



MLL Regulations Implementation Support

Dedicated English Language Development

The [Rhode Island Multilingual Learner Regulations](#), approved by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, are in effect as of April 23, 2025. To support the implementation and the new requirements, Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) developed this brief to provide the overview of Dedicated English Language Development (Dedicated ELD). This brief for LEAs is intended to support planning for the implementation of the new MLL Regulations by the 2030-31 school year.

<i>Audience</i>	<i>District Leadership led by Superintendent (e.g., Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Directors, MLL Administrators, Principals, Human Resources, Finance, etc.)</i>
<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Provide support and suggested steps for LEAs to launch MLL regulations implementation</i>

I. Clarify Requirements

This brief is intended to support LEAs with the new [Rhode Island Multilingual Learner Regulations](#), recognizing that doing this work takes planning and time. In the interim, while designing full implementation of the new requirements by the SY2030-31, LEAs remain under the obligation to provide MLL students with explicit English Language Development instruction for a daily minimum of time: three, two, or one period, based on students' proficiency level, per section 3.8.B of the regulations.

Regardless of the LEA's current context, a close examination of the new regulations and how Dedicated ELD may already fit in and/or be added to LEAs' current structures is a next step in planning for implementation. For LEAs with the currently required 3-2-1 period structure in place, the new regulations present an opportunity to designate one of these periods as Dedicated ELD within new program models (see [Brief 1](#)). For LEAs without the 3-2-1 structure in place, examining the requirements for implementing a selected program model will further clarify options for incorporating Dedicated ELD in your local context.

A. Dedicated ELD Overview

Dedicated ELD, as defined in section 3.2.A.5.b of the [MLL regulations](#), focuses on systematic, explicit, and sustained English language instruction, with the focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, and with [WIDA ELD standards](#) and [Key Language Uses](#) at the center.

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It is designed for MLLs only, to support students at a specific English language proficiency (ELP) level, with students at similar or adjacent levels placed together into one Dedicated ELD course.

The goal of Dedicated ELD is proficiency in English; therefore, instruction is in English with home/native languages strategically used as a support. The Dedicated ELD curriculum is appropriate for students' age and English language proficiency (ELP) levels. The instruction is delivered to MLLs who may or may not share a common home language by a teacher holding ESOL certification.

Dedicated ELD is a required component of all Content-Based and Bilingual Education program models, except for the Dual Language program models where Dedicated ELD is optional. Refer to [Brief 1](#) for information on program models.

B. Dedicated ELD Time Requirements

Section 3.2.A.2.j of the MLL Regulations clarifies that an instructional period is equivalent to **at least forty-five (45) consecutive** instructional minutes per day. While 45 minutes is the required daily minimum, the length of Dedicated ELD should align with the school's schedule while considering special contexts and student needs.

To ensure MLLs receive the appropriate level of support, section 3.8 of the MLL regulations has specific minimum time requirements for MLL instruction based on the student's level of English proficiency. These minimum time requirements ensure that MLLs at all stages of English development receive the support they need to thrive in both language acquisition and academic content.

- **MLLs at Entering and Emerging Levels (WIDA Levels 1 and 2):** Must receive a *minimum of three* MLL instructional periods per day. One period must be Dedicated ELD, while the LEA has flexibility to determine whether the two remaining periods will be Dedicated ELD or Integrated Language and Content Instruction, or a mix of both, based on student need.
- **MLLs at Developing Level (WIDA Level 3):** Must receive a *minimum of two* MLL instructional periods per day. One period must be Dedicated ELD, while the LEA has flexibility to determine whether the one remaining period will be Dedicated ELD or Integrated Language and Content Instruction, based on student need.
- **MLLs at Expanding Level (WIDA Level 4):** Must receive a *minimum of one* MLL instructional period per day, with flexibility for LEAs to decide whether that period is Dedicated ELD or Integrated Language and Content Instruction.
- **MLLs at Bridging and Reaching Levels (WIDA Levels 5 and 6):** Once students exit MLL status, they are no longer placed in an MLL program model, and, therefore, no longer enroll in Dedicated ELD. The MLLs who are recently exited will continue to benefit from explicit

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academic language development and culturally responsive instruction throughout the day. LEAs must monitor the exited students' academic progress for two years to ensure their continued success.

