

Ninth Grade Counts Webinar II: ELL

(Slide 1)

(Opening Presentation - Mary Hastings)

Mary: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the Smaller Learning Communities Webinar on Ninth Grade Transitions for English Language Learners.

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The purpose of today's webinar is to introduce to the second of our Ninth Grade Transition Tool. While our first tool, Ninth Grade Grades 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.

(Slide 3)

Before we get started let's take care of some housekeeping. We have muted all incoming calls except the presenters in order to reduce background noise, so please use the Chat Feature to ask questions or add comments, and I'll show you how to do that.

On the right-hand side of your screen on the lower right you will see the Chat, and all you need to do in the bottom bar is type in your question or comments and hit Enter or Return to send your text.

On the Apple computer that I'm using there's a little bubble on the lower-right that you hit for the return. You can type your questions or comments in at any time and we'll do our best respond to you as soon as possible. We'll be pausing throughout the webinar to give you a chance to formulate questions and put them in the chat room for us.

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If you're disconnected from the online webinar or conference line at anytime during the webinar, please contact our technical support. You might want to jot this number down: 207-773-0505 and we'll do our best to get you connected right away.

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The webinar slides will be posted on our website by the end of the day, on November 15th, which is tomorrow, and there is the online Web link for you so that you can get the webinar slides if you would like to share them others. We will email this address to everyone who registered for today's webinar, so don't worry if you don't copy it down.

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Now I want to introduce you to our technical systems team. We are the team from the organizations that are partnered together to deliver technical assistance to all learning communities program grantees, over the past several years. We have enjoyed meeting many of you in person at recent Project Director's Meetings. We include the Millennial Group International, which is located right outside of Washington, D.C. FHI 360, which is in Washington, D.C., and is the building where we have met with our project directors.

The Great Schools Partnership located in Portland, Maine; the Center for Secondary School Redesign, located in Rhode Island.

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We are please to introduce today's presenters.

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First we have Pamela Seki who is the Director of Program Assistance for language minorities for Long Beach Unified School District, in Long Beach, California. Pamela will be sharing information with us on long-term English Language learners.

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Next we have Gwen Currie Snow, who is the Associate Principal of the ESL Newcomer Academy in Jefferson County, Kentucky, which is Louisville. Gwen is going to be sharing a lot of information about the Newcomer Academy and how that was established and what they do there.

(Slide 11)

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

(Slide 12)

Finally, I am Mary Hastings, your Facilitator for this event. Welcome to all and thank you for taking time out to be with us today.

Are there any questions about the webinar so far at this point? I'll just give you a minute in case anybody has any questions, or is having problems with anything.

I don't see anything at this point, so please go ahead and ask any or give us any comments as we go along.

(Slide 13)

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 can be a mine field for any student, those who are learning both the language and the culture have additional hurdles to overcome. You can see there the three reasons why we created the webinar.

To introduce the new resource, to share evidence-based strategies for transitioning ELLs and to learn from colleague grantees engaged in ninth grade ELL work.

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

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Goal one is to share our research findings that will help your district or school accelerate the English and academic language proficiency of ELLs as they enter high school. We will have those research articles and materials posted on the Web link so that you can refer to those as you begin to do some more work in your schools, with your ELL students.

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Goal two is to hear directly from our school leaders who are implementing effective ELL transition strategies.

(Slide 17)

Goal three: introducing the new resource which is designed to help you take a more proactive approach to the emotional, social, and academic success of ELLs.

(Slide 18)

So 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." This is a condensed version of a much longer quote, and you can see the citation there if you'd like to read the entire quote. It emphasizes the need to address ELL instruction, support and acceleration systemically.

(Slide 19)

We talked about why ninth grade counts so much for traditional students in our first webinar, and now we are going to talk about why it counts even more for English language learners.

The national ELL population grew 51 percent over the last five decades to more than 5 million in our school systems round the country, 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 especially as newcomer students, who are 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.

Many of you may come from places where you have had an influx of refugee or immigrant students and have never had the experience before in your educational system.

(Slide 20)

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.

(Slide 21)

ELLs are at significantly greater risk of failing courses, high rates of absenteeism and dropping out of school. A recent study from the National Center for Research on evaluation standards and student teaching indicates that in states with the highest number of ELL students, their dropout rate was 25 percent or about 310,000 students. That's a lot of students for us to lose out of our systems.

Long-term ELLs and recently-arrived immigrant students may also struggle with significant academic deficits and cultural divides and we'll be hearing a lot about that.

(Slide 22)

In eighth grade, Hispanic students score more than 20 points lower than their White peers on the mathematic portions of the NAEP for instance, and that can certainly predispose them to not being able to do well in high school.

