Evaluating Programming, Performance, and Perspectives in Pursuing Progress for English Language Learners

Patricia Marie Tilghman

College of William and Mary - School of Education, ptilghman2010@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd

Part of the Educational Leadership Commons

Recommended Citation

Tilghman, Patricia Marie, "Evaluating Programming, Performance, and Perspectives in Pursuing Progress for English Language Learners" (2017). Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects. Paper 1530192399. http://dx.doi.org/10.25774/w4-sff4-g350
EVALUATING PROGRAMMING, PERFORMANCE, AND PERSPECTIVES IN
PURSUING PROGRESS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Patricia M. Tilghman

August 2017
EVALUATING PROGRAMMING, PERFORMANCE, AND PERSPECTIVES IN
PURSUING PROGRESS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

By

Patricia M. Tilghman

Approved August 8, 2017 by

Leslie Grant, Ph.D.
Committee Member

James Stronge, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Megan Tschannen-Moran, Ph.D.
Chairperson of Doctoral Committee
Table of Contents

List of Tables........................................................................................................vi

List of Figures........................................................................................................vii

Chapter 1: Introduction.........................................................................................2

  Background.........................................................................................................2

  Program Description.........................................................................................9

    Context..........................................................................................................10

    Description of the Program...........................................................................13

  Overview of the Evaluation Approach..............................................................17

    Program Evaluation Model............................................................................19

    Purpose of the Evaluation.............................................................................19

    Focus of the Evaluation................................................................................19

    Evaluation Questions.....................................................................................20

Chapter 2: Literature Review..............................................................................22

  Development of Programming for English Language Learners.....................22

  Key Dimensions of Programming for English Language Learners.................25

    Leadership.....................................................................................................26

    Personnel......................................................................................................29
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Design</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Implementation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Accountability</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and Community Outreach</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Methods</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Sources</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations, Limitations, and Potential for Bias</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Results</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Question 1</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Question 2</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Question 3</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Question 4</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation Question 5.................................................................139

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations...........................................146

Discussion of Findings..............................................................................146

Implications for Policy and Practice..........................................................157

Recommendations for Future Research......................................................166

Summary.....................................................................................................167

Appendices..................................................................................................166

Appendix A: Promoting Excellence Appraisal System Protocol................170

Appendix B: School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey....................173

Appendix C: School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey.............................187

Appendix D: Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol...........................200

Appendix E: Focus Group Letter of Invitation ........................................217

Appendix F: Participant Agreement and Disclosure Form .........................218

References................................................................................................219
Acknowledgements

...to whom much is given, much is expected...

Luke 12:48

This process has been a labor of love, the fulfillment of a dream, and a pathway to some self-realizations. There have been many hands that have helped to bring this work to fruition and to all I extend my most heartfelt thanks. However, there are those in my innermost circle, whose support must be specifically acknowledged. To my siblings, nieces, grandmother, and father, whether near, far, or with the angels, I thank you for your loving care and kindness. To my little lamb, I thank you for all the snuggles and smiles. You are my calming influence. To my precious, loving son, Matthew, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for sacrificing for and standing with me from the first day of class until the last word was typed. You are my rock, my light, and my laughter. To my beloved Mother, Bernita, my best friend, I honor and thank you for devotedly supporting me spiritually and emotionally through every step of not only this journey, but through my life’s journey. Nothing beats the power of my praying mother. You are my strength, my comfort, and the jewel of my heart. To the Master of Breath, I give all glory, honor, thanks, and praise for sustaining and supplying me. You are my power, my purpose, and my peace.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight. O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Amen

Psalms 19:14
List of Tables

Table 1. National Assessment of Educational Progress English Learner Results .......... 5
Table 2. Standards of Learning Assessment Results ................................................. 5
Table 3. Administrators of ELLs Survey ................................................................. 63
Table 4. Teachers of ELLs Survey ................................................................. 64
Table 5. Extant Student Data ............................................................. 73
Table 6. Data Analysis ................................................................. 79
Table 7. Cross-Sectional ACCESS Data ............................................................. 127
Table 8. Cohort ACCESS Data ................................................................. 127
Table 9. Evaluation Question 1 Findings ........................................................... 152
Table 10. Evaluation Question 2 Findings ......................................................... 153
Table 11. Evaluation Question 3 Findings .......................................................... 154
Table 12. Evaluation Question 4 Findings .......................................................... 155
Table 13. Implications for Policy and Practice ............................................... 159
List of Figures

Figure 1. ESL Program Logic Model.................................................................16
Figure 2. English Language Development Levels........................................66
Figure 3. Leadership Dimension Document Review Results.........................90
Figure 4. Leadership Dimension Positive Survey Responses........................91
Figure 5. Professional Development Dimension Document Review Results......93
Figure 6. Professional Development Dimension Positive Survey Responses.....95
Figure 7. Instructional Program Design Dimension Document Review Results.....97
Figure 8. Instructional Program Design Dimension Positive Responses Survey Results.99
Figure 9. Instructional Program Implementation Dimension Document Review ....100
Figure 10. High School Classroom Observation Protocol Mean Results..........103
Figure 11. Middle School Classroom Observation Protocol Mean Results.........105
Figure 12. Elementary Classroom Observation Protocol Mean Results.............107
Figure 13. Instructional Program Implementation Positive Responses Survey Results..108
Figure 14. Assessment and Accountability Dimension Document Review Results.....110
Figure 15. Assessment and Accountability Dimension Positive Responses Survey Results.................................................................112
Figure 16. Parent and Community Outreach Dimension Document Review Results….113
Figure 17. Parent and Community Outreach Dimension Positive Responses Survey Results.................................................................115
Figure 18. Cross-Sectional Percentage of ELs Achieving Progress..................119
Figure 19. Cross-Sectional Mean ACCESS Composite Scores........................119
Figure 20. Cross-Sectional Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores.............120
Figure 21. Cross-Sectional ACCESS Composite Cluster Scores.......................121
Figure 22. Cross-Sectional Standard Deviation Composite Scores....................121
Figure 23. Cohort Percentage of ELs Achieving Progress.................................122
Figure 24. Cohort Mean ACCESS Composite Scores......................................124
Figure 25. Cohort Standard Deviation Composite Scores................................124
Figure 26. Cohort Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores……………………………125
Figure 27. Cross-Sectional Percentage of ELs Attaining Proficiency…………………126
Figure 28. EL Reading Pass Rate Percentages…………………………………………129
Figure 29. EL SOL Reading Mean Scaled Score………………………………………130
Figure 30. EL Math SOL Pass Rate Percentages………………………………………132
Figure 31. EL Math SOL Mean Scaled Scores…………………………………………133
Figure 32. Non-EL vs. EL Reading SOL Pass Rate Percentages……………………135
Figure 33. Non-EL vs. EL Reading SOL Mean Scaled Scores………………………..136
Figure 34. Non-EL vs. EL Math SOL Pass Rate Percentages…………………………137
Figure 35. Non-EL vs. EL Math SOL Mean Scaled Scores……………………………138
Abstract

The demographic composition of America’s population has changed significantly over the past several decades that is reflected in classrooms that are culturally and linguistically more diverse. In particular, the rapidly growing population of non-native English speaking students has highlighted the need for language instruction programs to increase linguistic proficiency outcomes and close pervasive gaps in academic achievement in comparison to native English speaking students. Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), requires that local education agencies (LEAs) as guided by state education agencies (SEAs), provide language instruction programs that ensure equitable access to core curricula and academic achievement for identified students. To comply with the federal and state regulations, language instruction programs must be based on sound theory and be effective in producing appropriate linguistic and academic results for English learners (ELs). The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which a school district’s language instruction program met the seven dimensions of the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS), a theoretical framework for assessing the effectiveness of programming for English Learners (ELs). Evaluated in this study were data collected from document reviews, classroom observations, educator surveys, and extant student data. It was found that there were varying degrees of deficiencies, ranging from severe to moderate, in five of the dimensions. Recommendations were offered for the areas of leadership, professional development, and instructional program design and implementation.
EVALUATING PROGRAMMING, PERFORMANCE, AND PERSPECTIVES IN
PURSUING PROGRESS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

From the 1820s to the 1920s, millions of immigrants sought refuge on American shores entering the New York Harbor under the outstretched, torch-laden arm of the Statue of Liberty (Library of Congress, 2004). In her 1883 poem “The New Colossus,” Emma Lazarus referred to Lady Liberty as the “Mother of Exiles” whose flame glowed with a “world-wide welcome” for those who dared to dream (Lazarus, 2002). Just as for the millions of immigrants from days gone by, today, millions more people from across the globe seek solace on American soil under the guiding light of that gleaming torch; sharing a dream that is deeply rooted in the American dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. For many, the first steps in giving life to that dream leads them to the thresholds of classrooms across the nation, recognizing that education undergirds the pathway to prosperity and creating increasingly diverse student populations.

Background

The changing cultural composition of today’s American classroom is reflective of the perpetual changes in the demographics of the United States. In their discussion of the 2010 census, Humes, Jones, and Ramirez (2011) shared that 72% of the population self-identified as White and 13% as African American. It was further noted that 16% self-identified as being of Hispanic descent indicating a 43% growth in this segment of the population since 2000. In light of the country’s current demographic trends, today’s
classrooms display a much more divergent picture than the mono-ethnic, mono-linguistic learning environments of the past, hosting students representing multiple cultures, races, ethnicities, and languages.

As evidence of the ever-increasing diversification of the American classroom, during the early 1970s national enrollment included 22% of students who were classified as racial/ethnic minorities. By 2003, the enrollment of racial/ethnic minorities increased to 43% (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2005). A report in the New York Times (2013) indicated that the diversity index of classrooms across the nation rose from 52% in 1993 to 61% in 2006. The index represents the percentage that occurs by chance that two randomly selected students from the same classroom would be from different backgrounds. According to NCES (2005), during the 2002-2003 school term 4 million, or approximately 8%, of students enrolled in public schools were provided language instruction and services as English Learners (ELs). Just five short years later, in the 2007-2008 school term that number increased to 5.3 million students, reflecting 10.6% of the student population (Batalove & McHugh, 2010). Within the broad category of ELs are hundreds of mother tongues. Spanish is the primary native language spoken by about 79% of the English Learners. Also notably represented within the EL population, but to a lesser degree are the speakers of Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Korean (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

As classroom demographics have changed over time, researchers and educators have begun conducting more investigations and analyses of achievement data of ELs in comparison to their native English speaking peers. Results have indicated that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds do not perform as well as their
non-minority counterparts (Meidl & Meidl, 2011). This trend continues to be pervasive in this era of high stakes testing and high accountability (Santos, Darling-Hammond, & Cheuk, 2012). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a legislated project overseen by the NCES within the U.S. Department of Education (NCES, 2015). As the largest national, on-going assessment project, the purpose of NAEP is to determine what students in American classrooms know and can demonstrate in various subject areas including reading and math. The results reveal national, state, and more recently, urban district trends over time (NCES, 2015). Performance data are disaggregated by various student characteristics including race, ethnicity, and language proficiency.

Table 1 displays the results of ELs on the most recent administrations of the NAEP reading and math assessments. The data indicate that high percentages of students in need of English language instruction at both the fourth and eighth grade levels are performing below basic benchmarks in both reading and math. It is also worth noting that there has been little to no change in EL student performance since 2011, with the exception of fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, where decreases were two and three percentage points respectively. In the At or Above Proficient category, student performance results for ELs in both reading and math for fourth and eighth grades are 15 percentage points or more below their non-EL peers for all three administrations identified in Table 1. The disparity gaps in student performance between ELs and non-ELs are pervasive and persistent.
Table 1

National Assessment of Educational Progress English Learner Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade/Subject</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
<td>% At or Above Proficient</td>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade Reading</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade Math</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade Reading</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade Math</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It is clear that achievement gaps exist at the national level, but there are also disparities in achievement at the state level as well. The Commonwealth of Virginia, the location of the school district at the center of this study, is no exception to this trend. Federal requirements mandate that Virginia’s leaders establish Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) in reading and math test performance and participation (Virginia Department of Education, 2015). The AMOs represent benchmarks that the state and school districts within the state are expected to meet or exceed. Table 2 displays the statewide academic performance in reading and math of students identified as having limited English proficiency. As evidenced by the data, the students in the limited English proficient category significantly underperform those in the All Students category for each of the test administrations noted by ten or more percentage points. Again, the disparity gaps in student performance between ELs and non-ELs are pervasive and persistent.

Table 2

Standards of Learning Assessment Results % at or Above Proficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited English Proficient</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>Limited English Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. (Virginia Department of Education Report Card, 2015)
The identification of achievement disparities between ELs and their non-EL counterparts alone is not enough to stem the tide of academic achievement inequity. Researchers and educators must be compelled to delve deeper into how ELs are served to seek out possible root causes and potential solutions for closing the gaps. In their research, Calderon et al. (2011) reported that ELs at the elementary level typically receive thirty minutes of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction on a daily basis, with the remainder of the day having instruction provided by a general educator that may not have the prerequisite skills to provide appropriately scaffolded instruction. The authors further asserted that on the other end of the grade level spectrum, high school students are frequently grouped together, regardless of the diverse nature of their language skill sets, with one teacher for a given period of language instruction during the instructional day (Calderon et al., 2011). They contend that these factors occurring within the purview of the school and/or school division program structure contribute to the achievement disparities and educational inequities faced by English Learners.

In his work, Abbott (2014) defined cultural inequity as being an issue affecting recently arrived refugees and immigrants created by difficulties navigating the school environment due to unfamiliarity with American customs and culture. He also presents issues of inequity in linguistics as non-native English speaking students may be at a disadvantage in mainstream, English-only classrooms, such as Virginia and other states prescribe, when taking tests and accessing content presented in English. He further asserts that if EL students are placed in separate programs, they may also be subjected to inequities in disparate programmatic structure or lowered expectations.
Skrla, McKenzie, and Scheurich (2009) cited a definition of educational equity put forth by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction that highlights such issues as the elimination of barriers to education for groups based on their constitutionally-protected status which includes national origin. Inherent in this definition is the notion of incorporating rigor and relevance for traditionally underserved populations of students and to work towards eliminating those barriers, including barriers created by language minority status. There must also be an emphasis on planned, strategic, and systemic strategies for incorporating equitable practices and policies into the educational arena. It may be thought that just providing the same amount of funding for all students will create a sense of parity and equal opportunities for all. However, Darling-Hammond (2010) asserted that merely having equal dollars does not produce equal educational opportunities. Within this argument resides the notion that there must be some parity in the allocation of human and capital resources as well; not in the sense that everyone gets the same thing, but with the frame of reference that resources are allocated so that all students, including language-diverse students get what they need to yield the desired academic achievement results.

For decades, efforts have been made to improve educational equity for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Federal policy compels state and local education agencies to put measures into place to assist ELs in overcoming language barriers and to foster equal and equitable access to educational opportunities (Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974). Another such piece of federal legislation is The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) which proposed 10 key areas of action designed to “close achievement gaps with accountability, flexibility, and choice so that
no child is left behind” (107th Congress, 2002). There is much debate about the short and long term effectiveness of the measure, but it has served to bring attention to the plight and circumstances of traditionally underserved and underperforming populations such as students with limited English proficiency. As a part of the NCLB reform initiatives, the third area of the entitled sections, also known as Title III, makes specific mention of instructional programming for children who are non-native English speakers, lack proficiency in English, or are of immigrant status (107th Congress, 2002). Within this section are nine key points that outline the parameters of what state and local education agencies must do to ensure that students of immigrant status or students who are experiencing limited proficiency in English benefit from academic equity and access to comprehensible instruction commensurate with their English speaking peers. In 2015, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which served as the umbrella legislation for NCLB, was amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reflects the current regulations (United States Department of Education, 2016). ESSA retains the nine key areas of Title III as relative to providing high-quality researched-based language education instructional programs for English learners, but provides more detailed guidance specific to program parameters and accountability measures for EL student outcomes, EL student college and career readiness, long-term EL provisions, and EL family engagement (United States Department of Education, 2016).

The active implementation of the federal regulation generally takes place at the local level in the form of programs specifically crafted to serve EL students with oversight and monitoring provided by the state education agency. This is the case for a local Virginia school district (which is referred to as the School Division throughout this
study to preserve anonymity). The School Division leadership acknowledges the research-based assertion that schools and districts must address the “language, literacy, and academic needs” of ELs more effectively in order to reduce and eventually close persistent and pervasive achievement gaps between non-native English speakers and their English proficient peers (Calderon et al., 2011, p. 1). With this mindset and in light of the fact that the School Division, like many others across the state has not currently met all of its AMOs due, in part, to the underperformance of ELs, the goal of this work is to review the ESL program components and EL student achievement of those having participated in the ESL program through the lens of a program evaluation. The undergirding intention is to support making programmatic adjustments to improve EL student achievement outcomes and work more expeditiously towards closing existing achievement gaps.

**Program Description**

In maintaining compliance with the federal components of Title III, the Code of Virginia establishes a set of regulations governing the provision of services for students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Through the Code of Virginia, English is designated as the only required language of instruction (Code of Virginia, 2010). Additional regulations within the legislation specify procedures for identifying and enrolling LEP students as well as delineating funding, staffing, and professional development protocols for personnel who serve LEP students. Districts in Virginia are empowered through the Code to develop programs to meet the diverse needs of ELs. Information contained within this section describes the context of the School Division
and the program that is employed to serve students in need of English language instruction.

**Context.** Comprised of approximately 11,100 students served by 800 instructional and 600 support personnel, the School Division is moderately-sized and is located in the heart of historic Virginia. The academic and social needs of the students and families are served through nine elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools. Consistent with the population shifts in the rest of the nation, the School Division’s population has become increasingly diverse, now serving a constituency with 5% of the students being of Hispanic decent, 18% of students being of African American heritage, 11% of students being identified as having a disability, and 4% of students being designated as English Language Learners ([School Division], 2015). Although the surrounding school community has a general perception of wealth and prestige, hidden pockets of poverty exist. This is exemplified in the 30% of the student population that is eligible to participate in the free and reduced meal program in tandem with a homeless population that reflects 3% of the total division enrollment ([School Division], 2015).

According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) 2015 Report Card, the School Division has not met all of its federal Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). In particular, students with disabilities did not meet the threshold benchmark for reading or math performance. African American and students with limited English proficiency also did not meet the performance threshold for reading directly, but were able to meet the alternate criteria of reducing the failure rate by 10%, also known as R-10, (Virginia Department of Education, 2015). Further, students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup did not meet the benchmark for the Federal Graduation Index (FGI) along with
African American students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. However, the latter three groups did meet the criteria for R-10.

Student performance across the district has recovered from a slight drop in reading achievement while noted gains have been made in math performance for all students in the past few years. Further inspection of student performance data reveals significant gaps in achievement when subgroup data are analyzed. For example, barrier courses such as Algebra I reflect a pass rate of 77% for LEP students, which is a significant increase from the 38% pass rate of 2014, but is well below the 86% pass rate for all students and the 89% pass rate for White students. Similarly, the end-of-course (EOC) reading results bear a pass rate of 64% for LEP students while their White counterparts produced a much higher pass rate of 92%. Attendance rates span a four percentage point range with the Asian subgroup of students reaching the high end of 97% average daily attendance (ADA). At the lower end of the attendance spectrum are the economically disadvantaged students with an ADA of 94%. Hispanic, African American and LEP students have an ADA of 95% (Virginia Department of Education, 2015). The VDOE Report Card for the School Division indicates an instructional staff with 5% holding a provisional license and about 60% having obtained a master’s degree or higher.

The VDOE puts forth a set of policies that support compliance with the Codes of Virginia and NCLB with regard to EL instruction and achievement. Included in these protocols are annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs) that address academic progress and English language proficiency and attainment (Virginia Department of Education, 2012). Although the new amendments through ESSA do not require the reporting of AMAO progress, the reporting of English language proficiency and
attainment are still required through Title I compliance regulations (United States Department of Education, 2016). As each school district in Virginia designs their own program to meet the compliance standards for ELs, the School Division has developed an ESL program to serve limited English proficient students and immigrant children and youth. The School Division’s ESL program has been structured to foster academic progress and language acquisition in accordance with the AMAOs. Further, the program is designed to provide equitable access to curricular content through comprehensible input from intentional instructional delivery methods. Students are to have opportunities to construct meaning from, make connections with, and apply academic content.

The impetus for the formal development of the ESL program lies within the confines of state and federal requirements. Initially, the scope of the ESL program in the School Division was very narrow, serving less than four dozen students. The ESL program has grown dramatically to serving just over 4% of the total student population. This growth spawned the increased need for ESL teachers and professional development for classroom teachers. Additionally, this rapid growth has increased the need for more expansive program monitoring to ensure broad and individual student success and attainment of the AMAOs as prescribed by the VDOE.

While the School Division Strategic Plan does not explicitly mention the ESL program, there are key connections that can be made. The first goal of the strategic plan provides for the development of “meaningful measures of student performance for and achieve steady progress” [(School Division], 2012). This goal is in alignment with the progress-based AMAOs that undergird the ESL program. The second goal of the strategic plan requires the structuring of academic programs to meet the differing needs
and interests of students. This expressly applies to students from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Lastly, the sixth goal of the strategic plan asserts that the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessments to research-based, high yield, best practices be put in place to help the instructional constituency meet the diverse needs of students. This promotes the incorporation of professional development initiatives surrounding language and academic instruction for ELs as well as for the development of individualized learning plans for ELs.

**Description of the program.** Within the purview of the ESL program are 11 highly qualified ESL teachers to serve all 654 of the ELs across the division under the direction of an ESL Coordinator shared with the World Languages department. There is also an ESL specialist to assist with program oversight and management. The primary instructional components emphasize a pull-out model in which the ESL teacher pulls a small group of students from classroom instruction to provide small group instruction in English language acquisition and/or content reinforcement skills. The ESL program is intended to expose ELs to and to have them be successful with rigorous, challenging content instruction comparable to their same aged, native-English speaking counterparts.

To maintain compliance with federal regulations, all programs designed to serve ELLs must meet three key criteria: (1) be based in sound educational theory, (2) be effectively implemented, and (3) be effective in overcoming language barriers *(Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981)*. The program theory that undergirded this work is based on the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS) that was developed by The George Washington University’s Center for Equity and Educational Excellence (GW-CEE). In 1998, a national initiative was begun to assist educators in identifying and
implementing comprehensive, research-based approaches that were deemed critical to creating the optimal learning environments for ELs (The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education, 2009). This work resulted in the work *Promoting Excellence: Guiding Principles for Educating English Language Learners* (2009). The two decades of research in conjunction with the utilization of the guiding principles led to the development of the PEAS framework (Acosta, Anstrom, Marzucco, & Rivera, 2012). With a focus on best practices for ELs and programming in K-12 public schools, the PEAS framework is designed to empower school districts with a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing programmatic and student data to be able to make sound educational decisions regarding program improvements that are most likely to improve outcomes stemming from the teaching and learning process for ELs (Acosta et al., 2012).

At the core of the PEAS model is a set of seven dimensions that can be observed through standard practice and can be examined to determine the extent to which the foundational guiding principles are present and utilized in the existing program for ELLs. Additionally, utilizing the PEAS model can provide guidance to schools and districts for improving the educational and educational equity of the program (Acosta et al., 2012). The following are the seven dimensions of the PEAS framework.

- Leadership
- Personnel
- Professional Development
- Instructional Program Design
- Instructional Program Implementation
• Assessment and Accountability

• Parent and Community Outreach

Each of the seven dimensions has a corresponding set of standards. Collectively, these dimensions and standards have been adapted to serve as the logic model depicted in Figure 1. This logic model served as the programmatic theoretical frame for this study.
Figure 1. ESL Program Logic Model Theoretical Framework
Overview of the Evaluation Approach

The overarching intent of the School Division’s ESL program is to remove barriers from and provide equitable access to rigorous academic instruction that supports preparation for fulfilling post-secondary success. Effective ESL programs must support attainment of English proficiency as well as afford equitable and meaningful participation in the standard instructional program that is comparable to what is provided for non-EL students (U. S. Department of Education, 2015a). With a focus on policies, procedures, practices, staffing, and student outcomes, ESL programs must be evaluated regularly to determine effectiveness in serving ELs (U. S. Department of Education, 2015a). The goal of this work is to comprehensively evaluate the inputs, processes, and outcomes of the ESL program through a participatory process to determine action steps for current and future program improvement.

Program evaluation model. There are four major branches in the area of program evaluation (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). The Methods Branch highlights the collection of quantitative data while the Values Branch is more concerned with the identification of values and viewpoints from various perspectives garnered through the collection of qualitative data. Moreover, the Social Justice Branch deals with power structures with a focus on human rights and social iniquities through a mixed methods data collection platform. This study is most closely aligned with the Use Branch of program evaluation, which advocates that data yielded from the process, collected both quantitatively and qualitatively, are deemed useful by the stakeholders. In alignment with each of the four branches is a paradigm. The Pragmatic paradigm is associated with the Use Branch and is grounded in the philosophical perspective that the methodology used
and the data collected should reflect the rationale driving the study (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). This work has a decidedly neo-pragmatic slant as part of the focus is on the practicality of using and implementing the outcomes the emerged from Appreciative Inquiry focus groups.

Daniel Stufflebeam, a recognized theorist associated with the Use Branch of program evaluation (Mertens & Wilson, 2012), developed a model for evaluation that focuses on the evaluation of a given program’s context, inputs, processes, and products (CIPP). As this study focused on evaluating the inputs, processes, and products, referred to as outcomes in this work, the CIPP model was used in the context of the PEAS framework, which serves as a theoretical lens undergirding this work. The use of this theoretical basis supported the transformative component of this study. Transformative approaches utilize a theoretical lens that serves as a frame for collecting data, structuring participation, and analyzing outcomes and anticipated changes (Creswell, 2009).

Another aspect of this study that connected the use of portions of the CIPP and the transformative methodology was the substantive and significant participation of internal ESL program stakeholders in the evaluation process through the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) focus groups. This aligns with the practical participatory evaluation model that is embedded in the assumption that relevant stakeholders should be engaged in the evaluation process in meaningful ways (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Further, the practical participatory evaluation has elements of responsiveness that afford changes in the process to be made based on data gathered and participant need. This is in alignment with the AI process that encourages free thinking and adaptations by participants based on data and
information uncovered about who and what the organization is at its best (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

**Purpose of the evaluation.** There are two key purposes that drove this program evaluation. The first was fairly concrete and formative in nature in determining the current standing of the ESL program with respect to the extent of substantive alignment with the dimensions and standards of the PEAS framework. The second purpose was rooted in the outcomes of the AI process and was geared towards programmatic capacity building. The AI concept is grounded in the assertion that every person, group, and organization has a unique set of positive skill sets and resources that collectively form the “positive core” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). As the positive core is the essence of the organization at its best, then this positive core should be preserved and built upon. With that in mind, the second and perhaps more meaningful purpose of this evaluation in terms of pursuing progress was to uncover, map, and build upon the positive core of the School Division’s ESL program. The audience for this program evaluation includes the School Division’s Senior Leadership, The ESL Department’s leadership, the ESL Department staff, and the participants in the Appreciative Inquiry focus groups.

**Focus of the evaluation.** From the CIPP model perspective, the focus of this evaluation was on investigating the extent to which the inputs, processes, and outcomes aligned with the PEAS programmatic theory. While the evaluation addressed all seven dimensions, particular emphasis was placed on the dimensions of instructional program design, instructional program implementation, leadership, professional development and assessment and accountability. From the AI perspective, the focus was on creating a culture and climate of positive energy and success-orientation through the
implementation of the AI focus group process. This involved actively incorporating internal stakeholders into the program evaluation process, identifying the current areas of success through the mapping of the positive core, and collectively crafting the pathway to build the program envisioned.

**Evaluation questions.** With the rigors of standards-based education, the performance pressures of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* and the academic challenges of learning environments that are inequitable, language diverse students can and must be engaged in language programs that are effective in eliminating achievement gaps (Baker, et al., 2014), provide cohesive sustained instruction (Collier & Thomas, 2009), and provide support systems that foster achievement and equity in preventing ELs from falling behind their English speaking peers (Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000). This study was guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent did the key components of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program serving K-12 students as implemented in the School Division align with the dimensions of the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS)?

