

A Smaller Learning Communities Program **WEBINAR**

U.S. Department of Education
November 14, 2012 4:00 PM EST

This slide will be shown at the beginning of the webinar – 4 PM sharp
(MARY HASTINGS OPENS THE EVENT)

Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to this Smaller Learning Communities Webinar on ninth grade transitions for English Language Learners.

The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the U.S. Department of Education. The seal contains the text "DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION" at the top and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" at the bottom, with a central emblem depicting a figure holding a torch and a book.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

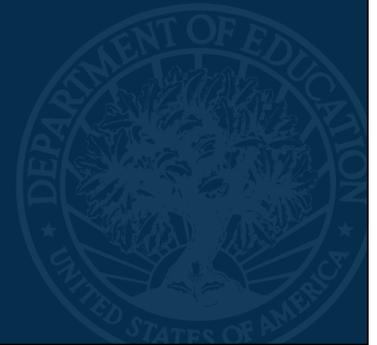
Strengthening the Transition
Into High School for
English Language Learners

Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to this Smaller Learning Communities Webinar on ninth grade transitions for English Language Learners.

The purpose of today's webinar is to introduce you to the second of our Ninth Grade Transition tools. While our first tool, Ninth Grade Counts, was written to assist teachers and leaders in schools and districts to build successful ninth grade experiences for traditional ninth grade students, this tool was developed to focus on those strategies which will make the transition into high school both supportive and successful for English language learners, especially long term learners and newcomers to the American education system. Two of our grantee schools will be assisting us today in this presentation,

HOUSEKEEPING

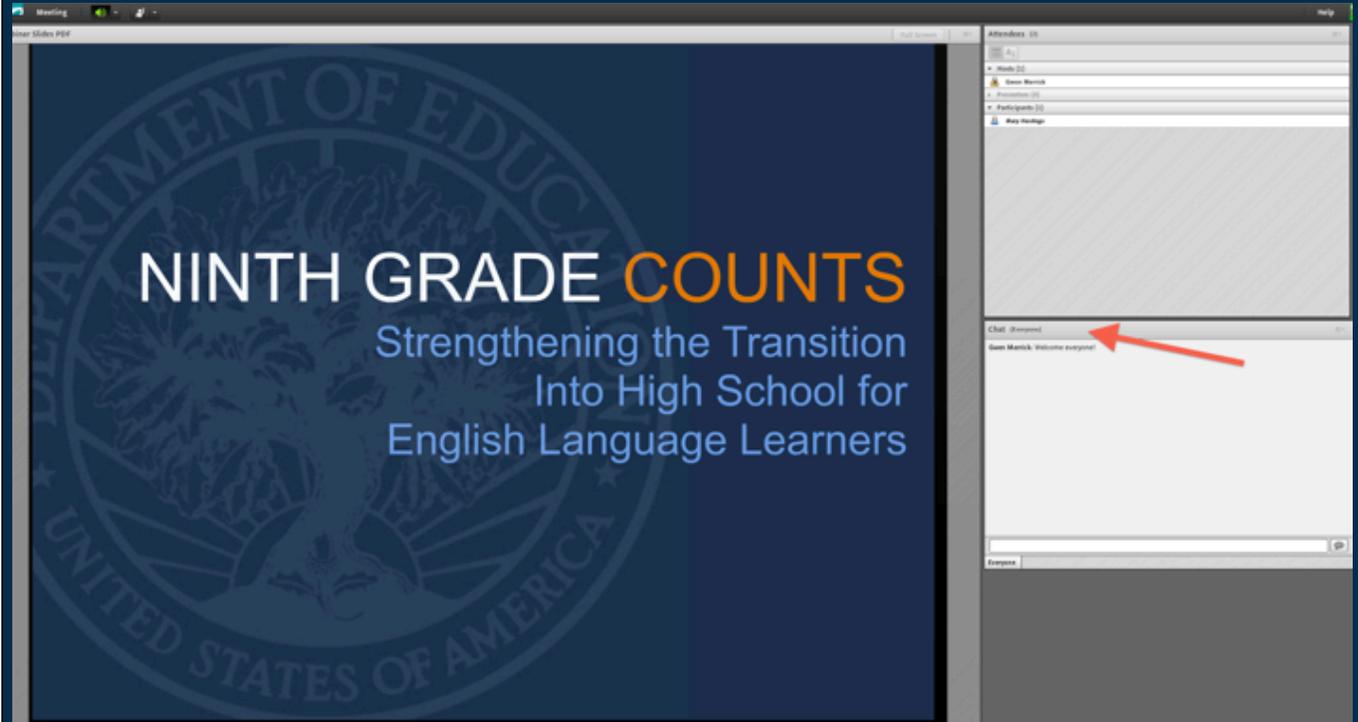
To ask a **question**, please type your question using the CHAT FEATURE and click enter



Before we get started, let's take care of some housekeeping

We have muted all incoming calls except the presenters to reduce background noise so please use the Chat Feature to ask questions or add comments.

HOUSEKEEPING

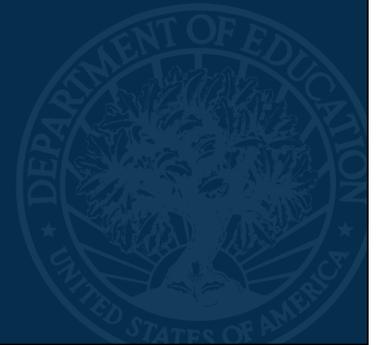


Type in your question or comment and hit enter/return to send your text.

HOUSEKEEPING

If you are disconnected from
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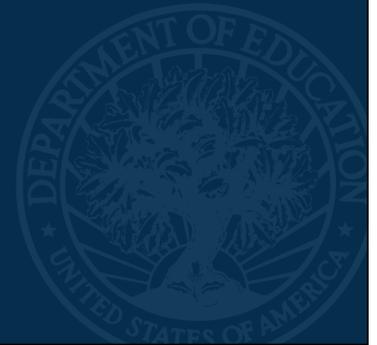


If you get disconnected for any reason, call us.

HOUSEKEEPING

The webinar slides will be posted on our website by the end of the day on November 15th

greatschoolspartnership.org/ninth_grade_counts



We will email this address to everyone who registered for today's webinar.

Your Technical Assistance Team

Millennium Group International
tmgi.net

FHI 360
fhi360.org

Great Schools Partnership
greatschoolspartnership.org

Center for Secondary School Redesign
cssr.us



Who are we. We are your technical assistance team from the organizations partnering to deliver technical assistance to SLCP grantees.

(Name organizations and location)

We have enjoyed meeting many of you in person at recent Project Director's meetings.



Today's Presenters

We are pleased to introduce today's presenters.



Pamela Seki

Director of Program Assistance
Long Beach Unified School
District
Long Beach, CA



Gwen Currie Snow

Associate Principal
ESL Newcomer Academy
Jefferson County, KY



Stephen Abbott

Director of Communications
Great Schools Partnership
Portland, ME

Stephen Abbott, director of communications for the Great Schools Partnership, will introduce the new guide and engage the other presenters and participants in a conversation about how this could be used in schools.



Your Facilitator

**Mary
Hastings**

Senior Associate
Great Schools Partnership
Portland, ME

Finally, I am Mary Hastings, your facilitator for this event.
Welcome all and thank you all for being here today.

Why We Created this Webinar

1. To introduce a **new resource** for supporting ninth-grade success for ELLs
2. To share **evidence-based** ninth-grade strategies for transitioning ELLs
3. To learn from **colleague grantees** engaged in ninth-grade ELL work

We created this webinar to engage everyone in a discussion about research based best practice for helping English Language learners transition into ninth grade. While entering ninth grade can be a minefield for any student, those who are learning both the language and the culture have additional hurdles to overcome.

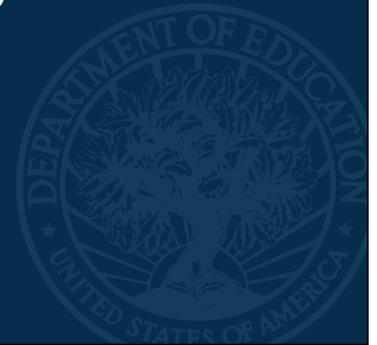
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Goals for Today's Webinar

Let me quickly review the goals for today's event.

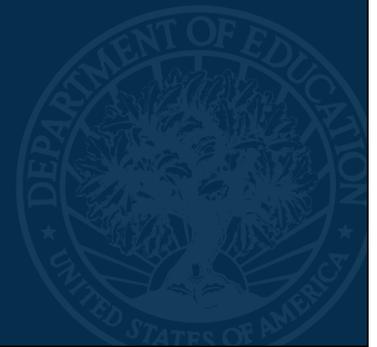
Goal #1

Share research findings that will help your district or school **accelerate the English and academic language proficiency** of ELLs as they enter high school



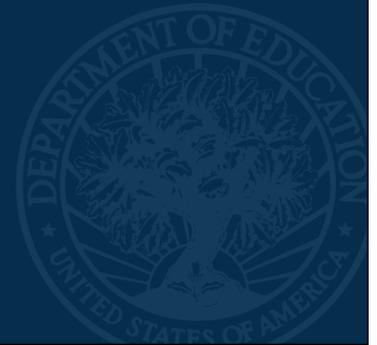
Goal #2

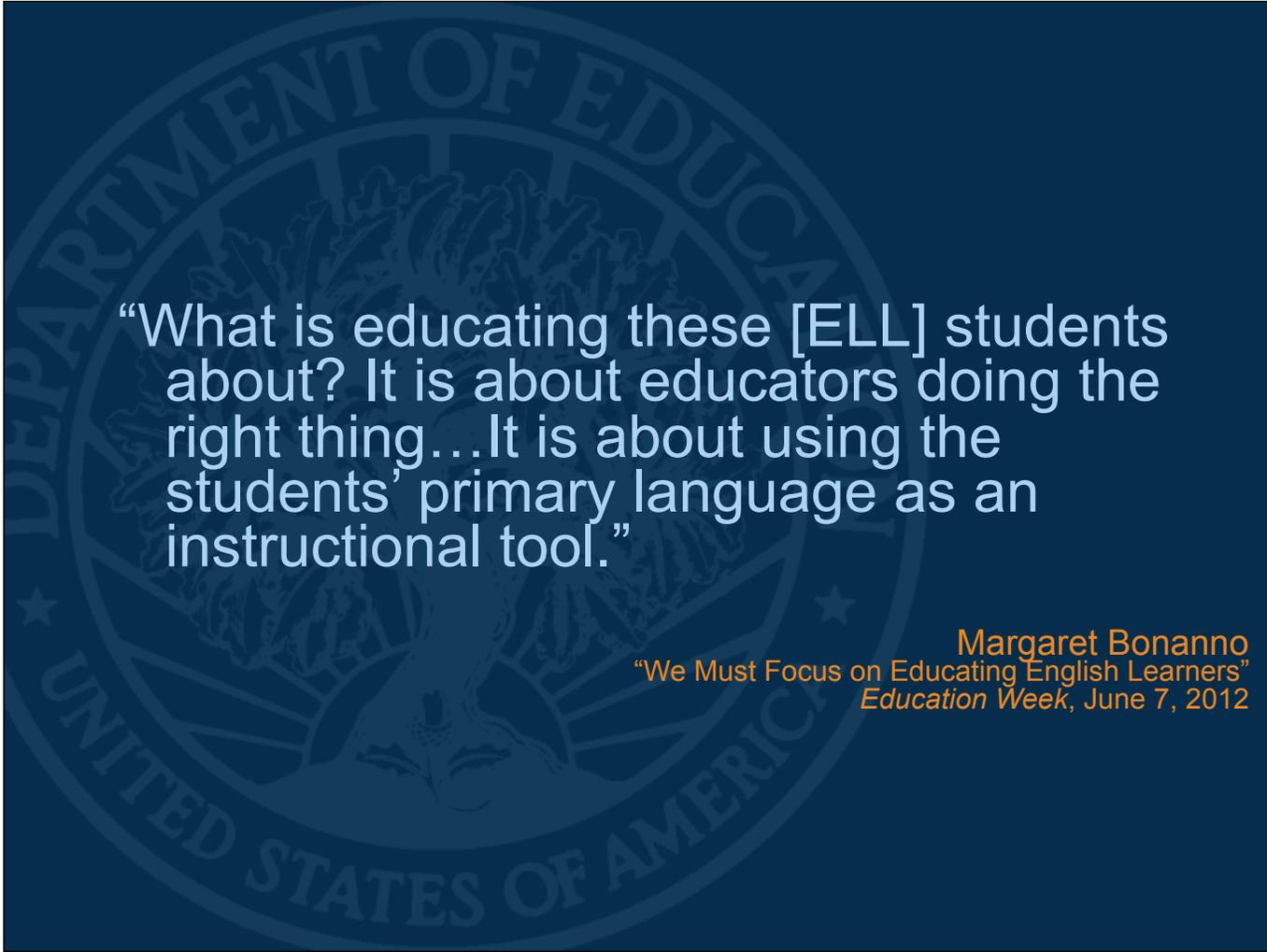
Hear directly from **school leaders** who are implementing effective ELL transition strategies



