English Learners at a Glance

Multilingual/Language Development Department

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Introductions

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Federal and State Requirements

Federal Requirements

- **Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964**
  - Prohibits denial of equal access to education because of language minority students' limited proficiency in English.
- **Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974**
  - Defines denial of equal educational opportunity as "failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in an instructional program".
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975**
  - Provides for free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation.
  - Ensures special education and related services to those children.
- **Title III of the ESEA of 1968 as amended by ESSA**
  - Establishes federal funding for supplemental services and programming to serve English learners.
  - English learners (ELs) must be able to participate effectively in all programs and content areas.

Landmark Cases

- **Lau v. Nichols**: (414 U.S. 563, U.S. Supreme Court, 1974)
  - Districts must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by the non-English speaking students in the district.
- **Castañeda v. Pickard**: (648 F.2d 989, U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit, 1981)
  - Program for ELs should be:
    1. Theory: Based on "a sound educational theory"
    2. Practice: "Reasonably calculated to implement effectively the educational theory adopted by the school," with adequate resources and personnel.
    3. Results: Evaluated as effective in overcoming language barriers after a trial period.
- **Plyler v. Doe**: (457 U.S. 202, 102 S. Ct. 2382, 72 L. Ed. 2d 786, 1982)
  - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that undocumented children have the same right as U.S. citizens and permanent residents to receive a free public education.

Illinois Codes

- Illinois School Code
  - Article 14C, Transitional Bilingual Education
  - Article 14D, Dual Language Education
  - Section 22-105, Safe Schools for All Act (Guidance on the Safe Schools for All Act)
- Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23)
  - Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education
  - Part 680, State Seal of Biliteracy

"How familiar are you with EL identification and placement?"

Let's assess ...

- Please raise your hand if you ...
  - Are new to this process
  - Need help with compliance
  - Are struggling with programming and staffing

Key Terms

- EL = English learner
- TBE = Transitional Bilingual Education
- TPI = Transitional Program of Instruction
- HLS = Home Language Survey
- WIDA = Approved organization that provides Illinois with EL standards and assessments

Cultural Sensitivity

- Honor students' native languages and cultures.
- Use inclusive communication with families.
- Avoid deficit thinking — focus on assets!

Newcomer Myths and Facts

Newcomer Myths and Facts

Myth: Their families do not prioritize education because they don't come to school events.

Fact: Many families face language barriers, transportation issues, or work long hours. Schools should consider how they can reduce the barriers families face to encourage and facilitate parent engagement in school events. In addition, the idea of family engagement in schools is uniquely American. Families may need specific and targeted invitations and instruction to help them understand American school culture.

Myth: Newcomers need to be placed in low-level or remedial classes until their English improves.

Fact: Academic ability and English proficiency are separate. Students may be highly capable in content areas when provided with appropriate linguistic support. Schools are encouraged to assess Newcomers' content skills in their native language wherever possible to ensure they are placed in courses appropriate to their academic abilities.

Myth: Newcomers should assimilate quickly and behave like other students.

Fact: Cultural adjustment takes time, and maintaining cultural identity supports emotional well-being.

Newcomer Myths and Facts (continued)

Myth: All newcomer students have experienced trauma.

Fact: While many have faced challenges, not all have experienced trauma and assuming so can pathologize them unnecessarily. It is important to learn about and know your students.

Myth: Only ESL teachers are responsible for teaching newcomers English.

Fact: Language development should be the focus across all content-areas and from every educator. Each content area has its own Academic English vocabulary that teachers are responsible for teaching to all students in their classes.

Myth: They'll catch up on their own time.

Fact: While there is some truth to this statement, without targeted support (language development, trauma-informed care, academic scaffolds, possible interventions), many will fall behind.

