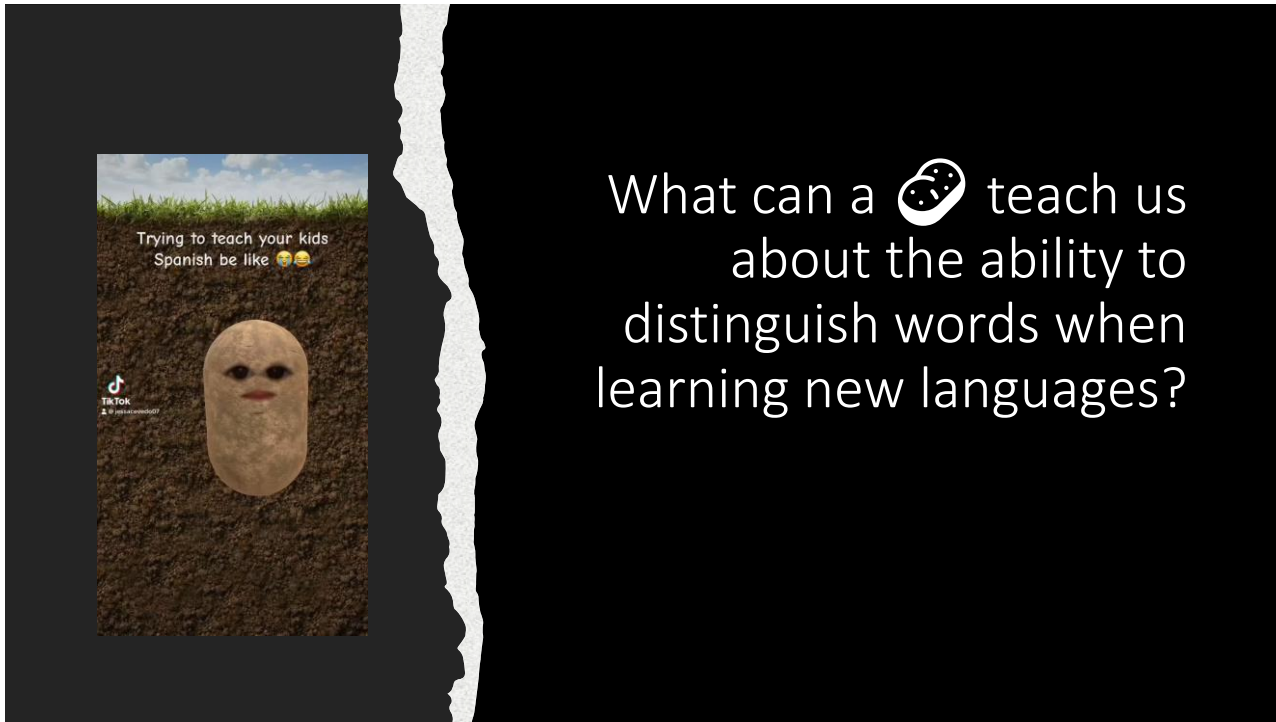
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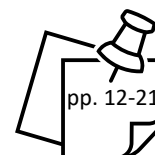
Professional Learning

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Exploring the Research



What do ELs bring to learning foundational skills (i.e., assets)?	What supports do ELs need to learn foundational skills?

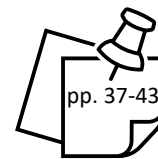



Take It a Step Further

1. How will teachers support ELs to transfer their linguistic assets to learning foundational skills in English?
2. What supports do teachers need?

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What do teachers need to know about language?



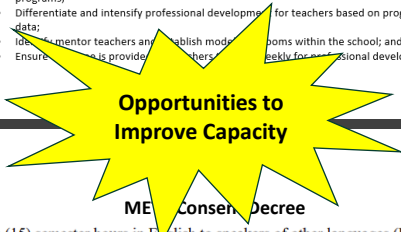
Topic	Already Know	Need to Learn	How We'll Support Teachers	Needed Resources
1. Language Development				
2. Sentences and Discourse				
3. Stress Patterns				
4. Vocabulary: Principles of Word Formation				
5. Syllabic System				
6. Phonemes and Sounds				

1. What is already in your reading plan?
2. What needs to be added?

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6) Professional Development (Rule 6A.6.053(4), F.A.C.)