(Slide 23)

ELLs, we know that ELLs are 50 percent less likely than their White English-speaking peers to have access to rigorous curriculum, that prepares them for college, and often this is because they aren't 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 by many college admissions.

(Slide 24)

They 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 English language learners are reduced along with the expectations.

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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.

(Slide 26)

75 percent of English language learners in the United States speak Spanish, but ELLs do represent a linguistic, cultural and educational diversity, and you will see this when Gwen Snow talks about the population as a Newcomer Academy in Louisville.

(Slide 27)

Two ELL populations in particular, require additional attention and support when they enter ninth grade. Those are the long-term English language learners often referred to as LTEL, and newcomer students with significantly interrupted formal education, or SIFE students.

(Slide 28)

We define long-term English language learners as having been in the United States at least six years. They are often native Spanish speakers, and they have remained at an intermediate or lower level of English proficiency. Often placed in mainstream classes by the time they enter high school even if they're not especially ready for it, and they may continue to struggle academically without appropriate interventions. Again, they're at a higher risk of failure or dropping out.

(Slide 29)

The other things that we know about these students are that they're usually orally proficient in English, that their reading and writing is below grade level and they need more intensive support in academic language acquisition. In fact, the same study I mentioned earlier states that ELL students who enter high school still in ELL programs have a dropout rate as high as 33 percent.

(Slide 30)

For newcomer English language learners, 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.

(Slide 31)

They're typically immigrant or refugee students and they've been in the United States for one year or less, so they face significant academic and linguistic challenges.

(Slide 32)

As I stated before, they've often received a sporadic or incomplete formal education in their home countries and they may also be burdened with emotional, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural obstacles. Many of these students have come from places where there is revolution or war and these are scars that they bring with them to their schooling in the United States.

(Slides 33-34)

Here are some things we know about time and ELL students. It takes an average of three to five years to develop oral proficiency in English. It takes about four to seven years to develop academic language proficiency and we are characterizing those two separately because oral proficiency can ... is beneficial to ELL in terms of their social lives, but certainly if they don't know academic vocabulary their educational life will not be as successful as it might be.

Long-term and newcomer ELLs are at a significant disadvantage in terms of time. Time is running out for them, intensive acceleration strategies are required to close the learning gaps and prepare them for college and careers.

(Question and Answer Check Point)

I'm going to stop right there and see if there are any questions about the information we've shared so far. I'll give you a chance to think about any questions or comments you might have or want to make. Some of you may have additional research that you've done that you would like to share or anything at all that is on your mind.

I'm going to continue talking about what districts and schools can do, and certainly Pamela and Gwen will add to this when they talk about their districts.

(Slide 35)

Strategies at schools and districts use really depend on the size and diversity of the ELL population. Priorities for utilizing staff, resources and expertise have to be determined and research and evidence-based practices are essential, and we hope that the tool that we've developed will help you with that. We know that these three things are really necessary up front as you approach your work with ELL populations.

(Slide 36)

Schools and districts that have smaller ELL populations sometimes need to combine levels of English proficiency using skilful differentiations, or perhaps you have a class that have levels one and two, and levels three and four, levels five and six, however you level your students, you may need to combine them.

Train teachers in effective ELL support strategies; is an essential thing to do because every teacher in the school will really be working with these students at one point or another. Focus your resources on ninth and tenth grades to close the learning gaps as soon as possible, especially for newcomer students.

The idea here is to steadily increase ELL awareness, expertise, and capacity over time, and communicating consistently and regularly with ELL parents and families is really essential. You can integrate the acceleration strategies such as English language learner learning-lab period as well.

(Slide 37)

Schools and districts that have large ELL populations often have to significantly restructure their academic program especially during ninth grade so that these students get a good start when they enter high school; for instance they might

create mandatory summer-bridge programs for English language learners that have significant deficits. These students might be identified in middle school, and then they enter the program in the summer. Often those programs are four to six weeks in length in order to keep the English proficiency and academic proficiency going through the summer.

Other things that larger populations might benefit from; are comprehensive orientation programs for English language learners and their families, with translation for all the different languages that are presented there, reaching out to local cultural leaders and organizations of the English language learners. Establish clear policies, procedures, and required practices for English language learner education; and continually collect ELL data, monitor effectiveness, and modify strategies.

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Some of the other things that larger populations should be doing is investing in ELL professional development for all staff; integrating classroom level in school and outside of school support systems. Here are some things that school leaders should be thinking about: Adopting a no-excuses approach to ELL education, embracing the sense that having ELL students in your school, is in addition to the school, not a subtraction from the school.

