



Superintendent's Circular

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Version 01

BPS INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM AND MONITORING FOR MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

*This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded
by a subsequent version.*

This superintendent's circular outlines the district's instructional system and monitoring for multilingual learners, including:

1. Instructional Expectations and Resources:
 - a. Defining high-quality instructional expectations and materials for our multilingual learners and multilingual learners with disabilities (MLWD)
 - b. Curating and outlining resources for schools, classroom staff, and school leaders to change and improve current practices in classrooms serving Multilingual learners and those with disabilities
2. Monitoring of Multilingual Learners' Instruction:
 - a. Monitoring Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) for multilingual learners who have not met ACCESS progress benchmarks

- b. Conducting classroom observations by school leaders and district regional support teams or ESL and content instruction across programs serving Multilingual learners

In accordance with the DOJ agreement for ELE services, an overview of ELE services, compliance monitoring, accountability, and DOJ reporting schedule is outlined [here](#).

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

The circular provides foundational information on practices and expectations regarding high-quality instruction and grade-level content instruction for our MLs aligned to MA-DESE frameworks and grade-level standards. Included are resources for classroom staff and school leaders to align and improve current classroom practices. The research-based resources and strategies will provide consistent, high-quality educational practices across the District to develop a systemwide understanding of expectations for instructing our multilingual learners and those with disabilities.

One priority of the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education (OMME) is to outline instructional expectations with guidance and resources for multilingual learner (ML) educators to accelerate MLs' language acquisition and support their growth across content. All MLs are entitled to meaningful access to grade-level content learning and English language development (ELD) instruction to build their English language skills in all four language domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). All

MLs regardless of program or placement are entitled to receive sheltered content with an SEI teacher and ESL services with an ESL-certified teacher¹. To that end, OMME is committed to providing all ESL and SEI content teachers with tools that best support MLs.

GROUNDING THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE IN WIDA AND MA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

To maintain high-quality content and language learning for MLs, it is paramount to center all ML instruction for Fall 2023 and beyond on research-based standards for language development as well as grade-level content. OMME expects that the MA Curriculum Frameworks and WIDA 2020 Standards Framework are the foundations for all effective delivery of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction and English Learner Education programs.

OMME has created clear and explicit guidance around what defines English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in Boston Public Schools (BPS) and the varied programmatic structures it may take. ESL is its own subject matter and provides explicit, systematic, and sustained language instruction to promote MLs' success at school and beyond. ESL is:

¹ Any core academic teacher of an Multilingual Learner (providing instruction in English): teachers of MLs with moderate disabilities; teachers of MLs with severe disabilities; teachers in English, reading or language arts; mathematics, science; civics and government, economics, history, and geography; early childhood and elementary teachers who teach MLs such subjects; and any career vocational technical teacher who instructs a ML.

- Asset-based and culturally sustaining
- Language driven
- Balanced, focused on both meaning and form
- Standards-based (i.e. ELA, History, Math, Science), rigorous, and integrated
- Designed for authentic language interactions, dialogue, and collaboration
- Planned and dynamic
- Differentiated and scaffolded
- Grounded in effective assessment practices

Successful pedagogy is grounded in these frameworks and approaches:

- MA Curriculum Frameworks: The frameworks establish clear academic expectations for what students should know and be able to do at the end of each school year. They emphasize the development of 21st-century skills with college and career readiness. Current curriculum frameworks for each content area can be found [here](#).
 - [English Language Arts & Literacy](#)
 - [Social Studies / Humanities](#)
 - [Science Technology & Engineering](#)
 - [World Language Standards](#)
- WIDA: A research-based, comprehensive approach to

supporting, teaching, and assessing multilingual learners. The [WIDA 2020 Framework and Standards](#) prioritize equity of opportunity and access, integration of content and language, collaboration among stakeholders, and a functional approach to language development.