- A. Describe the literacy professional development that will be provided by the district and/or schools, aligned to the requirements below:
- Provide professional development required by [s. 1012.98\(4\)\(b\)11, F.S.](#), which includes training to help teachers integrate phonemic awareness, phonics, word study and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension strategies into an explicit, systematic, and sequential approach to reading instruction, including multisensory intervention strategies;
 - Provide professional learning in B.E.S.T. ELA standards and evidence-based reading practices and programs;
 - Differentiate and intensify professional development for teachers based on progress monitoring data;
 - Identify mentor teachers and establish modeling rooms within the school; and
 - Ensure that a minimum of one hour is provided weekly for professional development.



(3) Fifteen (15) semester hours in English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) to include credit in each of the areas specified below:

- (a) Methods of teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL),
- (b) ESOL curriculum and materials development,
- (c) Cross-cultural communication and understanding,
- (d) Applied linguistics, and
- (e) Testing and evaluation of ESOL

Professional Learning



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Section E: Professional Learning				
District and school leaders establish a framework for providing, implementing and monitoring professional learning.				
Implementation Indicators	4=Fully implemented	3=Partially in place	2=Minimally in place	1=Not yet in place
1. The District Literacy Leadership Team has developed and executed a plan for professional development of the B.E.S.T. Standards for ELA that is grounded in the science of reading.				
2. The District professional development plan prioritizes Reading Endorsement professional learning for teachers required to be endorsed or certified in reading.				
3. School-based administrators are provided regular professional learning sessions on the science of reading and evidence-based literacy instruction materials and assessment.				
4. Principals provide training to help teachers integrate phonological awareness, phonics, word study and spelling, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension strategies into an explicit, systematic and sequential approach to reading instruction, including multisensory intervention strategies.				
5. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are guided by assessment data and are ongoing, engaging, interactive, collaborative, job-embedded and provide time for teachers to collaborate, research, conduct lesson studies and plan instruction.				


What is your role as an EL leader?

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District Guidance

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District guidance. Any district guidance and resources provided to teachers for developing literacy and grade-level content knowledge should also be coherently articulated or aligned to meet the needs of ELs.



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Home Language Erosion

Often times, English replaces the language of the home and family or speak English well. This language replacement leads to a disconnect between parents and children, and a lessening of the bonds between them for parents to guide their children (Fillmore, 2000; Rumbaut & Masuda, 2002). Socio-political forces shape the language politics students must navigate to develop their identity. Children are highly susceptible to the English language. They know about insiders and outsiders and belonging or not belonging to those who are unable to speak English easily or well (like their parents). The younger children are when they begin to learn English at school, provided they have opportunities to interact with teachers and peers. Instruction conducted in English. Regrettably, students exposed to other languages do not necessarily become bilingual by merely learning English in school. Unless the intentional, formal development of both languages. Unless done in meaningful ways, including recognizing parents' home language, it is likely to put those languages aside—even in the home, as they learn English.

Empowering Families to Support Home Language Development

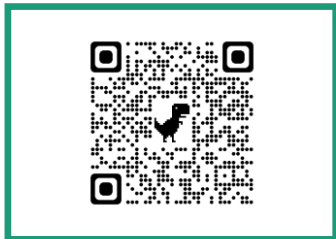
Skills in any language are beneficial to learning new languages, such as English, in school. Therefore, families should be encouraged and supported to engage with children using languages spoken in the home. Many families and educators mistakenly believe that home language reinforcement as students begin to learn English is counterproductive. Promoting home language development also helps to mitigate the home "language loss" and the associated loss of connection to the home and culture that often occurs as students learn English. This is especially important when schools only offer English language instruction. Materials that schools and educators can use to empower families to support home language development would—


- Explicitly convey to educators, families, and students the benefits of home language development alongside English development in school.
- Encourage students to communicate in their home language outside of school and deepen their knowledge of the characteristics of their home language through activities focused on meaning-making and communication.
- Convey, to the extent possible, to family members in their home language the similarities and differences between the language they know and English—and how they can use this knowledge to support their students in learning English while reinforcing the home language.
- Encourage families to find time to engage in activities of cultural importance, such as speaking, reading, oral storytelling, etc., in their home language—using increasingly complex and mature language (i.e., the language used by older members of the community) as students get older.
- Help families and educators to be aware of traumatic and emotional experiences that may arise as children attempt to fit into the school environment, straddling two cultures.


