2026 OELAS Conference

Catalog of Sessions



"Continuing to build pathways to possibilities
for Arizona English learners!"

Conference hosted by the
Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS)
at the Arizona Department of Education

Some sessions are still being finalized and will be added soon.

(updated November 2, 2026; sessions and details are subject to change)

2026 OELAS Conference

Hosted by the Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS)

"Continuing to build *pathways to possibilities* for Arizona English Learners!"

Keynote Address | December 10, 2026

"Beyond the Score: Empowering Educators, Inspiring Growth, and Unlocking Student Potential"

What if assessment could be more than a measure of progress and instead became a catalyst for student success? As Arizona embarks on a new chapter with AZELLA, discover how a connected approach to standards, assessment, and instruction can open new opportunities for English learners. Explore how ELPA21's commitment to meaningful assessment, actionable data, and educator-driven resources empowers teachers to recognize students' strengths, celebrate their growth, and support their journey toward English language proficiency. Together, we'll reimagine the role of assessment, not simply as a measure of what students know, but as a powerful tool for shaping instruction, expanding opportunities, and helping every English learner thrive.

Cathryn Still
Executive Director
ELPA 21

Kayci Reyer
ELPA 21

Keynote Address | December 11, 2026

"Teaching Humanity"

We are not just teachers of content, we are teachers of humanity. Through lessons from my personal journey as a quadruple amputee and experiences in my classroom, I explore how educators teach resilience, lifelong learning, kindness, and the importance of embracing who we are. My recovery showed me the very best in humanity, and as educators, we have a responsibility to help the next generation bring out the best in one another.

2027 Arizona Teacher of the Year

Lisa Scott
8th Grade Science and Social Studies Teacher
Esmond Station K-8 School

Beginner's Guide to the English Language Proficiency Standards

Topic: Foundations of the English Language Standards and Performance Indicators

Description: This session is geared for educators who are new to the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). We will begin with the fundamentals of the ELPS including where they are located and how they are organized. Then we will dive into the Performance Indicators from the ELPS to understand how they are used in Integrated Instruction and Targeted ELD Instruction.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Julie Rotberg
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Yolanda Huynh
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

A Recipe for Success: Mixing Mathematics and Integrated ELD

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: What are the essential ingredients for effective Integrated ELD in a mathematics classroom? In this interactive session, participants will step into a standards-aligned math lesson centered and explore how the right ingredients, thoughtfully mixed together, can create powerful opportunities for language development within mathematics. Rather than sprinkling in language supports after a math lesson has been designed, participants will experience how language development can be built into the recipe from the start. After experiencing the lesson as learners, participants will deconstruct the recipe behind the instruction, mixing all the essential ingredients: language objectives, vocabulary, purposeful questioning, structured student talk, reading, writing, mathematical discourse, and intentional scaffolds. Participants will leave with a Recipe for Success, a practical framework for planning Integrated ELD that blends content and language instruction from the very beginning.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Jen Larson
Director of English Language Development
Litchfield Elementary School District

Active Acquisition - Bringing Standards to Life

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: Hometown, USA -Real life language development acquired by participatory learning in an imaginary city. Guided by ELPS, the township simulates real life, creating authentic contexts for language development. This system addresses reinforcement, intervention/ targeted support, supplemental and enrichment needs. Expose students to content creatively and organically with real world practice.

Target Audience: Secondary Educators (6-12); Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Jody May High School EL Teacher Glendale Union High School District	Hoss Gardner Instructional Aide Glendale Union High School District

Adolescent Literacy Supports for English Learners in All Content Areas (Grades 6–12)

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: Adolescent literacy and language development are inseparable, especially for English Learners in grades 6–12 who must simultaneously build disciplinary knowledge and academic English. This session equips secondary educators across all content areas with practical, evidence-based instructional supports that strengthen reading, writing, discussion, and vocabulary development while advancing students' proficiency along the Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).