2. To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display language acquisition progress and language proficiency attainment in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

3. To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display academic achievement in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?
4. To what degree did the academic achievement of students enrolled in the ESL program compare to the academic achievement of non-ESL students in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

5. Utilizing an Appreciative Inquiry approach with ESL teachers, classroom teachers, resource teachers, and administrators, what themes and understanding towards overall ESL department improvement could be gleaned for future program planning?
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

English Language Learners are becoming increasingly prevalent in American public school classrooms. About three out of every four public schools in the nation serve students with language needs, comprising approximately 9% of all students enrolled in public schools (NCES, 2013). The students in our classrooms who do not possess enough linguistic skills to be considered fluent English speakers represent the fastest growing segment of the student enrollment in American public schools (Calderon et al., 2011). Further, it is projected that one-quarter of public school students will be non-native English speakers in need of language services by the year 2025 (National Education Association, 2008). As ELs have unique language and academic needs to be met in the school environment, efforts must be made to educate them equitably. To that end, the U.S. government mandates that school districts serving a population of more than 5% of students with limited or no English proficiency must make efforts to correct the English language deficiencies in order to make academic programs accessible to ELs (Calderon et al., 2011).

Development of Programming for English Language Learners

Case law and federal legislation requiring specialized services for ELs span the last several decades. In 1971, 2,800 San Francisco Unified School District students of Chinese ancestry filed a class action suit against the school district for failure to provide
equal education opportunities. The students felt that they were being denied their equal protection rights under the Fourteenth Amendment (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). The District Court and Court of Appeals denied the claim of the students. However, the U.S. Supreme Court rendered an affirmative decision citing not the Fourteenth Amendment, but the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as the basis for the provision of equal educational access (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prevents recipients of federal funds, including state and local education agencies, from discriminating on the basis of constitutionally protected statuses including race, color, or national origin (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). In this landmark decision of the Lau v. Nichols case, the Supreme Court held that local education agencies must implement appropriate and positive measures to assist students in overcoming language barriers that may impede their meaningful participation in the district’s instructional program (Lau v. Nichols, 1974).

In the same year as the Lau v. Nichols decision was rendered, The Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) of 1974 was enacted and mandated that state education agencies and public schools employ measures to help students overcome language barriers that prevent equal participation of students in instructional programming (Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1974). The EEOA served as the foundation of Roy Castaneda’s 1981 litigation against the Raymondville School District in Texas. As the father of two Mexican-American students, Castaneda asserted that the school district was engaging in discriminatory practices against his children based on their ethnicity. He alleged that the school was unfair in their practice of grouping students for instruction based on their ethnic affiliations and that these practices did not
comply with the statute providing his children with equal educational opportunities (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). The court ruled in Castaneda’s favor. The ruling resulted in what is now termed the “Castaneda Test” wherein programs that serve the language needs of English learners must be comprised of three key parts of (1) being based on sound educational theory, (2) being implemented effectively, and (3) producing successful results in terms of students overcoming language barriers to equitably access instructional programming (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981).

Another landmark case, Plyler v. Doe (1982), was initiated in response to a 1975 law in the state of Texas that allowed the withholding of funds from local educational agencies that served illegal or undocumented students (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the law was in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment indicating that a state may not deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. The ruling provided that undocumented children of immigrants have the right to access public education and may not be refused services contingent upon their immigration status (Plyler v. Doe, 1982).

To further support the cause of equitably educating students with limited English proficiency, the 2001 revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 authorizes the U. S. Department of Education to oversee the English Language Acquisition and Achievement Act which is also referred to as Title III, Part A (107th Congress, 2002). In 2015, ESEA was again amended through the Every Student Succeeds Act. This legislation retains the core principles of Title III, but expands the scope and focus of the provision of language instruction. Along with the shift in nomenclature from limited English proficient to English Learner, ESSA shifts several
accountability measures of EL outcomes and performance from the parameters of Title III to the broader scope of Title I, thereby increasing their prominence and significance (United States Department of Education, 2016). The new regulations provide for more intensive focus on increased opportunities for access to more rigorous and challenging content through supplemental academic support, increased opportunities for college and career readiness, and increased opportunities for expanding parental involvement to encompass whole family engagement. Additionally, the needs of certain subgroups of ELs such as long-term ELs and dually identified students are specifically addressed (United States Department of Education, 2016).

**Key Dimensions of Programming for English Language Learners**

Although the provisions of Title III, Part A require that language instruction services be provided to students with limited English proficiency, it does not prescribe the programmatic platform upon which the services should be administered. However, there are common elements that are reflected in most English language development (ELD) programs. The program theory that serves as the foundation for this work is based on the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS) that was developed by The George Washington University’s Center for Equity and Educational Excellence (GW-CEE). As an outgrowth of research-based best practices in developing high-quality programming for ELs, the PEAS model is comprised of seven dimensions (leadership; personnel; professional development; instructional program design; instructional program implementation; assessment and accountability; and parent and community outreach) coupled with 24 standards that outline observable and measurable elements for providing effective language services (Acosta et al., 2012). The following sections will address the
research-base and literature that support the seven dimensions and corresponding standards of the PEAS model.

**Leadership.** Central to the growth and development of an organization, department, or program, is the quality of the leadership that is its guiding force. In their discussion of leadership and the effects on student performance, Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) found that when leadership focused on developing clear goals and direction, working to foster capacity in the people, and creating a design that is success-oriented, then the leadership impact ranks second only to teaching in terms of effect on student achievement gains. The PEAS model supports this assertion for the achievement of students receiving English language instruction. In the realm of developing and implementing English language development (ELD) programs, it is incumbent upon instructional leaders at both the district and building levels to create environments that foster collegiality and collaboration, however, this can present challenges when resources, including time, are extremely limited and the threat of punitive sanctions loom from failing to meet state standards. Townshend, Acker-Hoecevar, Ballenger, and Place (2013) suggested that the development of collaborative environments be created through strategic dialogue that focuses on successful practices that can be systemically embedded into local programming and be inclusive of teacher and student constituencies. Leaders may play a key role in coalescing all of these forces and in particular, providing voice for those associated with the often underrepresented and underserved populations of language-minority groups. The leadership must purposefully ensure that the organization develops relationships within and beyond the active stakeholders that produce the desired results (Fullan, 2001).
**Vision, mission, goals.** In Proverbs 29:19 (New King James Version), the Bible tells us “where there is no vision, the people will perish.” The development and implementation of a vision, mission, and goals is a critical function of the leadership structure of ELD programming. Wilmore (2008) put forth that one of the first and foremost roles of a leader is to establish, implement, and continually assess the organization’s or department’s vision. She also asserted that there is a critical role for fostering positive relationships through purposeful and strategic steps being taken to engage stakeholders and engender support for a common vision (Wilmore, 2008). Drucker asks us to consider the question “Who are we?” Inherent in the understanding of “who we are” is the recognition of and the emphasis placed upon the mission and goals of ELD programming for the EL students served (as cited in Bryson, 2011).

**Shared responsibility.** Another crucial component to the leadership structure supporting ELD programming is the concept of shared responsibility. Wilmore (2008) brought forth ideas such as the development of a shared vision, implementing collaborative efforts, and providing for open channels of communication. All of these are concrete examples of intentional and strategic steps of educational leadership for the provision of language services for ELs. Townshend et al. (2013) indicated that hierarchical approaches that de-emphasize the concept of broadly sharing responsibilities and decision-making may inhibit progress in some circumstances. “We need to stop telling people what to do and start asking questions” (Townshend et al., 2013, p. 83). To that end, further consideration should be given to utilizing distributed leadership approaches where ESL specialists and content teachers are empowered to recommend courses of action and make solid, informed decisions in response to situations presented
(Calderon et al., 2011). In a discussion of servant leadership, Northouse (2013) noted that servant leaders use less institutional power opting instead to shift incrementally placing authority in those who are being led. Shared decisions can be made while involving more people in the knowledge creation and sharing process. Effective leaders understand the role and benefit of knowledge creation and responsibility sharing. They establish priorities and reinforce habits of knowledge exchange among stakeholders (Fullan, 2001). In effective ELD programs, shared responsibility highlights leadership that broadly shares information, collaboratively monitors and supports high-quality teaching and learning, and collectively holds all staff responsible to attaining progress towards goals (Smithfield, 1998).

**Climate.** One of the hallmarks of effective ELD program leadership is the ability to facilitate the development and on-going pursuit of a positive program culture and climate. The diverse nature of the EL student population requires the effective program leadership to intentionally utilize the varied perspective of the stakeholders to create a climate that fosters success for not only ELs, but for all students. Wheatley (2006) advised us to recognize that the “universe demands diversity and thrives on plurality of meaning” (p. 73). Similarly, Wilmore (2008) asserted that leaders must appreciate and value the diversity of perspectives represented in the program structure. The development of the positive program climate must be guided by the collaborative creation and articulation of a vision for student success that is shared by all.

Wilmore (2008) indicated that climate and culture are composed of the values and traditions that are institutionalized as cornerstone elements of daily operations. While reaching out to gain input from families and community groups, the voices of the primary
constituents of the district must not be overlooked. Townshend et al. (2013) reminded us that the people most responsible for the outcomes of the ELD program’s work, the students; and the people most responsible for implementing the ELD program’s work, the teachers; are often relegated to the least powerful positions in the decision-making spectrum. “For educational systems to be successful within the high stakes accountability climate created by NCLB, they must take risks in innovative instructional practices, empower staff, and open communication lines with the support of the district office” (Hallinger & Heck, 2011, p. 176).

**Personnel.** One of the most important factors in the academic achievement of all students, but in particular, non-native English-speaking students, is having access to highly qualified and highly effective teachers. Richards, Brown, and Forde (2007) argued that the changing demographic composition of today’s classrooms mandates teachers to be able to instruct students that hail from diverse cultures and possess varied language abilities. It is, therefore, of high priority that there is the appropriate search for and retention of qualified, effective, and caring teachers for students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, who collectively will soon comprise the majority of public school classrooms (Gordon, 2000).

**Expertise.** Ensuring that all students, but most especially students from marginalized populations clustered in high-needs schools have access to highly effective teachers is the single most important factor affecting student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000). As the student population becomes more diverse, the need to have qualified and effective instructors who are able to provide for the changing needs of the student population becomes more prevalent. Based on his research, Stronge (2007)
asserts that “minority students are more likely than students in other school settings to have teachers who are teaching out of their fields, who are not certified to teach, who have little to no experience, or who perform poorly on tests” (p. 13). This finding, of teachers with lesser qualifications serving disproportionately larger numbers of students possessing greater needs hailing from culturally diverse and language-minority backgrounds has further been supported in urban schools (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

Although the presence of ELs is typically greater in urban schools, their enrollment in schools across the nation is increasing. According to a study by the Center on American Progress, even though 49 states have programs that serve ELs and are accredited, the enforcement of implementing research-based practices with fidelity is not always reflected in the structure and execution of the program tenets (Samson & Collins, 2012). Local education agencies (LEAs) bear the responsibility to attract and retain teachers that have the appropriate credentials to serve ELs or to provide the necessary training for their current teachers to meet minimum credentialing standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). State education agencies (SEAs) have responsibilities as well. Through case law, SEAs are required to provide guidance and monitoring through a set of established procedures that ensure that local districts have appropriately and adequately prepared teachers to implement the given language assistance program with fidelity and effectiveness (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981).

Teacher preparedness to work with and provide language services for ELs is key to successful language acquisition and student achievement. Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) found that certified or trained teachers of ELs were substantively
more confident in their instructional abilities in working with ELs as compared to those
who had not had specialized training or professional development in this area. These
findings were further supported by Gandara and Rumberger (2012) as they asserted that
the most successful teachers of ELs possess the following qualities: (1) broad
pedagogical knowledge and experiential skills in teaching the mechanics and contextual
usage of language, (2) cultural competence skills and knowledge specifically in
communicating and engaging with students and families, and (3) a deep sense of self-
efficacy in their ability to teach ELs. Ensuring that ELs receive instruction from
qualified personnel is not only pedagogically significant, but it is also mandated through
case law. The ruling in *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981) indicated that paraprofessionals,
aides, or tutors may not supplant the services of qualified instructors for ELs. Their
services may be utilized on a temporary basis, but the school district has an obligation to
ensure that a qualified teacher is either hired or trained to provide the language services
for students in the program.

*Staffing.* As the number of students needing language services increases, there is
also an increasing need for qualified teachers to serve them. Especially in light of the
fact that ELs tend to be present in greater numbers in urban school settings where there
already exist disparities in access to qualified teachers (Metropolitan Center for Urban
Education, 2008), ensuring that ELs have access to certified personnel is an issue with
which many school districts grapple (Bass & Gerstl-Pepin, 2011). In the U.S., this
opportunity gap, or disparity in access to well-qualified teachers is the largest in the
world (Akiba, LeTendre, & Scribner, 2007). Each school district that provides language
acquisition programs is responsible for recruiting, retaining, and developing highly
qualified teachers to staff their EL program (U. S. Department of Education, 2015a). It is further advised by the U.S. Department of Education (2015a) for SEAs and LEAs to consider reviewing their hiring policies and practices to ensure that a diverse workforce reflective of their student population is being provided to meet student needs.

The type of ELD program, the roles and responsibilities of the instructors, and the number of EL students served will determine the number of instructors needed to staff the program (Hanover Research, 2014). In addition to providing the appropriate staffing and instructional materials for effective implementation of ELD programming, school districts must also ensure that appropriately trained administrative staff are in place to evaluate the teachers (U.S. Department of Education, et al 2015). Even with a full complement of certified EL educators, the successful implementation of an ELD program is not the sole responsibility of those EL instructors, but rather a collective effort of all school and school district staff members who support student achievement (Genesee, 1999).

**Professional development.** Finding time to engage in professional development sessions for not only general education strategies but also for additional training on working with students with language acquisition needs can present a significant challenge for schools and districts. Along with learning language acquisition and instructional techniques, teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students are well served in developing their level of cultural competence and responsiveness in their classroom practices (Banks & Banks, 1995; Gay, 2000). The undergirding tenets of culturally responsive teaching require educators to gain knowledge of self and personal beliefs, gain knowledge of student backgrounds and cultural affiliations and revise curriculum content.
and instructional materials to support culturally responsive instruction. Engaging in this type of substantive yet personally reflective work could impact currently existing professional development structures.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) offer a framework identifying six characteristics possessed by culturally responsive teachers. The first characteristic is the development of sociocultural consciousness. This represents the understanding that there are multiple perspectives of reality that are influenced by one’s own belief systems and societal connections. It is in this arena that teachers must delve deeply into their socio-cultural relations and value systems to be able to open themselves to the various perspectives of others. Explicit experiences should be engaged through meaningful professional development opportunities to open this dialogue (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This meaningful professional development builds educator capacity and is of high quality.

**Educator capacity.** A critical component to the growth and retention of teachers is specialized training in the needs of students through professional development. This is also significant for teachers who encounter ELs in their classrooms. Data gathered by NCES (2002), revealed that while as much as 41% of the teaching population had taught ELs, only 13% had received any professional development that helped to prepare them to meet the unique needs of language learners. In that same vein, Ortiz and Arteles (2010), asserted that the pervasive and persistent achievement gaps between the performance of ELs and their native-English-speaking peers is indicative of the need for more intensive staff preparation through professional development in effectively addressing academic language needs, literacy needs, and core content needs. School districts are obligated to train and evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development provided for staff.
members who serve ELs through the designated language instruction program. To facilitate this, it is incumbent upon school districts to make certain that the administrative personnel designated to evaluate EL program staff are also adequately trained to meaningfully ascertain as to whether or not instructors of ELs are appropriately utilizing instructional strategies that support the educational objectives of the program and lead to EL student achievement (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981).

To systemically build capacity, some schools and districts have found it beneficial to include administrators in the professional development sessions in concert with the EL teachers and classroom teachers who serve ELs to support a deeper understanding of effective instructional strategies (Stepanek & Raphael, 2010). To determine the effectiveness of instructional strategies employed as gleaned from professional development sessions requires more than just observations from building and district level administrators. There should also be the objective collection of relevant data. Researchers at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) recommend that schools and districts regularly collect information that reflects staff needs in addition to program strengths and weaknesses to create professional development opportunities that not only highlight issues of significance to the staff and schools but also serve to build capacity (Howard, 2007). Studies have found that when teachers of ELs participate in professional development that is substantive, covers such topics as advancing English language proficiency and improving academic language fluency, and designed to meaningfully build capacity, teachers reported improvements in their effectiveness in providing instruction for ELLs (Calderon, 2009; Gandara et al., 2005; Samson & Collins, 2012).
Quality. Included in the concept of professional development as a tool to build instructional capacity for educators of ELs is the component of the quality of the professional development given. Not only must professional development and training opportunities be able to build capacity within EL program staff, it must also be of high quality (Calderon et al., 2011). Research supports the assertion that high quality EL staff development must be on-going, intensive, and include significant opportunities for information exchange, peer coaching, and expert coaching (Calderon, 2009; Calderon et al., 2011). In their research, Calderon (2009) along with Stepanaek and Raphael (2010) found that teachers who worked with ELs reported that professional development opportunities were most impactful on their instructional practice when the sessions afforded opportunities for hands-on practice with instructional techniques, were able to be immediately implemented into their classroom instructional routines, included on-site, in-class demonstrations with their own or a teammates students, and provided opportunities for customized coaching.

Instructional program design. The supporting framework of an instructional program is its design. The instructional program design lays the foundation and parameters within which all of the program constituents will operate. For districts providing EL students linguistic support, it is required that language assistance programs be designed based on sound educational theory and effective implementation, however, there is no legislated federal regulation requiring a specific type of program model be utilized by SEAs or LEAs (U.S. Department of Education, et al 2015). Over the past few decades, there has been fierce debate among practitioners and researchers alike as to whether an English-only or bilingual approach is most effective in serving ELs and
closing achievement gaps with substantive evidence being presented on both sides (Hakuta et al., 2000). As school districts in Virginia are empowered to develop their own ELD models and the School Division at the center of this study does not implement a bilingual model, this discussion will primarily focus on English-only ELD instructional program design.

**Effective design.** The rulings of *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981) put forth that ELD programs must be designed to provide ELs the opportunity to both attain English language proficiency and have parity of access to and participation in the standard instructional program provided for other students within a given locale within a reasonable time frame. There are a variety of ELD program models that are generally classified into three broad categories with the most prevalent being programs based on an English-only model in developing literacy and English language proficiency (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). Out of the 48 states that report their data, 46 implement English-only ELD program models. Additionally, 36 of the 48 states also provide ELD programs which incorporate instruction in both English and another language (Viadero, 2009).

English-only program models typically offer content and classroom instruction in English, however, there may be opportunities for teachers or bilingual aides to provide some limited native language support (Hanover Research, 2011). This model may be seen more in school districts that have significant representation from one or two minority language groups. Conversely, schools that have students from a variety of language backgrounds tend to implement ELD programs that provide instruction only in English (Calderon, 2009). Calderon further asserted that federal policies have had the
effect of reducing the amount of instructional time spent supporting native language, thus encouraging more schools and districts to implement English-only models.

Within the category of English-only program models are a few model variations. Honigsfeld (2009) identified the English-language monolingual program variation as one in which the EL student is in a regular English-only classroom without benefit of any specially-designed instruction for language acquisition or academic English support. Another variant of the English-only models offers the addition of language services designed to meet the needs of ELs through an English as a Second Language program (ESL) where the student can receive instructional services for all or part of the instructional day dependent upon an individual student’s proficiency in English (Honigsfeld, 2009). In the structured immersion program model, teachers present all of the core content instruction in English, but provide structural supports that enable the EL student to have comprehensible access to the content information. The structural supports may include native language resources. Supports are gradually reduced over time as the EL student gains content and linguistic proficiency (Hanover Research, 2011; Honigsfeld, 2009).

Similar to the structured immersion model is the sheltered instruction program, which also employs an English-only instructional platform with native language supports as needed. In the sheltered instructional model, the teacher adjusts her rate of speech, intonation, grammar and vocabulary complexity, usage of context clues, incorporation of background knowledge and repetition of key vocabulary words to support the comprehensibility of the content for the ELs in her class (Hanover Research, 2011). Additional instructional supports may include the use of demonstrations, the addition of
visual aids and graphic organizers, and the engagement of EL students with their English-speaking peers in cooperative learning groups (Calderon et al., 2011).

**Access to grade-level content.** Understanding the role of culture and language in the learning process can provide powerful assistance in the successful acquisition of English language and content knowledge for students from linguistically diverse backgrounds (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The instruction in many classrooms across the nation emphasizes a test-driven, Eurocentric curriculum with which there is no personal connection for students from diverse backgrounds with their historical and sociocultural experiences (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). Recognizing and utilizing EL students’ background knowledge and information gained through prior education and other socio-cultural experiences in the classroom is critically important in helping them make connections with the grade-level academic content and language skills being taught (Deussen, Autio, Miller, & Stewart, 2008). Deussen et al. (2008) further asserted that when teachers tap into this background knowledge, the cognitive demand placed on students in the instructional environment is lessened, freeing them to concentrate more on making meaning of instructional concepts.

To ensure that students achieve at high levels in accessing grade-level content, EL students should be provided support and instructional resources throughout the learning process (Morrison, Robbins, & Rose, 2008). Schools and districts are compelled to provide adequate and appropriate instructional resources that allow EL students to gain access to grade-level content in a reasonable amount of time (U.S. Department of Education, et al, 2015). Included in the instructional resources category are texts and other literacy-based materials. The use of texts with EL students should be varied
according to grade level with a specific focus on comprehension through read-alouds and discussion in the primary grades and a focus on comprehension through the understanding of academic language and sentence structures that are central to comprehension in the upper grades and allow students to interact with a wider variety of text (Rivera & David, 2006).

Holding high expectations for students is a foundational building block towards increasing student performance outcomes (Hattie, 2009). Teachers of all students, including ELs, provide intellectual challenges by expecting students to perform at and by teaching to the highest standards (Ladson-Billings, 2009). It should be noted that high expectations must be undergirded by appropriate levels of instructional support provided by the teacher. Deussen et al. (2008) contended that ELs have a greater propensity for accessing and retaining linguistic and grade-level academic concepts when the information is presented in formats that are slightly above their current level of proficiency and inclusive of instructional supports. They further asserted that if ELs are to experience success in the teaching and learning environment, it is imperative that teachers scaffold instruction and assignments, providing multiple representations of concepts to help student meet and exceed academic expectations (Deussen et al., 2008).

To access grade-level content effectively, ELs need to have exposure to and eventually mastery of academic English. Intentional instruction focused on acquiring and using academic English should be a primary goal of instruction for ELs and be taught beginning in the primary grades (Gersten, Baker, Shanahan, Linan-Thompson, & Collins, 2007). Success in the mainstream classroom is dependent upon the mastery of academic English which necessitates the use of content-specific vocabulary and modes of
expression that are inherent in different academic disciplines such as math and science (Goldenberg & Wagner, 2008). Because of its technical complexity and use limited to academic environments, academic English requires more time to acquire than social language making the need to give high priority to the inclusion of academic language in explicit instructional practices for ELs necessary (Goldenberg & Wagner, 2008).

Language development. Acquiring and developing literacy and language skills in English is a conceptual process that requires explicit instruction for ELs. As a leading organization in research-based practices for EL instruction, Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Inc. (2006) operationalized the process of language development into four domains of instruction including reading, writing, listening and speaking. With the understanding that each of the four domains functions interdependently with the others, TESOL (2006) recommends that explicit instruction occur for each of the domains separately to ensure that each area is addressed in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of ELs. The need for language development processes to take place early on in the academic tenure of less-proficient ELs is of paramount importance. To that end, the regulations resulting from Castaneda v. Pickard (1981) provide for the temporary emphasis of English language acquisition curricula over other subject matter curricula by school districts with the proviso that any interim academic deficits resulting from the temporary focus on language be remedied in a reasonable amount of time.

In addressing the reading and writing components of the language development process, Rivera and David (2006) referencing the National Literacy Panel, suggest that students learning to read in English benefit from explicit instruction in the five pillars of
reading including phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Just as English learners need to engage in reading and writing to become better readers and writers in English, so too must they engage in listening and speaking to become better listeners and speakers of the English language. Goldenberg and Wagner (2008) recommended the use of instructional conversations as a strategy to promote EL students’ oral exploration of ideas with their teacher and fellow students. Ideally, these instructional conversations are rooted in open-ended questions to foster in-depth discussion encouraging language usage and development. The notion of engaging in instructional conversations between ELs and their English-speaking peers supports the inclusion of ELs in the mainstream environment. It is further asserted that the inclusion of ELs and the explicit focus on academic language in the mainstream classroom is not only substantively important for EL student success, but also benefits performance outcomes for native English-speaking students (Rivera & David, 2006).

**Equity.** Under the auspices of *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981), LEAs are required to ensure that ELs are able to meaningfully and equally participate in core curricula and instructional programming that are provided to their English-speaking counterparts. Implementing culturally responsive instructional practices is one avenue to support the equitable access of ELs to high-quality instruction and academic content. One of the first advocates of culturally responsive instruction, James Banks, conducted his early work in the context of schools as social systems and put forth the pursuit of educational equality as a transformative goal of schools (Banks, 1981). Nieto and Bode (2008) commented on culturally responsive instruction as having to “confront inequality and stratification in schools and in society” (p. 10). This supports the reconstructionist concept of schools not
just being a means to study social problems, but serving as vehicles for developing solutions to political and social issues (Oliva & Gordon, 2013). The progressive philosophy also connects to constructivism (Oliva & Gordon, 2013). Villegas and Lucas (2002) asserted that through a constructivist lens, lies their concept of linguistically and culturally responsive teaching where learners connect new concepts to prior knowledge and experiences to make meaning of new information in efforts to fully and meaningfully participate in the teaching and learning process.

Nieto and Bode (2008) delineated the broad goals of culturally responsive instruction as:

- Tackling inequality and promoting access to an equal education
- Raising the achievement of all students and providing them with an equitable and high quality education
- Giving students an apprenticeship in the opportunity to become critical and productive members of a democratic society.

These idyllic concepts become driving forces when working to infuse culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies into content curriculum. Students from diverse backgrounds are frequently immersed in learning environments that represent cultural contexts different than their respective families and communities (Lahman & Park, 2004). The cultural incongruity of the home and school environments can be bridged by developing and implementing culturally relevant curriculum, thereby increasing equitable access to learning content for all students (Banks & Banks, 1995).
**Instructional program implementation.** Perhaps equally as important to EL achievement as language assistance program design is effective instructional program implementation. While federal regulations do not mandate the specific language assistance program model that districts are to implement, there are requirements that compel SEAs to ensure the effective implementation of program models that support the equitable access of ELs to the core instructional program (*Castaneda v. Pickard*, 1981). It is the obligation of LEAs to provide adequate and appropriate human, capital, and fiscal resources to support the effective implementation of language assistance programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2015b).

**Program implementation.** A key decision in implementing the components of the EL language assistance program is determining where and how the instructional services will be delivered. Because case law prohibits extensive segregation of EL students from their native English-speaking peers, many schools and districts opt to provide language instruction within the mainstream classroom environment (Calderon, 2009). One of the benefits of addressing the needs of language learning students in the general education classroom is the empowerment of all students to appreciate cultural and linguistic diversity and to value the learning opportunities gained from peer interactions (Hanover Research, 2011). Rivera and David (2006) found that when ELs were included in the traditional mainstream classroom that implemented fewer instructional practices that fostered the segregation of ELs and that great opportunities existed for ELs to become acclimated to American and regional culture. There are benefits for native speakers as well. The inclusion process allows native English speakers to expand and
challenge their global perceptions with regard to linguistic and cultural diversity (Rivera & David, 2006).

Effectively integrating ELs into the mainstream classroom environments necessitates purposeful planning for instruction. Pertinent to the instruction of ELs in the general education setting is the development of language objectives for the content lessons, the incorporation of experience-based learning strategies, and the use of visual learning aids (Himmel, 2009). Intentionally utilizing these instructional techniques has been found to increase not only the academic outcomes for ELs, but also for their native English-speaking peers in the integrated classroom setting with growing support from national organizations such as the Center for Research on Education, Achievement, and Teaching ELLs (CREATE) and the National Center for Education, Evaluation, and Regional Assistance (Himmel, 2009).

Himmel (2009) contended that while traditional content objectives identify the knowledge and skills that students will acquire, the language objectives address the aspects of the academic language that need to be explicitly developed and reinforced. She further asserted that the language objectives should be stated in simple and clear terms for students to understand. Effective language assistance program implementation supports the combination of both language and content objectives to guide and enrich instruction for both ELs and English-only students by allowing the transfer of academic and linguistic knowledge between both groups of students (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Once language and content objectives are created, teachers can use them to drive instructional delivery, develop opportunities for peer interaction, and create
visual/multimedia aids to facilitate a deeper understanding of both language and content are concepts (Reutebuch, 2010).