That's really an important model for a leader to embrace because often you'll hear things like, "Those students are taking money and staffing away from our students, and it's really up to the leader to establish the fact that these are all our students.

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School leaders should also be holding ELLs to the same high academic expectations and English-speaking students, and foster an inclusive environment. Do not tolerate discrimination in any form. Often that means that schools need to spend some significant time developing cultural proficiency as students from other cultures enter.

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Other things that districts and schools can do is to recognize that ELLs and different types of ELLs have different needs and find creative ways to ensure that ELL programs are adequately funded and staffed.

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Finally, districts and schools should consider celebrating their diversity and their represented cultures in a variety of ways and be proactive in communications; so many different approaches may be required with different ELL populations.

(Question and Answer Check Point)

Again, I'm going to pause and see if anyone has any questions or comments at this point before we move on to our speakers.

I'm going to turn it over now to Pamela Seki from Long Beach Unified School District. Thank you, Pamela, for presenting for us today.

(Presentation - Pamela Seki)

(Slide 43 - 44)

Pamela: Thank you, Mary, and hello to today's participants. I'll be sharing with you the story of our journey to unmask and address the long-term English learners within the context of our small learning communities.

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

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We can point to inspiring English learner, and former English learner students who have achieved academic success and gone on to post-secondary study and careers, but data, district and state-wide 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 sub-group.

This professional hunch that our English learner cohort or sub-group was changing led us to explore the long-term English learner. 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.

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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 five-seven years in school. Some begin to identify the long-term learner at five years, but when we began five years ago, we took the conservative number of six years.

However, our current district data indicates that too many English learners who enter school as kindergarteners begin to plateau by grade three and by grade five have many of the characteristics of our high school long-terms English learners. 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.

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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 informing best practices for English learners and high school reform.

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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.

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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 the final slide.

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Digging deeper, we disaggregated our high school English learners. 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 percent 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.

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These students, our long-term English learners, who had been in our schools for more than six 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.

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Having identified our priority cohort, we examined the emerging research particularly that done by Laurie Olsen. Her work defines the profile of long-term English learners who lack academic English language proficiency, have gaps in literacy skills, may not have developed academic proficiency in their primary language, and often, their structural errors have fossilized.

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

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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 post-secondary education, but did not know what was required of them or how to prepare, or how to learn.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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 sounded right to them.

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As we had hoped, we were able to identify specific linguistic challenges faced by our long-term ELs. 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 English Course while putting English learners 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.

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

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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 One. Of those long-term English learners in the pilot program, 24.2 percent have subsequently met all reclassification criteria, far exceeding our district average of 11.3 percent, 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.

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At the end of the first year, we inventoried the participant students again, looking not for linguistic challenges, but for linguistic empowerment. Reading their words is as powerful as the achievement data.

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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.

(Slide 64)

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

(Slide 65)

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

(Slide 66)

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

(Slides 67 to 70)

What you see on this slide are the resources that were used to inform our work, and I hope that you will find them helpful as well.

(End of Pamela Seki's Presentation)

Mary: Thank you so much, Pamela, for your information, and again this is an opportunity for folks to ask questions of the presenter via the chat room. Pamela has worked very hard in her district along the lines of helping all the English language learners and I visited there last spring and saw some of the fine work that's being done.

I do encourage you, if you have any questions for her to please ask her and I think we'll give you a few minutes ... a couple of minutes and if any questions come up. Just so you have some time to process, even if those questions come up later you can certainly put them up in the chat room and we'll do our best to respond.

(Question and Answer Check Point)

Let's take a minute or two to just give you some time to process all of the great information from Pamela. It looks like we have a pretty quiet group today.

I think we'll move on to Gwen Snow from Jefferson County English as a Second Language Newcomer Academy. Gwen?

(Presentation - Gwen Snow)

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Gwen: Hello. Good afternoon. Thank you for having me on this webinar. Here, talking about a little introduction.

For many ninth graders, attending Algebra-One 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 ninth 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 ninth grader who just moved to the United States. A ninth grader with beginning English skills, little understanding of what U.S. 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 at this point.

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Over the past ten years, the English Learner population in Louisville, Kentucky, Jefferson County Public Schools has grown dramatically. This year, there are over 6,000 LEP students in a district of over 100,000. This is a 200 percent 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 percent of students enrolled at the ESL Newcomer Academy have had a limited exposure to formal education.

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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.

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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*, by Short and Boyson, was both instrumental in the ESL Newcomer Academy's ... were both instrumental in the ESL Newcomer Academy's initial design.

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

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The ESL Newcomer Academy has grown continually since its inception. As of November 12, the enrollment has already reached 271, which is 25 more than what's listed on this from a month ago, 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.

