

# Best Practices for English as a Second Language

1. Provide English Language Learners with customized learning environments and opportunities. Ensure English Language Learners have specialized programs to address their language acquisition needs and provide language support to access grade-level curriculum.
2. Provide a supportive school-wide climate and strong school leadership. Provide a school climate that is supportive of the needs of English Language Learners for their academic success. Ensure strong school leadership that is supportive of the needs of English Language Learners.
3. Provide high-quality staff development that encourages collaboration and excellence. Provide time for staff to routinely reflect and collaborate on instructional practices and student progress within the school and/or district. Provide informative, integrated, consistent, and on-going professional development to enhance knowledge of content and pedagogy, particularly in theories of second language acquisition and instructional strategies to foster language learning.
4. Provide a balanced, research-based curriculum. A curriculum for ELLs needs to be high quality and research-based. It must offer opportunities to learn and practice all levels of language and ensure mastery of the main aspects of the English language such as conversational fluency, academic language proficiency, literacy, and grammar. It must address cultural contexts and English language proficiency within the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
5. Establish school/family/community partnerships to support the English language development of English Language Learners both at home and at school.
6. Utilize native languages and cultural contexts to enhance language and content learning. Provide opportunities for English Language Learners to use their native language to further their access to content and develop their skills. Instruct students in their native language and provide multiple opportunities for students to engage within various cultural contexts.
7. Provide sheltered classroom instruction using strategies that enhance understanding in the classroom. English language learners must participate as productive members of each content subject in every classroom.
8. Ensure that English Language Learners are placed with the most qualified staff and ensure ELLs are placed in a classroom with a trained sheltered instruction teacher.
9. Provide explicit skills instruction and direct instruction in language and learning strategies to aid in English language development.
10. Provide opportunities for student directed activities and practice. Ensure that explicit skills instruction is supplemented with opportunities to practice language in student-led activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry.
11. Assess students regularly and systematically and use a variety of formative and summative assessments to regularly and systematically assess students to inform instruction, provide additional assistance to students, and adjust program models.