



## OELAS Guidance: Online Learning for English Learners: Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning within Online School Programs

The purpose of this document is to provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with guidance around the requirement from our office that English Learner (EL) instruction is the same in an AOI or ITM school as it is in a brick-and-mortar school. The expectations for **synchronous** and **asynchronous** instruction are also the same.

### Context:

#### 1. Definitions:

<b>Arizona Online Instruction (AOI)</b>	The Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) Program allows approved school districts and charter schools to develop online instructional systems to expand learning opportunities for students throughout our state. <b>Source:</b> <a href="http://azleg.gov">azleg.gov</a> (ARS 15-808 AOI Legislation)
<b>Instructional Time Model (ITM)</b>	An Instructional Time Model (ITM) meets instructional hour requirements through... remote instruction, project-based learning, mastery-based learning, weekend courses, and evening courses. ...to provide flexibility in the method and manner in which instructional hours are provided students. <b>Sources:</b> <a href="http://azed.gov/finance">azed.gov/finance</a> ITM FAQ & <a href="http://azed.gov/finance">azed.gov/finance</a> ITM Template
<b>Structured English Immersion (SEI)</b>	Structured English Immersion is a type of English instruction program that emphasizes the English language itself, focused on phonology (pronunciation - the sound system of a language), morphology (the internal structure and forms of words), syntax (English word order rules), lexicon (vocabulary), and semantics (how to use English in different situations and contexts). <b>Source:</b> <a href="#">SEI Model Implementation Guide</a>
<b>Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)</b>	Sheltered English Immersion is an approach to teaching grade-level academic content in English to ELs within the gen ed classroom, regardless of their English proficiency. <b>Source:</b> <a href="#">SEI Model Implementation Guide</a>
<b>Synchronous instruction</b>	Synchronous learning is online learning with scheduled, real-time virtual instruction where students attend the classroom virtually, submit assignments and <i>participate as they would if they were attending in person</i> . <b>Source:</b> adapted from <a href="https://des.az.gov">https://des.az.gov</a> Remote Learning
<b>Asynchronous instruction</b>	Asynchronous learning is online learning supported through a virtual platform with teacher-created lessons and assignments. Parents and students determine the schedule to get the work done. <b>Source:</b> adapted from <a href="https://des.az.gov">https://des.az.gov</a> Remote Learning

## 2. The Why

- Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEOA, all States and LEAs must ensure that ELs can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services.
  - EL students are entitled to EL programs with sufficient resources to ensure the programs are effectively implemented, including highly qualified teachers, support staff, and appropriate instructional materials.
  - **Sources:** [English EL DCL Fact Sheet \(ed.gov\)](#) and [English Learners DCL \(PDF\) \(ed.gov\)](#)
- According to Arizona statute, the state board of education and state-approved charter authorizers shall develop standards for the approval of online course providers and online schools based on the following criteria (in part):
  - The variety of educational methodologies employed by the school and the means of addressing the unique needs and learning styles of targeted pupil populations, including computer-assisted learning systems, virtual classrooms, virtual laboratories, electronic field trips, e-mail, virtual tutoring, online help desk, group chat sessions and noncomputer-based activities performed under the direction of a certificated teacher.
  - **Source:** [azleg.gov](#) (ARS §§ 15-808 AOI Legislation)
- H.B. 2862 allows school districts and charter districts to adopt an Instructional Time Model (ITM) to meet the instructional hour requirements in A.R.S. §§ 15-808 and 15-901 which provides flexibility for a school district or charter district to determine the manner in which instructional hours are provided to students, including: remote courses, project-based learning, mastery-based learning, weekend courses, or evening courses.
- School districts and charter schools operating through an adopted ITM are still responsible for the identification of English Language Learners and provision of the required minutes in the Structured English Immersion model the school district or charter school has adopted pursuant to Title 15, Chapter 7, Article 3.1, Arizona Revised Statutes.
  - **Source:** [azed.gov](#) (School Finance- Initial Guidance on H.B. 2862)
- **ARS 15-752:** Subject to the exceptions provided in section 15-753 [pertaining to bilingual waivers], all children in Arizona public schools shall be taught English by being taught in English and all children shall be placed in English language classrooms.
- **ARS 15-751.22:** "English language classroom" means a classroom in which English is the language of instruction used by the teaching personnel, and in which such teaching personnel possess a good knowledge of the English language. English language classrooms encompass both English language mainstream classrooms and sheltered English immersion classrooms.
- **ARS 15-752:** "Sheltered English immersion" or "structured English immersion" means an English language acquisition process for young children in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language.
- **[Arizona's Language Development Approach, Principle 2: Integrated Instruction in Disciplinary Language and Content:](#)** All educators share the responsibility for designing instruction that integrates language and literacy development with content learning. This is accomplished by using content standards to plan instruction along with the English Language Proficiency Standards to support differentiation by language proficiency level. Through the use of scaffolded supports, academic language development, and collaborative discussions, reading, and writing, educators help students develop disciplinary content knowledge, language, and autonomy.
- **[Arizona's Language Development Approach, Principle 3: Targeted and Explicit Language instruction:](#)** Explicit language instruction is a critical opportunity to intentionally support English learner (EL) students in developing the discourse practices they need to engage with rigorous, grade-level disciplinary content. Just as literacy and language should be integrated into content instruction, so should content and disciplinary practices be integrated into language instruction. Educators use the English Language Proficiency Standards with content material to teach language.

