



EL Statewide Update Newsletter

October 2024

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Dear EL Educators,

This newsletter is designed to be a go-to resource for important announcements, reminders, and insights from MDE regarding EL programming. Whether you're an administrator, coordinator, or teacher, our goal is to keep you informed about state-level developments, provide guidance on best practices, and share opportunities for professional growth. We hope you find this newsletter valuable as you continue to make a difference in the lives of EL students across Michigan.

Was this message forwarded to you? [Sign up](#) to receive this newsletter here.

Important Dates

- **October 11:** Last day to join a Title III EL consortium for entities that receive less than \$10,000 on the Preliminary allocation
- **October 14-16:** [MDE Special Populations Conference](#) | Lansing
- **October 15:** Section 41 Program Report due in NexSys
- **November 1:** Section 41 Bilingual Education Application* opens in NexSys
*Submission of an application is used to indicate acceptance of funds.
- **November 9:** [MITESOL Conference](#) | Ann Arbor
- **November 21:** Final submission date for 2024-25 Consolidated Application
- **January 15:** Section 41 Bilingual Education Application due
- **January 22:** [Register/join](#) the MDE Statewide EL Update Webinar

Resources:

- [OES Applications Schedule: 2024-25 Consolidated Application](#)
- [Annual EL To-Do Calendar](#)

EL Programming Updates

New Home Language Survey Questions

With support from the EL Advisory Committee, MDE has completed an extensive review and update of the Home Language Survey (HLS). This review included a comprehensive research study and parent focus groups in multiple languages. The new HLS includes a brief introductory text and two simplified questions:

Michigan welcomes families of all language backgrounds. Speaking more than one language is a valuable asset!

Please answer the two questions below. If your response to either question is a language other than English, the school district will give an assessment to see if your student may benefit from English language support.

- *What language is used most at home?*
- *What language is used most by the student?*



For School Year 2024-25, LEAs may elect to pilot implementation of the revised HLS by emailing their intent to mde-el@michigan.gov. LEAs that pilot the HLS will be asked to complete a survey regarding implementation.

The new survey must be adopted for the next school year's enrollments (2025-26), meaning you should plan to have it fully integrated into your registration procedures by April or May. We encourage you to start collaborating with your district's registration personnel and technology representatives to ensure a smooth implementation.

Learn more on the [MDE HLS Website](#).

Funding Updates

Section 41 Report

The Section 41 report due date is now October 15, 2024. The report is open, and districts can begin filling out the report. MDE identified two glitches in the report programming, and we have requested that they be corrected. Please wait to submit your report until the LEA receives an email from MDE letting you know that the glitches have been corrected.

New Section 41 Legislation

Section 41 legislation was updated for the 2024-2025 school year. The legislature increased the total allocation by approximately 10 million. They also added a new subsection to the law. Subsection 7 is quoted below. It includes a mandate for MDE to create English Learner program models with minimum minutes of service requirements by March 1, 2025. The new subsection also requires districts to agree to meet or exceed those minutes of English Language Development instruction by 2025-2026 to remain eligible for the funding. MDE will convene a working group to co-create this EL Program Model and minimum service minutes requirements during the fall and will share this with the state once it is approved.

See more on the [Legislature Website](#).

(7) By not later than March 1, 2025, the department shall establish English language learner program models that establish a minimum number of minutes per week that districts must provide direct English language development instruction for students according to the student's proficiency levels.

*These models must be compliant with federal requirements related to English language learner program services. **It is the intent of the legislature that, beginning in 2025-2026, to be considered an eligible recipient of funding under this section, a district must agree to meet or exceed the minimum number of minutes per week, as determined by the department, that the district provides direct English language development instruction.***



Student Mental Health and Safety Funding

The Michigan Department of Education is announcing a funding opportunity through Section 31aa of Public Act 120 of 2024 for fiscal year 2025. This funding provides payments to intermediate school districts and local education agencies, both traditional public school districts and public school academies, non-public schools, and the Michigan School for the Deaf to improve student mental health and student safety. To receive funding under this section, eligible recipients can opt-in and agree through the Grant Electronic Monitoring System/Michigan Administrative Review System via MiLogin beginning September 3, 2024. The process to opt in will close at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on November 1, 2024. 31aa funds will be disbursed by December 31, 2024, on a per-pupil basis.

