

ESOL Instructional Matrix Guidance and Best Practices

English learners (ELs) in City Schools receive English language instruction in order to support language development and academic achievement. Models of instruction can vary from school to school based on student need and school resources. This document provides guidance to accompany the recommended instructional models that support ELs.

When selecting a model or models for English language instruction, school leaders should consider the proficiency level and needs of ELs in each grade, including newcomers, students with interrupted education, long-term ELs, etc. This information also guides assignment of ESOL teachers to the grade bands (PK-5, 6-8, or 9-12). With that information in mind, refer to the Instructional Model charts to determine which model is appropriate for your students and school. Each school and student population is unique and subject to change. As such, you should consider revisiting your instructional models and the needs of the whole child on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

If your school includes more than one grade band, consider how many ESOL teachers are assigned to each of those grade bands. For example, if a PK-8 school has four ESOL teachers (3 ESOL teachers assigned to PK-5, 1 ESOL teacher assigned to 6-8), the school team would refer to both the elementary and the middle school charts (the elementary column for 3-4 teachers and the middle school column for .5 or 1 teacher).

English Learner Descriptors

English language proficiency is measured with the WIDA assessment tools: W-APT and WIDA ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs. For the purposes of instructional planning, ELs in City Schools are grouped by the following descriptors:

EL Descriptor	WIDA Score	Notes
Beginner*	1.0 – 1.7	<i>*Newcomer: English learners who have been in U.S. schools for one year or less and are at beginner proficiency levels</i>
Low-Intermediate	1.8 – 2.5	
Intermediate	2.6 – 3.7	
Advanced	3.8 – 4.4	

For more information refer to the [ESOL Toolkit](#) or [WIDA.us](#).

Suggested guidance for frequency of English Language Instruction for each of the descriptor groups in elementary grades (PK-5), is outlined below:

Student Group	Proficiency Level	Suggested Frequency of Scheduled English Language Instruction*
Beginner and Newcomer EL	1.0 – 1.7	4-5 days/week
Low Intermediate EL	1.8 – 2.5	3-5 days/week
Intermediate EL	2.6 – 3.7	2-4 days/week
Advanced EL	3.8 – 4.4	1-3 days/week

**Duration will vary by student need and school schedule*

Instructional Models

The models suggested for English language instruction are designed to meet the diverse needs of ELs at a range of proficiency levels and in a variety of school settings. School teams should work collaboratively to determine the most appropriate model or models, and make decisions based on data about their specific EL student groups.

Model	Description
<p>Integrated Instruction*</p>	<p>The Integrated Instruction model occurs when ELs receive targeted language instruction for their proficiency level through a continuum of collaboration between general education/content and ESOL teachers. Examples range from teachers equally sharing instructional responsibilities by co-teaching a class/lesson, to ESOL teachers providing structured language support in the general education class, to providing small group instruction to groups of ELs either inside or outside of the general education/content classroom.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Co-teaching Science Grade 3 (all year) by General Educator and ESOL Teacher b. ESOL teacher pushes-in to Grade 1 literacy block during small group instruction, leading small group of ELs and providing language instruction aligned to grade-level objectives c. Middle school ESOL pull-out group during literacy instruction to provide targeted language support in writing tasks that are aligned to grade-level objectives, text type, and purpose. d. Newcomer ESOL pull-out group for grades 4-5 during fourth grade literacy and 5th grade social studies.
<p>Sheltered Content Instruction</p>	<p>Sheltered Content Instruction is stand-alone content instruction for ELs that is taught by a dual-certified teacher (ESOL and other content). Sheltered content instruction occurs more frequently in secondary schools (6-12).</p> <p><i>Example: Scheduled content class for English learners (ESOL English I, U.S. History, Algebra I, etc.)</i></p>
<p>ESOL Instruction (ESOL Class)*</p>	<p>ESOL class is scheduled, stand-alone English language instruction for ELs taught by an ESOL-certified teacher. ESOL classes are predominantly for secondary grades.</p> <p><i>Example: Scheduled ESOL class (ESOL I, ESOL II, Language of Science, etc.)</i></p>
<p>Dual Language and Two-Way Immersion</p>	<p>This model includes both native English-speaking students and native speakers of a foreign language. Goals include developing academic achievement, bilingualism, and cross-cultural competencies for all students.</p> <p>Note: <i>Dual language programming requires specific and unique resources not available in all schools.</i></p>

* **Newcomer** programming allows ESOL teachers to work with ELs who are new to the country and at beginning proficiency levels. Instruction is typically implemented as a pull-out group or scheduled class for students and focuses on developing academic language skills in a compressed window of time.

Distribution of Students

Decisions about assigning ELs to homerooms or scheduled classes should be intentional, deliberate, and purposeful. Ensure that office personnel, including school secretaries and registrars, are aware of the school's enrollment plan when welcoming and registering new ELs. Examples of strategic groups include:

Cluster Group

ELs may be grouped in one or more classes based on WIDA English language proficiency level and academic data. Cluster grouping maximizes opportunities for collaborative teaching practices among ESOL teachers and other content teachers.

- Grouping of students with other ELs should not impede their access to resources or activities available to all students.
- School and district-based ESOL staff are available to support schools with grouping decisions.

Proficiency Level Group

ELs are grouped by proficiency level for pull-out ESOL integrated instruction or scheduled ESOL class.

- Newcomer
- Beginner
- Low-Intermediate
- Intermediate*
- Advanced*

**Intermediate students (2.6 and above) should be included in integrated instruction or sheltered content (as appropriate for grade level) to the greatest extent possible.*

Collaboration

An essential component of highly effective English language instruction is ongoing collaboration within ESOL teams, and between ESOL and other content teachers. Considerations for effective collaborative planning include:

- Collaboration requires agreed-upon schedules and structures that support collaborative meetings and communication about student needs and teacher expectations.
- Collaborative teams should regularly communicate progress toward shared goals with administrators through emails, document sharing, data meetings, and/or team meetings.
- ESOL team meetings are required for schools with more than one ESOL teacher. Frequency of ESOL meetings are determined according to school need (weekly, twice/month, monthly).
- ESOL and other content teachers work together at grade-level/other content team meetings to plan lessons and analyze formative and summative assessments. Teacher teams should monitor student progress together and adjust instruction as necessary.

Support

Appropriate support to schools is necessary to ensure effective English language instruction for ELs. Available support structures vary depend on the size of the school's ESOL program.

Supports for schools with ELs include the district ESOL Office, ESOL Educational Associates, ESOL Reps, and ESOL Bilingual Staff (where available). Direct support for schools typically begins with ESOL Educational Associates and ESOL Reps.

ESOL Educational Associates

- Provide direct support and school-based professional development to schools with ESOL teams of fewer than 3 ESOL teachers
- Provide indirect support to schools with ESOL teams of 3 or more ESOL teachers through collaboration with the ESOL Rep
- Support school-based professional development to schools with ESOL teams of 3 or more ESOL teachers

ESOL Reps

- School designees who function as the ESOL team lead in schools with 3 or more ESOL teachers
- Attend scheduled ESOL Rep meetings (approximately once a month)
- Responsible for disseminating all information from ESOL Rep meetings to their schools, as appropriate
- Collaborate with assigned ESOL Educational Associate to provide school-based professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- If in an instructional role, schedule should reflect time to complete these responsibilities
- Role is primarily communicating and supporting ESOL instruction and initiatives