EMERGENT MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS IN PREKINDERGARTEN

A Protocol for Identification, Instructional Planning & Programming

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This guidance is intended to provide Prekindergarten programs in New York State (NYS) initial support for implementing the *Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile Protocol (EMLLPP)*. The EMLLPP involves a series of steps designed to identify Emergent Multilingual Learners as they enter Prekindergarten programs as well as inform instructional planning and programming on their behalf.

Acknowledgements

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New York State Education Department's OBEWL, OEL, and New York State BOR
New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE)
New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYSTESOL)
New York City Department of Education's Early Childhood Education Office
New York City Administration for Children's Services, Division of Early Care and Education
Freeport Public Schools
Teachers College
Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education
Committee for Hispanic Children and Families
Lutheran Social Services of New York
East Harlem Council for Human Services, Inc./Bilingual Head Start
Goddard Riverside Day Care Center

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Introduction

This *Guidance Document* introduces the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) protocol designed for identifying children who enter Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) programs speaking little or no English. School-based UPK programs, community-based organizations (CBO), and interested community members will find useful information and guidance to support instruction and programming for this population of children.

Currently, the term "English Language Learner" (ELL) in NYS solely refers to students in Kindergarten (K) through 12th grade who are identified pursuant to the ELL Identification and Placement Process set forth in Commissioner's Regulations (CR) Part 154-2.3(a). NYS uses the terms "English Language Learners (ELLs)" and "Multilingual Learners (MLLs)" interchangeably, and also refers to this population as ELL/MLL. While CR Part 154-2.3(a) does not apply to Prekindergarten, NYSED developed the EMLLPP to document the linguistic exposure of Prekindergarten students. Unlike the formal ELL identification process, the EMLLPP does not determine students' English language proficiency. Students identified as EMLLs in Prekindergarten may or may not be later identified as ELLs/MLLs once their English proficiency is determined via the CR Part 154-2.3 (a) identification process in Kindergarten.

CR Part 151 UPK Regulations do not yet mandate a process for identifying English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in Prekindergarten. However, NYSED's Prekindergarten Quality Assurance Protocol requires Prekindergarten programs to support all young learners with fidelity and to the maximum extent practicable communicate in the language or mode of communication which the parents and/or guardians and the child best understand. School districts and CBOs that contract directly with NYSED to implement State-funded Prekindergarten programs must report to NYSED if they have a process in place for identifying Prekindergarten students who speak a language other than English. In 2016-17[1], approximately 15% (86 out of 487) of NYS school districts with State-funded Prekindergarten programs self-reported that they do not have a process to identify Prekindergarten students who speak a language other than English. Those districts which did have an identification process (416 out of 487 or 85%) self-reported an approximate total of 30,030 Prekindergarten students statewide who speak a language other than English. These students made up approximately 28% of the total Prekindergarten population of 120,000 students in 2016-2017. Among these Prekindergarten students who speak a language other than English, 22,523 (75%) were reported by the New York City Department of Education and 7,508 (25%) were reported by rest of State.

CR Part 117.1-3 establishes standards for the screening of every new entrant into NYS schools to determine which students are possibly gifted, have or are suspected of having a disability in

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[1] Prekindergarten Emergent Multilingual Learner data is annually reported by school districts and Community Based Organizations operating New York State-funded prekindergarten programs. Prekindergarten Emergent Multilingual Learner aggregate data is from the 2017-2017 Final Report self-reported via NYSED's Monitoring and Vendor Performance System (MVPS).

accordance with subdivision (6) of section 3208 of the Education Law, and/or possibly are "limited English proficient"[2] in accordance with subdivision 2-a of section 3204 of the Education Law.

The United States Department of Education's [Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Early Learning Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) contains explicit language related to providing instruction to ELLs/MLLs and providing professional development to their teachers: "States must assist teachers (including preschool teachers), principals, and other school leaders, state educational agencies, and schools in establishing, in implementing and sustaining effective language instruction educational programs designed to assist in teaching English Learners including immigrant children and youth." [SEC.3102Purposes]

According to NYSED 2017 data[3], of the approximately 2.6 million public school K-12 students in NYS, over 250,000 (9%) are ELLs/MLLs. Currently, NYSED mandates use of a Home Language Questionnaire and the New York State Identification Test of English Language Learners (NYSITELL) as part of an identification and placement process to identify ELLs/MLLs in grades K-12. In 2017, approximately 28,458 (10.9%) of all ELLs/MLLs were in Kindergarten. Among these students, 15,865 (55.7%) listed Spanish as their home or primary language. Another 3,877 (13.6%) listed Chinese as their home or primary language, and other languages listed as the home or primary language of a significant number of Kindergarten ELLs/MLLs include Arabic (1,293, or 4.5%), Bengali (805, or 2.8%), Russian (633, or 2.2%), and Urdu (513, or 1.8%).

