TOOLKIT

Connecting ESL Best Practices and Limited English Proficient Students
As West Virginians endeavor to meet the demands of the 21st century, our school systems must ensure that linguistically and culturally diverse students are prepared to live and succeed in a global economy. As state superintendent of schools, I am pleased to recommend this Toolkit for implementing high quality English as a Second Language Learner (ESL) programs as a critical resource for assisting administrators and teachers in this process.

The best practices that are highlighted in the Toolkit were gleaned from national, state and local resources. These guidelines clarify how to determine students’ service levels, measure student progress and support student success. They also provide guidelines for structuring the ESL program. The education of English Language Learners, as required by both federal and state policy, must address both the linguistic and academic achievement of students. This resource outlines the crucial role that English as a Second Language programs play in assisting student to attain the English proficiency that is essential for mastering academic content standards.

West Virginia’s opportunity for continued success is directly linked to the educational development of its children. Therefore, as we continue to strive to enhance the education of all students in West Virginia and to press forward toward a thriving economic future, we appreciate your ongoing efforts on behalf of English Language Learners. Together, we can meet the challenges of the 21st century!

Dr. Steven L. Paine
State Superintendent of Schools
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West Virginia’s schools are becoming increasingly diverse. School systems that have historically provided English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are facing growing numbers of LEP students. Similarly, districts that have never enrolled LEP students are increasingly experiencing the challenges of providing ESL services to low-incidence populations. Both of these scenarios present unique questions about the structure and function of an ESL Program. The *Toolkit for Connecting Best Practices and ESL Programs* provides a framework to address these issues. This Toolkit complements the existing resources for classroom teachers (see Toolkits for Connecting Elementary and Secondary Best Practices with LEP students); however, it is primarily designed to set clear, best-practice guidelines for ESL programs. **Some questions addressed in this Toolkit include:**

- How should the ESL program be structured?
- How should the appropriate ESL Service levels and amounts be determined?
- How should the ESL curriculum be established?
- How should we Measure Student Progress?
- How should we support student success?
What Approach Should Be Used To Teach LEP Students In The ESL Classroom?

Content-based English as a Second Language is an approach which uses instructional materials, learning tasks, and techniques from academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, and cognitive skills. This increases English Language Learners’ (ELLs) understanding of subject matter while at the same time increases their proficiency level in English. In this approach, content objectives and language proficiency standards are taught simultaneously (for more information see pp. 2 and 20 of the Secondary Toolkit at http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/WVConnectionTookKitPDF1.pdf).

“My curriculum revolves around the facts that ELLs need reinforcement of language and more concrete ways of learning and that they are weak in academic language. I take what the reading series says is supposed to be taught and teach it using various games and different ways to present the materials.” ESL teacher
Structuring the ESL Program

**How Is Academic Support Balanced With Language Instruction In ESL Instruction?**

Classroom and ESL teachers should collaboratively develop and follow LEP plans that specify goals for:

- direct language instruction and
- academic support

These goals should be adjusted as the students’ English language proficiency develops. Initially, the majority of ESL instruction provided to students with very limited English should focus on “direct language” instruction, such as basic literacy instruction and “survival” English. In these instances, separate ESL-specific texts and instructional materials may be useful. However, as soon as students’ English proficiency moves beyond the very basic level, instruction should also incorporate authentic content material such as content textbook readings and assignments (Reading/English Language Arts, Social Studies, etc.). These materials can serve as a springboard from which ESL teachers can teach reading/writing and study skills while simultaneously reinforcing students’ content knowledge of key concepts and vocabulary.

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<tr>
<th>Percent of Classroom Time</th>
<th>Academic Content Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
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<td>Level 2</td>
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<td>Level 3</td>
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<td>Level 4</td>
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<td>Level 5</td>
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</table>

As students’ English proficiency level increases, the amount of time teaching direct language should decrease, with more time supporting language learning through content.
Structuring the ESL Program

What English Language Proficiency Standards Should Be Used And Where Can They Be Found?