Learn more from the [PAM announcement](#).

Title III and Section 41 Preliminary Allocations

Preliminary allocations are currently available for Title III EL and Section 41 on MDE's website.

See the "[Important Dates](#)" section for important dates related to funding.

Resources:

- [Program Allocations](#)
- [EL-Specific Funding Sources Guidance](#)

Assessment Updates

Public WIDA ACCESS Reports Available on MiSchoolData

The Spring 2024 WIDA ACCESS assessment results are now available on the MiSchoolData website. These reports provide public-facing district and statewide results for each year of WIDA administration, as well as trend data.

To view these reports, go to the [MiSchoolData website](#). Select K-12th Grade, then English Learner Data, and then select English Learner Dashboard or English Learner Assessment. For questions about these reports, contact the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) by email to CEPI@michigan.gov.

WIDA Assessment Window Extended

The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment window has been temporarily expanded to a 10-week window through 2027. This will provide flexibility for schools with large numbers of students who may be observing Ramadan.



The 2025 summative WIDA window is scheduled for January 27, 2025 – April 4, 2025.

New Guidance on Administering WIDA Screener

WIDA has released new guidance on administering the WIDA Screener to students who are blind or have low vision and/or who are deaf or hard of hearing. You can find this resource in the WIDA Secure Portal when filtering by Accessibility and Accommodations.

Alternate ACCESS Standard Setting

In July, a standard-setting event was held for WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Educators, including English language, content, and special education teachers; school and district administrators; and state education agency representatives from across the WIDA Consortium participated in the event, which was conducted by WIDA with support from the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

Standard setting is a process through which proficiency level scores are determined, and cut scores are set for an assessment. A standard setting must be established after the first operational administration of a revised assessment. For Alternate ACCESS, this took place in the 2023-24 school year. WIDA Alternate ACCESS score reports will be delivered this month.

Learn more on the [WIDA website](#).

WIDA Alternate Screener

The WIDA Alternate Screener is in development. A release date is TBD, sometime in summer 2025. WIDA Alternate Screener is a brand-new, paper-based English language proficiency assessment given to new students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades K-12 to help determine if students are English learners.

Revised ACCESS for ELLs Coming 2025-26

WIDA is in the process of revising ACCESS to integrate the assessment with the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 edition. The updated tests will be ready for the 2025-26 school year.

For more news related to student assessment and accountability, be sure to read the [Spotlight Newsletter](#), published every Thursday by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA). [Sign up](#) to receive the weekly Spotlight Newsletter edition via email!



Professional Learning

Sheltered Content Statewide PLC

“ We are →
in great Collaboration

2:45-3:45 pm on Zoom This Year’s Dates: ←

Secondary Teachers of
ELs in content classes
free SCECHs

October 1st
December 9th
January 21st
March 4th
June 3rd

Continuous growth is key to effectively supporting our English Learners! Check out the resources below for professional learning opportunities designed to enhance your practice and expand your expertise.

MDE Sponsored PL

- [MDE PL Calendar](#)
- [MDE EL Teacher Network](#)
- [Sheltered Content Statewide PLC](#)

Regional PL

- [ELD Workshops](#) | Oakland Schools
- [Course Catalog](#) | Wayne RESA (see page 68 for Multilingual Learner offerings)
- [Teaching Math to EL and ALL Students](#) (with Adrian Mendoza) | Kent ISD

Earn SCECHs through eLearning Opportunities (Free!)