**Collaboration.** Although ELs may be integrated in the mainstream classroom, schools and districts are still obligated to provide them services specific to their language proficiency levels delivered by instructional staff certified to provide language instruction (U. S. Department of Education, 2015a). This may require the services of an ESL teacher in addition to the classroom teacher. Implementing a collaborative or co-teaching model may assist in providing English language learners with the language expertise of the ESL teacher and the content area expertise of the classroom teacher. In heterogeneous classrooms that are co-taught in this fashion, ELs are taught core content area material alongside their monolingual peers affording ELs the opportunity to engage with students who have varied levels of academic and linguistic proficiency (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). Gately and Gately (2001) defined traditional co-teaching as the collaborative efforts between a general education teacher and a special education with both holding responsibilities for the instruction provided to all of the assigned students. They further asserted that with the changing needs of today’s learners, that the definition should be expanded to include collaborative partnerships between classroom teachers and service providers such as reading specialists, and more recently, ESL teachers.

There are several models and forms through which collaboration can be achieved in the integrated classroom. Honigsfeld and Dove (2008) suggested three such models. The first model places one teacher as the lead teacher with the other teacher engaging in purposeful and intentional teaching. The lead teacher focuses on the overarching concepts while the intentional teacher emphasizes relevant language skills, or pre-/re-
teaching skills or concepts. The second model that the authors put forth encourages both the classroom teacher and the ESL teacher to each facilitate heterogeneous groups teaching the same content but in different manners. They asserted that by working in smaller groups, ELs have more frequent opportunities to interact with each other, listen to the English-speaking students, respond to discussion topics, and gain feedback from the teacher and other students (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). The last of the three models encourages the collaborating teachers to divide the class into several groups. It is suggested that by doing so, the teachers are better able to facilitate small group instruction and monitor students working independently. The groups are designed to be temporary and flexible so that specific and unique needs can be met at a given point in time. This model also fosters the use of learning centers that can be designed to meet language and content needs and objectives (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). Keefe, Moore, and Duff (2003) suggested a similar model where the grouping arrangement change based on the instructional topics, academic skills, and linguistic complexity of the content.

A significant benefit of implementing collaborative practices into the instructional program rests in the notion that when the ESL teacher is able to demonstrate academic language-based strategies during a co-taught content lesson, the classroom teacher has the opportunity to view the instruction firsthand, then implement similar strategies at a later point in time for the EL students when the ESL teacher is not present (Wertheimer & Honigsfeld, 2000). No matter which model is used, collaboration is most successful when both the classroom teacher and the ESL teacher share in the responsibilities of taking the lead role in providing instruction (Gately & Gately, 2001).
Challenging academic content. Through the language assistance program, LEAs are charged with providing meaningful access to the same rigorous and challenging academic that is established in the core instructional program provided to the general student population (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). Creating that pathway for ELs to wholly and meaningfully participate in challenging academic content begins with the belief that with the correct supports, language learners are able to substantively engage in the teaching and learning process. Ladson-Billings (2009) asserted, “when students are treated as competent, they are likely to demonstrate competence” (p. 134). Teachers provide intellectual challenges by expecting students to perform at and teaching to the highest standards (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Villegas and Lucas (2002) noted that viewing linguistically and culturally diverse students as capable learners is a strong method to engage them in the learning process. They further asserted that understanding the role of culture and language in the learning process aids in the successful teaching of students from diverse backgrounds. Utilizing student culture and language as a mechanism to improve learning outcomes is a cornerstone principle of culturally responsive instructional practices. Nieto and Bode (2008) posited that a major premise of culturally responsive instruction is to provide all students with high-quality, equitable education, rooted in rigorous content that raises student achievement. Culturally responsive instruction that promotes student participation in challenging coursework capitalizes on the strengths students bring to the classroom by identifying, nurturing, and promoting those strengths to optimize student achievement for all (Richards et al., 2007).

There is significant relevance in the incorporation of students’ culture into curriculum used by schools (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Some of the research suggests that
when students are able to see themselves reflected in culturally responsive curricula that are infused with high-yield instructional strategies, engagement and student achievement increase (Banks, 1999; Gay, 2000; Hattie, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994). “Deliberately incorporating specific aspects of the cultural systems of different ethnic groups into instructional processes has positive impacts on student achievement” (Gay, 2000, p. 118). Student engagement and involvement in challenging academic content is also fostered when teachers articulate specific strategies for instruction, provide constant scaffolding and monitoring, seek feedback from their students about their teaching, and find ways to engage and motivate students (Hattie, 2009).

*Socially constructed learning.* Effective EL language program implementation fosters regular opportunities for ELs to interact and engage with their English-speaking peers in each of the four language domains. This concept is undergirded by the legal expectation for school districts to implement their EL programs in the manner that imposes the least amount of segregation of ELs from their English-speaking peers while still maintaining consistency in achieving program goals (*Castaneda v. Pickard*, 1981). As teaching and learning is a socially oriented process, researchers at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory found that when students were encouraged to engage in peer-assisted learning, positive effects were noted for EL students (Deusseren et al., 2008). In the same line of thinking, Cheung and Slavin (2005) asserted that cooperative learning opportunities are most effective for ELs and all students when the groups are flexible, mixed in ability, support student re-teaching after teacher introduction, and are re-organized based on the needs of the learners.
Platforms for socially constructed learning through the use of cooperative experiences or peer-learning practices should be intentionally embedded into the instructional day. In their report for the Institute of Educational Sciences, Gersten et al. (2007) recommended that 90 minutes per week be dedicated to peer-learning activities through the use of flexible small groups or paired partnerships. The authors further purported that the peer-learning experience can serve as a viable vehicle for student to practice or expand upon the learning that has been presented as well as utilize critical academic vocabulary. Through these interactions with peers, EL students are able to engage in a variety of high-level, critical thinking tasks such as solving problems, developing projects, and discussing content-based topics (University of Southern Florida, 1999).

In his work with underperforming Latina/o students, Cammarota (2007) found that his preliminary data strongly suggested that engaging students in rigorous, socially constructed curriculum played a significant role in increasing educational attainment levels. The culturally responsive teacher seeks to motivate students to become active participants in their learning through reflection and evaluation incorporating self-regulatory concepts such as student goal-setting, performance evaluation and feedback utilization (Banks & Banks, 1995; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto & Bode, 2008). Instructional practices that convey the message that EL students’ languages and cultures are valued such as encouraging students to use their native language with peers during small group activities to build comprehension, then using those new terms in English once the concepts are understood can serve to create safe spaces for language
practice and knowledge exchange among ELs and non-ELs within the classroom context (Calderon, 2009).

**Classroom assessment.** Classroom assessment tools are mainstays of the teaching and learning process. Effective assessment and evaluation tools are not only aligned with the language goals, curriculum standards, and instructional objectives, but also with the school and district vision (Howard, 2007). Gersten et al. (2007) suggested that teachers and schools regularly collect data on EL learner progress, using resulting data in the instructional decision-making process determining modifications or interventions. The importance of early and frequent reading assessments are highlighted to promote the identification and implementation of targeted intervention strategies when deficits in literacy skills are present (Gersten et al., 2007). The California Public School System recommended the use of both formative and summative classroom assessments that are designed with modifications to meet EL language proficiency levels (California State Board of Education, 2014).

**Assessment and accountability.** Assessment and accountability are integral parts of any instructional program. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has made assessment and accountability practices a high priority for schools and districts across the nation with particular emphasis on traditionally underperforming students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Brown & Sanford, 2011). The ability to assess student progress, evaluate instructional practices, and utilize data to make sounds educational decisions are vital elements of any English Language Development (ELD) program (Hanover Research, 2014). Through SEAs, LEAs are held accountable for the

**Identification and placement.** School districts are bound by law to provide adequate and appropriate instructional programming for English language learners. One of the most important first steps in ELD program implementation is the identification and placement of students in need of language assistance services within a reasonable time frame (U.S. Department of Education, et al, 2015). To start the process, most school districts incorporate some version of a home language survey into the registration and enrollment process for all students. This information provides insights into the primary language spoken in a given family’s home environment and generally consists of a few questions that families are to answer. (Bailey & Kelly, 2010; Genesse, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 2015b). Factors such as the perceived social desirability of engaging in ELD programs or the lack of awareness of familial language habits can influence how home language surveys are completed potentially resulting in over- or under-identification of students in need of language-based instructional services (Bailey & Kelly, 2010).

In general, an indication by the family of a language other than English as being spoken in the home triggers the identification of the enrolling student as a potential candidate for language services and at such time becomes eligible for initial placement or screening assessment (U. S. Department of Education, 2015a). The English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment tool used must be deemed as valid and reliable for use with potential English language learners and must assess the proficiency of students in all four language domains (1) reading, (2) writing, (3) listening, and (4) speaking (U.S.
Department of Education, 2015a). The commercially developed ELP assessments that are available for use require some level of training for the instructional personnel who will be administering and scoring the assessments (Abedi, 2008). In addition to home language survey and placement assessment data, school districts are required to place qualifying EL students in age-appropriate grade-levels that offer them meaningful access to core curricula and equal opportunities to graduate (U.S. Department of Education, et al, 2015).

**Use of data.** The infrastructure of quality ELD programming supports the regular collection, use, and monitoring of EL student data. Effective ELD programs have thoughtfully developed assessment data usage plans designed to prevent or resolve problems as well as monitoring progress over time with the goals of ascertaining the degree to which the program goals are being met (Striefer, 2002). In addition to being solid instructional and programmatic practice, Title III of NCLB requires that ELLs are assessed and scored annually in each of the four language domains with an ELP assessment (107th Congress, 2002). These assessments are not standardized at the national level allowing SEAs to determine the assessment tool best suited for the respective state. Additionally, student identified as ELs must participate in the annual state assessment program in the content areas or reading/language arts, mathematics, and science (U.S. Department of Education, 2015b). ELP assessments can be used as a criteria to determine EL student readiness to participate in the content-based assessment required by individual states (Abedi, 2008). The most useful assessment and accountability program models collect data on EL student English proficiency attainment and academic achievement both formatively and summatively, in frequent and on-going
time frames, and enable staff to be aware of to what degree and why students are succeeding (Abedi, 2008; Calderon, 2009; Honigsfeld, 2009).

**Parent and community outreach.** The teaching and learning process impacts not only the staff and students, but also the communities and families that support them. Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may encounter an array of generational, familial, and cultural discordance with the school environment that may serve as roadblocks to achieving high academic outcomes (Banks, 1999). Research indicates that strong, enriching school-family partnerships are a key indicator of student success (Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg, 2010). ELD programs that yield successful outcomes include support structures for students and families that extend beyond in-class service delivery and language assessment protocols (Hanover Research, 2014).

**Communication.** Effective and appropriate communication, in tandem with the involvement of families and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, helps to ensure continued community support for schools. “Increasing connectedness between families and school personnel becomes central to cultural transformation” (Constantino, 2008, p. 118). It is incumbent upon schools and school districts to recognize that language barriers can thwart efforts to communicate with parents and families. Establishing open lines of communications with families of ELs in a language they can understand can help in creating a welcoming school community while providing access to pertinent information about their student’s education (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). Ensuring that families with limited English proficiency have access to meaningful forms of communication regarding all school and district programs, services, and activities that are called to the attention of other parents is an obligation of the LEA
Goldenberg, Rueda, and August (2010) contended that because ELs are predisposed to having to balance cultural, linguistic, and social differences between the school and the home environments that communications and positive relationships are exceedingly important.

**Parent, family and community partnerships.** As a noted author and researcher on family, school, and community relationships, Epstein (2010) asserted that parental support is a needed element for the success of all students in school, but is it especially so for children of immigrants and non-native English speakers. The building of successful partnerships between families and schools takes time, intentional effort, and requires the availability of varied venues for families and schools to connect (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). One of the first steps in bridging the cultural divide to set the stage for partnership development is for school staff to gain an understanding of the cultures represented by the families being served, incorporate the cultural traditions throughout the school environment, and view the cultural traditions as strengths (Epstein et al., 2002). When school and district staff recognize the cultural contributions of parents and families as assets to the school community, greater connections are likely to be made between families and schools as educational partners (Regional Educational Laboratory for the Pacific, 2015) with the ultimate goal of meaningfully educating children.

The cultural and linguistic composition of the American classroom has forever changed. The road to the removal of language as a barrier to the meaningful participation in and equitable access to the same educational opportunities as native English-speaking students is lined with case law and federal legislation. Language assistance programs, whether in the form of structured immersion, co-taught classes, or another delivery
model, serve as foundational avenues to provide language-minority students with the critical language and content instructional supports they need. Evaluating and determining the effectiveness of language assistance programs in meeting the needs of English language learners is crucial to ensuring their academic success and is the focus of this work.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the six most recent years of operation of the English as a Second Language program in a moderately sized suburban school district to help determine possible programmatic changes to support future ESL student growth and performance. The findings of this study will provide the School Division’s Senior Leadership, the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Coordinator, the ESL specialist, ESL teachers, building administrators, and other relevant constituents with information and recommendations based on the resulting evidence as to the extent to which the ESL program aligns to the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS) as put forth by The George Washington University’s Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (GW-CEE). Other similarly situated school districts may find this work useful in evaluating and developing their service models and program structures that support English Learners (ELs). Undergirding this evaluation are the four areas of propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy as put forth in the Program Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee on Standards for Excellence in Educational Evaluation, 2011). Chapter 3 reflects the program evaluation questions, data sources, study participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis protocols. Lastly, this chapter discusses the limitations and ethical considerations of this work.
Evaluation Design

The design of this study centered on the evaluation of the inputs, processes and outcomes components of the CIPP model. The context of this work is supported by the theoretical lens of the PEAS framework. Implementing this type of theoretical perspective as an overarching factor for this study is consistent with a transformative methodology that utilizes a theoretical lens to frame data collection, participant action, and outcomes analysis (Creswell, 2009). The involvement of internal ESL program constituents in the evaluation of the inputs, processes, and outcomes of the ESL program through participation in the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) focus groups is in accordance with the practical participatory evaluation model. This model is rooted in the assertion that impacted stakeholders should be included in the evaluation process in significant and empowering manners (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Additionally, the practical participatory evaluation allows for changes in the process to be driven by information revealed in the data and by participant need. This concept was supported through the AI process that empowered participants to engage freely, think openly, and adapt positively based on the mapping of the positive, fundamental elements already existing within the organization (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

Question 1 was designed to triangulate data gathered from division and program documents, classroom observations, teacher survey results, and administrator survey results to determine the extent to which program practices align to the seven dimensions of PEAS (The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education, 2009). Question 2 yielded data collected from the language acquisition performance of ELs on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs ®. Question 3 examined the
academic achievement of ELs in reading and mathematics in the School Division through extant data available for the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments (SOLs) and was compared to the results of non-EL students in Question 4. Question 5 was designed to uncover themes and understandings among internal program stakeholders with the intent to begin the process of co-creating programmatic improvements leading to increased EL student language acquisition and academic achievement. The following subsections provide explanations for each data source.

**Evaluation Questions**

The structure of this study was designed to provide insight into the ESL program of the School Division through the use of five evaluation questions.

1. To what extent did the key components of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program serving K-12 students as implemented in the School Division align with the dimensions of the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS)?

2. To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display language acquisition progress and language proficiency attainment in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

3. To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display academic achievement in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

4. To what degree did the academic achievement of students enrolled in the ESL program compare to the academic achievement of non-ESL students in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?
5. Utilizing an Appreciative Inquiry approach with ESL teachers, classroom teachers, resource teachers, and administrators, what themes and understanding towards overall ESL department improvement could be gleaned for future program planning?

Data Sources

To support the triangulation of data (Creswell, 2009), five data sources were used in this evaluation. These sources included document reviews, classroom observations, surveys, extant student language proficiency and academic achievement data, and focus group interviews, determining alignment to research-based best practices regarding EL program structure and producing co-created themes for future programmatic changes.

The seven dimensions of PEAS served as the overarching framework for this study. The extant student data provided quantitative data for this evaluation. The classroom observations, and the surveys yielded both quantitative and qualitative data points. The document reviews and the Appreciative Inquiry focus groups provided qualitative data regarding ESL program structure and implementation practices. The selection of a triangulated concurrent model is intended to ensure that “diverse participants are given a voice in the change process” (Creswell, 2009, p. 215) of the ESL program.

Document reviews. To gain a broad perspective on the scope of services provided to ELs, and on the guidance, leadership, and professional development provided to internal program stakeholders on serving ELs, 326 available documents from the English as a Second Language (ESL) department were reviewed. These documents included the available program operational manuals and corresponding documents, the previous program evaluation measures, sub-program proposal documents, classroom
schedules and service delivery times, instructional guidance documents, student LEP plan samples, and available Title III federal program documents including compliance forms, Title III funding applications and Title III improvement plans.

**Classroom observation protocol.** The George Washington University’s Center for Equity and Excellence in Education developed the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS) connected to the research base established in *Promoting Excellence: Guiding Principles for Educating English Language Learners* (2009) which puts forth research-based best practices for providing instruction and instructional programming for ELs K-12. PEAS assesses seven dimensions of EL programming and instruction with sets of observable standards that correspond to each dimension (Acosta et al., 2012). The PEAS classroom observation protocol is divided into a pre-observation component and a rating list to be completed during the classroom observation. The pre-observation component consists of noting demographic and descriptive information for the classroom. The demographic information included school, type of classroom, subject and grade level, number and type of EL student(s) enrolled, and a notation of content objectives, language objectives, and target vocabulary taught. The classroom protocol pre-observation component was modified for applicable use in the School Division. The observation instrument is a rating list that instructed the observer to rate on a scale of 0-3 the extent to which 63 indicators were present across 11 identified categories. The 11 categories corresponded to six different constructs identified within Dimension 5: Instructional Implementation of the PEAS framework. Upon completion of the classroom observations, the teachers observed were presented with a brief written feedback report from a strengths-based perspective and were offered the opportunity to
engage in a post-observation conference regarding the alignment of their practices to the PEAS protocol. None of the 15 observed teachers elected to participate in the post-observation conference. The full classroom observation protocol is located in Appendix A.

Administrators of ELLs survey. Administrative input is an important factor in assessing the ESL program in the School Division. A School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey (Appendix B) was adapted from an administrator survey developed by The GW-CEE to support the PEAS. This survey was field tested by six non-administrative participants. The focus of the field test was to determine the length of time to complete the survey, to assess the flow of the survey delivery, and to check the accuracy and mechanics of the survey questions. The field test respondents reported no grammatical errors or difficulty with the flow of the survey. The average length of time for the field test respondents to complete the survey was 34.2 minutes. It should be noted that three survey respondents indicated that the survey may have taken them longer to complete due to the lack of familiarity with EL program components from the administrative perspective. Building administrators currently serving in the School Division were not used during this field test, as there are a limited number of eligible building administrators in the School Division. Having two exposures to both the field test survey and the final survey could have had potential impacts on the results. Five questions were removed from the survey to shorten the length of the response time. Three of the questions removed were associated with the instructional program design dimension and two with the instructional program implementation dimension. It was determined that the same data would be ascertained through the document review data.
The survey was administered to gain insights from the building administrator perspective. The building principal or assistant principal designee from each of the 15 school sites in the School Division was invited to complete the survey. The survey contained a brief introduction that described the purpose for the survey, the voluntary nature of participation, how the findings were to be used, and the approximate time for completion. The instruction section shared with the participant who should complete the survey administratively, the definition of an EL, and the definition of Former ELs. There were 23 questions on this survey. Of those, 15 questions reflected six of the seven dimensions of the PEAS through Likert-type, closed-end questions. The dimension of qualified personnel was not addressed in the survey. Two of the 15 Likert-type questions offered the participant an open-ended response option to clarify their answer choice. There were three questions that sought to ascertain demographic or descriptive programmatic information. Three questions were open-ended and necessitated the participant enter an unscripted response. The table below indicates the corresponding PEAS dimensions for the 15 Likert-type questions. Question number six was strictly a demographic identifying question to determine whether the participant worked at the elementary, middle, or high school level. The final two questions asked the participant to give overarching, closing thoughts and did not correlate directly to a specific dimension.
Table 3

Administrators of ELLs Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEAS Dimensions</th>
<th>Survey Question Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1, 2, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Accountability</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Design</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Implementation</td>
<td>9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and Community Outreach</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers of ELLs survey. Equally important, if not more so, to the input of administrators of schools with ELs was gleaning the insights of the teachers who directly serve and instruct them. A School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey (Appendix C) was adapted from a teacher survey developed by The GW-CEE to support the PEAS. This survey was field tested by ten non-teaching participants. Similar to the administrative survey field test, the focus of the teacher survey field test was also to determine the length of time to complete the survey, to assess the flow of the survey delivery, and to check the accuracy and mechanics of the survey questions. The field test respondents reported three grammatical errors but no difficulty with the flow of the survey. The average length of time for the field test respondents to complete the survey was 28.4 minutes. Two questions were removed from the survey to shorten the length of the response time. One of the questions removed was associated with the instructional program design dimension and the other with the instructional program implementation dimension. It was determined that the same data would be ascertained through the document review data.

The Teachers of ELLs survey was administered to gain insights from educators who are currently teaching or have taught ELLs within the previous 3 years. Just as with
the administrator survey, the teacher survey contained a brief introduction that described the purpose for the survey, the voluntary and confidential nature of participation, how the findings were to be used, and the approximate time for completion. The first question shared with the participant the definition of an EL, the definition of Former ELs and served as a demographic screener to determine which of the educators should continue with the survey based on their service of at least one EL or former EL within the last three years inclusive of the current school term. There were 23 questions on this survey. Of those, 14 questions reflected six of the seven dimensions of the PEAS through Likert-type, closed-end questions. The dimension of qualified personnel was not addressed in the survey. There were 10 questions that focused on demographic or descriptive programmatic information. Three questions were open-ended and required that the participant construct an unscripted response. Table 4 displays the corresponding PEAS dimensions.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEAS Dimensions</th>
<th>Survey Question Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>2, 3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Accountability</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Design</td>
<td>4, 5, 15, 21, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Implementation</td>
<td>6, 8, 16, 22, 24, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and Community Outreach</td>
<td>18, 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question number 1 was strictly a demographic identifying question to determine whether the participant was currently teaching or had taught at least one EL or former EL in the previous two years. Question number 20 was also strictly a demographic identifying question to determine whether the participant worked at the elementary, middle, or high
school level. The final two questions asked the participant to give overarching, closing thoughts and did not correlate directly to a specific dimension.

**Extant student data.** Examining student outcomes was an integral part of this program evaluation. This work reviewed data from administrations of the WIDA Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS for ELLs®) assessment from September 2009 to June 2015. Federal regulations require that students who receive English language services be assessed annually on their progress towards attaining English proficiency (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). For this purpose, the School Division utilizes the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® tool which assesses student language development across the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kenyon, MacGregor, Ryu, Cho, & Louguit, 2006). Assessment items for the ACCESS for ELLs® assessment are developed, field-tested, and panel-reviewed in conjunction with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) (Kenyon et al., 2006). The ACCESS for ELLs® tool is structured to yield scores for each of the four domains. Each assessment reflects a specific grade cluster (K, 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) and three proficiency tiers (A, B, C) (Kenyon et al., 2006). The three tiers indicate levels of language proficiency with Tier A indicating the lower levels, Tier B indicating the mid-levels and Tier C indicating the upper levels with all levels having some intentional overlapping. Figure 2 depicts the structure of the assessment.
In addition to examining language progress and proficiency of ELs in the School Division, this study also sought to compare the academic achievement of ELs and their non-EL peers in reading and in mathematics for the identified time period. The Virginia Standards of Learning assessments (SOLs) are administered annually to students in third through eighth grades in reading and math with additional end-of-course assessments in English/Reading for Grade 11 and in end-of-course assessments for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II (Virginia Department of Education, 2013). The SOL assessments are a part of Virginia’s accountability program which took root in 1995 with the adoption of the standards, expanded in 1998 with the administration of the first SOL assessments, and entered the technological era in 2013 with full online testing and the inclusion of technology-enhanced questions (Virginia Department of Education, 2013). To continually replenish the item assessment bank for each content area assessment, content committees including educators from across the state convene each summer to develop,
field test, and statistically analyze items for test inclusion (Virginia Department of Education, 2013).

**Appreciative Inquiry focus groups.** One of the overarching goals of this work was to begin to chart a new course for positive growth of the ESL program and resulting EL student achievement in both language proficiency and academic coursework. The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach aims to bring forth and highlight existing strengths of an organization or program along with the hopes and dreams of its stakeholders (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). It is my belief that exposing and capitalizing on the positive elements that the program currently contained as opposed to only engaging in deficit model thinking would help to set the stage for positive change for our internal and external program constituents. The authors put forth that the AI approach is based on the notion that engaging in conversation and questions that evoke notions of strength, values, successes, hopes and dreams are inherently transformational (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). In this study, I conducted two consecutive AI focus group sessions with a cross-section of central office administrators, building administrators, ESL teachers, interventionists, specialists, classroom teachers and special educators.

The first AI focus group session consisted of an opening presentation, paired interview sessions and small group discussion sessions. The four paired interview questions incorporated the 11 components of good AI questions as identified by Whitney and Trosten-Blooom (2010). Questions 1 and 2 were designed to build rapport and set the stage for positive thinking, attributes, and interactions with ELs, their families and/or the ESL program. Question 3 emphasized the noted academic achievement gains in reading and math SOL results for the spring 2015 testing administration cycle for
students identified as LEP. Participants were asked to discuss any attributes or circumstances that may have contributed to the positive gains and how those positive aspects can be replicated and extended. The sixth and final question presented the respondents with a scenario of an award-winning school with an extensive EL population. The respondents were asked to reflect on the programmatic qualities and structures that were in place to support the award-winning status of the school’s ESL program. The Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol including the interview protocol is located in Appendix D.

Participants

This evaluation included several layers of participants from the School Division. To address administrative aspects of the ESL program as it relates to individual school sites, I invited all building principals or assistant principals to complete a survey as well as to participate in an appreciative inquiry focus group. Of the 15 building administrative teams, 11 principals or designees participated in the survey. There were three elementary and two secondary building administrators present for both AI focus group sessions. There were 15 school sites in the School Division and participation of building principals or assistant principal designees was completely voluntary. The administrative participants all have earned master’s degree status or higher and are in possession of an administrative endorsement valid within the state. Similarly, to investigate teacher perspectives on ESL instructional service provision, I invited ESL teachers, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and reading/math specialists to complete a survey and also participate in an Appreciative Inquiry focus group. There were 276 respondents to the Teachers of ELLs survey. ESL teachers were invited to participate because of their
role in providing direct language services to ELs in the School Division. Special education teachers were able to bring the perspective of providing academic instruction for dually identified EL students. Core content/classroom teachers provided academic instruction to ESL students and were able to address issues through that filter. The invitation was also extended to reading/math specialists as they frequently provide interventions for students with limited English proficiency. Attending both AI focus group meetings were five building administrators, four ESL teachers, two special educators, one reading specialist, and nine classroom teachers (seven elementary and two secondary). There were 20 teachers who were part of the 15 classroom observations. Of the 20, 12 were general education teachers and eight were ESL teachers. The teachers in this category had varying years of experience and educational backgrounds, but all having minimally earned a bachelor’s degree and hold a valid teaching license.

To address the potential changes in ESL program structure to support increased language proficiency attainment and academic performance for ELs, a total group of 21 administrators, classroom/content teachers, special education teachers and reading specialists engaged in two Appreciative Inquiry focus group sessions. The Appreciative Inquiry process is designed to foster environments of inclusivity in dreaming and designing ideal organizations (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

Data Collection

Each of the five data sources had a prescribed data collection process outlined in the following subsections. All data collection instruments were provided to the Academic Research department of the School Division for review prior to the onset of the data collection process.
Document reviews. There were 326 available documents from the English as a Second Language department that were reviewed that were used to support the program from September 2009 to June 2015. The range of documents reviewed included the available program operational manuals and corresponding documents, the previous program evaluation measures, sub-program proposal documents, classroom schedules and service delivery times, instructional guidance documents, student LEP plan samples, and available Title III federal program documents including compliance forms, Title III funding applications and Title III improvement plans. The documents were primarily accessed through electronic platforms. The documents were reviewed through the lens of the constructs of PEAS.