Many West Virginia ELL students receive the majority of their instruction in the regular classroom setting. Classroom and ESL teachers share responsibility for supporting ELLs as they teach both the English language proficiency standards and challenging academic content standards (math, science, social studies, and other subjects).

West Virginia English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards address the learning needs of a wide range of LEP students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade who come from diverse cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds and are at different stages of English language acquisition. The standards take into account the critical role of language learning in providing access to content instruction in English. The full set of standards can be viewed at [http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/elpstandards.html](http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/elpstandards.html).

How Can ESL Teachers Determine Which Academic Content To Support?

ESL teachers need to be knowledgeable of individual student progress in all ELP Standards and to receive feedback from content area teachers in order to target content instruction accordingly. Based on their understanding of student progress on ELP standards, ESL teachers can modify content material so that it is more comprehensible (for example, identifying key concepts, summarizing long passages, etc.), thereby, increasing student understanding and academic success. ESL teachers should collaboratively discuss with classroom teachers when modifying material for ESL students. An additional outcome of this collaboration will be the increased understanding of the content teacher in how best to adapt his/her own content material to make it more accessible for ELL students.

“My level one 9th grade students were reading *To Kill a Mocking Bird* in their English 9 class. To support them with this difficult novel, we watched and discussed the video and created a time line of story events in ESL class. The students enjoyed the book and were successful in their English 9 class assignments. The story was made comprehensible for the students through media, graphic organizers and small group discussions.”

ESL teacher
What is the difference between ESL teachers providing academic support and simple “tutoring”? 

Simple tutoring usually consists of helping a student complete a specific assignment. Providing academic support to an English Language Learner involves:

• teaching academic skills;
• building background knowledge;
• pre-teaching vocabulary;
• drawing on prior experience;
• decoding questions;
• providing examples of completed work; and
• modifying assignments so that they will be relevant and meaningful to the student.

ESL teachers should not simply “tutor” a student to help him complete an assignment in order to meet class requirements or receive a grade. ESL teachers should consistently help build the student’s academic background, skills and language necessary for the ELL to be successful in a rigorous class. The most effective way to deliver content-based instruction is to teach language via the classroom content. Students at Levels 3 and 4 will need instruction that relies heavily on the academic content of the classroom. The balance between language and content instruction gradually shifts as the student moves through the various proficiency levels, and instruction should be adjusted accordingly (see p. 15 for a definition of content-based instruction).
How Does A Content-Based ESL Program Differ In Districts With Low Numbers Of Ells Verses Districts With High Numbers?

When compared nationally, West Virginia’s total LEP population is considered low-incidence. However, within the state, there are both districts with high-incidence and districts with low-incidence LEP populations. Both of these circumstances have their unique advantages and challenges.

Districts that enroll small numbers of LEP students, “low-incidence” districts, face distinct challenges in implementing the law and working effectively with what is often a new student or group of students in the district. The district has the same legal obligation to provide ESL services as “high-incidence” districts; but, implementation on a smaller scale will look different than large-scale implementation. However, a “low-incidence” district may be able to provide more ESL services and have fewer conflicts scheduling services than a “high-incidence” district.

Conversely, districts that enroll large numbers of LEP students, “high-incidence” districts, have their own advantages and disadvantages. The district may already have staff of one or more trained ESL teachers and have procedures in place for serving LEP students, but as student numbers increase other challenges may arise. The following chart shows some of the issues unique to both types of school districts.
## Structuring the ESL Program

### LOW-INCIDENCE POPULATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Administrators more aware of individual LEPs and their needs</td>
<td>• Capacity within district may not be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scheduling ESL services may be easier</td>
<td>• Teachers/counselors/administrators with expertise in ESL may need to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ESL teacher may be able to provide more service</td>
<td>• District may not have and ESL teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can tailor services to meet individual needs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Easier to know families of LEPs</td>
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### Possible Solutions

