This fact sheet reports data and information from the U.S. Department of Education, national study of English learners and digital learning resources, *Supporting English Learners Through Technology* (2019) and the *Educator Toolkit: Using Educational Technology—21st Century Supports for English Learners* (2018).

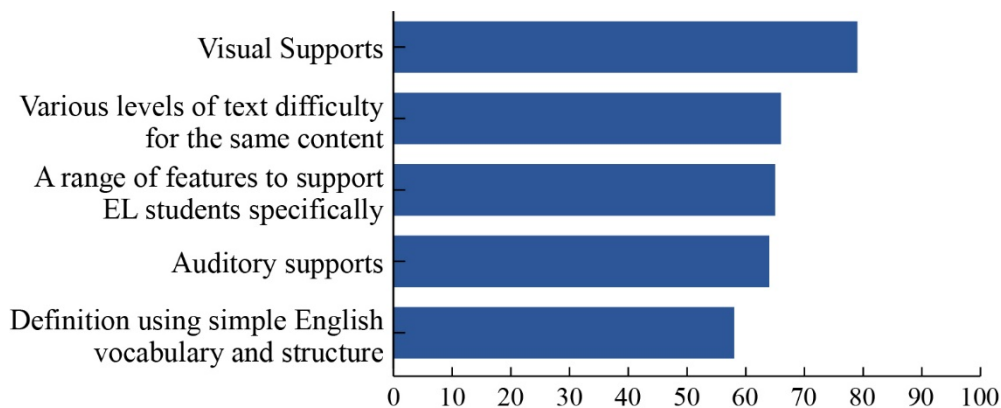## National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources[1]

Study Design:

- Researchers collected data on the use of digital learning resources (DLRs) with English learners (ELs) during the 2016–17 school year.
- Data was collected through a nationally representative survey of districts that enrolled ELs, a teacher survey, and case studies of six districts.

Select Key Findings:

- Eighty-five percent of teachers used DLRs in instructing ELs.
- Teachers were more likely to use general education DLRs than DLRs designed primarily for ELs in the instruction of ELs (85% vs. 65%).
- Across all districts, EL specialists reported fewer hours of professional development in DLR use than did mainstream teachers.

Most Important Features in Selecting Digital Learning Resources for Instructing English Learners[2]

Almost 80% of districts reported that whether the DLR can provide visual support to explain or clarify the content and vocabulary is a very important feature in selecting DLRs for use with ELs.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, Supporting English learners through technology: What districts and teachers say about digital learning resources for English learners. Volume I: Final Report. National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources, Washington, D.C., 2019.

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[1] "Digital learning resources" are defined as applications (apps), software, programs, or websites that are designed to engage students in learning activities and support students' learning goals.

[2] Additional features that districts reported as important when selecting DLRs for instruction of ELs included interactive dictionaries or glossaries, translation functions, materials in ELs' home languages, and record and replay functions.

Educator Toolkit's Guiding Principles for Educators:
What to Know and What to Do

Guiding Principles for Educators	What to Know
1. Understand what educational technology offers for instructing Els.	**What instructional technology can offer ELs:** • Multi-modal means of presenting information • Examples and images of events, daily life, and other cultural information • Supports to help students more fully participate in learning activities (e.g., short videos or images to define new vocabulary) • Differentiated instruction aligned to the EL's level of proficiency and academic learning needs
2. Discover the types of educational technology available.	**Types of educational technology available:** • **Digital Academic Content Tools:** resources or activities to learn academic content or skills (e.g., a simulation of a physics concept) • **Digital Productivity Tools:** resources to help students plan, document, organize, and analyze content (e.g., slide presentation tool or timeline tool) • **Digital Communication Tools:** resources students can use to communicate, collaborate, network, or share information (e.g., document sharing tool)

Guiding Principles for Educators	What to Do
3. Maximize the supports that educational technology offers Els.	• Look for embedded support features in resources (i.e., visual, auditory, translation, or collaboration). • Ask vendors to provide information on support features that can benefit Els. • Assess how easily your ELs can access and use specific support features. • Plan how you will guide your ELs in using support features.
4. Seek out hands-on, instruction-focused professional development.	• Request professional development on education technology. • Ask about embedded supports for ELs and how to use them effectively. • Collaborate with other educators around instructional practices for using technology with ELs. • Join an online community of practice around use of technology with ELs.
5. Learn more about ELs and educational technology.	• Explore online sites that provide descriptions of educational technology products and resources, particularly those that will meet the needs of your ELs. • Read reviews of educational technology products and look for discussions of instructional practices and features that support ELs.