Key components to effective ML teaching in the BPS:

- Native Language : [Research](#) shows that using native language instruction and resources has a positive effect on English language development. Teachers should leverage students' native-language literacy skills whenever possible and use that knowledge to facilitate metalinguistic awareness and cross-linguistic transfer. When teachers have a basic knowledge of students' native language structure, they can better identify students' [positive and negative linguistic transfers](#). Furthermore, teachers should consider using native language materials to build background knowledge and help students transfer content-area skills and understandings from one language to another.
- Collaboration Among ML Educators: BPS prioritizes teacher collaboration to support MLs' success in content area classes and programs. "Co-Teaching ESL is a unique form of teacher collaboration where two teachers (an ESL and a grade level/content area teacher) fully share teaching responsibilities for a common group of students. The co-teachers jointly plan for, deliver, and assess dedicated, systematic, explicit, and sustained standards-based and language-focused ESL instruction that connects to content

area topics and analytical practices.” ([DESE's Quick Reference Guide Co-Teaching Co-Teaching ESL](#))

MATERIALS GUIDANCE

OMME will continue to work across academic departments to ensure that all materials provide scaffolding and supports for multilingual learners. To support this initiative, OMME has developed an [ELD Look-For Tool](#) that illustrates effective culturally and linguistically sustaining practices that are key instructional components for all classrooms serving Multilingual Learners. This tool is aligned with research-based best practices for MLs and to the [BPS Equitable Literacy Look-Fors](#), and the [Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol \(CRIOP\)](#). In order to support the integration of content and language, OMME created an integrated [Language Objectives](#) writing tool and a series of professional development to support this initiative.

Multilingual Instructional Coaches (MICs) worked throughout SY 2022/23 to analyze district-approved tier 1 curriculum, thoroughly examine the WIDA 2020 Standards Framework to create a scope and sequence and unit maps for ESL instruction for grades K-12: Focus in Grades K0-2, EL Education for Grades 3-5, and StudySync and core content in Grades 6-12. All curriculum and support documents will be housed in this Boston Public Schools [ESL Curriculum Digital Notebook](#).

The work was grounded in:

- [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary \(DESE\) Next Generation ESL Curriculum Guidance,](#)
- [7 Forms of Bias,](#)
- [Culturally Responsive Teaching,](#)
- [Systemic Functional Linguistics,](#)
- [Equitable Literacy and Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices,](#)
- [the 3Ls,](#)
- [WIDA 2020 Standards Framework, and](#)
- [Understanding by Design \(UbD\).](#)

Dual Language schools have adopted a variety of authentic texts or trans-adapted texts / materials in the native language. OMME recommends usage of native language text sets aligned to grade level standards and units of study that meet the rigor and expectations for quality materials using [CURATE](#). Additionally, the district recommends the following Spanish and English complimentary materials for dual language:

1. Focus Transadapted Spanish Texts
2. American Reading Company

Other Dual Language and bilingual programs in majority BPS languages are provided materials in the form of authentic texts or transadapted texts thematically aligned to the biliteracy framework for the target languages that must meet grade level standards.

In setting expectations for high-quality instruction, the District has a responsibility to provide district level and individualized coaching support for school and classroom staff. The following is a list of instructional recommendations with critical resources for teachers and school leaders serving multilingual learners and English learners with disabilities (ELD).

SEI PROGRAMS VS. SEI CLASSROOMS

Boston Public Schools has the highest number of MLs across the state. Therefore, it is expected that every BPS classroom is an SEI classroom (if there is at least one multilingual learner enrolled) with a qualified SEI teacher. Additionally, BPS offers SEI programs to students at ELD levels 1-3 with some language specific programs at specified schools to better meet the needs of students at ELD levels 1-3 and provide language support if the educator has the same language. All MLs across ELD levels and placement settings are expected to receive ESL instruction in accordance with their level, grouping per the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (MA DESE).