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

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The ESL Newcomer Academy provides services for Students who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school and are assigned to the school. About 20 percent of our student population is invited to stay a second year as they are SIFE 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 sheltered ... they are placed on the sheltered instruction content classes when they have had the opportunity to build these basic skills.

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The ESL Newcomer Academy services students in grades six through 10 in Jefferson County Public Schools. Placement in grades six to eight is based on their age, whereas grades nine and 10 is for any student age 14 and up with less than ... grades nine is for any students age 14 and up with less than five credits, and 10th graders have five to 11 credits coming in to our program. Ninth graders in our SIFE program are earning elective credits as they go through the basic literacy and numeracy classes.

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

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Research shows that it takes a typical ESL student anywhere from three to 10 years to become as proficient in academic English as his or her fluent-speaking peers, and older students ... 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, to keep up with their peers.

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.

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On staff, we have six Bilingual Associate Instructors who provide bilingual support for Somali, Swahili, Spanish, Arabic and Nepali students which are currently the major primary languages we have in our school.

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 in seven Counties. Having a full-time counselor, plus the added support of local agencies has made a difference for many of our students.

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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.

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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 we use more accessible to students, but they are also learning academic English at the same time.

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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 classes, and also to get a baseline score to measure their growth for later. Students follow grade-appropriate curriculum. They are introduced to the textbooks of their

native-speaking peers, but they 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 English language classes.

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There are several opportunities for families to learn more about what their students are doing at school. At our Academy, we understand the needs of both Newcomer students and their families. The U.S. 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, and also an overview of the school, and give our families some basics that they 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 the 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 an opportunity for students to share about themselves with their families and the community, as well as to welcome back former students.

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A typical day at the ESL Newcomer Academy begins at 7:40 a.m. and ends at 2:20 p.m. Students come from all over Jefferson County Public Schools to attend the district-wide program housed at the campus.

All students have five classes, but on Wednesdays we have an extra class called Advocacy. Students learn character education in this class, or they get extra interventions to help them in areas in which they struggle. We also use this time to host guest speakers also talk about different issues pertaining to cultural identity, or adapting to the local community.

We also have a college awareness event annually, and we invite 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.

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Our students are placed on teams, and their teachers meet at least once a week to discuss needed interventions and student-related issues. No student is overlooked 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. They 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. For example, the Green House is comprised of students with a significantly interrupted formal education and has grades six through nine. The 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.

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Another house is called the Dream House, which is grades nine and 10; and these students have either a formal education or they are second year SIFE students returning with us. The students take courses required for graduation and all classes are taught by teachers who are highly qualified in their subject area, plus have an ESL endorsement or certification.

(Slide 89)

The Global House is basically the same as the Dream House, except it services grades six through eight and all teachers are, once again, highly qualified in their subject area, plus have the ESL endorsement or certification.

(Slide 90)

Another house we have is called the Fun House; these are students that are, kind of, part of our Green House, they're grades nine and 10, and they have a formal education background or are second year SIFE, but they need a little bit more intervention especially with literacy and numeracy, so we build that into their schedule so that they have more time to work with that.

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We also have a Life Skills rotation, the team of teachers addressing various components of needed life skills for our specific student population. This also provides time for the other houses time to collaborate during a common planning period.

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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 20 hours per week, and are provided with transportation, meals, and many exciting experiential activities to help them prepare for the following school year.

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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.

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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.

(Slide 95)

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, which is 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 dropout rates.

(Question and Answer)

(Slide 96)

Mary: Thank you, Gwyn. Thank you so much for all that wonderful information. There are several questions from our participants for you that I'd like to ask.

Matt has asked, "What types of assessments do you use at the Newcomer Academy?"

Gwyn: At our intake center, of course we use the WAPT, which is an intake assessment through WIDA which is a [consortium 00:47:52] I think there's about 25 states using that, and that's where students, if they have a 2.0 or below, are placed in our program. When students are first starting out with us on their first day we offer some additional assessments to give us some baseline data and to see where they're at.

For that, we are using the Hampton Brown Edge curriculum, they have a placement test that gives a select ELL level, and then we have looked and looked for some sort of universal screen that helps us with math, and it's difficult to find right now, but basically what we are using right now is teacher-created ... that our math team has gotten together and created math assessment that is very limited as far as needing verbal background. It's the thing that they are already know as far as basic math concepts, and we use that to help us determine which level of math or what kind of background they have with that.

Mary: Could you say what WIDA means, W-I-D-A, please, for Matt?

Gwen: Yes. I'm really bad at this too; I have to look it up myself. I'm really bad with acronyms.