Participants will engage with adaptable disciplinary literacy routines that reinforce ELPS Reading standards and help students navigate complex texts. The session also highlights explicit academic vocabulary instruction, including morphology and student-friendly definitions, aligned to ELPS Vocabulary expectations. Writing supports such as sentence frames, paragraph organizers, and modeled responses will be connected to ELPS Writing standards, while structured discussion protocols (e.g., accountable talk moves, think pair share) will promote oral language development aligned to ELPS Speaking and Listening.

Attendees will leave with ready-to-use templates and scaffolds that strengthen Integrated Instruction and Targeted ELD, increase access to content, and support equitable participation and outcomes for English learners.

Target Audience: Secondary Educators (6-12); Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Lauren Spenceley Secondary ELA Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Jill Scott K12 Social Studies and World and Native Languages Specialist Arizona Department of Education

Best Practices for EL Instruction
(Redelivery of PELL Session)

Topic: Effective Instruction for ELs

Description: Join us in examining best instructional practices specifically and intentionally designed to develop listening and speaking skills for English Learners during any EL Instruction. We will present ideas for collaboration methods, engagement techniques, daily routines, and more that are designed with ELs and their language development in mind.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Kayla Oswald
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Janie Christie
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Beyond Simplification: Leading for Adolescent English Learners' Access to Complex Texts

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: This session focuses on one of the most critical levers for equity and student success: ensuring adolescent English learners have full access to complex, grade-level texts. Moving beyond the misconception that literacy is simply decoding, this session highlights how reading, writing, speaking, and listening must be developed together to support deep comprehension and academic success.

Participants will explore the unique challenges secondary English learners face, including vocabulary demands, complex syntax, and gaps in background knowledge—while navigating the dual task of learning English and rigorous content simultaneously. The session emphasizes maintaining high expectations through intentional scaffolds, not simplified texts, and demonstrates how leveraging students' home languages can accelerate both language development and literacy.

Designed for district and school leaders, this session provides concrete "look-fors" to guide classroom observations and system-level decision-making. Leaders will examine what effective instruction looks and sounds like when English learners are truly accessing complex texts, engaging in academic discourse, and producing meaningful written responses.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Dr. Jose A. Viana
Senior Education Advisor
Lexia Learning

Building Knowledge, Building Language: Science of Reading Instruction for English Learners

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: Strong readers aren't built overnight. Just like a well-designed building, literacy and language development require a strong foundation, the right materials, and intentional construction.
Grounded in the Science of Reading, this interactive session explores how educators can build knowledge rich, text-centered classrooms where English Learners develop content knowledge and language simultaneously. Participants will examine how background knowledge, vocabulary, language comprehension, and meaningful interaction with complex text serve as the essential building materials for literacy development.

Participants will but the blueprint into action by experiencing knowledge building lesson seeing how reading, listening, speaking, and writing are intentionally constructed throughout. Together, we will examine the tools that make the learning accessible.
Participants will leave with a practical Knowledge Building Blueprint they can use to design instruction that builds the foundation English Learners need to become stronger readers, writers, speakers, and thinkers.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Jen Larson
Director of English Language Development
Litchfield Elementary School District

Creating Meaningful Family Partnerships for Native American English Learners

Topic: Effective Programs for ELs

Description: Explore how relationship-building can strengthen family engagement for Native American English Learners by examining the lasting impacts of federal boarding school policies, language loss, and historical and systemic barriers to meaningful school-family connections. Participants will learn culturally responsive strategies for partnering with families, honoring community strengths, and supporting heritage language revitalization while advancing English language development and academic success.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Sophia Begody
Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education

Elaine Mollindo
Professional Learning Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Designing Targeted ELD Instruction for EL Language Development and Reclassification

Topic: Effective Targeted ELD Instruction for ELs

Description: What does effective Targeted ELD look like, and how does it support English Learners on the path to reclassification? In this session, participants will explore the essential language skills ELs need to develop and identify instructional practices that promote growth across all language domains. Attendees will leave with practical strategies for language development.