- Districts meet regularly to share expertise and solve problems
- Provide more professional development for teachers
- “Share” an ESL teacher with a neighboring county
- Contract with a part-time ESL teacher
- Provide a stipend to teachers obtaining an ESL endorsement
- Allow teachers to job-shadow teachers experienced with LEP students
- Encourage teachers to take e-learning courses related to ESL

### HIGH-INCIDENCE POPULATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• District has capacity for teaching LEP students</td>
<td>• May have several ELP levels in one grade level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Procedures and practices already in place</td>
<td>• May need to train more classroom teachers to shelter instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Option of serving students by grade level using grade level material</td>
<td>• Individual students may not be well-known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Option of having ESL class period every day in elementary and middle</td>
<td>• Students may rely on native language with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Option of having ESL class for credit in high schools</td>
<td>• Scheduling ESL service is complicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Newcomers can get intensive help</td>
<td>• Large numbers of LEP students may overwhelm the district or individual schools at first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May be difficult to individualize ESL services in a large ESL class</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Possible Solutions

- Service students by proficiency level
- Provide newcomers with intensive help
- Level 1 and 2 students receive ample English instruction
- Level 3 and 4 students receive more specialized help with content
What types of indicators should be considered when determining the Level of ESL Service?

West Virginia school districts use initial language screening results for newly enrolled students or the WESTELL score for current students to assign an **English Proficiency Level**. This proficiency level is useful for assessment and accountability purposes. However, school districts have control and flexibility in determining the level of service ELLs receive. There are external factors such as the size of ESL staff, location of schools, etc. that will need to be taken into consideration when setting the district-wide service guidelines. There are also student-specific factors that should be considered. The determination of the amount of ESL services (Level of ESL Service) should be based on multiple measures.

**Example:** A new ELL transfers in from a neighboring state. The student scores a Level 4 when being screened. The student’s **English Proficiency Level is recorded as a Level 4**. Next, the LEP committee convenes to determine the amount of ESL services. The committee decides that due to the student’s sporadic attendance, low academic grades, and weak writing skills (as demonstrated on a writing sample), the student should be assigned to an **ESL Service Level 2**.
## Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

### Student-Specific Factors To Consider When Determining The Level Of ESL Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Proficiency</td>
<td>Student proficiency in all language domains (listening, speaking, reading, writing) should be considered. If a student has proficient listening and speaking skills, but lower levels of literacy skills such as reading and writing, the student will require more ESL services than a student who has competency in all language areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language skills</td>
<td>Two students score a Level 3 on the initial language placement exam. One student has advanced reading and writing skills in his/her native language, the other student has minimal proficiency in his/her native language. The student who has higher native language ability may require less ESL services than the student who has minimal native language skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic performance</td>
<td>Students who are performing satisfactorily in content course work but have been identified as having limited English proficiency are still entitled to receive ESL services. By enabling students to achieve language proficiency, the student has greater opportunity to move above mastery. In rare cases, a student's progress might indicate they should receive less service than they actually qualify for. Using multiple measures, it is the LEP committee's responsibility to determine the best amount of ESL services for each student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age/Grade Level</td>
<td>Older students may need more ESL services than younger students. Secondary students have less time to achieve English proficiency, and their content classes are more complex and demanding. Conversely, initial screening results may show an artificially high level of proficiency for early grades (kindergarten, 1st grade and sometimes 2nd grade) when in reality the student may be unable to comprehend written directions and have difficulty understanding assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of formal education</td>
<td>The amount of time a student has attended school (either in the home country or US schools) will affect his/her achievement level. If a student has never been enrolled in school or has limited formal schooling, the student may need time to adjust to the formal school setting. This student may require more ESL services than a student who has been continually enrolled in a formal school setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transient history</td>
<td>If a student's records indicate a high degree of transience or enrollment in several schools in a short amount of time, the amount of ESL services may need to be increased.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher recommendations</td>
<td>The LEP committee should take into account teacher recommendations that often accompany school records. (i.e., A new student's records indicate the student received 3 hours of ESL instruction per week, the student struggles with decoding and reading comprehension, and a note from the ESL teacher recommends that the student continue to receive at least 3 hours of ESL services per week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual factors such as an IEP, 504 plan, etc.</td>
<td>Consult with IEP Coordinator. Avoid redundancy in services that negatively impact students. If a student is receiving collaborative support in content classes per his/her IEP and is performing well, then additional “pull-out” for ESL services may have unintended negative consequences. The ESL teacher would continue monitoring the student and consult with the student’s teachers.</td>
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Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