Demographic diversity is indicative of cultural diversity in the State. The varied histories, traditions, values, experiences, beliefs, perspectives, etc. are all meaningful elements of children's identities. In order to affirm all identities, educators are careful to honor and integrate multicultural perspectives through materials, lesson plans, displays, and experiences that do not privilege any dominant group. Diversity in all forms becomes an asset to learning when the classroom environment promotes respect for how children may be different from one another as well as for what they may have in common.

Likewise, the home languages of New York's ELLs/MLLs represent an important resource to scaffold learning and contribute significantly to academic achievement. The steps outlined in this document inform teachers' planning on behalf of linguistically diverse preschool children and maximize the efficacy of the home language to scaffold and advance learning in English. As access to Prekindergarten rapidly expands for both three and four-year-old children, NYSED sets the same goals of academic success and language proficiency for its youngest learners.

The highest concentrations of English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) occur in Kindergarten and first grade[4] as these are the entry points to a formal educational

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[2] New York State no longer utilizes the term Limited English Proficient. Instead, this terminology has been replaced with English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner.

[3] New York Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) enrollment http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/statistics/enroll-n-staff/home.html

[4] New York Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) enrollment http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/statistics/enroll-n-staff/home.html

system. Exposed to their home languages from birth, it is logical that there would be more children identified as "English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners" in the earlier grades and that their numbers would gradually reduce as they gain English proficiency advancing through the grades. Public data about the preschool child population indicate that, proportionately, there are many more children in preschool learning English in their early childhood programs than there are in Kindergarten.[5] This signals to Prekindergarten programs the urgency to develop effective practices in first identifying emergent multilingual children, and then planning for the instruction and programming that will best serve them and their families.

The mission of NYSED is to ensure that all New York State (NYS) students attain the highest level of academic success, social-emotional well-being, language proficiency, and college and career readiness. As outlined in the *Blueprint for English Language Learner Success*, NYSED values linguistically diverse children and recognizes that bilingualism and biliteracy are assets.

All students in NYS are provided opportunities to participate in language learning or language support programs which result in bilingualism and multilingualism. NYS students are provided opportunities to graduate high school with a Seal of Biliteracy upon earning a high school diploma. The Seal of Biliteracy will help promote and acknowledge the great value and personal and professional benefits that come with being multilingual and multicultural in today's global society.

Research indicates that there are benefits to be garnered from leveraging the home language to promote emergent literacy skills and oral language development in English. Studies report strengthened English vocabulary and greater reading readiness resulting from home language instruction,[6] while vocabulary mastery in the home language supports reading comprehension in English[7]. Likewise, growth in oral language skills in the home language predicted English early reading skills in Kindergarten.[8] This unique relationship between language and learning in

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[5] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. DOI: 10.17226/24677.

[6] Burchinal, M., Field, S., Lopez, M. L., Howes, C., & Pianta, R. (2012). Instruction in Spanish in pre-kindergarten classrooms and child outcomes for English language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27*, 188-197.
Lindholm-Leary, K. (2014). Bilingual and biliteracy skills in young Spanish-speaking low-SES children: Impact of instructional language and primary language. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* Vol. 17,144-159.
Mendez, L.I., Crais, E.R., Castro, D.C., Kainz, K. (2015). A culturally and linguistically responsive vocabulary approach for young Latino Dual Language Learners. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research,*1-14.
Roberts, T. (2008). Home storybook reading in primary or second language with preschool children: Evidence of equal effectiveness for second-language vocabulary acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly,* Vol. 70, 475-490.
Schwartz, M. (2014). The impact of the first language first model on vocabulary development among preschool bilingual children. *Reading and Writing,* Vol. 27,709-732.

[7] Bialystok, E. (2007). Acquisition of literacy in bilingual children: A framework for research. *Language Learning, Vol 57,* 45-77

[8] Hammer, C.S., Davison, M.D., Lawrence, F.R., Miccio, A.W. (2009). The effect of material language on bilingual children's vocabulary and emergent literacy development Head Start and kindergarten. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 13, pp. 99-121.

early childhood calls for a clear description of the role of the home language in Prekindergarten programs.

The Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile Protocol (EMLLPP)

In 2014, NYSED established the Committee on Bilingual Education in Prekindergarten Programs (The Committee), which is comprised of educators and advocates who believe in the importance of promoting receptive and productive oral and literacy development in young learners, as well as in the advantages of multilingualism.

