



## MLL Regulations Implementation Support Integrated Language and Content Instruction

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 of the new requirements, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) developed this brief to provide an overview of **Integrated Language and Content Instruction** (Integrated Instruction). 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 clarity, support, and suggested steps for LEAs to launch MLL regulations implementation</i>

### I. Clarify Requirements

This brief is intended to support LEAs with the implementation of the Integrated Language and Content Instruction requirement in 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 SY2030-31, LEAs remain under the obligation to provide MLL students with MLL instruction<sup>1</sup> for a daily minimum of time: three, two, or one period<sup>2</sup>, based on students' English language proficiency level, per section 3.8.B of the current MLL regulations.

Regardless of the LEA's current context, a close examination of the new regulations and how Integrated Language and Content Instruction may already fit in and/or be added to LEAs' current structures is a next step in planning for implementation.

- LEAs with the currently required 3-2-1 period structure in place should designate one of these periods as Dedicated English Language Development (Dedicated ELD) and the remaining periods as Integrated Language and Content Instruction (Integrated Instruction).

<sup>1</sup> MLL instruction includes Dedicated English Language Development and Integrated Language and Content Instruction, per §3.2.A.5.7 of MLL regulations.

<sup>2</sup> One period is the equivalent of at least forty-five (45) consecutive instructional minutes per day, per §3.2.A.2.j of MLL regulations. Please note the regulations define the *minimum* length of the period. LEAs may implement longer periods or block schedules and provide MLL instruction that goes beyond the minimum in accordance with a school's specific schedule.

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This shift also presents an opportunity to adopt new program models if needed (see [Brief 1](#)).

- For LEAs without the 3-2-1 structure in place, it is crucial to immediately begin implementing new program models with the required periods of Dedicated ELD and Integrated Instruction. To further clarify options for selecting appropriate program models for your local context, refer to [Brief 1](#) for information on program models and their components.

### **A. Integrated Language and Content Instruction: Overview**

Integrated Language and Content Instruction (Integrated Instruction), as defined in section 3.2.A.5.c of the [MLL regulations](#), is a required component of both Bilingual and Content-Based Education approaches. It focuses on simultaneous content instruction and language development that is aligned to the grade-level, state-endorsed academic standards and [WIDA ELD standards](#). Integrated Instruction typically includes both MLLs and non-MLLs, but in selected program models it can be designed for MLLs only (e.g., Content-Based Instruction for Newcomers, One-Way Dual Language, or program models for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education).

The goal of Integrated Instruction is proficiency in content and language standards.

- In Bilingual Education (see section 3.2.A.6.a of the regulations), the goals focus on proficiency and literacy in English and a partner language, as well as content achievement in both languages. Therefore, instruction is provided in both English and partner language. Here, Integrated Instruction is delivered by a content-certified teacher who also holds either an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or Bilingual and Dual Language (BDL) certification.
- In Content-Based Education (see section 3.2.A.6.b of the regulations), the goals are proficiency and literacy in English as well as content achievement. Instruction is provided in English with home language used as a support. Here, Integrated Instruction is delivered by a content-certified teacher who has also met the MLL proficiency requirement, through one of the MLL proficiency pathways delineated in [Brief 2 – Proficiency and Awareness Requirements](#).

Integrated Instruction utilizes high quality instructional materials that are appropriate for the content area in each grade, as well as students' age and English language proficiency (ELP) levels. RIDE's [High-Quality Instruction Framework for MLLs to Thrive](#) aims at developing a common understanding of research-based, high-quality instruction for MLLs. This framework supports teachers of Integrated Instruction to integrate evidence-based practices for MLLs into teaching and learning while supporting the simultaneous development of disciplinary language

and content skills. This framework serves as a companion to other [curriculum frameworks](#) developed by RIDE and should be used in addition to the embedded language supports found in high-quality curriculum materials (HQCM).

Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of the Integrated Language and Content Instruction for the Bilingual and Content-Based Education approaches.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Integrated Instruction per Educational Approach**

Integrated Language and Content Instruction		
	Content-Based Education	Bilingual Education
<b>Instruction</b>	Grade-level content with discipline-specific academic language instruction. Content standards drive instruction, while WIDA ELD standards support language development in English.	Grade-level content with discipline-specific academic language instruction. Content standards drive instruction, while language standards support language development in English and partner language.
<b>Language</b>	Instruction in English with home languages used as supports.	Instruction in English and partner language, following specific program model design.
<b>Curriculum</b>	High quality, grade-level content curriculum in English, with home language as support.	High quality, grade-level content curriculum in English and partner language.
<b>Students</b>	Non-MLLs and MLLs <u>or</u> MLLs only in selected program models for a specified amount of time (e.g., Content-Based Instruction for Newcomers).	Non-MLLs and MLLs in Two-Way Dual Language <u>or</u> MLLs only in other Bilingual program models (i.e., One-Way Dual Language, Transitional Bilingual Education or Transitional Bilingual Education for SLIFE).
<b>Student English Language Proficiency (ELP) levels</b>	Integrated Instruction is designed for MLLs at all levels of ELP. Selected program models (e.g., CBI for Newcomers) may offer, for a specified amount of time, classes designed to support MLLs at specific ELP level(s).	Integrated Instruction is designed for MLLs at all levels of ELP.
<b>Educators</b>	Delivered by content-certified teachers who also meet the MLL proficiency requirement (as delineated in <a href="#">RI MLL Regulations</a> and further explained in <a href="#">Brief 2</a> ). When feasible, it can also be delivered via a consistent co-teaching model with a	<i>Partner language</i> : Delivered by content-certified teachers who also hold BDL certification <i>English</i> : Delivered by content-certified teachers who also hold ESOL certification.

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	content-certified teacher and an ESOL-certified teacher.	May also be delivered via a one-teacher model with a content-certified teacher who also holds a BDL certification.
<b>Time</b>	Following the program model design, while at least meeting the minimum hours required for MLLs at each level of proficiency (see Table 2 for more details).	Scheduled according to each program model’s instructional design (e.g., 90/10 or 50/50 in Dual Language).

### B. Integrated Language and Content Instruction: Time Requirements

The particulars of each student’s schedule are determined by the program model in which the student is placed (see [Brief 1](#) for program models). Minimally, MLLs receive three, two, or one period of MLL instruction, based on their ELP level, through a combination of Dedicated ELD and Integrated Instruction. While the MLL regulations establish a minimum, LEAs are encouraged to implement robust MLL program models, so MLLs can thrive in both language acquisition and academic content throughout the day. The primary drivers of schedules should be the student need and the implemented program model(s), which together determine each student’s schedule.

Section 3.8.B of the MLL regulations outlines the minimum requirements for the interim period prior to SY 2030-31. Section 3.8.A delineates the minimum time requirements for MLL instruction starting in the school year 2030-31. Table 2 illustrates the minimum requirements to be implemented by the beginning of the school year 2030-31.

**Table 2. Minimum Time Requirements for MLL Instruction Beginning in SY2030-31**

<b>Minimum Time Required by Student ELP Levels</b>	<b>MLLs at Entering and Emerging Levels (WIDA Levels 1 and 2)</b>	<b>MLLs at Developing Level (WIDA Level 3)</b>	<b>MLLs at Expanding Level (WIDA Level 4)</b>
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>Minimum of 3</b> periods of MLL instruction a day	<b>Minimum of 2</b> periods of MLL instruction a day	<b>Minimum of 1</b> period of MLL instruction a day
<b>Dedicated ELD (For MLLs only)</b>	At least 1 period a day	At least 1 period a day	At least 1 period a day of either Dedicated ELD <b>or</b> Integrated
<b>Integrated Language &amp; Content Instruction</b>	2 periods a day with flexibility to determine which content areas to designate as Integrated Instruction	1 period a day with flexibility to determine which content areas to designate as Integrated Instruction	Instruction, determined by student needs

For more detailed information on Dedicated ELD, review [Brief 3](#).

