



# Advocating for ELL students and their families at the school level

## Competency

Educator advocates in their schools for English Language Learner (ELL) students and families using a five-step action plan

## Key Method

The educator develops and implements an ELL advocacy plan based upon the five steps that can be implemented in their school community to purposefully promote equitable practices.

## Method Components

Who are English Language Learners (ELLs)?

At the federal level, an English Language Learner (ELL) is defined as a student:

A. Who is aged 3 through 21;

B. Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school;

C. i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant OR



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ii) (I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; OR

iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant AND

D. whose difficulties speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual –

i. the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on the State's assessments described in section 1111(b)(3);

ii. The ability to achieve successfully in the classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

iii. The opportunity to participate fully in society.

### What is advocacy?

**Advocacy** for ELLs can be described as action taken to work for ELLs' access to high-quality education and equitable educational opportunities. There are many different components to advocacy for ELLs including equitable access to content, equitable assessment opportunities, effective collaboration with families, and clear and transparent processes for identification, monitoring, and exiting of ELLs.

As ELLs and their families become more familiar with the U.S. educational system and learn to advocate for themselves, they will require fewer advocacy efforts from others to obtain equitable educational opportunities. Educators should practice this scaffolded advocacy strategy so ELLs can become self-advocates.

### What is educational equity?

**Educational equity** means that all students, regardless of culture, race, economic status, background, or other personal circumstances should have equal access to opportunities, resources, and support needed to achieve academically.

### What are the key strategies to advocate for English Language Learners (ELLs)?



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Educators will have the opportunity to practice advocating for ELLs with a step-by-step process that will enable them to identify an advocacy issue and work to bring about change in their school community. It is important to note that the order of the steps is non-linear. 5 Steps to ELL Advocacy:

1. **Isolate the issue**- Clarify the source of an issue facing your ELL students and their families so appropriate action steps can be planned.
2. **Identify your allies**- Consider advocating alongside partners in the school community with a variety of perspectives about the issue.
3. **Be clear on the rights of ELL students**- Having a clear understanding of the local, state, and federal policies and laws pertaining to ELLs and their families empowers you to advocate for what is ethically right and legally justified.
4. **Organize and educate others**- You are not alone in this work and need to expand your network of allies so you can work with others in your school setting and wider community.
5. **Identify your outlets for change**- Think of what incremental steps can be taken to bring about change in your classroom, school, district, and community.

## Supporting Rationale and Research

Batalova, Jeanne, and Margie McHugh. "Number and Growth of Students in U.S. Schools in Need of English Instruction." 2009. (2016, November 08). Migration Policy, Migration Policy Institute, August 2010, [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C9Hto-U5hFkRMPDi0pZrVLd8nZaOa\\_lf/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C9Hto-U5hFkRMPDi0pZrVLd8nZaOa_lf/view?usp=sharing)

Genessee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Saunders, W., & Christian, D. (2006). Educating English language learners: A synthesis of empirical evidence. New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tHwxP47FExptduJGOIMp31rlbhPaLOLT/view?usp=sharing>

He, Y., Prater, K., Steed, T. (2011). Moving beyond 'just good teaching': ESL professional development for all teachers. *Professional Development in Education*, 31(1), 7-18. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19415250903467199>



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Henderson, A. & Mapp, K. (2002). A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement. Austin, TX: SEDL.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qPUf4zPFH5wtJlqNpNTxpmuxYMGmH077/view?usp=sharing>

“The growing number of English learner students.” The National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), 2011,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b7WkEalsmw38OsOut-w9bsSaiUgizOdW/view?usp=sharing>

“The Condition of Education 2013.” National Center for Education Statistics. (NCES 2013–037), English Language Learners, 2013,

<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=96>

## Resources

[National Network for Early Language Learning \(NELL\)](#)

[Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action to the Resource Section](#)

[Advocating for English Language Learners Under ESSA.](#)

[Advocating for English learners: A guide for educators Chapter 2.](#)

[All in!: How educators can advocate for English Language Learners](#)

[A guide for engaging ELL families: Twenty strategies for school leaders.](#)

[Colorín Colorado](#)

[English Language Learners face unique challenges \(NEA\).](#)

[ELL advocacy: Tips from educators.](#)

[Expanding Your EL advocacy sphere of influence.](#)

[Be an Advocate for English Language Learners.](#)

[You are Already a Leader: Identifying your Leadership Skills on Behalf of ELLs.](#)



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[English Language Learners Toolkit](#)

[Advocacy for English learners: An overview.](#)

[Who are English Language Learners?](#)

[5-Step Action Plan](#)

[Ensuring English learner students can participate meaningfully and equally](#)

## Submission Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

*To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and receive a proficient score for all components in Part 2.*

### Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

400 - 500 words

How have you helped or how can you help ELLs and their families navigate their school and district to effectively advocate for themselves in a new setting?