What Is “Best Practice” Regarding Appropriate Minimum Service Levels?

Due to variances in “high-incidence” and “low-incidence” best practice, research does not articulate specific amounts of time required for ESL services for each service level. Even though there are no formal state regulations regarding how much service ESL students should receive at each level, each district should set general guidelines to ensure equity services among all students, regardless of:

- location of the schools;
- number of ESL teachers; or
- number of new students arriving.

Therefore, ESL service levels should be determined by each district. By adhering to service levels, districts will be able to recognize when more ESL staff is needed. When too much variance between the students’ proficiency levels and their service levels arises, additional staff should be added.

LEP students with negligible and very limited English proficiency will require much more English language instruction than students at higher proficiency levels. Providing as much language instruction as possible at the lower proficiency levels will “jump-start” students’ language acquisition and thereby provide students with a solid foundation.

Other Factors to Consider:

- Districts are encouraged to provide as much ESL service as possible. However, ESL service must be balanced with appropriate exposure to the regular classroom’s culture and language. There are clear limits as to how quickly students can learn English, regardless of how much intensive ESL services are provided.
- Removing Level 1 and 2 students from the regular classroom for most or all of the entire school day may overwhelm students and rob them of the opportunity to develop listening skills, adjust to a normal school routine and develop social relationships with their English-speaking peers.
Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

**English Language Service Level 1 (Negligible)**

Students at Level 1 (Negligible) need the most English language support due to their inability to access the curriculum. This is particularly important because sheltering content instruction, provided by the classroom teacher, may not be as meaningful for students who have yet to attain basic communication skills (for an explanation of Sheltered Instruction, see p. 24 of the Secondary Toolkit: [http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/WVConnection TookKitPDF1.pdf](http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/WVConnection TookKitPDF1.pdf)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines for ESL Instruction</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How Much?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>How Often?</strong></td>
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Districts with high-incidence LEP student population may provide a fully scheduled ESL class, while districts with low-incidence LEP student population may provide individual or small group instruction.

**English Language Service Level 2 (Very Limited)**

LEP students at Level 2 (Very Limited) will benefit from regular English language development instruction as outlined below.

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<td><strong>How Often?</strong></td>
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Districts with high-incidence LEP student population may provide an ESL class for elementary and middle school students and an ESL class for credit at the high school level. Districts with low-incidence LEP student population may provide individual or small group instruction.

Research shows that it may take up to two years for students to become skilled in listening and speaking English and up to five to seven years to become skilled in reading and writing English.
Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

**English Language Service Level 3 (Limited)**
LEP students at Level 3 (Limited Level) have not yet developed academic proficiency in English and often have different levels of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Level 3 students also require ESL instruction as outlined below.

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<td><strong>How Much:</strong></td>
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Districts with high-incidence LEP student population may provide an ESL class for elementary and middle school students and an ESL class for credit at the high school level. Districts with low-incidence LEP student population may provide individual or small group instruction.

**English Language Service Level 4 (Intermediate)**
Upper elementary, middle and high school content standards present a significant challenge for LEP students, even those at Level 4 (Intermediate Level). Level 4 is a broad category; therefore, students just entering Level 4 may still need English language instruction.

