

## **SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles**

*Preparing our Newest Professionals to Meet the Needs of DLL/ELs on Day 1*

SEAL's vision for teacher preparation is that all California Multiple Subject candidates (with and without bilingual authorization) enter the profession empowered, prepared, and motivated to meet the needs of English Learners/Dual Language Learners (EL/DLLs). Teachers are empowered to implement research-based strategies and EL/DLL best practices, as well as understand underlying inequities that affect the achievement of this continually growing student population. These competencies will enable new teachers to be change agents at their schools as they work to disrupt systems and practices that marginalize EL/DLLs.

For over a decade, SEAL has had tremendous success working with preschool programs and elementary school systems to elevate teaching and learning for EL/DLL students. (To learn more about the history and impact of SEAL, see "**About SEAL**" below.) As such, SEAL is expanding our evidence-based resources and services to teacher preparation programs throughout institutes of higher education. SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles will ensure that novice teachers receive high-quality instruction on effective practices for EL/DLLs by aligning coursework with clinical experiences through cycles of learning, observation, application practice, feedback and reflection.

### **Making the Case for Teacher Preparation to work with ELs/DLLs**

California faces both a hopeful future and a daunting legacy when it comes to EL/DLLs. Our state is home to the largest number of EL/DLLs in the country ([NprEd, Migration Policy.org](#)), and has some of the nation's most progressive policies in place to prepare teachers to work with this population ([Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll](#)). *California 2030*, for example, an initiative of the California Department of Education, aims to have half of all K-12 students participate in programs leading to proficiency in two or more languages by the year 2030. As the language of the initiative states, in the past, "English learners were viewed only as a challenge to the educational system because these students needed extra support. Today, we recognize that these young people are assets to our state and their local communities" ([Global CA, 2030](#)). Global 2030 makes official California's shift towards an assets-based understanding of multilingualism and multiliteracy. This policy shift, along with the introduction of the groundbreaking English Learner Roadmap in 2017, position California's public schools as national leaders in the education of English Learners.

However, California also has a pernicious history of school-based linguistic discrimination, and ELs continue to have among the lowest graduation rates of any subgroup of students in California ([CDE](#)). In 2016, Proposition 58 repealed the restrictions of Proposition 227 era which, in 1998, effectively made bilingual education illegal in the state. Almost twenty years of this "English-only" policy has taken a toll that has surely contributed to the conditions

confronting multilingual learners in California. Chief among these longstanding challenges is inequitable access to appropriately trained teachers ([Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll](#)).

California's teacher shortage is not limited to bilingual teachers. In recent years, California has experienced wide-spread teacher shortages that will only worsen as the 40% of the workforce that is age 50 or older begins to retire. Addressing this shortage by emergency issuing of substandard credentials and permits has only created a vicious cycle: teachers who enter the profession ill-prepared and under-supported are not only less effective in the classroom, they also tend to leave the profession, worsening teacher shortages and ensuring that new teachers never become experienced mentors who shepherd the next generation of teachers. Worse, these teacher shortages tend to impact districts with the highest proportion of students from low-income families ([Learning Policy Institute](#)).

**The bottom line is, teacher preparation matters.** Research indicates not only that teaching effectiveness is the largest in-school factor affecting student achievement (Chetty, Friedman, and Rockoff) ([Institute of Education Sciences](#)), but that teachers who *feel* competent are in fact, more successful teachers ([Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll](#)). Furthermore, Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll have found that teachers with any professional development that focused on increasing skills for teaching English Learners rated themselves significantly more able to teach those students across all categories of instruction than teachers with no such training.

If we want to seize this promising policy moment for our English Learners, we must broaden our focus to the next generation of teachers. Nationally, we are failing to prepare new teachers to meet the needs of English Learners. In a study conducted by the US Department of Education, *Effective Instruction for English Learners* was ranked last with over half of teacher candidates (57 percent) reporting “few” or “very few” preparation experiences - the two lowest rankings - and an additional 26% reporting just “some” preparation experiences across coursework, observation, practice, or feedback. In fact, in this study, *Effective Instruction for English Learners* was the lowest ranked of 13 competency areas ([Institute of Education Sciences, 2019](#)).