Steps for Compliance



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Home Language Survey



A form given at registration to determine if a language other than English is spoken at home or by the student



Must be administered to all new students



Sample HLS forms

EL Screening

- What's required?
  - WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener for Grades 1–12
- WIDA Account Setup
- Requirements to administer
  - Must complete WIDA training
  - Must have a PEL with appropriate endorsement

Cutoff Scores		
First semester of kindergarten	WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (listening and speaking domains)	5.0 oral language proficiency
Second semester of kindergarten–first semester of 1st grade	WIDA Screener for Kindergarten (all domains)	Overall composite 5.0
Second semester of 1st grade–12th grade	WIDA Screener (required screener – online or paper)	Overall composite 5.0

Placement

- TBE vs. TPI
  - TBE (Transitional Bilingual Education): For schools with 20+ students who share the same language.
  - TPI (Transitional Program of Instruction): For smaller groups or mixed-language EL populations.

Parent Notification

Must notify parents/caregivers within 30 days

Include placement, services, and rights

Provide letters in parents'/caregivers' home language

Sample notification letters



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Required Credentials for Teachers

- **ESL Endorsement** (PreK–12)
  - May provide services via pull-out or collaboration (push-in or co-teach)
  - A content area and/or grade level endorsement required to be "teacher of record"

- **Bilingual Endorsement** (PreK–12)
  - May teach in bilingual education programs in the teacher's endorsed grade levels
  - May provide collaborative services (push-in or co-teach) in content-specific bilingual courses
  - A content area endorsement required to be "teacher of record" in content-specific bilingual courses

ELS Credential for Teachers

ELS-TBE

Educator License with Stipulations – Transitional Bilingual Education

- Candidate must hold a bachelor's degree, pass a language proficiency test, and submit application to ISBE.
- Candidate may teach:
  - Transitional Bilingual Education PreK–12
  - ESL Education PreK-6
- Candidate has five years to complete necessary coursework to earn a Professional Educator License.
  - ESL and/or Bilingual Education Endorsements as well as any necessary content area/grade level endorsements must be earned if candidate wishes to continue teaching in this specialty.

Required Credentials for Administrators

- If the LEA has 1-199 students identified as ELs, the designated EL program administrator must:
  - Hold a valid Administrative or Supervisory Endorsement.
  - Annually complete a minimum of eight hours of professional development focused on EL programming.
- If the LEA has 200+ students identified as ELs, the designated EL program administrator must:
  - Hold a valid Administrative or Supervisory Endorsement.
  - Hold one of the following:
    - A Bilingual Endorsement
    - An ESL Endorsement with a language designation
    - 18 credit hours of related coursework as listed in 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1.783

ESL Teacher Access

- **Need a teacher?**
  - Options:
    - Shared/itinerant ESL teacher
    - Online/hybrid support
    - Current staff may seek supplemental endorsement

Making It Work With Low EL Numbers

Challenges

- Staffing
- Scheduling
- Classroom integration

Solutions

- Use pull-out or co-teaching models
- Build language support into core instruction

BICS vs. CALP



Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

Everyday social language used in informal settings, such as talking with friends, chatting at lunch or recess, or asking to go to the bathroom.

BICS typically develops within six months to two years after arrival.

Important to know: Just because a student sounds fluent in conversation does not mean they are ready for independent academic work in English. These students will need accommodations, scaffolds, visuals, and other necessary instructional strategies to help make the content as meaningful and accessible as possible.



