

Focus Group Workshop
December 5th 3:00-3:45 pm | 2022

Sandra Garcia: Director of State and Federal Programs
Yeny Rosales: Principal at Ryan STEAM Academy (ES)
Maria-Elena Ruiz: Teacher at Ocala STEAM Academy (TK8)
Maria Martinez: Principal On Special Assignment supporting multilingual learners and dual immersion programs

English Language Learners Alum Rock Union School District





Ed Specifications
& Standards

Next Steps:

Incorporate content from this interview into the Ed Specs design guidelines—then schedule round two video conference meetings with the same group to review the draft chapter for input in, March 2023.

Participants were oriented to understand what a Master Plan is and what Ed Specs are. Then highlights from the Ed Specs Visioning Workshop were shown, concluding with a list of learning shifts produced by Ed Specs Workshop participants as a vision for the future on the following page. After that, participants were asked a series of questions to confirm the program and vision for the future.



Learning Shifts Focus on Student Empowerment- DRAFT

ARUSD's learning environments will support students' development of ***mind, body and spirit***. They will be empowered with the opportunity to try different ways of learning to discover how they learn best, ***find their spark*** and to ***keep the curiosity*** they were born with to become ***expert lifelong learners***. ARUSD will work to give students and families who need additional support to have an ***equal chance to thrive***, meeting all their needs.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BECOME EXPERT LEARNERS

- Multi-sensory and multi-intelligences learning
- More control at the hands of the students
- Independent choice and/or collaborative elective periods
- Less teacher-directed time
- Students setting individual goals
- Student-driven activities
- Student-chosen schedules
- More independent work time
- Relaxation rooms
- No school uniforms

HIGHER COLLABORATION

- Team collaboration across studies, play, and extra-curricular activities
- Flexible and collaborative opportunities

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Spaces to support personal and basic needs (i.e. laundry services)
- Full day kindergarten

MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT

- More outside and exploration time
- Play and naturalistic movement
- Bring community into the class
- Indoor and outdoor use spaces

Program Background:

1. What programs are currently implemented at ARUSD that support English learning for students? How do you envision this curriculum evolving (i.e. crossing disciplines, Total Physical Response)
2. What programs are currently implemented at ARUSD that support English learning for parents?
3. How do the Dual language programs support English Learners? (Adelante Dual, Language Academy, Adelante II, Ben Painter ES). Are those the only campuses that have this program.

Participants were asked questions to confirm their programs.

Program Background:

Dual language campuses within ARUSD use varying language immersion techniques. Adelante Dual Language Academy works on a two-way immersion system, alternating between English and Spanish, that starts at a 90:10 ratio in TK and aims to end at a 50:50 ratio by 8th grade. Ben Painter Elementary School operates on a 50:50 English and Vietnamese reciprocated teaching model. One teacher educates in English for half of the day, and a second teacher educates in Vietnamese for the other half.

Programmatically, there exists designated English Learners Development (ELD) during the school day within the classroom through Bench Mark Advanced at Kindergarten through Fifth grades. At the Middle School level there is an Ever Day English Program curriculum. Learning courses like English Language 3D are used for long term learners such as those students who received a 3 or a 4 on their LPAC scores, and Imagine Learning is used for any newcomer across all grade levels. There is a desire for additional integrated English learning curriculum within all content areas.

Participants explained the varying language immersion techniques and progression from TK through 8th grade.

Program Background:

Designated and Integrated English Language Development (ELD)

We have a dual obligation to English Learners to provide meaningful access to grade-level instruction, while developing students' academic language proficiency through designated and integrated ELD instruction.

Integrated ELD

All teachers with English Learners (ELs) in their classrooms use the CA ELD Standards in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards throughout the school day and across all subjects.

Designated ELD

A protected time during the regular school day. Teachers use the CA ELD Standards as the focal standards in ways that build into and from content instruction in order to develop critical language ELs need for content learning in English. - California Department of Education (2014)

Participants explained the difference between Integrated ELD and Designated ELD.

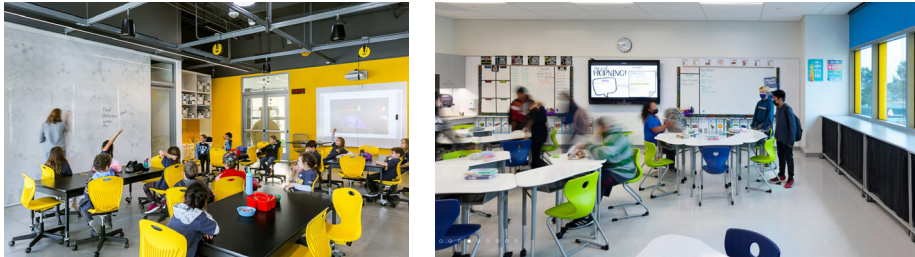
Before going into the Big Picture Questions, reference images below were shared. Participants were invited to leave comments on the photos.