Target Audience: Teachers responsible for any portion of Targeted ELD Instruction

Kayla Oswald
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Victoria Armenta
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Driving EL Student Success Through Intensive English Language Development

Topic: Effective EL Programs

Description: How can we accelerate English proficiency and academic achievement for English learners? The answer lies in targeted, high-impact instruction of how English works. This professional learning session explores how Intensive English Language Development (ELD) serves as a powerful catalyst for student success across all grade levels.
Drawing directly from the proven success of our summer program, this session highlights real-world data and transformative outcomes. Hear firsthand from past HISEP educators who successfully implemented these language methods, along with their compelling testimonials detailing how intensive language environments fundamentally shifted their students' confidence and proficiency in the English language. Most importantly, past participants will open up their portfolios to share actual classroom and student artifacts, providing an authentic, transparent look at the rigorous language production and high-leverage instructional materials that drove measurable growth.

Key Takeaways:

- Artifact Analysis: Examine authentic student work samples, lesson plans, and classroom artifacts from successful summer cohorts that have now brought this high intensity English language instruction into the school year.
- Summer Program Insights: Analyze implementation models, educator testimonials, and growth metrics from how the summer session has impacted instruction and student growth in the school year.

Target Audience: K-12 Classroom Teachers (Targeted ELD), EL Specialists or Coordinators, EL Instructional Coaches, and School Administrators

Amanda Love
OELAS Director of Program Effectiveness
Arizona Department of Education

Effective Integrated Instruction

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: This session explores effective integrated instruction through practical, classroom-based strategies that connect multiple subjects in meaningful ways. As a classroom teacher, I will share real experiences, lessons learned, and examples of how integrating content areas can improve student engagement, understanding, and retention.
Participants will learn how to design integrated lessons that align with standards while promoting critical thinking and collaboration. The session will include concrete examples, ready-to-use ideas, and opportunities for discussion, allowing teachers to reflect on their own practice and plan for implementation in their classrooms.
By the end of the session, teachers will leave with practical tools, strategies, and confidence to begin or strengthen integrated instruction in their own teaching.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Administrators; Other School/District Support Staff

Navnish Kaur
Teacher
Tucson Unified School DIstrict

ELD Doesn't Stop at the Math Door: Making Mathematical Language Visible Through Geometry

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: What happens when students understand the math but struggle to explain their thinking? In this interactive session, we will explore how intentional English Language Development can be embedded directly into grade-level mathematics instruction without lowering rigor or adding another lesson to the day.

Using Arizona Grade 5 Mathematics Standard 5.G.B.4—classifying two-dimensional figures in a hierarchy based on properties—participants will see how mathematical vocabulary, visuals, sentence frames, structured student talk, and purposeful questioning can help English Learners access complex mathematical concepts and communicate their reasoning.
Participants will explore the language demands within mathematics, connect language functions such as describing, comparing, explaining, and justifying to authentic math tasks, and examine practical classroom examples.

The session will conclude with an ELD Math Makeover, where participants will apply the strategies to an upcoming math lesson of their own. Participants will leave with practical tools and a clear framework for making mathematical language visible while maintaining grade-level expectations.
Our English Learners don’t need less mathematics. They need access to the language of mathematics.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Erin Heath
5th Grade Math/ELL Teacher (2025 Arizona EL Teacher of the Year)
Balsz School District

Empowering English Learners Through Metacognition: Supporting Dual Labeled Students

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Students who are English Learners and receive special education services must navigate both academic learning and language development simultaneously. Metacognitive strategies help students become active participants in their own learning by planning, monitoring, and evaluating their thinking. In this interactive session, participants will explore how High-Leverage Practice 14 can be used to explicitly teach metacognitive strategies that support language acquisition, self-regulation, engagement, and independence. Educators will examine practical instructional approaches, consider connections to specially designed instruction and language supports, and develop plans for embedding metacognitive practices into inclusive learning environments.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators

Jodi Walker
Lead Inclusion Specialist for Academic Achievement and Inclusionary Practices
Exceptional Student Services
Arizona Department of Education

Russell Reiten
Inclusionary Specialist for Academic Achievment and Inclusionary Practices
Exceptional Student Services
Arizona Department of Education

Enhancing and Assessing Speaking and Listening

Topic: Targeted ELD and Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Need ideas on how to teach and assess the domains of speaking and listening? Join us in uncovering the overlooked domains of Speaking and Listening. We will discuss implementing best instructional practices, building stamina, enhancing vocabulary, and explore ways to measure students' development and growth with listening and speaking skills.

