



# Progress Memo

<b>To:</b>	Advisory Council on Teaching and Learning & APS Department on Teaching and Learning
<b>From:</b>	Advisory Committee on English Learners
<b>cc:</b>	Sam Klein
<b>Date:</b>	11/22/20
<b>Re:</b>	Progress memo on English learners

## 1. What is working well for teaching and learning?

<b>Topic:</b> Teacher and staff efforts to support English Learners and their families	<b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph & Barcroft; EL teacher from Key, teachers from Randolph
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**Description:**  
Teachers received rave reviews. Teachers are working hard to form relationships such that elementary parents want their children to stay with their classroom teachers. EL Teachers have learned and adopted a wide variety of new technological platforms to help support students. Classroom teachers proactively reach out in Spanish to families to give them learning updates. Schools are providing additional staff to help with technology support, getting in touch with families, and providing support in multiple languages.

<b>Topic:</b> APS Resources	<b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph, Barcroft & Ashlawn. Teachers from Randolph & Key
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**Description:**  
APS support resources offered via schools and PTAs, like school kits, add-on kits, food and meals, coat drives and book drop-offs were noted and appreciated. Bilingual Family Liaisons are connecting families with community resources.

<p><b>Topic:</b> Technology Resources</p>	<p><b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph, Barcroft &amp; Ashlawn. Teachers from Randolph &amp; Key</p>
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**Description:**  
APS technology resources, like Lexia and Reading A-Z, were praised. Platforms like MS teams, Canvas, and Seesaw were also appreciated for supporting online learning.

**2. What is not working well for teaching and learning?**

<p><b>Topic:</b> Many students lack a space conducive to maximizing learning</p>	<p><b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph, Barcroft &amp; other elementary schools. Teachers from Randolph, Key and other elementary schools, Community volunteers who tutor elementary students.</p>
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**Description:**  
There are still some students that lack consistent internet access. Teachers report that some students are learning with TV, music, siblings, adults in the background. Some upper elementary and secondary students are responsible for siblings during school day. When students have technology issues, teachers can't stop class to support them, and while the family at home may try to help, they are often unable to do so, which leads to lack of engagement. According to parents, teachers, and community volunteers, a major equity issue is that some EL students don't have a family member that can sit and support them during virtual learning; this can mean that they are unable both to complete assignments and to develop and employ executive functioning skills that are necessary for success.

<p><b>Topic:</b> Lack of opportunities for social and academic language development</p>	<p><b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph, Barcroft &amp; other elementary schools. Teachers from Randolph, Key and other elementary schools.</p>
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**Description:**  
For academic English development, a lack of small group opportunities makes sustained academic conversations challenging. For social English, loss of lunch, recess and PE means limited opportunities to engage with native English peers. Teachers' only free time is during lunch, so they can't host virtual lunch.

<b>Topic:</b> Student Accountability and Independence	<b>Information source:</b> Parents from Randolph, Barcroft & other elementary schools. Teachers from Randolph, Key and other elementary schools.
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**Description:**

Asynchronous work for EL students is often unsubmitted. Direct one-on-one support is often needed for instructions to be understood and for work to be submitted. Students often do not attend small group support sessions; parent communication can be a challenge here. Some students are often unresponsive to small group calls. Students without direct home support often struggle to complete and submit assignments.

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**3. What are implications and/or solutions for teaching & learning for the longer term?**

1. Learning Environment Support - Administration at Claremont organized a call in which parents shared with other parents how they worked to create a focused learning environment for their students. A suggestion is to scale this presentation up and offer it in multiple languages. APS should continue to provide, and expand upon, personalized support for EL families across a variety of communication platforms.
2. Create More Learning Spaces - APS can open more spaces within schools for students to come for supervised virtual learning experiences that will help keep students focused, engaged and fully connected. One pod of EL families has formed at a local church; additionally, APS could connect families with this pod, or work to locate community spaces for more pods to emerge.
3. Purchase Clear Masks for EL Teachers - One benefit to virtual learning for ELs during our current situation is that teachers do not have to wear masks; students can see their teachers' mouths moving as they model how to make sounds. This will not be possible for EL students in a hybrid environment. We encourage the purchase of clear masks for EL teachers to support the language acquisition of EL students during the in-person days in a hybrid model.