The Committee supports the design of optimal learning environments that value linguistically diverse children and their families, and the creation of high-quality Prekindergarten programs that strengthen the language and literacy skills of all students and lead to narrowing academic achievement gaps. The Committee also works to support development of a highly effective workforce and to equip educators with classroom tools and professional training to meet the needs of multilingual children in Prekindergarten. In order to incorporate academically and linguistically relevant instruction into Prekindergarten curricula and programs, it is critical for educators to recognize the experiences that young children have with diverse languages and cultures and use this information to inform instruction and programming in Prekindergarten and beyond.[9]

On October 20, 2014, NYSED's (OBEWL) and (OEL) presented a discussion item to the (BOR) on the formulation of protocols and procedures to meet the language and literacy needs of all young children. A panel presentation took place to discuss the importance of including bilingual programs and services in Prekindergarten programs. In addition, the panel presented ways to effectively assess the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in Prekindergarten (or rather, Prekindergarten students likely to be identified as ELLs/MLLs the following year upon entering Kindergarten), issues of equitable access, and the importance of providing necessary and appropriate supports and services to students and families. [10]

The BOR directed staff to draft and develop protocols and procedures to reflect the needs of emerging bilingual children in Prekindergarten programs, which included items such as an at-

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[9] National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. (2003). *Early childhood curriculum, assessment, and program evaluation: Building an effective, accountable system in programs for children birth through age 8.* Washington, DC: NAEYC.
Barac, R. & Bialystok, E. (Mar/April 2012). Bilingual Effects on Cognitive and Linguistic Development: Role of Language, Cultural Background, and Education. *Child Development, 83, 2*, 413-422.
[10] Morell, Z. (2017) "Introduction to Roundtable Proceedings: Emergent Bilinguals in New York's UPK," *Journal of Multilingual Education Research*: Vol. 7, Article 7.

home questionnaire, professional development curricula for Prekindergarten administrators and teachers, and the creation of resources for families.

On April 3, 2017, the BOR approved the "Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile Protocol" (EMLLPP) developed to support state-funded Prekindergarten programs in:

1. Identifying preschool children who speak other languages at home;
2. Implementing best practices relative to the role of the home language for instruction and programming.

The protocol begins by adopting the term, *Emergent Multilingual Learner* (EMLL) to refer to the preschool population of children whose home language is not English. This term recognizes that all language is emerging for children at ages three and four, but like their K-12 counterparts, EMLLs have the potential to sustain the home language as they learn English and benefit from becoming bilingual or multilingual individuals.[11]

One distinguishing feature of the EMLLPP is that it does not engage early childhood professionals in determining a child's level of proficiency in English as occurs at Kindergarten with the NYSITELL. Rather, the information gathered about the child's language skills and practices within his/her family is used to form a *linguistic profile* for this child that enables teachers and other professionals to design strategies for his/her participation, adjustment, learning, and assessment. In Prekindergarten, there is a great likelihood that every teacher will encounter EMLLs in the classroom. The *Blueprint for English Language Learner Success* states that *"All teachers are teachers of ELLs."* This applies to Prekindergarten EMLLs and is a reminder that the cultural and linguistic diversity evident in NY requires that early childhood professionals develop competencies in meeting the needs of a diverse population. This includes planning accordingly to design and deliver instruction that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for all diverse learners.[12] In the case of early childhood education, one of the competencies professionals must develop is working collaboratively with families to promote learning through the home language and sustaining bilingualism or multilingualism for the young children.

The EMLLPP draws from research indicating that there are social, cognitive, and academic advantages associated with sustaining a young child's home language while he or she is acquiring English.[13] In addition, using the students' home language can help them navigate the

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[11] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. DOI: 10.17226/24677.

García, E. (2002). Addressing linguistic and cultural diversity in early childhood: From equity to excellence, from "raices" to "alas." In O. N. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), Contemporary perspectives on early childhood curriculum. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

[12] Palmer, D. K., & Martínez, R. A. (2013). Teacher agency in bilingual spaces: A fresh look at preparing teachers to educate Latina/o bilingual children. *Review of Research in Education, 37*(1), 269-297.

[13] Bialystok, E. (2007). Acquisition of literacy in bilingual children: A framework for research. *Language Learning, Vol. 57,* pp. 45-77.

new environment and bridge learning at school with experiences they bring from home. In order to support the effort to preserve the home language, the EMLLPP is organized in steps (Appendix A) that occur as part of common best practices in early childhood education. A brief description of each step appears below:

- **The parent completes the *[Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile for Prekindergarten Students](#)*** -- the form is completed as part of the process of enrollment or registration.

- **Interview the Family for a Social History** -- an interview is conducted with the parent or guardian, to learn about the child's experiences and practices with language.

- **Interview the child** -- an interview is conducted in the presence of his/her parent or guardian.

- **Review screenings --** results from screening instruments typically collected at the start of the year are reviewed.

- **Plan for instruction --** a plan is created to ensure that all EMLLs are provided bilingual supports and instruction in the home language while learning English.