Target Audience: Targeted ELD Teachers and Instructional Coaches

Jessica Graff
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Janie Christie
EL Education Program Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Formative Assessment as a English Learning Pathway: Empowering Educators to Advance Language and Content Mastery

Topic: Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Formative assessment is one of the most effective ways to improve learning outcomes for English learners because it provides educators with timely evidence to guide instruction while actively engaging students in the learning process. This interactive session introduces participants to a language-centered formative assessment framework designed to support English learners in meeting rigorous academic content standards while advancing English language development. Grounded in research and classroom practice, the framework helps educators design accessible, standards-aligned instruction that makes learning visible for both teachers and students.

Participants will explore a practical four-step formative assessment cycle: (1) clarifying both content and language learning targets and success criteria, (2) collecting meaningful evidence of student learning through classroom assessment strategies, (3) analyzing evidence to identify strengths, misconceptions, and next instructional steps, and (4) acting on the evidence by providing targeted feedback, adjusting instruction, and supporting differentiated learning experiences. Presenters will demonstrate how formative assessment can increase student voice, foster academic discourse, and build learner agency through self-assessment, peer feedback, goal setting, and reflection.

Using authentic classroom examples and ready-to-implement resources, attendees will examine strategies that can be incorporated immediately into elementary and secondary classrooms across content areas. Although the framework was designed to address the unique linguistic and academic needs of English learners, its evidence-based practices strengthen instruction for all students. Participants will leave with practical tools, implementation strategies, and classroom-ready resources that promote equitable access to grade-level content while accelerating language development and academic achievement through purposeful formative assessment.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Jobi Lawrence
Director, Product Development & Strategic Partnerships
ELPA 21

From Compliance to Catalyst: Operationalizing the ADE Class Profile for EL Linguistic Access

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: This session elevates the mandatory ADE Class Profile from a compliance tool into an active, asset-based catalyst for EL student growth. Grounded in the Synergistic Teaching framework, this presentation introduces the optimized Class Profile Matrix©. Adapted from the ADE document, this version integrates the 2019 AZ ELPS proficiency levels and adds a specific section for embedding student names. Attendees will execute the comprehensive "Architect of Access" cycle: Survey, Blueprint, Construct, and Inspect. By embedding student names to clarify language baselines, educators will competently align complex standards with asset-based student actions. Attendees will be provided with this high-leverage instructional blueprint, and leave fully equipped to identify lesson gaps, eliminate planning fatigue, and maximize EL linguistic autonomy across all content areas.

Target Audience: Secondary Educators (6-12); School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Kelli Krebill
ELD Educator
Tolleson Union High School District

From Compliance to Impact: Redesigning EL Support Around Students, Instruction, and Data

Topic: Effective English Language Development (ELD) Programs, beyond compliance

Description: What happens when an English learner program is intentionally redesigned so that compliance supports, rather than drives, the work? This session shares one district's journey to restructure EL support around students, instruction, and data while maintaining strong systems for program compliance.

Participants will explore the development of an EL Lead Teacher model that prioritizes student-facing instructional support while preserving essential compliance responsibilities. The session will demonstrate how district and school-level EL data can be used to identify instructional priorities, differentiate support across schools, strengthen Targeted and Integrated ELD, and focus resources on English language proficiency and reclassification.

Participants will see practical examples of how EL Lead Teachers, classroom teachers, instructional associates, school administrators, and district leadership can work within a coordinated system of support. The session will also examine lessons learned through implementation, including how data and ongoing reflection can inform adjustments to program structures and instructional priorities.
Attendees will leave with a practical framework and adaptable tools for examining their own EL program and identifying opportunities to shift time, resources, and support toward greater instructional impact for English learners.