Table 1 below illustrates the minimum time requirements bulleted above.

Table 1. Minimum Time Requirements for MLL Instruction

Minimum Time Required by ELP Levels	MLLs at Entering and Emerging Levels (WIDA Levels 1 and 2)	MLLs at Developing Level (WIDA Level 3)	MLLs at Expanding Level (WIDA Level 4)
Total Time	Minimum of 3 periods of MLL instruction	Minimum of 2 periods of MLL instruction	Minimum of 1 period of MLL instruction
Dedicated ELD (For MLLs only)	At least 1 period a day	At least 1 period a day	At least either 1 Dedicated ELD <u>or</u> 1 Integrated
Integrated Language & Content Instruction (For MLLs and non-MLLs <u>OR</u> MLLs only in certain program models. See Brief 1 for description of program models.)	Flexibility to determine whether the two (2) remaining periods will be Dedicated ELD and/or Integrated Language and Content Instruction	Flexibility to determine whether the one (1) remaining period will be Dedicated ELD or Integrated Language and Content Instruction	Instruction period a day, determined by student needs

II. Initiate Implementation

RIDE recommends that each LEA begins by examining their local assets and next steps through the snap-shot tool for [Implementation Support](#), [Brief 1 Language Instruction Education Programs](#), and [Brief 2 MLL Proficiency and Awareness Requirements](#). As a result of this examination, LEAs will have a point-in-time view of their current, local MLL context. In continuation of this planning, consider your context for implementing Dedicated ELD.

Current Context for Implementing Dedicated ELD

- Reference Implementation Support tool and Briefs 1 and 2 for framing current context and steps towards implementation.
- Review MLL data for student ELP levels, student groupings, and other considerations listed in Table 2.
- Assess current schedules and staffing.

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- Develop a transition plan to meet the 3-2-1 period structure by the SY2030-31, including Dedicated ELD as part of the minimum hours.
- Consider schedules, students, staff, and curriculum needs (see Table 2).
- Map out the following:
 - Determine new or adjusted schedule(s) and plan for master schedule changes.
 - Determine teacher assignments; plan for hiring and onboarding as needed.
 - Determine the role of the Implementation Team in curriculum selection.

Table 2. Considerations for Schedules, Students, Staff, and Curriculum

<p><i>Scheduling Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider how Dedicated ELD fits within the MLL program model(s) (refer to Brief 1).• Allocate a protected period of daily Dedicated ELD during the regular school day.• Consider grade-level team decisions where possible on whether MLLs in different classrooms will be combined for Dedicated ELD according to student need and proficiency level.• Consider how to utilize existing What I Need (WIN) block, intervention, or other periods.• Consider scheduling different levels of Dedicated ELD in a way that allows students – based on assessment data – to move up to the next level ELD course without impacting the rest of their daily schedule.• Coordinate with Special Education and other services to improve coherence and prevent conflicts.	<p><i>Student Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Content-Based and Transitional Bilingual program models, ensure each MLL is scheduled to receive at least the minimum of required instructional periods.• In Dual Language program models, determine the need for Dedicated ELD based on student data and outcomes.• Consider which MLLs, if any, will benefit from additional Dedicated ELD periods.• Ensure Dedicated ELD is aligned with each MLL’s English proficiency level.• Group MLLs strategically by age, grade, and proficiency level to allow for targeted ELD instruction, with no more than two adjacent grades and/or two adjacent proficiency levels clustered together.• Consider group/class size to allow for meaningful language interaction and individualized feedback.• Ensure linguistically and culturally responsive and sustaining instruction in consideration of each student’s background and experience.
<p><i>Staffing Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assign ESOL-certified teachers to Dedicated ELD.	<p><i>Curriculum Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As needed, establish a timeline, a curriculum selection team, and a budget for selecting Dedicated ELD curriculum

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider staffing needs and teacher availability across grade levels and buildings.• Build in flexibility in staff schedules for meetings and for traveling between schools.	<p>based on your MLL regulations implementation plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a selection process and criteria, using tools such as HQCM - Overall Selection Guidance - Update January 2025 .pdf (pages 7-9) and HQCM ReviewTools June2020.pdf.
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Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is Dedicated ELD different from Integrated Language and Content Instruction?