(Laughter)

Gwen: That's a kind of ...

Mary: I think it's something like: World International ... I can't remember either but I'll look it up and we'll see if we can find it.

Gwen: I've got it; it's World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment.

Mary: Then the WAPT test is ...? I'm sorry.

Gwen: The WAPT is the ... you get me on that.

Mary: I think it's WIDA ... I want to say Aptitude, but I'm not sure that's it. It might be Assessment...

Gwen: WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test.

Mary: WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test, thank you. I hope that helps you, Matt.

Then, another participant has asked if you could describe the comprehensive classroom. You did mention that when students go to comprehensive high schools, they are in some ESL programming and then they're in comprehensive classrooms, and I think that's what this person wants to know.

Gwen: Basically, we have several other schools throughout the district, not all of the high schools but about half of them, and about half of the middle schools have an ESL Program within their schools. When a student leaves our program, or if they test too high on the WAPT, they are assigned to one of those schools if they want to continue receiving ESL services.

Basically what that looks like it's a regular high school and instead of language arts for more beginning-level students, they'll have an ESL language arts class taught by an ESL-certified teacher, who is also highly qualified in language arts.

Then usually the rest of their day will be in just regular, Algebra-one or on integrated science, or whatever the mainstream classes are taking. There might be a few other ESL students in there with them, they have some peer educators, some bilinguals that will go in and support those teachers, but a bigger jump up. The instruction is to a comprehensive or a mainstream environment there.

Mary: I will add to that, that when I visited the comprehensive high schools that had the ESL Programs in Louisville, that I did meet with those teachers, the ninth grade teachers and they were very committed to their ESL students, along with helping them to develop their academic skills. I think it really helps to have a dedicated group of teachers teaching those students.

Another question that came up was about transportation and my memory was that you have transportation, but service to the school, is that correct?

Gwen: Yes. We do. All our students have access to JCPS transportation, a lot of them have to take two buses to get here, but they do have public school transportation provided for them.

Mary: Kyle is asking, if students receive credits towards graduation for attending the Newcomer's Academy.

Gwen: Yes, absolutely. If they're high school students, and they are on our regular team they've had a formal education background, basically their schedule looks something like: they have algebra-one, integrated science, English language arts, world civilization and they'll have health and computer applications, which are all required classes for graduation.

Then if they're on our Interrupted Education team, they're taking language and numeracy development classes which they receive elective credit for, but they do, as I said, receive credit and it all applies towards their graduation.

Mary: That's great. Stephen is asking a number of questions here, but I think they are probably questions that a lot of folks might have in the backs of their minds.

"What two or three strategies would you recommend to schools that are just beginning to develop in ELL program, Gwen?"

Gwen: I guess the biggest thing is look at where you are currently, collect some data and see what kinds of needs you have, and data, not only just their reading math scores, but getting feedback from students that maybe have been in the program for a couple of years and where they've struggled.

In fact, we do that ourselves, too. We've already set up our programs that we collect that information from transitioning students to see how we can improve and seeing ... and checking with the receiving schools and the other schools what are the specific areas of needs; that need to be worked on. Maybe visiting some other schools, there are some good resources out there, especially through CAL, has come out with a lot of recent information on Newcomer programs, and just reading up on different program models and what would work best.

Mary: During the research. Pamela, do you have anything you want to add to what Gwen is suggesting for starting ... developing and ELL program?

Pamela: I think her advice is on target. That you need to have your data to look at who your students are and what their needs are, and then there is a beginning group or body of research that is now available to us on the website, such as CAL.

Understanding Language is another website through Stanford University that has a good solid base of research.

Mary: I know Deborah Short has written a really ... a good report on *Newcomer Programs in the United States*, and I think that would be a terrific resource, as well, for anybody who is thinking about starting a Newcomer Academy. I know I recommended it to a number of schools in New England.

Then another question that Stephen has is, "Which strategies have you seen have the greatest impact?"

I presume he means strategies within the school.

Gwen: This year we have started this common planning time for teams, the teams that all have the same group of students, but different subject areas. They same group of students but they have algebra-one with this teacher, and science with another teacher, and we have given them a Common Plan time and they're doing professional learning communities, and they are creating common language assessments, focusing on one of the language domains.

Most of them are focusing on writing, and using some rubrics from the WIDA consortium to help them see where their [audio skip 00:55:27] are and they actually create assessments and lessons to drive students towards that next level, and using that measurement to help them along. Then also using our life skills rotations as time for interventions and also that advocacy time that's an extra non-instructional time where ... or it's a time where it's something where we could pull kids out and they're not going to get their grade lowered, giving them a [audio skip 00:55:53] there as well.

