

# English as a New Language Standards

Second Edition

for teachers of students ages 3–18+

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*National Board Certification  
Promotes Better Teaching,  
Better Learning, Better Schools*

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# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	4
<a href="#">About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards</a> .....	4
<a href="#">About the Standards</a> .....	6
<a href="#">About Certification</a> .....	7
<b>Foundation of National Board Certification for Teachers</b> .....	8
<a href="#">Five Core Propositions</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Architecture of Accomplished Teaching</a> .....	11
<b>Standards</b> .....	12
<a href="#">Introduction</a> .....	12
<a href="#">English as a New Language Standards Statements</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Standard I: Knowledge of Students</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Standard II: Knowledge of Culture and Diversity</a> .....	25
<a href="#">Standard III: Home, School, and Community Connections</a> .....	30
<a href="#">Standard IV: Knowledge of the English Language</a> .....	34
<a href="#">Standard V: Knowledge of English Language Acquisition</a> .....	43
<a href="#">Standard VI: Instructional Practice</a> .....	49
<a href="#">Standard VII: Assessment</a> .....	60
<a href="#">Standard VIII: Teacher as Learner</a> .....	68
<a href="#">Standard IX: Professional Leadership and Advocacy</a> .....	70
<a href="#">Standards Committees</a> .....	74
<a href="#">Acknowledgments</a> .....	76

# Preface

## About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (National Board) is a not-for-profit professional organization, created and governed by practicing teachers and their advocates. The founding mission of the National Board is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by

- maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do;
- providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and
- advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification into American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers.

Recognized as the “gold standard” in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students.

Founded in 1987, the National Board began by engaging teachers in the development of standards for accomplished teaching and in the building of an assessment—National Board Certification—that validly and reliably identifies when a teacher meets those standards. Today, there are 25 certificate areas that span 16 content areas and four student developmental levels. The essence of the National Board’s vision of accomplished teaching is captured in the enduring document *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*, at the heart of which are the Five Core Propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The National Board believes that board certification should become the norm, not the exception, and should be fully integrated into the fabric of the teaching profession. In other professions, such as medicine, engineering, and architecture, board certification has helped to create a culture of accomplished practice and is a major reason why those professions are held in such high regard by the public. Those professions did what teaching must now do: strengthen the coherent pipeline of preparation that begins in pre-service and continues through board certification and beyond, with each step engineered to help teachers develop toward accomplished. More than 110,000 teachers had achieved board certification by 2014, a number which represents the largest group of identified teaching experts in the country. Given the size of the teaching workforce, however, this sizable number represents fewer than 3 percent of teachers.

For most children that means they go through their entire schooling without being taught by a board-certified teacher. Each teacher who pursues board certification helps to close this gap, strengthening the profession and the quality of teaching and learning. In a world where board certification is the standard that all teachers aspire to and most achieve, students experience accomplished teaching throughout their schooling, unleashing their potential.

## About the Standards

Every child deserves an accomplished teacher—one who is qualified to equip students with the skills to succeed in a global community. The core mission of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is to create field-specific standards for accomplished teaching that are grounded in the Five Core Propositions and that articulate the actions that accomplished teachers employ to advance student learning. Each standards document represents a professional consensus on the attributes of practice that distinguish accomplished teaching in that field. Many school systems use the standards as the basis for ongoing professional development, and many colleges and universities incorporate the standards into their undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs.

Standards are developed and revised by a committee of 12–15 members who are representative of accomplished professionals in their field. A majority of standards committee members are practicing Board certified teachers. Other committee members are experts in academic content and child development, including teacher educators, researchers, and other professionals in the relevant field. Standards are disseminated widely for public comment and subsequently revised as necessary before adoption by the National Board's Board of Directors.

Throughout the development of both the standards and the certification process, the National Board ensures broad representation of the diversity that exists within the profession; engages pertinent disciplinary and specialty associations at key points in the process; collaborates closely with appropriate state agencies, academic institutions, and independent research and education organizations; and establishes procedures to detect and eliminate instances of external and internal bias.

National Board Standards and certifications are defined by the developmental level of the students and by the subject or subjects being taught. Teachers select the subject area that makes up the substantive focus of their teaching. They may choose Generalist certificates if they do not focus on one particular subject area in their practice. The four overlapping student developmental levels (listed below) indicate the age of the majority of their students.

- Early Childhood (EC)—ages 3–8
- Middle Childhood (MC)—ages 7–12
- Early Adolescence (EA)—ages 11–15
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood (AYA)—ages 14–18+

## About Certification

National Board Certification® is a voluntary, standards-based process designed for teachers to transform the Five Core Propositions into practice. In order to be eligible for certification a teacher must

- Hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution<sup>1</sup>;
- Have a minimum of three years' teaching experience at the early childhood, elementary, middle school, or high school level; and
- Where it is required, hold a state teaching license.

The assessments, aligned with the Five Core Propositions and the standards, are designed so that teachers demonstrate their practice by providing evidence of what they know and do. The evidence-based assessment honors the complexities and demands of teaching.

In 2014, the National Board initiated revision of the assessment to make the process more flexible, affordable, and efficient for teachers. In all certificate areas, candidates for National Board Certification are now required to complete four components: three portfolio entries, which are submitted online, and a computer-based assessment, which is administered at a testing center. Teachers develop portfolio entries that require analysis of their practice as it relates to student learning and to being a reflective, effective practitioner. Designed to capture what a teacher knows and is able to do in real time and in real-life settings, the portfolio consists of description, analysis, and reflection focused on student learning that is captured on video and in student work samples. The process requires teachers to reflect on the underlying assumptions of their practice and the impacts of that practice on student learning.

Teachers also demonstrate content knowledge by responding to open-ended and multiple choice questions delivered at a secure testing site. The assessment center component complements the portfolio, validates that the knowledge and skills exhibited in the portfolio are accurate reflections of what a candidate knows, and provides candidates with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills not sampled in the portfolio.

Assessments are based on the standards and are developed for every certificate area by educators who specialize in the same content and student developmental level as the candidates. Educators who are themselves practitioners in the certificate area score the submitted portfolio entries. They must successfully complete intensive training and qualify for scoring on the basis of their understanding of National Board Standards and scoring guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Candidates registering for the Career and Technical Education certificate are required to hold a bachelor's degree only if their state required one for their current license.

# Foundation of National Board Certification for Teachers

## Five Core Propositions

The National Board framework for accomplished teaching was established in its 1989 publication, *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*. The Five Core Propositions serve as the foundation for all National Board standards and assessments, defining the level of knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments that accomplished teachers demonstrate. Teachers embody all Five Core Propositions in their practices, drawing on various combinations of these skills, applications, and dispositions to promote student learning.

### 1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

Accomplished teachers base their practice on the fundamental belief that all students can learn and meet high expectations. They treat students equitably, recognizing the individual differences that distinguish one student from another and taking account of these differences in their practice. They adjust their practice based on observation and understanding of their students' interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, language, family circumstances, and peer relationships. They view students' varied backgrounds as diversity that enriches the learning environment for every student.

Accomplished teachers understand how students develop and learn. They consult and incorporate a variety of learning and development theories into their practice, while remaining attuned to their students' individual contexts, cultures, abilities, and circumstances. They are committed to students' cognitive development as well as to students' ownership of their learning. Equally important, they foster students' self-esteem, motivation, character, perseverance, civic responsibility, intellectual risk taking, and respect for others.

### 2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

Accomplished teachers have a rich understanding of the subject(s) they teach and appreciate how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, linked to other disciplines, and applied to real-world settings. While maintaining the integrity of disciplinary methods, content, and structures of organization, accomplished teachers develop the critical and analytical capacities of their students so they can think for themselves.

Accomplished teachers command specialized knowledge of how to convey and reveal subject matter to students. They are aware of the preconceptions and background knowledge that students typically bring to each subject and draw upon pedagogical and subject matter understandings to anticipate challenges,

modify their practice, and respond to students' needs. They also demonstrate a commitment towards learning about new strategies, instructional resources, and technology that can be of assistance. Their instructional repertoire and professional judgment allow them to generate multiple paths to knowledge in the subjects they teach, and they are adept at teaching students how to pose and solve their own problems so they can continue exploring and advancing their understanding.

### **3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.**

Accomplished teachers view themselves as facilitators of student learning within dynamic instructional settings. They create, enrich, maintain, and alter learning environments while establishing effective ways to monitor and manage those environments and the student learning that occurs within them. They possess a comprehensive knowledge of instructional methods, know when each is appropriate, and can implement them as needed. They use instructional time constructively and efficiently, customizing physical layout, resources, and instructional methods. They enlist the knowledge and support of a wide range of stakeholders to provide their students with enriched opportunities to learn. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of pedagogical approaches they may take, as well as the suitability of these approaches for particular students.

Accomplished teachers know how to engage students in varied settings and group configurations. They create positive and safe learning environments that guide student behavior and support learning, allowing the schools' goals for students to be met. They are adept at setting norms for social interaction among students and between students and teachers. They understand how to motivate students and value student engagement, supporting them as they face and learn from challenges.

Accomplished teachers assess the progress of individual students as well as that of the class as a whole. They apply their knowledge of assessment to employ multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding. They use the information they gather from monitoring student learning to inform their practice, and they provide constructive feedback to students and families. They collaborate with students throughout the learning process and help students engage in self-assessment.

### **4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.**

Accomplished teachers possess a professional obligation to become perpetual students of their craft. Committed to reflective learning, they are models of educated persons. They exemplify the virtues they seek to inspire in students—curiosity, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity and appreciation of cultural differences—and the capacities that are prerequisites for intellectual growth: the ability to reason and take multiple perspectives, to be creative and take risks, and to adopt an experimental and problem-solving orientation.

Accomplished teachers draw on their knowledge of human development, subject matter, and instruction, and their understanding of their students to make principled judgments about sound practice. Their decisions are not only grounded in established theories, but also in reason born of experience. They engage in lifelong learning, which they seek to encourage in their students.

Accomplished teachers seek opportunities to cultivate their learning. Striving to strengthen their teaching and positively impact student learning, teachers use feedback and research to critically examine

their practice, seek to expand their repertoire, deepen their knowledge, sharpen their judgment and adapt their teaching to new findings, ideas and theories.

## **5. Teachers are members of learning communities.**

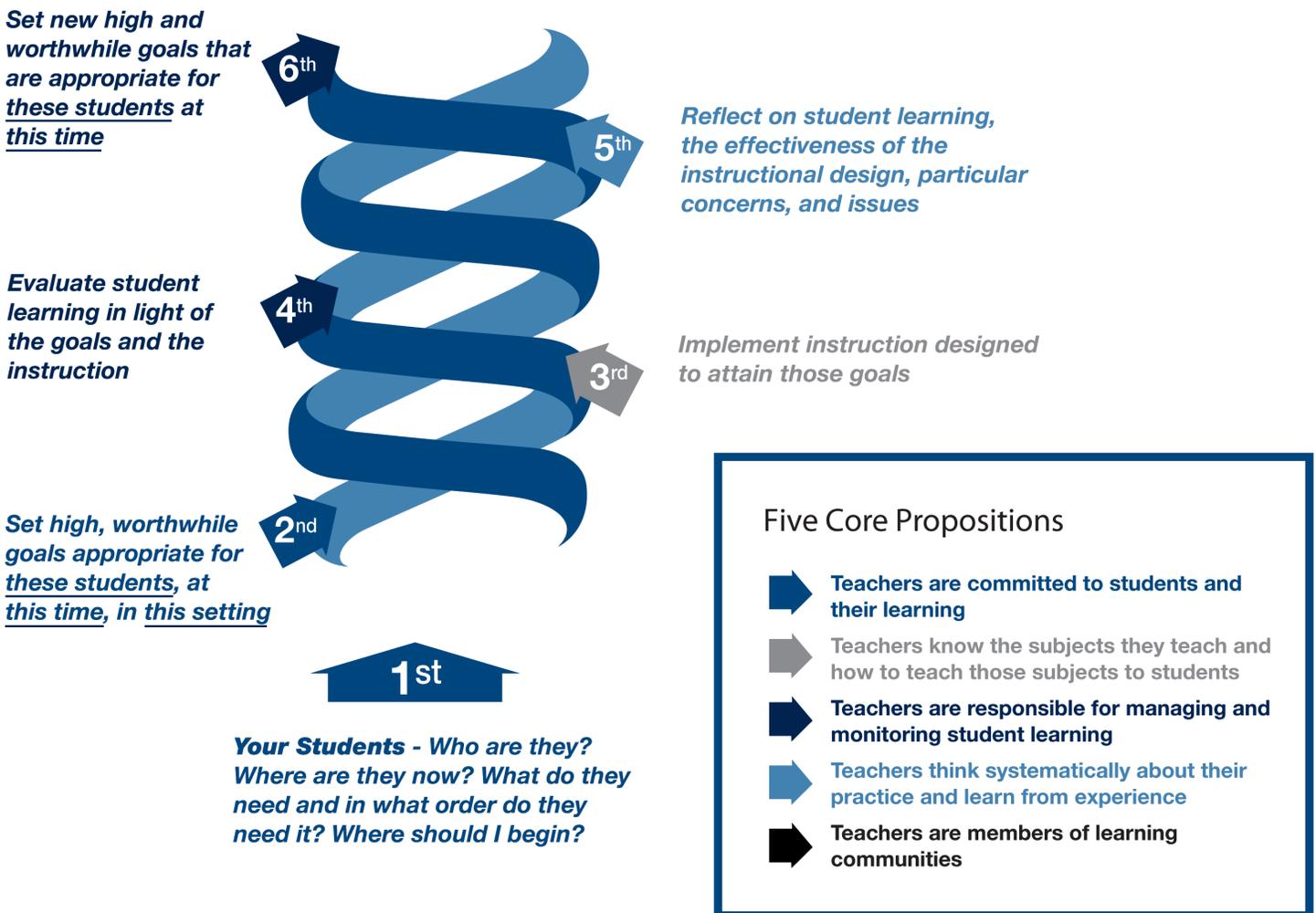
Accomplished teachers participate actively in their learning communities to promote progress and achievement. They contribute to the effectiveness of the school by working collaboratively with other professionals on policy decisions, curriculum development, professional learning, school instructional programs, and other functions that are fundamental to the development of highly productive learning communities. They work collaboratively and creatively with families and the community, engaging them productively in the work of the school and cultivating students' connections with the opportunities, resources, and diversity they afford.

Accomplished teachers can evaluate school progress and the allocation of school resources in light of their understanding of state and local educational objectives and their knowledge of student needs. They are knowledgeable about and can advocate for specialized school and community resources that can be engaged for their students' benefit, and are skilled at employing such resources as needed.

# Architecture of Accomplished Teaching

The Architecture of Accomplished Teaching provides a view of how the use of the Five Core Propositions and the standards that are developed from them result in student learning. As depicted in the Architecture of Accomplished Teaching illustration, shown below, one strand represents teaching practice as grounded in the Five Core Propositions, while the other strand represents the teacher’s impact on students and their learning.

## The Architecture of Accomplished Teaching: What is underneath the surface?



The National Board program certifies accomplished teachers who positively influence student learning through effective teaching practice. The process includes the core propositions for all teachers, a common set of accomplished teaching standards specific to the content field and students’ developmental levels, and a set of evidence-based assessments specific to the field that certify what accomplished teachers know and do.

# Standards

## Introduction

accomplished teacher    *enseignant chevronné*    znakomity nauczyciel  
**hervorragender lehrer**    insegnante realizzato    HUWARANG GURO  
profesor competente    выдающийся педагог    THẦY GIÁO TÀI NĂNG

Accomplished teacher—there are many ways to say it and many ways to demonstrate what an accomplished teacher knows and is able to do. Ensuring that all English language learners develop sufficient English proficiency to develop their potential is at the heart of what the accomplished teachers of English language learners do. Accomplished teachers of English language learners recognize the central role of strong proficiency in English in developing students’ abilities to understand their textbooks and instructional lessons; to interact meaningfully with others in a wide range of social and academic situations; to develop their ideas, make informed and reasoned judgments; and to think critically and analytically so that the students benefit from education in the United States.

In pursuit of these goals, accomplished teachers of English language learners deal with some of the most vexing and complex issues facing schools today. Their teaching assignments may include all subject areas; English language development/English as a second language in general; listening, speaking, reading, writing, or visual literacy; basic reading skills; advanced communication; or English across a variety of discipline areas. The specific charge of teaching English language learners imposes instructional demands on all teachers, but nowhere are the responsibilities of the instruction of English language more evident than in the work of accomplished teachers of English language learners.

Accomplished teachers of English language learners demonstrate a deep interest in cultural and linguistic diversity and view their students as rich resources. Many accomplished teachers study and speak other languages in addition to English and have experienced life in countries outside the United States, thus increasing their ability to empathize with their students. This shared interest in other languages and cultures underscores teachers’ priority of preparing students to live in a global society. Teachers of English language learners tend to have a heightened awareness of social inequality and social justice, combating discrimination and embracing the notion that the United States is a country historically comprised of immigrants. Their mission is to educate all their students so that every student can become a productive member of society.