While Santibañez and Snyder have noted that the California Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) - the standards that guide California's teacher candidates through their state assessments - “contain significant references to teaching ELs” (17), SEAL asserts that the TPEs, in their current form, fail to adequately centralize the needs of English Learners. The existing TPEs don't do enough to require teacher candidates to recognize the importance of home language and prioritize assets-based ideology and instruction. Indeed, perhaps the most damaging legacy of Proposition 227 is a school system that continuously fails to recognize home language as an asset. Not only are many DLLs/ELs not given the opportunity to fully develop academic language in English, but in English-only school environments, many children also experience home language loss. These conditions result in major inequities. California's K-12 English Learner population hovers around 19%, although the true percentage of students for whom English is not their first language (i.e., Ever-ELs) is almost 40% ([California Department](#)

of Education, 2021). Thus, the case for implementing SEAL’s Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles is grounded in the premise that *all* teachers in California are teachers of EL/DLLs.

The SEAL model has provided thousands of in-service teachers with intensive professional development in EL/DLL pedagogy. According to an external evaluation of the SEAL model as it was replicated across 12 different districts, after two years of professional learning, teachers in SEAL schools both significantly increased their use of research-based best practices for teaching English learners (see Figure 1) and also increased their confidence and sense of efficacy as educators (see Figure 2.) The model has proven itself to transform teacher practice, demonstrating positive outcomes for English Learners in biliteracy development, English language arts, and mathematics.

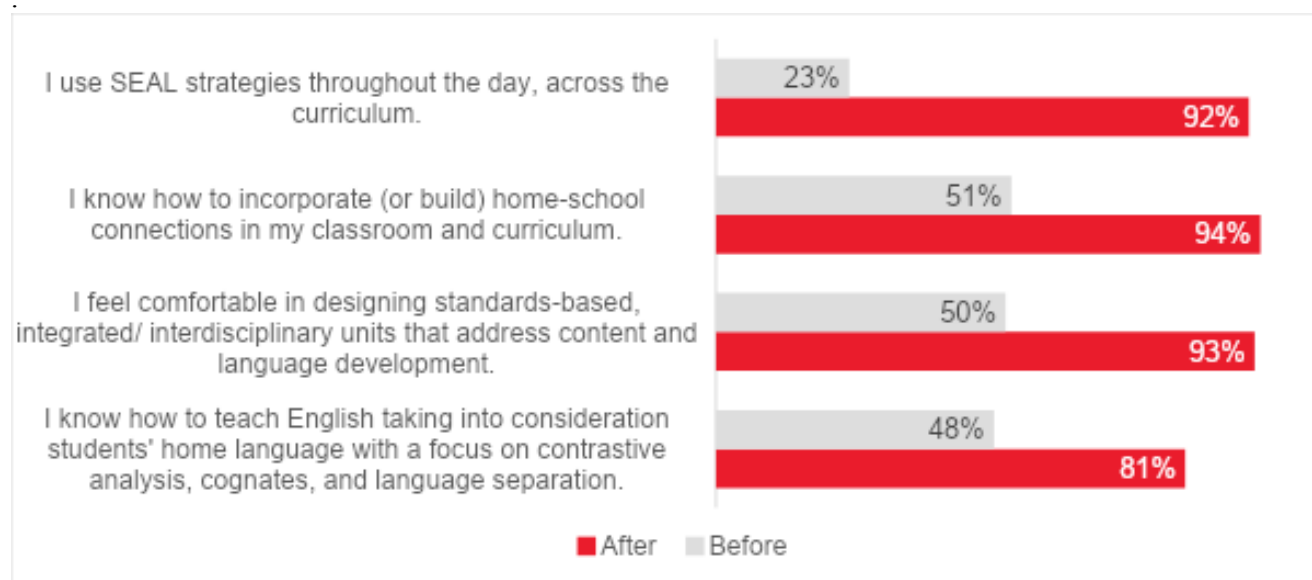
Thus, while SEAL’s Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles are necessarily aligned with the California TPEs, they are also deeply informed by SEAL’s own field-tested, research-based professional development model which prioritizes the needs of multilingual learners, in addition to California’s (newly drafted) Bilingual TPEs.

