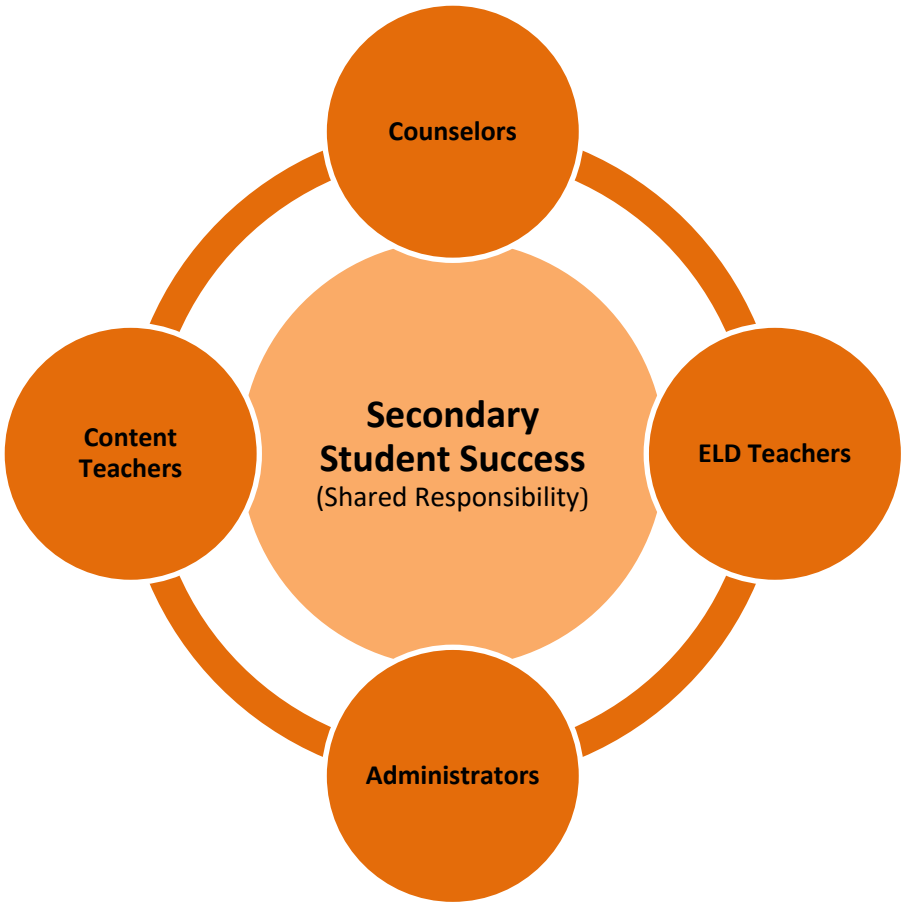
Chapter 9: Understanding Secondary Multilingual Learners

Secondary schools in Colorado strive to raise graduation rates, reduce dropout rates, and provide a rigorous curriculum that prepares students to be college and career ready. To reach these critical goals and include Multilingual Learners (MLs), it is often tempting to immediately jump to structural changes. Although schools must change the way they offer courses and schedule MLs, Salazar (2009) suggests there is a more critical component that must come first: "the relentless belief in the potential of culturally and linguistically diverse youth" to achieve academically.

There are no simple solutions or one-size-fits all formulas for fostering success for secondary MLs. Every school must consider the particular needs of its community. Even if a given ML population appears on the surface to be relatively homogenous, assessments will reveal that those students have all sorts of different educational backgrounds and unique needs.

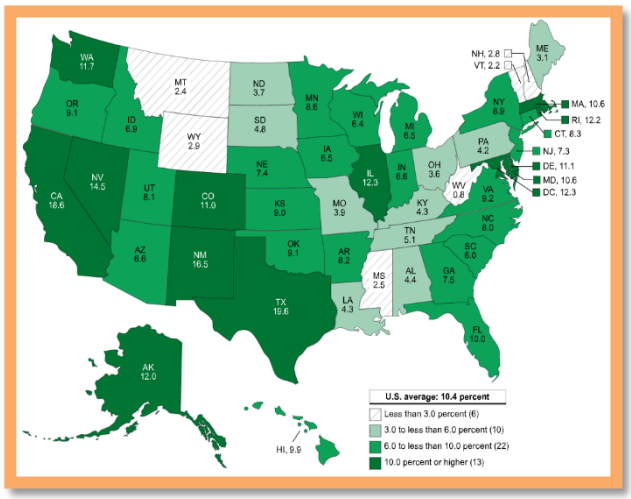
This chapter supports those who play a major part in the academic success of secondary MLs: administrators, counselors, content area teachers, parents, and English Language Development (ELD) teachers. Sharing responsibilities will be a continuous theme to highlight the system's changes around factors that influence student needs, Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) options and promising practices that are needed so that secondary students are successful.



9.1 Challenges and Opportunities

Demographics

Multilingual learners represent one of the fastest growing student population group in U.S. schools. In fall 2019, the percentage of public school students who were MLs was 5.1 million representing 10.4 percent or an increase from 9.2 percent (4.5 million) since 2010. In general, a higher percentage of public school students in lower grades than of those in upper grades were ML students in fall 2019. For example, 15.0 percent of kindergarteners were ML students, compared with 9.6 percent of 6th-graders and 7.7 percent of 8th-graders. Among 12th-graders, only 5.5 percent of students were ML students. (**National Center for Educational Statistics**



In fall 2019, the percentage of public school students who were MLs was 10.0 percent or more in 12 states—half of which were located in the West—and the District of Columbia. Reflecting the national increase, the percentage of public school students who were MLs was higher in fall 2019 than in fall 2010 in 42 states and the District of Columbia. In the remaining 8 states, the percentage of public school students who were MLs was lower in fall 2019 than in fall 2010. The largest positive percentage point change occurred in Rhode Island (7.3 percentage points) and the largest negative percentage point change occurred in Nevada (6.4 percentage points).

The Census Bureau reports at least 350 languages are spoken in U.S. homes. The number of people in the United States who spoke a language other than English at home nearly tripled from 23.1 million (about 1 in 10) in 1980 to 67.8 million (almost 1 in 5) in 2019, according to a recent report by the U.S. Census Bureau. At the same time, the number of people who spoke only English also increased, growing by approximately one-fourth from 187.2 million in 1980 to 241 million in 2019.

Multilingual Learner Graduation Rates

Between school year 2010–2011 and 2017–2018, the national high school graduation rate for MLs increased. The only exception was a one-percentage point decrease in school year 2016–2017 compared to the previous school year, but in school year 2017–2018 there was a two-percentage point increase in the national ML graduation rate. Moreover, during those eight school years (2010–2011 to 2017–2018), the high school graduation rate for MLs increased by 11 percentage points, from 57% to 68%. In addition, the gap in the high school graduation rate for all students versus MLs narrowed by five percentage points during this period, decreasing from a difference of 22 percentage points in 2010–2011 to 17 percentage points in 2017–2018. (NCELA EL Graduation Rates Fact Sheet).

National Perspective

In 2020, 2 million students between the ages of 16 and 24 dropped out. The overall dropout rate was 5.3 percent which is a decrease from 7.4 percent in 2010. The dropout rate varied by race/ethnicity in 2020: American Indian/Alaska Native youth had the highest status dropout rate (11.5 percent) of all racial/ethnic groups, including youth who were Hispanic (7.4 percent), Black (4.2 percent), of Two or more races (6.5 percent), White (4.8 percent), and Asian (2.4 percent). The dropout rate for those who were White was lower than that of every other racial/ethnic group except those who were Asian. The status dropout rate for Pacific Islander 16- to 24-year-olds did not meet reporting standards in 2019 and 2020. (**National Dropout Rates**).

Colorado Perspective

Colorado has experienced a demographic shift in the K-12 population over the last decade. With more than 109,000 multilingual learners, including immigrants, migrants and refugees, Colorado is among 12 states with the highest ML population. Unfortunately, Colorado's graduation and completion rates are far below that of their non-ML peers.

ESSA requires states to present the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, but also gives states the discretion to include extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates as well. Extended-year rates account for students who may require additional time to complete high school, such as those in five-year programs (e.g., ASCENT: Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment, a state program that allows a limited number of students to attend a post-secondary education after completion of 12th grade, while still in the K-12 system), those who started below grade-level, and students whose coursework is interrupted for a semester or more.

