



Partnership goals

With one of the highest proportions of English learner students in the nation, New Mexico is prioritizing high-quality and culturally appropriate English learner language instruction. REL Southwest is working with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) as well as Albuquerque Public Schools, Clovis Public Schools, Central Consolidated School District, Eastern New Mexico University, and Dual Language of New Mexico to support the following goals:

- ▶ Identify effective instructional practices for English learners and increase the use of these practices in New Mexico classrooms.
- ▶ Identify New Mexico schools that exhibit consistently higher gains in English learners' success and may serve as models of effective practice.

Projects

In partnership with REL Southwest, members engage in a learning cycle that includes training, coaching, technical support, applied research, and engagement activities to support the goals of the SWEL partnership. This work reinforces member capacity to use research in solving high-leverage education challenges. To learn more about our current projects, please visit <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/partnerships/swel.aspx>.

Over the course of the partnership, REL Southwest staff and members will support New Mexico's priorities to identify effective practices to help English learners acquire English language proficiency and content knowledge. Through partnership-driven research and technical support, REL Southwest staff will support the state in adding examples of evidence-based practices to the state's English learner program monitoring checklist. These examples will strengthen English learner instruction and provide guidelines for gathering and analyzing data to evaluate the continuous improvement of English learner programs. REL Southwest will also conduct research to identify schools with strong English learner performance gains and to understand effective practices associated with English learner academic growth.

Engaging our region

Engaging stakeholders is crucial to the REL mission of translating research into practice. Sharing research, learnings from training and coaching sessions, and insights from partnership members with stakeholders in the region is critical to New Mexico's mission to identify effective English learner instructional practices. For example, REL Southwest produced a [blog post](#) highlighting one of SWEL's practitioner members and conducted a research-to-practice [event](#) on implementing integrated and designated English language development.

Visit the [REL Southwest website](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) to learn more about our work. You can also sign up for the [REL Southwest Spotlight newsletter](#) for regular updates and browse our upcoming [events](#).

Giving English learners the best educational opportunities



Schools must consider many factors to provide English learners with opportunities to learn and succeed, including the following¹:

- ▶ Understanding the support that English learners need.
- ▶ Having time and resources to prepare instruction designed for English learners.
- ▶ Meeting the needs of English learners who speak different primary languages and come from different cultural backgrounds.
- ▶ Encouraging meaningful growth among English learners while meeting state and national accountability requirements.

States are creating resources to help schools and districts provide high-quality, responsive instruction for English learners.

For example, NMPED has created resources for New Mexico schools and districts, including the following²:

- ▶ A [Technical Assistance Manual](#) for district and school staff on serving English learners.
- ▶ An [English Learner Identification Guide](#) for assessing and serving the needs of students.
- ▶ A [Sample Notification Letter](#) to inform parents about services to support English learners.



The U.S. Department of Education has created several resources, including the following^{3,4,5}:

- ▶ An [English Learner Tool Kit](#) that includes guidance for identifying English learners, providing access to meaningful instruction and extracurricular activities, and exiting students from English learner programs.
- ▶ A [Newcomer Tool Kit](#) to help schools and districts support students who have moved recently to the United States.
- ▶ A [What Works Clearinghouse Educator's Practice Guide](#) on helping English learners master academic content and English language proficiency.
- ▶ A [REL Southwest Professional Learning Communities Facilitator's Guide](#) to support professional learning communities around the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide on helping English learners master academic content and English language proficiency.⁶

References

- ¹ Russell, F. A. (2016). *How do I teach English learners? The challenges content teachers face—and what school leaders can do to support them*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1126077>
- ² New Mexico Public Education Department. (2018). *English learners*. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/languageandculture/english-learners/>.
- ³ U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *English learner tool kit*. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html>.
- ⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *Newcomer tool kit*. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Newcomer-Toolkit-U.S.-Department-of-Education.pdf>.
- ⁵ What Works Clearinghouse. (2014). *Teaching academic content and literacy to English learners in elementary and middle school*. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/19>.
- ⁶ Dimino, J. A., & Taylor, M. J. (2015). *Professional learning communities facilitator's guide for the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide Teaching academic content and literacy to English learners in elementary and middle school*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved December 4, 2018, from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/plc.asp>.