Accomplished teachers of English language learners possess a deep understanding of who their students are, prepare students to be successful adults, and help the school community and the community at large understand the importance of diversity to a thriving democracy. Teachers recognize the challenges that face young people as a result of their quest for identity, acceptance, and community, as well as

the impact of demographic changes, technological developments, and new economic patterns on the lives of today's youth. Accomplished teachers never see students as simple stereotypes but instead recognize that each student is unique, and teachers strive to understand individuals in all their richness and complexity and the ways they identify in groups. This requires interacting with young people not just in the classroom but in other school and community settings, so that teachers can better appreciate student cares, concerns, and capabilities.

Teaching English to English language learners involves more than teaching the English language. It also means teaching students about their new school, community, and country; it means preparing them to inquire into how they can become contributing members of their various communities; it means helping them to collaborate with others from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives; and it means encouraging them to advocate for themselves to overcome any barriers to their success. Accomplished teachers of English language learners recognize their true accomplishment is not only to provide for English language proficiency but includes supporting their students as they acquire the skills, strategies, and confidence needed to set high, achievable goals, and empowering their students as independent learners who are prepared to develop their true talents in other areas throughout their education as well as in their future careers.

Accomplished teachers accept their ethical responsibility to advocate for their students' success in order to give both the students and their families a voice they may not have yet acquired themselves. Accomplished teachers' advocacy at the school, district, state, and even national levels extends beyond their students' academic needs to the unique personal needs of their students. Accomplished teachers understand that everyone in the school shares the responsibility for the success of all students, and they collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that success for English language learners.

The revised *English as a New Language Standards* articulate what it is an accomplished teacher of English language learners knows and is able to do. While the standards stand on their own, trends in terminology, program settings, student and teacher populations, and policy have influenced the revised standards.

For the sake of clarity, agreement was reached by the standards committee concerning several key terms that are used throughout the document. The term "English language learner" has been chosen to represent the group of students described in these standards. The committee agreed on the basic definition that an English language learner is a student who is in the process of acquiring English and has been exposed to a language other than English. In addition, as explained in footnotes, students' native languages will be referred to as either primary language or home language throughout this document.

Accomplished teachers of English language learners teach in a variety of settings, including bilingual, English as a second language or English language development, learning English through the content areas, or through co-teaching. Some teachers are generalists with responsibilities across the entire curriculum; others specialize in English language development; and still others, especially at the secondary level, specialize in particular subjects. At the secondary level, high school bilingual education teachers may be subject-matter specialists who deliver instruction in the students' home languages, in English, or in both, in a range of academic disciplines. Elementary and secondary teachers may be specialists in teaching students to develop English skills and gain access to the content across the curriculum. Although they may not be certified in the content area they teach, teachers of English language learners must have a comparable mastery of subject matter as generalists or subject-matter specialists, along with the special

training and experience necessary to make these subjects accessible to English language learners. While these standards comprehensibly describe what accomplished teachers of English language learners know and are able to do, content teachers will find it necessary to also refer to the content standard in the National Board document that is appropriate to their content area.

Since the publication of *English as a New Language Standards, First Edition*, nationwide enrollment of English language learners in public K–12 schools increased significantly, and the English language learner student population is expected to continue to grow rapidly overall. In addition, accomplished teachers of English language learners have faced growing issues concerning the language and educational backgrounds of their students. Teachers must be aware of the variety of English ability in students who, for example, speak another language at home but were schooled in English in another country and those who have had interrupted formal education. They must respond to the distinct needs of differing subgroups that exist within the multifaceted group of English language learners such as migrant students, refugees, Native Americans, and students who are speakers of Creole or Pidgin English among others. Subsequently, examples in this document are meant to be inclusive and not exclusive of the many characteristics of English language learners. Accomplished teachers are adept at seeking and using the latest research concerning all their student populations to ultimately provide more effective ways to build upon the resources all students bring with them into the classroom.

There has been a growing emphasis within the field on meeting the needs of English language learners who do not neatly fit the typical pattern of English language learners; for instance, some English language learners are eligible for special education services; others may also be gifted and talented or require both special education and gifted and talented services. Great variation among schools, districts, and states results in the over-representation or under-representation of these students in special education. Discerning whether students' academic difficulties may stem from language acquisition issues or from other underlying reasons continues to remain a challenge to educators, but much progress has been made in opening up channels of communication between stakeholders in this area in order to work together to provide the best support possible for these students.

Because there have been large influxes of English language learners in some areas of the country, many politicians are interested in advocating for the education of these students resulting in legislation and policies that affect the teachers of English language learners. One of these effects includes changes and variations in certification and licensure requirements for teachers of English language learners. Some states require all teachers (including general education and content area teachers) to be certified in working with English language learners while other states do not have specific certification requirements for teachers of these students. The standards recognize the obligation of teachers to follow their local policies while demonstrating what an accomplished teacher, regardless of context, knows and is able to do.

The emergence of high stakes testing and accountability for English language learners in the form of federally mandated English language proficiency and content area testing has brought the academic needs of English language learners to the forefront of education. In order to be included in testing, students must first be accurately identified as English language learners. Content-area testing has raised teachers' awareness of the need to assess students as fairly and equitably as possible when they must demonstrate their knowledge of content area subjects in a language in which they are not yet proficient. All teachers share the responsibility to educate English language learners as they prepare students for testing and increasingly seek assistance from teachers who have developed expertise in working with English language learners. Hand in hand with testing and accountability has come a focus on teaching academic English, or the type of English needed for students to succeed in the content areas. At the same

time, teachers cannot let social English fall by the wayside, as that is another component of English that is necessary for students' success both in and out of academic settings. These changes have resulted in an increased need for collaboration among all the participants responsible for the education of English language learners.

Widespread use of technology has influenced the impact of English on a global society as well as the type of English that students are exposed to both outside and inside the United States, resulting in teachers constantly being challenged to keep up with technological trends and to implement relevant technology in their classroom instruction.

As a result of the enormous changes in the field since the first edition of the *English as a New Language Standards*, specific changes have been made to this document. The revised standards are directly tied to current research and trends in the field. Some standards were collapsed to more accurately capture the expectations of accomplished teachers, decreasing the number of standards from twelve to nine. "Instructional Practice" includes content from previous standards on meaningful learning, multiple paths to knowledge, and learning environments. The Addendum to "Knowledge of Subject Matter" was removed, and a footnote directing readers to the content standard in the appropriate National Board for Professional Teaching Standards document was created. For instance, a teacher of middle childhood students would refer to the "Knowledge of Content and Curriculum" standard in the Middle Childhood Generalist Standards. This change ensures that the English as a New Language Standards remain aligned and consistent over time with other National Board standards documents.

Other standards were separated to more accurately and clearly describe expectations for accomplished teachers' knowledge in the field; for example, the original standard "Knowledge of Language and Language Development" was separated into two standards, "Knowledge of English Language" and "Knowledge of English Language Acquisition," to devote adequate attention to both areas. Due in part to increasing collaboration among all educators who are responsible for the education of English language learners, "Professionalism and Advocacy" is now a separate standard. Advocacy is also inextricably intertwined with other areas of the standards including testing, working with families, and knowledge of students. In addition, to reflect the unique aspects of teachers of English language learners regarding the ongoing learning process, "Teacher as Learner" is now a separate standard.

While some areas of teaching English language learners have warranted the creation of their own standard, certain changes have occurred within the standards that reflect the current status of this field. For instance, instead of the traditional four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the current standards also include the fifth domain of visual literacy to reflect changes in instructional trends and technological advancements. The concept of connecting with families was expanded to include connections across the dimensions of home, school, and community to reflect the various situations within which English language learners function. Finally, because reflection is a central element of the work of accomplished teachers and must exist in the context of that work, it is included as part of every standard rather than as a separate, single standard.

## **Developing High and Rigorous Standards for Accomplished Practice**

*English as a New Language Standards* describes what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. The standards are meant to reflect the professional consensus at this point about the essential aspects of accomplished practice. The deliberations of the English as a New Language Standards

Committee were informed by various national and state initiatives on student and teacher standards that have been operating concurrently with the development of NBPTS Standards. As the understanding of teaching and learning continues to evolve over the next several years, these standards will be updated again.

An essential tension of describing accomplished practice concerns the difference between the analysis and the practice of teaching. The former tends to fragment the profession into any number of discrete duties, such as designing learning activities, providing quality explanation, modeling, managing the classroom, and monitoring student progress. Teaching as it actually occurs, on the other hand, is a seamless activity.

Everything an accomplished teacher knows through study, research, and experience is brought to bear daily in the classroom through innumerable decisions that shape learning. Teaching frequently requires balancing the demands of several important educational goals. It depends on accurate observations of particular students and settings, and it is subject to revision on the basis of continuing developments in the classroom.

The paradox, then, is that any attempt to write standards that dissect what accomplished teachers know and are able to do will, to a certain extent, misrepresent the holistic nature of how teaching actually takes place. Nevertheless, the fact remains: Certain identifiable commonalities characterize the accomplished practice of teachers. The standards that follow are designed to capture the knowledge, artistry, proficiency, and understandings—both deep and broad—that contribute to the complex work that is accomplished teaching.

## The Standards Format

Accomplished teaching appears in many different forms, and it should be acknowledged at the outset that these specific standards are not the only way it could have been described. No linearity, atomization, or hierarchy is implied in this vision of accomplished teaching, nor is each standard of equal weight. Rather, the standards are presented as aspects of teaching that are analytically separable for the purposes of this standards document but that are not discrete when they appear in practice.

- **Standard Statement**—This is a succinct statement of one vital aspect of the practice of the accomplished teacher of English as a new language. Each standard is expressed in terms of observable teacher actions that have an impact on students.
- **Elaboration**—This passage provides a context for the standard, along with an explanation of what teachers need to know, value, and do if they are to fulfill the standard. The elaboration includes descriptions of teacher dispositions toward students, their distinctive roles and responsibilities, and their stances on a range of ethical and intellectual issues that regularly confront them.

In addition, throughout the document are examples illustrating accomplished practice and demonstrating how decisions integrate various individual considerations and cut across the standard document. If the standards pull apart accomplished teaching into discrete elements, the examples put them back together in ways more clearly recognizable to teachers. Because the National Board believes there is no single “right” way to teach students, these examples are meant to encourage teachers to demonstrate their own best practice.

# English as a New Language Standards Statements

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has organized the standards for accomplished teachers of English as a new language into the following nine standards. The standards have been ordered to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities. They each describe an important facet of accomplished teaching; they often occur concurrently because of the seamless quality of accomplished practice. These standards serve as the basis for National Board Certification in this field.

## Standard I: Knowledge of Students

Accomplished teachers of English language learners apply their knowledge of students' language development, cultures, abilities, values, interests, and aspirations to facilitate their students' linguistic, academic, and social growth.

## Standard II: Knowledge of Culture and Diversity

Accomplished teachers of English language learners model and build respect and appreciation for cultural diversity, demonstrating to their students and others that students can succeed academically while maintaining their cultural identities.

## Standard III: Home, School, and Community Connections

Accomplished teachers of English language learners establish and maintain partnerships with their students' families and communities to enhance educational experiences for their students.

## Standard IV: Knowledge of the English Language

Accomplished teachers of English language learners have in-depth knowledge of the English language and understand their students' language needs.

## Standard V: Knowledge of English Language Acquisition

Accomplished teachers of English language learners critically evaluate the ways in which students acquire primary and new languages and apply this knowledge to promote their students' success in learning English.

## Standard VI: Instructional Practice

Accomplished teachers of English language learners design supportive learning environments based on careful analysis of their students' characteristics and on the linguistic and academic demands of school. Teachers provide effective language and content instruction that expands students' linguistic repertoire in English, allows them to achieve academic success, and inspires them to acquire skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

### **Standard VII: Assessment**

Accomplished teachers of English language learners employ a variety of practices to assess their students appropriately. They use assessment results to shape instruction, to monitor student learning, to assist students in reflecting on their own progress, and to report student progress.

### **Standard VIII: Teacher as Learner**

Accomplished teachers of English language learners are passionate about their field and consistently engage in the process of professional growth. Teachers thoughtfully evaluate their learning and apply it in their practice to maximize student success.

### **Standard IX: Professional Leadership and Advocacy**

Accomplished teachers of English language learners contribute to the professional learning of their colleagues and the advancement of knowledge in their field in order to advocate for their students.

# Standard I

## Knowledge of Students

*Accomplished teachers of English language learners apply their knowledge of students' language development, cultures, abilities, values, interests, and aspirations to facilitate their students' linguistic, academic, and social growth.*

Knowledge of their students is the foundation for instructional decisions made by accomplished teachers<sup>1</sup> of English language learners. Teachers understand their students and build meaningful relationships with them and their families. Teachers know that English language learners are an extremely diverse population, and they build on this diversity to help students learn.

### Understanding and Appreciating the Diversity of English Language Learners

Accomplished teachers work with students whose cultures and social histories are even more diverse than the languages they speak. Their students may be indigenous Americans with heritage languages other than English; newcomers to the United States; or students born in the United States who live in communities where the home language<sup>2</sup> is not English, or whose language backgrounds combine multiple linguistic, cultural, and social characteristics. Teachers therefore recognize the need to understand their students from a variety of perspectives. Teachers consider a set of complex factors for each of their students, including place of birth, immigration history, age upon arrival in the United States, previous experience with English and current English proficiency, socioeconomic level, grade and literacy levels in English and in the home language, prior formal educational experiences, and familiarity with technology.

Accomplished teachers are knowledgeable about a range of local and global issues that can influence students' perceptions of and experiences in school. Teachers understand that factors such as age; gender; immigration status; exposure to traumatic events; and personal interests, needs, and goals can affect student

<sup>1</sup> All references to *teachers* in this document, whether stated explicitly or not, refer to accomplished teachers of English language learners.

<sup>2</sup> As used throughout this document, *home language* is the language other than English used dominantly in the home, regardless of the students' level of proficiency in that language. This language may be representative of the language spoken in the country from which a student emigrated.

learning. Teachers know that factors such as family<sup>1</sup> income and parents' English language proficiency and education levels can influence students' academic success. Furthermore, teachers are aware of the challenges many English language learners face within their immediate environments and in the larger society, such as racism and discrimination based on language, culture, ethnicity, and religious affiliation. Teachers acknowledge the ways such factors can inhibit students' English language learning and academic and social success. Teachers, however, see beyond perceived limitations and continuously strive to understand their students' dreams and help them meet their goals inside and outside school.

## Understanding Diverse Families

Accomplished teachers recognize that English language learners come from diverse family circumstances and are particularly sensitive to their students' home lives and family structures. Teachers of English language learners are aware of the complex economic, social, cultural, and linguistic contexts in which students and their families live, and teachers actively seek to understand the multilayered family issues students bring to school. Teachers know that the structure of many families new to the United States means that some students benefit from extended families comprising networks of caregivers. Teachers familiarize themselves with their students' family situations, such as whether the family includes one or both parents and whether siblings, grandparents, or other family members are present in the home. Although some recently arrived students have come to the United States with families also new to the country, many English language learners were born in the United States and have families with strong roots here. Other students have recently joined their families in the United States after years of separation, leaving behind caregivers they have known most of their lives. Some students arrive alone in the United States and live here alone or with stepparents, aunts and uncles, or siblings they do not know well. Still other students are left behind in the United States by parents who return to their home countries; those students may remain without family or adult caregivers, sometimes continuing their education without financial support or adult supervision. (See [Standard III—Home, School, and Community Connections](#).)

## Understanding the Role of Prior Educational Experiences

Accomplished teachers know that school infrastructure, familiar and therefore almost invisible to peers born and raised in the United States, may present special challenges for newly arrived students. English language learners may come to school with little or no prior formal education or may have attended schools in educational systems very different from the ones they encounter in the United States. For example, they may not be familiar with routines of daily school life, such as classroom rotations, bell schedules, and locker systems. Students may not understand the reasons for special events and circumstances such as pep rallies, school pictures, or emergency drills. Ordinary school days can present obstacles to students who are unfamiliar with school procedures and have limited access to the language of school. Teachers

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<sup>1</sup> *Family* is used in this document to refer to the people who are the primary caregivers, guardians, and significant adults of children.

take care to explain how and why schools operate as they do, helping students to understand the culture of the classroom and to function successfully within the larger educational system. Teachers might, for instance, devote a few minutes of class time to familiarizing English language learners who are new to the school with the daily schedule; class, lunch, school dismissal, and transportation procedures; and requirements and deadlines for participation in after-school programs, clubs, or teams.

## Viewing Students as Resources

Accomplished teachers believe that the wide range of abilities, knowledge, cultural backgrounds, and interests that students bring to class serves as a basis for learning. Teachers draw on these resources to provide challenging opportunities for English language learners to engage in academic content and provide a bridge to new learning. To activate students' knowledge regarding a geography lesson, for example, teachers might invite students to share their views about how personal experiences in rural, urban, or suburban communities have been influenced by geographical or environmental factors.

Teachers know that students may be very competent academically without being proficient in English. Teachers support students' classroom participation as well as affirm and expand students' multilingual skills by encouraging the use of native languages as a learning tool. Similarly, teachers are aware that students with limited or interrupted formal education often have highly developed cognitive and practical skills constituting an informal knowledge base that can be tapped as a rich resource for academic learning. For instance, students who hold responsibility for household shopping or for some aspect of the family business may have developed excellent organizational skills, the ability to add and subtract quickly and accurately, or the capacity to remember a series of items on a list—all real-world skills that teachers can build upon to foster classroom success.