Classroom observation protocol. Utilizing the PEAS classroom observation protocol, a team of three observers conducted 15 classroom observations. The observation team was comprised of an ESL Specialist from the School Division, an English/Language Arts content area coordinator from the School Division, and me. Prior to the use of the classroom observation tool, the three team members met collectively to discuss the use of the tool and to establish a basis for interrater reliability. During this meeting, the team members watched three videos of classroom instruction including one third grade classroom video, one eighth grade classroom video, and one eleventh grade English/Language Arts classroom video. All of the videos featured classroom instruction where there were three or more EL students present. The videos ranged in length from 19 to 24 minutes. After watching the third grade video, the three team members shared the results of the rating which revealed common scores were assigned for 28 of the 63 indicators or a rate of 44.4%. The team members discussed the rationale for the ratings to
gain insights into each other’s thought processes in assigning scores. The second video viewed was the eighth grade video. The discussion of the ratings after the viewing revealed that common scores were assigned for 43 of the 63 indicators or a rate of 68.3%. The ratings for the final video reflected that common scores were assigned for 51 of the 63 indicators for a rate of 80.9%.

Of the 15 classroom observations, three were conducted at the high school level, three were conducted at the middle school level and nine were conducted at the elementary level. The pre-observation component was completed collaboratively by the observation team prior to the classroom visits. The rating lists were completed independently during the classroom observations. The completed observation forms were submitted to me upon the conclusion of each observation day. Classrooms for observation were purposefully selected and agreed upon by the building administration and were based on the presence of ELs in some combination across language proficiency levels 1-6 in the classroom composition.

**Administrators of ELLs survey.** A letter of invitation to participate in the web-based survey was sent via email on March 14, 2016 to the principal and administrative team for each of the 15 school sites within the School Division. Only one respondent, either the building principal or assistant principal designee from each of the 15 school sites in the School Division was responsible for completing the survey. The email included the letter of invitation, which explained the purpose and parameters of the survey and the study and a letter of consent for participation. Once the letter of consent was signed and returned by the participant, a link to the survey was emailed. The survey window was open for a period of four weeks, from March 14, to April 15, 2016.
Teachers of ELLs survey. A letter of invitation to participate in the web-based survey was sent via email to approximately 750 classroom teachers, special educators, reading/math specialists, and ESL teachers at all school sites within the School Division. All members within this group were invited to respond to the survey provided they have provided instructional services to at least one EL during the current or previous two academic years. The email included the letter of invitation, which explained the purpose and parameters of the survey and the study, and contained a link to the survey. Due to the larger sample size of this group of respondents, consent for participation and a promise of anonymity was included in a disclosure statement in the instructions section of the survey. The survey window was open for a period of four weeks, from March 14, to April 15, 2016.

Extant student data. EL student data from the ACCESS for ELLs assessments were collected in both cross-sectional and longitudinal cohort manners. To gain insights into EL student progress in language attainment and proficiency, data was collected for ESL students that had consecutive ACCESS for ELLs scores for the 2013, 2014, and 2015 spring administrations. This data collection platform allowed for data to be viewed for the same subset of students over time. Cross-sectional data was also collected for the spring administration of the ACCESS for ELLs for each year of the study period. The ACCESS for ELLs assessment yields a score for each of the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The three digit scale score has a center point of 350 with a lower bound of 100 and an upper bound of 600 (Kenyon et al., 2006). ACCESS scores are scaled vertically to facilitate the measuring of progress across grade levels K-12 and are equated horizontally across the three tiers within each grade cluster. The composite
scaled score is combined in the following weighted manner and was used as the comparative data point for the ACCESS data. Composite = 35% Reading + 35% Writing + 15% Listening + 15% Speaking (Kenyon et al., 2006). I worked with the Department of Assessment and Accountability to gather this information.

In addition to examining language progress and proficiency of ELs in the School Division, this study also sought to review the academic achievement of ELs and their non-EL peers in reading and in mathematics for the identified time period. To that end, student performance data from the reading and math SOL assessments were collected from student extract files generated by the test management system website utilized by the School Division. The scaled score of each participating student was collected. Scaled scores between 500 and 600 are considered as pass advanced. Scaled scores between 400 and 499 are considered as pass proficient. Scaled scores below 399 are considered as failed/not passed. Cross-sectional data was collected for the spring administrations of the Reading and the Math SOLs for each year of the study period for both ESL and non-ESL subgroups.

Table 5
Extant Student Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tool</th>
<th>Score Type</th>
<th>Proficiency Range</th>
<th>Administration Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS for ELLs</td>
<td>Scaled Composite</td>
<td>350 - 600</td>
<td>Annually, K-12; ELLs only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOL Reading</td>
<td>Scaled</td>
<td>400 - 600</td>
<td>Annually, 3-8; End-of-Course, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOL Math</td>
<td>Scaled</td>
<td>400 - 600</td>
<td>Annually, 3-8; End-of-Course, 9-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appreciative Inquiry focus groups. On March 21st and 24th, 2016, two Appreciative Inquiry focus group sessions were conducted. Each session lasted between 90-120 minutes. A letter of invitation was emailed to each building administrative team to elicit the participation of one or more building administrators. A letter of invitation was emailed to all classroom teachers, special education teachers, and reading/math specialists who were currently serving at least one EL or former EL in the four elementary sites, one middle school site, and one high school site that serve the largest concentrations of ELs in the School Division. All 11 ESL teachers were invited to participate in a focus group interview.

An agreement and disclosure form were presented to each participant as a part of the opening of the first focus group session and can be found in Appendix F. This was noted in the letter of invitation found in Appendix E. To encourage participation, refreshments were served during each focus group session. Meeting reminders were sent one week prior and again two days prior to each scheduled session. Several tools and methods were employed to fully and robustly capture the comments, reflections, and discussions that occurred during each session.

Session one was primarily composed of introductions, process explanations, and the work of the Discovery phase, which included paired interview sessions, small group discussions and independent reflections. During the paired interview, each partner was equipped with a paired interview protocol and notetaking document to capture their partner’s responses. This protocol is located within the Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol within Appendix D. The small group discussion sessions had notetaking documents for each participant to use to frame ideas about stories and concepts shared in
the group. The Paired Interview Small Group Discussion Notes document is located within the Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol in Appendix D. Additionally, certain segments of the small group discussions were audio-recorded to clarify comments, to capture the richness of the discussion, and to ascertain participant intent. These recordings were transcribed. The participants recorded the themes that emerged from the discussions on sticky charts. Digital images were taken of the sticky charts.

Session two moved into the Dream and Design phases, building on the work started in Session one’s Discovery phase. The visual representations and the provocative possibilities/projections statements that were created by the small groups were recorded in poster form. Digital images were taken of these posters. Additionally, recordings were made of each group’s presentation of their work. During the Design phase, the small groups crafted action steps that they believed would support the attainment of their provocative possibilities/projections statement. This work was recorded on a Design Phase Planning Template that was housed on an Office 365 document that provided access to all group members for participation and review. The planning template is located within the Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol in Appendix D.

Data Analysis

Collectively, the five data sources provided both qualitative and quantitative data for analysis. This supported the concept of a mixed methods approach and was intended to extend the breadth and depth of this study. The data from the AI focus group sessions supported the transformative component to this study.
**Document reviews.** The available print and electronic documentation from the ESL department were reviewed through the lens of the constructs of PEAS. There were 326 that were reviewed that were associated with the ESL program from September 2009 to June 2015 including program operational manuals and corresponding documents, the previous program evaluation measures, sub-program proposal documents, classroom schedules and service delivery times, instructional guidance documents, student LEP plan samples, and available Title III federal program documents including compliance forms, Title III funding applications and Title III improvement plans. The documents were primarily accessed through electronic platforms. The documents were categorized and coded based on the observable PEAS standards supported. A frequency chart was created that reflected the seven dimensions and related sub-standards of the model. As each document was read and reviewed, key terms and phrases were noted on the frequency chart in the most relevant PEAS dimension and sub-standard.

**Classroom observation protocol.** The utilization of the PEAS classroom observation protocol yielded both quantitative and qualitative data. To ensure consistency in rankings between the three observation team members, measures were taken to provide for interrater reliability as described previously. The rating scale associated with each component of the observation instrument required each observer to make a determination as to the extent to which the component was present. The rating scale was as follows: 0 = Not observed; 1 = Weak evidence; 2 = Moderate evidence; and 3 = Strong evidence. These data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The other component to the classroom observation instrument was the description of the evidence that supported the observer’s rating in each category. The observer was instructed to
notate the observable actions as either strengths or weaknesses. These data were analyzed for trends and occurrences.

**Administrators of ELLs survey.** The 28-question Administrators of ELLs Survey contained closed-ended questions that yielded quantitative data and open-ended questions that produced qualitative data. The survey contained 15 questions reflecting six of the seven dimensions of the PEAS through Likert-type, closed-end questions. The quantitative data from these questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Two of the 15 Likert-type questions offered the participant an open-ended response option to clarify their answer choice. The data from these questions were coded and analyzed for emerging themes and trends. Five questions were open-ended requiring the participant to develop a response. These responses were also coded and analyzed for emerging themes and trends.

**Teachers of ELLs survey.** The 27-question Teacher of ELLs Survey contained closed-ended questions that yielded quantitative data and open-ended questions that produced qualitative data. The survey contained 14 questions reflecting six of the seven dimensions of the PEAS through Likert-type, closed-end questions. The quantitative data from these questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Three questions were open-ended requiring the participant to develop and input a response. These responses were coded and analyzed for emerging themes and trends. To provide the consumers of the results of this study easily understandable and usable information, the responses from both the administrator and teacher surveys were rated as either positive or negative and compared to the total number of responses recorded. This allowed the data from
questions with different Likert range indicators to be analyzed and reported in a similar manner.

**Extant student data.** As EL student data from the ACCESS for ELLs assessments were collected in both cross-sectional and longitudinal cohort manners, the resulting quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The student performance data from the reading and math SOL assessments that were collected from student extract files were also analyzed using descriptive statistics.

**Appreciative Inquiry focus groups.** The AI focus group sessions resulted in qualitative data from both of the sessions. The paired interview and small group discussions resulted in a set of emergent themes identified by the participants as a function of the focus group process. The transcriptions generated from the recordings added clarity and depth of meaning to the themes identified. The information gathered from the visual representations, positive provocative possibilities statements, and planning templates were compared with the components of the PEAS model and used to deepen the understandings gained from the document reviews, classroom observations, surveys, and extant data.
### Table 6

**Data Analysis by Research Question and Data Source**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1 — To what extent do the key components of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program serving K-12 students as implemented in the school district align with the dimensions of the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS)?</td>
<td>District ESL program documents, websites, schedules, records, classroom observations, teacher surveys, administrator surveys, focus groups</td>
<td>Document Review — Qualitative-coded to align with PEAS dimensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom Observation — Qualitative-coded for emergent themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator/teacher surveys — Qualitative-coded for emergent themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quantitative-descriptive statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2 – To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display language acquisition progress and language proficiency attainment in the school district from September 2009 to June 2015?</td>
<td>WIDA ACCESS Assessment Proficiency Data</td>
<td>Quantitative-descriptive statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3 – To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display academic achievement in reading and math in the school district from September 2009 to June 2015?</td>
<td>Virginia English Reading and Math Standards of Learning Assessment Data Grades 3-8 and End of Course</td>
<td>Quantitative-descriptive statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4 – To what degree did the academic achievement of students enrolled in the ESL program compare to the academic achievement of non-ESL students in reading and math in the school district from September 2009 to June 2015?</td>
<td>Virginia English Reading and Math Standards of Learning Assessment Data Grades 3-8 and End of Course</td>
<td>Quantitative-descriptive statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5 – Utilizing an appreciative inquiry approach with ESL teachers, classroom/content teachers, and administrators, what themes and understanding towards overall ESL department improvement can be gleaned for future program planning?</td>
<td>Educator Participant Appreciative Inquiry focus group sessions</td>
<td>Qualitative-reviewed for emergent themes and concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delimitations, Limitations, and Potential for Bias

Delimitations. The following factors establish the bounds of this study. The scope of this work was narrowly focused on a specific ESL program in a specific School Division within the state of Virginia. This was done with intentionality so that specific programmatic decisions may be based on the resulting findings of this work. Generalizability of this work to other contexts may be challenging as various mitigating factors may make other populations exceedingly different from the population referenced in this study.

- Participation in this study was limited to those educators that had direct experience with ELs or former ELs within the current or previous two school years in the School Division. Those who had not had direct contact with ELLs within that time frame were excluded from the study, as they had not had direct recent experience with the target population and subsequently, the ESL program.

- Extant student achievement data was used in this work. The use of extant data removed the opportunity for random assignment of academic and linguistic interventions. There was also no opportunity to control for external factors such as student mobility, economic issues, and policy impacts because of the use of extant data. Additionally, the use of cross-sectional data limited the ability to attribute causality to ESL program participation. The use of longitudinal cohort data reduced the sample size.

- The intentional small size of Appreciative Inquiry focus groups in conjunction with their potential vested interest in the ESL program success may have
produced results that were not consistent with the broader population of internal stakeholders.

**Limitations.** There were several noted areas of limitations in this study. The population of ELs in the School Division has experienced significant growth during the identified time span of this work. Additionally, there has been an increase in the refugee and immigrant youth subset of the EL population. There may be some study participants that engaged in this process with preconceived notions about working with students who have unknown citizenship status. It should also be noted that were several leadership changes during the six year span of this study. These frequent changes may have also impacted the perceptions and responses of study participants. There were limiting factors that were directly related to this study.

- The administrator and teacher surveys were based on voluntary participation. Those who were less impacted by the number and scope of services provided to ELs in the respective school sites might have influenced rates of participation. Those participants who may have had higher rates of ELs present in their school populations may have had a greater likelihood of participating. This may have skewed the findings by over-representing a specific segment of the broader internal constituency.

- A low response rate to the teacher surveys impacted the ability to confidently evaluate the findings for trends that reflect the broader population.

- The classroom observation team was comprised of two additional observers, but I was the only observer that was endorsed in English as a Second Language.
However, the other observers all had training and experience in conducting prescribed classroom observations within the School Division.

**Potential for bias.** One of the more significant limitations of this work was my role as both the researcher and the recently appointed Coordinator for ESL and World Language programs in the School Division. This could have potentially impacted rates and honesty of responses on the surveys. More notably, however, were the potential impacts that might have occurred in the classroom observations and Appreciative Inquiry focus group sessions. As a Central Office administrator in the School Division, there existed the potential for teachers to attempt to alter their instruction during the classroom observations. With regard to the AI focus groups, I had established, professional relationships with all of the building administrators, all of the ESL teachers, and many of the general educators. This could have impacted the openness and honesty in the responses given to the focus group questions. To address and minimize potential impacts, I did several things. First, the addition of observers other than myself in creating the observation team may have worked to help reduce potential bias. Secondly, the triangulation of data to include the anonymous surveys may have worked to offset impacts from potential biases during the AI focus groups.

**Ethical Considerations**

One of the foundational principles of this work was to protect the participants engaging in this study. Several measures were put into place to ensure that the safety, anonymity, and confidentiality of the participants were secure. This study adhered to the propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy standards put forth in *The Program Evaluation*
Standards (Joint Committee on Standards for Excellence in Educational Evaluation, 2011).

**Propriety.** The letters of invitation to participate in the Administrators of ELLs survey, interviews, and AI focus groups individual, included the purpose of the study, the selection criteria for participants and the potential benefits of participation in the study. This same information was included in the introductory section of the Teachers of ELLs survey. A letter of consent was also presented to all participants in the Administrators of ELLs survey, and AI focus group sessions. A disclaimer of consent for the Teachers of ELLs survey was included in the introductory section. During the data collection, analysis, and reporting phases, the program participants were identified by pseudonyms, when needed.

**Roles as the evaluator.** In this study, I served in several capacities; (1) as the facilitator of the evaluation, (2) as part of the classroom observation team, (3) as the facilitator for the AI focus group sessions, and (4) as the developer of the AI focus group session protocol and questions. As the School Division administrator for the ESL program, I had a vested interest in the outcomes of this work and ultimately the ability of the program to provide academic and linguistic instruction that supports EL student success. As the evaluator in the research, I acknowledge that my role as a division administrator might have influenced the honesty and veracity of the respondents, particularly in the face-to-face settings. To that end, I have and continued to encourage open and honest dialogue from those whom I served from a leadership perspective. I maintained that same philosophical stance when working with participants under the guise of this research. Incorporating the AI sessions may have helped to foster that open
and honest dialogue as the Appreciative Inquiry process itself is designed to reduce hierarchical stratifications and engage us in an equitable spirit of learning and growing collectively (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

**Utility.** The undergirding premise of this work was to produce evidence-based results that will be used to assist in future programming decisions to support the continued growth of the ESL program and mostly importantly, the academic and linguistic growth of the ELs served in the School Division. The evaluation was designed to meaningfully engage participants in several fashions. The AI focus groups were specifically included to invite participants to discover the positive elements inherent in the program and to reimagine the possibilities of what the ESL program can become.

**Feasibility.** Efforts were made to support the practical implementation of this evaluation. Focus group sessions were conducted at centrally located venues immediately after school hours. The surveys were delivered in web-based formats for ease and convenience of use for the participants. The familiar platform of the School Division email system was the primary means of communication with the participants during the study period.

**Accuracy.** Multiple data sources were used in this evaluation process to provide accurate findings. Research-based evaluation tools developed by the GW-CEE served as the data collection platforms for three of the five data sources. I worked diligently to effectively, consistently, and accurately communicate results, findings, and recommendations from this study.
**Research approval.** To gain appropriate permissions from The College of William and Mary Institutional Review Board (IRB), I completed the appropriate online training modules and application process in accordance with IRB protocols. Permission to conduct research in the School Division as the proposed laboratory of study was secured through the submission of a completed application package to the academic study review committee. The appropriate forms were available on and were secured from the School Division’s website. Approval from The College of William and Mary’s IRB was required and secured before the application package was considered by the School Division’s academic review committee.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The population of America’s public schools and classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse culturally and linguistically (Batalove & McHugh, 2010), producing a need to educate students from diverse backgrounds effectively. National, state, and local data indicate that concomitant with the changing face of the classroom is the disparity of academic achievement of diverse student populations, including students for whom English is not their primary language (Stepanek & Raphael, 2010). This demographic shift and achievement disparity also holds true for the School Division that is the subject of this study. To encourage states and localities to provide effective and equitable instructional programming meeting the needs of language learners, Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act defines a set of parameters in educating ELs (107th Congress, 2002). The basic tenets of the Title III programming are amplified in the revision of NCLB under the Every Student Succeeds Act, which continues to include the requirement that language instructional program effectiveness be determined through rigorous and regular program evaluation (United States Department of Education, 2016).

Summary of Findings for Study

The goal of this study was to determine the extent to which the language education instructional program of the School Division exhibits the critical components of an effective instructional program, the extent to which English Learners make
language progress and attain language proficiency, the extent to which English Learners achieve academically as compared to their native English-speaking peers, and the extent to which the educators of the School Division are able to positively plan for and enact programmatic improvements to impact student success. The findings of this work will help to guide future decision-making in the School Division.

**Evaluation Question 1:** To what extent did the key components of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program serving K-12 students as implemented in the School Division align with the dimensions of the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS)?

The programmatic theory that served as the frame for this work was the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS) developed by The George Washington University’s Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (GW-CEE). The following reflects the findings of the 287 teacher and administrator surveys, the review of 326 ESL program documents, and the analysis of the results of the PEAS protocol used for 15 classroom observations to determine the extent to which the School Division’s English as a Second Language program aligns with the dimensions and standards of the PEAS model. The dimension of personnel was not addressed in the classroom observation protocols, in the teacher and administrator surveys, and only yielded six relevant notations in the document review. Due to the lack of evidence, the personnel dimension will not be addressed as a finding in this discussion.

To determine the extent to which the School Division’s English as a Second Language program aligns with the dimensions and standards of the PEAS model, programmatic documents were reviewed, classroom observations were conducted...
utilizing the PEAS protocol, and surveys were administered to administrators and teachers of ELs. The document review included 326 examples ranging from operational manuals, instructional guidance documents, and sample student educational plans, to program compliance forms and Title III federal program documents. There were 294 references within the documents that directly related to the dimensions and standards of the PEAS model. There were also 48 documents that contained no relevant connections to the model.

As a part of this study, 15 classroom observations were conducted with three occurring at the high school level, three occurring at the middle school level, and nine occurring at the elementary level. The team of three observers used the PEAS classroom observation protocol as the framework tool for guiding and completing the observations. The key component of the observation tool was the rating list that afforded the observer the opportunity to rate each of the 63 indicators across 11 categories on a scale of zero-three where zero indicated no evidence, one indicated weak evidence, two indicated moderate evidence, and three indicated strong evidence. The 11 categories related to six constructs within the instructional program implementation dimension of the PEAS model. As the classroom observation protocol only related to the instructional program implementation dimension, those data are only presented in that section of this discussion.

Lastly, to gain insights from practitioners in the field, separate but related Administrators and Teacher of ELLs surveys adapted from the GW-CEE model, were completed by 11 administrators and 276 teachers of ELs respectively. The questions of both surveys aligned with all of the dimensions of the PEAS model except personnel. To
provide the consumers of the results of this study easily understandable and usable information, the responses from both the administrator and teacher surveys were rated as either positive, neutral, or negative and compared to the total number of responses recorded. Responses such as “agree” and “strongly agree” were coded as positive. Responses such as “neither agree nor disagree” and “I don’t know” were coded as neutral, and responses such as “disagree” and “strongly disagree” were coded as negative. This allowed the data from questions with different Likert range indicators to be analyzed and reported in a similar manner.

**PEAS 1 - Leadership.** The PEAS model supports the assertion that the achievement of language-minority students enrolled in language instructional programs is significantly impacted by leadership that embodies clear goals and direction, includes capacity building initiatives, and possesses an orientation towards success (Acosta et al., 2012). The leadership dimension includes the standards of vision, mission, and goals; shared responsibility, and climate.

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were only six documents that contained any references to the leadership dimension. Figure 3 details the document references within each standard. A draft operational manual from 2012 and a PowerPoint presentation presented to building administrators in 2011 referenced a vision for the ESL program. Additionally, there were four documents that addressed the concept of shared responsibility for educating ELs. Two of those documents were created in 2013 with regard to the retention of ELs. There was mention of shared responsibility in the 2014 Title III Improvement Plan that was presented to the Virginia Department of Education to
address the lack of English Learners attaining proficiency during the 2013 administration of the annual ACCESS assessment. The last document to note the shared responsibility standard was a survey given to ESL teachers to indicate their assignment preference for the 2015-16 school term. There were no documents relative to climate, which is the third standard within the leadership dimension. See Figure 3.

![Leadership Dimension Document Review Results](image)

*Figure 3. Leadership Dimension Document Review Results*

Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELLs surveys, the leadership dimension ranked third in terms of positive responses. When assessing the total number of responses, 22.5% of the responses given to the leadership cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension. The lowest ranked standard within this dimension is shared responsibility with only 17.9% of participants indicating positive responses. It should be noted that for both administrators and teachers that there is a lack of shared understanding of goals and expectations for EL instruction. The responses also indicate that there is a perceived lack of support from division leadership as well as a lack
of inclusion of ESL teachers in the curricular and instructional decision-making processes. The climate standard ranked as the highest standard in this dimension yielding a 56.3% positive response rate with administrators and teachers noting weaknesses in the fostering of positive school climates for ELs and in making the needs of ELs a priority. See Figure 4.

The standard of vision, mission and goals rated at 28.8%. The overarching concern in this standard is the inability of school leaders to articulate a clear vision for EL instruction, service provision, and academic success. Additionally, through their responses, administrators expressed a need for clarity in the hiring process for ESL teachers and a need for the deepening of skillsets to monitor and identify effective EL instruction.

**PEAS 3 - Professional development.** Professional learning opportunities for educators of ELs is critical to the academic success of students. It is important for teachers of linguistically and culturally diverse students to not only develop language
acquisition strategies and instructional techniques, but also to increase their level of cultural competence (Gay, 2000). Meaningful professional development for educators of ELs extends beyond responsive classroom practices to embrace personal beliefs, to value cultural affiliations, and to revise curricular content and instructional materials to reflect the students and families served in the school community. Educator capacity and professional learning quality are the two standards addressed in this dimension.

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were 27 documents that contained references to the professional development dimension. Figure 5 details the document references within each standard. All 27 of the document references were in the standard of building educator capacity. In general, the document references in this standard fell into three broad categories: presentations of EL-specific instructional strategies for teachers and administrators; presentations of programmatic overviews; and budget or funding requests. The 14 presentations and documents that dealt with the EL-specific instructional strategies covered a range of topics including the writing of language and content objectives; gaining understanding in the differentiation and acquisition of social language and academic language; infusing visual aids, realia, and manipulatives into instruction through the lesson planning process; and using technology to support individualized language instruction. The eight programmatic overview related documents included items such as a 2014 program analysis logic model, a 2014 programmatic profile and overview and a listing of the programmatic initiatives of 2012. The five budgetary documents included three Title III applications requesting funds for ESL teacher
professional learning and two local funding requests to provide professional development for content area classroom teachers. See Figure 5.

Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELs surveys, the professional development dimension ranked second in terms of positive responses. In reviewing the responses, 26.9% were attributed to the professional development cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 6 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension.

There is a noted disparity between the positive response rates of the two standards within this dimension. The building capacity standard ranks considerably lower than quality, producing a positive response rate of 13.5%. Both teacher and administrator responses reflected a broad and pervasive lack of EL-specific professional development offered to and taken by educators in the School Division. Further, the professional
development opportunities that are offered do not include a wide cadre of educators serving in various capacities to support EL instruction, nor were those opportunities considered relevant or useful. Moreover, administrators noted that the professional development sessions in which educators did engage had not yielded improvements in the instructional practices of teachers serving ELs. A common theme that was extracted from the open-ended question in this cluster revealed that many teachers are using outside resources such as books, articles, and online materials to enhance their skills in working with ELs.

The standard of quality within this dimension scored much higher than the building capacity standard, yielding a positive response rate of 31.9%. The questions in the quality standard were more reflective of the functioning of grade level teams and departments as professional learning teams (PLTs) in addressing EL needs as opposed to rating the quality of EL-specific professional development opportunities offered by schools sites or by the School Division. In the area of on-going, sustained professional learning relevant to the examination and discussion of EL instruction and data, respondents noted a lack of focus on examining EL student work specifically as well as a lack of focus on curricular and instructional modifications for ELs. Teachers did indicate that these teams worked well together and met regularly although not always to discuss EL students in particular. Administrator responses honed in on the lack of time devoted
to EL discussions in the PLTs and the lack of impact on changes to instructional practices. See Figure 6.

![Figure 6. Professional Development Dimension Positive Survey Results](image)

**PEAS 4 - Instructional program design.** Under legislative provisions, the School Division, like all other districts, is required to provide a language instruction program that is designed to reflect sound educational theory (*Castaneda v. Pickard*, 1981). The Castaneda ruling further asserts that the program be effective in helping students to attain English language proficiency and to meaningfully participate in the academic program. In addition to effectiveness, the PEAS model purports that language programs include the standards of providing access to grade level content, foster continuous language development, promote equity, and ensure access to effective counseling.

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were 57 documents that related to the dimension of instructional program design. Figure 7 details the document references.
within each standard. Of the 57 instructional program design document references, 29 were relevant to the effective design standard, 14 to the language development standard, 11 to the grade level content standard, two to the counseling standard, and one to the standard of equity. Although the effective design standard had 29 documents, only five substantively related to the design of major program components such as the 2014 inception and development of the Newcomers’ Academy, the 2014 ESL High School Consolidation of Services proposal, and the 2013 retention process and protocols for ELs documents. The other references were in perfunctory documents related to the ESL summer enrichment programs and the provision of ESL services to private schools within the School Division’s boundaries.

Of the 14 language development documents, there were four Title III applications and supporting documents that made notable mentions of the language development and acquisition process. Additionally, there were seven instructional presentations and three meeting agendas that supported the concept of language development in the instructional environment for ELs. Access to grade level content is a significant criterion for ELD programs. There are 11 documents that contained references to the requirement for EL students to have access to grade level content from the beginning of their matriculation in the ESL program. These included documents such as the ESL Strategies to Close the Achievement Gap 2012 presentation, the 2014 Title III Division Improvement Plan and the 2010 ESL Ahead of the Curve presentation. The 2014 Newcomers’ Academy Course Sequence document made reference to both the standard of equity and counseling within this dimension. See Figure 7.
Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELs surveys, the instructional program design dimension ranked lowest, in sixth place in terms of positive responses. Only 17.3% of the responses given to the instructional program design cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 8 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension.