Figure 1. Observed Changes in Teachers’ Classroom Practices: Key Findings

<b>Rigorous &amp; Relevant Curriculum</b> 	<b>Connections</b> 	<b>Comprehensibility</b> 	<b>Interactions</b> 
<b>STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT GROWTH in ALL DOMAINS</b>			
			- Highest post-treatment mean - Highest growth
<b>Qualitative findings</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequent use of essential questions</li> <li>- Visible use of thematic teaching</li> <li>- Minimal primary language connections to English teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequent observation of connections to previous learning and home-school connections in some classrooms</li> <li>- Limited opportunities for students to apply learning to community issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequent use of scaffolding to enhance comprehensibility</li> <li>- Frequent use of gestures/visuals to clarify key terms</li> <li>- Limited evidence of informal assessments to provide feedback and adjust instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some evidence of increased attempts at implementing collaborative structures</li> <li>- Limited evidence of student autonomy and choice</li> </ul>

Note: This figure is from the Section 3 Executive Summary of the final report of SEAL’s evaluation by CEEL/LMU and Wexford Institute (2020), which can be found at <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ceelreports/1/>

Figure 2. Teachers' Perceived Knowledge and Understanding Before and After Participation in the SEAL Professional Learning Community (N=448)



Note: This graph is based on findings from Section 3 of the final report of SEAL's evaluation by CEEL/LMU and Wexford Institute (2020), which can be found at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ceelreports/1/>

## About SEAL

English Learners represent the fastest growing student population in the United States, now numbering over five million (double the enrollment just 15 years ago). These students must learn English while mastering increasingly rigorous grade-level academic content taught in English. In California, close to half of English learners who enroll in kindergarten are likely to become “Long Term English Learners” who accrue irreparable academic gaps as they move through school, never developing the levels of English proficiency necessary for academic success. The demands of the 21st century Common Core standards underscore the urgency of putting into place powerful schooling that prepares English Learners for college and career readiness.

*The Goal of the SEAL Model is to develop academically proficient and literate students who love reading and writing, express themselves articulately in all of their languages, are joyful and confident learners, and are actors in their classrooms and their broader communities.*

Since 2008, the Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL) Program has provided high-quality English Learner/English Learner (EL/DLL) focused professional development to educators in California, partnering with districts, schools, and preschool programs across the

region. SEAL’s evidence-based approach to teacher and school leader professional learning is designed to build educator capacity to centralize EL/DLLs through intensive, extended training and coaching. We prepare educators, at all levels within the school system, to establish and sustain our research-based model in their schools and classrooms, integrating language development with content learning, including science, social studies, and the arts. SEAL teachers fully implement the ELA/ELD Framework, the Next Generation Science Standards, and History/Social Science Standards while providing students scaffolds and support to access content and develop complex, precise academic language.

Designed by drawing upon the research on best practices for ELs and the dual language brain, as well as preventing the creation of Long-Term English Learners, SEAL enacts effective English Learner practices. These two bodies of research, together with an explicit approach to comprehensive instructionally focused school change that incorporates an analysis of the challenges of implementing Common Core era standards, establish the foundation for the SEAL model. Utilizing this foundational research, the SEAL Model coalesces around Four Pillars:

**Pillar #1:** A focus on rich, powerful, precise and academic language

**Pillar #2:** Creation of an affirming, enriched and action-oriented environment

**Pillar #3:** Articulation across grades, and alignment of the preschool and elementary school systems

**Pillar #4:** Strong partnerships between parents and teachers

Eleven High-Leverage Pedagogical Practices (HLPPs) of instruction, implemented in all SEAL classrooms, ensure that all Four Pillars are addressed as part of the educational program in all grades. While the practices are aligned across the PreK–elementary grades, they are intentionally designed to increase in rigor and sophistication as they extend from one grade span to the next as a reflection of the deepening academic demands required as children advance in their school.