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Family Engagement (Rule 6A-6.053(11), F.A.C.)

In accordance with s. 1008.25(5)(e), F.S., parents of students identified with a substantial reading deficiency must be provided a read-at-home plan, including multisensory strategies, that the parent can use to help with reading at home.







READ-AT-HOME PLAN RESOURCES

A read-at-home plan is required to be provided to parents of any K-3 student who has been identified with a substantial deficiency in reading. The Florida Department of Education has compiled resources that each school district must include into a read-at-home plan provided to the parent of a student who is identified as having a substantial reading deficiency. A read-at-home plan includes information and resources connected to the essential components of reading: oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. These resources are available in an electronic format that is accessible online, and a hardcopy of such resources must be provided by the school upon parent request. To access these resources digitally, click on each link provided below.

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1. To what extent does your district's plan ____?



- Explicitly convey to educators, families, and students the benefits of home language development alongside English development in school.
- Encourage students to communicate in their home language outside of school and deepen their knowledge of the characteristics of their home language through activities focused on meaning-making and communication.
- Convey, to the extent possible, to family members in their home language the similarities and differences between the language they know and English—and how they can use this knowledge to support their students in learning English while reinforcing the home language.
- Encourage families to find time to engage in activities of cultural importance, such as speaking, reading, oral storytelling, etc., in their home language—using increasingly complex and mature language (i.e., the language used by older members of the community) as students get older.
- Help families and educators to be aware of traumatic and emotional experiences that may arise as children attempt to fit into the school environment, straddling two cultures.

2. How can the plan be updated to reflect the needs of ELs?

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A Framework for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction for English Learners
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Tying Loose Ends and Creating Coherence

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Ensuring Alignment to Approach for ELA/ELD



Step 5. Determine alignment with the district's approach to ELA/ELD and foundational skills instruction for ELs and student needs. Materials can more effectively support foundational skills development for ELs when they are aligned or consistent with the district's ELA/ELD and foundational literacy skills instructional approaches defined in **Steps 1 and 2 of Phase 1.**

Questions to consider include—

- Is the theory of action about second language acquisition and foundational skills development for ELs underpinning the materials aligned with the district approach?
- Are the expectations for English learners aligned with district expectations?
- Are the characteristics and needs of ELs in the school or district like those for whom the materials were designed?

Who represents ELLs on your Leadership Teams?

Section A: Literacy Leadership				
<i>District and school leaders establish an organizational culture that supports continuous improvement in student outcomes in reading.</i>				
Implementation Indicators	4=Fully implemented	3=Partially in place	2=Minimally in place	1=Not yet in place
1. A district-level Literacy Leadership Team is established and meets regularly to disaggregate data and make informed decisions on how to maximize student growth in reading.				
2. The K-12 CERP is disseminated widely, referenced frequently and actively implemented.				
3. The district provides support to parents of students identified with a substantial deficiency in reading with a read-at-home plan to support and improve family engagement at home.				
4. School-based administrators are fully trained on scientifically-based reading research and evidence-based practices.				
5. School-based administrators receive additional training and coaching necessary when indicated by student achievement data in reading/literacy.				
6. School Literacy Leadership Teams are established and meet regularly to disaggregate data and make informed decisions about how to maximize student growth in reading.				
7. Capacity is being built through identifying teachers, coaches and district personnel who can serve as trainers in the use of evidence-based curriculum, instruction and intervention aligned to the B.E.S.T. ELA Standards.				
8. Additional resources are systematically sought out at the local, state and federal levels to support literacy goals, first and foremost at the elementary level.				

What is your role as an ELL leader?

If you had an ELL Literacy Task Force, who would be there?

Stakeholder	Why are they needed?	How to involve them (or get them to listen)?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief of Academics • Literacy Director • Principals • • • • • 	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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A Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners
DECEMBER 2016

Re-envisioning English Language Arts and English Language Development for English Language Learners

Companion Documents

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Planning the Path Forward

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How will you shift to a *comprehensive and connected* approach?



