THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs
Suite 251
440 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130

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Instructional Values & Promising Practices for English Learners

Guiding Principles:
- **High Expectations:** All ELs can achieve at high levels and graduate ready for college and career
- **Asset Based:** Students' home languages and cultures are tremendous assets
- **Shared Ownership:** All educators share responsibility and take ownership for student success

Instructional Values:
We will...
1. Sustain academic rigor
2. Hold high expectations: high challenge, high supports
3. Engage all students in quality interactions
4. Sustain a language focus
5. Develop and deliver quality lessons

The five values detailed on the next several pages are aligned to the Danielson Framework, and are what we look for in all classes (both content and ESL) that support ELs. Together they provide high impact on outcomes for English Language Learners (ELs). Teachers can use this tool to identify steps towards making their instruction more effective for ELs. This tool can also be used to guide and inform instructional feedback. For supports or suggestions in any of these areas, contact OMCP at mulltilingual@philasd.org.

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Instructional Value 1: Sustain Academic Rigor *Are students demonstrating complex understanding of concepts and themes central to the discipline?*	
Danielson Alignment	1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy 1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students 1c Setting Instructional Outcomes 1e Designing Coherent Instruction 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning 3a Communicating with Students 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c Engaging Students in Learning 3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness
Promising Practices for Teachers of ELs	● Integrate and connect central ideas and themes of the discipline over time in order to promote deep disciplinary knowledge (deep focus on central ideas versus shallow coverage of several ideas) ● Invite students to build increasingly complex explanations of disciplinary concepts and processes ● Engage students in higher order thinking through complex text, tasks, and talk
Student Look-Fors	1. Students are engaged in higher-order thinking through complex texts, tasks, and talk 2. Students combine facts and ideas to synthesize, evaluate, and generalize 3. Students solve problems and construct new meanings and understandings 4. Students demonstrate complex understandings central to the discipline (through questioning, discussions, arguments, etc)
Research and Rationale	Learning concepts and analytical practices is conceived of as the integration of discrete understandings learned independently of language (Heritage, Walqui, LInquanti, 2016). Learning needs to take place in the student's zone of proximal development, more recently referred to as the construction zone. This metaphor refers to the area that lies beyond a student's ability to act on his or her own, where socially mediated learning prompts development. (Vygotsky, Newman Griffin, Cole, 1989). (Heritage, Walqui, Linquanti, 2016).

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Instructional Value 2: Hold High Expectations *Are <u>all</u> students supported in meeting grade-level standards?*	
Danielson Alignment	1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy 1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students 1c Setting Instructional Outcomes 1e Designing Coherent Instruction 1f Designing Student Assessments 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning 3a Communicating with Students 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c Engaging Students in Learning 3d Using Assessment in Instruction 4c Communicating with Families
Promising Practices for Teachers of ELs	- Engage students at every proficiency level in grade-level tasks that provide high challenge - Provide appropriate scaffolds by using the following techniques: - Develop appropriate scaffolds for academic tasks and activities using the WIDA Can Do Descriptors and Model Performance Indicators (MPIs) as a guide - Implement specific techniques to increase students' comprehension of complex input and support students' production of complex output and remove scaffolds as students progress - Incorporate strategic use of L1 (first language) through translanguaging practices - Use rubrics and other tools to ensure criteria for quality work is clear for students - Conduct metacognitive activities so that students gain knowledge of how to learn, how to monitor their progress, and how to self-correct
Student Look-Fors	1. Students at all proficiency levels are engaged in grade-level content 2. Students are able to explain the expectations of quality work 3. Students have opportunities to monitor their progress, self-correct, and provide feedback to classmates
Research and Rationale	Learning truly happens only if it is ahead of development. In response to teacher's worries, we would say that development occurs precisely because teachers plan lessons beyond the students' ability to carry them out independently. The catch, of course, is that lessons be deliberately designed to present high support along with high challenge. (Heritage, Walqui, Linquanti, 2016). ELs learn both through the language they encounter (input) and the language they produce (output). Input should be at a level that is challenging but nonetheless comprehensible (Krashen, 1985).

