Inaugural Courses:
Complex Thinking and Communication Across Content Areas

BUILDING INSTRUCTIONAL CAPACITY THROUGH HYBRID COURSE
CHALLENGES

• Changing prevailing mindsets
• Urgent need for professional development
MOVE AWAY FROM DEFICIT THINKING….

“By definition, ELLs are ‘not yet actually ready to access math and English-language content’.”

Retrieved online February 13, 2015
ELL NEEDS NOT ADDRESSED IN PD

Figure 12. Percentage of curriculum directors reporting that specified topics related to special populations are evident in their district’s CCSS professional development in ELA and math, 2013 (n=43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Often evident</th>
<th>Sometimes evident</th>
<th>Rarely evident</th>
<th>Never evident</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiating instruction for struggling students</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiating instruction for students with special needs</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiating instruction for English language learners</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiating instruction for struggling readers</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
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<td>Differentiating instruction for students with special needs</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiating instruction for English language learners</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
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But...is it possible??

What made us believe that we could move the field to use complex text when working with ELLs?

Young ELLs successfully engage with complex text as they explore the phenomenon of metamorphosis.
It is possible!

Name: ___________________  Date: __________

Choose one new vocabulary word. Illustrate the word to show what it means and then use it in a sentence.

mutualism, search, torment, warn

my brother keeps tormenting me when I am doing my work. The giraffe is tormented by the bugs.

Name: ___________________  Date: __________

Pick one animal partnership and explain why it is a symbiotic relationship.

| giraffe, oxpecker | plover, crocodile |

The symbiotic relationship about the plover and the crocodile is they both get what they want. The plover gets food and the crocodile gets clean teeth. The plover warns the crocodile when danger is coming. The crocodile will eat anything that can fit in its mouth but it will not eat the plover.
FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORK
CGCS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLATFORM
JOINT PLANNING AND DESIGN: ACADEMIC EXPERTS AND COUNCIL DISTRICT PRACTITIONERS

Planning

• Helmsely Charitable Trust grant funded six-month planning period, CGCS brought together experts and district practitioners (2015)

Focus

• Experts and practitioners focused on meeting the needs of ELLs and students performing below grade level due to a variety of factors (low SES, over-exposure to remediation, and low expectations)

Consensus

• Instruction must hold high expectations for such students, and teachers must have capacity to help students master academic language in all content areas
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2016: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Content**

- **Focus.** ELLs, students performing below grade level, and economically disadvantaged students are the focus of our work.

- **Opportunity for reflection.** An experience that provides a safe environment for reflecting on practice outside any formal/district-level evaluative protocols.

**Format**

- **Connecting educators.** An experience that connects diverse educators across roles and content areas (e.g., teachers, instructional coaches, principals, district administrators).

- **Flexible yet coherent.** A design that is user-friendly, coherent, and modular that will work within the context of any adopted curriculum or district initiative.

Live District Staff Facilitation is KEY
ADULT LEARNING DESIGN: LEARNING CYCLE

Learn - Challenge of practice and strategy; experiences and video; interactive facilitation

Plan - Collaborative planning; implementation strategy

Apply – Implementation; data collection

Reflect - Review data; further planning

Live District Staff Facilitation is KEY
FEATURES OF INAUGURAL COURSES:

- **Facilitator supports**—
  - ✔ In person training of facilitators
  - ✔ facilitator notes and resources
  - ✔ consultation with course experts and CGCS
- Hosted on Canvas environment--
  - • Strategic use of videos and professional readings
  - • Teacher planning and implementation videos
  - • Guides and template/tools to support planning

Live District Staff Facilitation is KEY
INAUGURAL COURSES: COMPLEX THINKING AND COMMUNICATION

- **Foundations**: provides the common language and understanding for why ELLs need access to complex text and thinking in all content areas.
- **Five in ELA/ELD pathway**: Helps educators triangulate language, literacy, and content (3 Ls).
- **Five in mathematics pathway**: focuses on the powerful classrooms, 8 mathematics practices, and specifically addresses the language demands of mathematics.
- **Pilot 2017 and Launch 2018**
INAUGURAL COURSES: COMPLEX THINKING AND COMMUNICATION
DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

Cohort 1 (SY 2017-18)
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg*
- Guilford County
- Metro-Nashville
- NYC-District 25
- Oakland

Cohort 2 (SY 2018-19)
- Anchorage
- District of Columbia
- Philadelphia

Cohort 3 (SY 2019-20)
- Atlanta
- Buffalo
- Kansas City
- San Antonio

*Subscription expired
QUALITY DISTRICT PD – MADE POSSIBLE BY DESIGN

• Build within District Context:
  • Relevant to specific EL needs
  • Map on/align with district initiatives
  • Build upon strengths & work around constraints

• District Ownership:
  • Build district capacity - constructed and designed with District staff
  • Leverage district talent - Led and facilitated by district staff
3LS FRAMEWORK
IMPLEMENTATION
EL DEPARTMENT
This intentional process was much like orchestrating an unfolding symphony of sounds, each distinct section tuning to a common pitch, the team of conductors eliciting musical themes from the instrumentalists in collaborative harmony.
WHY?