Under the Anticipated Year of Graduation (AYG) cohort formula implemented beginning in 2010, students are assigned an unchanging anticipated year of graduation (AYG) when they enter into ninth grade. The anticipated year of graduation is assigned by adding three years to the school year that a student begins ninth grade. For example, the formula anticipates that a student starting ninth grade in the fall of the 2016-2017 school year will graduate with the Class of 2020. (Graduation Statistics FAQs).

View graduation data on the Colorado Graduate Dashboard

The 4-year AYG rate for the class of 2021, shows 81.7% of all students graduated within four years, compared to 67.5% for multilingual learners.

Student Group	Number (N) of Students in Graduation Base	Number (N) of Graduates	Graduation Rate (%)
All Students	68,379	55,842	81.7%
Multilingual Learners (NEP/LEP)	8,773	5,922	67.5%

Four-Year AYG Cohort Rates, by Student Group

The 5-year AYG rate for the class of 2020, shows 86.0% of all students graduated within five years, compared to 76.6% for multilingual learners.

Student Group	Number (N) of Students in Graduation Base	Number (N) of Graduates	Graduation Rate (%)
All Students	67,245	57,841	86.0%
Multilingual Learners (NEP/LEP)	9,177	7,030	76.6%

Five-Year AYG Cohort Rates, by Student Group

The 6-year AYG rate for the class of 2019, shows that 86.6% of all students graduated within six years, compared to 78.0% for multilingual learners.

Student Group	Number (N) of Students in Graduation Base	Number (N) of Graduates	Graduation Rate (%)
All Students	66,709	57,792	86.6%
Multilingual Learners (NEP/LEP)	9,100	7,096	78.0%

Six-Year AYG Cohort Rates, by Student Group

The 7-year AYG rate for the class of 2018, shows that 87.0% of all students graduated within seven years, compared to 77.7% for multilingual learners.

Student Group	Number (N) of Students in Graduation Base	Number (N) of Graduates	Graduation Rate (%)
All Students	65,717	57,169	87.0%
Multilingual Learners (NEP/LEP)	8,429	6,546	77.7%

Seven-Year AYG Cohort Rates, by Student Group

For more information about graduation rates, and for school and district level results, visit CDE Graduation Statistics

For more information about interactive graduation data, visit CDE Graduation Dashboard

For information, visit CDE Dropout Statistics

For information, visit ASCENT Options

For information, visit College Admissions in Colorado

9.2 Shared Responsibilities Relative to Factors that Influence Students' Needs and Successes

District's Obligation to Serve Secondary Multilingual Learners

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) makes clear that state departments and districts, schools, and public charter schools must serve and be accountable for MLs. When people think about MLs, they primarily think of Elementary students, but data shows there are many MLs at the secondary level and their numbers are growing. During the 2018-19 school year, there were 56,773 MLs in 6th-12th grade in Colorado. Districts, schools, and public charter schools need to ensure that comply with ESSA and other federal and state laws by serving this population of students and providing them with what they need to succeed.

> *The Office for Civil Rights (34 C.F.R. Part 100)* and ESSA both stipulate that all children have the right to public education through age 21. Therefore, districts, schools, and public charter schools must provide instruction to older students who have not graduated from any other secondary institution.
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> *Plyler vs. Doe* (457 U.S. 202, 1982) delineates that schools cannot ask students any questions about their legal status or behave in such a way as to deter them from attending school. Principals, teachers, secretaries, counselors, and enrollment staff must make sure to behave in a way that does not "chill" a child's opportunity to attend public school.
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> *Colorado Revised Statute (CRS) A22-7-409* states that all students enrolled in Colorado public schools are required to take state assessments. If alternative schools that serve older students (up to the age of 21) take per-pupil operating revenue (PPOR), these students must be tested using the state assessments.

Middle and high schools are enrolling an increasing number of MLs, but they are far from a uniform group. For example, 62% of secondary MLs were born in the U.S. (MPI, 2015). Those who arrive from foreign countries during adolescence vary widely in their educational experience, home language literacy, and acculturation to life in the U.S. Factors that influence students' needs and school success fall into two categories (Walqui, 2000): socio-cultural and prior schooling. Socio-cultural factors are socioeconomic and immigration status, family support and expectations, social challenges, and sense of self. Prior schooling factors are previous academic achievement, educational continuity, language proficiency and access to the core curriculum. The more information schools have, the better able they will be to help students be successful.

Example

Lone Valley High School is a suburban school where about 80% of the graduates matriculate into higher education. About 5% of students are MLs. Each fall, the school holds a meeting for immigrant parents to explain the high school credit system, the college admission process, and how to access online grades and attendance. Students and parents go to a computer lab and access their grades and attendance together, which leads to some transforming conversations. Translators are provided for Spanish, Chinese and Korean. The ESL teacher is part of a larger school ESL committee that organizes the event. As a follow-up, counselors meet with MLs each semester to check in on progress, field questions, and adjust schedules as necessary.

Socio-Cultural Factors

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Research suggests ties between poverty and low literacy skills. Educators should consider low SES but not make assumptions about achievement based on SES alone. Many countries only provide compulsory education through elementary or middle school. Students from more affluent families may have had the privilege of attending private secondary schools with rigorous academics, while those of more modest means may have only been to middle school. For example, in Mexico there are not always high schools available in rural areas, so students may find themselves working migrant jobs to help support the family. When families migrate to the U.S., some can maintain their SES from their home country while others find themselves starting over. It is common to meet parents who were engineers in their home countries working minimum wage jobs in the U.S. due to licensing problems, immigration status delays, or lack of English proficiency.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Socio-Cultural:

- Connect families to resources available in the school and community.
- Ensure equal access to programs and opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and advanced classes.
- Helps families understand the U.S. education system and the value placed on a high school diploma.
- Hold parent meetings specifically designed for parents and guardians of multilingual learners. Even if parents have university degrees from other countries, the U.S. system and college admissions process will be new to them.

Immigration Status

More than their younger counterparts, adolescents are aware of their families' immigration status and its impact on their educational opportunities. Even families with legal status face obstacles in the wave of anti-immigrant sentiment that targets certain minority groups (Walqui, 2000).

DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) passed in June 2012, the Department of Homeland announced that "certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines may request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal. They are also eligible for work authorization. Deferred action is a use of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period of time. Deferred action does not provide lawful status."

For more information, visit Student and Family Rights to an Education

In 2019, the General Assembly passed H.B. 19-1196, Financial Aid For Students With In-state Tuition, which allows state-funded financial aid to be awarded to students who do not have lawful immigration status but have resided in the state for at least three years before graduating from a Colorado high school or passing a high school equivalency exam, and admitted to a participating college within 12 months of graduating high school. They must also sign an affidavit affirming that they are seeking or will seek legal status as soon as they are eligible. These students are historically called ASSET (Advancing Students for a Stronger Tomorrow) students after Senate Bill 13-033.

For more information, visit Colorado ASSET

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Immigration Status:

- Welcome all students to school and set them up for success.
- Work with your district to develop a process for enrolling speakers of other languages and then provide staff training.
- Though some students may face obstacles in attending higher education institutions, districts, schools, and public charter schools have the obligation to create programs that allow all students, regardless of immigration status, an opportunity to earn a high school diploma.

Family Support and Expectations

Research shows that "parents of multilingual learners value formal schooling and academic achievement, want to help their children succeed and are often able to do so." (Samway & McKeon, 2007, p. 61). Districts, schools, and public charter schools must form partnerships with all families and build these bridges between home and school to help MLs succeed in school. Even MLs who are born in the U.S. may have parents that experienced their schooling outside of the U.S.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Family Support and Expectations:

- Hold meetings for immigrant parents to explain how parent involvement is carried out in U.S. schools. Topics for such meetings may include how to access student grades and attendance online, an explanation of high school credits and graduation requirements, and methods for supporting literacy in the home.
- If parents do not speak English, encourage them to continue using their home language in the home and read to their children in their home language.
- Provide translators who can also act as "cultural brokers" for parent meetings and school events, so parents feel more comfortable asking questions.
- Schools are required to provide communication in the student's home language when possible.

Social Challenges and Sense of Self

Adolescents often articulate feeling caught between two worlds.