WIDA

Michigan educators can access WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops on demand from 9/1/24-8/30/25.

- [WIDA Self-Paced Workshops Flyer](#)
- [E-Learning SCECH Credit Request- English Learners](#)

Michigan Partnership with Project MOMENTUM

MDE is sponsoring free SCECHs earned through Project MOMENTUM, an NPD grant project underway in Minnesota.

- [Project MOMENTUM Course Catalog](#)
- [E-Learning SCECH Credit Request- English Learners](#)



Helpful Resources

[REL Resources for Educators of English Learner Students](#)

The Cross-REL EL Working Group has compiled a selection of resources to support your work with English learners. The first set of resources focuses on identifying ELs and assessing their needs, while the second set offers strategies for targeted support. These resources come in various formats—infographics, guidance documents, briefs, toolkits, videos, and more—designed to be accessible and practical.

September Highlights:

- [Welcoming, Registering, And Supporting Newcomer Students: A Toolkit For Educators Of Immigrant And Refugee Students In Secondary Schools](#) This toolkit helps educators and other stakeholders identify and use research-based practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students attending secondary schools in the U.S.
- [Starting School In The United States: A Guide For Newcomer Students' Families](#) This guide, which is available in four languages, helps newcomer students' families navigate the U.S. school system.

[OELA Resources](#)

OELA has produced a series of practice briefs and podcast episodes on instructional approaches and strategies for educators who serve English learners and their families. These resources highlight promising practices related to STEM, language instruction educational programs, teacher preparation, and early childhood instruction.

[Oakland Schools Guidance Documents](#)

Did you know that Oakland Schools consultants, along with expert educators from around the state, have created a wide variety of guidance documents and resources?

September Highlights:

- **New!** [Equitable Grading Practices for Multilingual Learners](#)
In response to the complex challenges associated with grading students, particularly multilingual learners, Oakland Schools recognizes the pressing need for a comprehensive and equitable approach to assessment and grading systems that promotes educational equity and supports the academic success of multilingual learners. This guidance document is a resource designed for district and school leaders, as well as English Language Development (ELD) and general education teachers seeking to address these challenges and create or revise assessment and



grading policies that promote equity and recognize the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students.

- **Enrollment Process for Multilingual Learners**

This guidance is designed to support districts in developing research-based, equitable intake and enrollment protocols for Multilingual Learners (MLLs) and their families. District teams, including counselors, English Language Development (ELD) staff, central office staff, and administrators, can utilize the Foundational Practices Overview and Planning Tool, along with the district planning tools linked within each practice, to articulate their own equitable intake protocols.

- [Guidance: Equitable Intake of K-12 Multilingual Learners](#)
- [Equitable Intake: K-12 Refugees & Afghan Arrivals](#)

Seal of Biliteracy

MI-SoBL Overview

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy (MI-SoBL) has been created to recognize high school graduates who exhibit language proficiency in English and at least one additional world language. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy requires students to meet the following criteria:

- Michigan high school graduation requirements
- Demonstrate Intermediate High Proficiency in world language assessments



September Highlights:

- **MI-SoBL met 2023-24 goals for the number of recipients**
 - The MI-SoBL Council goal for the number of recipients for 2023-24 was 2,000.
 - The Council is very pleased to announce that 2,226 Seals have been awarded as of August 1, 2024. This is the highest number awarded since the MI-SoBL was established in 2018.
- **MI-SoBL impact on K-12 schools/districts**
 - The MI-SoBL has been created to encourage students to study world languages and embrace their native and heritage languages.
 - The increasing number of MI-SoBL recipients demonstrates the effectiveness of the MI-SoBL program.
 - The [MI-SoBL map](#) of participating schools/districts is regularly updated to show the growing numbers.