- **Transition to Kindergarten -–** information gathered throughout the year becomes the student's record and informs the transition to Kindergarten.

The steps of the EMLLPP are not additional or uncommon practices in early childhood programs. Integrating the steps of the EMLLPP into routine practices is analogous to integrating the home language in a child's learning; it is not an added, isolated feature, but an element of every aspect of instruction and programming.[14] A discussion of each step will describe its purpose, its timing or when it may likely take place in the course of best practices for early childhood programs, and how to apply the information it provides.

Step 1. Parent Completes the Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile

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Brillante, P., Nemeth, K. N. (2017) "Teaching Emergent Bilingual Learners with Disabilities and Challenging Behaviors in Preschool," Journal of Multilingual Education Research: Vol. 7 Article 5

Burchinal, M., Field, S., Lopez, M. L., Howes, C., & Pianta, R. (2012). Instruction in Spanish in pre-kindergarten classrooms and child outcomes for English language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27*, 188-197.

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2014). Bilingual and biliteracy skills in young Spanish-speaking low-SES children: Impact of instructional language and primary language. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* Vol. 17, pp.144-159.

Ryan, A. M. (2007) Two Tests of the Effectiveness of Bilingual Education in Preschool, *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, *21, 4*, 352-363.

Tazi, Z. (2014) Ready for la escuela: School readiness and the languages of instruction in Kindergarten," *Journal of Multilingual Education Research*, Vol. 5, Article 3.

[14] García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Purpose

The *Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile* (Appendix B) is a form completed by the parent or guardian as part of the documentation required at enrollment. Early childhood programs should be prepared to support a parent or guardian in completing the program's required documents. It is good practice to assist parents or guardians in the language or mode of communication which they best understand. The profile gathers important information about the linguistic experiences of young learners. It is the first step as part of a process that will help educators to implement best practices relative to the role of the home language for instruction and programming.

Timing

The profile is collected at registration, before the child has entered the program. It can be one of the required documents included in the registration packet parents or guardians receive, and it may be completed in any one of the language translations provided by NYSED. Some parents or guardians may require additional support in reading or writing responses. It is good practice to assist parents or guardians in the language or mode of communication which they best understand.

Application

This first step is critical to the entire EMLLPP in that it first identifies those children who speak languages other than English in the home. Any child who is exposed to another language at home (questions 1-5) benefits from support and instruction in that language.

Research points to differences between the language development of monolingual and bilingual children. For example, young bilingual children tend to know fewer words in each of the languages they know but, in combination, their vocabularies are similar to those of monolingual children. [15] Young bilingual children also combine their languages in order to express themselves; rather than view this as confusion about languages, it is an indication of their enhanced ability to manipulate and use language.[16] Young bilingual children also develop greater awareness about differences between languages (metalinguistic awareness) than monolingual children.[17]

Responses to questions in each of the sections of the Profile can inform planning and programming as follows:

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[15] Bialystok, E., Luk, G., Peets, K. F., & Yang, S. (2010). Receptive vocabulary differences in monolingual and bilingual children. Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, 13, 525-531

[16] Pandey, A. (2010). *The child language teacher: Intergenerational language and literary enhancement.* Mysore, India: Central Institute of Indian Languages.

[17] Bialystok, E. (2001). *Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
Barac, R., Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. Child Development, 83 (2), pp. 413-422

A. Languages Spoken in the Home

This section explores what the child experiences at home: What languages are spoken? What are the languages of the parents or guardians? How does the child respond to the parents or guardians? What languages are spoken among siblings? Questions about the child's developmental milestones in speaking in short or full sentences provide important clues about bilingual language development. When were these milestones met?

Professionals should understand the developmental differences between monolingual and bilingual children to provide appropriate supports and avoid interpreting the development of a bilingual child through the lens of monolingual language and western cultural development. It is important to understand the linguistic and cultural features in a family in order to organize the strategies that will help sustain the home language and culture and maximize learning in English. From this section, early childhood professionals can identify the individuals in the home who can share in these strategies and link learning between the home and the program.

B. Languages Spoken Outside the Home/Family

This section provides information about the child's broader experiences with parents or guardians and peers outside the home. What has been the child's exposure to English? For example, has exposure to English occurred in social interactions, including a range of activities in diverse early childhood settings, or in more isolated activities such as watching television? Knowing if a child has lived in linguistic isolation or has had more formal exposure to the English language is important for planning for his/her adjustment to school as well as for personalizing instruction.

C. Language Goals

This section reminds professionals that, for some families, language learning is intentional and purposeful. Some families see great value in having the children become bilingual or multilingual. It may represent a connection to culture and heritage and/or it may stem from values about how children should be educated for global citizenship. Children from multilingual households benefit from continued multilingual supports in school. Families who actively choose to remain multilingual make excellent partners, not only to individual teachers, but to entire programs that may draw from their expertise in support of other families.

