

A dark blue silhouette of a person's head and shoulders, facing right, holding an open book. The background is a lighter blue gradient.

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

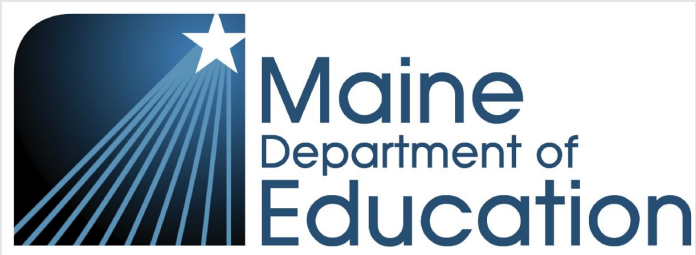
The Intersection of English Language Acquisition and Individualized Education Programs

Session 4: IEPs for MLs: Delivering Appropriate IEP Services and Instruction

April 29, 2025

Presented by: Maine DOE Office of Teaching and Learning, Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education, and UMaine Assistant Professor of Special Education Dr. Melissa Cuba





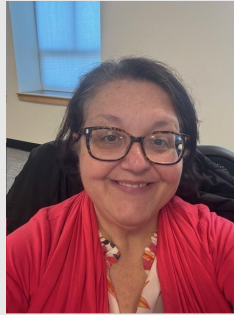
Jane Armstrong

English for Speakers of Other
Languages (ESOL) State
Specialist



Melissa Frans

2024-2025
Teacher Leader Fellow
Office of Teaching and Learning



Leora Byras

Education Specialist III
Office of Special Services
and Inclusive Education

Meet Our Team

The Office of Teaching and Learning and the Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education partnered to develop and present this Professional Learning Opportunity (PLO).

Mission & Vision

To promote the best learning opportunities for all Maine students by providing information, guidance, and support to our schools, educators, and leaders and by providing adequate and equitable school funding and resources.

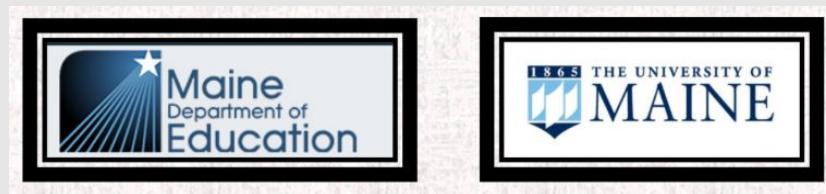
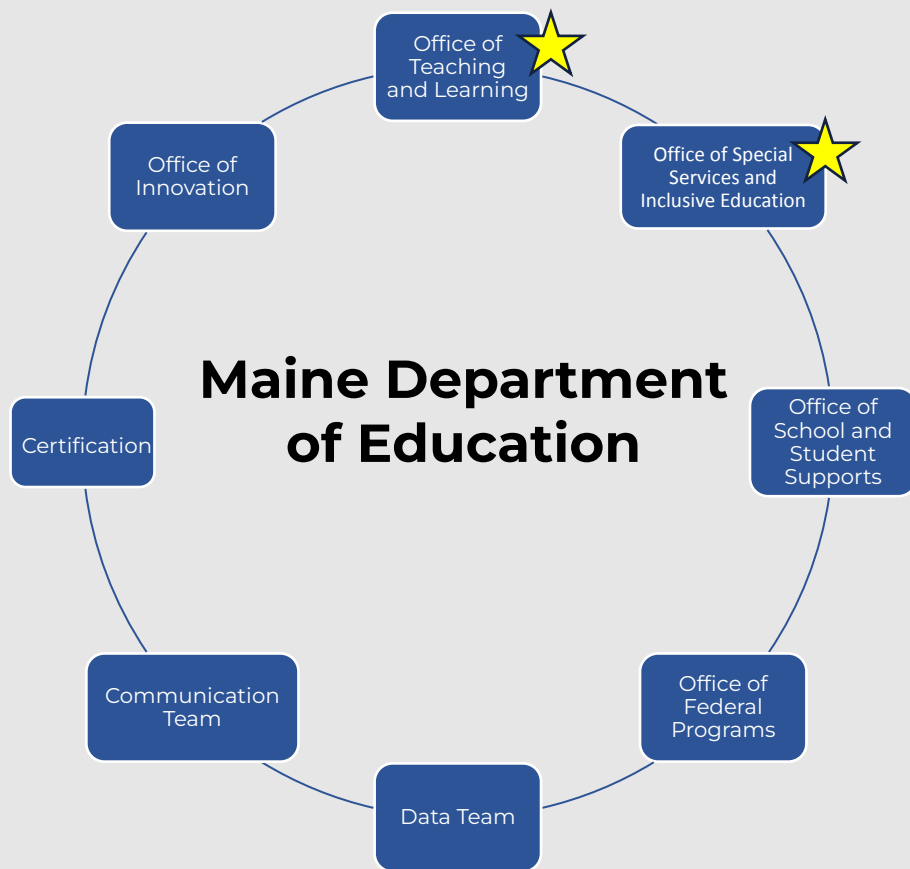
College of Education and Human Development



