



Willamette
EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

Oregon Department of Education
Education Service District
English Language Development Support
Year 1 Evaluation Results



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ODE ESD English Language Development Support Year 1 Evaluation Results

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the first partial year of the implementation of the Oregon Department of Education's special funding to provide English language development support to districts in five Educational Service Districts (ESD) and those nearby with 20 or fewer identified English learners. The purpose of this funding is to address disparities in outcomes of English learners in rural districts by providing technical assistance (TA) on culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and practice.

Six English Learner (EL) Specialists were hired to serve five ESDs. They provided technical assistance in 18 different content areas, depending on the needs identified by the programs they served. Participants in 54 districts received services.

Specialists made 467 log entries of 304 technical assistance sessions indicating 801 instances of technical assistance (i.e., they often covered multiple TA areas in one visit). Specialists logged 634 hours of travel time and 896 hours of technical assistance. Fully 88% of TA areas fell into the 11 of the 20 categories.

A response rate of 42% was achieved on the survey to service recipients. Out of 218 TAs, only 11 (.05%) were rated less than satisfactory, and were rated so by just 8 of the 47 respondents (17%). Satisfaction ratings were high, 3.4-3.7 on a 4-point scale.

The overwhelming majority of the responses to the technical assistance offered was positive. Respondents cited specific examples of student learning, feelings of increased competence and ability to have a positive impact on student outcomes, and improved tracking and monitoring procedures which they believed would help them to keep students on track and help them identify students who were not exiting the status in a timely manner who might need additional assistance.

The data collection log was revised several times, likely resulting in undercounting some activities, (e.g., group meetings, materials preparation time, and support provided virtually). Data on the number of students impacted by the technical assistance was difficult to ascertain as the number of EL students a person was working with was not always available for documentation.

Recommendations include:

1. Now that initial services have been established, increase technical assistance efforts to families and community leaders.
2. Continue to provide support *as identified by local service providers*.
3. Explore ways to track and document increases in identification of EL students.
4. Develop and adopt a protocol to gauge fidelity in the implementation of skills taught and the resulting impact on student learning outcomes.
5. Select case study students to track ELPA scores over time.
6. Establish agreements between the service provider and the district to support on-going positive relationships.

Background

HB 3499, passed in 2015, appropriated 12.5 million dollars every biennium to support improving English learners' learning outcomes. Forty districts were identified as having the highest needs and the lowest outcomes. Fifteen were identified as higher need *Transformation* districts and were allocated \$180,000 per year, and 25 as *Target* districts, receiving \$90,000 per year. Technical assistance (TA) was included.

One requirement in the selection of target and transformation districts was that selected districts must have at least 20 identified English learner (EL) students. Nonetheless, the state recognized the need to support districts with numbers less than 20. To do so, up to \$2.5 million of the funds was made available to hire six teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) as English Learner (EL) Specialists who are housed at five education service districts (ESDs) throughout the state. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at ODE collaborated with the community and other offices throughout ODE to select the five ESDs. Several criteria were used: 1) geographic representation; 2) low EL numbers identified; 3) total number of EL students throughout the ESD; and 4) the number of districts within the ESD whose data shows a high level of needed support. Currently, the five ESDs are Clackamas, Willamette, South Coast, InterMountain, and Malheur. The commitment from the ESD to house a Specialist is for the biennium. After the biennium, ODE, in collaboration with all ESDs, may decide to make changes in participating ESDs.

ODE reached out to all districts in these five ESDs as well as districts in need of supports to determine how the six EL Specialists could provide TA, and if it would be feasible to serve districts outside of the five ESDs. A guiding principle of the project is that TA is based on the individual district's needs. Although plans are made in conjunction with ODE, the district determines where they need TA, and if they want the assistance of the ODE EL Specialist. There is no requirement that districts participate. By maintaining a district-level emphasis, ODE is confident that it can achieve a systems approach to affecting change for the state's EL students.