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<tr>
<td><strong>How Much:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>How Often:</strong></td>
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Assign students at the middle or upper Intermediate level (4) to a teacher who has had professional development related to teaching LEP students. This will enhance continued growth in English language proficiency and content learning.
- Districts with high-incidence LEP student population may provide an ESL class for credit at the high school level.
- Monitor the student’s progress by conferring with the teacher and checking the student’s grades at regular intervals. (Minimum of once every nine-weeks)

**English Language Service Level 5 (Fluent)**
Monitor the student’s progress by conferring with the classroom teachers and checking the student’s grades at regular intervals until the student meets the criteria for exit from the ESL program (see http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/guidance.html for Exit Criteria).
Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

What Types Of Service Models Are Available To Implement Content-Based ESL?

Based on the student’s ESL Service Level, one or more of the following should be provided:

- Individual/small group pull-out instruction with an ESL teacher
- ESL instruction in a separate ESL class
- ESL inclusion support (co-teaching/collaborative teaching with the ESL teacher) within a regular class
- Full mainstream participation with ESL monitoring

What Type Of Facilities Are Needed For Servicing ESL Students?

At many schools finding an appropriate location for the itinerant ESL teacher to provide ESL services is a challenge. However, the building principal should ensure that the quantity and quality of ESL services are not diminished due to inappropriate space. Important factors to consider when identifying ESL teaching spaces are:

- Consistency - the same place at the same time on a regular basis
- Noise - the space should be quiet and private
- Facilities - adequate lighting, heating, cooling, and seating
- Teaching Materials - available chalkboard/whiteboard; storage space

Some options may include:

- Other specialists’ classroom (Gifted, Title I, Speech/Hearing specialist)
- A separate room off the library
- The computer lab that has been blocked out for ESL classes
- A portable

Unacceptable teaching spaces:

- Teacher conference room
- School stage
- Hallway alcove
- School cafeteria
Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

What Factors Should Be Considered When Setting The District ESL Schedule?

When setting the schedule for ESL services, communication with all stakeholders is a key element. Through clear communication, the groundwork can be laid for a working relationship that will benefit the student and make it easier for everyone involved to work together on the student’s behalf.

Consider:
• the location of the school;
• the number of ESL students at school (“high-incidence” versus “low-incidence”); and
• the method of instruction (pull-out by grade level, pull-out small group, pull-out individual student).

One of the best ways to ensure a productive relationship with the classroom teacher is to meet with her and collaboratively identify the best time for ESL services. Some of the factors to consider are:

✓ student’s specials (P.E., Art, Music, etc.)
✓ availability of a place to work with the student

Once the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher have decided on the best time for ESL service, notify the principal of the days and times for ESL services, leave contact information with him/her and ensure that the ESL teacher has appropriate security access to the school.
Determining Students Service Levels and Appropriate ESL Services

**Scenario**

**Demographics:**
There are ten LEP students in this school district that enrolls nearly 1400 students. There are three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Many languages are spoken, with Arabic and Spanish being the most prevalent.

**Program Design:**
- **Elementary:** The district has selected one of the elementary schools as the site for its ESL program. As part of implementing this program, it is in the process of training one classroom teacher to provide ESL instruction by assisting the teacher to complete her endorsement in ESL.

- **Middle School:** At the middle school level, the district has identified one team at each grade level - sixth, seventh, and eighth. These teachers have received professional development in ESL by completing the 7-week e-Course on ESL, and the district is planning for more intense professional development in the upcoming school year.

- **High School:** At the high school level, the district has identified two teachers in mathematics, science, and social studies for training to provide sheltered content instruction. They have received some ESL training and are working to increase their skills in sheltering content instruction.

**ESL Instruction:**
English language development instruction is provided to each of the ten LEP students by a teacher who spends two hours at the elementary school providing small group instruction to three LEP students; one hour at the middle school, providing one class period of ESL to three LEP students; and two hours at the high school, providing one class period of ESL to four LEP students.