ESL: English as a Second Language SCI: Sheltered Content Instruction

NLI: Native Language Instruction NLS: Native Language Support

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Program Type & Target	Instruction Type	BPS Instructional Expectations	Resources
SEI Multilingual Program - targeted for ML ELD 1-3 with low incidence languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade level aligned instruction using district materials or curriculum meets MA frameworks. Adapting or differentiation for lower ELD levels and/or low levels of literacy to accelerate learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASS Literacy Guide MA DESE Collaboration Tool
SEI Language Specific Program - targeted for ML ELD 1-3 with high incidence languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI ✓ NLS* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators teach academic language and align to MA Framework content grade level standards and WIDA standards. Classroom teachers collaborate and plan with ESL teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporating Native Language into Learning
SEI Inclusion Program - targeted for dually identified ML with ELD levels 1-3 and MLs with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI ✓ NLS* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators are bilingual and believe that the native language of students and families is an asset and promotes bilingual education. Classroom environments are multicultural, engage diverse perspectives and experiences and value all students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BPS Equitable Literacy Look-Fors MA DESE ESL Model Curriculum Units
SEI Classrooms without district ELE Programs - targeted to ELD 4 and ELD 5 and at all schools without an SEI Multilingual, Language Specific or SEI Inclusion Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student ILP (if needed) is aligned to WIDA Can Do and language domains. ESL instructional pedagogy is connected thematically with a focus on academic language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CGCS 3Ls: Learning, Language and Literacy SFL Writing Pedagogy UDL Guidelines MA DESE's Defining ESL Guidance

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Dual Language - targeted for MLs in ELD levels 1-3 and English monolingual students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI ✓ NLI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biliteracy skills that support each language and build metalinguistic awareness, such as teaching cognates. • Educators are bilingual and hold the belief that the native language of students and families is an asset. • Materials reflect authentic texts or are • transadapted with authors who reflect the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the target language. • The curriculum includes a standards-based scope and sequence for language and literacy development in English and the partner language for all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Dual Language CAL Guidance</u>
SLIFE - targeted for newcomer students with low native literacy assessments and gaps of education (Newcomer Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESL ✓ SCI ✓ NLI ✓ NLS * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native language literacy and numeracy skills that develop students academically. • Appropriate developmental strategies and pedagogy that build on students' schema and life experiences. • Educators are bilingual and hold the belief that the native language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>SLIFE DESE Guidance</u>

		<p>of students and families is an asset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials reflect authentic texts or are • transadapted with authors who reflect the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the target language. • Drawing on students' cultures and identities with projects and life skills that connect to their communities and assets. 	
Heritage Program - targeted for students with common ethnic and native language	<p>✓ NLI</p> <p>✓ ESL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students from heritage backgrounds are taught target language across modalities aligned to World Language Standards. • Identity is often a major factor in heritage speakers/signers' motivations for language learning, and educators must discuss identity issues to effectively support students in making the cultural connections described in world language content standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Language Standards • Heritage Speakers' Guide

MONITORING OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS INSTRUCTION

In addition, this circular outlines the District's expectations for Central Office and school leaders regarding a quality monitoring system for ESL and content instruction for multilingual learners across English Learner Education (ELE) programs and general education settings. This system facilitates the District's identification of classrooms, programs, and schools of excellence so BPS can share these practices, trends and teaching pedagogy

district-wide. In addition, routine observations will allow the District to identify schools and classrooms that need support for instructional improvement and, in some cases, intervention at a school, program, or classroom. The BPS monitoring system will ensure that students with an ILP are attended to with specific language goals.

MONITORING OF ML INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLANS (ILPS)

Multilingual Learners that are not meeting targeted ACCESS progress benchmarks indicated by MA DESE are required to have [Individual Learning Plans \(ILP\)](#) (also known as a student success plan) that track their language growth and academic progress. Each year, OMME will share guidance, the list of students who need an ILP per DESE's criteria, and the template document. LATFs will support the dissemination of information and these materials to teachers for completion. The ILPs should be completed by the student's team of teachers, integrating how the student will grow across content areas. The use of the WIDA framework and Can Do descriptors guide the BPS ILP document so that the goals within each language domain of where a student needs to grow to move to the next level on the English language proficiency continuum are aligned with WIDA. A BPS ILP sample template can be found [here](#).

With the continued implementation of this policy, school leaders, LATFs and teachers are expected to:

- Identify the areas in which identified MLs need

- improvement and establish personalized goals for attaining English proficiency;
- Assess and track the progress of MLs who did not meet benchmarks in the identified areas in need of improvement;
- Review resources and services available to assist MLs in the identified areas in need of improvement; and
- Incorporate input from the parents or legal guardian of the identified ML.

OMME is developing a systemic approach to monitoring ILPs for ML who have not met WIDA ACCESS Benchmarks as outlined below:

- School leaders and LATFs will be notified and updated on the percentage of ILP completion, and OMME will monitor progress towards 100% completion of ILP plan;
- ILPs should be finalized for students by October 15, 2023;
- Schools principals and LATFs with incomplete ILPs will be notified by late October to follow-up;
- Any remaining incomplete ILPs will be reflected on school EL plans;
- OMME Equity and Accountability regional liaisons will work with school superintendents to ensure ILP completion for ML identified in need of a plan.