Then this after-school program we are starting we'll also be able to do the same thing, just extra time to target those areas of needs that these PLC teams are finding that they need as they gather data.

Mary: Terrific. We do know that Common Planning Time is one of the greatest strategies to use for improved academic achievements all across the board, not just with the ELL students.

Pamela, do you have anything you want to add to that in terms of greatest impact.

Pamela: For us, with our long-term English learners, the greatest impact was doing additional time but with the same instructional materials as the core class, so that their intervention wasn't disconnected from what they're doing during the regular core class.

Mary: Thank you. Thank you for your questions, participants, and please continue to ask them as we go along.

Now I'd like to introduce Stephen Abbott from the Great Schools Partnership, who's going to talk to you about the new resource we've developed.

(Presentation Stephen Abbott)

(Slide 97)

Stephen: Thank you, Mary. Glad to be here.

My name, as Mary mentioned, is Stephen Abbott, and I am the Director of Communications for the Great Schools Partnership, and I'm also the co-author, along with Mary, of *Ninth Grade Counts: Strengthening the High School Transition for English Language Learners*; and it's this new self-assessment and planning guide for Smaller Learning Community Program grantees.

My presentation today will provide you with a brief introduction to the tool and how it works. At the beginning here, I'll talk about ... or at the beginning of this presentation, we did share our webpage link, and you can go to that link and download the tool. If you encounter any questions that you weren't able to ask today, feel free to reach to my colleague, Mary Hastings, whose email is on the page and she'll be able to help you out with anything you need.

Let's get started here.

(Slide 98)

If you are familiar with our first Ninth Grade Counts guide, was called *Strengthening the Transition in High School*, that guide addressed systemic transition strategies that can improve support for all ninth-grade students. You will notice that the new guide is mirroring the basic format of that tool. Even has the same cover design, and that's very intentional because this new resource is part of an integrated three-part guide, but we felt that by packaging them separately, it would make it a bit more manageable since there's a lot of information to each resource.

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The first focus ... or the focus of the first tool, as I mentioned, was on systems thinking; encouraging districts and schools to consider the systemic inter-relationships that will make or break the ninth-grade year for many students.

This new tool is designed to do a very similar thing, but with a deeper and more intensive focus on a particular student sub-group, as you might have guessed by

now, ELLs, and especially two categories of ELLs that we've heard a lot about today: Long-term English language learners and Newcomer students that have experienced significantly-interrupted formal education.

As you will see when you begin using the guide, a lot of the content is devoted to strategies that specifically target these two high-need student groups, although strategies that help them, generally useful for all ELLs.

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 get that wrapped up and out to all of you before or around the beginning of the New Year. Stay tuned on that.

(Slide 100)

The entire Ninth Grade Counts series is based on research, site visits to SLC schools around the country, interviews with dozens and dozens of practicing educators, and first-hand leadership experience.

For example, Mary Hastings has been a School Coach and SLC Project Director for many years, and she has helped several schools including; several SLC grantees successfully convert to smaller learning communities, develop ninth-grade teams, and create more personalized first-year programs. A lot of first-hand experience on the ground practice has informed this guide.

We also had help from several people, including the researchers and ELL experts that you see here, all of these four people review drafts of the tool and provided many recommendations for improvement.

(Slide 101)

We also stole a lot of wonderful 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 this presentation.

(Slide 102)

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 administrators, your faculties, really to take an honest look at where you are at and where you would like to go.

When I say that, I mean in terms of both the specific ELL improvement strategies that you want to attack and the outcomes they hope to achieve for ELLs in the ninth and tenth grades.

While all of the strategies are based on research and effective programs, this tool is definitely not in any way an academic study, it's a practical self-assessment and planning process that any school team can work through in a few hours.

As Gwen mentioned earlier, when it comes to instructing and supporting ELLs, knowing your students is really the best place to start and if you think about this guide as pretty much that for your school. It's a way for you to reflect on what's in place and in a focused way, really determine what's going on and then building your program based on that informed position.

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 pretty unique challenges for this student sub-group, 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 that we came across, and present it in a way that would be useful to busy practicing educators. The goal was to create an efficient, concentrated process that school teams and faculties could complete in less than a day; when I say that I mean like 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 at once comprehensive, and also non-burdensome.

The guide has three major components: self-assessment activity that's intended to be completed in small groups, a series of four planning roadmaps that will help your school determine action-plan priorities, and 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, and as was mentioned, again, earlier in the presentation, getting into that research is quite important.

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In this stage of the process the first part of the tool 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: the relationships among teachers, the messages both explicit and implicit, that students receive, or the policies that are in place at the district level can have a big impact on the effectiveness and results of a school improvement process. That's why we devoted this section to issues such as culture, expectations, resources, professional development, and leadership.