The effective design standard ranked lowest within this dimension with a rating of 6.8% of positive responses. Of most concern to the teachers and administrators, according to their survey responses, was the significant lack of written guidance and compliance material from the division level ESL department leadership. Additionally, responses indicated that there was inadequate focus directed towards addressing the unique needs of newcomer ELs with little to no English, those students classified as long-term ELs, as well as a lack of substantive progress monitoring for those students who have fully exited the language instruction program. The teacher responses revealed a
startling admission that the teachers themselves were lacking in knowledge of how to meet the needs of their EL students. Also ranking low in this dimension is the standard of access to grade level content. With a rating of 12.4%, the major concern raised in this standard was the insufficient support given to ELs in accessing content and to teachers in modifying that content for ELs to make it accessible.

The administrators and teachers survey responses were in alignment in assessing the standards of counseling, language development, and equity. The standard of counseling resulted in a positive rating of 17.9%. The low score is reflective of limited assistance being provided to families of ELs with regard to participating in and understanding course selection processes, having knowledge of graduation requirements, and navigating pathways for college and career readiness. The 28.6% positive response for the standard of language development is attributed to ELs not receiving appropriate amounts of targeted instruction for language acquisition. Lastly, the equity standard ranked highest in this dimension with a positive response rate of 35.8%. The higher scores in this standard were reflective of the presence of ELs in extracurricular activities and elective classes. However, it was also noted that there are few to no ELs enrolled in advanced coursework or gifted classes according to participant responses. See Figure 8.
**Instructional Program Design Dimension Positive Survey Results**

**Dimension and Standards**

- **Instructional Program Design**
  - Positive: 17.3%
  - Neutral: 32.4%
  - Negative: 59.3%

- **Effective Design**
  - Positive: 58.0%
  - Neutral: 31.9%
  - Negative: 61.3%

- **Access to Grade Level Content**
  - Positive: 12.4%
  - Neutral: 28.7%
  - Negative: 58.9%

- **Language Development**
  - Positive: 28.6%
  - Neutral: 30.1%
  - Negative: 41.3%

- **Equity**
  - Positive: 23.7%
  - Neutral: 35.8%
  - Negative: 40.5%

- **Counseling**
  - Positive: 37.9%
  - Neutral: 79.6%
  - Negative: 55.2%

*Figure 8. Instructional Program Design Dimension Positive Survey Results*

**PEAS 5 - Instructional program implementation.** It is not only important for a language instructional program to be effectively designed; it must also be effectively implemented. To achieve effective implementation, many school districts opt to serve ELs in the general education classroom providing content and language objectives, experience-based learning strategies and the use of visual aids yielding academic benefits for ELs and native English speaking students (Himmel, 2009). Undergirding the dimension of implementing the instructional program are the standards of planning for teacher collaboration, providing challenging academic content, supporting language development, building on the foundation of socially-constructed learning, and incorporating relevant classroom assessment practices (Acosta et al., 2012).

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were 74 documents that were relevant to the dimension of instructional program implementation. Figure 9 details the document
references within each standard. Of the 74 documents, 32 directly addressed the implementation of specific program components. These references included the assignment of ESL teacher caseloads from 2009-2015, ESL teacher schedules from 2009-2015, the 2013 recommended allocation of instructional service time for ESL enrolled students, and six agendas with accompanying minutes from ESL teacher meetings. In this context, the language development dimension refers to those instructional practices that are implemented in the classroom. There were 20 documents ranging from Title III funding applications from 2012-2014 and content area teacher training presentations to a 2010 Teachers of ELLs Tool Kit that offered a list of strategies to incorporate explicit academic language instruction into the general education classroom. The 2011 ESL Principal Presentation was the only document that made reference to assessments conducted in the classroom setting. There were no documents to reflect the concept of infusing socially-constructed learning into the instructional setting. See Figure 9.

![Figure 9. Instructional Implementation Dimension Document Review Results](image)
Critical to the language education process for English learners is the implementation of instruction. That implementation is most evident and observable in classroom practices and strategies. Using the PEAS classroom observation protocol, 15 observations were conducted across the high school, middle school, and elementary school levels of the School Division. The classroom observation protocol reflects 11 categories with 63 observable indicators that are all associated with the instructional program implementation dimension. All observations that were completed were conducted in classrooms that served at least three ELs and were led by a general education teacher, an ESL teacher, or in five instances, a pairing of the two. At the high school level, there were three classrooms observed by the team of three using the PEAS classroom observation protocol. With regard to teaching structure, one classroom was led by a general education teacher only, one classroom was led by an ESL teacher only, and one classroom included a collaboration between an ESL and general education teacher. The scores are reported in Figure 10 using a mean of all three observations from each of the observers across the 11 categories on a scale of 0 to 3 points where 0 indicated no evidence, 1 indicated weak evidence, 2 indicated moderate evidence, and 3 indicated strong evidence. The student engagement category garnered the highest score of all 11 categories of the high school observations with a mean of 2.0. Observer reports indicated that most students were on task with only a few instances of off-task behavior. The comments included questions of compliance as opposed to actual engagement in the learning process. Also achieving relatively notable scores were the categories of classroom environment and high expectations, each earning a mean score of 1.7. Observation notes indicated that the classrooms were well controlled and appeared to
reflect respect for students and teachers with some evidence of encouragement being offered. However, there was weak evidence indicating small group instruction or paired instruction to support EL needs. Grade level content was presented, reflecting posted content objectives with an emphasis on demonstrating understanding and application skills. The use of repetition strategies, moderated pace, increased wait time, and graphic organizers were identified as evidence of some scaffolding yielding a mean score of 1.5. There was also moderate evidence of collaboration displayed in the smooth flow of the lesson and observed communication of the collaborative pair.

On the other end of the continuum with a mean score of 0.4, there was weak evidence of meaning-based learning that occurred during the observations. Observers reported no evidence of authentic tasks or thematically linked instruction. There was one opportunity for students, including ELs, to have a brief hands-on interaction. The category of cultural experiences rated a 0.6. The classroom observations revealed weak evidence supporting connections to first language learning with the exception of the ESL teacher only classroom. Here, observers found evidence of the use of first language to second language transference strategies through the presentation of content-related cognates. Similarly, with a score of 0.7, evidence of differentiated instruction was weak. Of note were two examples of modified assessments and one example of the use of a graphic organizer to frame the learning content. With regard to academic language, also receiving a score of 0.7, there was weak evidence of Tier 3 content vocabulary instruction through repeated exposures. However, there were no examples of Tier 2 vocabulary instruction or analysis of complex text. See Figure 10.
At the middle school level, there were three classrooms observed by the team of three using the PEAS classroom observation protocol. In terms of teaching configuration, two classrooms were led by a general education teacher only, no classrooms were led by an ESL teacher only, and one classroom featured a version of a collaborative model. The scores are reported in Figure 11 using a mean of all three observations from each of the observers across the 11 categories on a scale of 0 to 3 points where 0 indicated no evidence, 1 indicated weak evidence, 2 indicated moderate evidence, and 3 indicated strong evidence.

There were two categories of the 11 that earned scores ranking at or above the mid-point of the 3-point scale; classroom environment with a mean score of 1.7 and academic language with a mean score of 1.5. In each of the classrooms, observers noted that the management of the classroom seemed orderly and organized with respect for students and teachers indicated. There was also some evidence of encouraging comments.
made. However, only two examples were identified of paired or small group work to support EL learning. Although falling below the mid-point with a mean score of 1.2, assessment practices were observed. There were six instances where checks for understanding that reflected the content occurred. Additionally, there was one example of a summative evaluation with some attempts of modification for EL comprehensibility. Bearing some mention from the observation team, the categories of collaboration, student engagement and high expectations each earned a mean score of 1.0 reflecting weak evidence.

In the category of cultural experiences, there was no evidence in any of the observed classrooms of connections to students’ native languages or to an infusion of their lived experiences into the instructional environment. Similarly rated with a mean score of 0.1, the category of meaning-based learning reflected no authentic tasks to connect student learning to the real world. Further diminishing the score was the lack of substantive evidence of thematic instruction. In the collaborative classroom, observers did cite the use of leveled text as a form of instructional differentiation to support a mean score of 0.4, but the student products and learning activities were the same for both native and non-native English speakers. Inconsistent use of visuals, gestures, and wait time were noted to support the 0.5 mean score in the category of scaffolding, though there were no opportunities presented for previewing content instruction, using realia, or engaging with technology meaningfully. With a mean score of 0.6, the focus on language category revealed one example in the collaborative classroom of the incorporation of language objectives, weak evidence of instructional modifications for varying language levels, and an overall lack of the use of multi-modal practices. See Figure 11.
At the elementary level, nine classrooms were observed by the team of three using the PEAS classroom observation protocol. The teaching structures included four classrooms led by a general education teacher only, two classroom led by an ESL teacher only, and three classrooms highlighting a sharing of instruction by an ESL teacher and a general educator. The scores are reported in Figure 12 using a mean of all nine observations from each of the observers across the 11 categories on a scale of 0 to 3 points where 0 indicated no evidence, 1 indicated weak evidence, 2 indicated moderate evidence, and 3 indicated strong evidence.

Of the three grade spans of instruction, the elementary level produced the most categories with mean scores at or above the scale mid-point. The student engagement category earned a mean score of 2.4, the highest scoring category for any of the grade span observations. To support the rating, there was ample evidence of cooperative learning in both small groups and pairs undergirded with routinized systems. Respect for
all was identified in each of the nine classrooms as well as the perception of equal status for ELs and non-ELs. The notation of solid management, active engagement, and pervasive on-task behaviors supported the classroom environment rating of 2.0. There were three incidences where observed off-task EL student behavior was noted. The categories of high expectations and focus on language both yielded mean scores of 1.7. Reflected in the observers’ comments for these categories was evidence of higher order thinking activities at the application level and on-grade level instruction. Moreover, there was evidence of the incorporation of language objectives in of the both of the ESL teacher led classes, in one collaborative class, and in one general education teacher led class.

Lower mean scores were documented for the categories of meaning-based learning, cultural experiences, and assessment at the elementary level. The lack of authentic, real-world tasks resulted in a mean score of 0.6 for the meaning-based learning category. The mean score for the cultural experiences category was also weak at 0.8. There were only four examples of the integration of native language into the instructional environment to emphasize first language to second language transference. Although no summative assessments were observed during the elementary classroom observations, there were 8 occurrences of formative assessment through checks for understanding identified resulting in a mean score of 1.1 for the assessment category. See Figure 12.
Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELs surveys, the instructional program implementation dimension ranked in the middle at third place in terms of positive responses. Nearly one of four, 24.2%, of the responses given to the instructional program implementation cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 13 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension.

Both the standards of collaboration and socially-constructed learning received a positive rating of 12.4%, the lowest in the dimension. In terms of collaboration, the survey participants noted a critical insufficiency of planning time with ESL teachers in tandem with non-existent training in developing collaborative teaching and instructional practices. The results of the socially constructed learning standard series of questions identified a pervasive viewpoint held by respondents that EL performance depends
primarily on the home environment and that teachers have limited influence on academic achievement. Due to limited access to formative and summative assessments that are appropriately modified for differing EL linguistic levels, the classroom assessment standard received a positive response rating of 17.5%.

The standard of implementation netted a positive response rating of 21.4%. Areas of concern included limited provision of resources and texts to support EL instruction and insufficient guidance embedded into curricular materials to support differentiation of EL instruction. The standard of presenting challenging content to ELs received a positive response rating of 29.3. This rating reflected the perception that the current curriculum is too hard for EL students. It is further indicated that the current curriculum lacks guidance for teachers on instructing ELs in the academic language of the content areas. The highest ranked standard in this dimension is language development, receiving a positive response rating of 34.0%. Responses revealed that teachers and administrators hold strong beliefs that ELs must learn English before they are able to learn content information. Further noted in the language development standard is the lack of perceived

![Figure 20. Instructional Program Implementation Dimension Positive Survey Results](image-url)
EL progress in language acquisition and limited access to first language instructional materials to engage emerging speakers. See Figure 13.

PEAS 6 - Assessment and accountability. Assessment and accountability are terms that are frequently used in PK-16 settings across the nation. In the age of NCLB and now ESSA there is increased focus on academic achievement particularly for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Brown & Sanford, 2011). Federal regulations require assessments for the initial identification and placement of ELs as well as annual assessments to determine progress and English proficiency attainment (U.S. Department of Education, et al, 2015). The PEAS model identifies the three standards within this dimension as identification and placement, the use of data and continuous improvement.

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were 53 documents that contained references to the assessment and accountability dimension. Figure 14 details the document references within each standard. Identification and placement are the first steps in determining if a student is eligible to receive language instruction services and the type of services that student should receive. There were 30 documents that targeted the identification and placement of ELs. Consistent with federal regulations, there were primary home language survey documents from 2012-2015, permission to test and enroll documents from 2012-2015, and refusal of service letters from 2010-2015. There were also parent letters describing the continuation of, completion of, and the exiting from services for 2009-2013. The use of data is critical to the decision-making process for instructional delivery and program operation. There were 23 documents that contained
references to the use of data standard. Of that number, there were three Excel spreadsheets containing ACCESS student data from 2012-2014, along with data presentations of 2012 Rosetta Usage and 2010 EL student data for performance on the SOL and Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA) assessments. Additionally, there were five EL student assistance plans from 2010, eight monitoring summaries of 2011 students determined to be formerly EL, and a 2011 collection of EL Kindergarten information. There were no documents that reflected any information on the continuous improvement standard. See Figure 14.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 28. Assessment and Accountability Dimension Document Review Results**

Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELs surveys, the assessment and accountability dimension ranked next to last, in fifth place in terms of positive responses. One fifth, or 20.7% of the responses given to the assessment and accountability cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 15 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension.
By far, the lowest standard in this dimension is that of continuous improvement. The positive response rating of 6.2% is indicative of respondents reporting a lack of knowledge of how EL data should inform instruction for on-going student success. The use of data standard did not fare much better with a positive response rating of 17.8%. Part of this low rating is attributed to division policies for EL grading, promotion, and retention that need substantive clarification and improvement. Additionally, participants noted their inability to access and use data regarding the academic progress of ELs as well as expressing concerns about their ability to diagnose the learning needs of ELs.

The identification and placement standard claimed the highest ranking in this dimension with a positive response rate of 34.5%. Administrator responses pointed to difficulties in identifying ELs for placement in remediation programs as well as difficulties in knowing the types of EL programming and services to recommend to support EL academic achievement. Teacher responses acknowledged the presence of exit criteria and
classroom placement protocols, but indicated that more improvements and clarification were needed. See Figure 15.

![Figure 15](image)

**Figure 15.** Classroom Placement Protocols

**PEAS 7 - Parent and community outreach.** Our students are products of the families and social networks that support them. A key indicator of student success is having deep, well-developed, and meaningful home-school partnerships (Weiss et al., 2010). Successful language development programs craft support structures that bridge the gap between the internal curricular environment and the external community environment (Hanover Research, 2014). The standards included in this dimension are communication; parent, family, and community partnerships; and parent involvement.

Based on the frequency count that was completed for the 326 documents that were reviewed as a part of this study, there were 77 documents that reflected references to the dimension of parent and community outreach. Figure 16 details the document references within each standard. Of all the dimensions and standards addressed, the most

![Figure 16](image)

**Figure 36.** Assessment and Accountability Dimension Positive Survey Results
document references related to parent and community outreach with the majority contained in the communication standard. In this area, 37 of the 51 documents noted were requests for interpreters for parent meetings, events, and individual conferences. The remaining documents were compliance related focusing on informing parents of service eligibility, assessment scores, and Annual Measureable Achievement Objective (AMAO) results, with the exception of 2 invitations to parent workshops in 2013 and 2014. The 18 parental involvement documents included minutes and attendance logs from the 2013 and 2014 EL parent/family workshops. Further included were 2012-2014 Title III applications that requested funds for parental resources and activities for the corresponding years and documentation of the purchase and distribution of educational materials for families to use at home with their learners. The eight documents in the family and community partnership strand reflect various years of volunteer tutor forms for individuals and agencies serving the EL population at school sites across the division. See Figure 16.

![Parent and Community Outreach Dimension](image)

*Figure 37. Parent and Community Outreach Dimension Document Review Results*
Of the six dimensions addressed in the administrators and teachers of ELs surveys, the parent and community outreach dimension ranked the highest, in first position in terms of positive responses, with 45.6% of the responses given to the parent and community outreach cluster of questions were rated as positive. Figure 17 provides a visual representation of the survey results for each standard and overall dimension as compared to the total number of responses collected for the dimension.

While both administrators and teachers ranked parent and community outreach as the strongest dimension overall, the lowest standard within the dimension is parental involvement. Though higher than many standards in other dimensions, at 28.4%, the parental involvement standard ranked well below the communication and family and community partnership standards. Teacher responses reflected a lack of inclusion of EL parents in assisting in classrooms and in organizing school events. Administrator responses identified that while EL parents are making a positive difference in their children’s education, they are not often invited to serve on school-based decision-making bodies. There was collective agreement among the respondents that there is no evidence of training specifically dedicated to support EL parents in helping their students to improve academically.

The positive response rating of 50.4% for the communication standard reflected the respondents’ acknowledgement that there are substantive efforts made to communicate with the families of the ELs served by the School Division. However, having access to enough interpreters for families at school-wide events and individual meetings was indicated as an area for improvement. The highest rated standard of this or any dimension is that of family and community partnerships with a positive response.
rating of 54.1%. While some respondents noted that schools do not do a good job of reducing barriers to EL family involvement, a majority of the responses highlighted the feeling that EL families are treated with the same respect as English-speaking families. Additionally indicated, is that when appropriate communication is made with EL families, parents are likely to participate with teachers in conferences. Administrator responses acknowledged efforts to generate community partners to support ELs academically. See Figure 17.

Figure 38. Parent and Community Outreach Dimension Positive Survey Results

The administrators and teachers of ELs surveys included several open-ended questions that afforded participants the opportunity to directly share their thoughts on topics presented. To the question of the most important things that schools or the division has done to improve teaching and learning specifically for ELs, the resounding response was “Nothing!” Two teachers responded with “Absolutely Nothing,” and another with “[ELs] are merely thrown into our classes and we make due [sic] with the
support of the ESL teacher who is spread way too thin for her caseload.” A response of note was elicited from a teacher who stated, “I believe that the school systems are being overwhelmed with the addition of illegal immigrants to our country.” In essence, the perception was that overall supports were limited. However, a few specific support structures were mentioned. Five teacher respondents indicated that the introduction of Rosetta Stone® was viewed as a supportive resource for lower proficiency EL students. An increase in the presence of ESL teachers in the classroom was also noted by 27 teacher respondents. Lastly, the Newcomers’ Academy, that serves approximately 100 newly arrived ELs from the three high schools within the School Division, was referenced by 31 teacher and administrator respondents as a newly added support.

There was no shortage in responses to questions surrounding the perceived barriers that have been encountered by teachers and administrators that prevent the effective teaching and learning for EL students. The lack of adequate, targeted, relevant, and sustained professional development was indicated as a barrier to effective EL instruction by 22 respondents. With regard to collaboration, 17 teacher respondents and 1 administrator respondent noted that insufficient time, ineffective communication, poor planning practices, and heavy caseloads led to inefficient collaborative structures. The lack of support from either the home or school environments was expressed by 26 teachers as a barrier for EL student success. One teacher stated that “my greatest barrier has been my limited access to support.” “Those students are pushed into classes with no help, they are pushed into classes where teachers are provided no support to help them,” wrote another. There were 24 teachers who reflected on the lack of teacher skills and abilities as barriers. Key areas that were noted focused on the inability for teachers to
speak the varied languages of their students, the misunderstanding of student needs, and the lack of knowledge of effective instructional strategies for ELs. Four administrator respondents also identified the lack of knowledge of instructional strategies and clear expectations as barriers for EL academic improvement. Insufficient access to appropriate materials and language services for ELs was shared by 41 respondents as barriers to EL achievement. One teacher reported that

“These “services” are a disgrace! There are no native speakers to assist with my Korean, Chinese, and French students who have NO English ability. The absolute “Band-Aid” of having Rosetta Stone for these students is to cover the fact that this division has failed these students by not having ESL teachers fluent in the languages of these students’ homes.”

**Evaluation Question 2:** To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display language acquisition progress and language proficiency attainment in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

It is required through federal and state regulations that students enrolled and served in a language instruction educational program be assessed annually to determine their progress in English acquisition and their eventual attainment of English proficiency (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). As a member of the World-Class Instructional Design Association consortium through the state of Virginia, the School Division utilizes the ACCESS for ELLs tool to assess student progress and proficiency. There are several formats in which scores are reported for the assessment, including a scaled composite score with an upper bound of 600, a lower bound of 100, and a mid-point of 350 (Kenyon et al., 2006). For ELs assessed with the ACCESS, progress is defined as a gain of 25 or
more points in the scaled composite score from one annual administration of the
ACCESS to the consecutive subsequent annual administration of the ACCESS for an EL
student (Kenyon et al., 2006).

Figure 18 depicts the cross-sectional percentage of ELs in the School Division
achieving progress each year over a 6-year span. For the four annual administrations of
the ACCESS from 2010 to 2013, the progress achievement percentage increased each
year. However, in 2014, a substantial decrease occurred in the percentage of ELs
achieving progress. Although no concrete data exist, anecdotal reports indicate that just
prior to this time frame, significant changes began to take place in the overall
demographics of the EL population of the School Division. Verbal accounts indicate that
those changes reflected increases of newly arriving students from rural areas of Central
American countries; increases in the number of identified ELs lacking first language
literacy; and increases in the numbers of students enrolling as unaccompanied minors.
These circumstances likely resulted in an increase in the overall number of lower
proficiency ELs being served and assessed. This increase of lower proficiency students,
who tend to score lower on the assessment due to language limitations, can generate the
impression that fewer ELs are achieving progress when the reality is that more students
are being assessed who come to the School Division with low linguistic skills.
Additionally, for the 2015 ACCESS administration, WIDA introduced a new online platform for the ACCESS. See Figure 18.

The cross-sectional ACCESS mean composite scores displayed in Figure 19, reveal a downward trend from 2010 to 2014 with a slight improvement in 2015. This is indicative of overall lower EL student individual scores in each of the five years of the declining mean trend. See Figure 19.
A similar pattern is noted for the maximum composite scores earned as shown in Figure 20. With the exception of 2013, the maximum composite score earned on the ACCESS administrations decreased each year from 2010 to 2014 while the minimum composite score remains fairly consistent over time. Again, the lower individual scores for some ELs are reflective of the increasing number of recent arrivals with limited formal education and lower English proficiency skills. See Figure 20.

![Cross-Sectional Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores](image)

*Figure 20. Cross-Sectional Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores*
A deeper investigation of the individual years identified in Figure 21 further highlights the general downward shift of the composite score clusters as well as providing a visual representation of the increase in ELs assessed each year. See Figure 21.

*Figure 21. Cross-Sectional Composite ACCESS Cluster Scores for 2009 – 2015 that indicate the pattern of score clustering.*

Fluctuations of the standard deviations with some tightening during the last 3 years of the span are noted in Figure 22.
While the cross-sectional ACCESS composite score data show a downward trend in the overall EL achievement of progress, an analysis of the cohort data present a different picture. To garner a substantive sample of composite EL ACCESS cohort member scores, the span for the years of the cohort data analysis focused on the 2013, 2014, and 2015 ACCESS administrations. From 2013 to 2015, 168 of the same EL students were enrolled and participated in ACCESS testing for each of those years creating a cohort sample. Figure 23 reflects the percentage of cohort member ELs achieving progress during the span, defined as an increase of 25 points or more (Kenyon, et al., 2006). From the 2013 ACCESS administration to the 2014 ACCESS administration, 41% of the cohort members achieved progress. From the 2014 ACCESS administration to the 2015 ACCESS administration, 52% of the cohort members achieved progress. It could be inferred that the longer the same students stay within the language
instructional program within the School Division that the likelihood of individual progress increases. See Figure 23.

Figure 23. Cohort Percentage of ELs Achieving Progress

Figure 24 presents the mean composite scores for the cohort members for the three-year span. Increases of 24.8 scaled score points and 26 scaled score points are noted for the 2013 to 2014 and the 2014 to 2015 progress assessment cycles respectively. As there were no scores for recently arrived students with lower English proficiency levels added into the cohort mean scaled scores, a steady improvement in performance was observed. See Figure 24.
The standard deviations shown in Figure 25 are notably lower for the cohort members when compared to the standard deviations for the composite scores in the cross-sectional analysis. This is important as it indicates more of the EL students scored closer to the mean reflecting a trend towards a more normal distribution. See Figure 25.
As shown in Figure 26, the minimum scores for each of the years of the cohort analysis shows a marked increase. Additionally, each of those years reflects a higher minimum score than the corresponding year in the cross-sectional analysis of the same nature. This further supports the increase in the achievement of progress for students who spend multiple, consecutive years in the language instructional education program of the School Division. See Figure 26.

![Cohort Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores](image)

*Figure 26. Cohort Max. vs. Min. ACCESS Composite Scores*

In tandem with the concept of achieving progress in English language acquisition is the construct of the attainment of proficiency in the understanding and usage of English. In terms of the ACCESS assessment, a student is determined to have demonstrated an appropriate level of English language proficiency when a composite scaled score of 400 or above is received. For the cross-sectional analysis of proficiency displayed in Figure 27, a downward trend is identified in the attainment of proficiency and program exiting for every year of the six years addressed in this study. It is not
possible to produce a cohort sample that included the same EL students for three consecutive years as the students attaining proficiency and exiting the program would not have participated in the following year’s administration of the ACCESS assessment and would, therefore, not have scores. This would preclude them from being included in the cohort membership. See Figure 27.

Figure 27. Cross-Sectional Percentage of ELs Attaining Proficiency

n = number of ELs served and assessed
Tables 7 and 8 summarize the ACCESS cross-sectional and cohort data for the School Division for the period 2010 to 2015.

Table 7

_Cross-Sectional ACCESS Data_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Point</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Composite</td>
<td>344.10</td>
<td>339.08</td>
<td>326.11</td>
<td>319.58</td>
<td>314.94</td>
<td>322.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>63.11</td>
<td>56.20</td>
<td>68.04</td>
<td>59.17617</td>
<td>60.62</td>
<td>56.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Composite</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Composite</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Composite</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Mode Composite</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8

_Cohort ACCESS Data_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Point</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Composite</td>
<td>298.92</td>
<td>323.71</td>
<td>349.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>52.22</td>
<td>37.57</td>
<td>30.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Composite</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Composite</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Composite</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Mode Composite</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Evaluation Question 3:** To what degree did students enrolled in the ESL program display academic achievement in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

Under the umbrella of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* and within the Title III framework are specific requirements of accountability measures for EL student outcomes. Along with linguistic progress and proficiency, a part of those academic outcomes includes academic achievement (United States Department of Education, 2016). Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, the school division implements the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments as a measure of academic achievement in specified content areas. Students enrolled in Grades 3-8 are assessed for reading and math achievement annually, while students enrolled in Grade 11 English, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, participate in the end-of-course (EOC) assessments (Virginia Department of Education, 2013). Student performance data on the reading and math SOL assessments are reported using scaled scores. Students achieving scaled scores between 500 and 600 are considered to have passed advanced; those achieving scaled scores between 400 and 499 are considered to have passed proficiently; and students achieving scaled scores of 399 or below are considered to have failed or not passed the assessment.

Figure 28 displays the pass rate percentages for ELs participating in the reading SOL assessments for Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 reading EOC assessment for the 2010 to 2015 test administration cycles. The 2010 testing cycling generated the highest EL pass rate percentage of the six-year analysis span at 73.9%. The lowest EL pass rate of 35.2% was earned in 2013. It is worth noting that the Virginia Department of Education implemented a new online test platform during the 2013 test administration cycle.
Additionally, the revised English SOLs that were adopted in 2010, implemented in 2011, and were fully assessed in 2012. The EL pass rate percentages were markedly lower in both 2012 and 2013, but a correlative investigation was not done to establish a relationship. For the 2014 and 2015 reading SOL administration cycles, the pass percentage rates for the ELs in the School Division were similar at 56.7 and 56.6 respectively. With respect to the statewide view, for each year of analysis for this study, the ELs of the School Division underperformed the ELs across the state in terms of pass percentage rates on the same reading SOL assessments. See Figure 28.