Acculturation and assimilation can lead to conflicts at home around cultural/ familial expectations and students may have difficulty navigating between differing cultures. Children who may have been successful in their home country lose self-confidence as they struggle to learn English, academic content, and a new educational system. They must also balance adopting a new culture while maintaining the culture and traditions of their home. Research shows that immigrant youth who maintain a strong sense of pride in their heritage are more successful in school (Nieto, 1999).

Possibility
Consider activities or clubs that address college and career planning, peer relationships, communication, problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, and/or multicultural awareness to raise achievement and create a sense of belonging.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Social Challenges and Sense of Self:

- Effective school practices build on students' backgrounds, including language, culture, and life experiences.
- Educators should advance a systematic, integrated and school-wide approach to infusing students' backgrounds in the physical environment, classroom learning community, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Celebrate the culture of all students.
- Provide courses such as Spanish for Spanish Speakers so students can continue to deepen their literacy in their home language.
- Encourage student leadership groups to support MLs during orientation and throughout the school year.
- Provide avenues for MLs and their parents to become involved in school leadership, such as participation on school accountability committees.
- Make an extra effort to include MLs in the culture of your school, including extracurricular activities, school committees, and celebrations.

Scenario

Jesus attended school in Guatemala up through 9th grade. When he enrolled in the U.S., his school provided a Spanish for Spanish Speakers course that led him to take AP Spanish his senior year. Besides being better prepared for college, Jesus also felt that a course designed for native Spanish speakers gave him additional confidence in all of his subjects. His pathway to graduation acknowledged the value of bilingualism.

Prior Schooling

Previous Academic Achievement

Multilingual Learners bring a reservoir of content knowledge from their previous schooling. Adolescents' level of success or failure in school influences their self-confidence and attitude toward learning.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Prior Schooling:

- Request and utilize transcripts from previous academic institutions to design academic programs for students.
- With the help of translators, interview students and parents about their prior experiences and consider student strengths when designing an academic plan.
- Help teachers to recognize that content knowledge from student's previous schooling is a resource to build on in the classroom. For instance, a student who has mastered algebra in their country does not need to re-learn algebra; they need to learn the new language that allows them to access algebraic concepts.

Educational Continuity

MLs who have attended schools in the U.S. may have experienced a variety of program models in different districts, schools, and public charter schools. It is not unusual for a student to have experienced bilingual education, English immersion, and ESL programs at various times throughout their educational history (Walqui, 2000). Also, they may have experienced interrupted schooling for a variety of reasons. Students with Interrupted Formal Schooling (SIFE) tend to be the most at risk of dropping out, so it is important to identify these students and design programs to fit their specific needs.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Educational Continuity:

- Provide both adult and peer support to help MLs navigate the new school and new schedules.
- For MLs who have moved through many districts, schools, and public charter schools and programs, conduct thorough assessments at intake to identify their needs and design their program accordingly.
- Communicate with parents early and often to help them understand what school programs will provide and how they may be different/similar to what their child has received in the past.

Language Proficiencies

Language proficiency is of particular concern for secondary MLs because as students enter a U.S. middle or high school, they can have varying degrees of proficiencies in one or both languages. Districts, schools, and public charter schools consider proficiency in both the L1 and L2 when placing students in classes.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Language Proficiencies:

Find as much as possible about the student's level of literacy in their first language. Some schools ask for a native language writing sample during intake and have a bilingual staff member or world language teachers assist in evaluating students' L1 writing.

Access to Core Curriculum

Students need the opportunity to earn credit from day one. Research shows that one of the factors that causes MLs to drop out is the lack of relevant, credit-bearing courses (Maxwell-Jolly, Gandara, & Mendez- Benavidez, 2007). Schools ensure access to core curriculum when they provide appropriate English Language Development (ELD) courses and academic content courses that use sheltered instruction to "change the load, not the level."

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Access to Core Curriculum:

- Place MLs with teachers who are highly skilled at meeting the needs of multilingual learners.
- Recruit teachers who have a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse endorsement or appropriate training.
- Provide MLs with explicit instruction in listening, reading, writing, and speaking in English before they are considered for interventions.
- Only place newly arrived MLs in Special Education courses or specialized intervention courses if they have been previously staffed at their prior school. The MTSS process must be followed for MLs to be placed in Special Education or intervention services.

Education Background

Intake procedures for secondary students must include several qualitative measures. Although writing samples and WIDA Screener provide vital information, taking the time to understand students' academic experience makes the greatest difference in properly placing them in classes. Locke (2006) states that flexibility in attendance, scheduling, and timelines greatly aids older MLs in their academic experience.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Educational Background:

To get a complete picture of a secondary ML, the school/district needs to go beyond the initial intake assessments. Conduct a background interview *before* creating student schedules as a means to determine appropriate supports and placement.

Out-of-School Youth

Out-of-school youth (OSY) have little or no access to federal or state resources. OSY are the fastest growing population within the migrant community because they often are disengaged and alienated from schools and learning.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Out-of-School Youth:

- Create a supportive environment for students so that they do not feel forced to choose between school and their families.
- Create policies and procedures for re-admitting OSY who may have dropped out in the past.
- Provide GED courses for OSY.
- Encourage OSY to engage in basic skills courses.
- Work with the Migrant Education Program and other relevant programs to provide practical life skills classes/activities for OSY.

Scenario

Minh arrived from Vietnam at 15 and struggled in all of his high school courses. He was especially slow copying information from the board and several teachers referred him to special education. A counselor who was experienced in working with MLs explained the language acquisition process to the staff and demonstrated the vast differences between the alphabetic systems of Vietnamese and English. Eventually the teachers began to incorporate strategies such as giving Jimmy the notes ahead of time, using visuals, and providing a peer tutor. Minh's ESL teacher provided both an English language development class and an additional ESL study skills class to help him develop additional learning strategies. Now the counselor and ESL teacher work together to schedule Minh's courses and select his teachers to ensure that his linguistic needs are met.

SECONDARY EDUCATION: FROM INTAKE TO GRADUATION

INTAKE: home language survey, district & language assessments, education background interview

ADMISSION STAFF	ELD TEACHER / COORDINATOR	COUNSELORS	STUDENT	FAMILY

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS: demographics of district/school, infulencing factors, resources

ADMINISTRATORS	COUNSELORS	ELD TEACHER/COORDINATOR

PLACEMENT & GRADUATION PLAN: content & ELD courses, graduation planning

COUNSELORS	ELD TEACHER/COORDINATOR	CONTENT TEACHERS

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES: strategic scheduling, cross-content connections, student data, placement, grading

INTERVENTIONISTS / CONTENT TEACHERS	COUNSELORS	ADMINISTRATORS

GUIDANCE: assessing credits, revisit graduation plan, revisit intervention plan, family engagement

COUNSELORS	ELD TEACHER / COORDINATOR	CONTENT TEACHERS	ADMINISTRATORS	FAMILY

GRADUATION: post secondary matriculation

STUDENTS

9.3 Programmatic Considerations

Schools that make a difference for diverse learners must show a "willingness to accept, embrace and navigate the complexity of teaching and learning in collaboration with others" (Salazar, 2009, p. 23). Whatever the programmatic approach, it must recognize and build on the identity, language, and knowledge MLs already possess. Specific practices to build on student identity and culture include:

- Provide opportunities during the school day for students to process in their native language with their peers.
- Revisit school traditions, pictures in the hallways, bulletin boards and announcements. How are all backgrounds and cultures reflected in your school?
- Create opportunities for students to share their background knowledge and perspective on topics in the curriculum.
- Allow students to access bilingual resources to help facilitate their understanding of content.
- Create different levels of ELD courses that meet the various needs of the ML population. Students at lower L1 and L2 literacy levels may need two beginning ELD periods per day; students with higher levels may need one period of an advanced class.
- Middle and high schools have some flexibility to structure instructional time, class size, course design and other organizational features to best serve their MLs. Research suggests that an average 9th grade ML will require 4–7 years of instruction to read and write as well as a typical 12th grade native English speaker (Hakuta et al., 2000).
- Permit newly arrived immigrant MLs to stay in high school for more than the usual four years (Garcia, 1999).
- Schools may reduce class size to better serve adolescent MLs (Boyson & Short, 2003; Crandall et al., 1998; Garcia, 1999). Programs that effectively target adolescent MLs for accelerated learning—either during the school day or through extended hours—typically include opportunities for small group or pair learning.
- Schools with many Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) provide small literacy classes that are co-taught by a CLD or Native Language Arts teacher and a reading specialist.