Target Audience: Other School/District Support Staff; School/District Instructional Leaders; Administrators

Angela Gandy
Federal Programs Coordinator
Laveen School District

From Data to Action: Using EL Data to Strengthen Instruction and Family Partnerships

Topic: Using and Analyzing EL Data to Inform Programs and/or Instruction

Description: English learner success requires more than collecting data—it requires using it to drive instructional decisions and engage families as partners in student success. In this interactive session, participants will explore how one Arizona district uses EL data to inform integrated instruction, Targeted ELD, and meaningful family engagement.
Through authentic examples and practical strategies, attendees will learn how language proficiency, classroom performance, and formative assessment data can guide instruction, monitor progress, and support conversations with families. Participants will leave with actionable ideas they can immediately apply to strengthen EL programs, improve instruction, and foster stronger partnerships with English learners and their families.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Christina Boston Director of Multilingual and Multicultural Education Tolleson Union High School District	Ernesto Tostado Technology Integration Coach Tolleson Union High School District	Dr. Ana Aguilar Vice President of Professional Development Summit K12

From Input to Understanding: Scaffolding Receptive Language for English Learners

Topic: Integrated Instruction for ELs; Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading and/or listening)

Description: How do we help English learners (EL) make sense of the language they hear and read – without reducing the rigor? Intentional scaffolding of listening and reading is essential to ensuring EL students can access and engage with academic language and content. This session explores practical supports teachers can purposefully provide during instruction to help EL students make sense of what they hear and read while engaging with academic content.

Target Audience: K-12 teachers, instructional coaches, EL specialists/coordinators

Julie Rotberg EL Education Program Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Yolanda Huynh EL Education Program Specialist Arizona Department of Education

Intensifying Intervention for English Language Learners

Topic: Using and Analyzing EL Data to Inform Programs and/or Instruction

Description: This interactive session explores how educators can design, evaluate, and intensify interventions that address both language development and academic needs simultaneously. Participants will examine dimensions of intervention intensity and learn practical strategies for using assessment data to make instructional decisions. This session is ideal for ELL educators, interventionists, literacy specialists, instructional coaches, and school leaders seeking actionable approaches to accelerate outcomes for English learners.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5)

Katie Lewis Dyslexia & Literacy Intervention Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Qiana Harris K-5 Literacy & Dyslexia Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Annie Baugh Arizona Department of Education

Keeping the Momentum: Supporting Recently Reclassified English Learners *(Redelivery of PELL Session)*

Topic: Effective Instructional Practices

Description: Join us as we take a closer look into the considerations of continued success for recently reclassified English Learners (ELs) as they move into the mainstream classroom. We are going to begin with a discussion that will answer the question "Now what?" for these students.

Target Audience: K-12 teachers, instructional coaches, EL specialists/coordinators

Jessica Graff EL Education Program Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Victoria Armenta EL Education Program Specialist Arizona Department of Education

More Than an Answer: Engaging ELs in Mathematical Discourse and Thinking

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: Mathematics learning is about more than getting the correct answer. It is about making sense of ideas, communicating reasoning, and engaging in meaningful mathematical conversations. In this interactive session, participants will explore five high-impact instructional practices that empower English Learners to think deeply and participate confidently in mathematics.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators

Laurel Cherry K-12 Math Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Eboney McKinney Director of Math and Ed Tech Standards Arizona Department of Education	Marisa Tualla K-12 Math Specialist Arizona Department of Education

Move, Match & Make Meaning: Making Targeted ELD Vocabulary Instruction Active

Topic: Effective Targeted ELD Instruction

Description: What if vocabulary instruction got students out of their seats and into the language? In this interactive session, participants will experience engaging, movement-based strategies for Targeted English Language Development that make academic vocabulary meaningful, memorable, and usable.

Using strategies that have been successful in my own EL classroom, participants will practice activities that move beyond simply defining words. Participants will experience a vocabulary “Synonym Hunt,” where students use picture cards and context clues to connect high-level academic vocabulary to accessible synonyms. They will also explore a multiple-meaning word activity in which students distinguish between words that are spelled the same but have different meanings and use each meaning in context.