![EL Reading SOL Pass Rate Percentages](image)

*Figure 28. EL Reading Pass Rate Percentages Grades 3-8 and EOC Reading*

While pass rate percentage can provide an overall pattern of the ability of ELs students within the School Division to achieve some passing scores on the state’s minimum competency assessments, more information may be gleaned from examining the EL reading SOL mean scaled scores as shown in Figure 29. For each year of the
academic achievement data analysis, the mean scaled scores for ELs in the School Division fails to cross the passing threshold of 400. The range of the mean scaled scores for the six years in review reflects a narrow band of just 37.4 points. Essentially, the mean scaled scores have not shown marked improvement for the full span of the years included within the study. The mean scaled scores of the ELs within the School Division were below the mean scaled scores of ELs across the state for every assessment year except 2015 where the ELs of the School Division earned a mean scaled score of 384.1 and the ELs across the state earned a mean scaled score of 361.4. Of relevance for consideration are the similar patterns of scaled score declines for both School Division and state ELs for 2012 and 2013, and for score increases in 2014 on the reading SOL assessments. See Figure 29.

Figure 29. EL SOL Reading Mean Scaled Score Grades 3-8 and EOC Reading
Figure 30 displays the pass rate percentages for ELs participating in the annual math SOL assessments for Grades 3-8 and the EOC assessments for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II for the 2010 to 2015 test administration cycles. As with reading, the highest pass percentage rate achieved by ELs within the School Division was earned in 2010 at 78.9%. Conversely, the lowest pass percentage rate of 43.8% was earned in 2012. Again, the Virginia Department of Education did introduce an online assessment protocol in 2013 and new math standards adopted in 2009 were fully assessed in 2011. Relational implications have not been established through research. From the 2010 to the 2011 testing administration cycle, the EL math pass rate percentage declined 34.5 points. A similar but less dramatic decrease of 22.7 points was noted in the state EL data for the same testing cycle.

The School Division EL pass percentage rates increased from 2012 to 2013 and again from 2013 to 2014 by 12.6 percentage points and 15.5 percentage points respectively. The state EL pass rate percentages decreased by 2.3 percentage points, similar to the School Division ELs from the 2014 to the 2015 testing cycles. In terms of pass rate percentages, the School Division ELs were consistently below the pass rate percentages of ELs across the state from 2010 to 2013. However, the math pass rate percentages of ELs of the School Division did exceed those of ELs across the state in 2014 and 2015 by 4.9 and 3.6 percentage points respectively. See Figure 30.
Similar to the EL reading SOL mean scaled scores, the EL math SOL mean scaled scores can provide more clarity into the scope of EL student math performance within the School Division. Figure 31 reflects those scores. Although slightly higher than the EL reading SOL mean scaled scores, the EL math SOL mean scaled scores do indicate that there are two years where the mean scaled score does not reach the scaled score passing threshold of 400. The range of the EL math SOL mean scaled scores is nearly double that of the EL reading SOL mean scaled scores at 71.5 points. With the exception of a small 2.6 point decline, EL math SOL mean scaled scores show a steady, noted improvement for the last several years of scores reviewed. EL math SOL mean scaled scores were lower than the EL math SOL mean scaled scores for the state in 2011, 2012, and 2013. On the other end of the spectrum, for the 2010, 2014, and 2015 testing cycles, ELs from within the School Division outperformed their statewide counterparts earning mean scaled scores that were above the state EL math SOL mean scaled scores by 8, 10.1, and 11.1 respectively. See Figure 31.
Evaluation Question 4: To what degree did the academic achievement of students enrolled in the ESL program compare to the academic achievement of non-ESL students in reading and math in the School Division from September 2009 to June 2015?

In accordance with court rulings, one of the three key components that every American language instruction program must contain is that the language instruction program must yield successful results in reducing language barriers for students in that program and provide equitable access to rigorous academic programming that is commensurate with their grade-level, English-speaking peers (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981). In this segment of this work, performance results on reading and math SOL assessments for non-ELs in the School Division are compared to EL performance results in the School Division for the same assessments from the 2010 to 2015 SOL assessment administration cycles.

Figure 31. EL Math SOL Mean Scaled Scores Grades 3-8 and EOC Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II
Figure 32 displays the pass rate percentages for non-ELs and identified ELs participating in the reading SOL assessments for Grades 3-8 and the Grade 11 reading EOC for the six-year span. The data reveal that for each year of the span, the pass percentage rates of non-ELs exceeded the pass percentage rates of ELs within the School Division. The largest gap in the reading pass percentage rates between non-ELs and ELs in the district was 44.7 percentage points and occurred in the 2013 testing cycle. The smallest gap noted during this time span was 15.5 percentage points for the 2010 testing cycle with the average disparity across the six years being 29.4 percentage points. Similar percentage pass rate gaps for reading achievement were indicated in 2014 and 2015 where percentage pass rates between non-ELs and ELs differed by 27.8 and 28.3 respectively. This may represent a possible trend toward achievement gap tightening as the 2014 and 2015 percentage pass rate gaps display a distinct difference from the 44.7 percentage point gap of 2013. In reviewing the reading SOL pass percentage rate data of non-ELs within the School Division as compared to the data of state non-ELs, the non-ELs across the state outperformed the non-ELs of the district by earning pass percentage rates that exceeded the non-ELs of the district from 2010 to 2013. The remaining testing cycles of 2014 and 2015 yielded data that reflected higher pass percentage rates for the district non-ELs as compared to non-ELs across the state. It should again be noted that a new online test platform was implemented in 2013 as well as the new 2010 reading standards being fully assessed in 2012. See Figure 32.
Just as looking beyond the pass rate percentages afforded deeper insights into the academic achievements of School Division ELs in reading and math, so, too are more in-depths perspectives unveiled when analyzing the mean scaled scores of non-ELs and compared to ELs. Figure 33 contains these data for the reading SOL assessments. As noted earlier and referenced again in Figure 33, in each administration of the reading SOL assessments during the span of this study, the EL mean scaled score for reading did not reach the passing threshold of 400. Conversely, for each year of the same reading SOL assessments, the non-EL students of the district exceeded the passing threshold. In 2011, the highest mean scaled score for reading earned during the span of 488.8 was attributed to the non-EL students’ performance. The lowest mean scaled score of 440.1, which is still above the passing threshold, was earned by the non-ELs during the following year’s testing cycle. The average disparity across the six years was 78.8
points. Further, in every year’s test administration cycle except for 2013, the School Division’s non-EL mean scaled scores exceeded the state’s non-ELs mean scaled scores. Similar patterns of increases and decreases in scores are noted for both groups at the district level. See Figure 33.

![Non-EL vs. EL Reading SOL Mean Scaled Scores](image)

*Figure 33. Non-EL vs. EL Reading SOL Mean Scaled Scores Grades 3-8 and EOC Reading*

Figure 34 displays the pass rate percentages for non-ELs and ELs participating in the math SOL assessments for Grades 3-8 and the EOC assessments for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II for the 2010 to 2015 test administration cycles. Indicated in the figure below is the fact that for each year addressed in the study, the pass percentage rates of non-ELs in terms of math academic achievement exceeded the pass percentage rates of ELs within the School Division. The greatest disparity in the math pass percentage rates between non-ELs and ELs in the district was 36.0 percentage points and occurred in the 2012 testing cycle. The disparity was least pronounced at 15.5 percentage
points for the 2010 testing cycle with the average disparity across the six years being 23.1 percentage points. Despite a slight 1.3 percentage point uptick in pass percentage rate disparity in 2015, there may be evidence of a possible trend toward achievement gap reduction from 2013 to 2015 as percentage pass rate gaps decreased from 25.3 to 15.3. In considering the math SOL pass percentage rate data of non-ELs within the School Division as compared to the data of non-ELs statewide, the non-ELs within the School Division outperformed the non-ELs of the state with pass percentage rates that were above the state’s non-ELs each year. Again, as a point of reference, the math SOL pass percentage rates of ELs within the School Division did not meet or exceed the state’s ELs from 2010-2013. See Figure 34.

*Figure 34. Non-EL vs. EL Math SOL Pass Rate Percentages Grades 3-8 and EOC Algebra I, II, Geometry*
The data in Figure 35 highlights the fact that while ELs in the School Division attained mean scaled scores that reached the passing threshold for 4 out of the 6 years, the non-ELs of the School Division reached and exceeded the same threshold every year of the study. District non-EL mean scaled math scores were highest at 487.9 in 2010, and lowest in 2011 at 431.9 with the average disparity across the six years being 33.7 percentage points. With regard to math academic achievement, the district’s non-EL scores rose above the state’s non-EL scores each year. The School Division ELs attained this status for three of the six years. Lastly, similar to reading comparative trends, math gains and declines are relatively consistent between both groups although the disparity in math SOL mean scaled scores is evident. It bears mention that a new online test platform was implemented in 2013 as well as the new 2009 math standards being fully assessed in 2011. See Figure 35.

Figure 35. Non-EL vs. EL Math SOL Mean Scaled Scores Grades 3-8 and EOC Algebra I, II, Geometry
**Evaluation Question 5:** Utilizing an Appreciative Inquiry approach with ESL teachers, classroom teachers, resource teachers, and administrators, what themes and understanding towards overall ESL department improvement could be gleaned for future program planning?

There is an old adage purporting that “what you put in to something is what you get out.” If the goal of this work is to evaluate the current ESL program to determine appropriate action steps that will foster increased positive outcomes, then it would stand to reason, according to the adage, that to yield those positive outcomes, there must be positive inputs. To that end, the Appreciative Inquiry approach, which is designed to identify, embrace, and capitalize upon existing organizational strengths, values, and success (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), was used as a framework to guide two focus group interview sessions to articulate positive inputs to help determine action steps towards positive outcomes. The participants in the sessions were all educators holding various roles in the School Division. The sessions consisted of guided paired interviews and structured small group discussions that focused on reflecting on the present status of the ESL program components and positively projecting and planning for future programmatic changes. Participants were dared to dream of and design the ideal program and develop action steps toward achieving it. The products of the sessions included written notes, recordings, visual/pictorial representations, and planning documents. These products were assessed to identify emerging themes and concepts. The following discussion highlights how those themes and concepts are related to the PEAS dimensions.

**Reflecting and projecting on the leadership dimension.** The concept of leadership was not a primary focus for the participants of the session with regard to the
amount of thoughts expressed and themes that emerged relating to this dimension. In
reflecting positively on the current status, there were two themes that emerged. The first
was the perception that the newly installed department leader was experienced,
understanding and interested in shared responsibility and success. The second reflective
theme indicated that the new department leadership held a K-12 view that is critical to the
post-secondary success of ELs in the School Division is the development of strong, clear
pathways to college and career readiness that spanned the K-12 scope. In positively
projecting for future success, several small groups noted that senior members of division
leadership should be encouraged to become more aware of and celebrate the rich
diversity that the ELs and their families bring to the district. One group shared that “We
have to value what our students and families bring to our schools and classrooms or they
can’t be successful.” It was also brought forth that both division and department
leadership be proactive in procuring appropriate instructional resources and support
materials, in addition to providing direct oversight to the revision of each content areas’
curriculum to ensure grade-level accessibility for all linguistic levels of English learners.

Reflecting and projecting on the personnel dimension. The two standards
identified in the personnel dimension are staffing and expertise. The themes that
emerged from the focus group that related to personnel connected in a different manner.
The reflective themes addressing current status spoke to the “eager teachers who desired
to collaborate” with others in supporting and instructing ELs but needed a structured
opportunity to do so. During this reflective component, there were several stories shared
that emphasized teachers who were committed to individual EL-students successes and
worked diligently to achieve them. One story shared by a participant relayed the case of
a teacher who worked with her high school EL student for six weekends to help prepare him for an SOL assessment that he needed for graduation after having experienced repeated failures. This story and others that were similar related to the positive projection of “relentless persistence for student success” as a key attribute that everyone should display when working with all students, but even more so when working with the ELs of the district. In that same vein was the projection that every educator that serves an EL student and their family must diligently work to forge “meaningful relationships to uncover the root causes beyond language” that may be thwarting student success.

Reflecting and projecting on the professional development dimension. There was unanimous agreement from every participant in each small group that professional development was a top priority. The positive reflection of the current situation identified the recent partnership with a local university to provide graduate coursework to a cohort of the district’s classroom teachers leading to a Virginia licensure endorsement in English as a Second Language. The School Division provided the funding for this sustained professional learning initiative. In light of the critical need for on-going learning opportunities, there was consensus on the positive projection for increasing training for educators on specific instructional strategies, best practices, appropriate modifications, and differentiated instruction models for reaching and succeeding with ELs in the general education setting. “For me personally, I know that I need more in my toolbox to reach my ELLs, especially the newcomers that have no English at all,” stated one focus group participant. It was noted that professional learning should be content and grade-relevant; deeply meaningful and highly interactive; while being job-embedded and on-going.
Reflecting and projecting on the instructional program design dimension.

The ESL department’s development and implementation of a specialized program at the high school level to meet the unique needs of older ELs with very limited language abilities was indicated as a positive reflection. Further, the continuing initiative of the restructuring of language service delivery and the laying of the foundation for collaborative teaching models also emerged as positive reflections. Subsequently, the positive projections for future growth centered on the development of newcomer programs at the elementary and middle school levels in addition to the refinement and expansion of the co-teaching platform. One particular theme that emerged relative to program design was the need to incorporate “a future-thinking orientation focusing on what happens for the ELs beyond high school.” Also coming to the fore as positive projections for instructional program design were the concepts of infusing the WIDA standards into the existing curriculum along with supporting resources and materials. The final programmatic future projection encouraged the division to consider implementing an immersion or dual-language model. It was indicated that such a model would promote biliteracy not only for ELs but also for native English speakers and promote greater cross-cultural understanding.

Reflecting and projecting on instructional program implementation. One of the most significant reflections related to instructional implementation was that whereas EL students were once not included in remediation and acceleration programs, they were “now targeted for such services as Reading Recovery, literacy support groups, Title I tutoring services, and response to intervention programming”. This was thought to be undergirded by the developing climate of “EL students belonging to everyone.” Three
key positive projections resulted from the discussions and planning. First, three of the
groups documented action steps for the development and implementation of a digital
“shared bank” of resources, materials, ideas, lesson plans, and strategies specifically
targeting grade-level content for ELs. This open-access platform would be accessible to
any educator in the district. The second theme was closely related and called for the
explicit instruction of content area vocabulary using multi-modal strategies. The third
projection builds on the current 1:1 technology program occurring at the middle school
level for all enrolled students. As each middle school student has a laptop to support
individualized learning pathways, it was noted that more emphasis should be given to
developing technology-based language acquisition pathways that not only compliments
the content learning, but is customized to progressively support language development.

Reflecting and projecting on the assessment and accountability dimension.
Themes related to the assessment and accountability dimension were limited. There were
no positive reflections related to this dimension. The positive projection that was most
closely associated with this dimension was regarding acknowledging EL student
achievement on state and local assessments. It was indicated that more time and
resources be devoted to sharing and celebrating the academic successes of ELs,
encouraging a deeper examination of EL student data.

Reflecting and projecting on the parent and community outreach dimension.
The threads of parent involvement, communication with families, and broad community
partners were woven throughout every small group and were sewn into nearly every
planning document. One of the strongest positive reflections focused on a specific school
site where a program was developed and piloted. This program brought EL families and
their children together to teach instructional strategies, practice skills and develop learning communities dedicated to whole family language and literacy development. It was also positively reflected that structures existed for obtaining interpreter and translation services to support first language communication with EL families. Three of the administrators in the group reflected on the community partnerships they had established at their respective school sites. One administrator shared her connections with a nearby predominantly Hispanic church, while another forged a partnership with a Latin American dance troupe to provide summer dance scholarships for some of her students. There was much discussion of and several action steps listed to develop outreach measures to build relationships and earn the trust of families making school cultures open and climates warm and welcoming. Other projections included developing parent panels to help bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps between schools and underrepresented community segments; replicating family literacy programs at other sites; creating a parent hotline to address frequently asked questions and provide school and community information; and to implement practices such as babysitting services, meals, and transportation, to make engagement in school activities accessible to more families.

Each of the small groups discussed and developed a positive projection statement. Group One’s positive projection statement reflected the desire to “Get all students to grade level English proficiency.” Group Two stated that “We are creating a culture of independent learners of language and content who embrace all cultures to support our school community.” The third group broadened to focus by writing that “The members of our program strive for excellence each day in ourselves and in each other with the goal
of all of us being productive 21st century citizens.” One of the most powerful outcomes from the experiences of the two AI sessions was the development and presentation by the fourth small group of their positive projection statement, which read:

We, the members of the School Division community, respect and appreciate our ESL students and their families. We value their life experiences, their cultural richness, and their contributions to the overarching community. We believe in and diligently will work to fulfill their right to a high-quality education, including individualized and differentiated instruction in a small class setting, access to appropriately challenging curricula and resources, and an unobstructed pathway to full personal success, high academic achievement, and broad options for enriching post-secondary opportunities.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The changing cultural composition of our country has created a rich landscape of diversity. From the varied religious, ethnic, economic, cultural, and linguistic perspectives, our classrooms and school sites reflect these demographic shifts. However substantive the changes, still remaining as a cornerstone principle is the foundation of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution providing that no person residing within a state’s jurisdiction may be denied equal protection under the law. This includes access to a free, public education (Plyler v. Doe, 1982). To that end, federal regulations require the students in our schools, who are identified as having limited English proficiency, have the opportunity to participate in language instruction education programs to remove barriers to academic achievement (United States Department of Education, 2016).

Discussion of Findings

Title III mandates that effective language programs must support attainment of English proficiency as well as provide for equitable access to and meaningful participation of ELs in curriculum and instructional environments (U. S. Department of Education, 2015b). This study focused on the inputs, processes, and outcomes of the School Division’s English as a Second Language program in determining alignment to the dimensions and standards of the PEAS model which served as the theoretical frame. At the core of this work was the goal of assessing the effectiveness of the School
Division’s language instruction program and offering recommendations for future programmatic improvements with the intention of positively impacting EL student outcomes. The collective data was used to inform the findings, rated as severely deficient, somewhat deficient, or approaching standards, and to establish recommendations.

**Evaluation Question 1: Aligning to the Promoting Excellence Appraisal System**

The review of ESL department documents, administrators and teachers of ELLs survey data, and classroom observation protocol results, were compared to the measurable and observable standards of the PEAS model that indicate effective elements of language instruction educational programs. Due to the lack of substantive evidence relevant to the dimension of personnel, it was not addressed as a finding in this study.

**PEAS 1 - Leadership.** Powerful and purposeful leadership is essential to the growth and health of an organization. The impact of leadership on student achievement is significant when that leadership focuses on defining direction with explicit goals; functions from a success-orientation; and works to build capacity within its membership (Leithwood et al., 2004). The dimension of leadership, including the standards of vision, mission, and goals; shared responsibility; and climate, was found to be severely deficient in meeting the measurable and observable criteria. It was found that there was no current completed or draft operational manual or full program guidance documents; no clearly defined vision, mission, or goals, and no direction for the establishment of climate. The evidence does not support a set of common understandings, a scope of shared responsibility, or sense of strong support from department and district leadership. Researchers remind us that for an organization or department to be effective, the
leadership must ensure that the vision is clear, that the environment is strategically collaborative (Townshend et al., 2013); that all stakeholders are included (Wilmore, 2008); that stakeholders are empowered as decision makers (Calderon et al., 2011); and that climate is reflective of the organizations values (Wilmore, 2008).

**PEAS 3 - Professional development.** Serving ELs and their families requires additional instructional skill sets and abilities to meet their unique language and academic needs. As an educator of ELs, it is important to develop a personal level cultural competence and the ability to implement responsive strategies in instructional practice (Banks & Banks, 1995; Gay, 2000). Gaining these critical understandings necessitates time and investment into professional development. The dimension of professional development including the standards of building capacity and quality, was found to be severely deficient in meeting the measurable and observable criteria. It was found that there was an overall lack of high-quality, meaningful professional development opportunities specifically geared toward addressing the needs of ELs. Further, there was no evidence to indicate that the limited professional learning offerings that were presented resulted in improvements in instruction for ELs. Research indicates that effective language instruction programs provide explicit and meaningful training (Villegas & Lucas, 2002); use professional learning offerings to build capacity (Howard, 2007); and implement professional learning frameworks include demonstrations, practical applications, and sustained customized coaching (Stepanek & Raphael, 2010).

**PEAS 4 - Instructional program design.** The articulated design of any program lays the foundation for the programmatic implementation. This assertion holds true for the design of the ESL program. Although federal and state regulations are present for the
existence of language instruction programs, there are no specifications that legislate their
development (U.S. Department of Education et al., 2015). The School Division’s ESL
department purports to implement a sheltered instruction model. Sheltered instruction
includes explicit vocabulary instruction, activation of background knowledge, creation of
comprehensible grade-level content, and the development of language skills (Hanover
Research, 2014).

With respect to instructional program design, it was found that there were severe
deficiencies in meeting the measurable and observable standards of this dimension.
There is no clear, written framework articulating program parameters and functions.
There was limited evidence providing guidance to administrators and teachers on creating
accessibility to grade-level content; for addressing the needs of newcomers, long-term
ELs, and monitored students; and for providing specific assistance to EL families in
course selection, academic planning, graduation requirement fulfillment, and post-
secondary planning. Effective language development programs employ instructional
designs that provide comprehensible input (Hanover Research, 2011); intentionally plan
for EL engagement in heterogeneous cooperative learning structures (Calderon et al.,
2011); purposefully creates pathways for access to meaningful access to core curricula
(Banks, 1981); that is rooted in high expectations (Hattie, 2009); and ensures access to
grade-level content (Morrison et al., 2008).

**PEAS 5 - Instructional program implementation.** Developing an effective
instructional design without facilitating effective instructional implementation will likely
not positively impact student outcomes. SEAs, through LEAs, are compelled to ensure
the effectiveness of instructional program implementation that provides equitable access
to core instructional programming (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981). For districts that serve ELs in mainstream classrooms, instruction must be purposefully planned; include language and content objectives; and offer authentic, meaning-based, culturally relevant learning experiences in environments of mutual respect (Himmel, 2009; Reutebuch, 2010).

The dimension of instructional program implementation was found to be somewhat deficient in meeting the criteria. Although limited in breadth and depth, there was some evidence of teacher collaboration, cooperative student engagement, and exposure to challenging content. Little to no evidence was found to support meaning-based learning, scaffolded and differentiated instruction, use of language transference strategies, inclusion of cultural experiences, thematically-linked instruction, and explicit vocabulary instruction. Effective language instruction programs should empower stakeholders to value cultural and linguistic diversity (Hanover Research, 2011); address both content and language objectives through authentic learning tasks (Himmel, 2009); construct defined frameworks for teacher collaboration (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008); promote challenging content that incorporates students’ cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2009); engender higher order thinking in peer-learning activities (University of Southern Florida, 1999); and implement modifications and accomodations commensurate with linguistic abilities (California State Board of Education, 2014).

**PEAS 6 - Assessment and accountability.** Today’s academic environments are deeply tied to the concepts of assessment and accountability, especially in relationship to the federal mandates of ESSA. Additionally, there is particular emphasis directed towards language-minority students (Brown & Sanford, 2011). Evaluating instructional
practices, implementing data-driven decision-making protocols, and accurately assessing student progress are vital elements to the effectiveness of a language development program and to EL student success (Hanover Research, 2014). The dimension of assessment and accountability was found to be severely lacking in evidence particularly supporting the usage of data and continuous improvement standards. Most of the evidence evaluated in this dimension was relevant to identification and placement assessment and accountability procedures. The evidence collected fell far short of the measurable standards with regard to utilizing data for informing instructional and programmatic decisions, ensuring and monitoring continuous improvement efforts through framework development, assessing student outcomes actively, and evaluating program efforts continually. Research indicates that effective language instructional programs employ valid and reliable identification and placement assessments (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a); develop clear and thoughtful assessment data usage plans (Striefer, 2002); and collect on-going formative and summative data (Abedi, 2008; Honigsfeld, 2009).

PEAS 7 - Parent, family, and community outreach. All students, including ELs are products of the network of the family and community entities that support them. Well-developed, nourishing home/school partnerships are key indicators of school success (Weiss et al., 2010). The most successful language programs extend beyond service delivery and draw in parents, family and community members to support educational endeavors (Hanover Research, 2014).

As there is some evidence of alignment to the standards, this area was found to be approaching sufficiency in fulfilling the parent, family, and community outreach
dimension. Examples of noted evidence included attempts to communicate with non-
English speaking families through using translated documents, accessing interpretation
services, and providing a few district-sponsored workshops for EL families. However,
there was no evidence of extensions outside of school bounds to support families, no EL-
specific parent training for providing academic support at home, and no district efforts to
include EL parents on decision-making bodies, on organizing/planning teams, or in
classroom events. Researchers assert that effective language programs implement
support structures that extend beyond school and classroom walls (Hanover Research,
2014); encourage connectedness between families and school staff (Constantino, 2008);
and foster staff understandings of cultures represented (Epstein, 2010).

Table 9

**Evaluation Question 1 Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEAS Dimension</th>
<th>Study Finding</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Design</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Program Implementation</td>
<td>Somewhat Deficient</td>
<td>Met One Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Accountability</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent and Community Outreach</td>
<td>Approaching Sufficient</td>
<td>Met Neither Criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria: (1) Document Review References of less than 70 (or 27%) (2) Survey Review Rating of less than 27%

*Note.* PEAS – Promoting Excellence Appraisal System

**Evaluation Question 2: Assessing EL Progress and Proficiency**

The purpose of a language development program is to provide language
instruction that guides ELs toward achieving progress annually and to the eventual
attainment of English proficiency. Students enrolled in the School Division’s ESL program are assessed each year with the ACCESS for ELLs® instrument. Progress is defined as a gain of 25 scaled score points from one testing administration to the next, while progress is defined as achieving a scaled score of 400 points or more. Analysis of the cross-sectional data revealed a 23 percentage point decline in the rate of ELs achieving progress from 2013 to 2015. Conversely, analysis of the cohort data indicated an increase in the rate of EL students achieving proficiency rising from 41% in 2014 to 52% in 2015. In terms of attaining proficiency, cross-sectional data reflected a decline in the percentage of ELs attaining proficiency each year of the study, dropping from a rate of 42% attainment in 2010 to just 11% attainment in 2015. The evaluation of the ACCESS assessment data led to a finding of somewhat deficient in terms of EL student annual achievement of progress. Further, it was found that EL student performance was significantly deficient in terms of annual performance in attainment of proficiency.

Table 10

_Evaluation Question 2 Findings_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Study Finding</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress in Acquiring English</td>
<td>Somewhat Deficient</td>
<td>Met One Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency in Acquiring English</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria: (1) Pass Rate Percentage below State target for 3 or more years (2) Mean Scaled Score below 400 for 2 or more years

**Evaluation Question 3: Assessing EL Academic Achievement.**

In addition to language acquisition, language instruction programs are required to support the academic achievement of the ELs being served (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). To determine academic achievement, most ELs, just like most other
students in the district, participate in annual reading and math assessments in Grades 3 through 8 as well as identified EOC assessments. The pass rate percentage for ELs assessed in reading relatively steadily declined from 74% in 2010 to 35% in 2013. Slight improvements were noted in 2014 and 2015. It should be noted that the mean scaled score for ELs for each and every year of the study never reached the passing mean scaled score threshold of 400. With regard to math achievement, the pass rate percentage for ELs decreased from 79% in 2010 to 35% in 2013. From 2013 to 2015, there was an increase of 13 percentage points. The mean scaled score for ELs for math did exceed the passing mean scaled score threshold of 400 from 2013 to 2015. The evaluation of the SOL assessment data for reading led to a finding of severely deficient in terms of EL student academic achievement. It was also found that EL student performance was somewhat deficient in terms of academic achievement in math.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Study Finding</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Performance</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Performance</td>
<td>Somewhat Deficient</td>
<td>Met One Criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria: (1) Pass Rate Percentage below Statewide ELs for 3 or more years  (2) Mean Scaled Score below 400 for 2 or more years

Evaluation Question 4: Comparing Academic Achievement Results

In addition to the acquisition of language through the language instruction program, educators of ELs must also ensure that ELs work toward academic achievement at rates equitable to their non-EL peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2015a). As with ELs, non-ELs also participate in the reading and math SOL assessments. For reading
achievement, the pass rate percentage for ELs within the School Division was well below the pass rate percentage for non-ELs for each year of the study, with the smallest achievement gap presenting at 15.5 percentage points in 2010 and growing to the largest gap at 44.7 percentage points in 2013. Although not as notable as with reading, disparities in math achievement exist as well. For each year of the study, the pass rate percentage for non-ELs exceeded that of ELs with the largest disparity of 36 percentage points occurring in 2012. The comparative evaluation of the SOL assessment data for reading led to a finding of severely deficient in terms of the equity of academic achievement ELs compared to non-ELs. Comparative student performance data was found to be somewhat deficient in terms of equitable academic achievement in math of ELs compared to non-ELs.