Goal #3

Introduce a new resource designed to help you take a **more proactive approach** to the emotional, social, and academic success of ELLs



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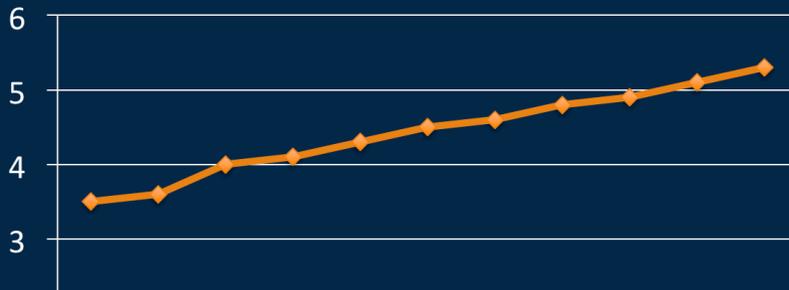
“What is educating these [ELL] students about? It is about educators doing the right thing...It is about using the students’ primary language as an instructional tool.”

Margaret Bonanno
“We Must Focus on Educating English Learners”
Education Week, June 7, 2012

This is a condensed version of a much longer quote (see citation if you’d like to read the entire quote).It does emphasize the need to address ELL instruction, support, and acceleration systemically.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

The national ELL population
grew 51 percent over the last
decade to more than 5 million

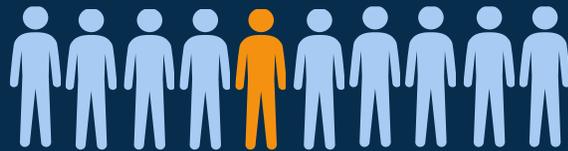


Compared to a total PK-12 population that grew by only 7 percent

This rapid growth has taken many states and school districts by surprise as newcomer students, either immigrants or refugees, are moving into areas of the country that have not experienced this diversity in the past, and school systems must rapidly adjust their funding, personnel and programming to meet the needs of these students and their families.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

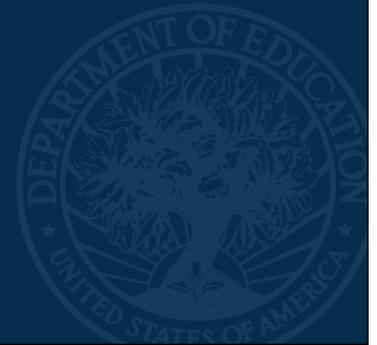
One in ten ninth graders is an ELL who has to navigate the myriad complexities of high school without the benefit of English proficiency



All entering ninth graders face increasingly demanding literacy expectations, academic content, and social challenges. BUT...

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

ELLs are at significantly greater risk of failing courses, high rates of absenteeism, and dropping out



ELLs are at significantly greater risk of dropping out, not pursuing postsecondary learning, failing courses, suffering high rates of absenteeism, and experiencing behavioral and emotional issues.

Long-term ELLs and recently arrived immigrant students may also struggle with significant academic deficits and cultural divides.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

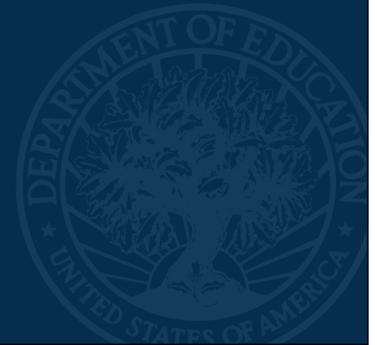
Middle school performance patterns for ELLs are **well below** those of their native English-speaking peers



In eighth grade, Hispanic students score more than 20 points lower than their white peers on the mathematics portion of NAEP, for example.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

ELLs are **50 percent less likely** than their white, English-speaking peers to have access to rigorous curriculum that prepares them for college



Often this is because they are not ready to enter mainstream courses until they have reached English proficiency so they must take ELL courses which do not offer the credits they need to graduate on time, or they enter sheltered courses which may not be recognized for college preparation.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

ELLs are also **far more likely** than their white and Asian-American peers to attend schools where **academic expectations are low**—and they never catch up



It is often the case that immigrant and refugee English language learners and their families may initially live in areas of a city where schools are struggling to support their traditional students so the infrastructure and cultural adjustments necessary for ELL students are reduced along with expectations.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

Many districts and schools have **little or no experience** with ELLs, and they may not have the infrastructure, programs, resources, or staffing in place to serve them adequately



In many communities, refugees and immigrants are the fastest growing population, which places new obligations on the local school system.

75% of ELLs in the United States speak Spanish

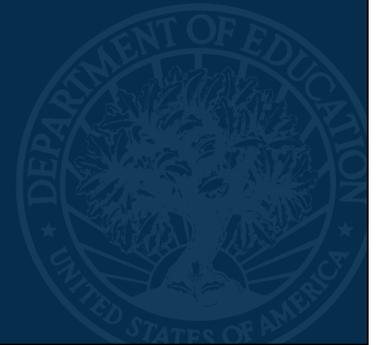


But ELLs represent tremendous linguistic, cultural, and educational diversity.

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

Two ELL populations in particular require **additional attention and support** when they enter ninth grade:

LTEL + SIFE



long-term English language learners (LTEL) and newcomer students with significantly interrupted formal education (SIFE).

Long-term English Language Learners

At least six years in U.S.

Often native Spanish speakers

Have remained at an intermediate (or lower) level of English proficiency



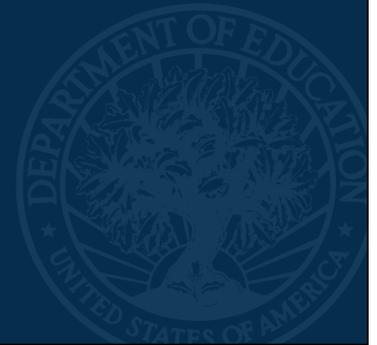
- Often placed in mainstream classes by the time they enter high school
- May continue to struggle academically without appropriate interventions
- May be at a higher risk of failure or dropping out

Long-term English Language Learners

Usually orally proficient in English

Reading and writing below grade level

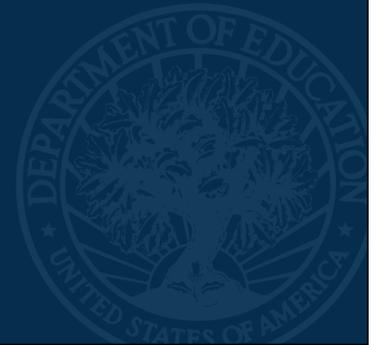
Need more intensive support in academic-language acquisition



- Often placed in mainstream classes by the time they enter high school
- May continue to struggle academically without appropriate interventions
- May be at a higher risk of failure or dropping out

Why Ninth Grade Counts Even More for ELLs

For **newcomer ELLs**, the formal schooling they received in their home country may have been excellent or practically nonexistent

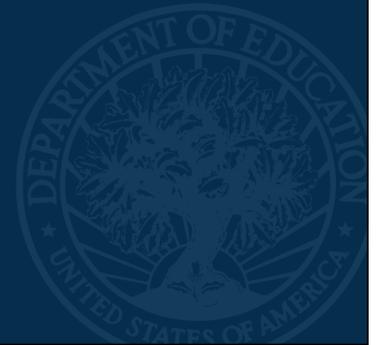


some students may have attended good schools from a young age while others may never have attended a formal school at all.

Newcomers with Significantly Interrupted Formal Education

Typically immigrant or refugee students

Have been in the United States for one year or less

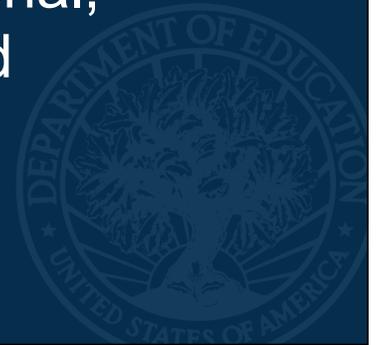


—Face significant academic and linguistic challenges

Newcomers with Significantly Interrupted Formal Education

Have often received a sporadic or incomplete formal education in their home countries

May also be burdened with emotional, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural obstacles



—May also be burdened with emotional, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural obstacles that make their transition into an American high school particularly difficult

Time + ELLs

Takes an average of 3–5 years to develop oral proficiency in English

4–7 years to develop academic-language proficiency

Long-term and newcomer ELLs are at a significant disadvantage



—May also be burdened with emotional, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural obstacles that make their transition into an American high school particularly difficult

Time + ELLs

Time is running out for these students

Intensive acceleration strategies are required to close learning gaps and prepare them for college and careers



—May also be burdened with emotional, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural obstacles that make their transition into an American high school particularly difficult

What Districts + Schools Can Do

Strategies will depend on the size and diversity of the ELL population

Priorities for utilizing staff, resources, and expertise must be determined

Research-and evidence-based practices are essential



We know these three things are necessary up front.

What Districts + Schools Can Do

SMALLER ELL POPULATIONS

Combine levels of English proficiency using skillful differentiation

Train teachers in effective ELL support strategies

Focus resources on ninth and tenth grades to close learning gaps



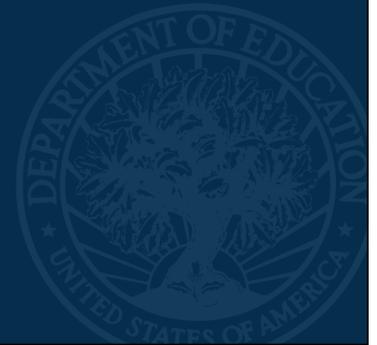
- Steadily increase ELL awareness, expertise, and capacity over time
- Communicate consistently and regularly with ELL parents and families
- Integrate acceleration strategies such as ELL learning-lab period

What Districts + Schools Can Do

LARGER ELL POPULATIONS

Significantly restructure the academic program, particularly during ninth grade

Create mandatory summer-bridge programs for ELLs with significant deficits



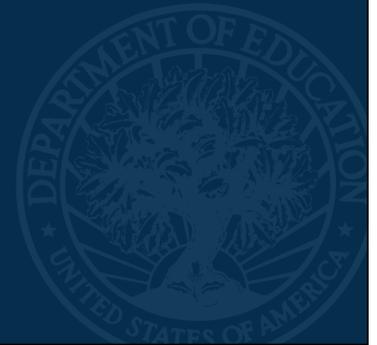
- Provide comprehensive orientation programs for ELLs and their families
- Reach out to local ELL cultural leaders and organizations
- Establish clear policies, procedures, and required practices for ELL education
- Continually collect ELL data, monitor effectiveness, and modify strategies