LIEPs generally include English language instruction as a central feature. Programs may include other components, such as teacher professional development; academic and other counseling for students; skill-building, such as study- or vocational-skill building; or family/community involvement. The program should be explicit concerning:

- Who will provide instruction to the English learning students?
- The curriculum and methods of instruction within the program (including setting (s) in which the curriculum is to be implemented).
- What language will be used for instruction.
- The desired outcomes for the students to become bilingual or to "transition from" or "exit" the program Programs for MLs need to be well defined (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2004).

9.4 Navigation of Secondary Systems and Structures

For many MLs, U.S. schools represent a better future; however, they also represent a foreign system with many obstacles. MLs must successfully navigate fragmented school days, departmentalization, and systems of academic courses. Districts, schools, and public charter schools can create policies and procedures to break down these obstacles and clear a path for student success. In addition to the changes all adolescents go through during this period, MLs are often navigating their cultural identity as well as the need to learn a new language and in turn learn *through* that new language to graduate and reach their full potential.

Potential Structural Obstacles

Strategic Scheduling

The continuous movement from class to class in an unfamiliar building and the constant shifting of classmates increases confusion and alienation for secondary MLs (Walqui, 2007). Some districts, schools, and public charter schools utilize block scheduling, with the advantage for MLs being extended class periods with fewer class periods per day. Another way of scheduling MLs is to look at the whole day for these students and strategically schedule academic classes. Place electives or lunch between the most challenging classes to provide a break so that students do not become overloaded and tune out.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Strategic Scheduling:

- Organize the master schedule around what is best for all students
- Create the master schedule with special populations in mind first
- Hand-schedule MLs into appropriate classes for linguistic and academic needs

Cross-Content Connections

Elementary school teachers often consider themselves generalists while secondary teachers think of themselves as subject matter experts. Content teachers may not see themselves as teachers of reading and writing because they expect students to be competent in literacy when they arrive. This assumption poses a problem for newcomers who lack these skills. When districts, schools, and public charter schools have strong departmental boundaries, there are no clearly established responsibilities for the
education of students who need to develop academic knowledge and acquire English (Walqui, 2007).

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Cross-Content Connections:

- Make connections across ideas and content
- Provide professional development which helps content teachers address the linguistic needs of MLs
- Set up structures that allow for cross-departmental work
- Build team planning into the school day
- Build awareness of the needs of MLs
- Consider co-teaching as one model for instruction
- Develop school leadership teams that combine ELD teachers, content teachers, administrators, and counselors

Data-Informed Course Scheduling

Secondary districts, schools, and public charter schools have complex systems of courses and requirements that can be difficult for students from different educational systems, languages, and cultures to grasp and negotiate. Too often 12th grade multilingual learners learn that they do not have enough credits to graduate right before graduation day. It is crucial to communicate, in the students' primary language(s) and in the simplest format possible, the graduation requirements as well as the courses necessary to matriculate into college or other postsecondary options.

One promising practice is to place students in courses based on data (interviews, transcripts, intake assessments) linked to the factors mentioned, not only teacher perception. When teachers' remedial or low perceptions drive placement, students often are treated consistent with these perceptions. Once a student begins to own these perceptions, a self-fulfilling cycle begins. If, for example, a student who took high level math in Mexico is placed in a remedial math class because of language, they may start to think of themselves as remedial. Some students rise to this challenge and do not legitimatize their misplacement, but others become bored and give up. Additionally, students placed in lower tracks may not receive the courses that are required for graduation or certain postsecondary options. A system of assessment and placement that better serves MLs should be a priority for districts, schools, and public charter schools and counselors.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Data-Informed Course Scheduling:
Optimal guiding principles when scheduling multilingual learners:

- Collect language proficiency data in both L1 and L2
- Schedule to the strengths of the student
- Schedule ELD courses/sheltered content courses first
- If sheltered content courses are not available, hand-schedule content courses with qualified instructors
- Schedule core courses before electives

Placement and Assessment

Students who are assessed, placed and monitored based on their knowledge and skills are more likely to receive instruction that meets their needs. Making time for placement is crucial because it saves time in the long run. It takes more time to reschedule a student who has been misplaced in courses. Additionally, such misplacement could in turn create challenges with student motivation and behavior. It is important to provide high school students with high quality—as opposed to remedial—instruction. Once placed, effective programs measure progress in ways that allow modifications in order to improve student performance. Diagnostic assessments—including formal assessments in the native language and English assessments with necessary accommodations, as well as portfolios and formative classroom assessments—ascertain the diverse language and academic strengths of MLs. Districts, schools, and public charter schools that effectively serve MLs establish multiple measures for examining student gains and instructional improvements. Regular quality review cycles (optimally every six weeks), during which data is gathered and analyzed to track the development of students and teachers over time, allow for appropriate program refinement.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Placement and Assessment:

- Have policies and procedures for intake assessments for secondary MLs
- Include writing samples
- Use additional assessments, specifically in math
- Counselors need to create a graduation plan for proper placement into classes

Grading

Teachers new to working with multilingual learners often express concern about fair grading. MLs are "faced with three significant challenges: they must learn new concepts (often quite abstract especially above third grade), they must learn in a language in which they are not proficient, and they must learn in a cultural context that may be quite unfamiliar to them" (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). As students face these challenges, they may struggle with written assignments and assessments where the language demands exceed their current level of English language proficiency. Even with their best efforts, students may struggle to achieve high scores on assignments and assessments compared to their native-English speaking peers. The following suggestions (adapted from Jameson, 2003, p. 171) will help teachers develop ways to grade MLs equitably.

Shared Responsibilities Regarding Grading:

- Explain what and how you grade early in the class; show examples of good work. Talk to students after grading if you think their expectations were different from the grade they received.
- Use the standards as a guide to teach what is most essential. What are the essential concepts they must learn? What vocabulary is most critical?
- Focus on meaning and content knowledge, not language errors such as grammar mistakes. Ask yourself: Did the student understand the question? Did they answer the question?
- Design assessments that allow students to express their knowledge. Matching words with pictures, filling in diagrams and answering questions orally are strategies that work.
- When writing test questions, adjust the language load, not the cognitive level. Avoid idioms, passive voice and vocabulary that could distract from the heart of the question.
- Grade using a combination of *process* and *product*.
- Adapt tests and test administration (allow more time for MLs, read the test to them, etc.). Teach test-taking skills and strategies. Use criterion-referenced tests.
- Teach students how to evaluate their own work. Provide rubrics for self-evaluations.
- If necessary, use pass/fail grades for newcomer MLs on the report card for the first or second grading/scoring period. As students learn more English and become accustomed to content courses, transition to letter or competency grades.

Teachers may struggle at first, but with more experience they can develop a grading policy that equitably reflects the content knowledge of MLs.

Special Notes for School Administrators

Successful districts, schools, and public charter schools effectively target resources, position themselves with key constituencies and provide strong guidance so MLs receive high quality instruction in environments that are safe, supportive, and connected to the broader school community. A school culture mindful of the contributions of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds fosters learning and achievement (Faltis & Coulter, 2007). A strong school leadership team must build structures and schedules for a comprehensive service model that addresses the needs of all students. The team must engage guidance counselors and ELD teachers in order to provide professional development that addresses cultural sensitivity as well as instructional goals.

As needs grow more diverse among adolescent learners, all middle and high school teachers must understand second language acquisition, know the basic principles of second language literacy instruction, how to teach in cross-cultural contexts, and how to provide MLs with content-based instruction that includes academic language instruction. This requires an administrative commitment to provide deep and sustained opportunities for professional development. Administrators should meet with ML staff regularly to analyze and strengthen instructional strategies such as scaffolding, use of appropriate materials and how to make connections to student experiences.

Special Notes for Counselors

Role of the School Counselor: According to the American School Counselor Association (2013), being aware of the national, state and local requirements and programs that impact future endeavors are one aspect of the school counselor's role. School counselors are obligated to provide comprehensive services to all of their students, including those who may be undocumented (Mainer, 2013). School counselors have an important role in the academic, socio-emotional, and career success of students; they have the unique opportunity and ability to shape underserved students' school experience, academic success, and their college choice process (Nienhusser, 2013). Furthermore, school counselors are the frontline mental health professionals for all of their students and families (Borders, 2002; Walley & Grothaus, 2013). The networks between peers, school officials, and students have the potential to empower minority students to access essential social capital plus give access to necessary resources for school success (Gonzales, 2010).