**Program Evaluation and Next Steps:**
After examining the test results for these students, the district determined that the ESL instruction was not adequate. They have concluded that their current approach to ESL instruction is not leading to enough significant progress by most LEP students in learning English. Additionally, the district determined that there are too many different proficiency levels within one class, and the amount of ESL instruction for beginner and early intermediate students was not sufficient. They are working to build capacity at each school and revise the service plan.
Establishing the Curriculum

The curriculum for ESL instruction should be based on ELP standards and appropriate grade level content standards. Before individual ESL lesson plans can be developed, the LEP committee should convene, either formally or informally, to allow for classroom observation and collaboration among colleagues.

**What Process Should Be Used To Develop Individual Lessons?**

1. **Examine the Content Material through the Lens of the Student’s English Language Proficiency Level**
   - Identify specific problems the ELLS may have with the materials (i.e., reading level, skills needed to complete assignments listed in the materials, questions in the materials, etc.).

2. **Identify Content Objectives and ELP Standards**
   - Examine the CSOs for the subject and grade level.
   - Examine the ELP Standards for the student’s language level.
   - Ensure students are aware of the objectives of the lesson.

3. **Identify Appropriate Content Theme**
   - This helps coordinate lessons with the content teachers (i.e. an environmental theme such as “Ecosystems” might be the focus of ESL and Science lessons).

4. **Look for Appropriate Materials**
   - This may include alternative versions of the text or adapted materials at the student’s language level.

Establishing the Curriculum

**What Types Of Materials Can Be Used?**

- Classroom texts and Teacher Guides for the appropriate grade levels
- ESL Supplemental Materials that are available to complement the adopted texts
  
  Example: Some K-5 reading series have an ELL component that includes posters and leveled readers. Many secondary texts come with Spanish CDs and workbooks. Some textbooks have been translated into Spanish and can be purchased.

- Picture Dictionaries for the Content Areas

- Please see [http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/lessonplans.html](http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/lessonplans.html) for sample lesson plans.

**How Should The Four Language Skills Be Incorporated?**

ESL teachers should introduce the topic through listening and speaking activities first, and then use a balanced approach with incorporating reading and writing activities as the student’s English Language Proficiency level allows. Thinking skill activities can also be incorporated through teacher-student questioning, problem solving or decision-making activities. For example:

- **Introduction** of the lesson lends itself to predicting, categorizing and inferring.
- **Presentation** of the lesson can incorporate observing, reporting and classifying (which can be done pictorially, orally or in writing).
- **Conclusion** of the lesson may use the thinking skills sequencing, justifying and summarizing.
- **Throughout** the lesson the teacher should model target language objectives, design authentic learning experiences, teach learning strategies, and use performance assessments (see Measuring Student Progress below).

“I teach ESL in a middle school setting with forty-eight English language learners. The students are divided into leveled groups according to the results of their English language proficiency test. The leveled groups are of mixed grades. I directly teach a group of level ones, a group of level twos, and a group of level threes. Level fours are monitored, and level fives are exited. I have the privilege of working with specific grade-level teams of teachers with whom my ELLs are assigned. This makes it easier to communicate, plan, and monitor the needs of my students. Within my own classroom, I am responsible for teaching the subject of English, which in my case, is English as a Second Language. To create my curriculum, I use the West Virginia English Language Proficiency Standards and the West Virginia Reading Language Arts Content Standards and Objectives. The focus of my instruction combines the responsibility of a regular English teacher and the creativity of a foreign language teacher. English language learners need to acquire English in all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as indicated on the WESTELL, and achieve mastery on the WESTEST Writing Assessment, as well as the WESTEST Content Assessment.”

ESL Teacher
Measuring Student Progress

How Does The ESL Teacher Measure Student Progress?

ESL teachers should assess students’ language development in order to make informed instructional decisions (discover areas of mastery and identify areas that need re-teaching), to communicate with the student, and most importantly, to motivate the student.

ESL Teacher Grading ESL Students

Students should know in advance how achievement will be measured. The ESL teacher should explain to students when and how their work will be graded. Students should be shown examples of work with explanations of the criteria for specific letter grades.