Throughout the session, participants will examine how these activities intentionally develop speaking, listening, reading, and writing while providing English Learners with repeated opportunities to interact with new vocabulary. We will also explore how visuals, movement, context, collaboration, and purposeful language production can be used as Targeted ELD scaffolds.
Participants will leave with practical, ready-to-use strategies they can adapt for vocabulary instruction across grade levels and content areas.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5)

Erin Heath
5th Grade Math/ELL Teacher (2025 Arizona EL Teacher of the Year)
Balsz School District

One Lesson, Every Learner: A Framework for Differentiating Instruction for English Learners

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing); Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: English learners bring a wealth of linguistic strengths to the classroom while demonstrating a wide range of English language proficiency levels, academic experiences, interests, and learning needs. Designing instruction that provides appropriate support without lowering expectations remains one of the greatest challenges educators face.

This session introduces a practical differentiation framework that enables teachers to intentionally plan, deliver, and assess instruction based on students' English language proficiency while ensuring meaningful access to rigorous grade-level content. Participants will explore a systematic approach to differentiating instruction by aligning the linguistic demands of lessons with students' proficiency levels across the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Presenters will demonstrate how educators can use English language proficiency data to identify appropriate scaffolds, adjust instructional supports, facilitate productive academic discourse, and differentiate tasks while maintaining rigorous expectations for all learners. Classroom examples from multiple grade levels and content areas will illustrate how differentiation can be embedded into daily instruction without requiring teachers to create multiple versions of every lesson.

Throughout the session, participants will engage with practical planning tools, instructional templates, and classroom-ready resources that simplify the differentiation process and support consistent implementation. Strategies for monitoring student progress, gradually removing scaffolds, and increasing linguistic complexity as students develop proficiency will also be shared. Although designed to address the unique needs of English learners, this framework strengthens instruction for all students by making learning more accessible, responsive, and engaging. Participants will leave with immediately applicable strategies and resources for differentiation.

Target Audience: Integrated Instruction Teachers, Coaches, Administrators

Jobi Lawrence
Director, Product Development & Strategic Partnerships
ELPA 21

Pathways to Reclassification: Building Language Proficiency for English Learners

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: Building a pathway toward reclassification begins with intentional instruction that develops students' English language proficiency across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This session explores how educators can strengthen language proficiency through explicit instruction, meaningful language practice, specific scaffolds, and authentic connections to language proficiency assessment tasks.

Participants will examine how language proficiency is measured, how rubrics can guide instruction and feedback, and how everyday classroom lessons can provide opportunities for students to use academic language in meaningful ways. The session will highlight practical strategies for making complex texts and academic content accessible, monitoring comprehension, creating purposeful speaking opportunities, and supporting students as they move from oral language to written responses.

Educators will also explore how language proficiency assessment tasks can be integrated into content instruction without reducing learning to test preparation. Through intentional planning and guided practice, teachers can help students build confidence, demonstrate what they know and can do with language, and make continued progress toward reclassification.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Jamey Goulet
Academic Officer
Teacher Created Materials

Ready, Set, Assess: Essential Strategies for Successful AZELLA Test Administration

Topic: EL Assessment

Description: Get ready to launch a successful first year of AZELLA Summative Reassessment testing! Designed for test administrators and test coordinators, this session will help you build the knowledge and confidence you need for a smooth testing experience. Discover essential test administration procedures, practical tips for preparing students, and strategies for navigating common testing challenges. Get a guided, firsthand look at the Test Delivery System (TDS), where you'll learn how to launch test sessions and monitor students during testing. Then, explore the Central Reporting System (CRS) to learn how to access student score reports when ready. From getting started to getting student scores, you'll leave with the tools and know-how to navigate AZELLA testing with confidence!

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Administrators; District Test Coordinators

Cathryn Still Executive Director ELPA21	Kayci Reyer Assessment Design Project Manager ELPA21	Tatyana Vdovina Cambium Assessments Inc.