MURAL LINK

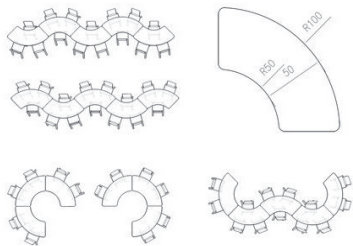
Multilingual Signage



Technology Equipped



Flexible Classrooms



Big Picture Questions:

1. Are there peer institutions or specific facilities you've visited that you've liked (or didn't)? What did you like (or dislike) about them?
2. What is needed in learning environments to better support English learners?
3. What spaces would allow languages and cultures to be connected in richer ways?
4. Do you envision an evolving curriculum to incorporate the many cultures within ARUSD?
5. What programs or spaces would allow languages to be practiced more regularly?
6. What is needed to support the work the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) does?
7. What is needed to support the work of each school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)?
8. Is there anything else we should know regarding English Learners at ARUSD?

Participants were asked questions to draw out their ideas to improve the learning environments to support the mission and vision of Alum Rock USD, and better support English Language Learners in the future.

The following pages show the participants answers placed in the sections in which they will appear in the educational specifications sections for this topic.

- Sections:
1. Activities
 2. Current Challenges
 3. Design Objectives
 4. Affordances
 5. Sizing and Adjacencies

1

Activities

- Recordings of language practice
- Conversational activity
- Pronunciation and association practice via stories and plays
- Written exercises
- Reading
- Singing

2

Current Challenges

English Language Learners (ELL) often need support beyond the classroom. Many ELL students have experienced a variety of stressful and even traumatizing events outside of school, and will need counseling and wellness support through the transition. Not having spaces dedicated to their learning or their specific needs, can make school feel like a less engaging or safe space for them and makes the educators' job of supporting them more difficult. Additionally, ELA designation oftentimes can be approached or seen as a deficit and affect a student's ability to participate in electives, especially at the High School level. In reality, these students becoming bilingual is a huge strength to themselves as individuals and the community.

3

Design Objectives

English Language Learners deserve learning and practice environments that they are proud of and express pride in their presence as part of the community. The space should accommodate the **equitable and current technology** needed to develop language skills, and **proudly display resources and information in multiple languages**. Additionally, **space and equipment to display student work** is paramount to instill a sense of pride and support a culture of excellence. *These spaces should help to re-brand English Learners as Emerging Bilingual students and encourage the whole community to see these students' background around language as a strong asset to themselves and the school.*

3

Design Objectives

Ideas for the physical environment to support the vision for learning

- Classrooms with increased tack-able surfaces and display surfaces in order to post language resources and materials in multiple languages
- Space and equipment to display student work
- Shared language lab with equitable and current technology that provides students the opportunity for self directed auditory learning
- Multicultural influences in collaborative spaces via language translation, the provision of language centers, and newcomer materials
- Newcomer Centers or hubs that provide mental wellness counseling for the whole family, vaccination clinics, and administrative assistance on top of learning spaces

4

Affordances

Furniture, Equipment and Technology

Furniture and Equipment

- Mobile white boards and tack boards
 - Teaching walls with layered white boards on tracks
 - Multicultural influence in collaborative spaces via displayed resources
-

Technology

- Adequate number of charging outlets or stations for student technology
- Mobile smart boards and a series of research computers especially for Middle School
- Virtual reality equipment, 3D printers, and robotics equipment
- Technology that supports increased student responsibility for personal technology regardless of age to support more engaged interaction
- Larger display screens that students can use

5

Sizing and Adjacencies

- Language Lab with listening and recording capability the size of a classroom
- Space outside of the regular classroom to practice language skills
- Newcomer Center on every site to walk students and parents through the steps of the child's education
- Vaccination clinics offered within the Administration Building or potentially re-design as a Newcomers Center or Welcome Center that contains Admin program

Appendix

Please follow the links to the Mural board to see artifacts from the focus group interview and the Ed Specs Visioning Workshop link to see the Artifacts from the workshop.

Mural Link: [HERE](#)

Ed Specs Visioning Workshop Link: [HERE](#)