After looking at issues affecting ELLs and their families, what do you feel is your role in bringing about change for ELLs and their families?

Which English Language Learner (ELL) issues needing advocacy most surprised you in general? In your own school community?

**Passing:** Educator completely answers each of the three context questions using personal examples and supporting evidence clearly illustrating your discoveries, experience advocating, and/or plan for advocating for ELLs. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

### Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following three artifacts:

#### **Artifact 1: Action Plan**

Select three issues you wish to advocate for and write a five-step action plan (see Resources section) for each using the information from All In! How Educators Can Advocate for English Language Learners (see Resources section). (150 - 200 words for each part of the plan)



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**Artifact 2: Letter**

Select ONE issue that you will actually advocate for and write a letter to your principal where you request a private meeting or staff meeting time to go over the five-step action plan for this one issue. (400 - 500 words)

**Artifact 3: Presentation**

Create a Powerpoint or Google Slide presentation that can be used with your staff to share what you learned about advocating and the five-step action plan for your one issue.

## Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
<b>Artifact 1: Action Plan</b>	<p>Explicitly describes each of the five steps to advocate for ELLs</p> <p>Connections to the content from the ALL In! guide are evident throughout the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication</p> <p>Responses are 150 to 200 words per step</p>	<p>Describes the five steps to advocate for ELLs, but does not provide adequate detail for each step</p> <p>Connections to the content from the ALL In! guide are evident throughout some of the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure does not inhibit clear communication</p> <p>Responses are not 150 to 200 words per step</p>	<p>Describes the steps to advocate for ELLs with so little detail that a clear picture of each step cannot be formed by the evaluator</p> <p>Connections to the content from the ALL In! guide are not made in the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure inhibits clear communication</p> <p>Responses are not 150 to 200 words per step</p>
<b>Artifact 2: Letter</b>	Business style letter explicitly includes	Letter includes the following	Letter includes little detail about or



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	<p>the following components:</p> <p>The issue you are advocating for</p> <p>The rationale for choosing this issue</p> <p>A request to meet to discuss the issue</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhances clear communication</p> <p>Response is 400 - 500 words</p>	<p>components, but does not provide adequate detail:</p> <p>The issue you are advocating for</p> <p>The rationale for choosing this issue</p> <p>A request to meet to discuss the issue</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure does not inhibit clear communication</p> <p>Response is not 400 - 500 words</p>	<p>omits the following components:</p> <p>The issue you are advocating for</p> <p>The rationale for choosing this issue</p> <p>A request to meet to discuss the issue</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure inhibits clear communication</p> <p>Response is not 400 - 500 words</p>
<b>Artifact 3: Presentation</b>	<p>Includes research and demographics on ELLs nationwide and in school community</p> <p>Walks audience through selected Five-Step Advocacy Plan for issue affecting ELLs in school community</p> <p>Engages audience through active participation</p> <p>Includes a call to action with explicit next steps for staff to take</p>	<p>Includes general OR school-specific research and demographics on ELLs</p> <p>Shares a Five-Step Advocacy Plan for an issue affecting ELLs nationwide</p> <p>Limited audience participation</p> <p>Includes a call to action</p> <p>Includes some media and graphics to enhance the presentation and learning</p>	<p>Includes some research and demographics on ELLs</p> <p>Shares template for Five-Step Advocacy Plan</p> <p>No audience participation</p> <p>No call to action</p> <p>All informational slides</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure inhibits clear communication</p>



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	Includes relevant media and graphics to enhance the presentation and learning Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication	Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure does not inhibit clear communication	
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### Part 3. Reflection

400 - 500 words

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Reflect on the following guiding questions:

- What key insights did you learn about your role and steps you can take when advocating for ELLs and their families?
- How will your new learning about advocacy affect or change your role when working with ELL students and their families?

**Passing:** Response thoughtfully addresses the impact the micro-credential has had on the educator’s practice in supporting and advocating for ELL students. Reflection includes personal examples and supporting evidence that is organized and easy to understand.



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