By the Fall of 2017, the six EL Specialists had been hired and were in place in each of the five ESDs. The EL Specialists expressed their desire to the ODE Program Lead, Kelly Kalkofen, to include external evaluation as a component of the project. WESD's Center for Education, Innovation, Evaluation & Research (The Center), was contracted by ODE in partnership with the ESDs to conduct these evaluations. In November, 2017, Kalkofen met with The Center's Chief Research Officer, Dr. Ella Taylor, to specify a research plan that would satisfy the needs of the project. This report is a result of that effort.

The remainder of this report provides a summary of the Year 1 data regarding the services provided by the six EL Specialists. There are two separate data summaries: an overview of EL Specialist activities, and a summary of the impact and satisfaction survey to the TA recipients. The report concludes with recommendations for the next year of the implementation of this project.

Summary of Activities Conducted and Participants Reached

Methods

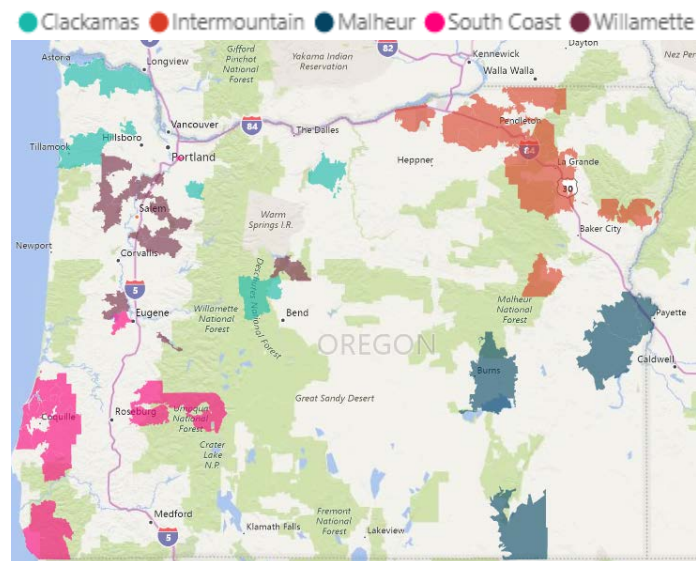
EL Specialists log their daily activities to track the services they are providing. In discussing options for tracking data across all six specialists, several desired elements became apparent: 1) the data collection tool should be the same for all six specialists, but would need to be flexible enough to accommodate differences between the specialists' work; 2) the data collection tool should be user friendly and have support; 3) data collection should not be an additional or overly time-consuming burden on the specialists; and 4) the data should provide meaningful information to inform the specialists' work.

With these elements in mind, the EL Specialists and the ODE Program Lead were consulted by The Center staff to identify key information to track. Center staff used Excel to develop the tracking log. A few specialists converted the spreadsheet to a Google Sheet to accommodate their work style. Dropdown lists, such as typical TA activities and district names, were developed to ease data entry and to facilitate summarization of data. The categories and the logs were revised several times throughout the data collection period. Specialists submitted the logs monthly. Logs were combined into one working Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The time period covered is January, 2018-June, 2018.

Findings

The highlighted areas on the map below are based on the actual zip codes where EL Specialists made contacts and provided services. The 5 ESDs are home to 72 school districts. Of these, 4 were identified as Transformation, 9 as Target, 13 as Tier 1 (fewer than 20 EL students), 8 as Tier 2 (eligible to receive 1-time funding), and 27 as Tier 3 (a neighboring district that might be in need of service).

While the original planning would have potentially accommodated 85% of the districts in these ESDs, a number of districts turned down services. Word spread of the TA available, and additional requests came in. Ultimately, the Specialists were able to serve more areas than originally planned. Sites included ESDs, district offices, school settings, and the community. Technical assistance was provided to seven school districts by the Clackamas EL Specialist, eight by the Malheur EL Specialist, 11 by the InterMountain