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

(Slide 105)

As I'm sure all of you know, the foundation of any effective ninth-grade transition really comes down to the quality of instruction, intervention, support that your students receive, and it's even more so in the case of ELLs. That's really what this tool is all about, making the kind of learning experience; or creating the kind of learning experience that will keep more ELLs in school, that will accelerate their learning. It will put them on track to graduation, to college, and rewarding careers.

In this section, we have addressed not only effective instructional strategies and interventions, but also social and emotional support.

(Slide 106)

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

Now I'm going to just walk you quickly through some of the Guide's major sections.

(Slide 107)

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 little glossary of ELL terms and abbreviations. In this Guide, we did strive to avoid the use of abbreviations, and to use terminology consistently, and I think that if you do end using the guide you will appreciate that, since the specialized ELL-related terms can quickly degenerate into alphabet soup, as I'm sure you know.

On the right-hand side of this slide, 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 for this kind of an activity. The process is designed for small groups of four or five; and the activity should take between 60–90 minutes, really depending on how much time you want to allocate for reporting out to the full group, or a process you want to use for that.

We really think of this as a warm-up activity, it's designed to get your district or school or leadership team thinking critically about how you approach the ninth-grade transition for ELLs already, and how all the parts working together, or not working together so well.

(Slide 108)

This is second part of the self-assessment activity; it's the reading and the prompt. The language of the three sections, Passive, Reactive, and Proactive—comes out of an in-depth study that was conducted by members of the technical-assistance team. This was printed ... the guide was printed, the first part of self-assessment activity will be on the left-hand side of the page, and this would be on the right-hand side of the page.

When these researchers dug into the research on ninth-grade transitions, and actually went out to schools all across the country and looked at what they were doing and not doing. A pretty strong pattern began to emerge, and in a word, the most successful ninth-grade programs were the most proactive when it came to data collection, personalization, interventions, orientation, and communication with community, parents and families.

The less effective programs, in terms of first and second-year outcomes, tended to be those that did not fully recognize or embrace the fact that ninth grade might demand specialized strategies. We will call this the passive approach. While the reactive schools were those that recognized the need for additional support during the freshman year, and far more innovated strategies, but their attempts to address those issues will probably ... too little too, which is scattered to really have a significant impact on a student achievement aspirations and learning acceleration.

The goal here is to activate self-reflection, and focused, structured, projective dialogue. It's really not to force your district or your school to fit into any one of these boxes. Think of this more as a continuum rather than three [distinct 01:09:59] boxes into which you're going to need with that.

(Slide 109)

In this slide, I have extracted some of the language from the self-assessment reading, since it was a little small, and you probably weren't able to read it on the previous slide; just to give you a sense of the content.

These are three columns that are roughly aligned horizontally; that is that similar characteristics and strategies are addressed from top to bottom in all three. If you read across the page horizontally, you will ... the bullets will be describing similar programs and strategies of features of a transition program.

In this case, the reading describes different ways in which a school may or may not recognize these specialized learning needs of ELLs and how they are responding. I want to mention here that the self-assessment reading does not represent sequential strategies that a school goes through to create an effective ELL program. It really represents what schools may already be doing really not what they shouldn't do.

Again, this is an assessment rubric; it's not a plan of action. In other words, don't look at it as a roadmap; the roadmaps are to come. The proactive column does, however, include a lot of pretty successful high-impact practices ...

Excuse me; is somebody rubbing up against the phone? I'm getting some background noise here. Yes, if somebody who is on, one of the presenters could just mute their phone that would be great. Thank you.

Even though the proactive column includes a lot of successful practices many of those practices or most or all of them are addressed in greater depth in the subsequent sections.

(Slide 110)

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

All of the four roadmaps include brief profiles of effective strategies from real SLC schools around the country. In this case, there is a profile of Robert A. Millikan High School's efforts to provide an amplified or accelerated instructional program to long-term ELLs, and to finally close learning gaps that, in some cases, had been present since they entered formal schooling. In fact, in this district I believe 52 percent of incoming long-term ELLs had been classified as ELLs since

the first grade, which is, pretty staggering statistic and a pretty significant obstacle for the high school to overcome.

Each of the four major sections in the roadmap is subdivided into three or four sub-sections that address the discrete areas I spoke about earlier. The sections feature a selection of essential practices that research or site visits or interviews, and our experience in higher-performing schools that have been revealed to be effective.

Think of this section as really an idea generator, not as a must-do checklist. It's not about going through and making sure you check off each one of these things, it's really about helping you zero in on a few things, a few critical things, that can really make a difference for your school and your teachers in your ELL population.