What Districts + Schools Can Do

LARGER ELL POPULATIONS

Invest in ELL professional development for all staff

Integrate classroom-level, in school, and outside-of-school support systems



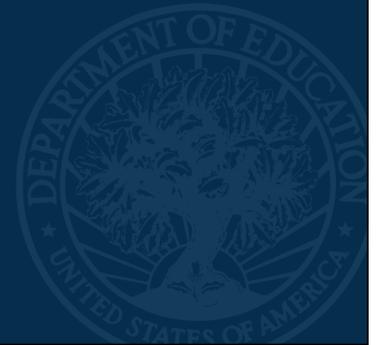
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What Districts + Schools Can Do

SCHOOL LEADERS

Adopt a “no-excuses” approach to ELL education

Embrace an “additive” —not a “subtractive”— model of ELL education

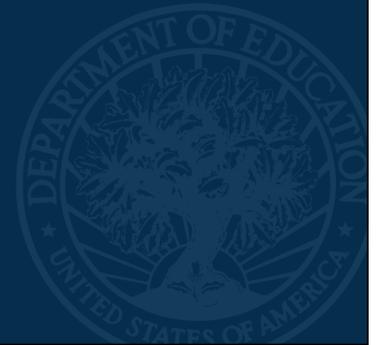


What Districts + Schools Can Do

SCHOOL LEADERS

Hold ELLs to the same high academic expectations

Foster an inclusive environment—and do not tolerate discrimination in any form

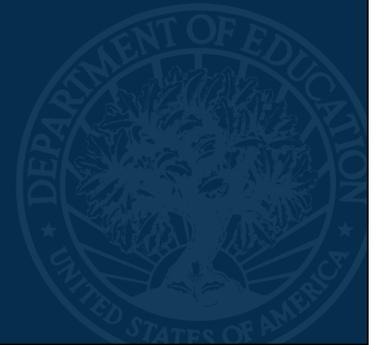


What Districts + Schools Can Do

DISTRICTS + SCHOOLS

Recognize that ELLs, and different types of ELLs, have different learning needs

Find creative ways to ensure ELL programs are adequately funded and staffed



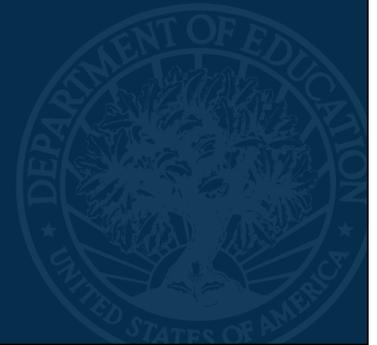
- Find creative ways to ensure ELL programs are adequately funded and staffed
- Create proactive ELL policies and make sure they are clear to all staff

What Districts + Schools Can Do

DISTRICTS + SCHOOLS

Celebrate your ELL diversity and their represented cultures

Be proactive in communications—different approaches may be required



- Find creative ways to ensure ELL programs are adequately funded and staffed
- Create proactive ELL policies and make sure they are clear to all staff

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Long Beach Unified School District

Pamela Seki
Director of Program Assistance for
Language Minority Students

Please welcome Pamela Seki from Long Beach Unified School District

SO WHAT ABOUT ELLs?

Long Beach Unified School District:

K–12 Enrollment: 82,302

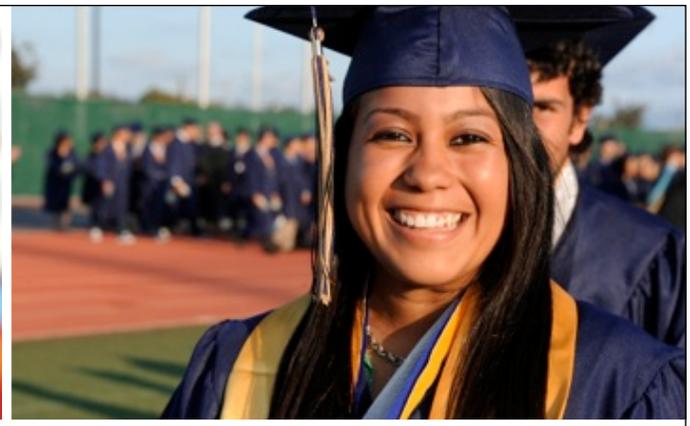
K–12 English Learners: 18,478 (22.5%)

Reclassification Rate: 11.3%

High School Enrollment: 26,439

High School English Learners: 3,713 (14.%)

Long Beach USD is a large urban district in Southern California. Currently, there are 82,309 students, K-12 enrolled in over 80 schools. The district has 7 comprehensive high schools, 4 of which have an average enrollment of 4,000 students. Data from the district's language assessment center for new enrollees indicated that few recent arrivals were entering the district beyond grade 3, yet the number of secondary English learners was not significantly decreasing. The district's reclassification rate of 11.3% was keeping pace with the state average.



Exploration + Adoption Unmasking the “Long-Term English Learner”



We can point to inspiring English learner and former English learner students who have achieved academic success and gone on to postsecondary study and careers, but data, district- and statewide tells us that many English learners do not. We suspected that we were in line with state averages and expected targets due to the successful performance of the elementary English learners who were masking a growing long-term English learner subgroup. This professional “hunch” that our English learner cohort/subgroup was changing led us to explore the long-term EL. We wanted our journey to focus on exploring the problem and adopting or acting on our data – not admiring the problem which has too often become paralyzing as the systems look at long-term English learners.

SO WHAT ABOUT ELLs?

Five Years Ago

Defined the long-term English learner profile and “academic English”

Reviewed research literature
(see recommended authors)



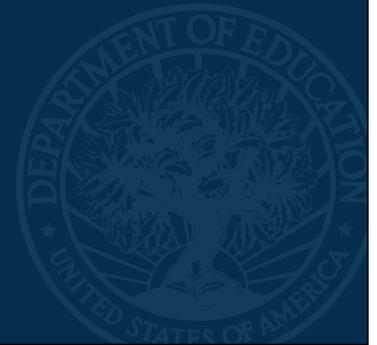
To do so, we needed to define the cohort and the goal and read the research that was beginning to emerge. It is a commonly-held assertion that reaching full academic fluency in English requires 5-7 years in school. Some begin to identify the long-term learner at 5 years, but when we began 5 years ago, we took the conservative number of 6 years. However, our current district data indicates that too many ELs who enter school as kindergarteners begin to plateau by grade 3 and by grade 5 have many of the characteristics of our high school long-terms ELs. It was important to bring together our own district data and the research literature regarding best practices for English learners and high school reform . . . We knew we had to be very deliberate in planning an intervention that was the “Long Beach Way”, informed by current research yet responsive to our specific needs.

SO WHAT ABOUT ELLs?

Four Years Ago

Disaggregated data (time in program) by site and grade level

Focused awareness at central office level



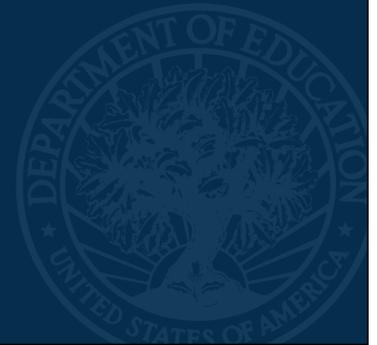
Having defined a “target population” and a goal, we began to look critically at our data by time in program and started talking about our English learners in a new context. It was important to bring together our own district data and the research literature regarding best practices for English learners and high school reform . . . We were very deliberate in planning an intervention that was the “Long Beach Way”, informed by current research yet responsive to our specific needs.

SO WHAT ABOUT ELLs?

Three Years Ago

Presented secondary long-term ELL data

Conducted research: *English Inventory* (Kate Kinsella)



Three years ago, we began to shape our approach, being very public about our secondary English learner demographic and achievement data, looking at barriers to equity and access in our programs and administered Kate Kinsella's pilot English Inventory to our own students which yielded data about our students that mirrored the field research.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS



The “Long Beach Way” is grounded in data-based decision-making – all reforms and initiatives are driven by data and research. Our approach to long-term English learners was in response to internal data and research and relied heavily on the work done by second-language experts which you will see annotated on our final slide.

LBUSD High School AYP English Learners

Total: 8,337 (February 2010)

Recent Arrivals 1,437	Long-Term 3,389	Reclassified AYP 3,511
Have been in U.S. schools < 5 years	Have been in U.S. schools > 6 years	Met criteria for reclassification, but not yet <i>proficient</i> 3 years on CST ELA
Making expected progress	52% entered LBUSD grade 1 2,159 received 2 or more D/F grades	Understand much academic English, but may have difficulty in formal discussions and writing Structural errors have fossilized

Digging deeper, we disaggregated our high school ELs. These are the descriptors we identified, informed by research, particularly the research being done by Laurie Olsen and California Tomorrow. Clearly the group that stood out was the middle column, our long-term English learners; 52% of these students had entered our schools and language programs in first grade as English learners and were not being successful' had not met reclassification criteria.

What the Research Says

Prioritized Focus Population

- Long-term ELLS
- 3,389
- Have been in U.S. Schools > 6 years
- Speak conversational/social English with fluency



These student, our long-term ELs who had been in our schools for more than 6 years and able to navigate the social language were our “invisible” English learners, sitting in mainstream classes, in small learning communities, with access, but not equity. We had narrowed our focus.

What the Research Says

Prioritized **Focus Population**

- Weak academic English language and gaps in reading/writing
- May not have developed academic proficiency in Level 1
- Structural errors have fossilized



Having identified our priority cohort, we examined the emerging research particularly that done by Laurie Olsen and California Tomorrow, a non-profit advocacy, research and technical assistance organization committed to equity-centered education reform work. Her work defines the profile of long-term English learners who lack academic English language, have gaps in literacy skills, may not have developed academic proficiency in their primary language, and often, their structural errors have fossilized.

What the Research Says

Prioritized **Focus Population**

- High oral, low literacy skills: ELP test discrepancy
- Distinct language needs (do not benefit from ELD lessons designed for normatively progressing recent arrivals)



These students demonstrate, both in the classroom and through English language proficiency measures, high oral English language skills, but low literacy skills: a significant discrepancy from the profile of a normatively progressing, more recent arrival English learner. Their language needs are those that cannot be met by traditional English language development or ESL instruction.

What the Research Says

Prioritized **Focus Population**

- Non-engagement (habits of passivity, invisibility at school)
- Want to go to college (unrealistic view of academic preparation)
- Discourage learners



Not unexpectedly, these long-term English learners, while still attending school, are disengaged, have become passive and invisible in the classroom. The research indicated that many reported wanting to pursue postsecondary education, but did not know what was required of them or how to prepare, how to learn.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH INDICATES

Exploration and rapid adoption
Urgency, acceleration, focus!

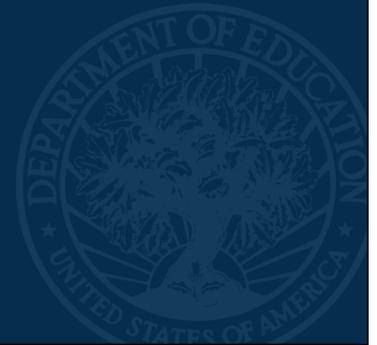
ENGLISH INVENTORY

Now that our exploration had identified the “who”, we turned to available research to identify the “what”. The biggest “take-away” was the need to provide maximum integration within the small learning community structures, to not sacrifice access for these students. Most powerful was our own “district” research . . . our own students spoke . . .

English Inventory

Administered to long-term ELLs at
three district high schools

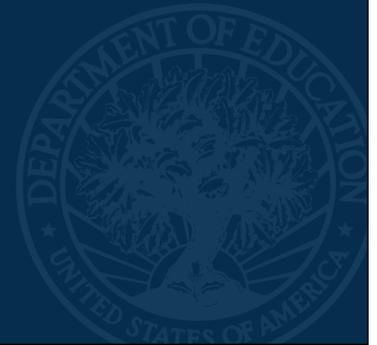
Provided rich data about our
students' linguistic challenges



Our sense of urgency and focus took shape via the “English Inventory”. During this period of exploration, several of us attended a presentation by Kate Kinsella, a well-known researcher and practitioner who had just developed an English Inventory. She was looking for districts to pilot the Inventory and granted us permission to administer it in our district. Several hundred long-term English learners, from three of our large high schools with small learning communities, participated in the administration of the survey which helped us identify and target their linguistic challenges.