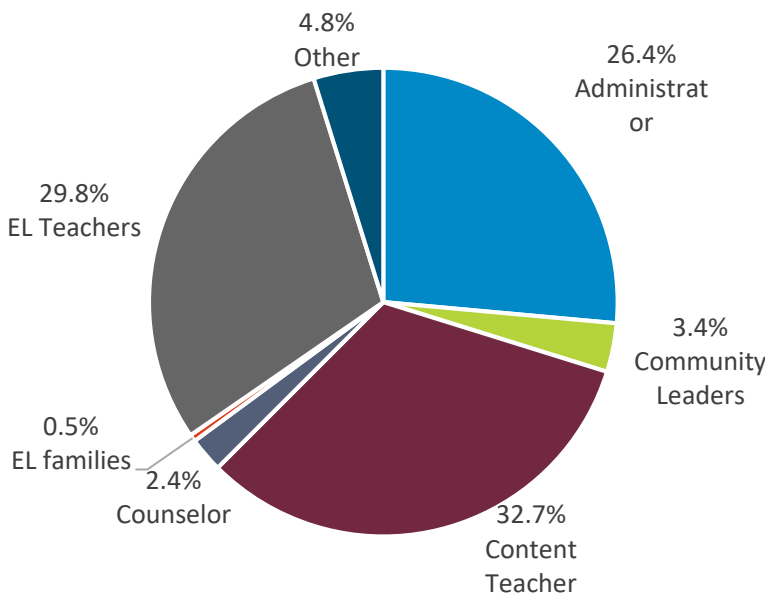
EL Specialist, nine by the South Coast EL Specialist, and 19 by the two Willamette EL Specialists. (Because of the number of programs involved, two specialists worked the Willamette Education Service District.) It should also be noted that the InterMountain EL Specialist was on leave for three months, and the second Willamette ESD EL Specialist, initially hired part time, became full time in January, 2018.

Specialists were asked to record the amount of time they spent in travel and the amount of time spent in actual technical assistance. During this 5.5-month period, they logged 634 hours of travel time and 896 hours of technical assistance.

Specialists were directed to include in their logs the names of individuals involved in each TA session, and to provide their roles. Specialists met with at least 208 individuals (many more if group professional learning sessions are included), often multiple times. In order to capture the roles of people involved, Specialists were asked to enter meetings with multiple attendees in separate records. To avoid counting the entries as multiple TAs, Specialists indicated the group nature of the meeting. Specialists made 467 entries with 304 sessions indicating 801 instances of technical assistance (i.e., they often provided multiple TA areas in one visit).

The chart below provides a breakdown of the roles of the recipients of technical assistance. These percents are based on unduplicated individuals (n=208).

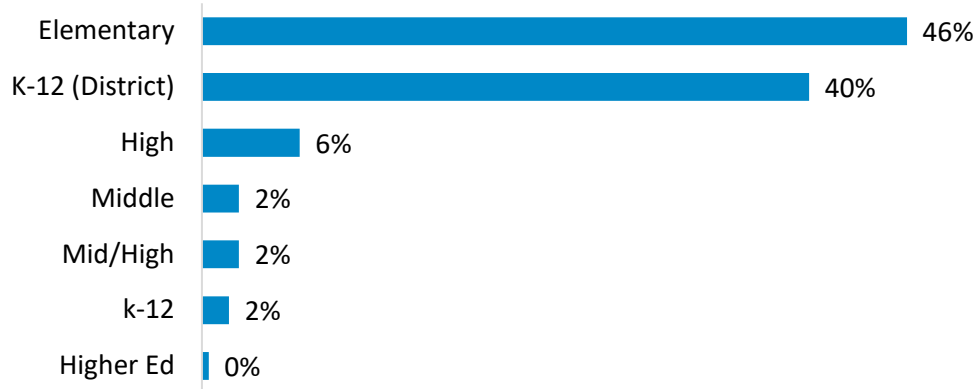
Figure 1. TA Recipient Role (n=208)



Content teachers (33%), EL teachers (30%), and administrators (26%) received the most assistance. EL teachers (n=62) were broken down into three categories. Seventy-one percent of the EL teachers receiving TA services were experienced, 23% were new, and 6% were veteran teachers who were new to serving EL students.