D. Emergent Literacy

This section makes the important connection between language and literacy. Oral language development is a primary focus in early childhood programs, and the information from this section helps professionals gauge a child's exposure to complex concepts, depth of vocabulary, formal language, conventions about reading and writing, enjoyment from books, and self-concept as a reader and writer. These competencies or

attitudes can be developed in any language; once learned, they facilitate the development of emergent literacy skills in English.

Step 2. Interview the Family for a Social History

Purpose

It is a common best practice to engage family members or caregivers in reporting details about a child's early history as well as the child's development. Key questions may include: *When were developmental milestones for walking and talking met?* The configurations of the family, health of its members, as well as significant incidences in their history, are also a typical part of a social history. Reviewing common social history questions along with the questions addressed earlier in the Profile, reveals a family's strengths and challenges in sustaining the child's multilingualism. At the family interview, early childhood professionals deliver a clear, strong message that it is good and desirable for the child to continue to develop the home language. This prevents any confusion or inadvertent message that the family should sacrifice the home language to support achievement.

Timing

The family interview would take place once the family is admitted to the program.

Application

The EMLLPP uses the interview as an opportunity to form a strong partnership with families where specific strategies between the home and school can be organized. Together, family members and early childhood professionals can devise a plan for activities and experiences with the home language that specifically support learning in school. These may include reading in the home language, conducting all at-home projects in the home language, targeting specific vocabulary words, etc. All of the typical early childhood activities planned for children in their homes can be conducted in the home language.

Step 3. Interview the Child

Purpose

The purpose of conducting an interview with the child is to observe his/her use of language. There are no specific questions that should be asked; it is an opportunity to observe how the child communicates. Early childhood professionals know how to engage children with questions about what matters most to them -- their pets, toys, siblings, favorite things, etc. Children can be asked to "demonstrate" what they can do -- count, describe, tell a story -- in the language they prefer. Ideally, the interview is conducted bilingually to gauge the child's receptive and expressive language skills. Parents and bilingual professionals can provide vital support for the interview.

Timing

The interview with the child can be conducted at registration where initial screenings may take place. If registration takes place online or at a central location, this step would take place once the child actually enters the program. The interview should be conducted in the presence of the child's parents or caregivers. Sometimes children are too timid to speak to an unknown person, so it is acceptable to conduct the interview at a later date or in the child's classroom.

Application

Student responses in the child interview should be monitored for features such as: the choice of words, the complexity of responses, the number of words in a response, and the language of choice. One obvious strength bilingual children exhibit during an interview is co-mingling their languages to make themselves understood, often using two languages in one sentence. This is a common feature among bilingual individuals[18] who can draw from all their languages to express ideas or make sense of their environment.[19] Rather than limiting the interview to one language or the other, it is more valuable to note the child's resourcefulness in self-expression.

Step 4. Review Screenings

Purpose

It is a common best practice to conduct initial screenings as children enter early childhood programs. Typically, screenings are conducted using a valid and reliable instrument of developmentally appropriate measures. Results from initial screenings form a baseline for progress in multiple areas such as cognitive development, social-emotional skills, and language development.

Timing

Screenings are typically conducted prior to school entry. The review of results would also take place before children enter classrooms.

Application

In order for results to be valid, screenings must have been conducted in the language of the child. Sometimes translations are not available, or the instrument is not normed for a bilingual

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[18] Paradis, J., Genesee, F., & Crago, M. B. (2011). Dual language development and disorders: A handbook on bilingualism and second language learning (2nd ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H Brooks Publishing.

[19] García, O (2009). Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century. In A. Mohanty, M. Panda, R. Phillipson, & T. Skutnabb-Kangas (Eds.). *Multilingual education for social justice: Globalising the local,* (pp. 128-145)*.* New Delhi, IN: Orient Blackswan.

population. Often, screenings are conducted in English when a child has not demonstrated any mastery of English or demonstrates minimal English language skills. Compared to English language norms, results from such screenings will incorrectly indicate delays or deficiencies. These errors in the administration of screenings create a need to conduct a review of the results from initial screenings that is informed by prior steps in the EMLLPP, such as the family or child interview. Screening results have been archived even when they are not valid; it is important to also document a review of the screenings to avoid errors.

When screenings are appropriately conducted, the results can inform an instructional baseline.

Step 5. Plan for Instruction

Purpose

Best practices in instructional planning for Prekindergarten include differentiating and personalizing lessons, activities, home assignments, centers, materials, and read alouds, and developing gross and fine motor skills. Emergent multilingual learners also need differentiation based on their home languages. The documents and activities of the EMLLPP support teachers in their planning by providing: 1) rich information about the child's language development; 2) guidelines to interpret baseline data from screenings; 3) a plan for partnering with their families to support learning at home.