## 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](#). As a result of this examination, LEAs will have a point-in-time view of their current, local MLL context and data. This will inform the LEA’s implementation of MLL program models ([Brief 1](#)), and, in turn, help to determine the implementation of the Integrated Language and Content Instruction.

### Examine Current LEA Context for Implementing Integrated Language and Content Instruction

- Reference [Implementation Support tool and Briefs 1, 2, and 3](#) for framing current context and steps towards implementation.
- Review MLL data for student ELP levels, student groupings, and other considerations (see Table 3).
- Assess current and consider future needs for schedules, students, staff, and curriculum.
- Develop a transition plan to implement a selected program model or models, that at minimum meets the 3-2-1 period structure by SY2030-31 and includes both Dedicated ELD and Integrated Instruction.
- Map out the following:
  - Determine the role of the Implementation Team for this aspect of implementation.
  - Determine program model(s) to be implemented.
  - Determine new or adjusted schedule(s) and plan for master schedule changes.
  - Determine teacher assignments and plan for hiring and/or professional learning.
  - Include professional learning requirements in district strategic and school improvement plans (per section 3.12 of the MLL regulations).

**Table 3. Considerations for Schedules, Students, Staff, and Curriculum**

<i><b>Scheduling Considerations</b></i>	<i><b>Student Considerations</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how Integrated Instruction fits within the LEA’s selected MLL program model(s) (refer to <a href="#">Brief 1</a>).</li> <li>• Determine which and how many Integrated Language and Content Instruction classes will be included in the MLL program model, following at least the minimums stated in MLL regulations and described in Table 2 above.</li> <li>• In Dual Language program models, determine which Integrated Instruction areas will be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure each MLL is scheduled to receive at least the minimum of required MLL instructional periods.</li> <li>• Consider how MLLs will benefit from a robust MLL program model with additional periods of Integrated Instruction beyond the minimum required in the MLL regulations.</li> <li>• In Transitional Bilingual program models, determine when and how students will transition from home language to English.</li> </ul>

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<p>taught in English and which in a partner language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult grade-level teams where possible on how MLLs will be placed into Integrated Instruction according to student need, proficiency level, and access to English-proficient peers.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Special Education and other departments to improve coherence and prevent conflicts.</li> <li>• Confirm schedules ensure equitable access to grade-level content while embedding language development.</li> <li>• Ensure Integrated Instruction courses at the secondary level are credit bearing and align with students’ college and career-readiness goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate MLLs with English-proficient peers while still providing MLL programming that meets MLLs’ needs.</li> <li>• Group MLLs strategically by age, grade, and/or proficiency level to allow for grade-appropriate content instruction and differentiated language instruction.</li> <li>• Consider group/class size to allow for meaningful language interaction and individualized feedback.</li> <li>• Ensure linguistically and culturally responsive and sustaining instruction in consideration of each student’s background and experience.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Staffing Considerations</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Curriculum Considerations</i></b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider staffing needs and teacher availability across grade levels and buildings.</li> <li>• Develop a plan for meeting the MLL awareness and proficiency requirements by SY 2030-31 (See <a href="#">Brief 2</a> for details).</li> <li>• Assign content-certified teachers who have appropriate MLL credentials for teaching Integrated Instruction in each program model.</li> <li>• Consider which pathways to MLL proficiency offer most flexibility with staffing: ESOL/ BDL certification, MLL Integrated Content Extension certification, MLL endorsement, or MLL proficiency professional learning.</li> <li>• In Content-Based program models, consider feasibility of a co-teaching model with consistent common planning time.</li> <li>• Consider scheduling common planning time or professional learning team time to facilitate collaboration between the Integrated Instruction and Dedicated ELD teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure curriculum simultaneously addresses state content and language standards and includes explicit language instruction tied to disciplinary practices.</li> <li>• Establish a plan and budget for professional learning on implementing HQCM with MLLs (including SLIFE, Newcomers, and dually identified students) in Integrated Instruction courses.</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide ongoing professional learning based on <a href="#">TESOL standards</a>, <a href="#">MLL Competencies</a>, and <a href="#">WIDA standards</a> as established in district strategic and school improvement plans.</li></ul>	
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### Frequently Asked Questions