English Inventory

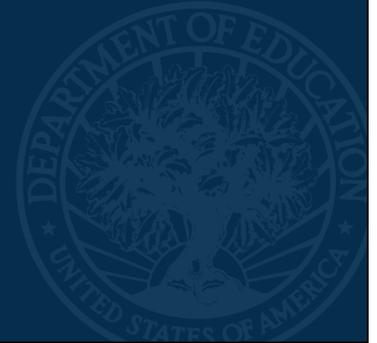
- ★ Vocabulary is colloquial, not academic
- ★ Writing has the same “voice” as speaking
- ★ Students give up when reading with clauses and long words



These linguistic challenges included a lack of academic vocabulary and syntax. Students used colloquial vocabulary and voice for both speaking and writing tasks. They frequently gave up or became confused when reading compound and complex sentences or encountering difficult vocabulary.

English Inventory

- ★ Sentences are often fragments
- ★ Cannot identify basic parts of speech
- ★ Many grammatical errors have fossilized
- ★ Self-editing is difficult because the “wrong way” sounds “right”



The writing samples from the Inventory were mostly fragmented sentences with predictable, fossilized, grammatical errors. This fossilization prevented students from self-editing because the wrong way or errors sound right to them.

Program Installation Pilot Course Development

TWO YEARS AGO

Developed district English 3-4 SDAIE and “Applications” course for long-term tenth-grade English learners

As we had hoped, we were able to identify specific linguistic challenges faced by our long-term English learners – we used these specifics in the design of our intervention. Our response was to develop a pilot course that would provide scaffolds and support for the core while putting ELs on track to meet university entrance requirements . . . To support the core class, a companion course taught by the same core teacher, to amplify the core content was added. The key difference here in comparison to other, previous “literacy interventions” is the connectedness of the content – the passages in the core class are used to teach the academic language development, language proficiency skills are not taught in isolation.

Program Installation Pilot Course Development

GOAL

Maximum integration without sacrificing access

Provide access to a variety of small learning communities via mainstream core English course while providing “instructed ELD” support via companion course

The attribution and motivational data we gathered via the inventory confirmed the need to provide access to the SLC structure, allowing English learners to experience the personalization and exposure to challenging and relevant curriculum; and to engage in collaborative group activities.

Initial Implementation

Pilot Treatment

24.2% Reclassified (24 / 99)

Those students not meeting reclassification criteria

Test	Date	N	N/% Improved Performance Band
CEDLT English Language Proficiency	October 2011	75	22 / 29.3%
CST-ELA	May 2011	75	10 / 13.3%
Reclassified	January 2012	75	33 / 44%

The number of students in our two-year pilot was 99. All met our minimum definition of a long-term English learner and many entered our system at Kindergarten or Grade 1. Of those long-term English learners in the pilot program, 24.2% have subsequently met all reclassification criteria – far exceeding our district average of 11.3% - even more significant when you consider the dismal prognosis for most long-term English learners! Of the remaining 75 pilot participants who have not yet reclassified, many are making incremental progress as measured by the increases in performance bands on the California English Language Development Test, the California Content Standards Test in English language arts and the pass rate for the California High School Exit Exam in English language arts.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...

How interesting it is to read



At the end of the first year, we inventoried the participant students again, looking not for linguistic challenges, but linguistic empowerment. Reading their words, as powerful as the achievement data is one of the pilot program teachers at Millikan High School, Tylene Quizon.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...

That when you focus on main ideas, you understand what you are reading and writing much more



As a result of this class, I learned That when you focus on main ideas, you understand what you're are reading and writing much more.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...

To take words and make them more sophisticated



As a result of this class, I learned to take words and make them more sophisticated.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...
Where to put punctuation



As a result of this class, I learned where to put punctuation.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...
To write essays with more details



As a result of this class, I learned to write essays with more details.

Toward Full Implementation

Student Voices

As a result of this class, I learned...
To think positive of myself



We believe this program provides a structure that includes access to core, college preparatory content, appropriate language development instruction and support in an environment that fosters success. This year, curriculum staff are developing a similar class to support our ninth grade English learners. An additional consideration for this new course is that in order to secure university credit for the course under the California UC system, the new 9th grade course must align to the Common Core State Standards. Therefore, our work this year is, develop and identify specific scaffolds and supports that will provide the access AND instruction that long-term English learners must have in order to be successful and meet the new, rigorous college and career-ready goals.

Resources

Reparable Harm (Laurie Olsen, Ph.D)

Download at: www.californianstogether.com

Meeting the Needs of English Learners in Small Schools and Learning Communities (California Tomorrow and Los Angeles County Office of Education)

Purchase: www.californianstogether.com

EL Resources (Kate Kinsella)

Download at: www.sscoe.org/depts/ell/teacherresources.asp

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of Literature (Dean L. Fixsen)

Download at: : www.sscoe.org/depts/ell/bcn/bcn.asp

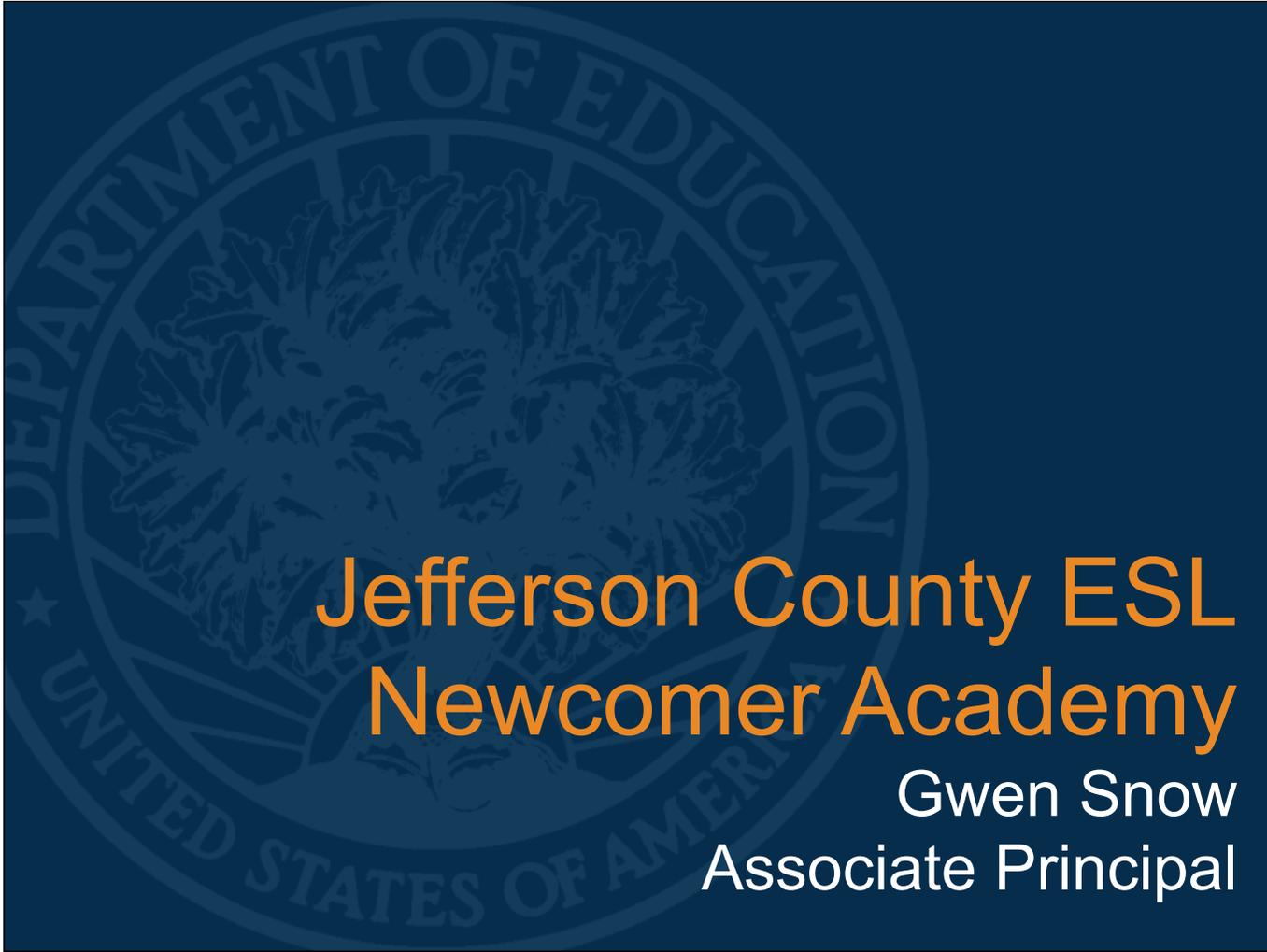


The resources on this slide were invaluable to us and we are grateful to our colleagues who have prioritized, unmasked and given us tools to empower the long-term English learner!

Questions for the presenter?



Review slide

The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the Department of Education, United States of America. The seal contains a central figure, likely a personification of Education, surrounded by the text "DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION" and "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA".

Jefferson County ESL Newcomer Academy

Gwen Snow
Associate Principal

For many 9th graders, attending Algebra I is already a challenge. Keeping up with new concepts while navigating the complexities of high school is quite daunting. Learning more self-sufficient study skills, the requirements of graduation, and how to adapt to a more rigorous curriculum all add to challenges of transitioning to high school.

Imagine a teenager who is adapting to this 9th grade transition, but who has moved to a new city. All her friends and family have been left behind. Ways of dealing with day to day living have been altered as the teenager navigates her new abode. For most teenagers, moving to a new city is pretty traumatic.

Now, imagine, being a 9th grader who just moved to the United States. A 9th grader with beginning English skills, little understanding of what US schools are like (let alone US high schools), and the stress of living in a new culture and leaving behind everything you've ever known. Successfully transitioning to high school becomes a seemingly insurmountable challenge.

Jefferson County Public Schools

Growth of LEP Students



Over the past ten years, the English Learner population in Louisville Kentucky – Jefferson County Public Schools – has grown dramatically. This year, there are over 6000 LEP students in a district of over 100,000. This is a 200% increase since 2004-2005.

A considerable population of the LEP students in JCPs is comprised of adolescent middle and high school students, many of whom are newcomers to the United States. This is due to Louisville being home to two refugee agencies, thus adolescents who are new to English and the United States and its school systems. The influx of refugees to our school system also brings with it an influx of SIFE students (these are students with a significant interruption of formal education.) Approximately 25% of students enrolled at the ESL Newcomer Academy have had a limited exposure to formal education.

ESL NEWCOMER ACADEMY BEGINNINGS

The **ESL Newcomer Academy** began in 2006-2007 as a consolidation of two newcomer programs in local high schools, and several programs across middle schools in Jefferson County Public Schools

As the adolescent English Learner population in Louisville continued to grow, it became evident that a Newcomer Program would be the wisest means of addressing the needs of newcomers to high school. Two newcomer high school programs began in JCPS over 10 years ago which evolved into the ESL Newcomer Academy which began in 2006-2007. It was a consolidation of the two high school programs, plus a few smaller middle school programs.

ESL NEWCOMER ACADEMY BEGINNINGS

Research to develop the Academy was conducted in 2004-2005. A visit was made to Columbus Ohio's Global Academy and information from CAL's "Establishing an Effective Newcomer Program"* (Short and Boyson) were both instrumental in the ESL Newcomer Academy's initial design

* <http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0312short.html>

Research to develop the Academy was conducted in 2004-2005. A visit was made to Columbus Ohio's Global Academy and information from CAL's "Establishing an Effective Newcomer Program" (Short and Boyson) was both instrumental in the ESL Newcomer Academy's initial design.

ESL NEWCOMER ACADEMY BEGINNINGS

During the first year (2006-2007) half the staff were relocated from programs across the district, and the other half we funded from the district's general fund

During the first year (2006-2007) half the staff were relocated from programs across the district, and the other half were funded from the districts' general fund as new positions.