For reference citations and more information, visit School Counselors Working with Undocumented Students

There is a lack of literature regarding effective ways to guide MLs to higher education and how to get them college and career ready. The existing, yet very limited, studies that focus on school counselors working with MLs focus largely on Latino students (Cook, 2015). Still, there is a lack of guidance for school counselors to effectively work through the college-going process of all MLs, regardless of their background (Cook, Pérusse, & Rojas, 2015). School counselors are critical to college going success and trajectory to college.

School counselors serve an important role in connecting ML students with people, opportunities and resources that will help ease their transition into your school culture. Some strategies that may help ML students' transition are:

- Proper course placement – placing ML students in the appropriate classes to meet their individual needs can increase school success
- Connecting them with clubs and extra-curricular activities
- Pairing them with a student representative, preferably one who is fluent in their native language, to acclimate them to the school. For example, they can give a tour of the building, explain the school rules and policies and introduce them to their teachers and other students
- Ensuring that students are appropriately identified for English Language development instruction. A disproportionate number of ML students are placed in special education. English language fluency does not always correlate with a need for special education services.
- Ensuring that students who are identified for special education services are also provided English language supports. Students should be afforded both services; one does not supersede the other.
- Organizing small groups to foster positive school adjustment
- Include families in the conversation

Provide families with resources. Organizations such as Catholic Community Services, the Refugee and Immigrant Center – Asian Association of Utah, and the English Skills Learning Center provide many services. Families of ML students can be a great resource for expanding cultural conversations in districts, schools, and public charter schools. Make sure they have a place at the table. Arrange for a **translator** to be present at meetings with families of multilingual learners. It is respectful to face the family during the conversation, not the translator. Provide **translated correspondence**, resources, and documents in preferred language.

Obstacles to College Access for Multilingual Learners and Recommendations for Counselors

Debrief - The purpose of this article is to briefly discuss some of the obstacles faced by MLs that impact their college opportunities. The authors discuss the challenges faced and provide suggestions to aid school counselors in creating a more college-going culture for MLs. Specifically, we discuss pertinent laws that impact MLs, obstacles pertaining to academics, socio-emotional strains, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and parental involvement. Finally, we offer various suggestions for school counselors.

MLs enter a system that believes they should learn English at the expense of their academics (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). According to the American Youth Policy Forum (2009), "When MLs enter public schools, they face the dual challenges of learning a new language while keeping up with the academic content of their grade level" (p. 2). Further, they are tracked into ESL classes and left out of academic tracks, which leaves them isolated from their native English-speaking peers (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011). The effects of the many disadvantages MLs face in and outside of school are evident when comparing the access and attainment of higher education between MLs and monolingual English-speaking students. MLs are less likely to attend a higher education institution than their monolingual counterparts (Cook, 2015). When MLs are restricted from rigorous curricula, they are more likely than English-proficient students or English monolingual students to attend a two-year institution rather than a four-year college (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). MLs are more likely to not transfer to a four-year institution than their native counterparts and more likely to not finish their degrees (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). Regrettably, it is estimated that 70% of students who start at two-year colleges do not go on to a four-year institution.

Challenges	Recommendations
Academic	To rectify this phenomenon, school counselors should advocate for students to have a fair chance at taking Advanced Placement courses or courses that give college credit (Cook et al., 2015). Doing so will lower the cost of college and improve college readiness (Perez, 2010). It is important to reframe the approach to MLs from deficit based to asset based (American Youth Policy Forum, 2009). When talking to students about their college choices, school counselors may consider the fact that institutions look at MLs differently; for example, some institutions do not give credit for ESL classes, adding to costs (Kanno & Grosik, 2012).
Access to information	School counselors must explain the college-going process to MLs in appropriate language and with a vast amount of information on the background of the U.S. education system (Kanno & Grosik, 2012).
Socio-economic	Having limited information may also affect the financial aid students receive (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011). For example, MLs may require school counselors to sit down with them to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), as just pointing them to the Web site may not be enough (Kanno & Grosik, 2012). Kim (2012) detailed the lesson plan of a four-week college and career planning research project that helped MLs learn the importance of college and career planning and also improve their writing and researching skills. In this project, students were expected to write about their career goals, research institutions for their careers and the college application process and create a financial plan.
Parental Involvement	Research has highlighted the significance of educating not only students but also parents about the college-going process (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011). School counselors may also set up hands-on workshops for students and parents to carefully walk them through the application process, including financial aid, and to provide translators when necessary (Kanno & Grosik, 2012). Parental involvement is another issue for most MLs, where parents are unable to be involved in school for various reasons. Whether parents are not involved due to late work hours or fear, school counselors should make an effort to increase parental involvement (Cook et al., 2015). Providing workshops (Kanno & Grosik, 2012) and parent nights (Cook et al., 2015) are a vital component to build rapport with parents of MLs. Which in turn may provide a welcoming atmosphere for parents. School counselors should give a chance for the parents to provide input, share their thoughts, questions and concerns about the college and career transition (Cook et al., 2015). Lastly, collaboration between the school and community can create more resources for parental involvement (American Youth Policy Forum, 2009).

Immigration Status	When working with MLs, school counselors should pay extra attention to those students who may be undocumented; they should address short- and long-term goals and educate them about their rights and available resources (Morrison et al., 2016). It is important for school counselors to go above and beyond for students who may be undocumented, as they face extraneous difficulties when planning for college. Undocumented ELL students will benefit from learning about available resources, such as scholarships that do not have residency requirements, and eligibility requirements for in-state tuition (Cook et al., 2015). Moreover, school counselors must stay up to date on legislation that affects undocumented college-bound students (Morrison et al., 2016). Nienhusser (2013) highlighted the role of school counselors in the college choice of undocumented students.
Socio-Emotional	MLs, regardless of status or background, may face various socio-emotional strains such as discrimination and bullying. It is important to consider these as they may influence the daily academic life of MLs. The StopBullying.gov (n.d.) initiative provides guidelines for school counselors who need strategies to prevent and deal with bullying. An additional strategy that can be useful to school counselors is storytelling. According to Enciso (2011), storytelling is a powerful tool to use with immigrant youth, including those who are MLs; this allows the students to be validated and engage with others in the school building. School counselors should always be respectful of the unique cultural backgrounds, cultural heritage, and values of MLs (Cook et al., 2015). Students dealing with the effects of trauma may benefit from the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBIT) program, which includes group interventions, psychoeducation, relaxation training, cognitive therapy, trauma exposure, social problem solving, and teacher and parent sessions (Santiago, Lennon, Fuller, Brewer, & Kataoka, 2014). Many MLs learn from their experiences and use them as a catalyst for success (Perez, 2009).

For references cited in this section and more information for counselors, visit additional website resources at:
Understanding the Challenges of English Language Learners and Increasing College-Going Culture: Suggestions for School Counselors

The long-term impact of subtractive schooling in the educational experiences of secondary English language learners. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism

School Counselor Experiences of Response to Intervention with English Learners

Develop a Graduation Plan

From the day a student arrives at high school, guidance counselors should begin developing a graduation plan. This plan should be developed mutually with the student and should be reviewed and updated at least once each year, or even once each semester or quarter. Changes to the plan should be ongoing and based on the student's progress during that time period. The ML's graduation plan may not look like the graduation plan for a native English speaker.

Assessing Credits

Evaluate the complete course credit history of an ML before designing the schedule and graduation plan. MLs often come with a non-traditional educational history. The student may have attended two or more schools during the year, come from a 7-period day vs. a 4-period day, have been enrolled in a course not offered at the new school, have trade/training program certifications, or have taken content courses in a different order. Complications arise when students move from one state to another with each state having different graduation requirements, standards, and assessment systems. This can result in many students not receiving credit for the coursework they have completed. Not receiving credits can lead to apathy, despair and dropping out (Johnson, et al. 1986; Rasmussen 1988). Careful credit assessment of all high school coursework is critically important.

Working with Partial Credits

Multilingual learners often lose credits when they move mid-semester. When the semester is interrupted by a move, any "partial" credit is lost. Partial credit is the percentage of the semester's requirements that the student completed successfully, and it is vital to the student's ability to graduate. If the school does not conserve and record partial credit, students may end up repeating a portion of a course that they have already completed.