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

*Integrated Language and Content Instruction* can occur in all content areas (ELA, math, science, social studies, health, art, and others) where language is developed through content-based, academic instruction. *Integrated Language and Content Instruction* also pertains to content area instruction that occurs in separate classrooms for DAS when dually identified students are included. *Dedicated ELD*, on the other hand, is a protected, daily instructional period that explicitly teaches English language skills, aligned to [WIDA ELD standards](#). Table 4 illustrates some key differences.

**Table 4. Dedicated ELD vs. Integrated Language and Content Instruction**

Dedicated ELD	Integrated Language and Content Instruction
Provides development of the four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) 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 <a href="#">WIDA ELD standards</a> and Key Language Uses (KLUs)	Uses RI content standards and WIDA ELD standards
Is a daily minimum of 45 consecutive minutes of instruction	Can occur in all content areas throughout the day
Focuses on language development with content	Focuses on content with language development

**2. What content areas can be considered for Integrated Language and Content Instruction?**

Any content area can be designated as an Integrated Instruction course, provided the teacher delivering it has met all the appropriate certification and MLL proficiency requirements (see [Brief 2](#)). It is recommended that districts begin with foundational academic subjects, such as ELA, math, science, and social studies, and add other content areas as the implementation progresses. Please note that Integrated ELA is not a substitute for Dedicated ELD or vice versa. For more details, please see [Brief 3](#).

**3. How should districts balance Dedicated ELD and Integrated Language and Content Instruction?**

Dedicated ELD and Integrated Instruction are components of all program models and, therefore, serve complementary purposes. Dedicated ELD provides focused time for explicit language instruction, while Integrated Instruction ensures that students learn academic language within the context of grade-level content. Focusing on implementing a complete program model will ensure these two components are present and well balanced, providing

students with sufficient Dedicated ELD and Integrated Instruction to support success in all academic subjects.

**4. How should we schedule these courses?**

Districts can redesign existing general education content courses into Integrated Instruction or create new Integrated Instruction courses if implementing new program models. This may or may not impact master schedules, so cross-department collaboration is key. Students' schedules should not prevent them from taking electives or other courses, or from receiving interventions as appropriate. Additionally, at secondary levels, LEAs must align Integrated Instruction with existing graduation requirements.

**5. Can we offer Integrated Instruction classes that include students at different grade levels?**

Yes, with the consideration that Integrated Language and Content Instruction courses should be designed in alignment with all Rhode Island regulations and guidance, such as [Secondary Regulations](#), [standards](#), [curriculum frameworks](#), and other RI initiatives, such as [high-quality curriculum materials](#).

**6. Can we offer Integrated Instruction classes that include students at different ELP levels?**

Yes, LEAs may include MLLs of all proficiency levels in the same Integrated Instruction courses. MLL student success is most strongly associated with the quality of language instruction, including intentional scaffolding and differentiated support rather than with proficiency groupings (Echevarria et al., 2024; Garcia et al., 2018; Gibbons, 2002). Mixed proficiency classes can be effective when instruction is intentionally differentiated, while narrower proficiency grouping may be useful in specific contexts focused on targeted language development. To ensure instruction is linguistically and academically appropriate for all students, districts are encouraged to prioritize instructional capacity and flexible, task-based grouping within classes over rigid course-level proficiency separation.

