

50-State Comparison: English Learner Policies

What EL training or ongoing professional development is required of general classroom teachers?

May 2020

Research indicates that it is beneficial for English learners if all general classroom teachers have some form of EL-specific training, regardless of whether they work directly with English learners or not. General classroom teachers help students gain proficiency in the essential areas of language proficiency: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Federal guidance encourages states to provide necessary personnel to effectively provide EL programs, including highly qualified core-content teachers who have received training to support English learners in their classroom. At least 28 states provide for specific qualifications or pre-service and in-service training and professional development for general classroom teachers in statute or regulation. The information below was gathered from state statutes and regulations only. For additional information, visit the [state EL guidance documents](#).

View the full 50-State Comparison: English Learner Policies [here](#).

STATE	WHAT EL TRAINING OR ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS REQUIRED OF GENERAL CLASSROOM TEACHERS?	SOURCE
Federal Law	Federal guidance encourages states to provide necessary personnel to effectively provide EL programs, including highly-qualified core-content teachers who have received training to support EL students in their classroom.	English Learner Toolkit, Chapter 3: Tools and Resources for Staffing and Supporting an English Learner Program (2015)
Alabama	Alabama Quality Teacher standards require knowledge of the process of English language acquisition and strategies to support the learning of students whose first language is not English.	Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-3-03

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Alaska	Professional content and performance standards include providing instructional opportunities to meet the needs of students based on theories of learning and motivation and the individual and special needs of students, including limited English proficient students.	Alaska Admin. Code tit. 4, § 04.200
Arizona	Districts may require a structure English endorsement as a condition of employment for all teachers. Standards require teachers to use individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards. The teacher does this by incorporating tools of language development into planning and instruction, including strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency and knowing about second language acquisition processes and knows how to incorporate instructional strategies and resources to support language acquisition.	Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 15-756.09 Ariz. Admin. Code R7-2-602
Arkansas	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
California	All teachers with one or more ELLs in their classrooms must have an English learner certificate or authorization. Educator preparation programs must prepare teachers for all pupils, including English language learners.	Cal. Educ. Code § 44253.7 Cal. Educ. Code § 44259.5
Colorado	The Professional Development and Student Support Program provides funding to local education providers to provide effective professional development activities related to teaching English language learners.	Colo. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-24-104 Colo. Code Regs. § 301-10:2224-R-5.00
Connecticut	Teacher preparation programs must include instruction in the concepts of second language learning and second language acquisition and processes that reflect current research and best practices in the field of second language learning and second language acquisition.	Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 10-145a

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Delaware	Educator preparation programs must provide instruction in language acquisition, specifically as it relates to English language learners.	Code Del. Reg. 14 290
District of Columbia	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Florida	State-approved teacher preparation programs must include strategies appropriate for instructing ELLs.	Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1004.04
Georgia	Educator preparation programs are required to teach candidates how to adapt instructional approaches and materials to meet the language proficiency needs of English learners.	Ga Comp. R. & Regs. 505-3-.19
Hawaii	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
Idaho	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
Illinois	Annual professional development activities for the licensed and non-licensed personnel involved in the education of English learners is provided.	Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 228.35
Indiana	Pre-service and in-service training programs for persons serving non-English dominant students as educational personnel will be provided.	Ind. Code Ann. § 20-30-9-6
Iowa	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Kansas	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
Kentucky	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Louisiana	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Maine	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Maryland	Not specified in statute or regulation.	