- **MI-SoBL impact on colleges/universities**
 - The MI-SoBL serves as an additional tool for colleges and universities to recognize applicants' language abilities for admission and placement.
 - Some Michigan colleges and universities have begun to offer credit to recipients of the MI-SoBL.
- **MI-SoBL impact on careers**
 - The MI-SoBL provides employers with a way to identify individuals with strong language and biliteracy skills and fully aligns with the goal of global competitiveness.
 - Research shows that there is a growing need for bilingual employees across a wide range of occupations, regardless of educational requirements or salary (New American Economy, 2017).
 - The MI-SoBL serves as an endorsement to employers that a high school graduate enters the workforce with highly desired skills in more than one language.

News from Our Partner Organizations

MABE



MABE 2025, May 8 & 9
Laurel Manor Conference & Banquet Center



MI-TESOL

MITESOL board members are excited to announce our 2024 annual conference, taking place on Saturday, November 9th, 2024, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor campus. This year's theme, Nurturing Identities, Inspiring Growth, sets the stage for a day of learning and professional development, enriched by esteemed speakers and presenters from across the state and the country, ready to share their knowledge and expertise in the English language teaching field.

The conference will kick off with [a plenary](#) from renowned scholar Dr. Diane Larsen-Freeman, renowned for her groundbreaking research and publications in the field. The MITESOL Board is especially thrilled to welcome back Dr. Larsen-Freeman to the University of Michigan, where she has established a distinguished career as Professor Emerita of Education and Linguistics, Research Scientist Emerita, and former Director of the English Language Institute at U of M. As [our midday keynote speaker](#), we are also



thrilled to welcome acclaimed author Beth Nguyen, a proud alum of the University of Michigan! During her talk, Ms. Nguyen will share insights on themes of identity, belonging, and immigrant experiences based on her memoir *Owner of a Lonely Heart*. Other lined-up invited speakers include Kelly Alvarez, English Learner Consultant at the Michigan Department of Education; Patrick Brown, Director of Adult Student Attainment Strategy at MCAN; Suzanne Toohey, Past President of MITESOL and Supervisor of the Instruction and Pedagogy Unit at Oakland Schools; and Giuliana Trinchieri, Community Resource Coordinator from the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center. Alongside these distinguished speakers, we are excited to have many MITESOL presenters sharing their expertise and innovative classroom strategies. Their insights will inspire fresh ideas and foster engaging discussions on effectively teaching English to multilingual learners.

[Registration](#) is now open, and we can't wait to welcome you to U of M on November 9th. Mark your calendar and check out our website to register!

For any questions related to our conference, please contact our President Meredith Bricker at president@mitesol.org or our President-Elect Alexandra Covell at president-elect@mitesol.org.



MI-ALAS

Introducing the Michigan Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (MI-ALAS)

We are excited to announce the launch of the Michigan Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (MI-ALAS), a new affiliate of the National Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS).

About ALAS National

ALAS is committed to advancing educational equity, focusing on empowering Latino administrators and advocating for students. ALAS provides professional development programs, leadership training, and networking opportunities that equip Latino educators and administrators with the tools to excel. The



organization also fosters collaboration through affinity groups and mentorship initiatives, supporting the growth of Latino professionals.

In addition to supporting educators, ALAS advocates for policies that promote equity and inclusion, ensuring that the needs and voices of Latino students are prioritized at local, state, and national levels. ALAS works to create a more inclusive and effective educational system for all. Website:

<https://www.alasedu.org/>

MI- ALAS Mission Statement

MI-ALAS was created to promote strong leadership, collaboration, and networking opportunities for high-quality public education. MI-ALAS strives to develop and advance Latino administrators, empowering them to address the unique needs of Latino students and educators throughout Michigan.

Goals for MI- ALAS

- **Professional Growth:** Promote and provide professional opportunities that facilitate the growth and advancement of Latino educational leaders.
- **Equitable Representation:** Advocate for the equitable representation of Latino educational leaders, driving positive transformation and nurturing a more inclusive educational system.
- **Opportunity Bridging:** Facilitate the bridging of opportunity gaps for emerging educational leaders.
- **Cultural and Academic Success:** Foster an educational environment that embraces diversity and cultivates success for Latino students by enhancing academic performance, cultural pride, and leadership skills.