### **SEAL’s ELEVEN HIGH-LEVERAGE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES**

**PRACTICE #1: COMPLEX, ACADEMIC VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT**

**PRACTICE #2: STRUCTURED ORAL INTERACTION AND ACADEMIC DISCOURSE**

**PRACTICE #3: EXPOSURE TO RICH LITERATURE AND HIGH-LEVEL INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

**PRACTICE #4: PURPOSEFUL, INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS AND MEANINGFUL TEXT ENGAGEMENT**

**PRACTICE #5: WRITING FOR PURPOSE**

**PRACTICE #6: DRAMATIC PLAY AND HANDS-ON, INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING**

**PRACTICE #7: GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS AND VISUALS**

**PRACTICE #8: CONTINUOUS CHECKS FOR COMPREHENSION AND DEMONSTRATING LEARNING**

**PRACTICE #9: TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE**

**PRACTICE #10: LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ARTS INFUSION**

**PRACTICE #11: THE WORLD IN THE CLASSROOM**

## The Content of SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles

SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles (TPLCs) prepare new teachers to meet the needs of Dual Language/English Learners. The six Cycles are closely aligned with the California Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs), the California Bilingual Teacher Expectations (BTPEs), and the California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA) Cycles of Assessment. Completing SEAL's Learning Cycles ensures candidates acquire the skills and materials required for their CalTPA submissions while being prepared to meet the needs of English learners upon entry to the classroom.

### SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles (TPLCs)

#### CalTPA Cycle One: Learning about Students and Planning Instruction

- 1 Teaching for Equity: Creating a Welcoming & Affirming Learning Environment
- 2 Oral Language Part I: Language & Language Learners / Teacher as a Language Coach
- 3 Oral Language Part II: Language in and Through Content + Formative Assessment

#### CalTPA Cycle Two: Assessment-Driven Instruction

- 4 Ensuring Success: Building Towards Performance Tasks
- 5 Context for Learning: Engaging, Motivating & Respectful
- 6 Leveraging Formative Assessment to Deepen Language Proficiency

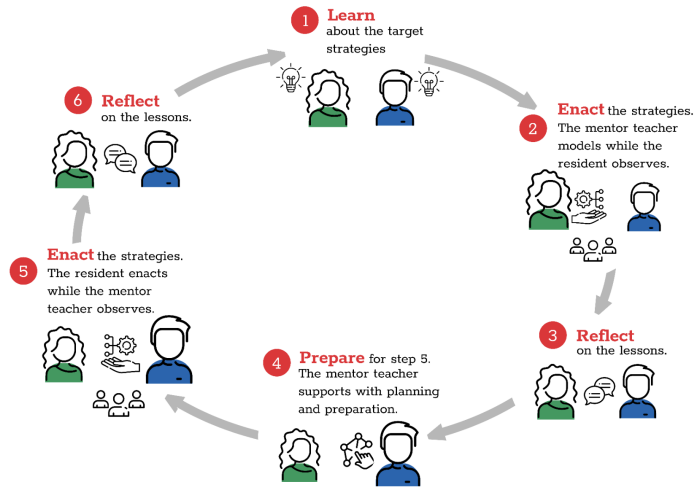
\*\*See **The Cycles in Depth** for a fuller explanation of the Learning Cycles, including TPEs/BTPEs covered, strategies, and aligned Educator Prep course work.

Each SEAL Learning Cycle centralizes the needs of Dual Language/English Learners by defining key pedagogical practices required to ensure their success. Teacher candidates learn how to enact these practices through a series of SEAL's research-based strategies.