## Forming Constructive Relationships with Students

Accomplished teachers know that building relationships with students creates opportunities to learn about students as individuals, and that this knowledge can support student's language and literacy development and academic achievement. Teachers observe their students carefully, noting whether they enjoy school, make friends, develop a sense of belonging, accept responsibility, or display concern for others. Teachers are alert to transformations in students' social development as they enter adolescence and their relationships with peers and adults change. Through observations and frequent interactions with students, teachers learn about their students' values, interests, talents, concerns, and aspirations and can determine whether and when students need advice or assistance. For example, teachers might encourage students to examine their personal values and compare them to the values of other cultures to help students better understand why groups act as they do and to assist students in communicating across cultures. Teachers provide culturally responsive guidance where possible and offer help as needed.

Accomplished teachers recognize that students may need to develop close relationships with concerned adults outside the family and comfortably fill this role as they help students adapt to their new environments. Teachers sometimes take on the responsibility of informally counseling students who are dealing with difficult social or economic circumstances. Knowing that English language learners may be accustomed to different authority structures or forms of social and instructional interactions, teachers develop relationships with students that allow them to improve their interpretations of student behavior and performance and to understand students' needs. Accomplished teachers make themselves available to advise students on a wide range of issues, including academic progress and the importance of staying in school, peer relationships, and extracurricular activities, and they can direct students to additional resources both inside and outside the school. Teachers are sensitive to individual students' perceptions of their own identity and status, which can be influenced by their place of origin, time of arrival in the United States, immigration history, socioeconomic level, and home language, among other variables.

## Observing Diverse Students Insightfully

Accomplished teachers employ various means of learning about students and their families, communities, and school environments. Teachers listen to students in the diverse settings where students express themselves, whether in formal classroom discussions, individual conferences, or informal gatherings. Teachers observe students working in groups and individually, noting their strengths, learning profiles, and interactions with peers. As keen observers of students and as experts in language development and cultural diversity, teachers understand that the significance of gestures and other body language can differ across cultures. A male Korean student who scratches the back of his head, for example, may indicate regret or signal a desire to ask a favor or a question. A female student from China might refrain from participating in class activities because her culture teaches her to avoid drawing attention to herself, not because she lacks understanding of what occurs in class. Teachers reinforce their understanding of students through discussions with family members or other caregivers and professional colleagues. They use the information they gather to determine the direction, approach, and content of their teaching; to motivate students; and to ensure that they equitably meet the unique and common needs of all. (See [Standard II—Knowledge of Culture and Diversity](#).)

## Working Successfully with Students with Exceptional Needs and Talents

Accomplished teachers seek assistance from colleagues to assess and identify students with exceptional needs, including gifted learners, and then address students' needs to provide meaningful and appropriate classroom experiences. They know that families often have insights about students that may not be evident in school settings. Consequently, teachers make special efforts to learn from families, involve them in decision making, and inform them of students' progress. Teachers also work cooperatively with a variety of educational specialists such as speech and language pathologists, reading specialists, special educators, physical and occupational therapists, psychologists, and specialists in child and adolescent development.

Teachers seek assistance from other experts who speak students' home languages and are familiar with their cultural backgrounds and prior educational and social experiences.

By collaborating with other educators, such as reading coaches or special education teachers, accomplished teachers can plan, implement, and adapt appropriate content curriculum, language learning objectives, and instructional practices while making sure each learner is an important and valued member of the class. Teachers fashion instructional environments to help students learn English while also learning about one another and understanding each individual's unique abilities. Teachers take care to adapt their practice to the linguistic and cultural needs of their students, and when necessary, to seek appropriate support services to monitor their progress and ensure their success. Teachers also respond to students who need to concentrate on selected learning outcomes and those who would benefit from a highly systematic approach to refining skills. Teachers do so while maintaining their commitment to promoting critical thinking and problem solving, helping students develop social relationships, and nurturing the special gifts and talents that each student brings to the classroom.

### **Creating Instructional Tasks That Respond to Both Commonalities and Differences among Learners**

Accomplished teachers know that students represent a continuum of language learning and use this awareness as they design appropriate teaching strategies, learning activities, and assessment tasks. Some students come to school speaking a language other than English at home and are learning English as a new language. Other students may speak English, but have a community language other than English. Still other students may be multilingual and multiliterate, and others may not be literate in any language. Given the variety of student populations and the varied goals of instructional programs, such as dual language instruction, some teachers develop students' proficiency in and teach through more than one language; some may teach in bilingual settings; some teach primarily through English while using students' native languages for instructional support; still others teach only through English. The requirements of a particular teaching assignment notwithstanding, teachers create opportunities for meaningful communication that allow students to interact with and learn academic content while building proficiency in one or more languages.

To provide diverse entry points into the curriculum, accomplished teachers must be attuned to students' individual abilities to understand and respond in a new language. Teachers must also consider students' cultural backgrounds, their prior educational experiences, and their dispositions toward different modes of learning. Understanding these factors leads teachers to design a variety of instructional approaches to accommodate the class as a whole while acknowledging the individuality of its members. For instance, a teacher of students at an intermediate English proficiency level might intervene as early as possible to provide individualized instruction and other supports to students who are not making reasonable progress

in their literacy development. Teachers may select a single language program to use with the entire class but vary instructional goals and activities for individual students based on their particular needs.

## **Reflecting on English Language Learners**

Accomplished teachers reflect on the academic, cultural, and other resources that each student brings to the classroom and find ways to use those resources to improve the academic progress of all students. Accomplished teachers inform their instruction by analyzing and reflecting on the demographic realities affecting their students, including such factors as length of residency in the United States, age upon arrival, place of origin, home language, socioeconomic status, family structure and values, educational background, and intellectual abilities.

## ***Standard II Knowledge of Culture and Diversity***

***Accomplished teachers of English language learners model and build respect and appreciation for cultural diversity, demonstrating to their students and others that students can succeed academically while maintaining their cultural identities.***

Appreciation of cultural diversity, knowledge about the characteristics of particular cultures, and development of instructional strategies useful in teaching across cultures are all rooted in understanding one's own culture and culture in general. Accomplished teachers of English language learners know that learning a new language implies understanding a new culture. Teachers understand the connections between a student's cultural identity and academic success. Teachers understand that just as students learn to function in school and society, teachers and their colleagues also learn to establish culturally responsive classrooms and schools. Teachers take an additive approach to culture. They teach students about the cultures of the United States while supporting the students' home cultures. Accomplished teachers critically reflect on their own assumptions and biases to meet the needs of all students. Teachers work with school staff and community members to identify, examine, and respond to the causes of discrimination, prejudice, inequity, and injustice. They collaborate with colleagues and community members to work toward creating school environments in which students of all backgrounds are valued and receive the support, guidance, and instruction to succeed academically and in society.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of Culture and Diversity**

Accomplished teachers of English language learners realize that acquiring an understanding of students' cultures is a continuous process. Teachers know that culture includes the beliefs, behaviors, values, and traditions that are socially constructed, negotiated, and shared among a group. They understand that the term encompasses notions of ethnicity, racial identity, family structure, language, socioeconomic status, and religious and political views.

Teachers include students' families and communities among the resources they consult to expand their knowledge about the personal, social, and educational backgrounds of their students. By doing so, teachers construct an understanding of cultural contexts and identities that transcends simplistic or stereotypical portrayals.

Teachers recognize that students who share the same country of origin might, in reality, represent widely diverse experiences resulting from regional differences or socioeconomic factors. Familiarizing themselves with students' lives outside school contexts enables teachers to build bridges between students' home cultures and school experiences.

Accomplished teachers understand that students represent widely divergent cultural backgrounds that cannot be tied to simple geographic locations. Some students from war-torn countries have adopted the cultural norms and behaviors of refugee camps where they have lived; some students from industrialized urban areas have acquired the cultural norms of multilingual friends; some from regions alongside other countries have lived in communities that largely follow the customs and beliefs of bordering nations and have developed bi-national identities that enable them to move seamlessly between neighboring cultures.

Accomplished teachers demonstrate sensitivity toward the cultural practices and perspectives of their students. Teachers realize that many things most commonly identified as culturally characteristic, such as traditional foods, clothing, and popular music, are often surface-level manifestations of deeper attributes of a group's cultural identity. These might include values regarding what is most important, beliefs about what is right or appropriate, and attitudes toward the world and others in it. Teachers recognize certain values as universal, such as parents' desire for their children's success, and they realize that cultural groups vary in how they enact these core values. Teachers interpret student behaviors in terms of underlying cultural characteristics and help others outside the students' cultural groups understand and appreciate diverse cultural viewpoints and experiences.

## Culturally Responsive Learning Environments

Accomplished teachers recognize that the presence of students from diverse cultures presents opportunities that can enrich learning activities and serve as a framework for academic success. Teachers capitalize on the cultural experiences their students bring to school. In a lesson on test-taking skills, for example, teachers might invite students to share techniques they used to prepare for tests in their homelands, such as working in study teams. Teachers incorporate students' diverse perspectives into their instructional decisions. Teachers know when students who are practicing Muslims observe Ramadan through fasting, for instance, and encourage colleagues to accommodate students with specific needs during this holy period. Appropriate accommodations might include providing a space away from the cafeteria during lunch, or refraining from scheduling important tests or physically demanding activities late in the afternoon, when these students who will not eat or drink before sunset are tired and hungry. Such culturally responsive approaches to instructional design and implementation honor the cultural knowledge and experiences of English language learners and can validate their own and other cultures.

Accomplished teachers of English language learners understand the need for explicit instruction of cultural behaviors associated with academic settings in the United

States. For example, teachers instruct students on how to express opinions verbally in group settings as well as in writing. Teachers might offer students opportunities to uphold their viewpoints with peers or have students practice expressing opinions in small groups by providing students with sentence stems that present the language structure of argumentative discourse. Teachers encourage students who are reluctant to share their ideas. Teachers also teach conversational skills by instructing students in culturally sensitive ways to take turns, to adjust their voice volume to particular contexts, and to speak directly to listeners. While instructing students in cultural behaviors required for students' academic success in school, teachers support the maintenance and development of communication skills that students may use in their communities and at home.

Accomplished teachers recognize that students' interactions can result in their integration or marginalization in school, and that some students may withdraw from participating in classroom activities such as literature circles or demonstrate signs of alienation. Accomplished teachers understand the effects of such marginalization on students' abilities to gain English language proficiency and to learn cultural behaviors and conventions for specific situations, so they use a range of strategies to engage all students. Teachers might model appropriate behaviors explicitly, provide detailed explanations about their use, and seek curricula for teaching them. Teachers might provide students opportunities for immediate success by helping them understand and communicate using a variety of discourse styles in the classroom, thus increasing their abilities to succeed in the larger society.

Accomplished teachers know that school culture in the United States is not monolithic; as a dynamic entity, it varies across communities, districts, regions, and states. Teachers acknowledge that subtle school cultures often exist that may not be initially obvious to students. At some schools, for instance, students of similar ethnic groups tend to eat lunch together, while at other schools students eat in mixed ethnic groups. Teachers recognize that the predominant school cultures that affect such behaviors as the use of personal space and taking turns are generally not taught to native speakers of English beyond the earliest years in school. Teachers therefore help their students understand certain aspects of accepted school behavior by explicitly teaching such concepts as how much personal space to allow while standing in line and how to take turns during classroom discussions.

Accomplished teachers help students adjust to and participate in school by facilitating positive academic experiences. Teachers know that students new to this country may have prior educational experiences that differ markedly from those of their peers born in the United States, and they respond thoughtfully to individual students' needs. For example, some students may be perplexed by the opportunity to choose an individual project or participate actively at a learning station. Teachers ensure that instructional activities demonstrate understanding toward students' cultural beliefs and practices. When grouping students for cooperative assignments, for instance, teachers honor students' cultural identities. For example, teachers may allow young girls from Saudi Arabia who may prefer and work more effectively with female partners to complete a project together.

## Student Advocacy

Accomplished teachers use a range of activities to welcome newcomers and help them succeed in school and society. For example, teachers might seek assistance for students who feel isolated or depressed or consult with community resource personnel about effective ways to ease students' transition to life in the United States. Teachers might arrange for students to receive instruction in their primary languages<sup>1</sup> when possible, assign classroom partners to help students adjust to school, build support systems for students and their families, or develop and deliver instruction specially designed for new students.

As advocates for English language learners, accomplished teachers work to make school culture inclusive and reflective of culturally diverse groups. Teachers might collaborate with colleagues to provide families with resources such as bilingual dictionaries or activity calendars that reflect the school's linguistic and cultural diversity. They might also promote celebrations that emphasize the community's ethnic and cultural traditions, oversee the creation of a multilingual telephone menu, assist in the development of a school Web site that includes the languages of their students, or help design multilingual signs and information resources. Teachers might work with curriculum committees to embed authentic multicultural literature into the curriculum. Through such efforts, teachers enhance their students' awareness of and appreciation for the richness of their own cultures and those of their peers.

Accomplished teachers understand that cultures are dynamic and that the cultural identities of their students are fluid and complex. English language learners may not necessarily identify with the culture of family members, with the culture of their home countries, or with any cultural group in the United States. Teachers realize that many students and their families are undergoing significant life changes that can affect students' ability to focus on school. A secondary student whose family immigrated to the United States several years prior to the student's arrival, for instance, may have difficulty adjusting to family, school, and community cultures while simultaneously adjusting to learning a new language. Accomplished teachers could form support groups to provide assistance to students and their families in such situations.

Accomplished teachers value the significance and implications of unique cultural beliefs and practices, including school and community cultures in the United States, and they thoughtfully guide students and their families as they attempt to interpret new experiences and succeed in the United States. Teachers may sometimes assume the role of cultural mediator, as students learn about and participate in a new culture notably different from their own. Teachers know that students may face choices between honoring the values, beliefs, or behaviors of their home cultures and adopting those of the school or of their new community.

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<sup>1</sup> As used throughout this document, *primary language* is the language in which English language learners are most fluent, or which they prefer to use. This can be the same as the home language or can be English.

Accomplished teachers assist students as they navigate the cultural complexities of a society that uses racial labeling and categorization. Some English language learners are confused, for instance, when they discover they are considered European by some government entities because they were born in Spain, but Hispanic<sup>1</sup> by other agencies because their parents are Chilean. Teachers recognize that such methods of identification may confuse recently arrived students unaccustomed to such practices, and teachers provide them appropriate guidance and support. When students fill out demographic information prior to taking standardized tests, for instance, teachers might acquaint students with ethnic and racial categories they are likely to encounter.

Accomplished teachers also acknowledge that some English language learners may confront unwelcoming attitudes from students who do not understand their cultural identities or experiences. Newly arrived students, for example, may not fit in with other students from the same country who have lived in the United States for several years because the new students dress, act, or speak differently. As a result, teachers provide students who are in a period of cultural adjustment with assistance in comprehending and coping with the multilingual and multicultural realities of their lives. Furthermore, teachers work with staff and students to promote understanding about such processes and to establish school environments that value and support students.

Accomplished teachers recognize and attempt to avoid cultural bias in their curriculum, instruction, and assessment. They do not assume, for example, that all students are familiar with iconic stories of Americana, such as “The Itsy Bitsy Spider” at the early childhood level, George Washington and the cherry tree at the elementary level, or Paul Revere’s ride at the secondary level. Instead, they explicitly teach any requisite background information and, whenever possible, draw on students’ prior knowledge and experiences to assist learning. Teachers work collaboratively with colleagues to increase awareness of cultural bias within content-area curricula. Teachers may participate in textbook review committees, for example, to examine cultural biases in proposed textbooks.

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers develop a deep knowledge and understanding of culture as both a target of student learning and a factor affecting student learning. Teachers are alert to their own philosophical, cultural, and experiential biases and take these into account when working with students whose backgrounds, beliefs, or values may differ substantively from their own. Teachers analyze issues of culture in their school environments to ensure opportunities for students to learn about and function in a new culture while maintaining their own culture. Teachers also critically reflect on possible biases in their instructional materials and classroom management strategies and act upon this reflection to promote student learning.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of publication, federal government entities use the term *Hispanic* to describe all Spanish-speaking populations regardless of origin.

# ***Standard III***

## ***Home, School, and Community Connections***

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***Accomplished teachers of English language learners establish and maintain partnerships with their students' families and communities to enhance educational experiences for their students.***

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Accomplished teachers of English language learners know that active family involvement strengthens student achievement, so teachers make special efforts to assure families that participation in their child's education is welcome and vital to student success. Teachers advocate for families, helping them to access resources for making their voices heard within the school and community. In addition to forging effective and mutually beneficial partnerships with families, teachers also understand the role that communities can play in contributing to the attainment of students' educational goals. Teachers therefore gain awareness of the communities and neighborhoods their schools serve, and they work to develop partnerships with agencies and organizations that might help meet the needs not only of their students, but also of the families of their English language learners. Teachers recognize the benefits that accrue in school programs as a result of such partnerships. The connections teachers establish among schools, families, and communities support students' educational progress and enable teachers to instill in students an interest in learning English that extends beyond school settings.