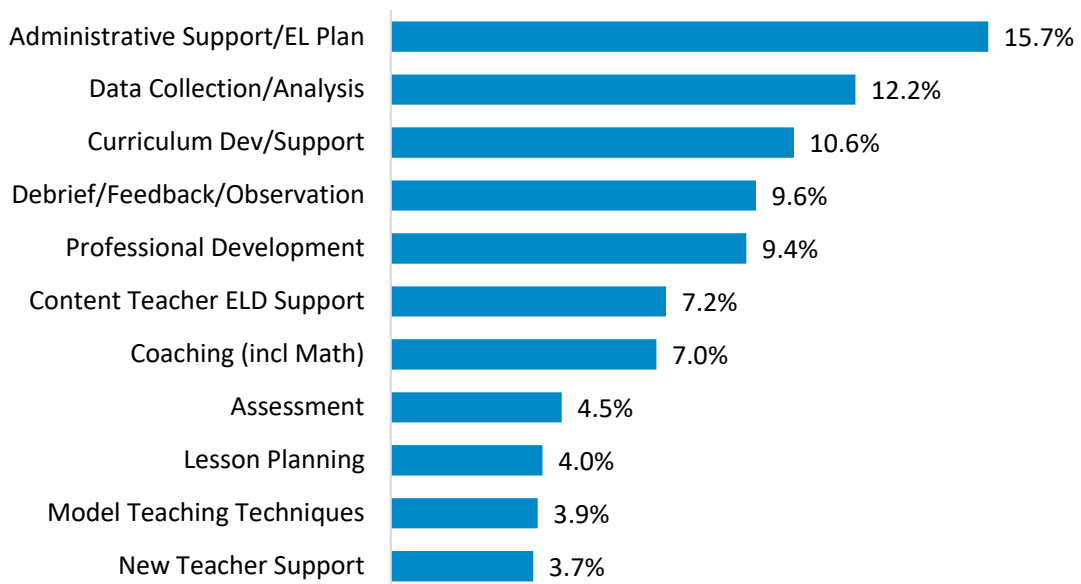
Grade levels associated with all TA recipients, including those with multiple visits (n=467) can be found in Figure 2 below. The vast majority of services were provided to elementary and k-12 programs.

Figure 2. Grade Levels Associated with TAs (n=467)



EL Specialists could choose up to four TA categories. Fully 88% of TA areas fell into the 11 out of 20 categories found in Figure 3. Administrative support and assistance in developing the District’s EL plan was the focus of the TA 16% of the time, followed closely by data collection and analysis (12%). The next two most popular areas of focus were curriculum development and support (11%) and observations and feedback (10%). Selected 1% of the time or less were starting an EL program, monitoring supports and protocols, establishing language objectives, physical space, family nights, and transition planning.

Figure 3. Most Often Selected TA Areas (n=801)



Summary of Impact on TA Recipients and Their Stakeholders

Methods

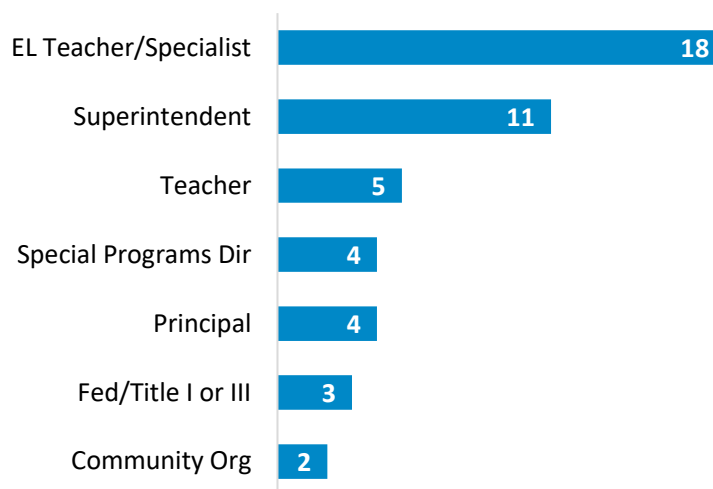
While the logs provided information on the output of the EL Specialists, data was also needed on the impact of their services. Measuring impact on student outcomes is not recommended at this point because of the brief timeframe and the focus of the activities (i.e., it was an implementation year). Nonetheless, it is important to determine if a) the services provided met recipients' needs, b) if they are making changes in their behaviors based on the technical assistance sessions and c) what changes, if any, they are seeing in the short-term outcomes of those they serve. The survey was conducted through Google Forms in April, 2018 and does not include individuals receiving TA after that time.