MONITORING OF INSTRUCTION

BPS recognizes that rigorous, standards-based, culturally affirming instruction is critical to student outcomes in our

highest needs schools. The district will implement a consistent monitoring system to ensure ESL and content instruction for Multilingual learners and those with Disabilities receive high-quality instruction and opportunities for accelerated learning across Equitable MTSS tiers.

- The Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education (OMME) is increasing staffing and instructional support in SY23/24 to support school leaders and educators in meeting consistent expectations for instructional practices for Multilingual Learners and those with disabilities. OMME multilingual instructional coaches will work to align instructional expectations from the district to classroom level with materials, role expectations, instructional practices, and coaching cycles.
- OMME has adopted an updated [MLs observation tool](#) using the [Equitable Literacy Self Reflection Tool](#) and [Learning, Language and Literacy](#) observation tool with embedded practices that meet grade level content expectations for MLs. The updated MLs observation tool will be utilized district-wide to perform learning walks and observations across all ESL and content classrooms where MLs are placed in order to assess the quality of teaching and learning for Multilingual learners with a focus on Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP).
- BPS district teams and schools will use the updated MLs observation tool replicated in [Bullseye](#) online platform for observers to input observation records in order to collect data, assess outcomes and monitor trends towards

increased instructional improvements.

- All district staff, school leaders and other classroom observers will be trained on the updated MLs observation tool via Bullseye online platform in order to implement across the system and leverage as a consistent routine classroom observation and monitoring tool.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

The following outlines the District's expectations for school leaders and central office regarding a quality monitoring system for ESL and content instruction for multilingual learners regardless of program or placement. It will ensure that we monitor schools for high-quality ML teaching practices and coherence across the district. OMME will add training for school leaders on ML instruction expectations and observation look-fors to better prepare them for appropriately evaluating and growing educators towards meeting proficient or exemplary status following the [MA DESE Classroom Teacher Rubric](#).

School leaders or assigned evaluators:

- a) Once every two weeks, school leaders are expected to do short observations (10-15 minutes) of all classrooms serving Multilingual Learners in the school. The school leaders should use the updated MLs observation tool to collect observation notes and align to district instructional vision.
- b) Within 48 hours of observations, school leaders should provide the classroom leaders with a quick note including a positive practice observed and a noticing or wondering to improve instructional practices. Resources aligned to expectations or improving instructional practices should be included with the noticings or wonderings.
- c) If any concerns arise from the short observation, the school leader should schedule an observation, including a one-on-one discussion with the teacher that offers resources, support, or coaching if available.
- d) When a school leader observes consistent classroom instruction below the expectations for teaching and learning, the school leader must have a conversation with the teacher and start the teacher improvement evaluation process. This should include expectations for improvement and resources to support the growth of the classroom staff.

DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY

Regional School Superintendents and District Regional Support Staff (District Team):

- a) Once a quarter, starting at the end of September, regional school superintendents and other district regional support staff will join school leaders to observe classroom practices in classrooms serving Multilingual Learners. The team will use the updated MLs observation tool to observe, record, and provide feedback on classroom instructional practices to identify trends and growth areas and monitor progress.
- b) Regional support staff conducting walkthroughs will be expected to record their observations in the centrally maintained [Bullseye](#) online platform. This will allow for district-wide analysis and monitoring of data trends. Additionally, school leaders and district staff will be able to monitor progress and share evidence to norm and validate observations.
- c) Regional school superintendents and regional support staff will debrief with school leaders on the day of the observations and discuss highlights of classroom instruction, how to grow pedagogically appropriate instructional practices, identify which instructional practices need support, and support is provided.
- d) Every quarter, the district team will monitor trends for evidence of improvement and areas of growth. The district team will be expected to coordinate central

office resources, including OMME coaches, and utilize data to support the classroom and school's needs effectively.

- e) School superintendents will work with school leaders who have not demonstrated progress to develop an action plan for improving instruction with clear metrics that include district support and will be reflected in future QSP and on school leader evaluation.

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