Timing

Instructional planning is ongoing.

Application

Teachers of EMLLs integrate children's home languages strategically to support comprehension, engagement, scaffolding, practice, assessment, and extending. From the physical environment to the daily schedule, the teacher models the usefulness of the home language for learning and promotes a positive perspective of multilingualism and multiculturalism. It begins with communicating to children and their families that their home languages are welcome at school even when the parents or guardians may struggle to understand. Some specific strategies include:

- Coordinate with families to have them read translations of familiar classroom books at home.

- Encourage family members to conduct at-home assignments in the home language.

- Invite community members to read books in multiple languages.

- Introduce translations of target vocabulary, teaching both the English word alongside the word in the home languages.

- Play songs and narrations in the home languages.

- Label objects in the classroom in both English and the home languages. Learn the translation of these objects from families or from translation software.

- Sing in multiple languages.

- Incorporate in the classroom familiar objects (i.e. instruments, household items, clothing, toys, etc.) from children's countries and cultures and encourage children to name and use them.

- Encourage counting in multiple languages.

- Learn and use key phrases in the home languages of the children.

- Encourage children to speak to classmates who share their language.

- Develop a thorough selection of visual aids labeled in multiple languages.

- Use audio and video resources in multiple languages.

- Create a multilingual library.

- Partner with community members who can aid in translation and interpretation.

- Invite community members to transcribe children's narrations on their drawings.

- Record children telling stories in their home language and ask them to translate their stories into English.

- Display children's work in multiple languages.

There are many ways to integrate home languages in the English language classroom. Once teachers begin to integrate the home language in their lessons and activities, the children themselves may suggest ideas.

As teachers check for understanding or assess learning, it may be necessary to partner with staff, community members, or parent volunteers fluent in the children's home languages. This sets a good example of how early childhood professionals value multilingualism -- parents or guardians work together to use diverse language resources on behalf of the children.

Transition to Kindergarten

Designing a thoughtful transition from Prekindergarten to Kindergarten is a vital aspect of early childhood education predicated on good communication between the early childhood setting and the elementary school. The EMLLPP recognizes that the Prekindergarten teacher and staff will have a wealth of knowledge about a child's progress, in the home language as well as English, to share with a future Kindergarten teacher. All the elements of the EMLLPP: the Language Profile, the Social History, results from screenings, notes from interviews, and any

anecdotal records a teacher considers important, should be maintained in the student record that accompanies the child to Kindergarten.

On registration into Kindergarten, as per the ELL Identification Process as prescribed by CR Part 154-2, the Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ) must be administered to all incoming Kindergarteners. Upon conducting an individual interview with the child, Step 2 of the *ELL Screening, Identification and Placement Process* set forth by CR Part 154-2.3(a), includes the review of documents, prior assessments, and academic experience. Teachers and other personnel in the elementary school should include student records from Prekindergarten that might be helpful or informative as part of this step in the ELL Screening, Identification, and Placement Process.

Programming

The EMLLPP also informs programming in Prekindergarten. Programming includes all the activities or initiatives of an early childhood program designed for school-wide or program-wide implementation. This includes parental involvement initiatives, outreach efforts, newsletters, membership in committees, community partnerships, assembly programs, holiday events, field trips, fundraising, and others. A Prekindergarten program, like a classroom, must make adaptations to serve a multilingual population. In addition to the recruitment of bilingual faculty, staff, and administration, school-wide strategies include:

- Displaying information and announcements in multiple languages.

- Displaying student work on bulletin boards in multiple languages.

- Conducting outreach calls or telephone chains in multiple languages.

- Prominently displaying statements of belief about multiculturalism and multilingualism.

- Partnering with service agencies to provide language learning classes onsite.

- Recruiting translators and interpreters from the community.

- Offering presentations or discussions on the benefits of multilingualism.

- Modeling solidarity with language learning by learning another's language.

The work of teachers exists within the context of the programming in the setting or school; it is not possible for the teacher alone to be successful in supporting multilingualism without the shared efforts of the staff and administration.

Monitoring Quality and Faithful Implementation

The EMLLPP is implemented in the course of common best practices for registration, programming, and instructional planning in early childhood education. The steps outlined in the EMLLPP, documenting language development, interviewing children, gathering a social history, etc., should be deeply familiar to early childhood professionals as they have always been a fundamental part of good practice. The EMLLPP introduces a bilingual or multilingual lens to common early childhood education practices for two purposes: 1) identifying Prekindergarten children who speak other languages at home; 2) implementing best practices relative to the role of the home language for instruction and programming. Administrators can safeguard the quality and fidelity of implementation with careful attention to the following:

- An effective registration process—whether conducted remotely or onsite, the steps of the registration process ground instruction and programming.

