

Guidelines for Teacher Assistants Working with Students Who have English as a Second Language

These reflect the role of the teacher assistant working with students who have English as a second language as an integral part of that student's Instructional Team. In this role, the teacher assistant supports and reinforces (but does not replace) instruction of the teacher. While these Guidelines focus on students who have English as a Second Language, the Guidelines are important considerations for ALL children, including students who are and are not English speaking. This is particularly true in RI given the broad spectrum of cultures represented in our schools. In addition, school districts are reminded that they must comply with RI's law related to the Education of Limited English Proficient Students, RIGL Chapter 16-54 and accompanying regulations.

Standard 1. *Teacher assistants demonstrate a level of professionalism in communication and collaboration among members of the school community, including colleagues, families, and related agencies.*

Additional indicators for teacher assistants working with students who have English as a Second Language.

ESL 1.1 able to use a collaborative team approach with the understanding that the teacher is in charge of instruction and ongoing assessment of students' progress regardless of the Teacher Assistant's cultural or linguistic background.

ESL 1.2 demonstrate understanding that confidentiality is required and that discussions are to occur only with the teachers, families or others directly involved in that student's education.

ESL 1.3 exhibit sensitivity and understanding of individual language(s) and cultural differences, including differences in social class and the "cultural adjustment" that families go through when moving to a new country.

ESL 1.4 demonstrate that they have oral English proficiency and competencies in English literacy.

ESL 1.5 demonstrate that they have basic proficiency in speaking, reading and writing in their native language.

ESL 1.6 able to use effective communication skills with the family in their native language (or most proficient language) and in English.

ESL 1.7 able to carry out teacher plans to encourage the participation of families with limited English in their student's learning environment and facilitate home-school communication (e.g.,



by conducting home visits, assisting families at school visits, making phone calls at times convenient to families).

ESL 1.8 know to ask for help when they lack the ability to translate appropriately due to the nature of the content to be translated.

ESL 1.9 if they do home visits, demonstrate good judgment related to safety and role limitations.

ESL 1.10 demonstrate an awareness of the laws and regulations related to special education and working with students who have English as a second language

Standard 2. *Teacher assistants support teachers by participating in instructional opportunities.*

Additional indicators for teacher assistants working with students who have English as a Second Language.

ESL 2.1 able to assist the teacher as a member of the Instructional Team in developing and using culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies and techniques.

ESL 2.2 demonstrate an understanding of culturally different educational systems and methods of child rearing and be able to communicate these differences to school personnel and families.

ESL 2.3 able to assist the teacher in planning, modification and implementation of curriculum instruction and assessment based on the cultural/linguistic and knowledge background of the student.

ESL 2.4 demonstrate the ability to assist teachers with adapting learning materials and equipment to meet the needs of individuals with different ability levels, learning styles, or cultural/linguistic backgrounds.

ESL 2.5 able to provide appropriate native cultural/linguistic support for students with limited English proficiency.

ESL 2.6 able to preview lessons in native language(s) to ensure that students understand instructions and concepts. ESL 2.7 able to provide students with the opportunity to connect new learnings in English to previous knowledge through instruction in their primary language.

ESL 2.8 able to assist the Instructional Team in making recommendations for referring the child for special services outside of the general education classroom (e.g., gifted and talented, special education, Title I, career/vocational education).

Standard 3. *Teacher assistants support a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.*

Additional indicators for teacher assistants working with students who have English as a Second Language.

ESL 3.1 demonstrate and convey to the Instructional Team an understanding of the different cultures represented by the student population and assist in promoting a culturally responsive learning environment.

ESL 3.2 able to engage in positive interactions with all students of all cultures in the classroom in order to promote a culturally responsive learning environment.

ESL 3.3 able to assist the teacher in gathering information about similarities and differences in child development and cultural implications specific to the group with which they are working.

ESL 3.4 able to assist the Instructional Team in gathering and applying information about immigration patterns of various cultures and its effects on students' learning and behavior.

ESL 3.5 able to assist students in both English and the native language in understanding and applying collaborative, cooperative and independent strategies in the classroom.

ESL 3.6 able to assist t the Instructional Team in gathering information about customs and practices that may cause routine student behavior to be misinterpreted as a disability or learning problem.

Standard 4. *Teacher assistants exhibit knowledge of health, safety, and emergency procedures of the learning environment.*

Additional indicators for teacher assistants working with students who have English as a Second Language.

ESL 4.1 able to assist school personnel in gathering information needed to ascertain whether or not there is or is not cause to report suspicion of abuse.

ESL 4.2 able to assist school personnel (e.g., nurses, social workers and therapists) in communicating with families in their native language to ensure that their children are able to access medical services related to education.

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