Stay tuned for our new website, which is coming soon; there, we plan to share upcoming events and professional opportunities! To learn more about MI-ALAS or get in touch with the team, please email michigan.alas@gmail.com. Join our email list by [completing the survey](#).

District Highlight: Chippewa Valley Schools

Over the past five years, CVS has committed to serving its growing population of more than 1,350 ML students who speak over 40 different languages. In this issue, we are excited to highlight the great work CVS is doing!

Expanded Staffing

With the support of Human Resources, Business, and Education Services, Chippewa Valley Schools has successfully hired seventeen additional teachers to support the instructional program for ML students. As the 2024-25 school year begins, the district now has a total of 22 teachers and 25 paraeducators dedicated to English language development (ELD). This expansion in staffing has greatly benefited the students, providing them with the necessary support to succeed in all academic areas. Notably, in the past year, 113 students were reclassified as Former English Learners (FEL), with 90 at the elementary level—a testament to the hard work of the students and the ELD team.



Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Parent Network

With increased flexibility in funding this past year¹, Chippewa Valley Schools also added an ELD Coordinator, Stephanie Williard, whose dedication and passion for serving ML students and their families have already made a significant impact. Under Ms. Williard’s leadership, the district launched a Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Parent Network that hosts events for families, fostering greater community engagement.

New Technology Supports

Additionally, Ms. Williard introduced Summit K-12 Learning and Ellevation for the K-12 program. Summit K-12 offers tailored instruction to help students practice the four WIDA domains both in and out of school, enhancing their understanding of the WIDA test—especially for secondary students. Reviewing WIDA and other assessment data remains crucial for the continued development of the program. With the introduction of ELlevation this year, the district now has a comprehensive data warehouse for ML students, linking to Summit K-12 and allowing the upload of relevant local benchmark assessments. Both ELD staff and general education teachers will have access to this data, along with accommodations and other pertinent information about students' progress. This integration will significantly enhance the approach to ELD instruction, student placements, and support for general content area teachers.

Seal of Biliteracy

In addition, Chippewa Valley Schools introduced the Seal of Biliteracy to recognize students' abilities in their native languages. Although only a small number of students participated in its inaugural year, the district anticipates increased participation in the future. Collaboration with the World Language department and counseling teams, as well as the creation of a dedicated website, have helped raise awareness of this prestigious achievement. Earning the gold Seal of Biliteracy is a significant accomplishment, and the district is committed to celebrating this milestone with its students.

Is your district doing great things? Email katnikk@michigan.gov to be included in a future newsletter.

IHE Highlight: Wayne State University

The Bilingual Bicultural Education Program (BBE) at Wayne State University offers courses at the initial certification, post-bachelor, and graduate levels for individuals seeking an MDE endorsement in bilingual education or English as an additional or second language (ESL). The BBE program also offers courses in American Sign Language (ASL) for all levels and a Deaf Studies minor at the undergraduate level. We are currently in the process of redesigning our world language education program.

¹ [Section 41 Guidance](#): Districts may have need for EL leads separate from district administrators. An allowable supplemental staffing cost may include EL leads who support integrated program models and continuous improvement efforts.



Inservice teachers seeking an additional endorsement can complete the coursework for a bilingual or ESL endorsement as part of a Master's Degree in Teaching and Learning or a Graduate Bridge Certificate. The Graduate Bridge consists of only the required courses for the ESL or Bilingual Education endorsement; however, the courses can be applied toward a master's degree at a later date. For teachers who already have a master's degree, the courses can be taken as part of an Educational Specialist Certificate.