Findings

The six EL Specialists were asked to provide the email addresses for both those who chose to participate in services (n=100) and those who chose not to participate (n=25). Sixty-four different districts were sent survey requests, and 47 schools or districts from 35 different districts responded. Multiple individuals from districts may have received the survey, but only one or two from an institution typically responded. Three reminders were sent. Only 5 (20%) of the people who did not participate responded, whereas almost half of the people who did receive services responded (n=42, 42%).

The majority of respondents were EL Teachers, followed by superintendents. Respondent roles are found in Figure 4 below.

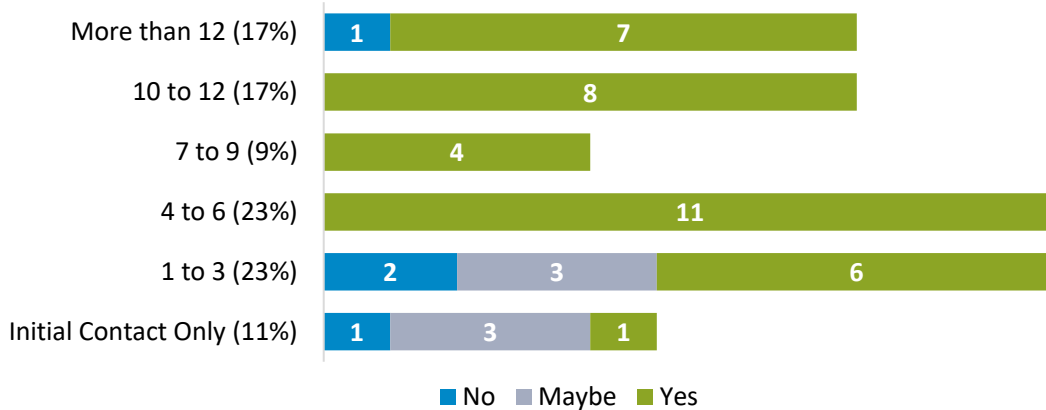
Figure 4. Respondent Self-identified Roles (n=47)



The first measure of impact reviewed was whether or not the institution wanted to continue services into the next year. As can be seen in Figure 5, if the individual

received services, he or she was more likely to want to continue services. Locations identified as *initial contact only* turned down services and were not re-contacted.

Figure 5. Respondents’ Desire to Continue Services by Number of Visits



Services were typically turned down because they had no identified EL students in their programs at that time. Only one program, one that received multiple visits, declined services for the next year due to dissatisfaction with services.

Table 1. Respondent Satisfaction Ratings for each TA Area

Table 1 lists the 18 different TA areas respondents identified as receiving and their satisfaction rating of that service. The blue-barred column on the left shows the number of respondents indicating the category of services (listed in the middle column) that was received. The rightmost column indicates the average satisfaction rating. The green highlights specify the areas with

Number Responding	Technical Assistance Area	Average (4 high)
30	Curriculum Support	3.5
29	Administrative Support	3.5
29	EL Plan	3.4
27	Coaching/Observation/Feedback	3.6
25	Professional Development	3.6
23	Assessment	3.4
23	Data	3.4
23	Documentation	3.4
23	Establish Language Objectives	3.4
23	Newcomer Support	3.5
23	Provide Classroom Materials	3.5
22	Lesson Planning	3.4
22	Model Teaching Techniques	3.6
21	Monitoring Support/Protocol	3.5
20	Exiting Support/Protocol	3.4
13	Family Night/Parent Engagement	3.5
9	Starting ELD Program	3.7
5	Math Coaching	3.4

the highest satisfaction ratings; however, the ratings were consistently high, ranging from 3.4 to 3.7 on a 4-point scale.

Out of 218 TAs, only 11 (.05%) were rated less than satisfactory. These ratings came from eight of the 47 respondents (17%). Four of the 11 explanations revealed that the

topic either had not been covered or was scheduled to be covered shortly (assessment, data, newcomer support, monitoring support/protocol). It is unclear why they rated dissatisfaction with an area where they had not received services. One can speculate that the survey either indicated areas that they did not realize were available, or that they wished they had received the service earlier in the year. Four more indicated they wanted more in the area or that what they received in the area was inadequate (curriculum support, professional development, provide classroom materials (2)). The remaining three areas (documentation, newcomer support, coaching/observation/feedback) were indicated by the site that chose not to receive services the next year.