**3. The Who:** LEAs who currently operate or who are planning to operate under an AOI and/or ITM structure.

**4. The What:**

- AOIs and ITMs are still required to follow federal and state laws regarding the identification of ELs. This includes (but is not limited to):
  - ✓ use of the Home Language Survey in an unaltered form with a legal parent signature
  - ✓ Administration of the KPT and AZELLA Placement test in person within the required timeframes
- AOIs and ITMs are still required to provide one or more EL program(s).
- Instructional minutes meeting the requirements of any of the state board-approved models (both Targeted and Integrated minutes) must be synchronous.
- The appropriate student grouping requirements must be met for both Targeted (ELs only) and Integrated (ELs with non-ELs).
- Targeted instruction must be driven by the Performance Indicators (PIs) of the Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and supported by the AZ ELPS/PIs in Integrated.
- The teacher(s) planning and delivering the EL instructional minutes for both Targeted and Integrated must have an SEI, ESL or BLE endorsement, or have completed the 45-Hr SEI coursework, or the charter/district must have a plan in place for teachers of ELs to meet this requirement.
- **The Bottom Line:** Requirements are the same for AOIs/ITMs as for brick-and-mortar schools.

**5. Compliance Requirements for SEI Model Implementation:**

- **Minutes Requirement:** A minimum of 50 (grades 6-12) or 60 (K-5) minutes of Targeted ELD and 50 or 60 minutes of Integrated ELD per day (depending on the model(s) selected).
- **Grouping Requirement:** Targeted instruction should be comprised of ELs in only one grade level and English proficiency level *to the extent possible*. For Integrated instruction ELs learn alongside their non-EL peers.
- **ELPS/PI Requirement:** During Integrated Instruction, the teacher utilizes Performance Indicators (PIs) from the ELP Standards to support language to access content learning. The Targeted teacher uses the PIs to drive instruction.

**6. Considerations for Flexibility in SEI Model Implementation:**

- Minutes can be met daily or weekly when the LEA follows a traditional calendar. Minutes may be met yearly when implementing an approved ITM. If there are questions pertaining to a specific scenario, please reach out to OELAS.
- Minutes can be broken up into instructional cycles (recommend no fewer than 30 min per session).
- Targeted and Integrated instruction do not need to be solely direct instruction for all required minutes, but may include guided, group, and independent practice (reflective of an in-person classroom).
- When lower numbers indicate a need, Targeted instruction student groups may contain students within two adjacent proficiency levels and/or in more than one grade level within the same ELP Standards band (grade bands: K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8 & 9-12).
- For both Targeted and Integrated instructional times, provide various opportunities for communication and interaction with teacher and classmates.
- Integrated and Targeted teachers can plan together for specific language supports in content classes.