Ready, Set, Elevate – ADEL

Topic: Effective Use of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)

Description: Ready to transform digital learning in your school or district? Join us for an interactive exploration of the Arizona Digital Educator Leadership (ADEL) platform and discover how educators can leverage its powerful tools to navigate professional learning opportunities, integrate high-quality instructional resources, and elevate teaching and learning outcomes.
Participants will experience the ADEL ecosystem through the lens of an ADEL Ambassador and learn practical strategies for accessing courses, managing resources, creating collections, aligning standards, utilizing lesson-planning tools, and supporting colleagues through meaningful professional development. Whether you are new to ADEL or looking to maximize its impact, this session will provide actionable steps to help you lead digital learning initiatives with confidence.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12); K-12 Educators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Administrators;

Eric Stuebner
Program Manager - ADEL
Arizona Department of Education

Ready, Set, Engage! Practical Strategies for the Secondary ELA Classroom

Topic: Effective Targeted ELD Instruction

Description: High school English learners need frequent opportunities to participate, practice language, collaborate, and receive immediate feedback—but meaningful engagement does not require expensive programs or complicated preparation. In this interactive session, participants will experience practical, low-cost strategies used in secondary EL classrooms. Participants will leave with adaptable activities and resources they can use immediately in their own classrooms.

Target Audience: Secondary Educators (6-12)

Kristen Taglia
Teacher/Department Chair English Learners
Glendale Union High School District

Katie Osborne
Teacher/Department Chair English Learners
Glendale Union High School District

Scaffold Without Lowering the Bar: Providing Access to Grade-Level Literacy for English Learners

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: How can a new curriculum help teachers provide English learners the support they need without reducing the rigor of grade-level instruction? This session explores how a high-quality, knowledge-building literacy curriculum can create meaningful entry points into complex texts, academic conversations, and grade-level writing while maintaining high expectations for all learners. Participants will examine how intentional language scaffolds—including vocabulary development, structured oral discourse, modeling, visuals, oral rehearsal, and integrated reading, writing, speaking, and listening—can remove linguistic barriers without lowering cognitive demand.
Participants will also explore how English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards can be integrated with grade-level content standards to make language development an intentional part of rigorous literacy instruction. Through a real-world district implementation example, participants will see how educators are shifting from modifying expectations for English learners to scaffolding access to grade-level learning. The session will highlight instructional shifts, lessons learned, and practical examples of how curriculum-embedded supports and ELP Standards can increase English learner participation, language development, and access to rigorous literacy instruction.

Target Audience: Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Elementary Educators (K-5)

Alexis Aguirre Language Acquisition and Biliteracy Osborn School District	Melissa Robinson Curriculum Specialist for Data and Assessment Osborn School District	Elizavet (Lisa) Rivera Director of Teaching and Learning American Reading Company

Supporting Science Sensemaking for English Learners: High-Leverage Graphic Organizers for Language and Learning

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Science learning is most powerful when students make sense of phenomena, communicate their thinking, and engage in scientific discourse. For English learners, the language demands of science can create barriers to participation. This interactive session explores how high-leverage science-specific graphic organizers can serve as linguistic supports that make science thinking visible while promoting language development. Participants will experience free, classroom-ready graphic organizers from The Wonder of Science that support key Science and Engineering Practices. Attendees will leave with practical strategies, ready-to-use resources, and ideas for using graphic organizers within integrated science instruction to support both academic language development and rigorous science learning for English learners.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Johanna Kaiser K-12 Science Education Specialist Arizona Department of Education	Sarah Sleasman Director of Science and STEM Arizona Department of Education

Targeted ELD in Action: Turning Language Needs into Instruction

Topic: Effective Targeted ELD Instruction

Description: This interactive professional learning session will help teachers strengthen their Targeted ELD instruction by connecting students' language needs to intentional, standards-aligned instruction. Participants will learn how to identify specific language needs, set clear language objectives, and plan targeted supports that help English learners access grade-level content while developing academic language. Teachers will explore practical strategies for scaffolding speaking, listening, reading, and writing and will apply them to authentic classroom examples. The session will emphasize moving beyond general language support toward purposeful instruction that addresses what students need next. Participants will leave with practical tools and strategies they can use immediately to plan, deliver, and monitor effective Targeted ELD instruction.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5);

Navnish Kaur
Teacher
Tucson Unified School District

The Integrated Toolkit: Actionable Strategies and Seamless Planning for EL Educators

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Maximizing integrated instructional time requires more than good intentions—it demands systematic planning and high-leverage techniques. Designed for K-12 educators, this hands-on session delivers a practical roadmap to seamlessly embed language acquisition into core content lessons.