Dedicated ELD is a protected, daily instructional period that explicitly teaches English language skills, aligned to [WIDA ELD standards](#), Key Language Uses for each grade-level cluster, and student language proficiency levels. Integrated Language and Content Instruction, on the other hand, happens across all content areas (ELA, math, science, and social studies) where language is developed through content-based, academic instruction. Table 2 illustrates some key differences.

Table 2. Dedicated ELD vs. Integrated Language and Content Instruction

Dedicated ELD	Integrated Language and Content Instruction
Provides development of the four language domains (L, S, R, and W) and social, instructional, and academic proficiency in English	Provides content-specific language development and access to grade-level, academic content in ELA, math, science, social studies, etc.
Uses WIDA ELD standards and KLUs	Uses RI content standards and WIDA ELD standards
Is a daily minimum of 45 consecutive minutes of instruction	Occurs in all disciplines throughout the day
Focuses on language development with content	Focuses on content with language development

2. Can Dedicated ELD be part of the English Language Arts (ELA) period/block?

Dedicated ELD must be a separate, standalone period focused on language development, not embedded within the ELA period. ELA is not a substitute for ELD or vice versa. In a school that utilizes the Content-Based Education approach (rather than Bilingual Education), ELA classes may include MLLs and non-MLLs. This Integrated ELA instruction focuses on ELA standards with ELD standards as support to promote both ELA content knowledge and language development needed for ELA. This is **in addition** to a Dedicated ELD class that primarily focuses on language development and uses a variety of content areas for the purpose of language instruction.

3. Do all MLLs need to receive one period of Dedicated ELD? What about MLLs at higher levels of proficiency?

In Content-Based and Transitional Bilingual program models:

- MLLs at Entering, Emerging, and Developing levels (WIDA Levels 1-3) must receive a ***minimum of one period*** a day of Dedicated ELD.

- MLLs at Expanding level (WIDA Level 4) may receive, at minimum, one period of Dedicated ELD or one period of Integrated Language and Content Instruction.
- MLLs at Bridging and Reaching (WIDA levels 5 and 6) do not receive Dedicated ELD.

In Dual Language program models, the necessity for Dedicated ELD is determined by student data, outcomes, and need. In all program models, LEAs may determine – using student data, outcomes, and needs – that an MLL (such as SLIFE or newcomer) may receive more than the minimum one period of Dedicated ELD a day.

4. How is a period defined?

Per section 3.2.A.2.j of the MLL regulations one period is equivalent to at least forty-five (45) consecutive instructional minutes.

5. Can we combine students at different grade levels or proficiency levels in one Dedicated ELD group?

Considering that MLLs at different levels require different support and materials, students in Dedicated ELD should be grouped by similar or adjacent language proficiency levels to allow for targeted instruction (Hayman & Field, 2012; Saunders et al., 2013). LEAs may provide mixed-grade Dedicated ELD, especially in low-incidence schools, but must still ensure instruction is developmentally and linguistically appropriate for all students. For example, it may be appropriate to offer one Dedicated ELD class for 4th and 5th graders who are all at Level 1 of proficiency, but it wouldn't be appropriate to place 1st and 5th graders in the same Dedicated ELD period even if they were all at the same level of English language proficiency. Likewise, 5th graders at Levels 2 and 3 may be grouped, whereas 5th graders at Levels 1 and 4 should not be grouped.

6. Who is qualified to teach Dedicated ELD? Is MLL Endorsement sufficient?

Per Section 3.2.A.6.b of the [MLL Regulations](#) and Section 1.9.5.S of the [Certification Regulations](#), only teachers holding an ESOL certification are qualified to teach Dedicated ELD. The MLL Endorsement is not sufficient for teaching Dedicated ELD.