### **Communication with Families**

Accomplished teachers develop culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate techniques for establishing rapport with their students' families that encourage involvement and enhance opportunities for their students' success. Teachers know that many parents and family members of their students are English language learners themselves. To newly arrived families, school cultures in the United States may be unfamiliar and overwhelming. Teachers understand the importance of providing opportunities for parents and other family members to learn about the structure, policies, and practices of schools in the United States and the expectations for family involvement in U.S. education. Teachers know that students frequently act as interpreters of language and culture for their families by translating and negotiating for parents and that, in such cases, the shifting balance of familial power may create intergenerational tensions with ramifications for family cohesion and for student performance in school. With the aid, as necessary, of bilingual community liaisons or trained interpreters, teachers clarify the broad roles of schools in the United States,

not only in educating students but also in advocating for them in providing social services and in preparing students for higher education and future employment. Teachers continually inform parents about students' participation and work in class, report cards, and test scores in a clear manner that accurately portrays their children's progress and suggests how families can support student learning.

Accomplished teachers rely on a range of communication strategies to help students' families understand educational processes and to encourage their participation in a variety of school activities. In doing so, teachers foster vital, effective instructional programs and build their understanding of families' expectations and educational goals. Teachers enlist the aid of families as partners in the education of their children by establishing and maintaining a variety of direct two-way communications, as well as other forms of communication, such as telephone calls; individual progress reports; and Web sites, e-mail, and newsletters translated into families' home languages. As appropriate, teachers and bilingual liaisons or trained interpreters make home visits to discuss students' progress. Teachers ensure that communication with families is frequent, timely, and meaningful as they regularly share updates on students' accomplishments, successes, strengths, and needs, including the means for achieving higher goals. They provide families clear information about such issues as immunization requirements, course offerings, student placement, special services, and extracurricular activities. Teachers recognize that families may have cultural values and aspirations that differ from those prevalent in the broader society. When teachers find that students' best interests conflict with family viewpoints, they exercise discretion and sensitivity in working with families to understand the situation. Communication with families fosters success, identifies concerns, and enables teachers to respond thoughtfully to families' interests.

Accomplished teachers treat families with respect and understanding, realizing that communicating with parents of English language learners presents both opportunities and challenges. Teachers are aware that family members use their own educational experiences in framing their expectations of and attitudes toward the education of their children. Teachers realize that keeping families informed about school is vital to alleviating misconceptions and, therefore, ensure that information reaches appropriate family members. Teachers know which families need special assistance in circumventing language or cultural barriers in communicating with the school, and may partner with school staff and community organizations to initiate classes or workshops that address the needs of families in the areas of language, education, and school expectations. Teachers help families access resources, such as trained interpreters and translated documents, so they can participate fully in their children's education.

Accomplished teachers recognize that families have experiences and insights that can enrich the quality of students' education. Involvement with families offers teachers opportunities to gain insight into parents' expectations and aspirations for their children, and can help them meet students' language learning needs. Teachers listen actively to what families say about students' home lives, taking special note of talents, strengths, and abilities that might not be demonstrated in the school setting

but could enhance the educational process. Teachers share this information, as appropriate, with other teachers and school personnel, maintaining the confidentiality of privileged information that families share. Teachers regard collaboration with families as an indispensable tool in providing students support and motivation and in furthering opportunities for improved learning.

## **Connections Between Home and School**

Accomplished teachers dedicate themselves to providing avenues for the continuing educational success of their English language learners, understanding the mutual responsibility they have with families for the learning and achievement of their students. Teachers therefore recognize the benefits of connecting with families to develop strategies that can be implemented at home to reinforce students' school experiences. Teachers address cultural issues that sometimes arise because of a family's place of origin or previous educational experiences. Teachers highlight parents' roles as educators, affirming and endorsing specific skills and expertise families contribute to the educational process. For example, teachers might emphasize for families the importance of maintaining high expectations and aspirations for children over time, explain how families can act as advocates for their children's education, and outline positive steps families can take to nurture students' academic efforts. Teachers may offer suggestions to family and other school staff on how to help students develop constructive learning habits and study skills to improve academic performance. Teachers might recommend specific questions about schoolwork that families could ask to motivate students to use the language they are learning, to prepare them for classroom discussions, and to build their interest in school and language learning. In communicating with families about students' goals, accomplishments, and needs, and in connecting what occurs at school to related experiences in the home, teachers help families establish high expectations for academic success and enrich learning in ways that build students' confidence, competence, self-discipline, and motivation.

## **Connections with the School Community**

Accomplished teachers recommend and initiate strategies in their classrooms and within the school community that enable families of English language learners to feel welcome, safe, and important. For instance, teachers might enlist parents as tutors or mentors, invite family members to speak about areas of professional expertise and cultural practices, or have parents assist with the writing of class newsletters. To create environments that encourage family participation, teachers work with school staff, including trained interpreters and bilingual community liaisons, to establish regular and purposeful communication with families and advocate for those who do not speak English. Teachers might prompt colleagues and administrators to include families of English language learners as school volunteers to help publish calendars in native languages, create multilingual telephone menu options, or organize special events. To ensure that their students' families have a voice in school decisions, teachers may advocate for the creation of forums where families can discuss concerns and contribute ideas, or recommend that parent conferences be held at times and locations convenient for families of their students. Teachers might

arrange curriculum nights to familiarize families with school programs or to acquaint them with family literacy and learning strategies that advance student achievement. For example, teachers might model early literacy strategies so that parents could use these strategies at home. Teachers work closely with guidance counselors and other school personnel to ensure that English language learners are informed of requirements and opportunities for higher education and that they are appropriately placed in credit-bearing courses that are prerequisites for pursuing specific academic or other professional goals following graduation. Teachers work with the entire school community in affirming respect for multilingualism and cultural diversity to promote collaborations that benefit educational outcomes for students.

## Connections with the Community

Accomplished teachers sustain the academic performance of their students by connecting families of English language learners to community resources, services, and agencies that respond to family needs affecting students' success in school. Teachers promote a range of community services to support families new to the United States, such as health, social, educational, and recreational resources. Teachers may collaborate with school staff and other professionals to introduce families to English language and citizenship classes, courses in computer literacy, and opportunities for continuing education. Teachers inform students and their families about resources in public libraries, for example, or community organizations that support the needs of students and families. Teachers might apply for grants from community groups to secure resources such as computers for students. Teachers can initiate partnerships with community leaders to provide funding for learning opportunities such as bookmobiles to provide students, their families, and their neighborhoods with accessible, relevant, and interesting materials.

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers consciously reflect on their philosophy pertaining to the role of families in the education of students. Teachers analyze how families' insights into their children's learning are voiced, understood, and appropriately acted upon. Teachers examine roles of home, school, and community in the attainment of educational goals. They analyze the results of these mutually beneficial partnerships, clearly articulate how such alliances facilitate the learning of English for their students, and adjust their practice as necessary to improve these connections.

# ***Standard IV***

## ***Knowledge of the English Language***

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***Accomplished teachers of English language learners have in-depth knowledge of the English language and understand their students' language needs.***

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Accomplished teachers' substantive knowledge of English ensures that their English language learners, regardless of backgrounds and proficiency levels, learn and use English effectively. Teachers are familiar with district, state, and national standards and policies that affect their students' English language development. Teachers purposefully refine and apply their knowledge of the fundamental domains and components of language, and of variations in the use of English.

### **Domains of Language**

Accomplished teachers have deep knowledge of domains of language—listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy—in order to assess their students' English language ability and to effectively address their linguistic needs in school settings.

#### ***Listening***

Accomplished teachers understand the features of listening—receiving, attending to, understanding, evaluating, and responding to sounds and messages—and are able to identify unique challenges for English language learners. For example, they understand that speakers from some language backgrounds may not attend to important grammatical inflections on words, such as past tense and plural markers. Teachers analyze the essential components of language that allow students to follow oral directions, understand explanations, take notes, and interpret conversations. Teachers analyze the specific listening challenges students face, such as determining the meanings of words that feature English sounds they cannot distinguish. Spanish speakers, for example, may not recognize the [ɪ] sound in the word *ship* and confuse it with the [i:] sound in the word *sheep*. Teachers identify and target the features of listening in colloquial speech such as contractions, reduced forms, hesitations, and short sentences typical of spoken English, as well as discourse markers, like *first* and *second*, that signal the organization of spoken messages.

Accomplished teachers can identify when they must probe for or provide prior knowledge to prepare students for effective listening. Teachers know that students who appear to be attentive may not comprehend what they hear, so teachers incorporate multiple methods to check for listening comprehension. Teachers know the importance of providing extra assistance to English language learners as they take notes and organize information. Teachers of students at beginning levels of English language proficiency know how to help students segment speech into syllables and begin to recognize essential words. Teachers assist students at beginning levels of English proficiency in identifying conversational patterns and using strategies such as urging speakers to repeat and paraphrase to clarify points. Teachers instruct learners at intermediate levels of proficiency to listen for phonemes, morphological endings, and stress and intonation contours as cues for meaning. Teachers of learners at advanced levels of English language proficiency may identify text structures by which students can follow narratives, make sense of scientific explanations, or follow complex laboratory instructions. Teachers know that those students need to learn explicit skills in order to comprehend long stretches of English speech in real time, and that students need to quickly identify the purposes and topics of extended listening tasks. Teachers of English language learners at any level know how to help students make inferences and determine speakers' intent.

### ***Speaking***

Accomplished teachers thoughtfully analyze the essential language features students need to learn for speech and identify features to include in the curriculum. In terms of pronunciation, accomplished teachers may identify and obtain critical information, such as consonant clusters, vowel diphthongs, syllable structure, and intonation patterns of English as well as components of students' native languages that may influence their speech in English. In terms of vocabulary, they may analyze essential words appropriate for specific audiences, topics, and settings, or words that help students check for comprehension. Teachers may address the purposes of paraphrasing or rephrasing, when necessary, to maximize audience understanding. In terms of grammar, teachers may identify specific grammatical features that students need in order to express themselves in spoken English. Teachers help students express themselves fluently and effectively through pragmatics, such as body language, facial expressions, gestures, rate of speech, and pauses.

Accomplished teachers are able to identify, analyze, and explain a wide range of genres and functions of language, such as apologies and explanations, with specific topics and particular purposes and audiences in mind. They anticipate the language students need to participate in classroom activities, such as interactions with peers and teachers, whole-class discussions, and formal presentations. Such language might include expressions for paraphrasing, for agreeing and disagreeing, and for clarifying.

### ***Reading***

Accomplished teachers have a thorough understanding of the linguistic components and cognitive processes involved in reading. These overlapping

components include the sounds of language, writing, and spelling systems as well as vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structures used in reading. Teachers recognize the extent to which the language demands of texts influence what students are capable of reading, where gaps in comprehension will likely occur, and when students can read independently. Teachers understand the complexity of students' learning to read in English and address the distinctive language and literacy needs of English language learners.

Accomplished teachers who teach beginning readers have extensive knowledge of the sound system and letter-sound relationships in English and of the challenges these sound-symbol correspondences may present for English language learners from diverse language backgrounds. Teachers identify the precise sounds likely to cause difficulty for distinct groups of English language learners and address these systematically in classroom instruction. Teachers know that decoding skills are vital for beginning readers and have extensive knowledge of English spelling conventions, essential in decoding, that are particularly important for students with educational gaps. Teachers know how to select meaningful, connected texts for their students to read, and they analyze the appropriateness of texts using sound-spelling correspondences that may need to be taught systematically. They apply their knowledge of students' varying levels of language development in English and in the primary language as they help students develop prerequisite skills such as phonemic awareness and decoding. For English language learners who have developed foundational knowledge in their primary language, accomplished teachers help them transfer and use their knowledge to build reading skills in English.

Accomplished teachers analyze the types of word knowledge that students at beginning levels of English language proficiency require, including knowledge of a rich, functional, and high-frequency vocabulary as well as word analysis skills that allow learners to identify prefixes and suffixes and determine word meaning. Teachers know that English language learners who speak languages that share a common foundation with English can rely on their understanding of words with the same or similar base forms. For example, many core English words in mathematics and social studies have cognates in Spanish, such as *addition/adición*, *angle/ángulo*, *civilization/civilización*, and *geography/geografía*. Teachers purposefully help students take advantage of this rich language resource.

Accomplished teachers determine the language difficulty level of texts and select texts appropriate to varying English proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and ages. They have a thorough understanding of ways to assist students in reading aloud fluently with appropriate intonation and expression, and they know what constitutes reasonable reading rates for diverse types of texts. Recognizing the critical role grammar plays in reading comprehension, accomplished teachers reflect on the ways grammatical features and word order can be interpreted by English language learners. For example, teachers recognize that as learners read clauses, they interpret information through word order, phrasing, and the relationships among words. At the same time, learners process grammatical information to infer a text's meaning across

phrase and sentence boundaries, for example, by identifying pronoun references and interpreting logical connections among paragraphs.

Accomplished teachers understand that skilled use of transition markers has a strong impact on reading ability. Words like *after* and *next*, for example, indicate chronological sequence; words like *compared with* and *different from* indicate comparison and contrast; and words like *as a result of*, *in order to*, and *therefore* indicate process and causation. Teachers help students learn to identify the meanings of these critical discourse markers and use them in comprehending written texts.

Accomplished teachers identify reading comprehension strategies to build students' background knowledge quickly and match instructional strategies with students' fluency levels and other variables. Teachers are adept at identifying and analyzing the cognitive processes underlying comprehension skills and strategies that enable students to read texts with understanding. Teachers recognize the diverse text structures that help students comprehend informational and narrative texts. Teachers know that students' prior knowledge directly contributes to comprehension, and they identify the precise knowledge and information their students require to understand texts. They might also analyze and teach a variety of reading comprehension strategies that help students self-monitor their reading.

Accomplished teachers critically examine the cultural issues that might interfere with text comprehension. They know that what seems to be an easily comprehensible text may cause problems for English language learners who lack the cultural knowledge to understand it. For example, a story about a child bringing his mother marigolds may create confusion for a student from France, because in France marigolds symbolize death and mourning.

Accomplished teachers are aware that critical reading is not an expected goal of common literacy in all cultures, and therefore some English language learners may be unfamiliar with the practice of reading critically. Teachers understand the importance of this type of reading in English in school and on the high-stakes comprehension tests that prioritize inference skills. Teachers are adept at connecting reading and critical thinking, showing students how to make purposeful, reasoned, evidence-based judgments about their reading. Teachers discuss ways students can improve their ability to read critically, for instance, by identifying component parts of an argument or analysis and drawing appropriate conclusions.

Accomplished teachers have a firm grasp on the skills and knowledge students need in order to access and benefit from technology-based reading. Teachers analyze texts from a wide variety of media and technology-based sources to determine how language affects the presentation of information. Doing so helps teachers reflect on the strengths and limitations of each medium for English language learners of specific proficiency levels.

In addition to all the attributes explained above, accomplished teachers continuously investigate research on reading pertinent to English language learners.

They have a strong understanding of research related to topics such as print awareness, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, and they understand the relevance of these topics for improving instruction for English language learners.

### ***Writing***

Accomplished teachers understand the basic rules of handwriting, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. They can identify letters that are difficult for some students to write, particularly students at beginning levels of English language proficiency. Teachers know the challenges that spelling conventions present to English language learners of diverse language backgrounds and are diligent in identifying needs of specific students.

Accomplished teachers take into account the rich vocabulary English language learners must know to produce clear, grade-appropriate writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. As appropriate to their teaching assignments, teachers help students develop coherence in their writing, establish themselves as authorities, present evidence, convey humor and politeness, and avoid needless repetition. Teachers may analyze word choices related to levels of formality, style, and tone. They have deep knowledge of ways students can use new vocabulary to produce increasingly complex and grammatically correct sentences.

Accomplished teachers reflect on and determine the scope and sequence of grammatical features that support students' writing development. They can identify patterns of grammatical errors in students' writing and know how to address these errors linguistically. They understand that grammar varies according to the context in which it is used. They acknowledge the differences between broad norms of spoken English grammar and the narrow conventions of writing that are sometimes at odds with the norms.

Accomplished teachers are able to analyze and explain such features of writing as thesis statements, paragraph structure and unity, purpose and effectiveness of introductions and conclusions, use of transitions, effective use of evidence and reference information, and audience appropriateness. Teachers recognize that some English language learners approach writing with previously developed understandings of writing structure, and they know how to address these issues sensitively. Teachers of learners at advanced English language proficiency levels identify, explain, and analyze language characteristics of diverse types of analytical and expository writing, such as essays, research papers, and lab reports.

Accomplished teachers know when and how to use process writing, collaborative writing, and timed writing. They know how to adapt writing instruction for students at varying English proficiency levels who may not be able to take full advantage of the basic steps in the writing process. For example, they may modify the idea-gathering stage for students at beginning proficiency levels by scaffolding instruction for them

or by encouraging their use of the primary language in small groups to enable all students to participate in a brainstorming session.

Teachers explore the availability of technology and ways to use technology in writing. They reflect on the use of electronic tools that may involve a combination of images, video, audio narration, music, and writing. They understand the language features and knowledge that students need to produce diverse types of technology-based writing in order to participate fully as literate members of society.