• Reduce the number of Long Term English Learners
• Meet ESSA growth goals for our English Learners
OUR NEED

Increase our English Learners' daily rigorous interaction with complex and compelling text across all grade levels
OUR GOAL

• Provide authentic, true to life content and language learning experiences to accelerate language acquisition.

• Differentiate tasks and resources for instruction and learning to hold ELs to high standards.

• Provide a culturally relevant and unbiased learning environment to allow students to have access to consistently outstanding learning opportunities.

• Provide all ELs access to challenging, grade-level work.
RAISING EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

The 3Ls Lesson Flow offers English Language Learners:

• a well structured and scaffolded approach to develop a comprehensive understanding of complex reading materials.

• a way to build knowledge by thematically bringing Science and Social Studies topics into the ELD class.

• a way to increase comprehension by focusing on more than just vocabulary, but also author's craft, as well as author's purpose.
MAKING IT HAPPEN

• Courses with content directly from experts via videos and professional readings
• The CGCS professional learning platform courses (the core foundation for our training)
  • Well structured
  • Lots of practical examples
  • Easily accessible resources and materials
• Face-to-face workshops for entire EL teaching staff
• Opportunities for remote collaboration using available tech tools
• A weekly newsletter to showcase implementation highlights
THE JOURNEY: FIRST YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION

JUNE- AUGUST

• We developed and refined the compelling “why” of the PD modules developed by the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)

• We developed tasks and presenter’s notes for the following modules: Foundations, English Language Development 1 (ELD 1), and English Language Development 2 (ELD 2). Also, in order to promote collaboration among teachers we created a blog.

JULY- AUGUST

Train the trainer sessions

• We identified ESL teachers that had ACCESS language proficiency growth for a three-year span. We trained six ESL teachers on the Foundations, ELD 1, and ELD 2 modules.

• As part of the train the trainers process, we worked on identifying complex and compelling texts based on the SCS and the criteria outlined in ELD 2. This included online research, visiting public libraries and book stores.

AUGUST

• An EL teacher leader was assigned with the task to train all new EL teachers on the ELD modules.

• We presented Foundations and ELD 1 to ESL teachers. Teachers were encouraged to use the blog to share their viewpoints and ideas.

SEPTEMBER - MAY

• We presented the remaining ELD modules at our monthly meetings.

• We also incorporated a weekly newsletter to highlight how teachers were implementing the framework.

• We also collected data to gauge buy-in from staff.
Throughout the school year ELL Coordinators were tasked with providing coaching, feedback, support, and monitoring. They conducted school visits, helped with lesson plan development, participated in PLC meetings, and provided written feedback using an observation form.
WHERE WE STAND NOW

2016-17 – First year of assessment after the WIDA ACCESS re-standardization.
2017-18 – First year of 3Ls PD for EL staff with partial implementation.
2018-19 – First year of full implementation of 3Ls.
WHERE WE STAND NOW

PERCENTAGE ELS AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL READING EOG
WHERE WE STAND NOW

PERCENTAGE ELS AT OR ABOVE GRADE LEVEL ENGLISH II EOC
GRADE 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
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3LS LESSON IN ACTION

• Implementing the 3Ls framework has provided our teachers with opportunities to...
  • expose ELs to Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary in a contextualized meaningful way, and
  • create lessons that are anchored in complex and compelling texts.

Videos of teachers in action
PERSPECTIVES

FROM TEACHERS

• **Initial reservation**: “Students with low proficiency in the language cannot tackle complex text.”
• **Change of mind**: “By increasing exposure to complex text with scaffolded support, students were able to meet the challenge.”
• **My new-found view**: “Rather than bringing the materials I use to the students’ levels, I now provide students with the tools and support to bring them to the level of the material.”

FROM STUDENTS

• There has been an increase in student engagement and in written production.
  View video of student

FROM ADMINISTRATORS

“Student engagement has increased in ELD and ELA classes, due to the collaboration between teachers.”

FROM EL COACHES

“Despite the amount of work it takes, I would never go back to doing things the way we were.”
THANK YOU!

Council of Great City Schools

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