Growth During 2012-13 Year

Weeks	2011-2012 # Students	2012 -2013 # Students	Difference
1	128	175	+47
2	137	191	+54
3	152	217	+65
4	156	225	+69
5	156	235	+79
6	160	245	+85

The ESL Newcomer Academy has grown continually since its inception. As of November 12, 2012 the enrollment has already reached 271, and is projected to grow to over 400 by the end of the school year. This growth is due to an influx in refugee placement in Louisville, plus a growth in the number of immigrants.

**ESL Newcomer Academy
2012-2013**

No.	Language Grades	Middle School			Sub Total	High School			Sub Total	TOTAL
		6th	7th	8th		9th	10th	11th		
1	Arabic	0	3	0	3	8	8	0	16	19
2	Amahric	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2
3	Burmese	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	3
4	Chin	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3
5	Chinese	1	2	0	3	0	2	0	2	5
6	French	0	1	1	2	4	0	0	4	6
7	Gujarati	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
8	Karen	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	3	5
9	Kinyarwanda	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
10	Kirundi	2	1	0	3	1	0	0	1	4
11	Nepali	4	1	9	14	15	7	0	22	36
12	Other	1	6	0	1	6	0	0	0	1
13	Portuguese	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
14	Somali	3	3	5	11	11	8	1	20	31
15	Spanish	11	14	11	36	38	27	0	65	101
16	Swahili	2	1	3	6	2	1	0	3	9
17	Tagalog	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
18	Tamil	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2
19	Thai	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
20	Tigrinya	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
21	Turkish	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
22	Urdu	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2
23	Vietnamese	2	1	0	3	0	1	0	1	4
24	Wolof	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
25					0				0	
	Returning	0	17	18	35	41	23	1	65	100
	New	31	14	15	60	48	37	0	85	145
	TOTAL	31	31	33	95	89	60	1	150	245

9/27/2012

The Newcomer Academy is extremely diverse. This slide shows our population at the end of September 2012, 6 weeks into the school year. The largest language group, Spanish, comprises less than half of the total population of the student population.



Who is Enrolled in the ESL Newcomer Academy

Students are in their first year in the US

The ESL (English as a Second Language) Newcomer Academy provides service for Students who are in their first year of enrollment in a US school, are assigned to the school. About 20% of our student population is invited to stay a second year as they are SIFE (significant interruption of formal education) students. They have generally missed two or more years of formal education and are placed in classes to help them build initial mastery in literacy and numeracy. They are placed on the sheltered instruction content classes when they have had the opportunity to build these basic skills.



Who is Enrolled in the ESL Newcomer Academy

Students are grades 6–10

Students in grades 6 to 10 in Jefferson County Public Schools. Placement in grades 6 to 8 is grade appropriate, whereas grade 9 is for any student age 14 and up with less than 5 credits, and 10th graders have 5 to 11 credits coming in to our program. 9th graders in the SIFE classes are earning elective credits.



Who is Enrolled in the ESL Newcomer Academy

Students are beginning level English learners (2.0 or below on W-APT)

Students are assigned to the ESL Newcomer Academy if they score below a 2.0 on the WIDA W-APT language placement assessment. Students scoring above a 2.0 and up to a 5.0 are assigned to other schools within our district that will include one or two classes of ESL instruction, plus some bilingual support. The majority of these students learn in comprehensive classrooms.

Students who transition from our program are also placed in comprehensive classrooms with bilingual support and one or two ESL classes.

ESL Newcomer Academy Staff



All teachers have ESL endorsements or certification

All teachers are “highly qualified” in their content areas

Research shows that it takes a typical ESL student anywhere from three to ten years to become as proficient in academic English as his or her fluent-speaking peers. As older students can fall behind quickly in more advanced content classes, it's important that they have extra supports to help them keep up. At the ESL Newcomer Academy, all teachers have ESL training, plus, they are highly qualified in their content areas. Students are learning the grade-appropriate content they need to catch-up with their peers. Our staff knows how to present new information in a way that is more accessible to English learners.

ESL Newcomer Academy Staff



All teachers share ESL Bilingual Associate
Instructors

An ESL Counselor

On staff, we have six Bilingual Associate Instructors who provide bilingual support for Somali, Swahli, Spanish, Arabic and Nepali students. Almost all of our BAIs have college degrees and are very adept at supporting the needs of our students and their families.

The ESL Newcomer Academy greatly benefits from having a full-time counselor on staff. Our school also collaborates with Children's and Family Place and Seven Counties. Having a full-time counselor, plus the added support of local agencies has made a difference for many of our students!

ESL Newcomer Academy Staff



Volunteers

An associate principal

The ESL Newcomer Academy also has an Associate Principal to oversee instruction and day to day management of the school. As the primary administrator, I also establish and maintain connections to district and community resources to support the needs of our evolving program.

Our school is also lucky to have several volunteers who assist us. We have about ten regular volunteers who come in to work individually with struggling students on their assignments.



Goals of the ESL Newcomer Academy

Preparing students for
academic linguistic
proficiency

Students do not lose valuable time in the classroom and are much more engaged due to the instructional strategies used to promote their understanding. Not only is the curriculum more accessible to students, but they are also learning academic English at the same time.



Goals of the ESL Newcomer Academy

Bridging the
achievement gap –
making sure students
catch up in academic
areas while filling in
background knowledge
gaps

On their first day of enrollment, students are assessed to see how much English and math they know (in order to place them in the most appropriate class, and also to get a “base-line” score to measure their growth.)

Students follow grade-appropriate curriculum. They are introduced to the textbooks their native-speaking peers use, but also have a wide variety of supplemental texts to help support their language learning needs. National Geographic’s English Language Development series which includes, Inside the USA, Inside, and Edge, are used in the ESL classes.



Goals of the ESL Newcomer Academy

Helping both students
and their families
understand how U.S.
schools work

There are several opportunities for families to learn more about what their students are doing at school. At the ESL Newcomer Academy, we understand the needs of both Newcomer students AND their families. The US school system may be very different from what families were used to in their previous countries.

Before the beginning of the school year, we host a Family Orientation. An overview of the school is provided, plus, an introduction to the "basics" families might need to know (such as how to ride the school bus, the importance of regular attendance, and how to support the academic needs of students at home.)

During the school year, we have two Parent-Teacher Conferences, when parents can talk with their children's' teachers to discuss their progress. An Open House allows students to give a tour of their classrooms for their parents. Parents are also invited to a College Awareness event, and can learn more about how to help their children prepare for college. Former Newcomer students who are enrolled in college are on-hand to explain some of the challenges of which to be aware. A Global Homecoming provides the opportunity for students to share about themselves with their families and the community, as well as to welcome back former students.



Goals of the ESL Newcomer Academy

Helping students
navigate a path toward
college and career
readiness

A typical day at the ESL Newcomer Academy begins at 7:40 am and ends at 2:20 pm. Students come from all over Jefferson County Public Schools to attend the district-wide program housed at the North end of the Shawnee Campus.

All students have five classes. On Wednesdays, however, there is a special Advocacy period. Students learn character education, or get extra interventions to help them in areas in which they struggle. Guest speakers also talk with groups to address cultural identity issues, or how to adapt to the local community.

A college awareness event is held annually after school with several college representatives to help students and their families to begin to navigate the complexities of getting into college. Our counselor

also works with all students to help them prepare for their transition into comprehensive schools, and ultimately their transition into college and career. She works with students individually, in small groups, and visits classrooms to review students' Individual Learning plans and to help students plan toward their futures.

Structure of the ESL Newcomer Academy



Five Houses

Green House – grades 6–9, students with a significantly interrupted formal education (SIFE)

Students are on teams, and their teachers meet at least once a week to discuss needed interventions and student-related issues. No student is over-looked at our school! We have divided our Academy into five “houses”, each addressing specific needs in our student population. Each house works also as a professional learning community. They develop common language assessments based on the WIDA language development levels; collectively analyze results and design instruction and interventions based on their findings. They are all focused on how to help all of our students become proficient in English as efficiently as possible.

The Green House is comprised of students with a significantly interrupted formal education (SIFE). It has grades six through nine. Course work includes basic math and language arts, as well as implementation of the RIGOR curriculum, which targets phonemic awareness and reading comprehension via social studies and science content selections.

Structure of the ESL Newcomer Academy



Five Houses

Dream House – grades 9 and 10, students with a formal education, or 2nd year SIFE students.

The Dream House- grades 9 and 10. Students have either a formal education, or are 2nd year SIFE students. Students take courses required for graduation – all classes are taught by teachers who are highly qualified in their subject area, plus have an ESL endorsement or certification.

Structure of the ESL Newcomer Academy



Five Houses

Global House – grades 6 to 8; students with a formal education or 2nd year SIFE students

The Global House – grades 6 to 8. Students have either a formal education, or are 2nd year SIFE students. Students take same courses required of all middle school students in JCPS – all classes are taught by teachers who are highly qualified in their subject area, plus have an ESL endorsement or certification.

Structure of the ESL Newcomer Academy



Five Houses

Fun House – Students in grades 9 and 10 who either have a formal education background or are 2nd year SIFE. More intervention time built into schedule

The Fun House – Students in grades 9 and 10 who either have a formal education background or are 2nd year SIFE. More intervention time is built into their schedule to address math or reading needs.

Structure of the ESL Newcomer Academy



Five Houses

Life Skills rotation - A team of teachers addressing various components of needed Life Skills for our students on a rotation

Life Skills rotation – a team of teachers addressing various components of needed Life Skill for our students on a rotation. The time students spend in this rotation allows the other Houses time to collaborate during a common planning time.

Mission: Transition

Student and staff interaction with receiving schools

Interventions to eliminate gaps in literacy and numeracy



Students and staff interact with receiving schools in order to prepare our students for their new educational environments. Former students come to present information about their transition. They also return during our Global Homecoming, Open House, and Orientation to share their experiences with new families.

We also have many interventions to eliminate gaps in literacy and numeracy. We are currently collaborating with the YMCA to have an after-school program to provide more support in reading and math, and time to participate in extra curricular activities such as soccer, basketball, and dance. Students are also invited to participate in our ELL Summer Program. This excellent opportunity provides students with five weeks of reading and math instruction during the summer, to help prevent summer learning loss. Students attend twenty hours per week, and are provided with transportation, meals, and many exciting experiential activities to help them prepare for the following school year.

Mission: Transition

Graduation requirements spiraled throughout the year

College and career awareness infused throughout curriculum



Our counselor regularly meets with students to help them complete their Individual Learning plans to and to prepare them for understanding what graduation criteria they need to meet in order to graduate. As our students will leave us after a year or two, it is important that they understand this before they leave.