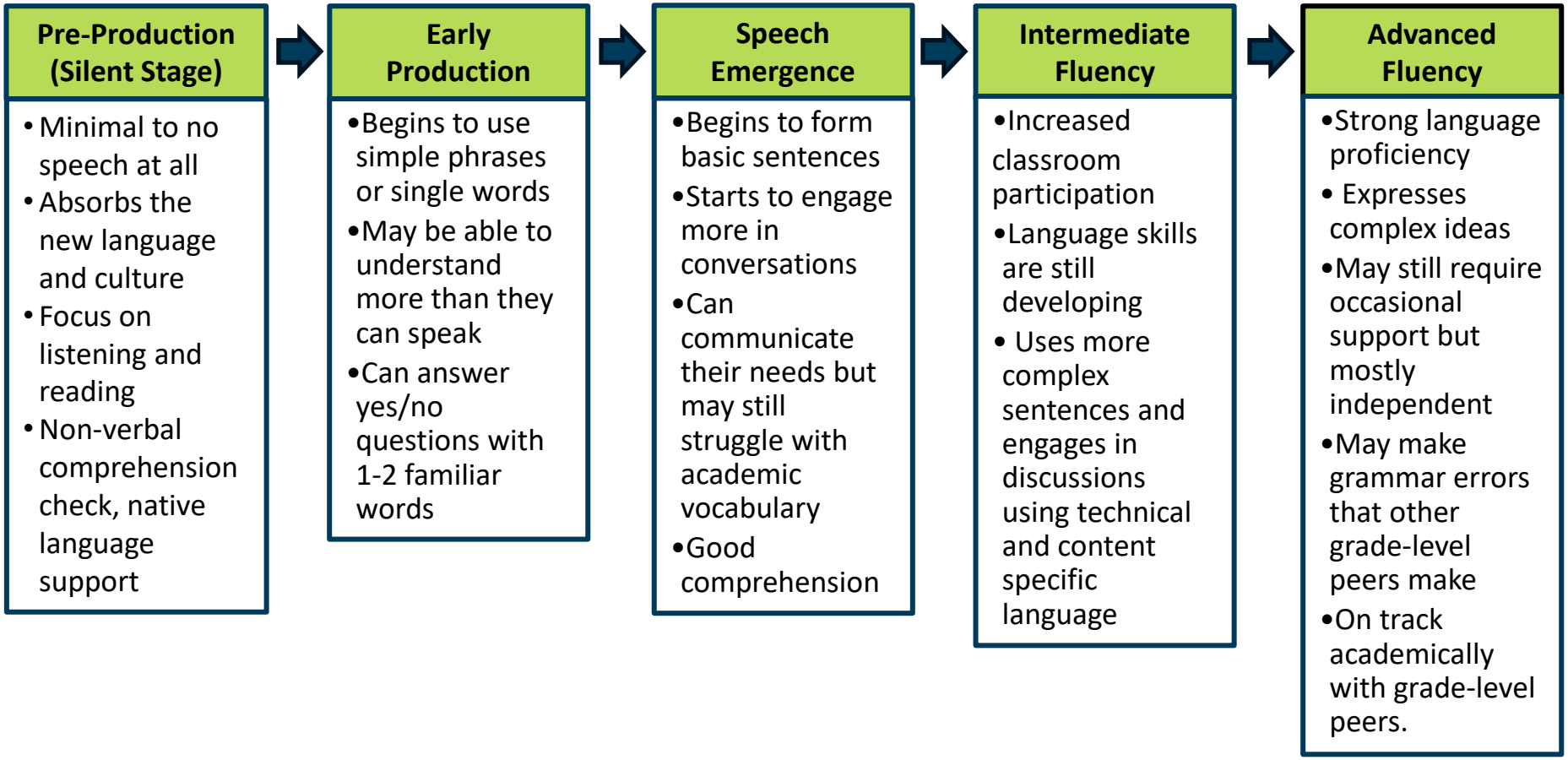
Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

Academic language that is needed to understand textbooks, write essays, solve word problems, or explain scientific concepts.

It can take five to seven years (or longer) to develop, especially without strong support in the student's first language.

Important to know: This is the language needed to succeed in school. Students might struggle with CALP even though their BICS is strong.

Stages of a Newcomer Student's Adjustment



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Resources

- Supporting English Learners Guide
- Newcomer Students at a Glance
- NCELA Newcomer Toolkit
- Dept. Of Education English Learner Toolkit
- Colorín Colorado
- ISBE Multilingual webpage

Questions?

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Multilingual Webpage

Assigned Consultant Listing

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Thank you!

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