Table 12

*Evaluation Question 4 Findings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Study Finding</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Performance</td>
<td>Severely Deficient</td>
<td>Met Both Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Performance</td>
<td>Somewhat Deficient</td>
<td>Met One Criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria: (1) Pass Rate Percentage below School Division non-ELs for 3 or more years  (2) Average Disparity above 50 points

*Evaluation Question 5: Analyzing Appreciative Inquiry Themes*

As one of the primary objectives of this work was to yield data to inform decisions for future program growth and improvement in EL student outcomes, it was deemed highly relevant to gain the insights of some of the internal stakeholders associated with service provision for ELs. To that end, two AI-style focus group sessions were conducted to elicit reflections regarding the current positive core of the ESL
program and to project positive possibilities for future program improvements. The emerging themes regarding positive reflections included new viewpoints of the new leadership with commitments to shared responsibility and a K-12 scope for EL college and career readiness. Additional themes of positive reflection included developing teacher collaboration practices; sprouting partnership with local universities; positive measures towards service delivery restructuring; and emerging community partnerships.

Numerous positive projections were put forth for consideration to impact future growth. It was expressed that leadership should begin to broadly celebrate the rich and growing diversity of the district and support prescriptive efforts to curriculum augmentation and resource procurement. Future programming should also foster commitment to the “relentless pursuit of EL student success” undergirded by the development of meaningful relationships with the families of ELs. Other themes for positive projections included incorporating WIDA standards, descriptors, lessons, and resources; developing a “shared bank” of lesson plans and resources; expanding personalized EL learning building on the existing 1:1 technology initiative; substantively increasing access to high-quality professional development; instilling a focus on family literacy; and investigating options for implementing a dual-language model. These themes were gleaned from the collective actions steps that were generated by each small group during their planning phase. As this evaluation question was geared toward future planning and implementation, no rating was assigned for the findings.
Implications for Policy and Practice

Much of the assessment data shared appears to reflect a pervasive lack of sustained progress in language acquisition and academic achievement. This may not be the case. The current method of data collection in the School Division and at the State level may mask the actual progress being made. For example, in terms of progress with language acquisition from 2013 to 2015, a substantive decline from 94% of ELs achieving progress as measured by the ACCESS assessment to 71% of ELs achieving progress occurred. While that information is factual, it should be noted that during that same time frame the School Division experienced a net gain of 93 lower proficiency ELs. This increase created a substantially greater number of lower proficiency ELs in the assessment sample than there were higher proficiency ELs. This could have resulted in a skewing or depressing of the pass rate percentages and mean scaled scores for the ACCESS assessment administrations. It would also shed light on the increasing scores of the cohort sample, as no new ELs were included in that group. Similarly, the SOL assessment scores could have not only been impacted by the increase in lower proficiency ELs, but also by the assessing of new standards in both reading and math, the introducing of a new online testing platform including technology-enhanced questions, and the increasing of the depth of knowledge in terms of skills assessed, during the same 2013 to 2015 time frame.

In light of these collections of data and subsequent findings, the broader question that begs to be asked is “what is the relevance and importance of this information?” Simply put, ensuring equitable access to rigorous curricula, providing for meaningful engagement in grade-level appropriate instructional environments, and creating pathways
for linguistic and academic achievement are core elements of a language instruction educational program that are required by federal mandate (United States Department of Education, 2016) and supported by court rulings (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981; Plyler v. Doe, 1982). I would further assert that we, as educators, have not only a legal responsibility, but moreover, have a moral obligation to diligently pursue excellence for and vigilantly value the contributions and talents of both language-majority and language-minority students. The entitlement to access quality public education does not end where a non-dominant language begins. As a result of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered to enhance the effectiveness and outcomes of the School Division’s English as a Second Language program. Each of the recommendations is directly associated with improvements in the observable and measureable standards of the respective PEAS Dimension.
Table 13

*Implications for Policy and Practice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Related Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EQ1: The dimensions of leadership, professional development, and instructional program design were found to be severely deficient; assessment and accountability was found to be severely deficient; instructional program implementation was found to be somewhat deficient; parent and community outreach was found to be approaching sufficiency. | Recommendation 1: Addressing Leadership  
Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development  
Recommendation 3: Addressing Instructional Program Design  
Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation |
| EQ2: EL performance in achieving annual progress was found to be somewhat deficient; EL performance in attaining proficiency was found to be severely deficient. | Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development  
Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation |
| EQ3: EL performance in reading achievement was found to be severely deficient; EL performance in math achievement was found to be somewhat deficient. | Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development  
Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation |
| EQ4: EL performance compared to non-EL performance in reading achievement was found to be severely deficient; EL performance compared to non-EL performance in math achievement was found to be somewhat deficient. | Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development  
Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation |
| EQ5: Notable positive reflections were made in terms of current ESL programmatic status; substantive positive projections were made in terms of future ESL programmatic improvements. | Recommendation 1: Addressing Leadership  
Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development  
Recommendation 3: Addressing Instructional Program Design  
Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation |
**Recommendation 1: Addressing Leadership**

It is my assertion that leadership is more than just the “person(s) in charge.” True leadership is the amalgamation of the collective viewpoints of the organizational membership and the collective fervor to harness current success to inspire the dogged pursuit of future growth and success. Leadership entails the deliberate development of collegial and collaborative environments (Townshend et al., 2013). It is incumbent upon organizational leadership to purposefully and strategically foster the collective development of and support for a common vision (Wilmore, 2008). Language instruction programs thrive with elements of distributed leadership giving voice to ESL teachers, specialists, and content teachers in developing courses of action and making informed decisions regarding programmatic structure, instructional delivery, and related outcomes (Calderon et al., 2011). Due to the lack of a common, clear vision; sufficient guidance documents; a collaborative climate; and an understanding of shared responsibility, the leadership dimension was found to be severely deficient.

In light of the research on organizational leadership and the findings of this study, it is suggested that the following recommendations be implemented to improve programmatic structure to positively impact student outcomes.

- Collaboratively develop, clearly articulate and broadly share a defined vision, mission, and set of overarching goals.
- Develop and implement a series of structures to foster the orientation towards shared responsibility and accountability that elicits and embraces contributions from all internal stakeholders.
• Take active and measurable steps to develop an inclusive and responsive climate from the department perspective that can be replicated at the individual school level.

**Recommendation 2: Addressing Professional Development**

At the heart of effective programming and instruction are educators who are sufficiently equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to forge meaningful relationships, diagnose EL student learning needs, and prescriptively implement strategies that facilitate academic and linguistic mastery. Administrators also play a significant role by having a strong knowledge base in terms of instructional strategies to be able to determine, support, and monitor effective classroom and school-site practices. Persistent and pervasive academic achievement disparities between the performance of ELs and non-ELs is indicative of the need for more professional development targeting academic, literacy, and core content needs (Ortiz & Arteles, 2010). Teachers and administrators must be adequately trained to implement and monitor effective strategies that support instructional and programmatic objectives (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981). Professional development offerings must not only build capacity, but must also be of high quality (Calderon, 2009). The data collected from this study have led to the determination that the ESL program has severe deficiencies in the dimension of professional development when compared to the PEAS standards of building capacity and quality due to the lack of relevant professional development offerings, the inclusion of limited participants, and the lack of sustained professional learning models. The focus of this recommendation is not on increasing the same type of professional development
being provided, but to markedly improve the quality, sustainability, and application of learning gleaned from the training sessions.

With respect to the research and the benefits of professional development and the findings of this study, it is put forward that the following recommendations be implemented to improve programmatic structure to positively impact student outcomes.

- Develop coursework pathways that allow cohorts of educations to gain in-depth skills and application abilities targeting the creation of comprehensible input and the introduction of multi-modal instructional techniques into daily lessons.
- Develop training opportunities that allow for collaborative reflections, strategy demonstrations, and practical application experiences.
- Implement formalized sustained, reflective coaching protocols and processes for teachers of ELs.

**Recommendation 3: Addressing Instructional Program Design**

The instructional design of a language development program provides the framework for operation and instructional delivery. It serves as the pathway for leaders and educators to co-create and follow with intentionality, towards positively increasing student outcomes. Language development programs are required to be built on sound educational theory (Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981). Furthermore, effective programs provide written and articulated guidance on instructional supports such as the use of context clues, explicit vocabulary instruction, graphic organizers, visual aids, realia, manipulatives, background knowledge (Hanover Research, 2011), and are prescriptive in the use of cooperative learning structures (Calderon, 2009). The instructional program
design must directly incorporate the use of differentiated strategies and texts in accordance with linguistic ability levels in order to make grade level content accessible and should include learning experiences that reflect the four domains of language (Rivera & David, 2006). For the dimension of instructional program design, the collective data results indicated severe deficiencies pursuant to piecemeal attempts at overall program design and extremely limited written programmatic guidance.

When considering the nature of the research base and the findings of this study, it is offered that the ESL department implements the following recommendation to improve programmatic structure to increase student outcomes.

- Co-create an extensive, explicit written programmatic framework that details the specifics of sheltered instruction implementation, provides guidance on curriculum revisions to support EL accessibility, provides guidance on cooperative structures to implement socially-constructed learning experiences, provide specific guidance on language development strategies and academic language mastery, and articulates counseling structures from a K-12 perspective in preparation for high school graduation and post-secondary life.

**Recommendation 4: Addressing Instructional Program Implementation**

Having a strong, written, explicit instructional design is of no value if that design is not effectively implemented with fidelity. The School Division currently serves ELs through a combination of primary mainstream classroom integration supported by pull-out groups or push-in collaborative teaching models. The use of both content and language objectives are critical to guiding and enriching classroom instruction for both
ELs and non-ELs (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Additionally, the use of cooperative instructional models highlighting flexible grouping strategies that encourage substantive interactions between ELs and non-ELs of varying academic and linguistic capabilities result in increased content learning for all (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). Lastly, by holding high expectations and engaging ELs in challenging content through the use of culturally responsive strategies optimizes student achievement (Richards et al. 2007).

The analysis of the collective data resulted in a determination of some deficiencies in the dimension of instructional program implementation due to the limited evidence regarding authentic learning tasks, thematically linked instruction, cultural connections, and socially constructed learning.

In comparing best practice research to the findings of this study, it is asserted that the following recommendations be implemented to improve programmatic structure to increase student outcomes.

- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively implement explicit instructional strategies for academic language development emphasizing high-frequency, functional, transitional, and content-specific terms.
- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively develop and employ content and language objectives.
- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively implement sheltered instruction techniques.
- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively implement socially constructed learning models.
- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively implement collaborative/co-teaching models.

- Provide training, written guidance, and coaching to enable teachers to effectively incorporate the WIDA descriptors and culturally responsive strategies into daily lessons.

- Provide access to a shared bank of thematically linked resources and meaning-based learning activities.

**Additional Recommendations**

Although the dimension of parent and community outreach was not identified as an area of deficiency, it did emerge as a central theme in the AI focus groups sessions and in the survey responses. To that end, the following recommendations are offered for consideration.

- In conjunction with parental input, develop and deploy structures to facilitate direct parental involvement including, but not limited to the provision of transportation, childcare services, interpretation services, and accessible time frames.

- Extend support structures beyond the classroom and school walls reaching into communities hosting neighborhood activities and home visits.

- Provide specific training for EL parents and families in understanding and navigating the School Division parameters, accessing resources, and in using instructional strategies to support learning at home.
Having served as both the researcher and program coordinator, I had the opportunity to begin implementing elements of the recommendations during the course of this study. To begin addressing deficiencies in instructional program design, a four-pillar framework has been developed. Pillar I – Building Programmatic Capacity, addresses specific compliance, operations, and functional aspects of the language instructional program. Pillar II – Building Instructional Capacity, is designed to address high-quality professional development, support staff training, facilitate ESL endorsement attainment, and embed sustained coaching protocols. Pillar III – Building Linguistic and Academic Capacity, addresses the instructional program implementation and assessment and accountability dimensions through the incorporation of learned instructional strategies and assessments, both formative and summative, into daily classroom practice. Lastly, Pillar IV – Building Parent and Family Capacity, focuses on the parent and community outreach dimension by implementing initiatives that extend support beyond school walls and emphasizes whole family literacy.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

In deference to the extensive nature of these offered recommendations and the required investment of time and resources to begin implementation processes, it is my recommendation that a similar, full program evaluation be conducted again in five to seven years to ascertain the impact on student outcomes. The results of the subsequent evaluation might be enriched by a comparative analysis of the Administrators and Teachers of ELLs surveys, classroom observation protocols, progress and proficiency data, as well as academic achievement data. To support deeper analyses of the data, it is recommended that data collection processes be augmented to associate each student’s
English language development level to the corresponding SOL results. This would allow for correlations to be made between grade level, language proficiency level, and academic performance level. It might also be helpful to collect data on the types of ELs being served within the district to better meet their needs. For example, teaching reading to a student who has had extensive formal language in their home country has far different implications than providing reading instruction for a student who possesses no literacy skills in the native tongue. Further, it is recommended that an investigation be conducted to gain deeper insights into the parent involvement standard of the parent and community outreach dimension as this was identified as a key theme. The program may also be well served in conducting research on the EL student perspective, focusing on their positive reflections and projections as stakeholders and as the co-creators of their educational experience.

**Summary**

Although the findings of this work may perceptually paint a bleak picture of the current state of the district’s language program, there are several positive and uplifting points to be gleaned. First, the evidence suggests that there is an increasing awareness of, evolving attitudes about, inclusiveness related to, and rising respect for the needs and contributions of our EL students and their families. Secondly, there is evidence of a growing willingness to embrace, engage, and serve our ELs with an inclination toward equity. Lastly, there is evidence of an increasing mindset that our rapidly expanding population of language-diverse families serves not as an obstacle that promotes fear and failure, but rather as an opportunity to pursue excellence for our ELs.
Just as the body does not optimally function without a working brain, so too, does an organization not effectively function without effective leadership. By employing the recommendations to improve department and district leadership, the ESL program should gain a more clear vision and a deeper sense of shared responsibility and accountability for student outcomes within a climate of cooperation. The brain and the body are composed of muscles that need to be nourished to respond to exercise and be capable of growth. Similarly, teachers and leaders must engage in new learning to deepen understandings and broaden knowledge bases. Through sustained, meaningful, and relevant professional development, the educators who serve ELs and their families, will build capacity and expertise in equitably delivering content and language instruction. The design of a language instruction program provides a pathway to the realization of the vision and mission. This concept is akin to the joint functioning of the brain and the body in interpreting sensory input to create an appropriate response. In accordance with the recommendations, the development of a well-crafted instructional program design will lay the foundation and framework for successful program implementation as well as serving as a tangible, co-created pathway in pursuit of the collective vision.

Emma Lazarus wrote of the American dream as she envisioned it, embodied in the outstretched arms of the Statue of Liberty. Many educators see that same American dream in the faces their students of all hues and homelands seated in their classrooms each day. All children that we serve in the public K-12 setting have a right to access education. Not only is this a legal responsibility, but it is also a moral obligation. It is incumbent upon us as educators to break down barriers and build bridges of accessibility to language and learning. We must value and foster a deeper understanding of the rich
cultural and linguistic diversity of all of America and the contributions of her people. No matter the homeland of birth or hue of skin, the manner of worship or even the flow of the mother tongue, those who stand on America’s fertile soil, desiring to contribute purposefully and meaningfully to the higher values of our society, should be embraced in the loving arms of liberty, impassioned by the life’s blood of opportunity, and empowered by the staff of knowledge, the crown of wisdom, and the sword of lifelong learning.
### Appendix A

#### Promoting Excellence Appraisal System

**Classroom Observation Protocol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Start Time:</th>
<th>End Time:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Observer:** ________________________________

**School:** ____________________________________

**School Level (please circle):**

- [ ] Elementary
- [ ] Middle
- [ ] High

**Type of Classroom:**

- [ ] ESL only class
- [ ] ESL pull-out group
- [ ] Gen. Ed. + ESL push-in
- [ ] Gen. Ed. + ESL co-teacher
- [ ] Other (describe)

**ESL Teacher:** ____________________________

**Teacher:** ________________________________

- [ ] single classroom teacher
- [ ] classroom teacher + ESL teacher
- [ ] classroom + ESL co-teachers

**Subject/Grade Level:** ______________________

**Total Number of Students:** ________________

**Number of ELLs:**

- [ ] ELD Level 1
- [ ] ELD Level 2
- [ ] ELD Level 3
- [ ] ELD Level 4
- [ ] ELD Level 5
- [ ] ELD Level 6
- [ ] Former LEP

**Total Number of Actively Served ELLs 1-5:**

**Virginia Standard(s) Taught:**

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

**Content Objective(s) Identified:**

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

**Language Objective(s) Identified:**

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

**Target Vocabulary Taught:**

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

---

170
## PEAS Classroom Observation Instrument

0 = Not Observed  
1 = Weak Evidence  
2 = Moderate Evidence  
3 = Strong Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Content objectives articulated</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Grade level instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Instruction addresses content objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Higher order thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- remembering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- applying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- analyzing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- evaluating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- creating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Elicit and record responses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Address content learning strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Speed, volume</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Focus on lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Wait time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Instruction appropriate to students’ ELP levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Differentiated learning activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Differentiated materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Differentiated student products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- test format</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- collaborative project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- demonstration completion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- chart/graphic organizer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- demonstration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- portfolio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- matching/sequencing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- oral demonstration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Correct instructions to students’ lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Multicultural materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. L1 supplementary materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Teaches L1-L2 transfer strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. L1 clarification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. Effective L2 instruction (BVID)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. Qualify L1 course test (BVID)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. Students engaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. Students on task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Growth Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Pair/small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Cooperative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Equal status peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5a. Mutual respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5b. Respect of teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5c. Respect for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Acknowledgement of effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Active learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a. Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1b. Read-alongment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1c. deposit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1d. Domain interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1e. Languge context/coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1f. Role play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1g. Phonetics/TPK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1h. Artistic playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1i. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Authentic tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2a. Language objectives articulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2b. Appropriate to ELP level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2c. Language objectives addressed,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Focus on form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Corrective feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Focus on meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Metalinguistic strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Multiple modalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Sustained output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Comprehensible input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Explicit TQI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Analysis of complete text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Tier 2 vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Tier 3 vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Multiple exposures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Deep exploration of language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. Supports access to content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. Checks for understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. Formative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. Appropriate assessment of content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. Appropriate assessment of language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. Adjust instruction based on assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22. Level of collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. Lesson on smoothly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24. Co-planning evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25. Communication between teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey**

### Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the services offered to English Language Learners (ELLs) and former ELLs in this School Division.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Names of schools and respondents, all information or opinions collected, and any information about respondents learned incidentally will be kept confidential. Individual responses or data potentially traceable to an individual will not be shared for any purpose.

Findings from this survey will be reported in aggregate form (e.g., by elementary and secondary levels). Results of the evaluation will help the School Division make decisions about needed reforms to improve support for ELLs.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Thank you for your participation.

### Instructions

Note: For some questions, you may find it helpful to consult with someone who is knowledgeable about the ESL Program. However, only one administrator per school (typically the principal) should respond to this survey.

**Definition of English Language Learner:**

For the purposes of this survey, English Language Learners (ELLs) – also known as Limited English Proficient (LEP) students – are students who are not yet proficient in English.

**Former ELLs** are students who have any history of LEP status and are now fully mainstreamed.
School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

School Division

1. Thinking about the ESL program, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Office, school administrators, and teachers share an understanding of goals and expectations for serving ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives in the School Division adequately address the needs of ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing priorities in the School Division make it hard to focus on teaching and learning for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Thinking about the ESL program, how would you rate the quality of guidance available from Central Office for each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidance Area</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement and exit criteria for ESL students</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written guidance for implementing ESL services (e.g., documents provided by the ESL Department)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Division policies for grading, promotion and retention of ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from lead teachers, coaches, and/or the ESL Department for addressing the needs of ELLs in subject area instruction</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Division process for procuring resources and materials for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Division process for hiring ESL teachers</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

Use of Data

3. Thinking about the ESL program, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a clear vision in the School Division for the use of data to inform ELL education.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to the reports I need to meaningfully examine ELLs’ academic progress.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received useful professional development around using ELL data to inform instructional decisions.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at using data to diagnose ELLs’ learning needs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. In the last 12 months, how often have you used data about ELLs for each of the following purposes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>0 times</th>
<th>Once this year</th>
<th>1-2 times a semester</th>
<th>1-2 times a month</th>
<th>More than twice a month</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placing ELLs in classes or groups</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing recommendations for programming or educational services for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying and correcting gaps in the curriculum for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying individual ELLs who need remedial assistance</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing the school management plan</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

#### Monitoring

5. Who is responsible for supervising and/or monitoring the implementation of the school’s instructional program for ELLs? (Check all that apply.)

- [ ] Principal
- [ ] Assistant Principal
- [ ] ESL Teacher
- [ ] Site-based Leadership Team
- Other (please specify)

6. What tools are used to monitor classroom instruction for ELLs? (Check all that apply.)

- [ ] Walk-through instrument provided by the division
- [ ] Site-based walk-through instrument
- [ ] SIOP observation sheet
- [ ] No specific tool
- Other (please specify)

#### School Level

*7. I work in a(n)

- [ ] elementary school.
- [ ] middle school.
- [ ] high school.
School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

Middle and High School

8. To your knowledge, for how many ELLs Levels 1-5 is each statement true?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLs participate in elective courses (e.g. instrumental music, computer science, drama).</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Few (10–25%)</th>
<th>Some (26–50%)</th>
<th>Many (51–75%)</th>
<th>Most (76–100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLs participate in advanced coursework (e.g. intensified courses, advanced math and science, AP, IB).</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Few (10–25%)</th>
<th>Some (26–50%)</th>
<th>Many (51–75%)</th>
<th>Most (76–100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The families of ELLs help select courses for their child.</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Few (10–25%)</th>
<th>Some (26–50%)</th>
<th>Many (51–75%)</th>
<th>Most (76–100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLs and their families receive appropriate guidance about high school graduation requirements.</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Few (10–25%)</th>
<th>Some (26–50%)</th>
<th>Many (51–75%)</th>
<th>Most (76–100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLs are on pathways to college and career readiness.</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Few (10–25%)</th>
<th>Some (26–50%)</th>
<th>Many (51–75%)</th>
<th>Most (76–100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Indicate the types of programs used in your school to serve ELLs Levels 1-5. (Select all that apply.)

☐ General Education
☐ General Education + ESL push-in
☐ General Education + ESL pull-out
☐ ESL Newcomers’ Class
☐ ESL-specific Content Class(es)
☐ ESL-specific Language! Live Class
☐ Interventions for struggling ELLs in reading or math

Other (please specify)


10. Indicate the types of programs used in your school to serve ELLs Levels 1-5. (Select all that apply.)

- General Education
- General Education + ESL push-in
- General Education + ESL pull-out
- ESL-specific Content Class(es)
- Interventions for struggling ELLs in reading or math

Other (please specify):

11. Briefly describe the school’s approach to serving ELLs.

Co-teaching

*12. Does the school implement any fully co-taught classrooms for ELLs? (i.e. a classroom in which a general education teacher collaboratively plans and collaboratively teaches (both teachers assuming full teaching responsibility at different times) with one or more ESL teachers in a general education classroom)

- Yes
- No
## School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

### Co-teaching

13. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-teachers have received training to use co-teaching strategies.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-teachers meet regularly to plan instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ESL teacher and general education teachers work well together work well together as co-teachers.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ESL teacher spends most of the class time helping ELLs individually.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the co-taught classroom, the ESL and content teacher consistently work together with all students, including both ELLs and native English-speaking students.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of co-teaching, I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use this space (as needed) to clarify your responses above.

### Instructional Teams

14. How are teachers organized into instructional teams? (Check all that apply.)

- [ ] Grade-level teams
- [ ] Departmental teams
- [ ] ESL teams
- [ ] Professional learning communities (PLCs)

Other (please specify)
## School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

### Instructional Teams

15. Thinking overall about the school’s current design for instructional teams and/or PLCs, for how many teams is each statement true?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Less than half</th>
<th>More than half</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and administrators share a clear vision and expectations for how the teams should work.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers participate on the teams.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams meet regularly as scheduled.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams work well together.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ participation on instructional teams/PLCs has improved their instruction for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. How many of the instructional teams and/or PLCs engage in the following activities at least once per semester?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Less than half</th>
<th>More than half</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan or design curriculum and/or instruction for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine ELL students’ work.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine ELL district or school-wide data (e.g., test scores, course taking, or discipline referrals)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new strategies for teaching ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use this space (as needed) to clarify your responses above.
School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

Students and Teachers

17. How would you rate each of the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom/content teachers understand how to address the needs of ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are physical confrontations in the school between students of different races at least once per month.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs receive sufficient support to access grade-level content instruction in all subject areas.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs receive targeted instruction to develop academic English (i.e. the language of math, science, social studies, and English language arts)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. How would you rate each of the following practices in your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placing ELLs in classes at the appropriate level.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing appropriate academic support for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring ELLs after they have exited LEP status.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing support for newcomer ELLs with limited formal schooling.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing the needs of struggling long-term ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

### Students and Teachers

19. How much do you agree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The current schedule stretches ESL teachers too thinly to adequately address both language and content needs of ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school supports flexible pathways for ELLs who need more instructional time. (e.g., extended school day, night and weekend classes, extended time to graduate)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for ELLs in this school are helping to close achievement gaps.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school has a policy of placing its most effective teachers with ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers help to make decisions about school or department-wide curriculum and instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers participate in creating the master schedule.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staff Professional Learning

20. During the last 2 years (including the current school year), how many staff members who serve ELLs have participated in professional development specifically about ELLs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Member</th>
<th>None (10–25%)</th>
<th>Few (26–50%)</th>
<th>Some (51–75%)</th>
<th>Many (76–100%)</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education teachers</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance counselors</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

Staff Professional Learning

21. During the last 2 years (including the current school year), what professional learning opportunities has the school provided for staff to improve teaching and learning specifically geared toward ELL instruction?

(Please specify topics and amount of workshops/sessions, or type “none: if none were held.)

Your Professional Learning

22. How would you rate your knowledge and skills for each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to look for when monitoring instruction in classrooms with ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying teachers who are effective with ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the cultural, historical, and linguistic backgrounds of the school’s ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. During the last 2 years (including the current school year), I have participated in the following clock hours of professional development or coursework specifically about ELLs.

- [ ] 0 hours
- [ ] 1 – 8 hours
- [ ] 9 – 32 hours
- [ ] 33 – 80 hours
- [ ] More than 80 hours
### School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

#### Quality of Professional Learning Opportunities

24. Thinking about the professional learning and coursework in which and/or your staff have participated relating to ELLs, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ELL professional development was aligned with the school’s goals for ELLs.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers received enough training and follow-up to support changes in practice.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of the professional development, instructional practices for ELLs have improved.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Which professional development topics (if any) have been most useful for your school?  *(Please type “none” if there have not been any that have been useful or provided.)*
### School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

#### Parent Outreach

**26. Thinking about the last 2 years (including this current school year), how often has the school done the following?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 Times</th>
<th>Once per year</th>
<th>1 – 2 Times per year</th>
<th>1-2 Times per month</th>
<th>More than twice per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provided written communication to the languages spoken at home.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided an interpreter for families who attended a meeting.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided logistical support (e.g., transportation, child care, or food) so ELL families could attend a meeting.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted the family of an ELL when the child did something well.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided training specifically for ELLs’ families about ways to improve their child’s learning.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided leadership training specifically for ELL families.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Included an ELL’s family member to serve on a school decision-making body.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked with a community partner to implement an academic support program specifically for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked with a community partner to plan curriculum and instruction for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Your Final Thoughts

**27. What are the most important things your school has done to help improve teaching and learning specifically for ELLs?**


### School Division Administrators of ELLs Survey

#### Your Final Thoughts

28. **What barriers has your school encountered that prevent effective teaching and learning for LEP students?**

This survey is now complete. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey to help the School Division improve teaching and learning for English Language Learners.
School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

**Introduction**

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the services offered to English Language Learners (ELLs) and former ELLs in this School Division.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Names of schools and respondents, all information or opinions collected, and any information about respondents learned incidentally will be kept confidential. Individual responses or data potentially traceable to an individual will not be shared for any purpose.