Table 2. Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance Area	Number	Reason
Curriculum Support	1	Wanted more to strengthen instruction
Coaching/Observation/Feedback	1	Information conflicted with prior knowledge
Professional Development	1	Want more for teaching staff
Assessment	1	Planned for next meeting
Data	1	Planned for next meeting
Documentation	1	Information conflicted with prior knowledge
Newcomer Support	2	Information conflicted with prior knowledge; Not discussed
Provide Classroom Materials	2	Presentation dry; Wanted more to strengthen instruction
Monitoring Support/Protocol	1	Never talked about

Finally, in addition to satisfaction with the content areas of TA, 100% of recipients indicated they were satisfied with the length and number of TAs they received.

In future years, direct observation measures of impact will be implemented. For this first partial year of services, only service recipient perceptions of the impact were solicited.



Recipients were first asked, *What changes have you made in your practices or policies as a result of the English Language Learner support you received?*

Below are several representative responses:

“I am in a very rural area. Support is slim. This is the first time that I have had assistance/support for my student. Thus, she is now able to receive services based on her needs.”

“The support we received helped us reorganize our system of teaching ELD”

“We have a more efficient and comprehensive system to monitor ELs.”

“I now have a larger PLC of educators that I can collaborate with to problem solve and bounce ideas off of.”

“Started parent meetings, set easy school contacts available for parents”

“Our district will also implement structured data collection and progress monitoring of ELL students in their ELD classes as a result of the support.”

“We redid our EL Plan to be more current with our practices, and dug deeper into what we need to do in order to continue/be more successful for our students.”



Next, recipients were asked to reflect on *the impact on the child, the student's family, classroom, teacher, or administrator resulting from the English Language Learner support you received*. The following responses represent their thoughts.

“My student has gained more confidence and is communicating better and better. She now knows the vocabulary words to use to explain herself...she has become a better writer and is more expressive and detailed.”

“The lesson planning scratches the surface, but learning to collect various types of authentic data on the student, and develop relationships with them and their families will ultimately equip me with the background knowledge I need to help them move forward.”

“Teacher feels like there is somewhere to go for help and support, families feel supported and like they have an advocate at their schools”

“The Kindergartner has used language and has learned a lot through telling stories!”

“More parent and family engagement supported by ELL Nights”

“Deeper understanding of the law and much better support for families and students.”

“The classroom teachers have learned new strategies to use with their EL students. We were able to complete our EL plan with the extra advice and suggestions.”



In response to the item *What priorities would you like to work on [in the next year]?*, respondents were thoughtful in their responses. Besides working on transitioning students into high school, helping students integrate, and monitoring and tracking progress, they provided the following priorities:

“ELL/SPED identification process”

“I would like support in setting up a system of data collection and ongoing assessment with ELL students in our district that goes along with the adopted ELD curriculum.”

“Continued support on the new tracking system as well as support for continued integration of ELP standards in the classroom for dual language. In addition, we are interested in formative assessments that can be used by classroom teachers to measure the ELP standards.”

“Cultural outreach into the community”

“Educating our district about common practices, engaging/valuing families”

“Getting the ELL families involved with their schools. Making them feel welcome and being able to feel that they can support their children’s education.”

“I would like to work on expanding my teaching practices by further developing a scope and sequence for my lessons next year, as well as “expanding the brand” by helping the students share their knowledge in meaningful ways with other students, and share strategies with teachers in our district to help EL students that are in their classes.”

“We really need some whole staff professional development in ways that classroom teachers can support our EL students. We also need some help with monitoring and exiting.”

“We would like to continue to be able to collaborate with the EL specialists and the other districts in order to know what other districts are doing that has been successful for their ELs and their programs. This is especially important since we are such a small district and so rarely get to collaborate with and learn from other ELD teachers and programs. Support from specialists and from other districts who meet with us has been especially helpful this year to me as a new EL coordinator since there is no one in my district I can go to with many of my questions.”