### ***Visual Literacy***

Visual literacy is based on the idea that pictures can be read and that meaning is communicated through a process of reading images. Learners can turn information into all types of pictures, graphics, or forms that help communicate information and they can read information from all visual forms. Visual literacy is both receptive (viewing) and productive (visual representation), in that students are both consumers and producers of visual images. Viewing, a component of visual literacy, includes the ability to interpret graphic representations, evaluate media messages, and employ visuals to communicate. Accomplished teachers anticipate and mediate their English language learners' linguistic and cultural difficulties in accessing visual literacy. Teachers identify the specific language and cultural information students require to interpret, discuss, and incorporate visual representations in their communications. Teachers know, for instance, how to evaluate the placement of texts and graphics on a Web site and how to assess the overall impression of Web sites, and teachers can explain this information to students by building on students' past visual experiences. Teachers realize that diverse cultural groups have varying understandings of authorship and ownership of text, and they explicitly teach English language learners about the perceptions and consequences of plagiarism in the United States.

Accomplished teachers ascertain the appropriateness of the instructional use of visual representations for students' age and English language proficiency. Teachers know that visual tools, while helpful to some English language learners, may present linguistic and cultural barriers to others that require explanation. Because technology evolves so quickly, teachers are diligent about staying informed of new technological advances.

## **Components of Language**

Accomplished teachers have a strong background in the components of language—phonology, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse—and know how to facilitate English language learners' effective use of these components.

### ***Phonology***

Accomplished teachers are knowledgeable about the sounds of the English language and the ways these sounds combine to form words. They understand basic stress and intonation patterns of English. They also understand English syllable

structure, which may vary from those used in their students' primary languages. In addition, they understand the complex spelling system of English.

### ***Vocabulary***

Accomplished teachers have extensive knowledge of word meaning and usage. They effectively explain aspects of words needed to understand multiple meanings and connotations. They analyze and explain information concerning, for example, spelling and the use of words in grammatically correct ways. They teach students roots, affixes, and common Greek- and Latin-based English words. Teachers know how to choose words useful in academic situations that have considerable bearing on students' understandings of the school curriculum, such as words with large word families. Teachers of newcomers, regardless of when students enter the classroom, select words that students need in emergencies—*Help! Stop! Fire!*—as well as words essential to students' everyday lives. Teachers of students with advanced levels of English proficiency identify challenging words and examples of word usage that students need to know to access difficult texts, pass exams, make academic presentations, and succeed in mainstream classrooms. Teachers of English language learners in content classes may identify content-specific vocabulary that often causes confusion and that is essential for learning and expressing important concepts.

### ***Grammar***

Accomplished teachers identify and explain the basic features of grammar in the context of meaningful communication. They develop instructional sequences for the presentation of grammar based on criteria including an analysis of instructional material. Through knowledge of students' primary languages as well as through formal and informal assessments, teachers identify and address students' grammatical needs by determining the causes of errors. Teachers are well-versed in English morphology and syntax. Because many students at intermediate levels of English language proficiency have difficulty improving their grammar, teachers of these students identify challenges presented by problematic grammatical features, such as noun systems, complex clauses, conjunctions, and embedded quotations. To meet the needs of learners at advanced levels of English proficiency, teachers develop an extensive familiarity with grammar that includes knowledge of passive constructions, conditionals, and causative structures.

### ***Discourse***

Accomplished teachers are adept at analyzing the forms of discourse, including functions such as complaints and refusals; genres, such as stories and lab reports; and conversational and organizational features, such as openings and closings of conversations and expository writing. They determine problems students encounter in communicating, and they examine the discourse sources of the problems. Accomplished teachers know writing conventions and discourse organization differ across languages and cultures. For some cultural groups, for example, the introduction to a business communication requires an exchange of initial pleasantries before revealing the purpose of the letter: "Dear Sir: I hope this letter finds you well

and you are enjoying our fine spring weather. I am writing to request a copy of your invoice for services rendered.” Teachers of newcomers who enter their classes at any time of year are adept at identifying specific discourse features that should be taught immediately. Teachers of learners at advanced levels of English language proficiency know the characteristics of a large array of complex genres, such as argumentative, narrative, informational, descriptive, literary analysis, and expository writing. Content teachers of English language learners teach the discourse features characteristic of their content areas. Mathematics teachers, for example, can explain the structure of word problems, focusing students on the relationships between numbers.

## Variations in Language Use

Accomplished teachers analyze variations in the use of English—language variation, social language, and academic language—and consider other variables such as situational settings. They are familiar with dialectology and the range of dialects used in the United States, particularly in the communities where they work and in the countries from which students have come. They recognize code switching as a means of participating in social interaction, building community, and expressing identity. Teachers understand the characteristics of social language and academic language.

### *Social English Language*

Accomplished teachers are aware of the characteristics of social language, including vocabulary and fixed expressions, grammatical features, and discourse structures. Teachers recognize the language that students need to use when interacting informally. They are able to explain clearly the social consequences of inappropriate words and utterances. Teachers, for instance, identify and explain politeness features that students may use in social situations. They recognize that social language has important features that may be too subtle for students to recognize, such as nonverbal cues that others may provide in the course of interactions. They identify the specific types of social language that can improve students’ interpersonal relationships, help them gain peer acceptance, express their own views and emotions, and recognize others’ views and emotions. For early childhood students, for instance, teachers understand the value of pretend play and cooperative play activities in promoting language and literacy development and learning. Teachers provide opportunities for early childhood students to have time for play in centers where conversation can be incorporated into play.

### *Academic English Language*

Accomplished teachers understand that language required in academic settings is complex and can be less familiar and more demanding than the language of everyday settings. Teachers know that students’ facility with academic English is crucial to access content-area curricula and to benefit from instructional activities, assignments, and assessments. Teachers may determine that students need to know specific words relevant to all content areas, such as analyze, evaluate, discuss, and clarify, as well as grammar characteristic of specific content areas, such as passive

structures in science, and the non-literal forms of language, such as idiomatic and metaphorical expressions used in literary texts.

Accomplished teachers analyze the features of academic English used in various content areas, drawing on their broad understanding of key concepts and the linguistic demands that content areas require of English language learners. Regardless of instructional settings, teachers are familiar with content-specific language students need. To study history, for example, teachers know that students must understand language dealing with causation, time, order, and sequence. To assist students in understanding algebra, for instance, teachers examine the language of math problems and language important to understanding number systems, symbolic expressions of quantitative relations, or trigonometric functions. For early childhood students, teachers might provide opportunities for students to express causality, such as “I like...because...”

Accomplished teachers know that students—regardless of English proficiency levels—can engage in higher-order thinking, and they foster essential skills that allow students to hypothesize, infer, generalize, and predict. Teachers analyze the language forms and functions that appear in academic texts and tasks, such as complex clauses and decontextualized language, which convey meaning through linguistic cues independent of the immediate context.

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers of English language learners reflect on the vital role that a strong knowledge of English plays in learning and communicating. When considering the essential language domains and components, they realize the need to stay abreast of the most current literature in the field and reflect on how they can use research findings to inform their instruction. Teachers reflect on their analysis of the language demands of tasks and texts, anticipating the language needs of students and the linguistic challenges they face. Teachers reflect on their observations of students’ progress in acquiring specific features of language. Teachers analyze their knowledge of language domains, components, and variations to address students’ communicative needs in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy in a wide range of social and academic settings. Their reflection is based on a deep understanding of the systematic yet variable nature of language and of the value of a multilingual society.

# ***Standard V***

## ***Knowledge of English Language Acquisition***

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*Accomplished teachers of English language learners critically evaluate the ways in which students acquire primary and new languages and apply this knowledge to promote their students' success in learning English.*

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The instructional decisions made by accomplished teachers are informed by their inquiries into the current research regarding English language acquisition. Research findings enable teachers to analyze and critically evaluate theories and hypotheses concerning English language acquisition in terms of relevance to improving students' language development. They deliberate on developmental stages in the acquisition of English and accurately characterize their students' language acquisition patterns. Teachers know that, for many students, English language acquisition is not a linear process. Teachers take into account a range of factors that influence students' acquisition of English.

### **Language Exposure**

Accomplished teachers understand that students' exposure and active attention to English directly affects their English language development. Accomplished teachers analyze students' exposure to English, identifying the characteristics of high-quality language exposure that maximize students' English language development. Teachers evaluate ways to expose students to engaging, relevant, and meaningful language. Teachers deliberately increase the quality of their students' exposure to English, for instance, by building on students' interests, language goals, and prior knowledge. Teachers are adept at identifying and employing multiple ways to ensure that students understand the English they read and hear. Teachers can identify aspects of English that students have acquired and those aspects of English that students need for social purposes and to access content.

Accomplished teachers determine when and how to provide models of language adapted to students' language proficiency levels in order to reduce the language demand, build background knowledge that enhances students' ability to comprehend what they read and hear, and offer more challenging texts. Teachers understand that students often can understand more English than they can produce, and teachers know that involving students with understandable but increasingly complex and sophisticated language supports their development of English. Teachers determine

when to expose students to individual words and phrases and when to expose them to larger stretches of discourse.

Accomplished teachers thoughtfully develop plans to ensure that students receive repeated exposures to specific aspects of English. Teachers critically evaluate students' English language development to determine which students require additional, meaningful opportunities to read and hear specific language features, how much exposure each student requires, and which instructional experiences best provide students with multiple exposures to language.

## Language Awareness

Accomplished teachers quickly identify features of English that students cannot acquire through exposure alone, and they determine when to call deliberate attention to language forms and the accurate use of these forms. When teaching language forms through oral reading of books, for example, teachers may have early childhood students raise their hands when they hear words that rhyme, or have older students identify adverbs by raising their hands when they hear words that end in -ly. Teachers know that language awareness directly affects language development, and they have facility in explaining language to their students. They examine how English works in terms of sounds, spelling, words, grammar, and discourse. When exploring the persuasive function of advertisements, for instance, teachers draw students' attention to the purposeful use of such forms as adjectives, imperatives, and questions.

## Interaction and Practice

Accomplished teachers know students acquire language through the exchange of meaningful messages and identify and evaluate ways of providing students with multiple opportunities to practice using English to communicate inside and outside the classroom. Teachers understand that not all interactions improve students' acquisition of English; they identify the characteristics of effective interactions and practice, such as meaningful and scaffolded use of the targeted language and the ways students can use English to improve their language development. Teachers know specific features of English that students need to acquire and how to structure practice to enhance development of these features over time.

## Interdependence of Language and Content

Knowing that English language learners acquire academic English effectively when it is taught and learned along with academic content, accomplished teachers are adept at integrating content and language instruction. They analyze the interdependence of language and academic content, noting how this association increases in upper grades as students' development of content knowledge becomes more intimately linked with their command of academic English. For teaching narration in English language arts, for example, teachers of early childhood students may have the students retell a fairy tale in chronological order while teachers of older students would instruct them in the use of embedded quotations in their readings.

## **Interdependence of Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Visual Literacy**

Accomplished teachers use and apply their knowledge of the interdependence of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy, and the ways this interdependence can accelerate students' English language acquisition. Listening, speaking, and reading, for instance, support writing development. Teachers know that academic writing, which involves accuracy and precise expression, contributes to the development of proficiency in academic oral language. They also know that reading provides students with rich language models and that discussions of readings help students retain, analyze, and recall language. Teachers analyze effective ways to integrate all domains—listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy—to accelerate and reinforce students' language development. When students have difficulty learning features in one domain, teachers determine ways of improving students' development of features by using other domains.

### **Explicit Instruction**

Accomplished teachers make language salient for students because they understand that effective, explicit instruction fosters acquisition of particular aspects of English. Teachers draw students' attention to target forms and facilitate processing of these forms for productive use of language development. Teachers know that students who do not receive explicit language instruction may stop acquiring these features of English, which could prevent them from fully developing academic English.

### **Instructional Feedback**

Accomplished teachers have a thorough understanding of the relationship between language development and instructional feedback. Because teachers know that constructive feedback helps students notice gaps within their production of English, teachers target forms and functions of English that students are developing. Teachers provide continuous, systematic, and supportive feedback tailored to students' needs to facilitate English development. They easily discern when to model language forms, when to ignore students' language errors, and when to correct students explicitly. Teachers provide sensitive feedback to support students' correct and effective use of English. Teachers identify errors common to students of diverse language groups and varying English proficiency levels. Teachers recognize that some students who have not demonstrated sufficient progress learning English might require sustained feedback, over time, that is focused on specific language features those students are no longer developing.

### **Language Transfer**

Accomplished teachers accurately evaluate students' knowledge of their primary languages and build upon that knowledge when teaching English. Teachers understand the effects of students' primary language and literacy on English language development.

Accomplished teachers determine aspects of students' primary languages that may transfer to English and may affect students' learning of English, such as sounds, spelling, word meanings, grammatical rules, word order, rhetorical features, and discourse structures; this awareness helps teachers design and implement instruction. Teachers may examine language transfer with students to increase language awareness and to support the positive transfer of language features. Teachers, for example, may encourage students to practice transferring cognate knowledge, and they may provide targeted feedback. Teachers know students may have valuable reading skills in primary languages that may transfer to reading in English. When appropriate, teachers judiciously contrast learners' primary languages to English in order to focus on new features of the target language that may differ or not exist in their primary languages.

Accomplished teachers recognize that many factors influence language transfer, including proficiency in the students' primary languages and in English as well as similarities and differences between the two languages. Teachers know that many learners are in the process of acquiring or losing their primary language, while some may have acquired only partial proficiency in one or more of the five language domains. Such students are often unsuccessful at transferring features from their primary language to English. Teachers understand, however, that students may transfer features from an informal, oral variety of their primary language into English or an informal variety of English into academic English.

## Educational Background

Accomplished teachers analyze the impact that English language learners' educational backgrounds have on language development. Teachers know students rates of language acquisition can vary greatly depending on their degree of exposure to literacy and academic language in any language at home and in school, their access to continuous formal education whether in their primary language or in English, their ability to use their primary language to read and write for academic purposes, and their ability to communicate meaningfully. Some students have experienced interrupted or limited education and may have underdeveloped literacy skills that impede their ability to learn academic English. Accomplished teachers know how to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in students' educational backgrounds. Teachers provide instructional supports to accelerate students' development of English while at the same time helping students overcome educational gaps and build upon their previous schooling. (See [Standard 1—Knowledge of Students.](#))

## Culture and Sociolinguistic Variables

Accomplished teachers evaluate cultural and sociolinguistic variables that affect students' language development. In identifying and responding to instructional needs of students, for example, teachers differentiate between the needs of native English speakers and the needs of English speakers from countries such as India, Liberia, and Jamaica who are learning academic language. Teachers know that cultural backgrounds create contexts in which students build frameworks for understanding

English, which, in turn, facilitate English language development. Teachers identify cultural differences in learning and communicating and the specific ways these differences affect students' development of English. Teachers analyze languages and dialects spoken in the community to predict, understand, and mitigate difficulties students may encounter as they learn English. Teachers know that regional language patterns and dialectal variations can be misinterpreted as speech and language delays or deficiencies. Spanish speakers, for example, may have difficulty consistently producing the [j] or sh sound in English because it does not occur in Spanish, just as some English speakers may have difficulty trilling the [rr] sound in Spanish words like *perro*. Teachers also know some errors that appear to be reading miscues, such as reversing the [k] and [s] sounds in *ask*, may actually reflect dialect differences or instances of English language learners' efforts to construct language as they read for meaning.

## Age and Length of Time in the United States

Accomplished teachers know that students of disparate ages and varying time in the United States acquire academic and social language at differing rates. In general, young students learn English at rates different from older students and face less-challenging language demands than older students. As a consequence, older students may require more intensive language supports than younger students, especially when older students have experienced gaps in language and academic development. All students, however, require sufficient, deliberate instruction to develop age- and grade-level appropriate English.

## Motivation

Accomplished teachers make informed decisions for instruction that reflect their understanding of how to motivate varied groups of English language learners who may include newcomers; long-term residents of the United States; and students of diverse abilities, primary languages, and cultural backgrounds. Because accomplished teachers understand the effort required by students to advance their English language development and to improve their abilities in specific areas such as reading, writing, and vocabulary, teachers encourage students to develop habits of perseverance. They incorporate activities that foster students' ability to monitor their own behaviors so they learn to motivate themselves and support their own English language learning. (See [Standard VI—Instructional Practice](#).)

## Other Factors Affecting Language Development

Accomplished teachers analyze student variables that may affect English language development and academic success, such as time of arrival; social, political and economic factors; identity; exceptional learning needs; rural, suburban, or urban environment; cognitive readiness; and aptitude. Accomplished teachers, for example, know that students who live in rural areas might be isolated from communities that speak their primary language and are likely to communicate solely in English in school as well as in the larger community. Teachers know that the linguistic isolation

experienced by such students might influence their acquisition of English as well as the loss of their primary language; conversely, a lack of instructional support may result in students' developing social but not academic language in both English and in their primary language. Accomplished teachers may try to help these students maintain and develop their primary language by locating resources in that language and support their development of English by addressing their specific academic language needs.