- Modeling a commitment to continuous improvement, building resources and enhancing practices on behalf of multilingual children. It may take time to build a repertoire of resources for translation and interpretation.

- Targeted professional development—as the state's child population becomes more diverse, administrators will need to be mindful of the competencies teachers and staff need to build in order to be effective. Linguistic diversity calls for a deepened understanding of language acquisition and the relationship between language and learning; this is an area where all early childhood professionals need targeted professional development.

- Time for practice and improvement—in order to build capacity among teachers and other staff, allotments of time and assignments will grow and evolve. Teachers and staff need dedicated time to meet with families, conduct interviews, plan appropriately, etc.

- The overall school environment—the values associated with multiculturalism and multilingualism do not exist solely in the classroom. The entire school environment manifests the belief that all languages are welcome, and their speakers are full members of the community.

Investing fully in the EMLLPP provides Prekindergarten programs an important framework for supporting learning for young EMLLs. As a final element of the EMLLPP, Prekindergarten programs will include in a year-end report, the number of students served who spoke a language other than English at home. NYSED will record these numbers in the student populations of the state.

Conclusion

Cultural and linguistic diversity is a great asset of the state of New York. As outlined in the *Blueprint for English Language Learner Success*, NYSED values linguistically diverse children and recognizes that bilingualism and biliteracy are assets. NYSED values multiculturalism and multilingualism and sees in the diversity of languages spoken in the state an opportunity to support students' potential to be multilingual throughout their lives, reaping the benefits associated with speaking more than one language. Supporting this great potential begins at the earliest opportunity -- Prekindergarten.

The ideas and recommendations of this document guide the decisions and practices of local programs. Additional training, resources, discussion, and demonstrations are organized by NYSED's (OEL) and (OBEWL). For more information contact: the NYSED OEL at (518) 474-5807 or email OEL@nysed.gov or the NYSED OBEWL at (518) 474-8775 or (718) 722-2445 or email OBEWL@nysed.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions

If the home language is used in school, will it slow down English acquisition?

There is a growing body of research demonstrating that EMLLs who are instructed bilingually actually acquire English more quickly than those children who are taught exclusively in English. Theory and research suggest there is a strong interaction between languages in the bilingual child that makes using the home language an important resource to learning English and academic content. Teachers worry about progress in English as they recognize that it is critical to success in school. We can have confidence that English acquisition is not compromised by using a child's home language for learning.[20]

Does every teacher have to be bilingual or multilingual?

It is a great asset to be bilingual or multilingual, but we may never be able to speak each of the hundreds of languages represented in New York families. However, every teacher can incorporate strategies that make use of students' home languages. English-speaking teachers of EMLLs can apply their professionalism and ingenuity to identify ways to use children's home languages as a resource for learning. In fact, the increasing linguistic diversity of New York

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[20] Burchinal, M., Field, S., Lopez, M. L., Howes, C., & Pianta, R. (2012). Instruction in Spanish in Pre-Kindergarten classrooms and child outcomes for English language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27*(2), 188-197.
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http://www.highscope.org/file/NewsandInformation/ReSourceReprints/Spring2013/ReSourceSpring2013_HomeLanguage.pdf
Farver, J., Lonigan, C., Eppe. S. (2009). Effective early literacy skill development for young Spanish-speaking English language learners: An experimental study of two methods. *Child Development, 80*(3), 703-719.
Lindholm-Leary, K. (2014). Bilingual and biliteracy skills in young Spanish-speaking low-SES children: Impact of instructional language and primary language. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 17(2), 144-159.

students demands that teachers make use of linguistically relevant approaches, at any grade, to advance their achievement. Step 5 (Plan for Instruction) lists several strategies that teachers can use even when they do not speak their students' home languages.

Registration for our program is not conducted onsite but at a central office, so where should the Language Profile (Step 1) be completed?

The information provided by the Language Profile (Step 1) informs the very first decisions that are made for children, such as teacher assignment or classroom placement. For this reason, it would be important to have the Language Profile (Step 1) completed at the earliest opportunity. It is good practice to assist parents or guardians in the language or mode of communication which they best understand. Providing parents support and assistance in reading and writing to complete documentation, if needed, is a fundamental component of good programming. Reviewing questions on the Language Profile (Step 1) conducted onsite at the Family Interview & Social History (Step 2), will ensure that important information is not missed. The Child Interview (Step 3) should also take place onsite.

Is it necessary to follow every step in the protocol?

The EMLLPP is designed to work within common practices in early childhood programs, such as collecting documents at registration, conducting screenings, taking a social history of the child's development and family, etc. Each of these practices garners valuable information about who the child is and how instruction and programming might be personalized for him/her. In the same way that we would not omit any of these important steps as part of quality programming in early childhood, we would not want to miss the opportunity to use these steps to learn about a child's language development (in multiple languages) and use that knowledge to inform our planning on his/her behalf. Some programs may combine steps (i.e. registration and family interviews in one meeting) for more efficiency. The EMLLPP works within each program's structure but views each step in the protocol as uniquely valuable for compiling a portrait of the child as a language learner.