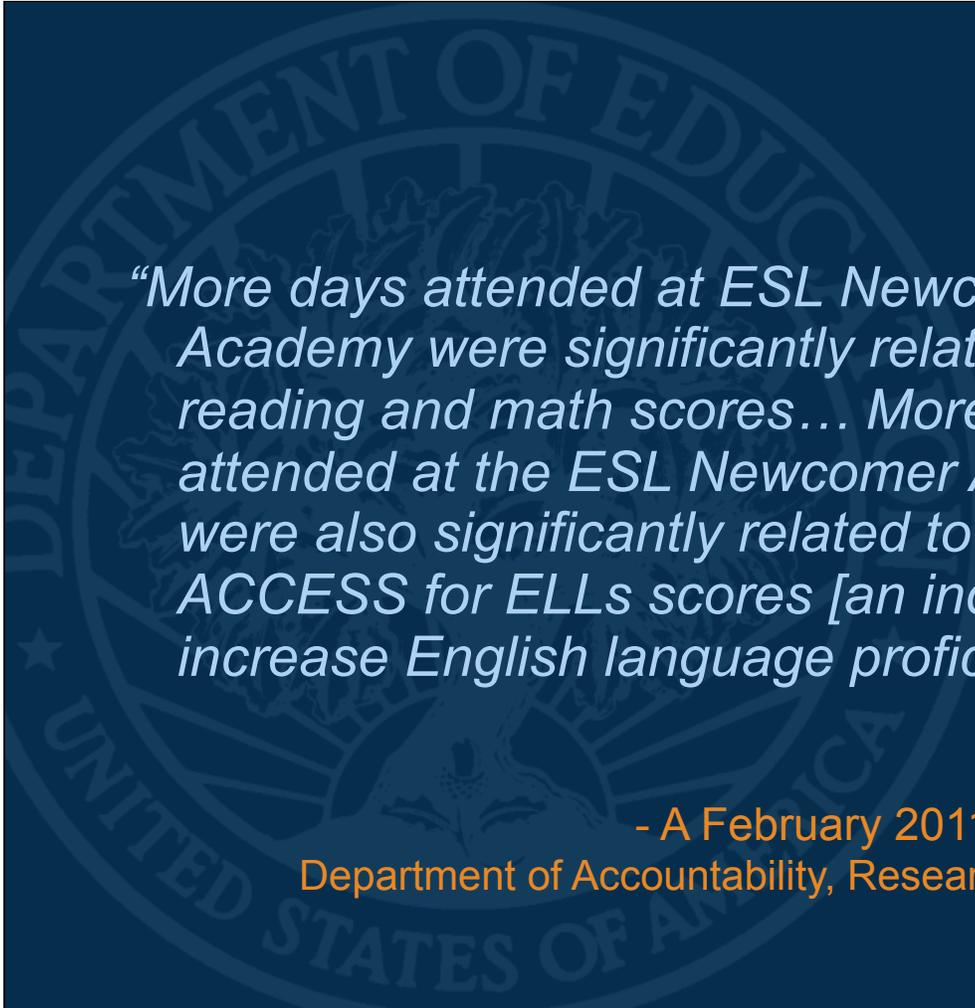
Mission: Transition

Mental health support

Physical health support



Being new to a culture and language has a definite impact on a student's academic and social acclimation. Our school provides space and time for local mental health agencies to work with students and their families to support their individual needs. With a growing population of refugees, the documented incidences of PTSD, depression, and acculturation needs continue to grow. We approach each of our students as individuals, with specific academic, social, and mental health growth areas to target.



“More days attended at ESL Newcomer Academy were significantly related to higher reading and math scores... More days attended at the ESL Newcomer Academy were also significantly related to higher ACCESS for ELLs scores [an indicator of increase English language proficiency.]”

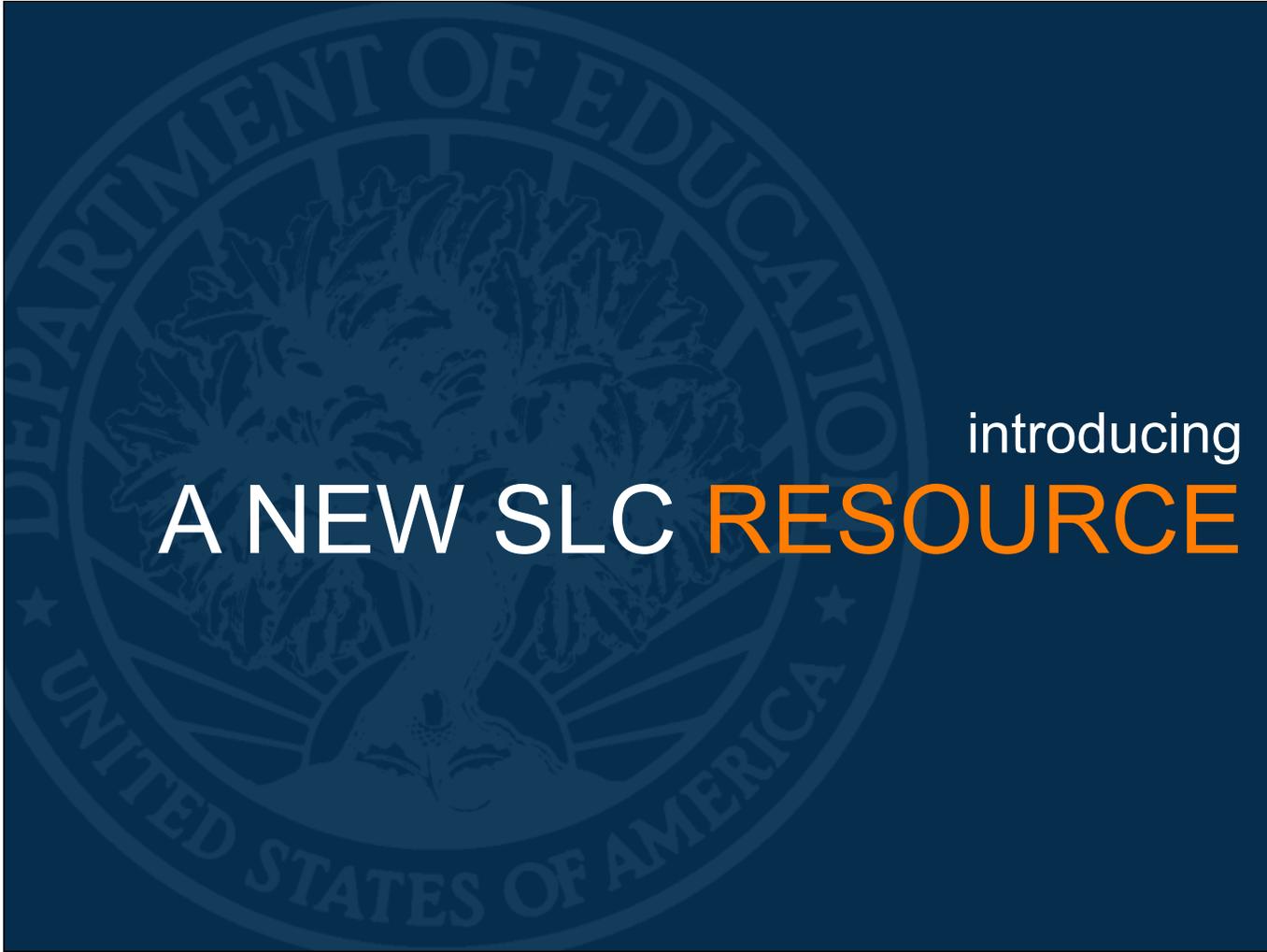
- A February 2011 study of JCPS
Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning

Recently, the JCPS Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning found that “More days attended at ESL Newcomer Academy were significantly related to higher reading and math scores ...More days attended at the ESL Newcomer academy were also significantly related to higher ACCESS for ELLs scores [an indicator of increased English language proficiency.]” We are continuing to document the results of our efforts by tracking students’ WIDA language development through their transitioning programs, as well as their Grade Point Averages and drop out rates.

Questions for the presenter?



Review slide



introducing
A NEW SLC RESOURCE

Hello, my name is Stephen Abbott and I'm the director of communications for the Great Schools Partnership and co-author of Ninth Grade Counts: Strengthening the High School Transition for English Language Learners, a new self-assessment and planning guide for Smaller Learning Community Program grantees.

My presentation today will provide a brief introduction to the tool and how it works. At the beginning of the presentation, we shared a link to a webpage where you can download the new tool immediately. If you have any questions, please contact our technical-assistance director, Mary Hastings, whose email is listed on the webpage.

Okay, let's get started.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS



Strengthening the Transition into High School for English Language Learners

If you are familiar with our first Ninth Grade Counts guide—Strengthening the Transition in High School, which addresses systemic transition strategies that can improve support for all ninth-grade students—you will notice that this new guide mirrors the basic format and structure of that first tool. Even the cover shares the same design. In fact, this new resource is actually the second installment of an integrated three-part guide, not really a separate tool.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

A three-part resource

1. Systemic transition strategies
2. English language learners
3. Summer bridge programs



The focus of this first tool is on systems thinking—encouraging districts and schools to consider the systemic interrelationships that make or break the ninth- grade year for many students.

This new tool is designed to accomplish a similar goal, but with a deeper and more intensive focus on a particular student subgroup—as you might have guessed by now, English language learners—and especially two categories of ELLs who need to the most attention and support: long-term English language learners and newcomer students with significantly interrupted formal education. As you will see when you begin using the guide, a lot of content is devoted to strategies that specifically target these two high-need student groups.

The third installment of the guide will address high-impact summer-bridge programs that can accelerate learning for incoming students before they begin ninth grade. The plan is to release the final installment of the resource around the beginning of the new year. So stay tuned!

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

EXPERT REVIEWERS

Patricia DiCerbo, EdD, Research Scientist and ELL Specialist at the George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education

Elizabeth Jiménez, CEO, GEMAS Consulting

Noni Mendoza-Reis, PhD, Professor and Chair of Educational Leadership at San Jose State University

Laurie Olsen, PhD, Director of the Sobrato Early Academic Language Initiative for English Learners

The entire Ninth Grade Counts series is based on research, site visits to SLC schools, interviews with dozens of practicing educators, and first-hand leadership experience. For example, my colleague and co-author, Mary Hastings, has been a school-improvement coach and SLC project director for many years, and she has helped several schools—including SLC grantees—successfully convert to smaller learning communities, develop ninth-grade teams, and create more personalized first-year programs.

We also had help from several people, including the researchers and ELL experts you see listed here who reviewed drafts of the tool and provided many recommendations for improvement.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

SCHOOLS STUDIED

Baldwin Park High School, Baldwin Park, CA

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo High School, Long Beach, CA

The ESL Newcomer Academy, Louisville, KY

Iroquois High School, Louisville, KY

Miami Coral Park Senior High School, Miami, FL

Robert A. Millikan High School, Long Beach, CA

We also stole a lot of great ideas from SLC schools that are actually doing this work every day—and those schools are listed here and in the new guide. You heard from two of them earlier in the presentation.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

How it works

Self-Assessment Activity

Best Practice → Current Practice
→ Prioritization + Planning

Vignettes

ALSO: Introduction, Glossary,
Research



As with the first Ninth Grade Counts guide, this new tool will equip you and your colleagues with a simple, step-by-step process that you can use with your school leaders and faculties to take a honest look at where you are at and where you would like to go—in terms of both ELL improvement strategies and outcomes for ELLs in the ninth and tenth grades. While all of the strategies are based on research and effective programs, this tool is not an academic study—it’s a practical self-assessment and planning process that any school team can work through in a few hours.

The point of departure for the tool is equity—how to ensure that every ELL gets a fair shot at success. As we have seen today, ninth grade poses some unique challenges for these students, and this guide is a way to help clarify and simplify the process of addressing those complex challenges head on.

Our general approach to creating this guide was to keep it simple. We wanted to distill some of the most important research findings and guidance, and present it in a way that would be useful to practicing educators. The goal was to create an efficient, concentrated process that school teams and faculties can complete in less than a day—about three-to-five hours. We know you that you already have a lot on your plates, so our intent was to develop a process that is comprehensive but non-burdensome.