## **Myths and Misconceptions about English Language Acquisition**

Accomplished teachers are familiar with myths and misconceptions commonly held about English language acquisition: students acquire English more quickly if their families speak only English at home, immersion in an English-speaking environment alone is sufficient to accelerate English acquisition, students have fully acquired English once they appear to be speaking fluently, and all students learn English in the same way and in the same time frame. Accomplished teachers know how and when to educate colleagues about relevant aspects of English language acquisition, respecting their colleagues' professionalism while providing opportunities to learn about the language acquisition process. For example, teachers may informally point out to a colleague that a student's pronunciation of English does not necessarily equate with that student's literacy skills and knowledge of academic English. Teachers may also provide more formal professional development opportunities to colleagues, for instance, teaching them a content-rich lesson in a language their colleagues do not understand in order to build empathy for English language learners and to illustrate features of the language acquisition process.

## **Reflection**

Accomplished teachers thoughtfully consider factors that influence English language acquisition as they evaluate students' needs and plan instruction. Teachers purposefully seek to advance their knowledge, to stay current in research, and to evaluate theories in relation to their own instructional context. Teachers reflect on students' need to develop English language and literacy skills, and they make sound decisions that facilitate their students' English language acquisition.

# ***Standard VI***

## ***Instructional Practice***

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*Accomplished teachers of English language learners design supportive learning environments based on careful analysis of their students' characteristics and on the linguistic and academic demands of school. Teachers provide effective language and content instruction that expands students' linguistic repertoire in English, allows them to achieve academic success, and inspires them to acquire skills that will serve them throughout their lives.*

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### **Preparing for Effective Instruction**

In preparing for effective instruction, accomplished teachers of English language learners analyze students' strengths and needs, including academic and linguistic abilities. By connecting with students' lives and showing concern for them as individuals, teachers gain students' trust and confidence, encourage them to experiment with language and content learning in English, and focus them toward positive interactions and independent learning. Teachers incorporate students' cultures into their instruction, build upon students' accomplishments, and communicate a vision for success to all students.

In addition to considering the needs of students when planning for instruction, teachers also consider learning objectives as they gather a rich array of instructional resources and determine appropriate teaching strategies. They identify the linguistic, cultural, and conceptual demands of texts and tasks and select varied instructional approaches that enable students to deepen their knowledge of English, increase their access to curriculum, and enhance their enjoyment of school.

### ***Integrating Language and Content***

Accomplished teachers know that learning English takes time and that learning academic English cannot be deferred until students have sufficient mastery of the new language. Consequently, teachers organize instruction around both content and language learning goals. Teachers may derive language objectives from a set of subject area learning standards, or they may select content-area topics and learning tasks to support communicative and functional language objectives. Integrating language and content instruction occurs along a continuum of emphasis on either language or content.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information, refer to the appropriate National Board subject area standards.

Accomplished teachers may plan to integrate topics from different disciplines and organize them around broad conceptual themes. Planning for thematically coherent, content-based language teaching allows teachers to take advantage of the natural redundancy of language, whereby the language used to discuss related concepts, such as vocabulary as well as sentence structure, is reinforced through multiple opportunities for exposure and practice. In addition to planning age-appropriate, thematically-linked instruction, accomplished teachers purposefully plan to integrate students' use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy in class activities and home assignments.

### ***Building on Students' Prior Knowledge, Experiences, and Interests***

Accomplished teachers know how to make difficult concepts more comprehensible for English language learners by designing instruction that builds on prior knowledge and experiences, personal strengths, interests, and linguistic abilities. Teachers maximize opportunities for students to explore and discuss central ideas in the curriculum by selecting major themes and guiding questions that encourage students to build connections to their prior knowledge and experiences. For example, teachers might ask newcomer students, literate in their primary language but at a beginning level of English proficiency, to write stories in their primary language about personal experiences, translate their stories into English with the assistance of peers, and then share their stories with classmates by reading aloud or by adding the stories to an online collection. When teaching about early settlers and pioneers in U.S. history, teachers might incorporate some students' and their families' immigration or migration experiences.

### ***Selecting Materials and Resources***

Accomplished teachers strategically select sources to expose students to increasingly complex language. Teachers plan assignments to provide resources appropriate to students' English language proficiency levels and ensure that students have access to reading materials. To support students' development of academic English, teachers offer a wide range of literacy experiences that expose students to linguistic features characteristic of content-area texts as well as of meaningful tasks and interactions.

Accomplished teachers of English language learners select, adapt, and create a range of diverse materials. They look beyond textbooks into other school resources and the community, seeking opportunities to enrich students' learning experiences. Whenever possible, teachers identify bilingual or bicultural school staff and community members to support literacy instruction. Teachers may invite family and community volunteers to read bilingual books and work with students individually or in small groups to develop reading and writing skills in the students' primary languages, to promote students' cognitive development, and to facilitate transfer of literacy skills from primary languages to English.

Accomplished teachers working with English language learners are sensitive to dialectal differences in primary language materials and, therefore, seek instructional

resources from the diverse regions represented by their students. The purposeful selection of challenging materials appropriate to students' primary language and literacy levels and their English language abilities and content learning needs maximizes their opportunities to learn and use English.

Accomplished teachers understand that all students benefit from instruction representing multiple perspectives, and they know that English language learners need to see themselves and their experiences meaningfully reflected in the curriculum. Teachers are also aware that conventional materials may be limited and even inaccurate in portrayals of the social, political, and historical contexts of indigenous people and other ethnic or cultural groups. Therefore, teachers of English language learners critically review their curriculum and, as needed, supplement and modify materials and instructional tasks to include students' perspectives.

Accomplished teachers are familiar with and know how to incorporate a wide range of current technological resources into their instruction to help develop or reinforce students' learning of language, culture, and concepts related to the curriculum. To inform their efforts to incorporate technology, teachers first assess students' computer literacy and knowledge of relevant terminology. Teachers may infuse linguistically, culturally, and age-appropriate technology to provide activities that extend students' learning and offer academic support, such as online publishing or research. Teachers may use Web sites or Internet-based resources for relevant video clips and pictures, for example, to build students' background knowledge.

In order to build background knowledge, accomplished teachers seek resources and plan ways to use technology creatively to facilitate students' learning. Teachers recognize, however, that age-appropriate literature, textbooks, and Web sites in English may require levels of language proficiency higher than many of their students possess. Resources written in simpler English may not engage students' interest, and materials in students' primary languages may not be available or appropriate. Teachers prepare for instruction by acquiring a variety of multimedia resources for classroom and school library collections in English and in other languages to support their students' language and literacy development as well as to facilitate their access to the curriculum.

### ***Teaching Collaboratively***

Accomplished teachers collaborate with a wide range of instructional colleagues both formally and informally. They identify the best partners to support students' needs and collaborate with them in planning, teaching, assessing, and reflecting on their instruction. Teachers work with staff and school administrators to establish common planning times and use innovative and effective strategies to confer and plan instruction with colleagues. In collaboration with content-area teachers, teachers of English language learners ensure that English language objectives are taught explicitly and appropriately with content learning objectives. Collaboration with content-area teachers may involve both teachers examining the curriculum for linguistic, cultural, and conceptual demands to plan appropriate instruction. Accomplished bilingual

teachers of English language learners might work with content-area teachers to identify important concepts and key vocabulary and to preview and reinforce instruction in the students' primary language. Teachers may also work with reading specialists to assist students in identifying appropriate reading strategies so that students can meet the linguistic demands of textbooks and learn essential concepts.

### ***Managing Learning in the Classroom***

Accomplished teachers plan for effective classroom management practices for English language learners. Teachers seek orderly classrooms so that spontaneous engagement can occur and imagination and learning can flourish. Teachers anticipate possible concerns related to cultural identity as well as intercultural conflicts among students, and they analyze and employ effective ways of preventing or mitigating the effects of such concerns or conflicts. For example, when planning to incorporate group work, teachers determine whether pair-work versus large-group configurations provides the most productive and effective learning opportunities. In addition, when establishing groups, teachers consider students' English language proficiency levels, primary language and cultural backgrounds, and personal characteristics such as gender and personality. Teachers distinguish between student misbehavior that undermines classroom civility and exuberance that adds vitality to learning experiences. When disciplinary action is necessary, teachers act promptly, equitably, and with minimal disruption to the class. Discipline strategies, set within parameters of school policy, are sensitive to the cultural norms familiar to students and allow students to retain their dignity. Teachers work to include all students in congenial and equitable learning environments.

Accomplished teachers effectively manage students' learning time. Teachers know when to extend time devoted to an activity, and just as importantly, when to curtail or conclude an activity for maximum language learning. Teachers establish highly structured, orderly learning routines that communicate to students what is expected of them, thus helping students to focus on successful language learning opportunities and to feel confident about participating in class. Teachers plan instruction that uses time efficiently and enables them to adapt as circumstances dictate in order to address language and content objectives and meet students' unanticipated needs and learning interests.

### **Providing Effective Instruction**

Accomplished teachers of English language learners create and maintain classroom climates of high expectations, sustained engagement, common goals, and mutual support among students. Teachers structure emotionally secure and intellectually rigorous learning environments where students may be included in developing rules and routines for effective learning. Students have a sense of belonging, accept the rules of the classroom community, take responsibility for their learning, and are eager to learn. Teachers facilitate students' language and content learning by upholding high standards for meaningful communication to facilitate instruction that leads to sustained academic achievement in all subjects.

Accomplished teachers choose, develop, and modify instruction based on ongoing observations of students' linguistic needs. Teachers implement effective instruction by structuring lessons around pre-teaching, scaffolding, exposure, practice, and feedback. They recognize that structured routines, especially within lessons, are essential to the academic success of English language learners.

### ***Differentiating Instruction in the Language Domains***

Accomplished teachers understand that English language proficiency typically develops unevenly across the five language domains of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and visual literacy. A student may have strong reading skills, for example, but experience difficulty with fluent oral communication. Teachers therefore differentiate instruction according to each student's level of English proficiency in each of the language domains.

#### **Listening**

Prior to practice in listening, accomplished teachers provide background knowledge that may include an introduction to or review of key vocabulary, grammar, or discourse structures. Teachers might scaffold instruction by implementing graphic organizers and setting a purpose for listening. To practice listening, for example, students might be asked to follow directions for a variety of tasks. Teachers recognize that English language learners need sustained and ongoing exposure to the specific language related to topics of study displayed in the learning environment. Teachers may display relevant posters and visual images with labels throughout their classrooms. To support the language objectives of a lesson on requests, for example, a teacher might display cartoons created and illustrated by students in which the dialogs depict appropriate examples of language, such as requests for assistance, information, or advice.

#### **Speaking**

Accomplished teachers model appropriate speaking for their students and incorporate opportunities for students to enhance their speaking skills. When introducing themselves at the beginning of the school year, for instance, early childhood teachers might model formal and informal introductions. Teachers could create environments rich with examples of the language of introduction and have students practice multiple forms of introductions using puppets. Teachers might have older students audio-record their introductions and develop suggestions for improvement. Students could then introduce themselves to partners or introduce one another to members of a group or to the class with teacher and peer feedback. Teachers know how to create speaking activities involving students' prior experiences and knowledge so students have a rich context for expressing ideas and are able to transfer their linguistic knowledge.

## Reading

Accomplished teachers introduce students to the power and enjoyment of literacy by selecting materials appropriate to the interests, cultural backgrounds, grade-level curriculum, and language and literacy experiences of their students. Students read for a wide range of purposes, including basic comprehension, personal enjoyment, information gathering, and critical understanding.

Accomplished teachers are knowledgeable about teaching phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary development, comprehension, and fluency as appropriate to students' grade levels and content-area learning, focusing on students' specific needs. For example, a middle school science teacher might emphasize vocabulary development while an early childhood teacher might focus on all five components.

Accomplished teachers identify and pre-teach essential vocabulary likely to be unfamiliar to English language learners. Teachers employ effective techniques such as the use of visuals, semantic maps, translations, and realia to assist in developing key vocabulary and conceptual prerequisites that students need to understand texts. Because many English language learners arrive in U.S. schools with literacy skills and reading strategies already developed in their primary languages, teachers accelerate students' English literacy development whenever possible by building on these skills and strategies through cognate awareness and guided reading. Teachers direct students' attention to organizational characteristics of texts such as headings, introductions, and topic sentences, as well as tables of contents, and the alphabetic ordering of glossaries.

Accomplished teachers instruct students by drawing on multiple, interacting systems of language knowledge in English—sentence and word forms, grammar and discourse structure of texts, word meanings, and background knowledge. Teachers know how and when to emphasize vocabulary instruction and how and when to monitor for comprehension.

## Writing

Accomplished teachers differentiate writing instruction to address students' varying levels of fluency in writing. Teachers know when to offer English language learners choices in writing prompts and when to select topics and assignments appropriate to students' culturally-based experiences, English language proficiency, writing abilities, and grade-level expectations.

Accomplished teachers reflect on the sources of students' writing errors and provide clear, direct instruction to explain target forms. Teachers model the writing process, provide word banks and sentence frames, and provide students with thoughtful feedback to improve their writing in English. Teachers also guide students in using appropriate resources such as editing checklists, scoring rubrics, and peer and teacher conferences so that students can identify their own strengths and limitations and effectively edit and revise their writing. Teachers provide specific,

timely, and consistent feedback that students of diverse backgrounds can understand and incorporate into their writing. Teachers understand patterns of language used by learners, as well as their avoidance of specific structures and skills, and shape instruction and feedback to address aspects of language that students have not yet mastered.

### **Visual Literacy**

Accomplished teachers design tasks that help students acquire skills necessary to communicate with visual information. To support students' language development, teachers pre-teach key vocabulary and the processes of interpreting graphic representations, evaluating media messages, and employing visuals to communicate. Teachers may use images, such as photographs, political cartoons, illustrations from children's books, films, maps, charts, and graphs. In a lesson on persuasion, for example, teachers might create an image bank of persuasive techniques used in print advertisements. To scaffold the lesson, teachers might have students view an image that employs a particular persuasive technique, and then move to images representing more complex ideas, ultimately guiding students to choose an idea or product to advertise for a specific, real audience and create their own marketing campaign that incorporates several images. Teachers might provide students with word banks and sentence frames to allow all English language learners to develop their English and to access new concepts. Throughout their classrooms, teachers could provide a variety of advertisements representing the distinct cultures of their students. When teaching visual literacy, accomplished teachers keep in mind that age, culture, and prior experiences contribute to students' abilities to interpret and use visual symbols. For students with limited experiences involving visual images, teachers might provide additional exposure to visuals and opportunities to interpret them.

### ***Engaging and Motivating Learners***

Accomplished teachers' knowledge of students and strong command of English and other subjects comprising the curriculum provide the tools necessary to engage all students in language learning. Teachers recognize that students' needs and interests contribute to their language development, which is facilitated when each student perceives the personal significance of instruction. Teachers might incorporate topics and issues relevant to students' needs and interests to motivate them to continue independent language and concept learning outside the classroom and extend their understanding of the world. Teachers seize opportunities to inspire students by helping them form significant connections between schoolwork and their daily lives and perceive the real-world applicability of language skills they learn. Teachers offer students multiple ways to attain success in their classes and structure activities to ensure meaningful language development.

Accomplished teachers recognize the benefits of bilingualism and how it may contribute to English language learners' academic success. Teachers motivate students to maintain literacy in both their primary language and in English by connecting the cultural backgrounds of their students to content and language

objectives. Teachers, for instance, might invite bilingual community members to discuss how bilingualism contributes to learning English as well as to their careers and to the community.

### ***Providing Students with Focused Language Instruction***

Accomplished teachers know when and how to provide focused language instruction that promotes students' acquisition of and interest in English. Recognizing that language-focused activities are more meaningful to students when they understand texts they read and hear and when topics of discussion and assigned books are relevant to them, teachers might allow for students' voices in curricular decisions such as the choice of reading material. Teachers know that many students cannot develop academic English entirely on their own, and, without focused language instruction, may reach plateaus at any level of English language development. Such instruction can include contextualized attention to distinctive sound contrasts; effective use of synonyms, varied word forms, and rhetorical features; and strategic tasks that integrate the functional uses of language.

### ***Thinking Critically***

While planning their lessons, accomplished teachers recognize that today's complex world requires multifaceted approaches to thinking and acting. Teachers challenge students cognitively at both individual and group levels by asking questions that elicit problem-solving abilities. Teachers employ a combination of activities and techniques, such as graphic organizers and word lists, which allow students to construct their own understandings of the material. Teachers analyze the linguistic and cultural demands of learning tasks that require students to think critically, and that provide them with sufficient support. Accomplished teachers initiate tasks that foster inquiry, building students' capacity to communicate complex ideas. Teachers encourage students to ask questions that extend or clarify concepts, promote deeper thinking, or provide diverse perspectives. They motivate students to synthesize conceptual understandings verbally and in writing, constantly integrating students' English language development with academic content learning. By involving students in critical thinking activities, teachers develop language learners who challenge assumptions, engage in creative projects, persist in explorations of difficult material, think substantively, and demonstrate a commitment to acquiring a high level of English language proficiency.

### ***Individualizing Instruction***

Based on students' needs, accomplished teachers might teach particular grammatical structures, such as relative clauses or question forms. They might teach useful discourse forms, such as phrases signaling a courteous interruption or an expression of a difference of opinion. Teachers provide clear and accurate explanations with multiple examples, model the target language structures, and provide opportunities for students to practice these new language forms and functions through interactive tasks such as show and tell, role-playing, and simulations.

