

Advisory Committee on English Learners - Minutes
25 September 2024, 7 PM Room 202 Syphax Education Center

Present: Amy Graham (Chair), Jared Peet, Robin Liten-Tejada, Sam Klein – Office of English Learners (OEL)

Absent: Luisa Concepcion (APS Teacher), Patty Gallardo, Anne Zebra,

Opening: The meeting began promptly at 7 PM.

Agenda Items

1. **OEL Update:** Sam Klein gave an OEL update on the opening of school.
 - a. The Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement is closed. DOJ is not planning any follow up visits (unless there is a new complaint) because they believe that APS has put monitoring systems in place to make sure schools continue to be in compliance.
 - b. OEL met with approximately 270 new teachers. They also had separate meeting with new EL teachers at the elementary and secondary levels.
 - c. Dr. Mann has requested that central office staff focus on curriculum development down to the lesson level. For OEL, this means developing lessons for the ELD block (English language development), a stand-alone course and lessons for ELA for English learners. The goal of this effort is to ensure greater consistency of instruction across schools.
2. **Follow up on Recommendation 1: Expanding the Definition of SLIFE Students** Last year, ACEL recommended that greater attention be given to students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE), beginning with a new expanded definition of SLIFE. Each member of ACEL had experience with students who lacked significant formal education but had not been classified as SLIFE. Our teacher informants characterized these students as one of their greatest challenges. OEL has developed a new interview protocol which will be used this school year. It will not be done at the Welcome Center. Rather EL counselors will conduct the interview. For older students, counselors will first develop a relationship with students. However, the state requires the schools to identify SLIFE students within 3 quarters. More details about state guidance can be found in the VDOE Guidebook for Supporting SLIFE Students: [SLIFE Handbook](#)
3. **Follow up on Recommendation 2: Create a path for SLIFE Students.** According to our teacher informants last year, SLIFE students at the secondary level, may need a specific course sequence(s), appropriate class sizes, and extended learning time. OEL is currently considering whether we need a separate class or path for SLIFE students. VESA in Region IV has begun informal collaboration on how to best educate SLIFE students. Fairfax is using native language support. Loudon is using Bridges materials.
4. **Focus for 2024-25 School Year:** The group agreed that given the experience and interests of current members, ACEL will continue to focus on English learner instruction at the secondary level during this school level.

Next Meeting: 16 October 2024 7 PM, Room 202 Syphax Education Center

Proposed Agenda

1. Review and approve minutes of the September ACEL Meeting
2. OEL Update – Sam Klein
3. Introductions - Two Truths and 1 Lie
4. ACTL Update – The NIATx Process for Making Change (without Increasing Costs) - Amy Graham
5. Focus Area for 2024-25 - Members
 - a. Generate potential topics: E.g. students, Coteaching, Extended Learning Time, Newcomer Academies, Other
 - b. Identify key selection criteria: evidence of effectiveness, teacher-friendly, cost, other
 - c. Information Gathering – Empathetic Interviews, Ask Experts, ACTL Focus Groups
6. Review of decisions and action items