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Massachusetts	<p>Training in second language acquisition techniques is required for re-certification of teachers and administrators.</p> <p>Professional Standards for Teachers include guidelines, including the ability to use effective strategies and techniques for making content accessible to English learners and demonstrating knowledge of the difference between social and academic language and the importance of this difference in planning, differentiating and delivering effective instruction for English learners at various levels of English language proficiency and literacy.</p>	<p>Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. 71 § 38Q</p> <p>603 Mass. Code Regs. 7.08</p>
Michigan	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Minnesota	Districts with one or more English learners are required to implement professional development opportunities for mainstream classroom teachers and all staff working with English learners.	Minn. Stat. Ann. § 124D.61
Mississippi	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
Missouri	Competency in content planning and delivery for English language learning is required to receive a mainstream teaching license.	5 Mo. Code Regs. Ann. 20-400.510 et.seq.
Montana	Governed by the department of education's EL guidebook or federal law rather than state policy.	
Nebraska	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Nevada	Access to high-quality, ongoing professional development training is required for all teachers and administrators. This training includes cultural competency to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of certain categories of pupils, including English learners.	Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 391A.370
New Hampshire	Early childhood educators and English language arts teachers must demonstrate knowledge and competency in the needs of English learners.	<p>N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 507.18(b)(5)(a)</p> <p>N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 507.24(c)(2)(f)</p>

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New Jersey	Teacher preparation programs, school district evaluations, and professional development programs must align with standards that include strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency.	N.J. Admin. Code § 6A:9-3.3(a)(2)(i)(5)
New Mexico	Districts are required to provide professional development to employees, including teachers, teacher assistants, principals and others on research-based bilingual multicultural education programs, best practices of English as a second language and classroom assessments that support academic and language development.	N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-23-5
New York	<p>General classroom teachers must attend an approved preparation program that includes instruction on working effectively with students from homes where English is not spoken.</p> <p>School districts must provide professional development that address the needs of ELLs to all teachers and administrators. At least 15 percent of mainstream teachers' required professional development must focus on language acquisition, including co-teaching strategies and integrating language and content instruction for ELLs. At least 50 percent of professional development for bilingual and ESL teachers must be about language acquisition and best practices for co-teaching strategies and integrating language and content instruction for ELLs.</p>	<p>N.Y. Comp. Code R. & Regs. tit. 8, § 80-2.12(a)(1)(i)</p> <p>N.Y. Comp. Code R. & Regs. tit. 8, § 80-2.13(a)(1)(i)</p> <p>N.Y. Comp. Code R. & Regs. tit. 8, § 154-2.3 (k)</p>
North Carolina	The Teacher Education Program Approval process must be established to ensure that all participants have an opportunity to gain an understanding of and develop strategies for addressing the educational needs of limited English proficient students.	16 N.C. Admin. Code 6D.0106
North Dakota	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Ohio	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Oklahoma	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Oregon	Accreditation and educator preparation requirements must prepare educators to work with second language learners of all ages. This includes pre-service and in-service requirements.	Or. Admin. R. 584-410-0080

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Pennsylvania	Teacher preparation programs must include coursework that addresses the needs of English language learners.	22 Pa. Code § 49.13
Rhode Island	All LEAs with ELL programs must provide sustained, high quality job-embedded professional development for administrators, coordinators, instructional coaches, school and community liaisons, guidance counselors, all teachers and other personnel who work with English Language Learners.	R.I. Code R. 20-30-3.12
South Carolina	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
South Dakota	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Tennessee	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Texas	An individual who holds a classroom teacher certificate that is renewed on or after June 1, 2019, must complete CPE activities directly related to educating English language learners.	19 Tex. Admin. Code § 232.11
Utah	Educator preparation programs may be approved if they require the study of knowledge and skills designed to meet the needs of diverse student populations. This training includes incorporating tools of language development into planning and instruction for English language learners and supporting the development of English proficiency.	Utah Admin. Code r. R277-504-3
Vermont	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Virginia	Candidates for mainstream teaching licenses must have training in teaching methods for ELLs. License renewal process must include training on working with ELLs.	8 Va. Admin. Code 20-543-90 Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-253.13:5 (E)
Washington	Professional development training of sufficient duration and depth for administrators, teachers, counselors, and other staff on bilingual program models, and/or district's alternative instructional program, appropriate use of instructional strategies and assessment results, and curriculum and instructional materials for use with culturally and linguistically diverse students is provided.	Wash. Admin. Code 392-160-010

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West Virginia	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Wisconsin	Not specified in statute or regulation.	
Wyoming	Not specified in statute or regulation.	