In addition to alignment to the CalTPAs and the B/TPEs, SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles outline the foundational knowledge novice teachers will require in order to fully engage with each Learning Cycle. This enables the university to ensure alignment between coursework and clinical practice.

The six Learning Cycles are inquiry-based and designed to engage candidates with their mentors in continuous reflection over the course of their preparation year. Each Cycle begins with approximately two hours of asynchronous learning through SEAL's online learning management system. By design, mentors and residents independently work through the online course and then collaborate to make

## SEAL Teacher Preparation Learning Cycle



meaning in their classroom with their students. This includes side-by-side planning and preparation followed by mentor modeling, co-teaching, and candidate rehearsal and implementation. This gradual release model ensures mentor and resident learn in tandem, establishing the critical foundational skills outlined in *TPE #6: Developing as a Professional Educator*.

## Our Levels of Support

In response to the varying needs of California teacher preparation programs, SEAL offers two options for access to our Learning Cycles, thereby affording each IHE the opportunity to identify the most effective and personalized level of partnership for their context.

<p><b>Option B:</b> Full Access</p>	<p>SEAL's Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles are SCORM compliant and ready-to-use. In addition to providing an orientation to the Learning Cycles for university educators, SEAL will support the institute of higher education to load the courses onto their online learning management system.</p>
<p><b>Option A:</b> Full Access with Consultancy</p>	<p>In addition to Orientation, SEAL will provide targeted consultancy throughout the first year of implementation to integrate and implement the SEAL Learning Cycles. This will include supporting alignment between coursework and the Learning Cycles, integration of the Learning Cycle process with already established observation and reflection protocols, and access to additional SEAL resources for use in university coursework, such as videos of high quality instruction, tools and templates designed to centralize the needs of EL/DLLs, and PreK-6th grade curriculum resources.</p>

## The Teacher Preparation Learning Cycles In Depth

CalTPA Cycle 1: Learning About Students and Planning Instruction		
SEAL Teacher Preparation Learning Cycle	Foundational Knowledge <i>Covered through University Coursework</i>	Practices/Strategies <i>Implemented in Clinical Practice</i>
<p><b>#1: Teaching for Equity: Creating a Welcoming &amp; Affirming Learning Environment</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>How do we create affirming learning environments?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8; <b>2:</b> 2.2, 2.5; <b>3:</b> 3.5; <b>4:</b> 4.1, 4.4, 4.7; <b>5:</b> 5.2</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> a, c, e, f, g; <b>2:</b> a, c, f; <b>6:</b> a, d, e, g, h, i</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research on Motivating &amp; Engaging ELs</li> <li>● Understand Anti-Bias Education and Learning for Justice</li> <li>● English Learner Roadmap Principle #1: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools</li> <li>● Leveraging student and family Funds of Knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to promote positive <b>classroom culture</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Culturally relevant and sustaining literature</li> <li>● The Classroom Audit</li> <li>● Celebrating &amp; Promoting Multilingualism</li> <li>● Creating Home-School connections through home activities</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to develop strong <b>family partnerships</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gallery walks</li> <li>● Empathy Interviews</li> <li>● Family-Centered Goal Setting</li> </ul>
<p><b>#2: Oral Language - Part I: Teacher as a Language Coach</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>How does oral language develop higher order thinking?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.1, 1.2, 1.6; <b>2:</b> 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6; <b>4:</b> 4.1, 4.4; <b>6:</b> 6.5</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> a, b, c; <b>2:</b> a, b, d, e; <b>3:</b> a, b, c; <b>4:</b> a, d; <b>5:</b> a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Formative Assessment</li> <li>● Academic Language</li> <li>● How to write Language Targets &amp; Content Objectives</li> <li>● Characteristics of Integrated and Designated ELD</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to promote <b>oral language</b> and <b>higher order thinking</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher as Language Coach</li> <li>● Language Functions with Graphic Organizers and Sentence Frames</li> <li>● Inquiry Chart</li> <li>● Think-Pair-Share</li> <li>● Choral Response</li> <li>● Academic Process Journal</li> <li>● Transfer</li> </ul>