When asked, *Do you have any additional comments you would like to add to help us improve services to our consumers in the state of Oregon?*, a few specific suggestions were elicited:

“I think Oregon would be smart to extend mentorship to a teacher’s first few years in a new building. This scaffolded approach could help us retain the best teachers and provide the best learning opportunities for our students.”

“If there is not a procedure or protocol set up and working in place already to provide translated report cards to parents that would be very important. Also, some parents of children learning a second language may face barriers such as illiteracy. It would also be important to offer equitable options for parents such as oral presentation in their language regarding report cards, progress reports and for other meetings such as IEP’s about their child.”



For the most part, though, responses to this item were to communicate appreciation, both to the state and to the individual EL Specialists. Gratitude was expressed to each one of them by name, as well as to ODE.

“Thank you for setting this program up so that we can all be better educators to such an amazing and important population of students!

“This has been a really beneficial resource and I know that our school has appreciated the extra support and I have heard the same sentiments at other meetings as well with other district reps. Thank you!”

“I felt that the team that came to our district were empathetic with the problems in working with ELs in a small school district. They were full of ideas and were readily available to be of service.”

“Special thanks to Dawn Granger for providing support to my teachers and our district!”

“I love working with Ashley, she is wonderful, professional, and approachable.”

“[Janice Scudder] is a great coach, doesn’t hold back, and is very observant regarding areas of strength and need.”

“Brittany and Katie were great for me this year. I am very thankful for them...”

“THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!! These ladies are knowledgeable and have just the right personalities too to deliver feedback in order to move our program forward for our staff and students. We very much appreciate this support!”

Limitations

Evaluation of this first partial year of the project has provided an opportunity to establish effective data collection tools and methods, and to improve upon procedures for future years. During this first year, the data collection log was revised several times, creating some confusion about the appropriate way to capture data. This likely resulted in some undercounting of activities, especially related to meetings of groups of at the district or program level. Midway through the process, specialists added tracking the time they spent preparing materials for specific programs. Because this was not captured for the entire time frame, it was not reported. In addition, in-depth support provided via phone, email, or through other virtual media was not consistently captured. Specialists have a better understanding now of the purpose of the data collection and when these types of interactions should be documented. The next revision of the log will include a field for email addresses so that satisfaction surveys can be sent at intervals throughout the year instead of only at the end of the year. Additional years of data collection will increase the reliability of the tools. Finally, data on the number of students impacted by the technical assistance was difficult to ascertain. This was because some of those involved in support took the information back to others in their schools, and the number of EL students a person was working with was not always available for documentation.

Recommendations

Several recommendations can be gleaned from the data collected in this partial year.

1. Increase technical assistance efforts to families and community leaders. As this project was ramping up this year, it is understandable that the EL Specialists' focus would be on the direct service providers. However, the few contacts they were able to make with families and the community were impactful and specialists expressed a desire to do more outreach in these areas to build a larger network of support for students.
2. Continue to provide support as identified by local service providers. This has helped to develop trusting relationships between the Specialists and the service providers, and has given service providers a sense of ownership in both the process and outcomes.
3. Explore ways to track and document increases in identification of EL students as a result of the services provided.
4. Develop and adopt a protocol to gauge fidelity in the implementation of skills taught and the resulting impact on student learning outcomes.
5. Select case study students to track ELPA scores over time. Oversampling should be utilized initially because of the mobility of these students.
6. Establish agreements in conjunction with the district, to be followed when the specialist is engaging with district staff members. Along with this, the Specialist should provide a personalized philosophy of services statement that includes a general statement about the types of services available, the experiences that have shaped the EL Specialists' philosophies on teaching, learning, and technical assistance, and information on who to contact (besides the EL Specialist) if any concerns ever arise. Alternatively, explore how this is handled by other fields, such as mental health or rehabilitation counselors.

This first year of the project has resulted in positive outcomes and the development of on-going technical assistance in most sites where services were provided. Recipients consistently expressed gratitude regarding the expert support they have received and feel empowered to positively impact student learning outcomes. In the next year of the evaluation cycle, trends carried over from last year to this will be explored, as well as further fleshing out the impact of technical assistance on student learning outcomes.