

Communities of Practice

During the 2021-2022 school year, the TEA English Learner Support Division welcomes local education agencies (LEAs) to participate in two Communities of Practice as described below. These facilitated networks are the first of more to come! Participants will meet bi-monthly with TEA staff to discuss key topics, exchange ideas and resources, share out on implemented progress, and provide input on the development of related TEA resources.

Please complete this [LEA Interest Form](#) by **Friday, September 10th, 2021**, to receive further details on participation! Limited spots available.

Biliteracy Instruction (BI) in Transitional Bilingual Programs (TBE)

Background:

Close to half of the bilingual programs implemented in Texas are TBE. Both early and late exit models begin with primary language literacy, and then leverage that knowledge to facilitate the transition to English literacy. This transition best supports sequential bilinguals, or students who have fully developed their primary language and can therefore develop early literacy skills efficiently. However, many of our students in Texas are simultaneous bilinguals, or students who enter school already developing two languages simultaneously. Biliteracy instruction, rather than a traditionally implemented TBE program, leverages students' entire linguistic repertoire, yielding a more efficient way to serve students entering our classrooms.

Participants:

This Community of Practice will include LEA leadership teams interested in strengthening their current elementary TBE programs through the incorporation of biliteracy instruction.

Purpose:

LEAs currently implementing TBE programs will investigate the concept of biliteracy instruction through a TEA facilitated book study and discussion. LEAs will have tasks to complete, such as analyzing data, soliciting input from teachers, and collaborating with RLA curriculum leadership. The proposed timeline is for LEAs to create biliteracy units during the summer of 2022 to be implemented in the fall of the 2022-2023 school year in at least one grade level on at least one campus.

Supporting Newcomers Across Texas

Background:

Newcomers are typically defined as immigrant students in their first 3 years in U.S. schools. Newcomers represent a wide range of backgrounds and national origins, and they may include students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) as well as refugees and asylees. In the 2020-2021 school year, there were 108,090 Texas students identified as immigrant, and of these students, 89,557 were also identified as English learner (EL)/emergent bilingual (EB). This means that 8% of our over 1.1 million EL/EB students are newcomers, and targeted support is essential for their success.

Participants:

This Community of Practice will include a variety of LEA staff (teachers, instructional leadership, etc.) that serve newcomers, particularly at the secondary level, in various capacities from schools with a few newcomer students to those with concentrated amounts of newcomers who are served in a localized newcomer center or designated school.

Purpose:

The purpose of this Community of Practice is to connect a network of educators who serve newcomer students across Texas and to facilitate the sharing of resources, effective instructional methods, strategic planning practices, and parent and family engagement ideas. Community of Practice participants will hear and learn from each other, empowering each other to strengthen their support of newcomer students.