7. Can an MLL miss core content to receive Dedicated ELD? What subjects can we pull MLLs out of for Dedicated ELD?

MLLs must have access to core content instruction to progress academically while receiving Dedicated ELD instruction. Dedicated ELD is **in addition** to core content instruction.

LEAs and schools should develop master schedules that incorporate Dedicated ELD appropriately to meet the requirements, without students missing core content instruction. Considerations of student needs and context look different from one school to another, so

schedules will vary. The following guiding questions might assist with planning schedules to support Dedicated ELD:

- What times during the day could MLLs participate in Dedicated ELD without missing core instruction?
- What types of scheduling changes would facilitate options to build in Dedicated ELD?
- How can grade-level team schedules be coordinated so that MLLs at the same or adjacent grade levels can receive Dedicated ELD together?
- How can schools utilize What I Need (WIN) block, intervention, or other periods/blocks to strategically group MLLs together for Dedicated ELD period(s)?
- What considerations and/or changes might be necessary at the high school level to ensure students meet diploma requirements per [Rhode Island Readiness-Based Secondary Regulations](#)?
- What other ways can a school creatively address scheduling to ensure that MLLs receive Dedicated ELD?

To clarify, “pull-out ESL” is not an approved program model in itself. Instead, all program models consist of two components: Dedicated ELD and Integrated Language and Content Instruction. Please refer to [Brief 1](#) for additional support on program models and their components.

8. Can Dedicated ELD be delivered via a co-teaching model?

Yes, if the co-teaching is intentionally designed for English language development and provides the full period of targeted ELD instruction. It must be distinguishable from Integrated Language and Content or general instruction. When a Dedicated ELD class includes MLLs with IEPs, the class can be co-taught by an ESOL teacher and a special educator.

9. How do we ensure students with disabilities who are also MLLs receive both Dedicated ELD, special education, and related services?

LEAs must provide all services and instruction MLL students are entitled to. School and district teams should collaboratively plan schedules to ensure both explicit language instruction and IEP services are addressed appropriately. Coordination between the MLL and Special Education Departments is crucial to permit dually identified students access to both Dedicated ELD and IEP services.

10. How will program models and their components, including Dedicated ELD, be monitored for compliance and effectiveness?

Districts will report on the MLL program model each MLL is enrolled in via the MLL Census. State monitoring visits will include a review of how Dedicated ELD is implemented and documented, including staffing, scheduling, and other aspects. LEAs should simultaneously

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track the Dedicated ELD time, ensuring appropriate staffing and scheduling, as well as monitor student language progress regularly.

References and Resources

Regulations:

[200-RICR-20-30-3 Regulations Governing the Education of Multilingual Learners](#) (April 23, 2025)

[200-RICR-20-20-1 Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island](#) (June 4, 2025)

MLL Regulations Implementation Support Tools:

[MLL Regulations Implementation Support](#) (May 2025)

[Brief No. 1 – Language Instruction Educational Programs](#) (May 2025)

[Brief No. 2 – MLL Proficiency and Awareness.pdf](#) (June 2025)

Additional Resources:

Billings, E. & Walqui, A. (n.d.). *The Zone of Proximal Development: An affirmative perspective in teaching ELLs/MLLs*. West Ed. https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/bilingual-ed/zone_proximal_development.pdf

Hamayan, E., & Field, R. (2012). *English language learners at school: A guide for administrators*. Brookes Publishing. <https://products.brookespublishing.com/English-Language-Learners-at-School-P1385.aspx>

[High-Quality Instructional Framework for MLLs to Thrive](#) (December 2021)

[Rhode Island’s Blueprint for Multilingual Learner Success](#) (2020)

[Rhode Island’s Strategic Plan for Multilingual Learner Success](#) (2020)

Saunders, W., Goldenberg, C., & Marcelletti, D. (2013). English language development: Guidelines for instruction. *American Educator*, 37(2), p. 13-25.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1014023.pdf>

[WIDA ELD Standards](#)

[WIDA Key Language Uses](#) (Introduction)