The BBE program partners with school districts to offer courses for bilingual education or ESL endorsement to cohorts of teachers. Cohorts are generally 20 or more students from one school district. The courses are offered in a variety of formats - synchronous online courses, traditional face-to-face, or a mixture of both.

If you are interested in learning more about the BBE program or to apply, please visit <https://education.wayne.edu/teaching-learning/med>

If you would like to talk with us about starting a cohort in your school district, please email Dr. Westbrook at lisa.westbrooks@wayne.edu.

Immigrant Community Insights

Support for Newcomer Students and Families

The Office of Global Michigan works to make Michigan welcoming and inclusive for everyone, including newcomer students and families. The Refugee Services team works specifically in youth and education support to help ensure that all students and families can find success in Michigan schools.

The Office of Global Michigan currently funds three programs that support newcomer students and their families. The **Refugee School Impact** program serves children ages 0 to 18 and their parents. Under this program, School Liaisons provide dedicated support to newcomer families as they enroll in school and transition to the U.S. education system. Support services include tutoring, ESL, family engagement, and peer support. The goals of the Refugee School Impact program are to help newcomer families thrive socially, academically, and emotionally in their new schools. Currently, the Refugee School Impact program has six direct service providers located in Kent, Ingham, and Washtenaw counties, as well as the metro Detroit area.

The **Youth Mentoring** program serves older youth between the ages of 15 and 24. These youth are matched with a mentor, typically of a similar background, who helps to guide the youth through high school and young adulthood. Youth also receive individualized career and educational guidance as they plan for their post-secondary lives. Furthermore, peer engagement, civic engagement, and cultural engagement services help youth in this program to develop a sense of belonging in a new country. There are currently four direct service providers of the Youth Mentoring program located in Washtenaw, Ingham, and Kent counties.

Lastly, the **Afghan Refugee School Impact: Support to Schools** program supports six intermediate school districts in Michigan: Kent, Ingham, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Wayne. This program funds a



Newcomer Consultant position for each intermediate school district, with the goal of enhancing capacity to serve newcomer students and families. Since 2022, Newcomer Consultants have facilitated staff training, cultivated and developed newcomer resources, enhanced ELL support services, and much more. Newcomer Consultants have successfully addressed gaps in services and support in school districts with the highest population of newcomer families.

If you are interested in learning more about the Office of Global Michigan and its partners, please visit <https://www.michigan.gov/ogm>.

Promising Practices

Starting the Year with a Focus on Collaboration

As we begin the school year, it's essential to recognize that collaboration is key to supporting all students, including multilingual learners. The WIDA ELD Standards Framework encourages a shift from thinking that English learners belong solely to ELD teachers to a mindset where all students are everyone's responsibility. By working together, educators can best meet the needs of the whole child.

Collaboration can take many forms, from joint planning to co-teaching. Here are some key collaborative practices that help foster an inclusive learning environment:

Joint Planning: This involves ELD specialists and classroom teachers working together to design lessons that meet both content and language needs. Through co-planning, educators align standards, adapt materials, and create assessments that support all learners.

Parallel Teaching: In this model, ELD and classroom teachers coordinate lessons, ensuring continuity between specialized ELD services and general instruction. This approach helps maintain alignment across content areas, promoting coherence for multilingual learners.

Collaborative Assessment: By analyzing student work together, teachers can identify strengths and areas for growth. This collaborative reflection leads to more targeted instruction and supports student success.

Co-Developing Materials: Teachers work together to create scaffolded materials that are culturally responsive and meet the diverse needs of multilingual learners. This practice ensures that the curriculum reflects students' lived experiences.

Joint Professional Learning: Learning together strengthens instructional practices and fosters shared understanding. Participating in conferences or professional learning communities (PLCs) can enhance collaboration and positively impact student outcomes.

Starting the year with a focus on collaboration not only benefits students but also builds a strong professional community. As we work together, we create an environment where all learners can thrive. What collaborative practice can you strengthen this year to better support your multilingual learners?