- Provide students with clear and descriptive criteria (see section on rubrics).
- Involve students in developing evaluation criteria and teach them how to evaluate their own work.
- Use a variety of assessments in order to yield the most accurate measurement of student progress.

If a classroom teacher asks an ESL teacher to provide input on a content-area grade, the teacher may be referred to the Guidelines for Grading in the Secondary Toolkit http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/WV_ConnectionToolKitPDF1.pdf (p. 12).

Types of Assessment ESL Teachers May Use

Formative Assessment - occurs during instruction to provide feedback to teachers and students. The results of formative assessment are used to adjust instruction. Are the students grasping the content standards being taught? Should the teacher move on or re-teach? Are the students able to apply the concepts taught? If not, why? Does the content need to be presented in a different format?

Summative Assessment - occurs at the end of an instructional unit to document student learning. This could be in the form of a performance-based assessment: a quiz, Jeopardy game, Learning Log or Journal entry, unit test, etc.

- Learning Logs and Journals (a written record that summarizes students’ learning in their own words)
- Students write a one-sentence summary of what they learned at the end of the class period.

Performance-based Assessment (requires students to do something with their knowledge) i.e., projects, exhibitions, investigations, debates, role plays, portfolios (paper and electronic)
An example of a social studies performance-based assessment would be an exhibit of students’ family histories and roots as a project to accompany a unit on immigration.

- Portfolios (a purposeful and systematic collection of student work to reflect growth and the achievement of curriculum objectives met over time)
- Students select items to be included in a folder, binder, box, or on video or audiotape. The students make a table of contents, explain why each item is included, and set personal goals for learning as well as assess those goals.

In a math class a portfolio might include a written essay on how the student uses math in real life, an article they read that used statistics, the hardest problem they solved during that marking period, etc.

**Can Course Credit Be Given For ESL Courses?**

Ninth through 12th grade students may receive high school credit (Carnegie Units) for an ESL class that meets the required number of minutes (60 hours per semester). All credit classes must adhere to WV course guidelines (minimal number of minutes, number of assignments every marking period, a semester exam, a final exam, etc.) and must address the English Language Proficiency Standards (http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/elpstandards.html). Auditing classes should be avoided, if at all possible. ESL students may earn elective credit for ESL courses.

“As a high school ESL teacher working with students of various language levels and many different subjects, I have always tried to approach the students’ needs in a multitude of ways, trying to play to their various strengths. My classrooms are a combination of English, history, art, and literature, and methods of instruction include minimum lecture, classroom discussions, group work, partner work, games, and art projects. There are ways for the student to express himself verbally as well as non-verbally. This helps those students whose language abilities may not be as high as the rest of the class’s to participate and to be engaged.” ESL Teacher

**What Is Response To Intervention (RTI) And How Will It Affect ESL Students?**

Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI) refers to a process based on using scientific research-based instructional strategies that are matched to individual student needs. Teachers use assessment data to monitor students’ progress and make important decisions about what and how to teach children who are not making sufficient progress. For clarification regarding English Language Learners and RTI, please see http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/RTIMemoReELLS081308.pdf.
Supporting Student Success

In addition to the instructional component of serving LEP students, ESL teachers play a critical role in partnering with administrators, counselors, and classroom teachers. LEP students receive the best services from a school that use a team approach.

**How Can The ESL Teacher Facilitate A Team Approach?**

**Collaborating with the Classroom Teacher**
The ESL teacher needs to partner with the classroom teacher to maximize learning and achievement of LEP students. There are many varied opportunities for collaboration.