The guide has three major components: (1) a self-assessment activity intended to be completed in small groups, (2) a series of four “planning roadmaps” that will help your school determine action-plan priorities, and (3) four vignettes that provide brief profiles of effective ELL transition strategies in action. The guide also includes an introduction to the challenges facing ninth-grade ELLs,

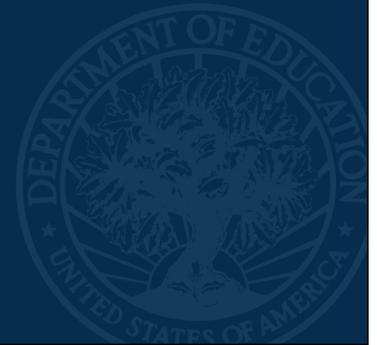
a glossary of ELL terms and abbreviations, and a list of useful research that schools can consult to dig deeper into research-based ELL instruction and support.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

How it works

District + School Conditions

- Culture + Expectations
- Leadership + Resources
- Professional Development
- Policies + Accountability



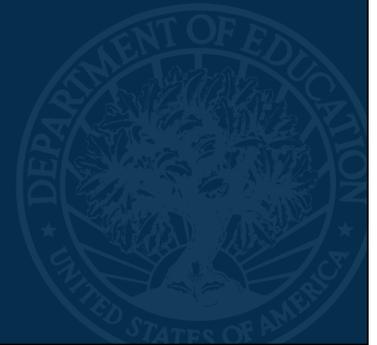
This stage in the process is focused on the preconditions—what you can do to set the stage for a successful ninth-grade experience for ELLs. As we know, less concrete factors—such as the relationships among teachers, the messages students receive, or the policies in place at the district level—can have a big impact on the effectiveness of any school-improvement process. That’s why we devoted this section to issues such as culture, expectations, resources, professional development, and leadership.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

How it works

Planning + Orientation

- Data Collection + Analysis
- Orientation + Summer Programs
- Parent + Family Orientation



In this section, we broke out the proactive preparation and planning activities that will define an ELL's first experiences of high school life: orientation programs, summer learning, or reviewing middle-school performance data early on and using it to guide course placements and teaming strategies, for example.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

How it works

Instruction + Intervention Programs

- ELL Curriculum + Instruction
- English Language Development
- ELL Interventions + Support
- Newcomer Support Programs



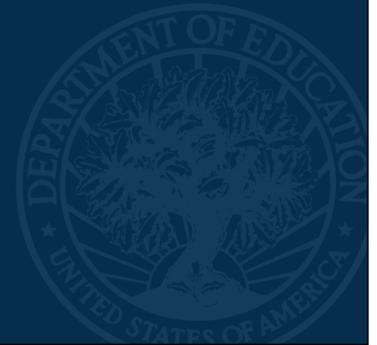
As I'm sure all of you know, the foundation of any effective ninth-grade transition comes down to the quality of instruction and support that students receive—and even more so in the case of ELLs. That's what this tool is all about: making ninth-grade the kind of learning experience that will keep more ELLs in school, accelerate learning, and put them on track to graduation, college, and rewarding careers. In this section, we have addressed not only effective instructional strategies and interventions, but also social and emotional support.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

How it works

Parent + Community Engagement

- Communication + Outreach
- Ongoing Parent Support
- Cultural Inclusion
- Community Connections



While the first Ninth Grade Counts guide only featured three planning roadmaps, we added a fourth to our ELL guide. The reason is simple: family and community are absolutely essential to any effective ELL transition program. How the school reaches out to, welcomes, communicates with, and includes ELL parents, families, and cultural leaders will have a big influence on the success of ELLs, especially recently arrived immigrant and refugee students—a very fast growing student population in many areas of the country.

Now I'm going to quickly walk you through the guide's major sections.

ABBREVIATION GLOSSARY

A variety of common ELL terms and abbreviations are used in this guide and in the ELL community and literature. Below are a few of the more common terms.

Academic Language Development (ALD): A term applied to programs and courses designed to assist limited-English-proficient and non-English-proficient students develop the academic knowledge, skills, and general literacy required for success in formal schooling and mainstream courses.

English Language Development (ELD): A term applied to programs or courses designed to help limited-English-proficient and non-English-proficient students in the development of English-language skills while they continue to acquire essential academic skills in core subject areas.

English Language Learner (ELL): Students who are not native English speakers and who are in the process of acquiring English and academic-language skills.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): A term applied to students who are not native English speakers and who have not yet acquired the ability to read, write, and speak fluently or effectively in English.

Long-Term English Learner (LTEL): Students who have been in the U.S. school system more than six years, but who have not progressed beyond the intermediate level of English language development.

Newcomer: Students who have been in U.S. school system less than one year, and who may be recently arrived immigrants or refugees. [NOTE: In this guide, the term newcomer always refers to newcomer students with interrupted formal education.]

Significantly Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE): A term applied to students who have received either no formal schooling in their home country, who have received less than four hours per day of formal education, or who have experienced prolonged interruptions in their formal education.

Sheltered Instruction or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE): A carefully planned teaching approach that utilizes specialized techniques and strategies—such as allowing ELLs to use support materials in their primary language—that help students acquire English proficiency, academic language, and subject-area knowledge.

Self-Assessment Protocol

The following protocol is an opportunity for district and school teams to engage in a self-reflective conversation about ninth-grade ELL programs and transition strategies, particularly strategies for long-term and newcomer ELLs. The goal of the activity is to examine your district or school in terms of three different approaches to ELL instruction and support: *Passive*, *Reactive*, and *Proactive*. When it comes to successful transitions, proactive strategies are essential—a high school that strategically plans and prepares can help all ELL students successfully transition into ninth grade and graduate on time prepared for college, careers, and civic life.

Purpose

To identify strengths and weaknesses in ninth-grade ELL programs as a first step toward more effective instruction and support for all incoming ELLs.

Structure

Break up into groups of four and assign the roles of facilitator, recorder, and timekeeper.

Time

Between 60-90 minutes.

Protocol [Adapted from the School Reform Initiative's *Save the Last Word for ME* protocol]

- 1 Individually, read the three descriptions—*Passive*, *Reactive*, and *Proactive*—on the following page. Keep in mind that these descriptions are merely concise, illustrative profiles that are based upon a synthesis of observations, research studies, and reports from schools. Your district or school may closely resemble one of the descriptions or it may reflect elements of all three. The goal is to provoke thoughtful, self-reflective discussions about how your school is addressing ELL success in ninth grade. While reading, participants should identify the specific features they believe accurately describe their school or district, and then select two or three passages they consider particularly important.
- 2 When the group is ready, a volunteer reads one passage that he or she has found to be the most significant. [NOTE: The volunteer should not reveal at this time why the passage is significant.]
- 3 After pausing briefly to reflect upon what has been said, the other three participants will have one minute to respond to the selected passage and express what the text made them think about and what questions it raised.
- 4 After the three have spoken, the first participant has three minutes to explain why he or she selected the passage.
- 5 The group conducts four rounds of seven minutes each. The same process is followed until all members have had a turn.
- 6 Participants share their opinions and thoughts about the district or school's general approach to ELL success, making sure to base their comments on concrete evidence, observations, and hard data as much as possible.
- 7 Each group makes a collective determination about where the district or school falls on the passive-reactive-proactive continuum and cites three specific supporting examples that came up during the session. One group member should be the recorder for this exercise. The group may use a flip chart or computer to record the examples.
- 8 The groups reconvene and share their results with the larger group.
- 9 The large-group facilitator collects the results and examples for future planning, making sure that all participants receive copies.

Here we have the first half of the self-assessment activity. On the left-hand side of this slide, you can see that we have included a handy glossary of ELL terms and abbreviations. In the guide, we strived to avoid abbreviations and use terminology consistently, which I think you will appreciate—specialized ELL-related terms can quickly become alphabet soup.

On the right side, you will find the self-assessment protocol. The directions are pretty self-explanatory, and it's based on a protocol that my colleagues have used many times before and that seems to work quite well. The activity is designed for small groups of four or five, and the activity should take between 60–90 minutes, depending on how much time you want to allocate for reporting out to the full group. This is kind of a “warm-up” activity designed to get your district or school thinking critically about how you approach the ninth-grade transition for ELLs and about how all the parts work together.

Passive

- The school vision and mission say that all students will be prepared for postsecondary success, but ELLs have significantly lower graduation and college-going rates.
- The ELL program is not fully funded, provides only the minimum services required by law, and has little consistency in assessments, classification criteria, or placements.
- The school does not distinguish among ELL subpopulations and does not provide programming or support to address the specific needs of long-term or newcomer ELLs.
- The school does not have formal systems to collect, analyze, or monitor incoming ninth-grade ELL data.
- The district provides little or no ELL-specific professional development, and ELL instruction and support are largely left to ELL teachers (if there are any).
- Ninth-grade orientation for long-term and newcomer ELLs occurs alongside native English-speaking students, and ELL families are not invited to participate.
- Time is not scheduled during the school day for planning meetings between ninth-grade ELL teachers, support specialists, and mainstream teachers—if such meetings do occur, they happen on the teachers' own time.
- Long-term and newcomer ELLs are given the same instruction, assessments, and coursework as other students, with little or no support in their native language—consequently, learning gaps may persist or widen over time.
- The school does not use student data, progress monitoring, or formative assessment to develop and modify interventions for ELLs; individual ELL teachers provide appropriate interventions when they have time.
- Teachers, advisors, and guidance counselors do not proactively and intentionally engage ELLs and their families in discussions about postsecondary planning and preparation.
- The expectations and messages communicated to long-term and newcomer ELLs are inconsistent across programs, courses, and learning opportunities—consequently, many ELLs simply assume they will not graduate on time.
- Long-term and newcomer ELLs and their families are not formally welcomed into the community by school leaders.
- The district and school are unaware of the community, social-service, and mental-health resources that may be available to enhance support for long-term and newcomer ELLs and their families.

Reactive

- The vision and mission do not honor the school's linguistically diverse student population.
- The ELL program is adequately funded, provides all required services, and has clearly articulated reclassification and placement criteria, but it is not based on current research and effectiveness is not consistently monitored.
- The school recognizes the distinct learning needs of long-term and newcomer ELLs, but it is only beginning to develop research-based programs for these students.
- Individual teachers collect and analyze ninth-grade ELL data but there are no formal institutional systems or expectations.
- The district provides annual professional development opportunities for ninth-grade ELL teachers, but other ninth-grade teachers are not invited to attend and they are not encouraged to earn ELL credentials.
- A full-day orientation is provided to all long-term and newcomer ELLs at the beginning of the ninth grade, and older mentor students are paired with incoming ELLs to help with translation and cultural adjustment.
- Ninth-grade ELL teachers and support specialists meet semi-regularly during the school day to review student-performance data, but they rarely collaborate with mainstream teachers until their students are reclassified.
- Long-term and newcomer ELLs are placed in courses with English-speaking students, but they are often given "watered down" texts, slower-paced instruction, and little or no bilingual support—many ELLs are not promoted to tenth grade.
- The school provides only a few standard interventions for long-term and newcomer ELLs, such as in-school ELL labs, after-school programs, and weekend tutoring.
- Teachers, advisors, and guidance counselors voice the value and importance of postsecondary planning and preparation at the beginning of ninth grade, but few practical resources are provided to ELLs or their families.
- Professional development for school staff has led to relatively consistent expectations and messages being communicated to ELLs, but student interviews and surveys indicate that the ELLs harbor mixed feelings about school.
- The district and school are aware of community and government resources that can help support long-term and newcomer ELLs and their families, and a list of these resources is translated for and distributed to ELL students and parents.

Proactive

- The vision and mission explicitly celebrate the school's multicultural and multilingual student body.
- The school has a research-based ELL program that is fully funded by the district and outside sources, provides a diverse array of support services, and has well articulated ELL policies, placement procedures, and classification criteria.
- The school recognizes the distinct social, emotional, and academic needs of long-term and newcomer ELLs, and all teachers and support specialists employ evidence-based strategies to accelerate language and learning acquisition.
- The school has robust early warning systems to collect, analyze, and monitor data on ELLs prior to and after entering ninth grade.
- The district offers specialized ELL training to all staff and professional learning communities help teachers embed ELL-specific support strategies in every course.
- Multiday orientation and summer-bridge programs are provided to all incoming long-term and newcomer ELLs to address academic preparation, language development, acculturation, and confidence building.
- The school provides common planning time every week for ELL teachers, support specialists, and mainstream teachers to discuss support strategies for ninth-grade ELLs.
- Long-term and newcomer ELLs are given the same challenging coursework as English-speaking students, and bilingual texts and intensive academic-language support accelerate readiness for tenth grade.
- The school's research-based intervention system includes in-school, after-school, one-on-one, and classroom-embedded support strategies continually monitored to determine effectiveness.
- A variety of programs for ninth-grade ELLs and their families help them plan and prepare for college and careers, including information nights, college visits, and a postsecondary resource center.
- All school staff intentionally and repeatedly emphasize that postsecondary success is attainable for every ELL, and ELLs and their families are regularly surveyed to ensure that the messages are being heard.
- The school works collaboratively with social-service and mental-health organizations to integrate school-based and community-based support for long-term and newcomer ELLs and their families.

