



# Advocating for English Language Learners (ELL) Friendly Local, State, and Federal Policies

## Competency

Educator advocates at the local, state, and/or federal level for policies that support English Language Learners and their families.

## Key Method

The educator creates and implements an advocacy plan that supports English Language Learners and/or their families 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. 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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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

D. Who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of outlying areas; and

E. Who comes from an environment where a language other than English had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency;

F. 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

G. 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 success 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)?

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.



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

## 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

Blanco, Maria. "Before Brown, there was Mendez: The Lasting Impact of Mendez v. Westminster in the Struggle for Desegregation." American Immigration Council. American Immigration Council, 25 March 2010,

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1isSM7\\_hqoz0MSfCIYF59GH0fIdnVFf0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1isSM7_hqoz0MSfCIYF59GH0fIdnVFf0/view?usp=sharing)

Wright, Wayne E. "Landmark Court Rulings Regarding English Language Learners." Colorin Colorado. WETA Public Broadcasting, 2010,

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/landmark-court-rulings-regarding-english-language-learners>

Zacarian, Debbie. "Serving English Learners: Laws, Policies, and Regulations." Colorin Colorado. WETA Public Broadcasting, 2012,

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/guide/serving-english-learners-laws-policies-and-regulations>

## Resources



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

[Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action](#) (Download as a PDF link so that you can share with your assessor)

[Fast facts on English Language Learners \(NCES\).](#)

[Dear colleague letter on the rights of all children to enroll in public school](#)

[ALL In!: How Educators Can Advocate for English Language Learners](#)

[Writing an Advocacy Plan](#)

[Defining advocacy for English learners. What does advocacy for English learners really mean?](#)

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

[Ensuring English learner students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs.](#)

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

[English Language Learners at school: A guide for administrators](#)

[Understanding the theory: The interest-based relational approach](#)

[WestEd](#)

[Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action](#)

[5-Step Action Plan](#)

## 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 - 600 words

How can you advocate for English Language Learners (ELLs) at the local, state, and/or federal level and challenge inequities? If you have already done so, please share your experience.



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

When advocating, how have you identified or would you identify potential allies to collaborate with?

How have you helped or would you help ELLs and their families learn to advocate for themselves?

How have you collaborated or would you collaborate with allies who shared your point of view on the policy issue? How have you collaborated or would you collaborate with potential allies who had a different point of view than you?

**Passing:** Educator completely answers each of the above questions using personal examples and supporting evidence that clearly illustrates his or her prior experiences advocating for ELL friendly policies and working with allies. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

## Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

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

**Artifact 1 - Survey for Reflection and Action:** Complete the Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action (see Resources section). After taking this survey, copy your results for the assessor to view, or share the PDF from the link. Create a document that shares your results and a document where you share your answers to these questions: What key insights did you discover from taking the survey? What are three concrete actions that you can take to improve those policies and procedures?

**Artifact 2 - Five-Step Action Plan:** Select an ELL-friendly policy you want to advocate for at the local, state, and/or federal level. Write a five-step action plan (see Resources section) reflecting the policy. In your action plan be sure to include the landmark court cases and the 5 Steps to ELL Advocacy (see Resources section).

**Artifact 3 - Agent of Change Letter:** Become an agent of change by writing a letter scheduling a meeting with a union representative, school board member, or a local, state, or federal legislator to educate them about policies affecting ELLs and how these policies can become more ELL friendly.

**Artifact 4 - Meeting Talking Points:** Create talking points for your meeting. These talking points can be a bulleted list. Be sure to include how the policy you want to change is currently affecting your students and their families along with the policy changes you are advocating for. The notes should include student and family voices in your talking points so you are advocating alongside your ELLs.



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

## Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Survey	<p>Completes all parts of the "Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action"</p> <p>Explicitly describes key insights discovered from taking the survey and three concrete actions to take to improve the policies and procedures mentioned therein</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication</p> <p>200 - 250 words</p>	<p>Completes most parts of the "Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action"</p> <p>Describes some key insights discovered from taking the survey and some concrete actions to take to improve the policies and procedures mentioned therein.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure allow for clear communication</p> <p>Is not 200 - 250 words</p>	<p>Completes some parts of the "Policy and Accountability Requirements: Survey for Reflection and Action"</p> <p>Describes too few key insights discovered from taking the survey and too few concrete actions to take to improve the policies and procedures mentioned therein.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may inhibit clear communication</p> <p>Is not 200 - 250 words</p>
Artifact 2: Action Plan	<p>Explicitly describes each of the five steps to advocate for ELLs</p> <p>Connections to the content from pages 10-14 of the ALL In! guide are evident throughout the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication</p> <p>100 - 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 pages 10-14 of the ALL In! guide are evident throughout some of the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure allow for clear communication</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>Does not make connections to the content from pages 10-14 of the ALL In! guide in the advocacy plan</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may inhibit clear</p>



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

		Is not 100 - 200 words per step	communication Is not 100 - 200 words per step
Artifact 3: Letter	<p>Business style letter explicitly includes the following components:</p> <p>The issue to be advocated</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 enhance clear communication</p> <p>400 - 500 words</p>	<p>Letter includes the following components but does not provide adequate detail concerning:</p> <p>The issue to be advocated</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 allow for clear communication</p> <p>Is not 400 - 500 words</p>	<p>Letter provides little detail about or omits the following components:</p> <p>The issue to be advocated</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 may inhibit clear communication</p> <p>Is not 400 - 500 words</p>
Artifact 4: Meeting talking Points	<p>The talking points explicitly include the following components:</p> <p>The policy issue affecting your students and their families</p> <p>How the issue can be made more ELL-friendly</p> <p>How you can partner with potential allies and community organizations</p>	<p>The talking points include some of the following components. Adequate detail for each component may be lacking:</p> <p>The policy issue affecting your students and their families</p> <p>How the issue can be made more ELL-friendly</p> <p>How you can partner with potential allies and</p>	<p>The talking points include too few of the following components. Limited detail is provided for the components:</p> <p>The policy issue affecting your students and their families</p> <p>How the issue can be made more ELL-friendly</p> <p>How you can partner with potential allies and</p>



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**English Language Learners**

Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

	<p>The laws supporting the ELL-friendly policy</p> <p>Potential outlets for change</p> <p>Includes student and family voices so educators are advocating alongside of ELLs and their families</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication</p>	<p>community organizations</p> <p>The laws supporting the ELL-friendly policy.</p> <p>Potential outlets for change</p> <p>Includes student and family voices so educators are advocating alongside of ELLs and their families</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure allow for clear communication</p>	<p>community organizations</p> <p>The laws supporting the ELL-friendly policy</p> <p>Potential outlets for change</p> <p>Includes student and family voices so educators are advocating alongside of ELLs and their families</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may inhibit clear communication</p>
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### Part 3. Reflection

500 - 600 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?](#)

- Provide a reflection on what you learned, using the following questions as guidance:
- What have you learned about being an advocate through the creation of an advocacy plan and planning a meeting with a union representative, school board member, or legislator?
- What did you learn about working in partnership with ELLs and their families when advocating for ELL-friendly policies?
- Moving forward, how might what you have learned affect your practice?

**Passing:** The response thoughtfully addresses the impact on the educator’s current practice, using personal examples and supporting evidence. Reflection is relevant to the micro-credentialing process. Writing is organized and easy to understand.



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