(Slide 111)

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 the presentation; adopting a no-excuses approach to educating ELLs, and an additive, as opposed to a subtractive model of ELL instruction and support.

Again, this tool is pretty intensively focused on learning acceleration, getting students back on grade level, and graduating and prepared for college and careers.

(Slide 112)

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 that other faculty members and staff will find them useful as well.

Again, this part of the process is not a checklist in any way, it's really intended to get school leaders thinking more consciously and more intentionally about the 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, I found it just gets easier to see how things fit together, and the goal here is to give you a clearer sense of the direction you need or want to take and really, 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.

(Slide 113)

Here you'll see a few examples of the content that 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, will really have a huge effect over time.

For example, welcoming families new to your school or district, learning a few phrases in the native language of your students, showing up at cultural events that are important to your student populations; these gestures, coming from a principal or respected teacher, that can really make a difference.

(Slide 114)

Just one final thing before we go to questions. When it comes to building an effective ELL transition and support program, deeper research is going to be required. This is mentioned, I think, earlier in the presentation, and while we look at this, this guide or tool as a great place to start, it's really just the start. Educating ELLs and particularly those long-term and newcomer ELLs, we've been talking about; it requires schools and educators to develop some pretty specialized in-house expertise and new strategies.

The good news though, is that there is a growing body of research and exemplar schools that are doing a lot of the hardest work for you, and my recommendation to everyone is to seek them out, listen to what they have to say, and really just steal from them, [literally 01:17:36].

Working with a lot of schools over the years, we've seen a lot of people begin an improvement process from scratch and not really go out there and do a thorough [inaudible 01:17:55] assessment of what's already been done. When you do that, it cannot only really accelerate your own professional understanding and growth as school leaders and educators, but it could save you, literally, one, two, or even three years of learning curve, and that's a lot of time and that's a lot of resources.

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

That's all I've got for you today. Thank you very much.

(Slide 115)

(Question and Answer)

Mary: Stephen, thank you so much for going over the guide for everyone. I don't know if anyone has any specific questions, but feel free to ask them. I will say that we are going to be ... in addition to posting this webinar and the guide on the website that we mentioned earlier, we will be sending you a link as well tomorrow, in an email for an evaluation ... an online evaluation that will take you about, I don't know, five minutes or so to fill out, on the webinar, so that we can get some feedback from you.

Any questions at all anybody wants to ask about the guide, please type them into the chat room and while Stephen is still on we'll be glad to respond to those. Also, if there any leftover questions that any of you have for Gwen or Pamela about the Long-Term program and the Newcomer program, you could type those in as well.

I will let you know that we have a third tool coming out which is also part of the ninth grade transition and this tool will be on summer-bridge programs. It will be in a similar format, and we will be doing webinars for that tool probably, I think it's in December. The first one will be in December, and then I believe there's another one after the first of the year, so look for that. Hopefully, you'll also access the ninth grade transition guide if you're interested in that.

I don't see any questions. I do want to ... I know that people need time to process, so as Stephen said, please feel free to email me and I'll be glad to respond to any questions that are lingering for folks.

Gwen and Pamela, thank you again for your participation in this, and Stephen as well. We hope that this was helpful to you as you continue to help your English language learners do their work in school successfully, and go on, hopefully, afterwards....

Oh, someone is typing in a question. Thank you, Tina, we will wait till your question is in and then we'll see what we can do to help you out.

In any case, the interesting thing for me today is that I heard the President's first press conference after his reelection, and he mentions, specifically, the immigration issues in the States and the Dream Act, and helping out students who are working so hard to learn English and be part of our culture, and that was very encouraging in light of knowing that this webinar was coming up this afternoon.

We will wait and see what Tina has to say here, and looking forward to that. Certainly, all of you ... it's interesting to see that people on the list here are from all over the country, and we have a number of participants from Hawaii as well, so we really do appreciate you with all the different time changes that you were able to be part of our work.

Waiting for Tina here, I don't know if she's still typing or what, but anyway. Tina, I hope you can see what she's written on the chat room. She said, "Considering their high population in ..." Tina is from Texas, "...that they would love to support any networking, and they feel the tool will support the school districts to move forward in support of ELLs." Thank you, Tina, that's great to know.

Certainly given that Tina is going to do networking we certainly encourage all of you to consider that and we can certainly put you in touch with one another as time progresses.

(Slide 116)

(Thank You - Closing)

Thank you; once again, for your participation today, and look for our email tomorrow with the follow-up Web links, and we wish you all well for the remainder of the school year.

Bye-bye.