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Instructional Value 3: Engage Students in Quality Interactions *Do students participate in <u>extended</u> interactions/discussions on academically relevant and challenging texts/topics/content?*	
Danielson Alignment	1c Setting Instructional Outcomes 1e Designing Coherent Instruction 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning 3a Communicating with Students 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
Promising Practices for Teachers of ELs	● Structure tasks for extended interaction and discussion, in order for students to use language to co-construct knowledge and meaning ● Provide students with multiple opportunities to interact with peers in deliberate and sustained conversations on academically relevant and challenging texts/topics/content ● Ensure all students participate in discussion activities with multiple opportunities to provide corrective feedback aligned with instructional goals ● Ask open-ended questions that engage students in higher-order thinking
Student Look-Fors	1. Students participate in sustained verbal interactions about disciplinary ideas with other students and with the teacher 2. Students interact in dialogue which involves the exchange of ideas and is not scripted or dominated by one or two students 3. Student responses to teacher or peer questions are elaborated to make complex points (beyond a single word response)
Research and Rationale	Conversation builds oral language, which is a foundation for reading and writing (Roskos, Tabors & Lenhart, 2009). ELs' vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation develop faster when there are opportunities for interaction in the classroom using the language being learned (Mackey & Goo, 2007). Students develop abilities to communicate complex ideas when there are many opportunities for authentic interactions with others (Zwiers, O'Hara & Pritchard, 2014). Well over a century ago, linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt described expressions as having "meaning potential", a potential that is realized in interaction. To explore this meaning potential is what we want students in general, and English language learners in particular, to do: construct new knowledge by engaging in interactions that pursue understanding, enhance it, problematize central ideas, propose counter arguments, debate, and reach some sort of conclusion. (Heritage, Walqui, Linquanti, 2016)

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Instructional Value 4: Sustain a Language Focus *Do students use the language of the discipline in meaningful ways?*	
Danielson Alignment	1c Setting Instructional Outcomes 1e Designing Coherent Instruction 2c Managing Classroom Procedures 3a Communicating with Students 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c Engaging Students in Learning 4a Reflection on Teaching
Promising Practices for Teachers of ELs	• Provide opportunities for students to use the language of the discipline (e.g. the language of math, science, social studies, and language arts) both orally and in writing • Explicitly teach the language of the discipline including word, sentence, and discourse level • Model and explain the nuances of language specific to the discipline (formulaic expressions, text structures, active versus passive voice, etc.)
Student Look-Fors	1. Students practice and produce language of the discipline orally and in writing at the word, sentence and discourse level.
Research and Rationale	ELs who appear to be fully fluent in English may nonetheless struggle to express themselves effectively in academic settings (Cummins, 2000; Scarcella, 2003; Short & Echevarria, 2005). Research shows that students should be explicitly taught, in context, the language skills they need to succeed in the classroom (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2010). As ELs use more complex forms of language to accomplish interesting tasks, they learn more content and their language skills improve (Zwiers, O'Hara, & Pritchard, 2014). ELs benefit from many of the teaching practices that are effective for all students; however, these learners also require modifications to make instruction meaningful (August & Shanahan, 2006, 2010). Students learning rigorous content in a language they do not speak or comprehend completely requires specialized teaching techniques to make the message understandable (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2012). Students retain more language and content concepts when they create and communicate original messages (Swain, 1985; Walqui, 2006).

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Instructional Value 5: Develop and Deliver Quality Unit & Lesson Plans *Are lessons designed to simultaneously develop language proficiency and content knowledge?*	
Danielson Alignment	1c Setting Instructional Outcomes 1e Designing Coherent Instruction 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning 3a Communicating with Students 3c Engaging Students in Learning 4a Reflecting on Teaching 4c Communicating with Families
Promising Practices for Teachers of ELs	● Design units for continuity and coherence ● Design lessons that: ○ Provide opportunities for students to actively engage with the language and content of the discipline ○ Make connections between subject matter and students' lives and experiences ○ Connect the tasks/activities to the instructional objectives so students know where they are headed and what is expected of them ○ Incorporate frequent opportunities to check comprehension/understanding, using a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques, to assess and promote student learning of language and content ○ Allow for adjustment of instruction in response to student learning with the goal of students monitoring their own learning
Student Look-Fors	1. Students can explain the key concepts and central ideas of the unit and lesson 2. Students are actively engaged with academic content and language of the discipline 3. Students are involved in assessing their own learning 4. Students can connect the key concepts to their lives and experiences
Research and Rationale	ELs need multiple opportunities to see and hear modeling of the target language, to try and modify their language output, with teachers offering specific feedback that describes progress and focuses on areas for revision. (Zwiers, 2008). Using formative assessment on a regular basis has a strong effect on student learning, and can help raise achievement for below-grade level students while also benefiting all students. Students who are involved in assessing their own learning significantly outperform students who are not involved (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Numerous studies show that students perform better when their home culture and background knowledge are welcomed, respected and incorporated into the academic environment (Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, & Tharp, 2003; Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Nieto, 1999).

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Resources:

1. Walqui Aida and Leo van Lier. Scaffolding. The Academic Success of Adolescent English Learners. WestEd. 2010.

2. Levine, L.N. Lukens, L & Smallwood, B.A. (2013). The GO TO Strategies: Scaffolding Options for Teachers of English Language Learners, K-12. For Project EXCEL, a partnership between the University of Missouri-Kansas City and North Kansas City Schools, funded by the US Department of Education, PR Number T195N070316.