Accomplished teachers pay special attention to the needs of students at varying English proficiency levels, content knowledge, and educational backgrounds, while adhering to appropriate curricula, standards, and time lines. When teaching reading, for example, teachers know when and how to explain vocabulary and give clear explanations informed by their knowledge and understanding of students' culture and English proficiency. Secondary social studies teachers might teach students at advanced levels of English proficiency how to use reported speech accurately and effectively in their writing. Teachers of mathematics may explain the interpretation of meaning and accuracy of forms for conditional structures used in algebraic expressions, such as "If  $x$ , then  $y$ ."

Accomplished teachers scaffold instruction so that students can express themselves effectively. For instance, teachers might provide explicit instruction on how to summarize others' remarks or how to change the subject so that students can use these discourse skills effectively in conversational tasks. Teachers might also provide templates to guide students' oral and written production. A science teacher who teaches English language learners, for instance, might use sentence frames expressing sequence or cause and effect to help students report findings from an experiment. Teachers pose cognitively complex questions modified according to students' English proficiency and scaffold their ability to respond reflectively and with increasingly complex language. Teachers include activities that require students to interact orally in class. To extend students' classroom practice in academic language, teachers might structure opportunities that encourage additional practice during extracurricular activities or after-school homework clubs.

### ***Using the Primary Language as a Tool***

When appropriate, accomplished teachers support students' optimal learning through the use of their primary language to create meaning and engage in discussions about new concepts. Teachers are aware that students' knowledge of another language may complicate their comprehension of concepts expressed in English. For example, students may mistakenly associate the meanings of false cognates, such as *embarrassed* in English and *embarazada*, which means *pregnant* in Spanish. Teachers know that a strong literacy level in the primary language supports English language literacy development and learning. They acknowledge and value students' primary languages and encourage their development by creating environments rich in oral language use, print and visual literacy, and cultural diversity. In instructional settings where more than one language is used, teachers use both languages as teaching and learning tools when appropriate. Teachers keep linguistic and conceptual goals in mind when making language choices for instruction. They attempt to build on the linguistic abilities students bring to school and help them move toward greater understanding and use of English as a medium for learning.

Accomplished teachers understand the limitations imposed on students' participation, critical inquiry, and creativity when all instruction is delivered in English. Teachers find ways to encourage the use of students' primary languages when appropriate. Teachers might group students according to language dominance, for instance, and use primary language materials when available. When more than one

language is used for instruction within a classroom, teachers are careful to avoid practices that subordinate the status and use of one language to another. When language choice and use are determined by state or administrative regulation or by program requirements, teachers exercise professional judgment and implement formal and informal assessments to make choices about language use, depending on the focus of instruction and the desired levels of student participation.

### ***Interacting in the Classroom***

Accomplished teachers know how to scaffold instruction to support students' use of language in increasingly complex ways. Teachers use a diverse repertoire of instructional approaches, strategies, and activities to increase students' interactions and language use. Teachers strategically implement collaborative learning, developing students' discussion skills and emphasizing the importance of listening carefully and responding thoughtfully and appropriately. These activities may involve role-play, debates, interviews, structured writing, peer editing, and technology-based tasks that connect students to the real world. Teachers may address critical and creative thinking demonstrated through interviews and reports for classroom presentations and publications.

Accomplished teachers skillfully encourage in students a willingness to use English, even though they may make mistakes. Teachers know language is learned through approximation of standard usages and making mistakes is an integral part of language learning; however, they are able to identify specific errors that do not necessarily disappear over time without instruction and offer students effective feedback. Teachers know when to model language forms, when to ignore language errors, and when to correct students explicitly and in culturally responsive ways.

Accomplished teachers use simple, specific, clear, and consistent feedback that students of diverse backgrounds can understand and use to improve their English language proficiency. Teachers provide feedback in a timely manner, supplement it with additional instruction as needed, and monitor students' responses to feedback. Accomplished teachers are carefully attuned to evidence that reflects students' emerging capacities to monitor and self-correct language as they attempt new constructions and convey new meanings in English.

Accomplished teachers recognize errors common to students of diverse primary languages and varying English proficiency levels. Teachers realize that English language learners often make errors related to over-generalization that nevertheless indicate their learning of English. For instance, they might state, "He goed to the store." Teachers also recognize that some students—many born in the United States—who have not demonstrated sufficient progress learning English might require sustained feedback, focusing on specific language features that have ceased to develop. These features might include noun plurals, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, modal auxiliaries, compound-complex sentences, articles, or fixed expressions, such as *on the one hand* and *on the other hand*. Teachers provide students opportunities to benefit from feedback focused on these errors.

## Encouraging Students to Become Independent Learners

Accomplished teachers guide students as they become independent learners by teaching learning strategies that foster language development and subject matter mastery. Teachers know that intellectually active students are successful learners. Therefore, they offer students clear explanations, explicit modeling, and guided practice in techniques used by strategic learners, such as how to navigate textbooks, maintain organization, and use reference materials, including those on the Internet. As a result, students take ownership of strategies and apply them independently to improve their knowledge of language. Teachers recognize that such strategies empower students to succeed academically by giving them confidence to recognize their needs, cultivate their strengths, and undertake the challenges of English language learning.

## Incorporating Assessment

Accomplished teachers recognize that assessment is a continuous cycle in which assessment of learning informs instruction, while instruction informs assessment. They infuse effective assessment strategies throughout their instruction. (See [Standard VII—Assessment](#).)

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers continually analyze their instruction—evaluating objectives, lesson plans, timing, classroom management practices, and classroom environments in terms of student learning and development. Teachers further critique success in planning, preparing for, and delivering instruction by reflecting on their knowledge of students, culture, second language acquisition, content-area curriculum, and of the English language. To enhance students' simultaneous access to academic content and English language learning, teachers reflect on the learning environments they create and on their use of instructional resources. Teachers observe students' progress in acquiring specific features of language, and, upon reflection, build connections between students' current levels of knowledge and their functioning at more sophisticated levels of performance. Teachers also reflect on the degree to which their instruction communicates high expectations and fosters student success.

# Standard VII

## Assessment

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*Accomplished teachers of English language learners employ a variety of practices to assess their students appropriately. They use assessment results to shape instruction, to monitor student learning, to assist students in reflecting on their own progress, and to report student progress.*

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Accomplished teachers of English language learners view assessment as an integral part of instruction benefiting both the student and the teacher. While recognizing an obligation to prepare students for high-stakes assessments, teachers know that assessment of student understanding and progress is a daily, informative process at the heart of student-centered teaching, and they are adept at using multiple evaluation methods to interpret student understanding and use of language. Teachers employ assessments for a variety of purposes. For example, teachers use assessments to determine appropriate placements of students in an English language proficiency level for instruction. They use content-based assessments and students' self-assessments to monitor students' learning and to inform instruction. In addition, teachers use assessments to determine appropriate services for students who may have special needs, including those identified as gifted and talented. As appropriate, teachers communicate assessment results clearly and regularly to students, families, professional colleagues, and community members.

### Variety in Assessment Techniques

Accomplished teachers understand the advantages and limitations of a wide range of assessment methods and strategies, both formal and informal, and use them to gauge students' progress. Teachers know that linguistically and culturally diverse students often have skills that will not emerge in unfamiliar or uncomfortable settings or during certain evaluations. Teachers address the potential for cultural bias in assessment materials and practices when evaluating their validity. Teachers, therefore, do not rely on any single method of measuring student achievement. They frequently give students opportunities to demonstrate progress in a variety of ways that traditional assessments might inhibit. Teachers understand, for example, that performance-based assessments may have special utility for linguistically and culturally diverse learners. Teachers might provide students with opportunities to display their knowledge through authentic assessments that measure student progress in real-world contexts. Teachers know under what circumstances to assess students in their primary language, and they secure the appropriate resources to do so. Teachers also recognize that students at beginning levels of English language

proficiency are sometimes hesitant to respond verbally to questions posed in the classroom, and therefore, at times, arrange for students to confirm their understanding in ways that do not require public oral responses. For example, teachers might ask students to point to depictions of objects or scenes teachers describe, draw pictures indicating their understanding of words, or follow verbal directions while writing on the board. When appropriate, teachers create their own tools for assessment that might incorporate students' daily class work, artwork, or exhibits, and might feature a wide range of technological enhancements. Assessments for elementary school students, for instance, might include dramatic performances in which students interpret or reenact stories. A teacher might ask high school students studying media to examine propaganda in television commercials, discuss similarities and differences among advertisements analyzed by classmates and, as a group, write and film a new commercial showcasing specific propaganda techniques. Teachers seek good matches among students' abilities, instructional goals, and assessment methods, considering the relative strengths and weaknesses of the procedures as well as the timing, focus, and purpose of each evaluation.

## Initial Placement Assessment

Accomplished teachers know how to analyze and interpret assessment data, teacher observations, and other information to determine students' appropriate placement in an English language proficiency level and to ensure that students receive instructional services that meet their needs. Teachers work with other professionals to confirm that English language learners are placed in appropriate content-area courses that enable them to succeed in school and allow high school students to earn credits toward graduation. Teachers pay particular attention to students' development in each of the five language domains. Teachers may recommend additional assessments to confirm a student's proficiency level, and, as necessary, may recommend changes in instructional services.

Accomplished teachers understand the value of assessing students in their primary languages at the time of their initial enrollment in school. Even if they do not speak the student's primary language, teachers know that assessment data in the primary language can provide valuable information regarding a student's literacy level. When no formal primary language assessment is available, teachers devise informal ways to ascertain a student's level of reading and writing in the primary language, such as having the student write about a picture. Teachers may advocate for students to be assessed in their primary language in such areas as mathematics to verify proper placement in content classes based on students' knowledge of the subject rather than solely on proficiency in English.

## Assessment to Guide Instructional Practice

Accomplished teachers, sometimes with the assistance of students, set high yet realistic goals using assessments meaningful to the academic, social, and motivational needs of their students. To achieve these goals, teachers construct formative and summative assessments. Informal, formative assessments can be

as simple as comprehension checks or listening and reading comprehension tests, whereas summative assessments include end-of-unit tests or cumulative projects. Teachers might incorporate online quizzes that are automatically graded and provide immediate feedback to allow students and teachers to reflect on student progress and plan future lessons. Student portfolios might serve simultaneously as formative and summative assessments. As a formative assessment, a portfolio might help both the teacher and the student determine how to strengthen the learning process; as a summative assessment, a portfolio could establish insight about a student's language proficiency over time. Teachers analyze assessment results and make purposeful adjustments to curriculum and instruction consistent with their findings.

Accomplished teachers regularly assess students' language performance to gain perspectives on their ability to apply newly learned language skills in a variety of settings and to guide decisions about how to proceed with instruction. Teachers may tailor assessments to the linguistic needs of varied populations of English language learners. They monitor students' readiness to grasp new ideas and their ability to use language fluently and accurately to communicate understanding. Teachers note and analyze both the form and content of students' responses and the processes by which they approach tasks, solve problems, and synthesize and evaluate knowledge. When appropriate, teachers assess students' knowledge of the foundational components of English and content-specific language, and they use assessment data to help students access content-area information. Teachers evaluate the willingness of their English language learners to take risks with new vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structures. In assessing students' writing, for example, teachers might evaluate students' ability to use complex clauses, academic word families, transition words, and larger rhetorical structures. Accomplished teachers might collaborate with content teachers to create or use available content-area assessments, both formal and informal, to assess English language learners at diverse proficiency levels. They might also encourage the use of primary language assessments, as appropriate. On the basis of their findings, teachers anticipate how to proceed with individual students as well as with groups as a whole.

The information teachers gather through assessment allows them to reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction; teachers design, implement, and assess their instructional programs in a cycle of instruction, review, modification, and evaluation. Effective assessments indicate when teachers should move forward with instruction, when they should refine instruction or re-teach, and when they should provide students with additional exposure to language and opportunities to use language meaningfully. This continual examination of instruction enables teachers to maximize student learning.

### ***Assessment of Student Progress in the Five Language Domains***

Accomplished teachers develop and use appropriate instruments to assess students' facility with specific language features in the five language domains of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and visual literacy. Teachers then monitor students' ability to incorporate these features into their language use, and they routinely provide feedback to students about their progress. Teachers implement

specific techniques to evaluate students' work and performance and to record assessment information.

### **Listening**

Accomplished teachers select and implement listening assessments appropriate to students' English proficiency levels. Teachers assess the ability of students at beginning levels of English proficiency to understand sounds and spoken words and phrases; to understand reduced forms of daily speech such as *gonna*, *wanna*, or *kinda*; to answer inferential questions; and to recognize important facts and take notes from short discussions on a variety of topics. At more advanced levels, students respond to listening passages of increasing length and complexity. Teachers might use texts that ask students with beginning levels of English proficiency to recognize pictures that correspond to spoken words or phrases, to respond physically to directions, and to listen to narratives with accompanying illustrations and then retell what occurs. Teachers might ask students at advanced levels of English language proficiency to listen to a range of topical materials, such as broadcasts of great speeches by United States presidents or other popular leaders, as well to listen to debates and political forums.

### **Speaking**

Accomplished teachers systematically assess students' oral language development through structured conversations or formal assessments. Examples of appropriate assessments for students with beginning levels of English language proficiency might include oral cloze tasks or picture-sequencing activities which ask students to discuss the arrangement of pictures portraying a sequence of actions. Appropriate assessments at intermediate levels of English language proficiency might have students explain the steps to a familiar process or describe the events of a significant occurrence. To determine the language proficiency of students who have developed oral fluency, teachers might use a class-created rubric to assess students' knowledge and use of word prefixes, inflectional endings, modal auxiliaries, pronoun references, and transition words in skits or presentations.

### **Reading**

Accomplished teachers assess students' reading abilities at frequent, designated intervals. Early in the school year, for example, teachers might administer assessments to determine young students' knowledge of how to use printed materials, of beginning and ending sounds, of rhyming words, and of word concepts. For older students, teachers might assess students' decoding skills; oral fluency; knowledge of vocabulary, including morphology; and reading comprehension. Assessment of reading comprehension might include students' knowledge of the structure of diverse types of texts, both fiction and nonfiction, and of literary elements such as metaphor, as well as their ability to understand complex sentences and pronoun referents; to identify main and supporting ideas; to contrast fact and opinion; and to use inferences, summary, and analysis.

## Writing

Accomplished teachers assess students' writing to help English language learners produce their best writing and gain language proficiency. To assess the writing skills of English language learners and support their writing development, for instance, teachers might incorporate tasks that include prompts as well as relevant grammatical reminders, word banks to help students with lexical choices, discourse suggestions providing tips on rhetorical structure, or cloze activities that require students to fill in blanks with words that have been deleted from stories or other texts. Accomplished teachers, often along with their students, are adept at creating and using both holistic and analytic rubrics to evaluate students' writing. Teachers interpret writing assessment data in the context of their understanding of each individual student and their evaluations of the accomplishments of the class as a whole and adjust their instructional plans, pace, and objectives accordingly.

## Visual Literacy

Accomplished teachers assess students' ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate visuals for meaning, relevance, and context. They assess students' vocabulary, grammar, and discourse in speech and in writing when interpreting the visual, and their ability to produce or use visuals appropriate to purpose and audience. Teachers are mindful of students' English language proficiency when assessing visual literacy. During a shared reading lesson, for example, early childhood teachers might invite students to choose illustrations from a story to predict what happens next. To assess students' personal and critical responses to visual representations, secondary teachers might ask students to view a series of images and use a concept map to communicate the underlying meaning and intent of the images.

## *Substantive Feedback to Students*

Because accomplished teachers know that well-stated and appropriate feedback can boost students' confidence and inspire their commitment to learning, they provide clear, timely, and constructive feedback to students, reinforcing students' growth, highlighting their improvements, and celebrating their accomplishments. Teachers affirm for students that feedback is both helpful and necessary to learning a new language. Teachers who identify misconceptions and gaps in students' knowledge of academic language, for example, might work with students to determine a course of action for improvement that incorporates a logical progression of manageable instructional steps. In the teaching of writing, rather than addressing a wide spectrum of tasks, a teacher might stress specific skills on which a student needs to focus, such as subject-verb or pronoun-referent agreement, the proper placement of adjectives and use of articles, or the construction of plurals and question forms. Teachers acknowledge the benefits of the judicious use of well-structured peer evaluations and instruct students on how to assist classmates with assessment and feedback. For example, a teacher might acquaint students with the purposes and practices of peer feedback by showing a video of students working in collaborative groups, asking students to analyze the language skills they observe, and introducing rubrics or checklists students then use constructively to critique their classmates' language

learning. Teachers recognize that purposeful feedback, one component of a range of effective assessment strategies, provides students with important perspectives on their own language learning.

## **Student Self-Assessment**

Accomplished teachers encourage students to set high goals for themselves and teach them how to evaluate their own progress toward English language acquisition. Teachers know that developing their students' capacity for self-assessment enhances students' decision-making skills; promotes their ability to discern connections between classroom activities and real-world experiences; and fosters their growth as independent, reflective learners of English. Knowing that student self-assessment elicits valuable information that teachers can use to make instructional decisions regarding students' English language development, accomplished teachers provide individual and group feedback that models language skills students need to self-assess and self-correct and guides them in adjusting their learning strategies. Teachers, for example, might instruct students in creating their own rubrics to evaluate specific aspects of English. Teachers clearly communicate their expectations for students' language learning so that students can judge how well their work meets those expectations. Teachers therefore help students define and understand their linguistic progress and motivate students to take responsibility for their own language learning.