Findings from this survey will be reported in aggregate form (e.g., by elementary and secondary levels). Results of the evaluation will help the School Division make decisions about needed reforms to improve support for ELLs.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Thank you for your participation.

☐ By checking this box, I voluntarily agree to participate in this survey, with the understanding that my responses are confidential and that I may withdraw from this study at any time.

**ELL Enrollment**

1. **Please indicate whether you have taught English Language Learners (ELLs) or former ELLs within the last 3 school years (including the current school year).**

**Definition of English Language Learner:**

For the purposes of this survey, English Language Learners (ELLs) – also known as Limited English Proficient (LEP) students – are students who are not yet proficient in English.

Former ELLs are students who have any history of LEP status and are now fully mainstreamed.

☐ I have taught at least 1 ELL or former ELL within the last 3 years (including the current school year).

☐ I have not taught at least 1 ELL or former ELL within the last 3 years.

☐ I don’t know.
## School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

### School Division and School

2. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Office, school administrators, and teachers share an understanding of goals and expectations for serving ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives in the School Division adequately address the needs of ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing priorities in the School Division make it hard to focus on teaching and learning for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School leaders articulate a clear vision for educating ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this school, the needs of ELLs are a high priority.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom/content teachers understand how to effectively address the needs of ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers have expertise in the subject they teach.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL teachers help make decisions about school or department curriculum and instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

#### School Division and School

4. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELLs participate in extracurricular activities.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are physical confrontations in the school between students of different races at least once per month.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified ELLs are identified for gifted classes.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ELL Programming

5. How would you rate each of the following practices for ELLs in your school for the past 3 years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placing ELLs in classes at the appropriate level.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing appropriate academic support for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering a positive climate for ELLs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring ELLs after they have exited LEP status.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing support for newcomer ELLs with limited formal schooling.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing the needs of struggling long-term ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

### School Division and School

#### 6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources and texts in my subject area(s) are appropriate for the ELLs I serve.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The curriculum is too hard for my ELL students.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The curriculum in my subject area(s) provide adequate guidance to differentiate instruction for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The curriculum provides adequate guidance to support instruction in academic English (i.e. the language of math, science, social studies, and/or English language arts).</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate supplemental resources are available in the native languages of my students.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to formative assessments in my subject area(s) that are appropriate for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7. How would you rate the quality of the guidance available from your division and school for each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidance Available</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement and exit criteria for ESL students</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written guidance for implementing ESL services (e.g., documents provided by the ESL Department)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Division policies for grading, promotion and retention of ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from lead teachers, coaches, and/or the ESL Department for addressing the needs of ELLs in subject area instruction</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Division process for procuring resources and materials for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

Instructional Practice

8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident that I can meet the needs of the ELL students that are in my classroom.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel as though some of my ELL students are not making any progress.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most ELLs’ performance depends on the home environment, so I have limited influence.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Until an ELL learns English, it is difficult to teach academic content.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is adequate professional development offered for teachers in my grade/subject area specifically geared towards ELL instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Learning

9. During the last 2 years (including the current school year), I have participated in the following clock hours of professional development or coursework specifically about ELLs.

- [ ] 0 hours
- [ ] 1 – 8 hours
- [ ] 9 – 32 hours
- [ ] 33 – 80 hours
- [ ] More than 80 hours
10. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about ELL-specific professional development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ELL professional development topics were relevant to my practice.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I received enough training and follow-up to support changes in my practice.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of the professional development, my instructional practices for ELLs have improved.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Which professional development topics (if any) have been most useful for your school?  (Please type “none” if there have not been any that have been useful or provided.)

Instructional Teams

12. How are teachers organized into instructional teams? (Check all that apply.)

- Grade-level teams
- Departmental teams
- ESL teams
- Professional learning communities (PLCs)

Other (please specify)
## School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

### Instructional Teams

13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Note: “The team” refers to the PLC or instructional team(s) in which you participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Less than half</th>
<th>More than half</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School leadership provides a clear vision and expectations for how the teams should work.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school leadership provides sufficient time for the team to meet.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The team work well together.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My participation on the team has improved my instruction for ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. How does the team engage in the following activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan or design curriculum and/or instruction for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine ELL students' work.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine ELL district or school-wide data (e.g., test scores, course taking, or discipline referrals)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new strategies for teaching ELLs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Co-teaching

*15. Do you teach in a fully co-taught classroom for ELLs?*

(i.e. a classroom in which a general education teacher collaboratively plans and collaboratively teaches (both teachers assuming full teaching responsibility at different times) with one or more ESL teachers in a general education classroom)

[ ] Yes

[ ] No
### School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

#### Co-teaching

16. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have received training to use co-teaching strategies.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have enough time to communicate regularly to plan instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My co-teacher(s) and I meet regularly to plan instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ESL teacher spends most of the class time helping ELLs individually or in a small group in the back of the room.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the co-taught classroom, my co-teacher(s) and I consistently work together with all students, including both ELLs and native English-speaking students.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of co-teaching, I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Use of Data

17. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a clear vision in the School Division for the use of data to inform ELL education.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to the information I need to meaningfully examine the academic progress of ELLs in my classroom.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received useful professional development around using ELL data to inform instruction.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at using data to diagnose ELLs’ learning needs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey**

### Parent Outreach

18. Thinking about the families of your ELL students, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My school actively conducts outreach specifically for the families of ELLs.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families of ELLs are treated with the same respect as English-speaking families.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to request an interpreter for my students’ families when necessary.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school does a good job of reducing barriers to ELL family involvement.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that families of my ELL students are making a positive educational difference in the lives of their children.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. How often are the following statements true for the families of your ELL students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELL families who attend school events and meetings are provided an interpreter if they need one.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families of my ELL students attend parent-teacher conferences.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families of my ELL students participate actively in the school (e.g., helping to organize events, assisting in the classroom).</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### School Level

*20. I work in a(n)*

- [ ] elementary school.
- [ ] middle school.
- [ ] high school.
School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

Middle and High School

21. To your knowledge, for how many ELLs in your school is each statement true?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>None (10–25%)</th>
<th>Few (26–50%)</th>
<th>Some (51–75%)</th>
<th>Many (76–100%)</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELLs participate in elective courses (e.g., instrumental music, computer science, drama).</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs participate in advanced coursework (e.g., honors courses, AP courses).</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The families of ELLs help to select courses for their child.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs and their families receive appropriate guidance about high school graduation requirements.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs are on pathways to college and career readiness.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Middle and High School Demographics

The purpose of this section is to understand the demographics of the survey respondents. Any information that is reported will not identify individuals of schools; information about participants will be reported in aggregate form.

22. How do you provide services to ELL students? (Select all that apply.)

- General Education
- General Education + ESL push-in
- General Education + ESL pull-out
- ESL Newcomers’ Class
- ESL-specific Content Class(es)
- ESL-specific Language! Live Class
- Interventions for struggling ELLs in reading or math
- Special Education
- Gifted and Talented
- Other (please specify)
## School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

### Middle and High School Demographics

23. What subject areas do you teach (or support) this year? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] Math (including algebra, geometry, calculus)
- [ ] Science (including biology, earth science, physics)
- [ ] Social Studies (including history, geography)
- [ ] English Language Arts (including reading, literacy)
- [ ] World Language
- [ ] Business Education
- [ ] Career and Technical Education
- [ ] Family and Consumer Science
- [ ] Other Electives (e.g., health, P.E., music, art)
- [ ] Other subject(s) (please specify)

### Elementary School Demographics

24. How do you provide services to ELL students? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] General Education
- [ ] General Education + ESL push-in
- [ ] General Education + ESL pull-out
- [ ] Interventions for struggling ELLs in reading or math
- [ ] Special Education
- [ ] Gifted and Talented
- [ ] Other Electives (e.g., health, P.E., music, art)
- [ ] Other subject(s) (please specify)

The purpose of this section is to understand the demographics of the survey respondents. Any information that is reported will not identify individuals of schools; information about participants will be reported in aggregate form.
School Division Teachers of ELLs Survey

Elementary School Demographics

26. What subject areas do you teach (or support) this year? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Math
☐ Science
☐ Social Studies
☐ English Language Arts (including reading, literacy)
☐ Related Arts (e.g., health, P.E., music, art)

Other subject(s) (please specify)

Demographics

27. Please indicate your years of experience (including the current year).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2-5 years</th>
<th>6-9 years</th>
<th>10-19 years</th>
<th>20+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching in this School Division</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching ELL students</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Final Thoughts

28. What are the most important things your school or the division has done to help improve teaching and learning specifically for ELLs?
28. What barriers have you encountered that prevent effective teaching and learning for LEP students?

This survey is now complete. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey to help the School Division improve teaching and learning for English Language Learners.
Appendix D

Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol

Affirmative Topic
The Positive Aspects of Working with Our English Language Learners and Our ESL Program

Session 1
Lead-in

Good Afternoon and thank you for taking the time to meet and share with this body of educators. Each day that we walk into an American school or classroom, we discover an amazingly beautiful and ever-changing tapestry created from the intertwining threads of our nation of immigrants. As educators, we have the honor and privilege of providing instruction to students who come to us from as close as the house next door or from lands far and away. With that concept comes the dynamic opportunity of working with students and families who have a mother tongue other than English. During our time together today, I’d like for us to reflect upon and explore the positive aspects of working with our English Language Learners (ELLs) and our English as a Second Language (ESL) program as we work to co-create our ideal programmatic structure to help shape and support the destiny of our diverse population.

Our work for this session and the next will focus on 3 phases. In the first phase, the Discovery phase, we will explore our positive experiences in working with ELLs and their families through paired interview sessions. We will take time to discover each other’s stories and look for common themes among them. In the second phase, the Dream phase, we will creatively imagine what we could co-create as our ideal program to support our ELLs and their families. Lastly, we will capture the images from our Dream phase and craft action steps that can help us make that dream a reality. During different phases of our process, various methods will be used to capture the stories and information shared. During the paired interviews of the discovery phase, participants will take detailed notes to capture their partner’s thoughts and stories. Audio recordings will be used to gain insights and clarity during the Discovery phase small group discussions. Charts and recordings will be used to document the group work of the Dream phase. Finally, recordings and planning templates will serve as documentation collection tools for the Design phase. Please be assured that names or any identifying information will not be used in the sharing of this work or in subsequent reporting tools. In your folder of information is a Participant Agreement and Disclosure form. Please take a few moments to read and complete this form. I am available to answer any questions.

<Allow time for form completion and collection>

Do you have any questions before we begin this journey? Then let’s begin.
At this point, briefly share the presentation that highlights information about the current program structure, student demographics and recent gains in assessment scores.

Alright, so now that we have some background information, let’s move into our paired interview sessions. In your folder, you have a document entitled “Paired Interview Protocol” and a picture card. These interviews will serve as the basis for our Discovery phase of this process so that we can learn more about each other and our experiences with ESL families. We all have some level of interest in the success of our ELLs and the ESL program and this interview and focus group process will help us capitalize on our collective efforts and expertise. Please take a few minutes to carefully read and familiarize yourself with how this process will work.

Allow time for document review; briefly review each section

Take a look at your picture card. To locate your partner, you will find the person whose card matches yours. You and your partner will then find a space to work in the room and complete the “Paired Interview Protocol.” It is extremely important to complete all of the parts of the interview protocol and to take good notes to accurately capture your partner’s story. Remember, when we return to our small groups, you will be sharing your partner’s story, so pay close attention. We will have 20 minutes for both partners to share their responses to the interview questions, so let’s take about 10 minutes per partner.

Are there any questions? Then let’s find our partners and begin.

A countdown timer will be displayed on the projection screen so that all pairs are aware of their time remaining. Reminders will be given at the 9 minute mark to prepare to switch and at the 19 minute mark to prepare for closure of the paired interview segment.

Alright, now that we have completed our paired interviews, please thank your partner and let’s transition back into our small group areas.

Allow time to move back to small groups

As we are back in our small groups, each group member is going to share one story/response that was given by their interview partner that was the most profound, meaningful or impactful. The other small group members who are listening should take notes on the prominent positive theme(s), concepts, insights, cogent points, ideas, or “ah-ha” moments that are shared in each story that are relevant to the key components that create strong ESL programs. Write down what you think are the important points. Use the “Paired Interview Small Group Discussion Notes” document to record your thoughts. Each group member will have two uninterrupted minutes to share one of the stories from their paired interview partner, while the remainder of the group actively listens and takes notes. Are there any questions? Then let the sharing and notetaking begin.
Alright, has everyone in each group had a chance to share?

Ok, now it’s time to reflect on all that we have heard. The next 3-5 minutes are going to be quiet time for individuals to independently review their notes and identify some common themes or phrases that were present in the stories that you heard. Feel free to use the highlighters, if you’d like. You may wish to start writing a list of phrases or topics that begin to emerge. You have a space on the bottom of your “Paired Interview Small Group Discussion Notes” form to capture your thoughts. So let’s take the next 3-5 minutes to review your notes and begin to generate an individual list of positive themes, concepts, or ideas that you gleaned from the stories told that relate to the development of a thriving ESL program.

So, at this point, we have interviewed a colleague, shared a significant story from that interview, and independently identified some emerging themes from those stories. Now, as groups, we are going to come to consensus on some of those important themes. In your small groups, I’d like you to share your positive thoughts, ideas, ideas, themes or phrases about ESL programming that you gleaned from the stories that you heard. Look to see if there are any commonalities among the group in what you discovered as individuals. Then, as a group, develop a list of those themes, topics or ideas that you discovered collective that support quality programming for ELLs and their families. Please use your jumbo stickie pads to write your groups ideas. Put one concept, thought, theme, or phrase per stickie. Write as many stickies as you like. Please remember, no actual names or identifying information will be used in the reporting process. So let’s take 10 minutes to generate our group list of ideas, themes, topics that positively support ELL learning and programming. The small group discussions will be recorded to capture some clarifying information about the emerging themes.

Alright, we have had the opportunity to generate some themes and topics and it’s time to post them. I am going to ask Group 1 to post all of their stickies on the wall with space in between each stickie.

<Allow Group 1 to have time to post their stickies.>
Now, I am going to ask the remaining groups to take a look at what Group 1 has posted and cluster your stickies where they best fit or create new places for stickies that don’t fit in with any of the other posted themes or ideas.

<Allow the remaining groups to post their stickies.>

So, all of our groups have had the opportunity to post their stickies. As we move into this next activity, I’m going to ask that we thinking deeply about which positive concepts, themes, or ideas are most critical to begin with at the start of this co-created restructuring of our ESL program. In your folder, you have three dot stickers. In a few moments, I am going to ask that everyone do a gallery walk around the room, look at all of the stickies and decide which three are the most important. Then place your dots on the stickies for which you wish to support. You can place your dots on three different stickies, you can place you dots all on one stickie, or any combination thereof; but you only get three dots. Let’s begin.

<Allow time for all participants to cast their votes. Afterwards, the 3-5 themes/concepts with the highest number of votes will be selected for further exploration by the participants depending upon the number of groups.>

Everyone has now had an opportunity to decide which topics are most important. According to you dots, the following are the themes/topics that we as a collective body think are the best place to begin the process of restructuring our ESL program to start on our journey to “Gear Up for Greatness”.<Share what the results are.>

As we prepare to close out our time together this evening, I am going to ask each person to begin to think about which theme/topic you would like to explore and develop when we come together again next week for our second session. In your folder there is a blank index card. On that card I would like you to write the following: <Also projected on the screen>

One take away from this session ________________________________

Two topics you’d be interested in exploring in our next session from our list of top choices:

First choice:________________________ Second Choice:________________________

Three things that might improve our time together next week.

______________________________________________________________

Thanks so much for your time and participation today and I look forward to our time together next week. Please turn in your folder with your “Paired Interview Protocol” form, your “Paired Interview Small Group Discussion” form and your index card as your exit package before you leave. Remember to bring your fully charged laptop next week as we will use them. Have a safe trip home.
Paired Interview Protocol

This interview process will allow is to get to know each other better through the sharing of our experiences, our stories, and our dreams for the future.

The following are a few tips for engaging your partner in this interview.

Please check off each task as you complete it.

☐ Read all of the questions to yourself before you start.

☐ Before you begin, find a space where you and your partner can comfortably work feeling relatively relaxed.

☐ Once you connect with your partner, take a few minutes to introduce yourself. Share some things about yourself like your name, your work site, and why you are interested in the success of our ELLs and their families.

☐ During the interview, be sure to actively listen to your partner. Try to make sure that your body language conveys a relaxed and open message. Lean in to your partner and make good eye contact to show your interest.

☐ Start the interview and take good notes.
Questions

1. Take a moment and scan back through your professional and personal experiences. Tell me a story about a positive experience that you had with an English Language Learner (ELL) and/or their family that was especially memorable for you or inspired you in some way? What made that experience special and memorable? How did you feel about the experience? What were the connections to an ESL program, if any?
2. Think about your role and how you interact with ELLs. Tell me about a time when you felt really successful working with an ELL or their family. What were the highlights of that experience? What positive attributes did the ELL bring to that experience? What positive aspects did you bring to that experience?
3. Recently, many schools showed significant gains in certain grade and content clusters of ELLs. Think about your own school data and ELL student performance in reading and math. What things do you think ESL teachers, classroom teachers, interventionists, specialists, special educators, and administrators did to positively impact the gains that were made by our ELLs? How should we acknowledge and celebrate those gains? What can we do replicate and expand that upward trend?
4. Imagine, if you will, three years into the future and your school has just been awarded National Blue Ribbon School status for the significant gains in language acquisition and academic achievement for your ESL students and quality programming. What does your award-winning ESL program look like? What supports from the School Division helped your school to achieve this acclaimed status?
☐ At the end of the interview, review with your partner the notes you
have written about their responses and confirm your accuracy in
capturing their message.

☐ When time is called, thank your partner for sharing and return to your
small group table.
**Paired Interview Small Group Discussion Notes**

As each member of your group shares the most inspiring story they heard from their interview session, listen carefully to jot down themes, concepts, thoughts and/or ideas that you believe are relevant to key components that support highly-effective ESL programs. Write your notes in each box. Each team member will have no more than two uninterrupted minutes to share their interview partner’s story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Member 1</th>
<th>Group Member 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Member 3</th>
<th>Group Member 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Member 5</th>
<th>Group Member 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take the next 3-5 minutes to independently review the notes you have just written about what your group mates have shared. Identify any common themes, concepts, or ideas that may be present. In the space below, generate a list of phrases, themes, ideas, etc. that emerge.
Appreciative Inquiry Focus Group Protocol

Affirmative Topic
The Positive Aspects of Working with Our English Language Learners and Our ESL Program

Session 2

Lead-in

Good Afternoon and thank you for coming back to continue our work of co-creating the ESL program of our dreams. Last time we were together, we engaged in the Discovery phase of this process. We shared our stories with a partner in the paired interview, uncovered some common themes in our stories in our small groups, and translated those themes into broad topics that we feel will lead us towards the development of an ESL program that will “Gear us Up for Greatness”. We closed out our session by selecting a topic from among our top picks that we’d like to explore and develop. This afternoon, that is where we will begin. Based on your choices from last week, the small groups have been reorganized to facilitate our work in the Dream and Design phases of our process.

Our first step for this evening is to engage in some dialogue and brainstorming about what each group topic means to the members of the group. In essence, you’ll be brainstorming some ideas of what your group’s topic looks like in the context of the world-class ESL program of our dreams. I’d like to start by showing you an example of a brainstorm chart that was completed on one of the topics that wasn’t selected for further exploration. This is just a sample of what your group can produce.

<Share visual sample.>

Now it’s your turn. Each group will have 7 minutes to discuss and brainstorm ideas of what your selected topic looks like in a highly effective ESL program context. You have chart paper at your group’s table along with a recording device to capture your thoughts and discussions.

Are there any questions? Let’s begin.

<A countdown timer will be displayed on the projection screen so that all groups are aware of their time remaining. A reminder will be given at the 6 minute mark to prepare for closure of the brainstorming segment.>
Alright, so now that your group has had a chance to brainstorm what your topic might look like in a highly effective ESL program context, it’s time to take those words and thoughts to a visual level. Using the same example from my brainstorming sample, here is one way to produce a visual representation of my dream for this topic in our ESL program.

<Share visual sample.>

Along with my visual representation, I have crafted a sample of a provocative possibilities statement that reflects what I dream as the ideal standard for this topic in WJCC’s highly-effective ESL program.

<Share statement sample.>

Your dynamic groups will have 25 minutes to dream and develop a visual representation of what your topic could look like in a highly-effective, super success, award-winning ESL program in WJCC. You are only limited by your imagination. There are chart paper and markers on your table as well as other art/craft supplies located on the supply table. Remember, this should be a visual representation of what we dare to dream as possible. Along with your visual representation, each group should craft a potent, powerful, promising, and positive provocative possibilities statement of what we dare to dream and do for our ESL program in WJCC to highlight your topic and go along with your visual representation. At the end of the work time, each group will share their visual representation and positive provocative statement. Are there any questions about your group’s mission? Let’s go forth, discuss, dream, and develop!

<A countdown timer will be displayed on the projection screen so that all groups are aware of their time remaining. Reminders will be given at the 10 minute mark and 3 minute mark to prepare for closure of the visualizing and provocative statement segment.>

It’s time to share. Are there any volunteers who would like to share their visual representations and positive provocative possibilities statement? I will be recording your group presentations.
That was wonderful and thanks for all of the work and effort that went into developing the dream.

Now we are going to shift from the Dream phase to the Design phase. This is where we begin to plot action steps that are designed to help make our dreams become a reality; to breathe life into the positive provocative possibility statements. This portion is the “how” of realizing the dream. For this portion of our work, each group member will need their laptop. In your email inbox, you should have a link to a Google Doc specific to your group’s topic. That document is a planning template where you and your team will identify specific actionable items needed to bring the provocative possibility statement to fruition. Be sure to include short term and long term steps that are needed. In this Design phase, we want to move from the conceptual nature of our Dream phase to more concrete components. Let’s take a look at the planning template.

The next 45 minutes will be spent on developing a solid action plan using the Google Docs template. Make sure that each action step is objective, measurable, lists the resources needed, whether human, capital, or fiscal and identifies a responsible parties for either completing the action(s) or making the request(s) to those who have the power to complete the action(s). We will record the small group discussions and at the end of this session, each group will share the plan that they have designed based on their provocative possibilities statement created in the Dream phase.

Alright, now let’s take some time for each group to share the plan they have developed.

The work that has been done by each group is definitely meaningful and impactful. It will be shared with the ESL department and WJCC leadership through the program evaluation process and will be reported in my dissertation research. I want to extend my
most sincere thanks to each and every one of you for your participation in the research and work. I want to assure you that it won’t end here. The goal of this endeavor is to truly develop an award-winning, world-class ESL program that is highly-effective in creating pathways for our language-diverse students and families to be successful. To that end, the work of these focus group sessions will be translated into an on-going planning group to begin to refine and implement the plans that were started here. Each of you will be extended the opportunity to continue with this work in helping our program “Gear Up for Greatness”. Thank you for sharing your time and talents and I bid you safe travels.
Design Phase Planning Template

Theme/Topic:_____________________________________

Positive Provocative Possibilities Statement:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Resources Needed (human, capital, fiscal)</th>
<th>Parties Responsible for Completing the Action</th>
<th>Parties Responsible for Requesting Assistance to Complete the Action</th>
<th>Connection to Positive Provocative Possibilities Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E
Letter of Invitation

Dear School Division Colleagues:

Over the past several years, our division has experienced significant growth in the population of students with a native tongue other than English. These students are provided language acquisition services through the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The programmatic structure of the ESL department should provide an enriching platform fostering the academic and socio-emotional success of English Learners (ELs) and their families through language-based college and career readiness opportunities in their PK-12 matriculation. While our program has served, with the best intent, our ELs and their families, the rapid growth and changing characteristics of our ELs necessitates some programmatic changes to ensure increased academic and linguistic growth.

Crafting a program model that meets student needs, engages families, and capitalizes on internal expertise requires collaborative efforts. To that end, I am reaching out to colleagues across the PK-12 instructional spectrum serving in a variety of roles with responsibilities in working with ELs and their families to provide input in the restructuring process. The goal is to co-create a world-class program that facilitates high levels of student and family achievement in our premier district. On March 10 and 17, 2016 from 5-7 p.m., I will be hosting focus group sessions, where participants will engage in substantive dialogue and activities geared towards generating positive action steps in developing an inclusive school community and service model for our language-diverse students and families. Each session should last no longer than 120 minutes. The results of these sessions will serve as part of a full evaluation of the ESL program, will be an integral part of the ESL program restructuring process, and in essence of full disclosure, will serve as part of the research I am conducting for my dissertation. As the Coordinator for the World Language and ESL programs, I am eager to gain your insights and elicit your feedback to help us “Gear Up for Greatness,” our theme for this year’s work.

All staff members who have direct contact with ELs and/or their families are welcomed and encouraged to participate. I am looking for participants who have broad visions for our program, are passionate about inclusive teaching and learning practices, willingly embrace and want to participate in the change process, are willing to commit to the two focus group sessions in March, and desire to see improvements in our current ESL program. If you are interested and available in being a part of this dynamic and transformative process, please RSVP to patricia.tilghman@schools.org by March 1, 2016. Upon receipt of your response, you will receive an Outlook invite and further participant instructions. Thank you in advance for considering this opportunity to chart our new course.

Sincerely,

Patricia M. Tilghman
Coordinator WL/ESL Programs
Doctoral Candidate, The College of William and Mary
Appendix F

Participant Agreement and Disclosure Form

First/Last Name: ________________________________  Work Site: ________________________________

Position: ________________________________  Email: ________________________________

Years of Experience in Current Position: ________________________________

Years of Experience Working with ELLs/EL Families: ________________________________

Years of Experience in Education: ________________________________

Please read and check all statement boxes indicating understanding and agreement.

☐ I voluntarily agree to engage in focus group sessions for the ESL program evaluation.

☐ I plan to attend both focus group sessions.

☐ I understand that names and identifying information will not be used for reporting purposes.

☐ I understand my image may be used in reports, but not connected with specific comments.

☐ I understand my comments may be used in reports, but not connected with my name/image.

☐ I understand that the results of this work:
  will become part of the ESL program evaluation results.
  will be shared with division leadership.
  will be a part of the dissertation studies of the researcher.

My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and truthfully completed this form.

Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
References

http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html

http://edglossary.org/hidden-curriculum


http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=English%20Language%20Learners%20Face%20Unique%20Challenges
http://projects.nytimes.com/immigration/enrollment


Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (U.S. Supreme Court 1982).


http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html

http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html.


doi:10.1177/0022487102053001003


https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/


Patricia M. Tilghman

Professional Experience

2015 - present
Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools, Williamsburg, Virginia
Position: **Coordinator, ESL and World Languages**

2012 - 2015
Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools, Williamsburg, Virginia
Position: **Coordinator, Multicultural Education**

2009 - 2012
Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia
Position: **Coordinator II, English as a Second Language**

2005 - 2009
Newport News Public Schools, Newport News, Virginia
Position: **Elementary Principal**

Academic Background

2013 – 2018
The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
Education Doctorate – Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership
*Cumulative G.P.A – 4.00*

2007 – 2009
Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia
Certificate Program – Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages
*Cumulative G.P.A – 3.73  Endorsement: ESL Pre-K-12*

1995 – 1998
The George Washington University, Hampton Roads Ctr, Virginia
Master of Arts – Educational Administration and Supervision
Cumulative G.P.A – 4.00  *Endorsement: Pre-K-12 Administration*

1988 - 1992
Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia
Bachelor of Science – Early Childhood Education
Cumulative G.P.A – 4.00  *Endorsement: NK-8 Instruction*