EMERGENT MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS LANGUAGE PROFILE PROCESS FOR PREKINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

STEP 1: ADMINISTER THE EMERGENT MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS LANGUAGE PROFILE

Administer the Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile to all enrolled Prekindergarten students. If the Profile indicates that a student's home or primary language is other than English, complete each step of this process. The child is an Emergent Multilingual Learner who is entitled to bilingual supports and instruction in the home language while learning English.

STEP 2: FAMILY INTERVIEW AND SOCIAL HISTORY

An interview, preferably in the home language, is conducted with the parent or guardian to learn of the child's language practices. The information on the Profile would inform this interview. The content of this family interview supplements any information gathered on the Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile once it is determined that a student has a home or primary language other than English.

STEP 3: CONDUCT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH THE CHILD

An interview is conducted with the child in the presence of his/her parent or guardian. It is best practice to conduct the interview bilingually to gauge the child's comfort in his/her languages.

STEP 4: REVIEW OF EXISTING SCREENINGS

All State-funded Prekindergarten programs require initial screenings. At this point, the child's screening results are reviewed to assess emergent literacy or numeracy skills and findings are summarized.

STEP 5: PLANNING FOR PREKINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION

Ensure that all Emergent Multilingual Learners are provided bilingual supports and instruction in the home language while learning English.

TRANSITIONING TO KINDERGARTEN

All students who will not begin Kindergarten until September of the following school year are considered new entrants to districts and schools. Therefore, districts and schools shall commence the ELL Screening, Identification, and Placement Process for all Prekindergarten students as per Commissioner's Regulations Part 154-2.3(a) on or after June 1 of the current school year. All information gathered in this Language Profile Process must be maintained in the student's record.

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile
for Prekindergarten Students

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Thank you for completing the Emergent Multilingual Learners Language Profile. This survey will assist your new school with valuable information about your child's experience with languages. Information gathered will assist Prekindergarten educators in delivering academically and linguistically relevant instruction that strengthens the language and literacy of all students.

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY ENROLLMENT OR SCHOOL PERSONNEL ONLY AND MAINTAINED ON FILE
Date Profile Completed:
Student Name:
Gender:
Date of Birth:
District or Community Based Organization Name:
Student ID (if applicable):
Name of Person Administering Profile:
Title:

Parent or Person in Parental Relation Information

Name of parent or person in parental relation:

Relationship (to student) of person providing information for this profile: ☐ mother ☐ father ☐ other:

In what language(s) would you like to receive information from the school? ☐ English ☐ other home language:

Language in the Home

1. In what language(s) do you (parents or guardians) speak to your child at home?

2. What is/are the primary language(s) of each parent/guardian in your home?   (List all that apply.)

3. Is there a caretaker in the home? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what language(s) does the caretaker speak most frequently?

4. What language(s) does your child understand?

5. In what language(s) does your child speak with other people?

6. Does your child have siblings? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, in what language(s) do the children speak with each other most of the time?

7a. At what age did your child begin to speak in short sentences?

In what language?

7b. At what age did your child begin to speak in full sentences?

In what language?

8. In what language does your child pretend play?

9. How has your child learned English so far (television shows, siblings, childcare, etc.)?

Language Outside the Home/Family

10. Has your child attended any nursery, Head Start or childcare program? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, in what language was the program conducted?

In what language does your child interact with other people in the nursery or childcare setting?

11. How would you describe your child's language use with friends?

Language Goals

12. What are your language goals for your child? For example, do you want child to become proficient in more than one language?

13. Have you exposed your child to more than one language to ensure that he or she is bilingual or multilingual? ☐ yes ☐ no

14. Does your child need to speak a language other than English in order to communicate with your relatives or extended family? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, in what language(s)?

Emergent Literacy
15. Does your child have books at home or does he or she read books from the library?   In what language(s) are these books read to him or her?
16a. Can your child name any letters or sounds in English? ☐ yes ☐ no   16b. Can your child recognize letters or symbols in another language? ☐ yes ☐ no   If yes, in what language(s)?
17a. Does your child pretend to read? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unsure   If yes, in what language(s)?   17b. Does your child pretend to write? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unsure   If yes, in what language(s)?
18. Does your child tell the stories from his/her favorite books or videos? ☐ yes ☐ no   If yes, in what language(s)?
19. Does your child's childcare or nursery program describe goals for his or her learning? ☐ yes ☐ no   If so, what goals do they describe?
20. Please describe anything special you did to prepare your child to begin Prekindergarten.