## **English Language Proficiency Assessment**

Accomplished teachers understand the purpose of proficiency assessments with regard to current local, state, and federal guidelines for monitoring the progress of students' English language development. Teachers collect and analyze data from formal sources. They know how to examine such assessment instruments critically and understand their uses and limitations in the practice of informed teaching. Teachers are knowledgeable about the psychometric properties of standardized tests when administered to English language learners, including large-scale, content-based assessments; academic language proficiency assessments; reading placement tests; and formative instructional assessments. Teachers are also involved in interpreting language proficiency assessment results as they pertain to the reclassification of students' English language proficiency. Aware of which students may be ready to exit language support programs, teachers carefully monitor these students' language proficiency assessment results. Teachers collaborate with content teachers, guidance counselors, and others to share current information when students are reclassified as no longer in need of language support. If reclassified, students are eligible for accommodations on state content-area tests; as necessary, teachers advocate for these students to receive appropriate accommodations.

## **Standardized Content Assessment**

Accomplished teachers work collaboratively with school staff to confirm the eligibility of English language learners to participate in content-area assessments

and ascertain that students are assessed fairly. Teachers understand test validity and reliability and are able to explain to colleagues how these concepts relate to the unique features of evaluating English language learners. Additionally, teachers examine content-area assessments in collaboration with content teachers to determine where students might have difficulties and to identify key words that English language learners need to know.

Understanding the influence accommodations have on student outcomes and on test reliability, teachers of English language learners collaborate with content-area teachers, educational specialists, counselors, and others to ensure that students have accommodations that address their needs without compromising an assessment's validity. Teachers are aware of current research on the efficacy and appropriateness of accommodations on assessments as well as state and local policies regarding accommodations available to their students. Teachers therefore collaborate with colleagues to select testing accommodations. For example, they recognize the inappropriateness of providing bilingual dictionaries as an accommodation for students not literate in their primary language and suggest other appropriate accommodations.

## **Assessment for Special Purposes**

Accomplished teachers make certain that English language learners receive appropriate assessment and identification for a variety of programs and services and advocate for the proper assessment and placement of all students. Teachers ensure that they are part of the early intervention process when a student is in need of academic intervention. In advocating for appropriate referrals for English language learners, teachers adhere to local, state, and federal guidelines concerning the assessment of students with special needs. Teachers help administer and monitor the efficacy of interventions for students at risk of academic difficulties. After academic interventions are fully administered and monitored, teachers work as part of a team to determine whether students should be assessed for special services, recommending assessment in primary languages as appropriate. They advocate for the fair assessment of their students regarding placement in special education and ensure that the analysis of assessment results reflects their students' status as English language learners.

Furthermore, teachers advocate for their students to receive access to gifted and talented programs. Accomplished teachers realize that English language learners may be underrepresented in gifted and talented education, and they assist in identifying potential students for such programs, helping colleagues recognize when an English language learner makes extraordinary academic progress that might not be immediately noticed because of limited language proficiency. When students are considered for special needs placement, including gifted education, teachers collaborate with other professionals at their school to provide insights on students' progress in the acquisition of English. They advise colleagues about such background variables as the student's level of proficiency in the primary language, amount of prior formal education, and cultural factors that might affect learning. In all

cases, teachers advocate for appropriate actions to meet their students' needs as English language learners.

## Substantive Assessment Information for Families and Others

Accomplished teachers are skilled at presenting, summarizing, and interpreting assessment data from a range of evaluative tools in meaningful and valid ways to various audiences, ensuring that all information is clear, understandable, and connected to instructional goals. Teachers use assessment results to provide frequent, specific information to professional colleagues, families, school officials, and other decision makers about each learner's progress and performance. To that end, teachers employ appropriate methods—including the most current technology—for collecting, summarizing, and reporting assessment data to demonstrate that learning occurs. Teachers communicate assessment information to families, for instance, about students' accomplishments, successes, and needs for improvement as well as ways to attain higher goals. They elicit parents' insights about their children's interests and ways to motivate them, and teachers respond thoughtfully and thoroughly to parents' concerns. Teachers know that such efforts encourage involvement and promote family input into the educational process by providing families with opportunities to evaluate program effectiveness and to help determine future directions for improved instruction. (See [Standard III—Home, School, and Community Connections](#).)

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers reflect on their strong foundation in assessment, as it applies to language testing, and their use of all available assessment data to inform daily classroom activities and provide students with access to content and educational opportunities. Teachers reflect on multiple evaluation methods to interpret student understanding and use of language and choose those evaluation methods that provide the most valuable information about students' learning and English language development. Teachers reflect on the effectiveness of their instructional decisions, using information gathered from students' progress and from lessons to set high, worthwhile goals for student language and content learning and to design instructional strategies appropriate to students' needs. Accomplished teachers think carefully about the best ways to provide clear communication to students, parents, colleagues, and the educational community regarding the purposes and results of assessments.

# ***Standard VIII***

## ***Teacher as Learner***

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*Accomplished teachers of English language learners are passionate about their field and consistently engage in the process of professional growth. Teachers thoughtfully evaluate their learning and apply it in their practice to maximize student success.*

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Accomplished teachers of English language learners distinguish themselves by demonstrating a capacity for ongoing, analytical self-examination; willingness to try new approaches to improve their instruction; and a readiness to change in order to grow as teachers and learners. Strongly committed to lifelong learning, teachers participate in a wide range of reflective practices and consider reflection central to their responsibilities as professional educators.

### **Professional Growth and Development**

When making relevant choices for professional growth, accomplished teachers seek knowledge about their students' cultures, primary languages, and communities to develop effective ways to serve diverse populations of English language learners. Teachers readily acknowledge their students as the best resources for enhancing their knowledge of students' primary languages and cultures. Teachers take into account the best practices for developing students' English language proficiency and academic knowledge. Teachers consider the full range of English language learners, including those who have substantial gaps in their formal education as well as those who have not reached proficiency in academic English despite having lived in the United States for years. Motivated by observations of their students, research findings, and a desire to equip students for future challenges, teachers regularly examine students' development of English and ability to achieve in content learning, and they apply this knowledge to their instruction.

Accomplished teachers set personal and professional goals that include a range of professional development activities and structured, continuing education opportunities relevant to teaching English language learners. Because the study of language acquisition is constantly evolving, teachers seek information both in person and online concerning current evidence-based theories and research and use this knowledge to improve their instruction. Their professional development might include critiquing published research related to English language development or undertaking advanced coursework that provides targeted attention to second language development and cultural studies. Understanding the value of using their students' primary languages and of experiencing their cultures, accomplished teachers

might seek opportunities to travel or teach abroad. As participants in professional organizations, teachers contribute to a cadre of educators dedicated to improving the language proficiency of English language learners. They critically reflect on their own classroom practices and monitor and analyze the progress of English language learners in order to study patterns of success and failure and to identify dropout risk factors and to develop strategies to prevent students from leaving the educational system. Teachers of English language learners work with teachers across grade levels to analyze student performance on grade-level assignments and on tests of English language proficiency in order to track student progress in learning across language domains and construct systematic, seamless transitions for students between grade levels.

Accomplished teachers stay abreast of relevant technological advancements to assist instructional planning and delivery and to examine the effectiveness of lessons. Teachers avail themselves of technology to update their own knowledge; to assist their planning, assessment, and research; and to communicate and collaborate with colleagues to improve instruction and enhance professionalism. They analyze the relative merits of pedagogical approaches and judge their appropriateness when making curricular and instructional decisions pertaining to technology. They reflect on their use of technology to maximize English language learners' exposure to, use of, and interest in academic English. As a result, teachers create and incorporate meaningful learning activities that integrate technology into their instruction, empowering English language learners to participate successfully in real-life interactions with others and to succeed in school.

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers reflect on their own capacity for continual, analytical self-examination; willingness to try new approaches to improve their instruction; and their readiness to change in order to grow as teachers and as learners. To develop and implement effective strategies to serve diverse populations of English language learners, teachers continuously seek new ways to expand knowledge of their students' cultures, primary languages, and communities. The ongoing reflection of accomplished teachers guides their personal and professional growth and adds substance and vitality to their practice.

# ***Standard IX***

## ***Professional Leadership and Advocacy***

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*Accomplished teachers of English language learners contribute to the professional learning of their colleagues and the advancement of knowledge in their field in order to advocate for their students.*

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Accomplished teachers of English language learners function as leaders of professional teaching and learning communities. They assume responsibilities that extend beyond their classrooms, including school leadership roles as advocates for a welcoming learning environment in which all staff members are responsible for the language growth and academic success of students.

### **Collaborating with Colleagues to Improve Student Learning**

Accomplished teachers are integral members of a community of teachers and learners in which collaboration allows them to forge connections across disciplines that strengthen students' achievement. Teachers are committed to continuing the professional development of their peers and contribute to the quality of their peers' practice by acting as resources for colleagues who strive to become more knowledgeable about meeting the needs of English language learners. Teachers provide leadership and information on ways to facilitate students' growth in English language learning as well as their academic success. Teachers share research findings about English language learners with colleagues to help other educators identify and activate students' existing knowledge and to encourage appropriate instructional practices. Accomplished teachers assist content-area teachers in understanding that language barriers can make lessons inaccessible and assessments invalid for English language learners. They might provide advice for adjusting terminology and oral language use or demonstrate how to modify texts, assignments, and assessments to assist students in accessing academic content and learning English. A teacher might help content-area colleagues understand the importance of identifying essential vocabulary that all students must learn. For example, teachers might help a colleague teaching science realize how knowledge of basic terms like increase and decrease can aid an English language learner in successfully conducting an experiment.

With the goal of contributing purposefully to professionalism in their schools, accomplished teachers readily take advantage of opportunities to educate colleagues regarding misconceptions about English language learners. Teachers, for instance, raise their colleagues' awareness of questionable assumptions about what

commonly occurs in the home environments of English language learners, where time, space, or materials to complete schoolwork might not be available or where certain assignments, such as independent science projects, might be unfamiliar to anyone in the family.

Assuming the responsibility of professional leadership, accomplished teachers are skilled at working harmoniously and effectively with their colleagues and reap the benefits of such professional collaboration. Teachers initiate informal discussions both in person and electronically; share materials and expertise with their peers; collaborate with colleagues to design, improve, and evaluate academic programs and professional development plans; and recommend ways to involve families in their children's education, such as inviting family members to act as guest speakers or to serve on evaluation and advisory committees. Teachers serve as peer coaches or master teachers, mentoring student teachers, new teachers, and experienced colleagues. Teachers are available to observe their colleagues' teaching, and, in turn, invite colleagues to observe and evaluate their teaching as a means of improving instruction. Teachers might invite others to comment on the quality of feedback provided to students on written work, for example, or examine the strengths and weaknesses of their lesson plans, instructional units, or teaching materials. To enhance instruction, teachers might recommend or develop programs to better serve the diverse needs of students. Teachers might be integral members of peer-coaching groups in which colleagues analyze and critique lessons observed at various times during the year. Teachers understand that taking on professional leadership roles improves their own effectiveness as teachers, expands their knowledge of students, deepens their understanding of how their field relates to others, contributes to the knowledge and skills of other teachers, improves the school's instructional programs, and fosters the success of all students.

## **Advocating for English Language Learners**

Accomplished teachers challenge misconceptions about English language learners, arbitrary requirements, inappropriate curricular and assessment assumptions, cultural misunderstandings, and other factors that may limit their students' achievement. They do so in ways that have a positive impact on their individual students and learning communities. Teachers ensure that valid assessments, placements, and referral procedures occur so that English language learners receive appropriate and equitable services. Teachers know and disseminate information regarding local, state, and federal mandates and accommodations to which students are entitled. They advocate for their students' admission to special programs, such as those for gifted and talented students, and they argue against inappropriate placements in compensatory or remedial programs. Teachers recommend, and, when possible, help establish new programs, courses, and curricula to build on the knowledge, skills, and interests that English language learners bring to school, addressing students' individual needs and fostering their positive self-image. Teachers also advocate for equal access to extracurricular activities and enrichment programs. A teacher, for example, might consult with colleagues about facilitating the inclusion of English language learners in school events and encourage students to participate

in school clubs or activities in which they can share experiences, display their talents, teach others about their cultures, and develop leadership skills.

Accomplished teachers know that lack of knowledge about English language learners and lack of resources in schools can result in insufficient or inequitable access to educational opportunities and related services. Teachers promote the value of multilingualism and multiculturalism and advocate for the effective use of primary languages in instruction. They support programs in which students learn primary languages and English simultaneously, encouraging students to become multilingual and multicultural. Teachers recommend the inclusion of diverse language materials in media centers, clarifying for colleagues the positive impact such resources have on student learning. Teachers advocate for students' access to technology and seek resources from the school and the community to make technological resources available to students. Teachers may train support personnel working with multilingual and multicultural students and their families and collaborate with staff and community members to identify and train interpreters. Teachers advocate for the civil rights of English language learners and know how and when to question convention, tradition, and innovation, thereby supporting practices that help all students succeed and enhancing respect for the distinctive needs and contributions of English language learners.

Accomplished teachers advocate for students and their families to ensure that their voices are heard. Because linguistically and culturally diverse learners and their families are often newcomers to the United States and members of minority groups who lack proficiency in English and familiarity with U.S. schools, teachers engage families in practices that empower them to become advocates for their children. (See [Standard III—Home, School, and Community Connections.](#))

## Preparing for the Future

Accomplished teachers stay abreast of national and international political, social, and natural events which might influence the demographics of their schools and classrooms. They anticipate the impact of these events so they can prepare themselves, their colleagues, and their communities for new and different responsibilities they will need to put in place to meet students' needs. Accomplished teachers know and understand statistical data and research findings related to English language learners and can disseminate this information effectively. Teachers, for instance, can analyze and discuss disaggregated data including, for example, graduation rates, attendance reports, standardized test scores, and grades in content classes; and they understand the implications for their instructional settings.

Accomplished teachers of adolescents prepare students for postsecondary opportunities by providing them with detailed information about college and employment that English language learners and their families might lack. Teachers, for example, might provide students with specific information regarding college entrance requirements, scholarships, and loans and apprise students of the timelines and procedures involved in completing college and employment applications. Teachers

might send materials home with relevant information or communicate directly with families. They might teach students the characteristics of effective personal statements for college admission applications and resumes, instructing students in the writing skills needed, and offering their expertise as editors. They might assess instructional offerings in their schools or communities and advocate for courses of study that support students and their families in achieving college and employment goals. In their efforts to inform students and their families about postsecondary educational opportunities, teachers might collaborate with higher-education faculty to encourage English language learners to contemplate future educational possibilities.

## Contributing to the Advancement of the Profession

Accomplished teachers understand that putting themselves in positions of public advocacy signifies a commitment to professional growth that contributes to student learning. Teachers, therefore, regularly contribute to the improvement of teaching English language learners. Some teachers publish journal articles or develop and participate in electronic presentations and discussion groups. To benefit instructional programs and the field, teachers may acquire grants or initiate professional development activities. Teachers seek opportunities to collaborate with educators from colleges, universities, or other institutions and agencies in pilot programs, action research projects, and in the supervision of student teachers or interns. Teachers serve on regional or district committees to represent the needs of English language learners when decisions are made regarding changes in curriculum and in instructional and assessment materials, as well as changes regarding professional development. They are members of professional organizations where they might make presentations at conferences; serve on education policy committees or councils; contribute to the design, review, or revision of standards, benchmarks, and curriculum guidelines; or participate in efforts to address and solve policy issues. Teachers might appear before educational decisionmakers or serve on task force committees and evaluation teams at local, state, regional, or national levels. They promote educational opportunities for their students by advocating for local, state, and federal funding of programs that advance instructional programs and services for English language learners. Teachers take leadership roles within the profession, sharing their accumulated knowledge and skills and strengthening the practices of all teachers.

## Reflection

Accomplished teachers consistently reflect on their own professional leadership and advocacy, examining how their collaboration with colleagues benefits English language learners both inside and outside the classroom and improves the learning environment in their schools. As advocates for English language learners, teachers analyze what they do to bring about equitable access to educational opportunities and sufficient services for all their students, using their conclusions to guide continued efforts. Teachers think critically about their professional contributions outside their classrooms and schools, and they consider how these activities affect student learning, their practice, and the profession.

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The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is deeply grateful to all those who contributed their time, wisdom, and professional vision to *English as a New Language Standards, Second Edition*. Any field grows, shifts, and evolves over time. Standards, too, must remain dynamic and therefore are subject to revision. In 2009, NBPTS convened a second English as a New Language Standards Committee. This committee was charged with achieving both continuity and change, using the first edition of the standards as the foundation for its work but modifying the standards to reflect best practices of the early twenty-first century. The English as a New Language Standards Committee exemplified the collegiality, expertise, and dedication to the improvement of student learning that are hallmarks of accomplished teachers. Special thanks go to committee chairs, Margaret Golibersuch, NBCT, and Candace Harper, for their invaluable leadership in making the second edition a reality.

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