

Serving Oregon's Emergent Bilingual Students

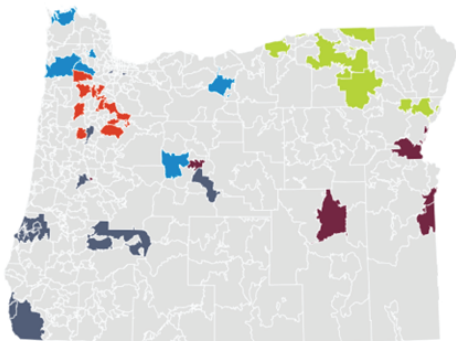
ODE ESD English Language Development Support

Serving the needs of Oregon's emergent bilingual students has been a priority in Oregon exemplified by the Oregon Legislature's passage of HB3499, which appropriated \$12.5 million every biennium to support English learners. A critical component of the Legislation was providing support for not only those districts with large numbers of emergent bilingual students, but also districts with fewer than 20. Based on numbers from Title III programs, approximately 100

Oregon school districts had fewer than 20 emergent bilingual students. HB3499 provided funds to hire six teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) as English Learner (EL) Specialists (5 full time and one approximately .75 time) who are housed at five education service districts (ESDs) throughout the state: (Clackamas (1.0 FTE), Willamette (1.75), South Coast (1.0), InterMountain (1.0), and Malheur (1.0)). The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at ODE collaborated with the community and other offices throughout the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to select the five ESDs.

Serving Oregon

A guiding principle of the project is that technical assistance (TA) is based on the individual district's perceptions of their own needs. There is no requirement that districts participate. Over the first two years of the project, 70 districts and six ESDs were served. The map below indicates the five ESDs housing ESD EL Specialists and the areas they served.



WESD's Center for Education, Innovation, Evaluation & Research (The Center) partnered with ODE and the ESDs to evaluate the work of the ESD EL Specialists. This document provides data summaries of ESD EL Specialist activities and a summary of the impact and satisfaction survey of TA recipients from the first two years of the project.

Technical Assistance

ESD EL Specialists provided technical assistance to smaller schools and districts with vastly differing needs. One of the most important first steps was to develop trust with the districts. While working with the ESD EL Specialists, some districts discovered they had underidentified students. Those districts with dedicated English Language Development Teachers, often lacked support and felt isolated. Some of the ELD teachers lacked formal training in the area and/or wear multiple hats for the district. Still others lacked effective strategies to impact the work classroom teachers did with emergent bilinguals. ESD EL Specialists worked to meet the needs of the district regardless of the challenges.



Technical assistance areas included coaching, curriculum support, lesson planning, needs assessments, professional development, administrative support, community and family engagement, EL Plan and Title III Support, refugee support, formative assessments, and state assessments. Where possible, networking opportunities (highly valued by districts) were provided through regular meetings of communities of practice, and workshops often included multiple districts and both EL and content area teachers.

Hours & Impact

The ESD EL Specialists worked tirelessly to meet the needs of the districts they served. Because of the distances they had to travel, we asked that they track their travel time and the amount of time spent in technical assistance. Note: they did not document brief sessions, responding to email, ESD duties, or preparation time in their logs. In Year 1, they spent an average of 15 hours in travel each month, and in Year 2, 20 hours. The number of hours specialists spent in training sessions (on the phone, virtually, or in person) increased from an average of 21 hours per month in Year 1 to 33 hours per month in Year 2.

Years 1 & 2

In Year 1, TA requests focused on developing capacity and working with administrators to gauge each district's needs. Year 2 turned the focus to classroom services. In Year 3, ESD EL Specialists' work was vital to districts as they dealt with providing services during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the work continues into Year 4 and beyond, ESD EL Specialists will be there to support district needs.



The average time each ESD EL Specialist spent in travel increased by one-third, from 15 hours per month in Year 1 to 20 hours per month in Year 2.



The average number of hours each ESD EL Specialist spent in technical assistance per month increased by more than fifty percent from Year 1 to Year 2.

Administrators and Teachers Identify Positive Outcomes

Administrators and teachers were surveyed about the ESD EL Specialists' services. Almost 80% of survey respondents each year indicated they would like to continue services into the next year. Those responding "maybe" indicated that if they had emergent bilingual students the next year, they would want to continue services. Improvements to monitoring, family engagement, and developing staff capacity are all areas identified by administrators and teachers as positive outcomes. Below are some of their comments.

- [EL Specialist] is an amazing resource for our school and for the schools in our region. We are so thankful for her solution-oriented approach and her collegiality with our staff. Thank you!
- The advancement of our monitoring systems for exited students has positively impacted teachers and admin by providing more easy-to-use data and forms to monitor academic progress.
- Equity training professional development has made me become more aware of our policies and practices. Our district teams will use more of an equity lens in the future because of this training.