Participants will explore dynamic, research-backed English learner (EL) strategies that boost student engagement, promote academic vocabulary development, and enhance oral language production. Beyond strategy implementation, attendees will walk through a step-by-step framework to streamline co-planning and individual lesson design. You will leave equipped with flexible templates, actionable scaffolding routines, and a comprehensive planning model to optimize every minute of your integrated time, ensuring all English learners meet rigorous content and language standards.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Other School/District Support Staff; K-12 Educators

Kari White
EL Instructional Specialist
Dysart Unified School District

Two Lenses, One Learner: Strategies for Supporting Dually Identified Students

Topic: Dual-labeled ELs: How to Best Provide Both Services and Instruction

Description: Dually identified students—English learners who also receive special education services—often sit at the intersection of systems that were not designed to work together. Teams may struggle to distinguish language acquisition from disability-related needs, determine when intervention is appropriate, and translate English language proficiency data and IEP goals into coherent classroom instruction. The result can be fragmented support, competing priorities, and missed opportunities for students.

This interactive session moves beyond the question, “Is it language or disability?” and focuses instead on designing instruction and systems that respond to the whole learner. Participants will explore how English language development, specially designed instruction (SDI), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and evidence-based instructional practices can work together without blurring their distinct purposes.
Using learner profiles, classroom examples, and practical planning tools, participants will examine how language development goals, IEP goals, scaffolds, explicit instruction, structured academic discourse, and progress monitoring can be intentionally integrated. Participants will leave with a practical framework for strengthening collaboration among English learner, special education, and general education teams—and for creating more coherent, responsive instructional pathways for dually identified students.

Target Audience: Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Suzanne Jimenez
National Director, Insights and Specialized Instruction
HMH

Unlocking Mathematical Thinking Through Writing

Topic: Effective Integrated Instruction for ELs

Description: Discover how writing can strengthen both mathematical understanding and language development for English learners. Participants will explore mathematical writing genres, analyze student samples, and experience classroom-ready strategies that support students in explaining, justifying, and communicating their mathematical thinking. Attendees will leave with practical writing routines, scaffolds, and resources to enhance mathematical discourse and student engagement.

Target Audience: Elementary Educators (K-5); Secondary Educators (6-12);K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Eboney McKinney
Director of Mathematics and Educational Technology
Arizona Department of Education

Marisa Tualla
K12 Math Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Laurel Cherry
K12 math Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Unlocking Voices: Oral Language Strategies That Get ELs Talking

Topic: Effective Targeted ELD Instruction for ELs

Description: What if the key to powerful language growth isn't in more worksheets—but in more talk? Step into this interactive session where silence transforms into sound and hesitant learners find their voices. You'll discover three deceptively simple yet transformative methods—Sentence Combining, Language Warm-up, and Image Discussion—that spark authentic communication and deepen linguistic understanding. Come ready to practice!

Target Audience: K-12 Educators; Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders; Other School/District Support Staff

Heidi Koski
Heidi Coski Consulting

Writing Made Easy: Mini-Lessons that Work

Topic: Intentional Language Scaffolds and Linguistic Supports for ELs (Supports for reading, listening, speaking, and/or writing)

Description: After 9000+ one-on-one writing conferences with students (hundreds of them with EL students), this workshop will offer some of the mini-lessons that arose from that experience. Teachers will get to choose from a menu, and Dr. Taylor will demonstrate selected techniques that help students learn how to better. Focus for this session is sentence fluency and conventions, 3rd-12th, UDL (Universal Design for Learning). Students regularly increase their writing ability by a year or more using these simple techniques.

Target Audience: K-12 Educators;Administrators; School/District Instructional Leaders

Dr. Brian Taylor
Associate Executive DirectorAmerican Student Opportunity Collaborative (ASOC)

Kena Taylor
Principal
Vernon Elementary