

BUILDING SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS

WARM-UP: Reflect and discuss the following questions:

- Who are we serving?
- What are the characteristics of our students and families?
- What are the strengths and needs of our ELL students?
- What changes have we made to ELL/bilingual education in the past and what changes are we planning for the future?
- What will our students learn and how will they learn it?
- How will we measure or demonstrate mastery of learning?
- What are our dreams and aspirations for our students?
- What expectations do we have for our students' development and learning?
- What kind of school do we want to build to support our students?
- What are our aspirations for our school?
- What distinguishes us from other schools?
- If parents had a choice as to where to send their child, why would they choose our school?

VISION: Use Post-it pads and notecards to work through numbers 1-5 below.

1. Take the perspective of a parent of an ELL. Reflect on the place you envision your child going to school. What would it look like? How would the child be treated? What would your experiences be like? Write reflections on a Post-it note.
2. Now think about a work environment they would like to go to every day. What would it look like? What would your experiences be like? Write answers on another Post-it note.
3. Look over the two Post-it notes and consolidate them into one. When ready, write the combined thoughts in a statement on an index card.
4. In small groups of four, each member should share statements with the group. Once each member has shared, the small group must collaborate to create a unified vision statement. Write on large poster paper.
5. Combine small groups into one whole group and repeat the process, using the large poster paper statements to consolidate into one unified vision statement draft for ELL practice.

MISSION: The mission statement moves to more concrete goals for action to enact the vision.

1. Brainstorm goals and steps to reach the vision – writing each goal on a separate post-it.
2. Using large poster paper to organize, group the post-its by theme or topic.
3. Use these big themes and topics to draft the mission statement as a whole group.
4. Edit using SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

CULTURE & COMMUNITY: Use the chart to revise the mission based on classroom- and school-level indicators and considerations for linguistically responsive practice.

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Linguistically Responsive School Environment Indicators

- Multiple languages are portrayed around the school through bulletin boards and displays.
- Multiple languages are represented in oral school communications, such as the morning announcements and discourse around the school building.
- Multiple languages are represented in written school communications, such as newsletters, report cards, and parent notifications.
- Culture is a consideration when welcoming students and families into the school, as well as preparing them for success in American schools.
- Mirroring the linguistic diversity of students, school personnel (e.g., teachers, social workers, school psychologists) are bilingual and biliterate in various languages.
- Students and teachers in ELL/bilingual classrooms are included in the holistic school community and physical layout of the school building.
- Students in ELL/bilingual programming have access to the same special area, library, and other extracurricular activities as mainstream students.
- The school library has a wide variety of bilingual and native language books and audiovisual materials in languages other than English.
- The school library has a wide variety of books and audiovisual materials that are culturally relevant and portray non-mainstream individuals and families.
- Faculty members have access to bilingual and multilingual resources to support instruction.
- Faculty members recognize the importance and value of language diversity.
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Linguistically Responsive Classroom Environment Indicators

- Classrooms are safe and welcoming environments where students feel comfortable to take risks.
- Classrooms provide consistent procedures and routines to allow students to focus on learning.
- Teachers consistently work to foster community and collaboration within the classroom.
- Teachers celebrate students' assets and make them a central part of the curriculum.
- Teachers recognize and utilize students' native language as an asset and resource in classroom.
- Teachers understand the appropriate ways to accommodate student language, such as by using wait time and appropriately responding to linguistic errors.
- Classrooms are print-rich environments where students have access to multilingual supports.
- Classrooms provide students with collaborative opportunities to creatively make meaning.
- Teachers set short-term and long-term goals for students' academic and language achievement.
- Teachers collect anecdotal data on students' backgrounds and abilities to guide decision making.
- Teachers incorporate students' background knowledge from homes, communities, and schools.
- Teachers value and involve parents and families in meaningful ways in classroom community.
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