

A comprehensive approach for developing English proficiency is essential to ensuring the academic achievement of English learners. Integral to such an approach is explicit language instruction in every class, every day. Language development to support content learning is driven by the demands of grade-level academic work.

In contrast, Systematic ELD is a dedicated instructional block that is driven by students' assessed English proficiency levels. The goal is to move students from one proficiency level to the next. Systematic ELD builds a solid foundation in English by teaching language that English learners:

- are not likely to learn outside of school or efficiently pick up on their own,
- will not explicitly learn in other subject areas, and
- need to use for effective academic learning, classroom participation, and real-life purposes.

The Common Core and other content standards assume native English proficiency. Systematic ELD provides a time for English learners to learn and practice language they need in order to navigate rigorous content instruction and a myriad of adult and peer interactions, such as discussions and collaborative work.

Systematic ELD challenges students to explore language in compelling and playful ways, continually growing their ability to use English flexibly, fluently, and accurately – to have agency over their own language use. Ultimately, the goal of Systematic ELD is for English to be a bridge to academic success rather than a barrier.

Critical research-based features of Systematic ELD instruction

- Puts **language learning and exploration squarely in the foreground.**
- Groups students by **assessed proficiency level** as determined by multiple sources, such as state language assessments, analysis of writing samples for vocabulary and grammatical knowledge (using the *ELD Matrix of Linguistic Knowledge* or language-focused writing rubric), the *Express Placement Assessment*, and recorded observations of oral production.
- Uses a **functional language approach** organized around essential purposes for communication. Language tasks are highly applicable to real-world and academic interactions that students must adroitly navigate. Instruction draws students' attention to a variety of aspects of English (e.g., rhythm and cadence, pronunciation, colloquial expressions, formal and informal registers).
- Provides an organized method of language instruction to help **prevent gaps and fill existing gaps in language knowledge** that can hinder students' achievement of full English proficiency. Instruction follows a developmental scope and sequence of language skills identified in ELD standards and the *Systematic ELD* handbook.
- Is **explicitly taught, emphasizing oral language development through structured, purposeful interaction.** It includes **substantive written practice** to ensure that students develop in-depth understanding of how English works and acquire fluency and an accurate command of all modes of communication.

Systematic ELD Institute

The purpose of the five-day institute is to build the capacity of teachers to provide targeted Systematic ELD instruction and of administrators to provide appropriate guidance and support.

The comprehensive handbook lays out a theoretical model and vision for explicit language instruction. It includes tools to assist in determining proficiency-appropriate vocabulary, syntax, and structures for a wide range of communicative purposes, plus instructional strategies and sample lessons.

There are institutes for three audiences: 1) K–6 districts using existing ELD materials, 2) K–6 districts adopting E.L. Achieve's elementary *Systematic ELD Instructional Units*, and 3) Secondary teachers responsible for ELD instruction.

Capacity-building Model

E.L. Achieve's initiative work is not a one-time event. Throughout all phases of implementation – planning, launching, and sustaining – district teams work toward established goals. After initial training, there is ongoing support for improving classroom instruction. We provide videos to discuss, guides for self-reflection, rubrics for developing key teaching skills, and protocols for facilitating collaborative, results-driven discussions.

As part of our capacity-building model, partner districts join E.L. Achieve's expert networks through leadership seminars and ongoing support. Our goal is for districts to take ownership of the initiative and achieve deep, system-wide classroom implementation that leads to increased English learner achievement.