<p><b>#3: Oral Language - Part II: Language In and Through Content</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>How can we plan to centralize and build language in all content areas?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 1.6, 1.8; <b>2:</b> 2.2,2.5; <b>3:</b> 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5; <b>4:</b> 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7; <b>5:</b> 5.2; 5.7, <b>6</b> 6.1, 6.2, 6.5</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> a; <b>3:</b> a; <b>5:</b> a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic Instruction &amp; the California ELA/ELD Framework Circles of Implementation</li> <li>• Backward Planning for desired outcomes based on standards</li> <li>• Anti-Racist Instructional Practices (per the California Social Studies Framework)</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to <b>centralize language instruction throughout content</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogic Read Aloud</li> <li>• Narrative Input</li> <li>• Draw and Label</li> <li>• Chants &amp; Songs</li> <li>• VIC</li> <li>• Essential Questions &amp; Enduring Understandings</li> </ul>
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**CalTPA Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction**

<p><b>#4: Ensuring Success for DLL/ELs: Building Toward Performance Tasks</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>How do we ensure our Dual Language Learners excel on their Performance Tasks?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8; <b>2:</b> 2.2, 2.5; <b>3:</b> 3.1, 3.2, 3.3,3.4, 3.5, 3.6; <b>4:</b> 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7, <b>5,</b> 5.2, 5.7, 5.88</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> a, b; <b>2:</b> b, d, e; <b>3:</b> a, c; <b>4:</b> d; <b>5:</b> a, b, c</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating the ELD Standards</li> <li>• Planning for Integrated &amp; Designated ELD</li> <li>• Differences between short-cycle &amp; medium-cycle assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to <b>implement targeted Integrated &amp; Designated ELD</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Tasks incorporating Language Functions</li> <li>• Planning “to prepare for” Designated ELD</li> <li>• Language Function Wall</li> <li>• Infusing “choice” into Performance Tasks</li> </ul>
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<p><b>#5: The Context for Learning: Engaging, Motivating, Respectful</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>How does authentic collaboration promote critical thinking and language development for DLL/ELs?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.8; <b>2:</b> 2.1 2.2, 2.5; <b>3:</b> 3.5, 3.6, 3.8; <b>5:</b> 5.4; <b>6:</b> 6.1</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>2:</b> a, c, d, f</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inquiry-based learning</li> <li>● 21st Century Learning &amp; the 4Cs (Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Creativity)</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to create a <b>collaborative classroom community</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● T-graph for Social Skills</li> <li>● Community Meetings</li> </ul> <p>Strategies to promote <b>inquiry-based learning, problem-solving, &amp; critical thinking</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborative Practices</li> <li>● Discussion Protocols</li> <li>● Observation Pictures</li> <li>● Research Rotations/Researcher Centers</li> </ul>
<p><b>#6: Leveraging Formative Assessment to Deepen Language Proficiency</b></p> <p><b>Answers the Guiding Question:</b> <i>What does powerful differentiation look like?</i></p> <p><b>Addresses the following TPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> 1.4; <b>4:</b> 4.3, 4.4, 4.7; <b>5:</b> 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.8</p> <p><b>Addresses the following BTPEs:</b>  <b>1:</b> a; <b>2:</b> b; <b>3:</b> c; <b>4:</b> d; <b>5:</b> a, b, c, d</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differentiation - What is it? How does it show up in the ELD standards?</li> <li>● Designated ELD – “in response to”</li> <li>● Addressing data gathered during formative assessment</li> <li>● Purpose/use of rubrics for medium cycle assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to use <b>formative assessment to plan for Designated ELD</b>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oral Language Analysis for Designated ELD</li> <li>● Feedback &amp; Goal Setting</li> <li>● Differentiated rubrics (using ELD standards) &amp; Reflection</li> <li>● “In response to” D-ELD lessons.</li> </ul>

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