Take steps to ensure maximum credit accrual for partially completed semesters. If a student must leave in the middle of the semester, code the transcript so that the student receives partial credit. If a student arrives at your school outside the normal entry time, work with the previous school to give the student credit for work completed and avoid repeating course work. When working with migrant families, find out when annual migrations are likely to take place and take proactive steps to ensure that students leave with partial credit.

As described in the prior pages, the school must provide MLs with frequent access to staff, including guidance counselors, social workers, intervention specialists, librarians, and mentors. Encourage strong parent and community involvement. Build the school community by engaging families and using neighborhood resources to strengthen ML instruction and opportunities for college and career guidance.

Walqui (2007) found that secondary school counselors too often equate limited English language proficiency with academic limitations and act as gatekeepers to more challenging academic credit-bearing courses that lend more post-secondary options. Begin with the end in mind and create a plan for MLs' success.

Setting up Multilingual Learners for Success

After conducting thorough intake assessments, conducting interviews, and evaluating transcripts, school staff can then begin to plan for appropriate instructional programming for each English learner. It is important to provide students the opportunity to follow a rigorous academic curriculum, which fosters academic success and helps them integrate into the fabric of school and society. Callahan (2005) notes that in schools where teaching only basic English is the focus, secondary MLs tend to achieve poorly, lose hope, and often drop out. She also found that curriculum placement into regular college preparatory courses was a better predictor of academic achievement than students' English language proficiency.

A comprehensive school-wide program includes qualified ELD teachers as well as content teachers who shelter grade-level content for MLs. Districts, schools, and public charter schools must provide qualified staff, continuous professional development, and design and implement a rigorous and relevant curriculum that prepares MLs for college.

Higher Education Admissions Requirements

In 2003, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) adopted the Higher Education Admission Requirements (changed to "Recommendations" in 2018 to more accurately reflect that it is not required for admission to fulfill HEAR), which provide a high school course mix and rigor guidelines for students planning to attend any of Colorado's public four-year colleges or universities. The recommendations were implemented in in two phases: Phase 1 for students graduating in 2008 and 2009, and Phase 2 for students graduating in 2010 and beyond. Private colleges and universities set their own admission standards, so students should contact those institutions directly for information regarding their enrollment policies. Additionally, public two-year colleges have open enrollment policies, meaning that students applying to these schools do not need to meet HEAR, however, it will certainly benefit their success if they do.

ACADEMIC AREA	2008/2009 GRADUATE	2010+ GRADUATES
English*	4 years	4 years
Mathematics (Must include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or equivalents)**	3 years	4 years
Natural/Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-based)**	3 years	3 years
Social Sciences (at least one unit of U.S. or world history)	3 years	3 years
World/Foreign Language***	not required	1 year
Academic Electives****	2 years	2 years

*Two units of ESL English may count for HEAR recommendations when combined with two units of successfully completed college preparatory English.
**College-preparatory ESL mathematics/science courses that include content and academic rigor/level comparable to other acceptable courses may satisfy HEAR recommendations.
***American Sign Language (ASL)
****Acceptable Academic Electives include additional courses in English, mathematics, natural/physical sciences and social sciences, foreign languages, art, music, journalism, drama, computer science, honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate courses, and appropriate CTE courses.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education does not review individual high school courses to determine whether or not they meet Colorado's Higher Education Admissions Recommendations. Because local school districts in Colorado oversee their high school curricula and colleges and universities establish their own entrance standards, it is their discretion to determine what coursework meets HEAR.

View HEAR Requirements

CDE Graduation Guidelines and Multilingual Learners

The Colorado graduation guidelines have two purposes, the first is to articulate Colorado's shared beliefs about the value and meaning of a high school diploma. The second is to outline the minimum components, expectations, and responsibilities of districts, schools, and public charter schools and the state to support students in attaining their high school diploma. Districts, schools, and public charter schools have the authority to adapt the college and career demonstrations necessary to earn a standard high school diploma to accommodate for students with exceptions: multilingual learners, gifted students, and students with disabilities.

For more information, visit Students with Exceptions

Secondary schools in Colorado strive to raise graduation rates, reduce dropout rates, and provide a rigorous curriculum that prepares students to be college and career ready. In order to reach these critical goals and include multilingual learners, it is often tempting to immediately jump to structural changes. Although districts, schools, and public charter schools must change the way they offer courses and schedule multilingual learners, Salazar (2009) suggests there is a more critical component that must come first: "the relentless belief in the potential of culturally and linguistically diverse youth" to achieve academically.

There are no simple solutions or one-size fits all formulas for fostering success for secondary multilingual learners. Every school must consider the particular needs of its own community. Even if a given ML population appears on the surface to be relatively homogenous, assessment will reveal that those students have all sorts of differing educational backgrounds and unique needs.

View the Graduation Guidelines Engagement Toolkit

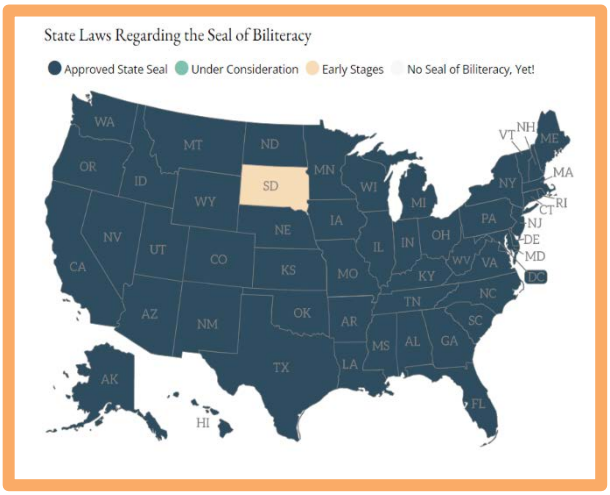
A Capstone Project is a multifaceted body of work that is district determined and serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. When developed through an inclusive process, capstone experiences and portfolios offer an authentic, rigorous learning opportunity for students, and they provide school faculty and staff a meaningful professional growth opportunity. Capstone projects allow students to draw on knowledge and skills from a variety of content areas and apply it in meaningful ways. Portfolios serve as a mechanism for students to curate and display high quality work that demonstrates their mastery of course content, career, and college readiness. The strongest practice or approach helps students demonstrate academic, professional, and entrepreneurial competencies, while encouraging them to develop expertise in an area of deep interest. This investigative process encourages and requires a high degree of collaboration and coordination among faculty and staff.

For more information, visit Capstone Project

Colorado Seal of Biliteracy

National perspective

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by a school, school district or county office of education in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy takes the form of a gold seal that appears on the transcript or diploma of the graduating senior and is a statement of accomplishment for future employers and for college admissions. In addition to the Seal of Biliteracy marks attainment of high level mastery of two or more languages, districts, schools, and public charter schools are also instituting Bilingual Pathway Awards, recognizing significant steps towards developing biliteracy along a student's trajectory from preschool into high school.



Is the Seal of Biliteracy just for Multilingual Learners?

A Seal of Biliteracy is granted to all students who meet the criteria for the award. For each level, criteria are set for students whose first language is English who are learning a second language and for multilingual learners who are developing academic proficiency in their home language while mastering English.

For more information, visit the Seal of Biliteracy Guidelines

Learn more about Seal of Biliteracy for Colorado High School Diplomas

Is this just for Spanish speakers? What about other language groups?

Seals of Biliteracy are intended for all students who master standard academic English and any other language, including American Sign Language. Assessments, including Advanced Placement Tests (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams, are available in many languages. Some districts, schools, and public charter schools have developed their own assessment process for languages where there are no existing tests and use a common rubric for scoring the tests aligned with World Language Standards. A Linguafolio approach has been developed by the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages. Currently, districts, schools, and public charter schools use a combination of assessments, course requirements, student work, and performance. If your school or district is seeking models and ideas for how this is done, contact the CLDE Office at the Colorado Department of Education.

Who awards the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Colorado Seal of Biliteracy was designed to be awarded by school district or state; however, an individual school site or school program may also decide to implement the award. For example, the dual language strand in one K-8 school has instituted an award for students who complete its program, thus recognizing the high levels of biliteracy achievement.