**Some Best Practices are:**
- Have a conference with the classroom teacher and provide a copy of the county’s ESL Handbook (if available), Toolkit and ESL teacher contact information
- Collaboratively develop the student’s Modifications Form (or provide a copy)
- Decide if/how the ESL teacher will assist with grading
- Outline the ESL teacher’s role and classroom teacher’s role

**Other Opportunities for Collaboration**
- Schedule regular conferences between the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher
- Get appropriate textbooks and materials from the classroom teacher
- Ask the classroom teacher for suggested topics/themes to coordinate the ESL curriculum with classroom curriculum (Content-based ESL)
- Establish mutually acceptable means or methods of contact (email, mailbox, phone calls, notes in student’s planner)
- Consider periodic co-teaching and/or team teaching
- Attend planning meetings at schools with “high-incidence” LEP population
- Attend teachers’ meetings or Faculty Senate at the school with “high-incidence” LEP population

“I develop my elementary school ESL curriculum striving to meet each student’s language needs, to work closely with classroom teachers and to incorporate flexibility and creativity. Once the English Language Learners’ (ELLs’) areas of need are determined, I develop an overall plan for each student utilizing academic records and teachers’ feedback. Elementary ESL teachers are given the adopted reading series’ ELL teaching guide, readers and posters that accompany each grade level. This is a very helpful resource when getting the academic year started and throughout the year, especially for students who require assistance with vocabulary, comprehension, and basic reading skills. When coordinated with classroom teachers’ lessons, I can effectively reinforce the skills for each unit. Some 4th and 5th grade students need more support understanding content lessons in Science and Social Studies or Math, rather than basic reading skills. Again, I work closely with classroom teachers so that my ESL lessons reinforce new topics. An elementary ESL curriculum utilizes many resources and materials, depending on the students’ needs – manipulatives, books, games, and so on. With teamwork and effective planning, all students are able to make progress and feel successful in school.
Communicating Across the School

In the **K-2** setting, it is recommended that ESL teachers spend time in the classroom, observing and participating with the classroom teacher.

In the **3-5** grade setting, it is recommended that ESL teachers interface with the classroom teacher one-on-one to report on student progress and get the classroom teacher’s input and direction.

In the **Middle School** setting, it is beneficial for ESL teachers to be involved in planning instruction, attend team meetings, and meet with the Related Arts teachers.

In the **High School** setting, it is important that the ESL teacher establish an effective means of communicating with a variety of teachers, since students may have four to eight different teachers a day, depending on the schedule of the school.
What Type Of District-Level Support Is Necessary For Program Success?

The county Title III director, school level administrators, and ESL teachers play an important role in leveraging district administrative support. Regular communication and integration of ESL issues can be provided through:

- regular updates on ESL issues through reports/presentations at the district’s Administration Team meetings
- regular updates on ESL issues at the district’s principals’, vice-principals’, and counselors’ meetings and at the service personnel meetings
- input to the county’s Five-Year Strategic Plan to ensure the needs of LEP students are addressed
- consistent professional development opportunities for the ESL teacher and the district’s content teachers (Example - ESL teacher attend county-wide staff development, such as writing initiatives, instructional strategies, orientation to new reading series, new textbook training, colleague work groups, book studies)
- visit ESL teachers’ classrooms and observe ESL teachers

What Is The ESL Teacher’s Role As An Advocate For The Student?

ESL teachers often take on the role of being an advocate for the LEP student. Ultimately, the responsibility for the LEP student lies with the school. The ESL teacher may provide valuable input into the student’s educational process but should avoid becoming the only one who “knows what is best” for the student. Ultimately, the role of the ESL teacher is best defined by the individual county of employment. Though not required, ESL teachers may provide expertise in:

- initial enrollment of LEP students
- SAT meetings
- Facilitating the translation of documents
- parental involvement
- opportunities for ESL learning during the summer

How Can The ESL Teacher Continue To Develop Professionally?

Another important part of advocacy is being well informed as an ESL professional. How can ESL teachers find the support and sense of community that they need to continue to develop as professionals?

- Communicate regularly with other ESL teachers
- Keep informed via ESL list serves (Contact WVDE to be added to listserv)
- Become an active member of professional organizations
- Attend Title III Meetings
- Attend continuing education programs for ESL Professionals
- Job shadow other ESL teachers
- Provide staff development to others