This is second part of the self-assessment activity—the reading and prompt. The language of the three sections—Passive, Reactive, and Proactive—comes out of an in-depth study conducted by members of the technical-assistance team. When they dug into the research on ninth-grade transitions, a pattern began to emerge: the most successful ninth-grade programs were the most proactive when it came to data collection, personalization, interventions, orientation, and communication. The less effective programs, in terms of first-year outcomes, tended to be those that did not fully recognize or embrace the fact that ninth grade might demand specialized strategies—the passive approach—while the reactive schools were those that recognized the need for additional support during the freshman year, but their attempts to address the issues might have been too little, too late, or too scattered to have a significant impact. The goal here is to activate self-reflection and dialogue, not to force your district or school fit into any one of these boxes.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

PASSIVE

The school does not distinguish among ELL subpopulations and does not provide programming or support to address the specific needs of long-term or newcomer ELLs.

REACTIVE

The school recognizes the distinct learning needs of long-term and newcomer ELLs, but it is only beginning to develop research-based programs for these students.

PROACTIVE

The school recognizes the distinct social, emotional, and academic needs of long-term and newcomer ELLs, and all teachers and support specialists employ evidence-based strategies to accelerate language and learning acquisition.

In this slide, I have extracted some language from the self-assessment reading to give you a sense of the content. The three columns are roughly aligned horizontally—that is, similar characteristics and strategies are addressed from top to bottom in all three. In this case, the reading describes different ways in which a school may or may not recognize the specialized learning needs of ELLs and how they are responding. I want to mention here that the self-assessment reading does NOT represent sequential stages that a school goes through to create an effective ELL program—it represents what schools may already be doing, rather than what they should do. In other words, it's a rubric for self-assessment. While the proactive column includes a lot of successful practices, those practices are addressed in greater depth in the subsequent sections.



ROBERT A. MILLIKAN HIGH SCHOOL

MOVING LONG-TERM ELLS TOWARD GRADUATION

Robert A. Millikan High School in Long Beach, California, enrolls roughly 4,000 students. In February 2010, the district participated in a long-term ELL study led by Dr. Laurie Olsen for Californians Together. Researchers discovered that 70 percent of the district's ELLs had been English learners for six or more years, and that 52 percent of these students had been classified as ELLs since first grade. According to Pamela Seki, director of program assistance for language minority students, the district chose Millikan and three other high schools to pilot a new program for long-term ELLs. Students who met the pilot criteria were identified at the four sites and specialized training was provided to selected teachers over the summer. In fall 2011, Millikan began offering an intensive English language development class for tenth-grade ELLs—the year that required state graduation tests are taken. The course consists of two periods of carefully sequenced “amplified” English language instruction designed to accelerate oral and written English fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. In the course, ELLs use the same texts, learn the same content, and are held to the same academic expectations as the mainstream tenth-grade students.

In October 2012, students in the pilot program demonstrated a 38 percent improvement on the California English Language Development Test, and they later achieved a 19% improvement on the ELA section of the California High School Exit Examination. It will take a few years before long-term ELL learning gaps are completely closed in Long Beach, but Millikan is leading the way for the other high schools in the district. And based on the program's positive preliminary results, the district began offering a similarly intensive English language development course for ninth-grade ELLs.

Communication + Outreach

- All critical school information is provided in multilingual or translated formats to ELL parents and families throughout the school year, including letters, announcements, and academic progress reports.
- The school's parent, college, or career centers offer all relevant informational materials in multiple languages.
- The school telephone system provides a multilingual option and instructions on how to utilize it, including the automated telephone notification system.
- For open houses, parent meetings, and major school events, translators representing the multicultural ELL community are on hand and available as needed.
- For each distinct ELL culture represented in the school, a designated parent and family liaison connects with families at the beginning of ninth grade, maintains contact throughout the year, responds to questions, offers support and services, and recruits volunteers and translators.

Cultural Inclusion

- Administrators, teachers, and support specialists receive professional development in relevant cultural traditions to improve their general understanding of the cultural histories, social conditions, and customs of the ELL populations represented in the school.
- The school's multicultural and multilingual community is acknowledged and celebrated from day one, and ninth-grade ELLs are invited to post photos, flags, or writings related to their culture in classrooms, hallways, and on the school website.
- Various cultural traditions and holidays are recognized, celebrated, and respected throughout the year, and school spaces are dedicated for the public or private observation of specific cultural practices when appropriate or requested.
- Ninth-grade courses incorporate the knowledge and experiences of ELL students, and course content integrates topics relevant to the ELL cultures represented in the school, such as reading multicultural authors or studying the contributions of international scientists.

Ongoing Parent Support

- ELL parents are included in all decisions regarding their children— they are well informed of the rationale behind school decisions and their right to refuse services or assistance is always respected.
- The district or school sponsors an ELL parent organization that hosts regular meetings to encourage parent involvement in the school, explain academic options for students, discuss postsecondary and career planning, and provide other learning opportunities of value to the ELL parent community.
- Parents are notified at the beginning of ninth grade about their child's ELL placement, and they are regularly kept informed about academic growth through progress reports, phone calls, and conferences.
- Classification and proficiency-level criteria are clearly communicated to all ELL families, and parents are required to participate in and agree with all reclassifications.
- Parents receive translated materials that describe effective strategies for reinforcing or supplementing academic support at home, including local or online resources they can take advantage of.
- The school utilizes community and cultural centers for parent meetings and other school events that may be more geographically convenient or emotionally comfortable for ELL families.

Community Connections

- The district and school have developed a comprehensive list of community resources and regularly collaborates with cultural leaders and institutions that are important to their ELL populations.
- The school seeks and trains bilingual mentors from the community to help motivate and support long-term and newcomer ELLs by providing in-school and at-home tutoring or offering college and career encouragement.
- School leaders actively work to create internship, job-shadowing, and service-learning opportunities in the community that are specifically for long-term and newcomer ELLs.
- The school partners with local colleges, universities, and technical schools to provide ninth-grade ELLs and their families with opportunities to visit college campuses, attend classes, meet students, see living arrangements, and learn about admissions procedures, course requirements, and financial aid.

Now I'm going to walk you through one of the planning roadmaps, which are designed to focus your school's action planning in four primary areas: the preconditions that need to be in place to create a strong ELL transition program; how to effectively plan for and induct ninth-grade ELLs; how to teach and support them once they come through your doors; and how to reach out to, welcome, and include their parents and families.

All of the roadmaps include four brief profiles of effective strategies from real SLC schools around the country. In this case, Robert A. Millikan High School's efforts to provide “amplified” and accelerated instruction to long-term ELLs and finally close learning gaps that, in some cases, had been present since they entered school. In fact, 52% of incoming long-term ELLs in the district had been classified as ELLs since the first grade. Each of the four major sections is subdivided into three or four subsections that address the discrete areas I spoke about earlier. The subsections feature a selection of essential practices that research, site visits, and interviews have revealed to be effective. Think of this section as an “idea generator,” not as a must-do checklist. The goal here: to help you zero in on a few things that work and that can really make a difference for your ELLs.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

ELL INTERVENTIONS + SUPPORT

The school has embraced a “no excuses” approach to ELL support and intervention—everyone accepts ELLs where they are and take responsibility for getting them to where they need to be.

The school uses an “additive” model of academic support for ELLs that is focused on acculturation, learning acceleration, continual monitoring, and rapid-response interventions designed to quickly move ELLs toward proficiency, reassignment, grade-level performance, and postsecondary preparation.

Here are a few examples of the kind of content you will find in the planning roadmaps. In this case, I’ve extracted two of the more important messages delivered earlier in this presentation: adopting a “no excuses” approach to educating ELLs and an “additive,” as opposed to a “subtractive,” model of ELL instruction and support.

What Leaders Can Do

- ✓ Commit to the ongoing development of your own multicultural awareness and sensitivity—as a school leader, your attitude, expressions, and actions set the tone for the entire school community.
- ✓ Educate yourself about the cultures, languages, and personal experiences of incoming ninth-grade ELLs, and make it a priority to attend and participate in important cultural events held in the community.
- ✓ Remember that small gestures can make a big difference—for example, block out a time every week to check in on a ninth-grade ELL who may be struggling or to meet with an ELL parent you have not met before.
- ✓ Create opportunities for teachers and staff members to have direct, participatory experiences with the languages, cultures, and families of ELLs.
- ✓ Don't assume you know what ELLs and their families are thinking, feeling, or experiencing—ask them directly and often, and use the feedback you receive to inform your leadership and the design of the school's ELL program.
- ✓ Learn about and take advantage of the preferred communication channels within ELL cultural communities—use community forums and focus groups to stay informed about the concerns, perceptions, and viewpoints of ELL families, and act on useful recommendations to build stronger bridges between the school and ELL cultural communities.
- ✓ Create formal, institutionalized procedures for communicating with ELL parents and families, and use multiple communications strategies—websites, social media, email lists, call systems, the student information system—to keep them informed throughout the year.
- ✓ When communicating with ELLs and their families, recognize that proactive methods and more persistent outreach may be required—always repeat important messages, make personal calls and appeals, actively recruit parent and family participation, and ensure that critical communications have been received and understood.
- ✓ Actively welcome and reach out to local cultural leaders and institutions, solicit their involvement in school decisions and events, and welcome their assistance in facilitating communication and engagement with the ELL community.

What's Working

What's Not Working

Priorities + Next Steps

In each of the four planning roadmap sections, you will also find a column called “What Leaders Can Do” and three blank workspaces. The guidance for school leaders offers a few things to think about that go beyond specific action-plan strategies. These recommendations may be more relevant to program directors, superintendents, principals, and leadership teams, but I’m sure other faculty and staff will find them useful, as well. Again, this part of the process is not a checklist, but a way to get school leaders thinking about the intentional—and unintentional—leadership strategies they are using to shape their ninth-grade work. The last part of the process is getting some thoughts down on paper. When you write things down, it gets easier to see how everything fits together—the goal here: give you much clearer sense of the direction you need to take and what your most urgent priority areas are. In the last column, you begin to map out those priorities so they can be addressed in your action plan.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

WHAT LEADERS CAN DO

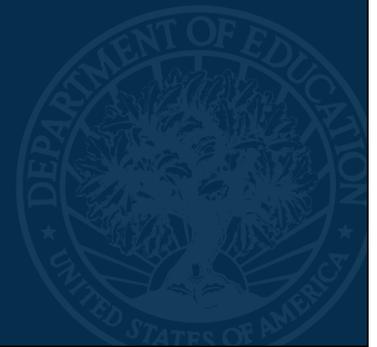
- ✓ Commit to the ongoing development of your own multicultural awareness and sensitivity—as a school leader, your attitude, expressions, and actions set the tone for the entire school community.
- ✓ Educate yourself about the cultures, languages, and personal experiences of incoming ninth-grade ELLs, and make it a priority to attend and participate in important cultural events held in the community.

And here you'll see a few examples of the kind of content you will find in the advice for school leaders. In this case, the examples focus on two important dimensions of leadership: embodying and modeling the behaviors you want to see in your staff, students, and community, and paying attention to the small gestures that, in aggregate, have a huge effect over time. Welcoming families, learning a few phrases in their native language, showing up at cultural events that matter to them—these gestures, coming from a principal or respected teacher, can really make a difference.

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

One thing to remember

Deeper ELL research will be required



Just one final thing before we go to questions:

When it comes to building an effective ELL transition and support program, deeper research will be required. The guide is a great place to start—but it's just the start. Educating ELLs, particularly long-term and newcomer ELLs, requires schools and educators to develop some pretty specialized in-house expertise. The good news is that there is a growing body of research and exemplar schools that are doing a lot of the hardest work for you. Our recommendation: seek them out, listen to what they have to say, and steal from them liberally. It could not only accelerate your own professional understanding, but it could save you one, two, or even three years of learning curve—and that's a lot of time and resources.

For this reason, we've included a list of the research literature we found most useful during the development of the guide. We hope you'll get as much out of these resources as we did.

That's all I got. Thank you.

Questions for the presenter?



Review slide

NINTH GRADE COUNTS

Thank you for
participating today





A Smaller Learning Communities Program
WEBINAR

U.S. Department of Education
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