Overview of the Colorado Seal of Biliteracy

A seal of biliteracy is a credential given by a Colorado district recognizing students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. A seal of biliteracy encourages students to pursue biliteracy skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions office. The following is guidance provided by the Senate Bill 17-123 to guide districts, schools, and public charter schools through implementing the pathway of the seal of biliteracy for high school diplomas.

For more information, visit Senate Bill 17-123

The Colorado Seal of Biliteracy is designed to:

- encourage students to study languages
- certify attainment of biliteracy skills
- recognize the value of diversity
- provide potential future employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills
- provides colleges and universities with a method to recognize and give credit to applicants for attainment of high level skills in multiple languages
- prepare students with 21st century skills that will benefit them in the labor market and the global society
- strengthen intergroup relationships and honor the multiple cultures and languages in a community

View the Minimum Requirements: Seal of Biliteracy for High School Diplomas

Districts, schools, and public charter schools may consider the following format for meeting the assessment requirements:

Sample Exam Format

Section I - Multiple Choice — 65 Questions | 1 Hour, 30 Minutes | 50% of Exam Score

- Part A — 30 questions; 40 minutes
  - Interpretive Communication: Printed Texts
- Part B — 30 questions; 50 minutes
  - Interpretive Communication: Print and Audio Texts (combined)
  - Interpretive Communication: Audio Texts

Section II - Free Response — 4 Tasks | 1 Hour, 20 Minutes | 50% of Exam Score

- Part A — Written Tasks; 60 minutes
  - Interpersonal Writing: Email response (1 prompt; 15 minutes)
  - Presentational Writing: Persuasive essay (1 prompt; ~ 55 minutes total: 15 minutes to review materials plus 40 minutes to write)
- Part B — Spoken Responses; 20 minutes
  - Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation (5 prompts; 20 seconds for each response)
  - Presentational Speaking: Cultural evaluation (1 prompt; 4 minutes to prepare, 2 minutes to respond)

View the Foreign Language Assessment Directory

9.5 Principles of Instruction with Promising Practices and Strategies

Once programmatic decisions have been made, incorporating strategic teaching and learning guided by researched based principles and promising practices are important in accelerating learning, promoting student academic achievement, and fostering language acquisition. Levine, Lukens, and Smallwood (2007) have indicated there are five research-based principles for English language learners:

- **Principle 1: Focus on academic language, literacy, and vocabulary across content areas**: teach the language and skills required for content learning.
- **Principle 2**: **Link background knowledge and culture to learning**: Explicitly plan and incorporate ways to engage students in thinking about and drawing from their life experiences and prior knowledge.
- **Principle 3: Increase comprehensible input and language output**: Make meaning through visuals, demonstrations, and other means while providing students multiple opportunities to produce language
- **Principle 4: Promote classroom interaction:** Engage students in using English to accomplish academic tasks
- **Principle 5: Stimulate higher order thinking and the use of learning strategies**: Explicitly teach thinking skills and learning strategies to develop multilingual learners as effective, independent learners

Principle 1: Focus on academic language, literacy, and vocabulary across content areas	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Use sheltered instructional practices	Structured note taking, sentence frames and starters, sort tasks, mix and match activities
Use effective reading strategies	Anticipation guides, cloze passages, guided reading, chunking, picture walks, reciprocal teaching, teach the text backwards
Use effective writing strategies	Graphic organizers, outlines, sentence stem and frames
Emphasize early and ongoing extensive oral language development to improve reading and writing skills	Accountable talk, language models, sentence starters, think-pair-share, questioning techniques
Principle 2: Link background knowledge and culture to learning	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Assess and build on students' language and background	Pre-teaching concepts, preview/review, KWL, frequent checks/ formative assessment, provide multiple examples from diverse perspectives, provide opportunities for students to develop home language when possible
Provide a culturally inclusive environment	Ensure multicultural resources are displayed and utilized, anchor charts, culturally relevant texts
Scaffold content connections by building students' experiential knowledge, and connecting to their interests and perspectives	Make explicit links to prior knowledge and skills, real world connections, introduce new content via familiar resources, help students make text-to-text and text-to-self connections

Principle 3: Increase comprehensible input and language output	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Utilize sheltered strategies	Visuals, consistent routines, graphic organizers, total physical response, manipulatives, wait time, gestures, realia
Provide various options for assignments and assessments	Provide choice when possible, provide differentiated opportunities to demonstrate understanding as appropriate to English proficiency level
Principle 4: Promote classroom interaction	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Create opportunities for movement and student interaction	Use flexible and purposeful pairing/grouping based on academic and linguistic needs, provide specific roles in cooperative learning, structured oral routines (numbered heads and give one-get one), provide clear and consistent rituals and routines
Principle 5: Stimulate higher order thinking and the use of learning strategies	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Ensure students goals are based on standards and all students have access grade level content	Select and accommodate materials based on English language proficiency level, provide targeted support and instruction
Target higher level academic vocabulary	Provide explicit instruction and modeling of academic language throughout the lesson. Explicitly teach cognate relationships, word attack strategies, idioms, word banks, word squares, Tier 2 vocabulary. Provide language rigor by expanding students' language complexity (more sophisticated) and/or quantity (extending the length of discourse)
Explicitly teach learning and cognitive strategies	Model, name and explain learning strategies and metacognition to students. Model metalinguistic awareness (thinking about language)

For more information, view The Five Principles of Instruction for English Language Learners

9.6 Promising Practices for School Leadership and Administration

Multilingual learners represent one of the fastest growing groups in U.S. districts, schools, and public charter schools. It is important for administrators to maintain an understanding and focus through the principles, practices, and strategies presented below:

Principle 1: Establish a culturally inclusive environment	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Foster an affirming attitude towards students and their families	Invite families to inclusive events at school, provide information in their home language when possible, ensure diverse role models are available, honor student and family diversity, adapt practices to meet the needs of your current student population
Use home school connections to enhance student engagement, motivation and participation	Support and encourage families to build home language and literacy in the home, communicate with families using various means (home visits, phone calls, texts, email, cultural liaisons/navigators)
Principle 2: Create environments of success for students	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Ensure students are participating in English language development (i.e. ELD courses, co-taught, push-in support) and grade level instruction in all content areas.	Create schedules that allow students to participate in dedicated and integrated ELD and core content based on individual student needs, support teachers with best practices and effective instruction, ensure students are scheduled in the most highly qualified teachers' classrooms
Provide opportunities for success toward college and career readiness	Ensure students' schedules include classes that are at grade level and taught toward standards, create an environment of high expectations for all, provide multiple opportunities for students to participate in activities and programs school-wide. Provide differentiated approaches towards communicating post-secondary information
Ensure multilingual learners have equal opportunity to be enrolled in academic coursework such as IB, AP, Concurrent Enrollment, AVID, and/or Honors	Provide targeted recruitment, professional development for teachers, and additional support for students
Principle 3: Create environments of success for staff	
Promising practice	**Example Strategies**
Support teachers who work with ML students	Allocate resources to ensure equity and access, create a vision/UIP goals that include ML students. Support professional learning for teachers towards ML instruction, add specific criteria to classroom observation documents that support effective strategies for ML instruction.

Website Resources

English Language Learners: How Your State is Doing

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NELA) Fact Sheets

Immigrants in the U.S. States with the Fastest-Growing Foreign-Born Populations

U.S Department of Education: Who are Multilingual Learners

CDE Migrant Education Program

The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition: Language Instruction Educational Program Models (

Census Bureau-Languages Spoken at Home

Center for Immigration Studies

Kids Count Data Center

(See Appendix H and Appendix I)

Appendix H
Secondary English Learner Educational History Checklist

(Adapted from the Washington State Counselors Guide)

To adequately assess the needs of secondary multilingual learners, obtaining the educational history is a preliminary and crucial factor.

- Examine all of the records you receive from the sending institution or relatives of the student.
- Determine the student's years of U.S. and/or foreign education and any gaps in the educational process. Obtain and validate transcripts from all previous schools, including private or foreign schools. Make sure all credits are posted.
- Determine if the student has ever attended a summer school program. Determine if the student has any grade reports or certificates from attending trade schools, training programs, community service programs, or other educational programs. Obtain, validate, and post records.
- Make a thorough evaluation of all credits earned and credits needed for graduation and for post-secondary education. Look at past transcripts to identify if the student is repeating coursework unnecessarily.
- Review requirements for graduation from the local district and those for post-secondary entrance to college or vocational training.
- Assist the student in developing a graduation plan of coursework that incorporates the results of your complete credit analysis, the requirements for graduation and the student's career pathway.
- Enroll the student in appropriate courses. Within a week of placement, check with teachers to verify correct placement.
- Empower the student with information so that she/he can accept personal responsibility to manage her/his education. Involving the student and her/his relatives in educational career planning not only assists in making good educational decisions, it also provides the counselors with information on the student's interests.
- Review scores from State and local academic and language proficiency assessments. Establish whether the student has met mastery in all required areas.
- Compare the student's age and grade level to see if they are on track to graduate by the required age.