**7. Who is qualified to teach Integrated Language and Content Instruction?**

To teach Integrated Instruction, in addition to content certifications, teachers must also:

- in Bilingual Education program models, hold ESOL or BDL certifications,
- in Content-Based Education program models, meet the MLL proficiency requirement via one of the following pathways: ESOL or BDL certification, MLL Integrated Content Extension certification, MLL endorsement, or RIDE-approved MLL proficiency professional learning.

For more details, see [Brief 2](#).

**8. Is MLL Endorsement sufficient to teach Integrated Instruction?**

Yes, MLL endorsement is one of four ways to meet the MLL proficiency requirement, so a content-certified teacher who also holds an MLL endorsement is qualified to teach Integrated Instruction. To see all the pathways for meeting the MLL proficiency requirements, please see [Brief 2](#).

Please note that MLL endorsement is not sufficient for teaching Dedicated ELD, as Dedicated ELD teachers must hold an ESOL certification.

**9. How, if at all, does the Right to Read (R2R) requirement apply to content teachers who will provide Integrated Language and Content Instruction?**

The R2R requirements for content area teachers who provide Integrated Instruction remain the same as for those only providing content instruction. For example: a HS math or science teacher who provides Integrated Language and Content Instruction needs to meet R2R awareness; whereas an elementary classroom teacher who provides Integrated Language and Content Instruction needs to meet R2R proficiency. For more information, please see the [Rhode Island Right to Read Act](#) page.

**10. Can Integrated Language and Content Instruction be delivered via a co-teaching model?**

Yes. The co-teaching involves meaningful co-planning, is intentionally designed for simultaneous content learning and language development, and follows all other characteristics of the Integrated Instruction. When an Integrated Instruction class includes MLLs with IEPs, the class can also be co-taught by a content-certified teacher with MLL proficiency and a special educator.

**11. Will Integrated Instruction lower the rigor of content courses?**

No. Integrated instruction maintains grade-level rigor while developing MLLs' English language proficiency with scaffolds and supports. Students earn the same credits as their peers, ensuring access to college- and career-ready pathways.

**12. How do we assess students in Integrated Instruction?**

Formative and summative assessments should include both content mastery and progress in academic language, as determined by content and language objectives.

**13. How do we ensure dually identified students receive Integrated Instruction, special education, and related services?**

Coordination between the MLL and Special Education Departments is crucial to permit dually identified students access to both MLL instruction and Special Education services. LEAs must provide all services and instruction MLL students are entitled to. School and

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district teams should collaboratively implement MLL program models and plan schedules that do not preclude students from engaging in content and language instruction as well as accessing IEP and 504 services.

## 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)

### From RIDE:

- ***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)
  - [Brief No. 3 – Dedicated English Language Development](#) (June 2025)
- ***Other RIDE Resources:***
  - [High-Quality Instructional Framework for MLLs to Thrive](#) (December 2021)
  - [Rhode Island Curriculum Frameworks](#)
  - [Rhode Island’s Blueprint for Multilingual Learner Success](#) (2020)
  - [Rhode Island’s Strategic Plan for Multilingual Learner Success](#) (2020)

### From WIDA:

- [WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#)
- [Language for Learning](#)
- [Plan Curriculum, Instruction and Classroom Assessment with the WIDA Language Charts](#)
- [Teaching with Standards](#)
- [Understanding What Students Can Do](#)

### ***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](https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/bilingual-ed/zone_proximal_development.pdf)

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Staehr Fenner, D., Snyder, S., & Gregoire-Smith, M. (2024). *Unlocking multilingual learners'*

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*potential. strategies for making content accessible.* Corwin.

Vales, G., Menken, K., & Castro, M. (2015). *Common core, bilingual and English language learners: A resource for educators.* Brookes Publishing.

WestEd (Augst 2025). [Literacy practices that support multilingual student success across content areas.](#) WestEd.