	Traditional Approach	Comprehensive and Connected Approach
Home Language (Including Dialects of English)	Irrelevant or impediment	Critical asset
Grade-Level Content	Preceded by foundational skills	Anchor for foundational skills
Meaning-Making and Comprehension	Later stage of FS development	Prioritized throughout FS development
Linguistic Identity	Defined by academic English ability	Expanded by academic English ability
Language-Based Skills (Oral Language)	Subordinate to code-based skills	Developed simultaneously with code-based skills
Text Comprehension	Signaled by speed and accuracy	Signaled by proper expression

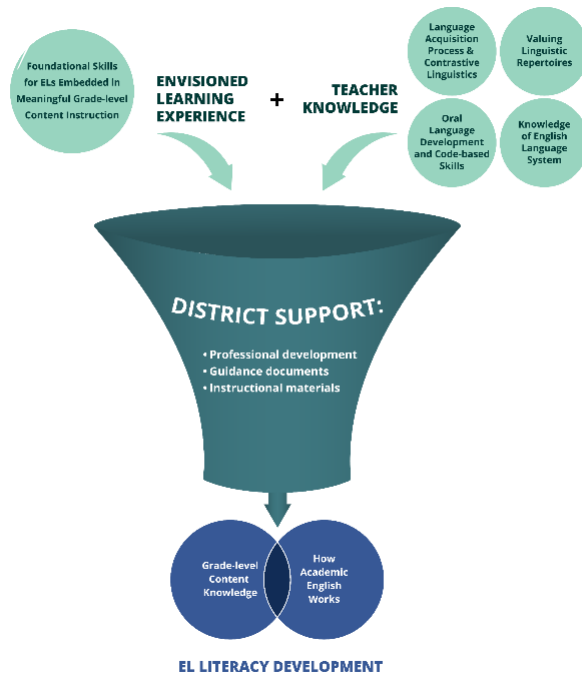
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Theory of Action

When **teachers value and leverage the linguistic repertoires** that ELs bring to school and teachers are **equipped with knowledge** about—

- (a) How the English language system works,
- (b) How ELs develop English as a new language, and
- (c) Comprehensive approaches to literacy,

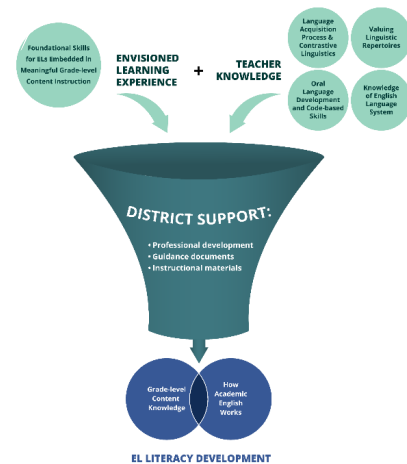
teachers can **create learning experiences** that **build content knowledge** and **foundational skills instruction** that supports student understanding for how academic English works.



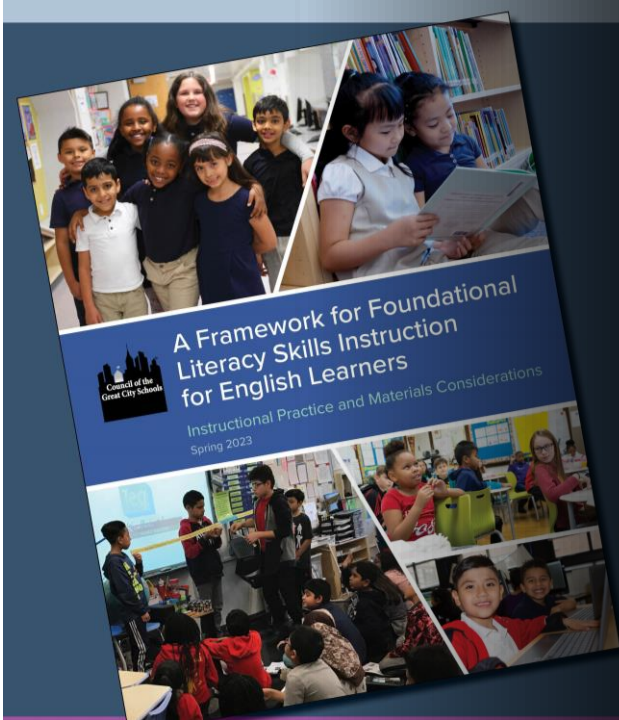
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Setting Priorities and Refining Action Steps

	Current	Desired	Action Steps
Theory of Action			
Goal for EL Literacy Development			
Envisioned Learning Experience			
Teacher Knowledge			
District Support			



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Questions