Appendix I
Educating Multilingual Learners at the High School Level

Educating MLs at the High School Level: A Coherent Approach to District- and School-Level Support

In 2000, The American Institutes for Research (AIR), assisted by WestEd, completed a 5-year evaluation of educational environments for MLs in California. The study identifies an array of factors that make a positive difference for ML achievement, not only in California but potentially across the country. The study found that there is no single path to ensuring high ML achievement. However, the following practices appear to be more important contributors to success with MLs than using a specific instructional model:

- Implement a well-defined, rigorously structured plan of instruction for MLs
- Ensure that teachers are skilled in addressing the needs of MLs
- Systematically use data to assess teaching and learning
- Regularly adjust instructional planning based on student performance

As ML enrollment continues to grow, issues facing schools tasked with educating these students become increasingly important. According to federal statistics, an estimated five million MLs were enrolled in U.S. public schools in 2004–2005, an increase of more than 65% from 1993–1994 (Parrish et al., 2006). Spanish is the most common primary language spoken by MLs, and about 70% of MLs are native Spanish speakers (Capps et al., 2005).

Districts, schools, and public charter schools face diverse circumstances in their ML populations. Some serve populations in which one primary language is spoken by the majority of MLs. In other districts, schools, and public charter schools, dozens of language groups may be represented in a single school. Adding to the complexity is variation in the length of residence in the United States: some are newly arrived; others are U.S. born children of immigrants. There also are wide-ranging levels of literacy skills and previous schooling (Genesee, Lindholmleary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). A range of factors, including local contextual factors, must be considered when determining what works best for MLs (Parrish et al., 2006).

States set high academic standards for MLs who face the extraordinary challenge of learning academic English and mastering the same core content standards (in English) that are expected of all students. A major concern in the education of MLs that surfaced throughout the study is that in some cases, language status hampers access to grade-level instruction in the core curriculum and may impede attainment of academic English and grade-level performance standards. At the study's high schools, some MLs and their parents raised concerns that they were "stuck in the ML track" and that this track of courses was not preparing then for college.

What improvement strategies make the most difference in educating MLs? The study gathered information from 66 schools with high ML performance relative to other schools with similar demographics. Some schools in the sample offered bilingual instruction; some offered immersion; and several offered multiple options for ELD instruction. Schools were selected from across the state and had a broad range of demographics. However, all had significant ML populations, and all had high levels of poverty.

Research findings suggest there is no one path to academic excellence for MLs. However, administrators tend to pinpoint a few key features upon which MLs' success hinges. School principals identified the following as most critical:

- Staff capacity to address the needs of multilingual learners
- Schoolwide focus on English language development (ELD) and standards-based instruction
- Shared priorities and expectations in regard to educating MLs
- Systematic, ongoing assessment and data-driven decision making

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be derived for administrators, districts, schools, and public charter schools.

- **Articulate ML policies across classes, grades, and schools.** A coherent set of performance expectations for MLs and a carefully designed plan to guide their progress through the grades and create coherent instructional transitions across schools are essential to the success of MLs.
- **Use data to guide policy and instruction.** The use of data to guide ML policy and to measure the results of instructional practices was prevalent among the successful districts, schools, and public charter schools in the study.
- **Except under very limited circumstances, districts, schools, and public charter schools should offer MLs the same range of challenging coursework offered to English-speaking students.** The study found that instructional programs in place were ostensibly designed to improve the English language acquisition and academic achievement of MLs but resulted in offering MLs a narrower range of less challenging coursework than was available to English-speaking students, often characterized by low expectations. Although the separation of MLs for targeted support is sometimes justified, this should be done strategically and limited to cases justified by specific instructional purposes and demonstrated success.
- **Districts, schools, and public charter schools should support ongoing, job-embedded PD to promote MLs' academic and linguistic achievement and ensure appropriate deployment of skilled teachers to schools in which they are needed most.**
- **Schools should emphasize literacy, personalized learning communities, distributed leadership, and teacher collaboration.** Teaching literacy across the curriculum was identified as a priority in schools that had better-than-average performance among MLs. The development of personalized learning communities and teacher teams were effective strategies for teaching literacy. Empowering members of a school community, such as teacher teams and other staff, to contribute to shaping the direction of student learning positively influenced achievement outcomes and increased the cohesiveness of the school community.

Ten Tips from the Successful Principals Interviewed for this Study

1) **Establish consistent standards around high expectations and strategies:**

"I think the key to our success is consistency. That's the key. The expectations—the standards—have to be set, and the expectations are high for all children. The support that we give them has to be there. But the standards, or the expectations, are never lowered. You cannot do that without consistency. So, it doesn't really matter necessarily what the curriculum is, as long as the strategies that are used to deliver that instruction are consistent across the grade levels, in every strand."

2) **Don't underestimate multilingual learners:**

"Remember that these students are highly motivated and want to learn English. It's important to provide them with a good support group and to ensure that their first experiences help them to keep their goals high. This is critical."

3) **Make multilingual learners a whole-school priority:**

"All teachers must take responsibility for ML kids—it can't just be the ML department. We only have 40 kids in our ELD classes, but we have one third of our school classified as ML. So they are sitting in regular classes, and we need to get them to a fluent level. All teachers have to know who they are, what level they are, in order to bring them up to the fluent level, and that involves the whole staff."

4) **Motivate, train, and involve teachers:**

"Developing highly efficient and effective teachers is the first challenge as a principal. Start by sharing research and demographics with them. Teach them how to read and analyze test scores. Teach them step-by-step all the issues with MLs...what the typical life experience of an ML in the school is like, etc. Work as a team to solve the problems. Build in time for lots of dialogue and reflection. Work collaboratively as an entire school through vertical and grade-level meetings. Include teachers in decision making."

5) **Focus on the needs of individuals:**

"It's hard to do that. Teachers can't look at 30+ students and say, 'I'm going to meet all of your needs every day.' It's overwhelming, and you can't do it. But you must identify needs and find commonalities to group. Where groupings don't work, address it as an individual need. You can't approach it as a 'one-size-fits-all'."

6) **Be an active participant in instruction:**

"As principals, we really need to be instructional leaders—to be in the classroom and speaking with kids…What do they understand and what do they struggle with? I try to get in as often as I can, set aside time during the day. Sometimes there are barriers. That's where we are as instructional leaders across the nation: how do we delegate, give up, let go of the various administrative things that we have throughout the day to really get in and look at classrooms and come out as instructional leaders? Coming back into staff meetings or professional development and teachers taking you as someone who's credible, saying, 'That principal came into my classroom and sat through a guided reading lesson and found the same obstacles as I found.' Then we can talk about those issues and how do we overcome them."

7) **Emphasize literacy:**

"In our school, everything is based on language. Schools are language places. If kids are going to do well in schools, they have to be good at language. Everything is based on language. You have to work on language composition. We have put most of our eggs in reading and comprehension. The library here is a hoppin' place, and it is well used."

8) **Encourage collaboration:**

"Make sure to allow opportunities for cross-dialogue among teachers within and across grade levels to make sure there is coordination and information-sharing about what various teachers have been focusing on and how kids are doing."

9) **Seek staff input about training needs:**

"Offer staff opportunities for development and conduct an inventory of staff development needs to see if they are fully prepared. Ask them what they feel would help them best serve these students, and they will be candid."

10) **Have a dedicated classroom for late-entry newcomers:**

"Keep the class size small. In our school, these students get ELD all morning and then are mainstreamed with native English speakers in the afternoon. I find that the students speak a lot more in this special classroom. Then they get role models with the English speakers in the afternoon. After 1 year, they are transitioned into another class. Sometimes they can move out sooner than 1 year."

This brief was adapted from a longer summary that highlights a 5-year study conducted by AIR and WestEd. The summary provides recommendations and approaches to supporting and instructing MLs in California.