Dr. Melissa J. Cuba

Assistant Professor of Special Education
College of Education and Human Development
The University of Maine





***Supporting Maine's
multilingual students and
families is a shared
responsibility.***

Who is here today?

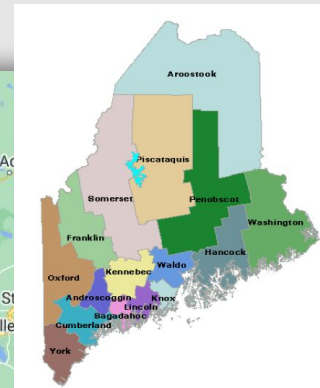
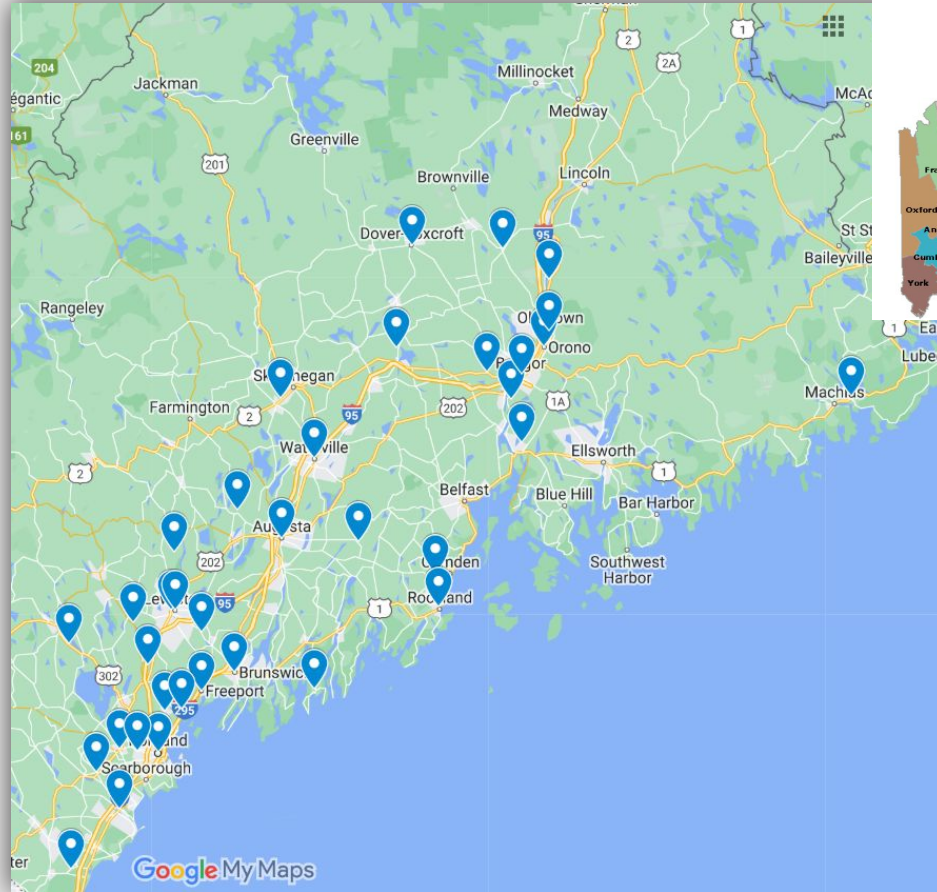
40 School Administrative Units (SAUs)

10 organizations

- Catholic Charities
- Margaret Murphy Center
- Morrison Center
- Panorama Speech Therapy
- School Psychology Associates
- Southern Maine Administrative Collaborative
- Woodfords Family Services
- Maine Health
- University of Maine
- Dirigo Consulting

Additional Cohorts

- Child Development Services
- Maine DOE





Participation in this session and completion of suggested pre-work will receive 2 professional contact hours.

Today's Focus:

IEPs for MLs: Delivering Appropriate IEP Services and Instruction

- Presentation
- Workshop
- Discussion
- Wrap Up

How does knowledge about academic language development and use relate to writing an effective IEP?

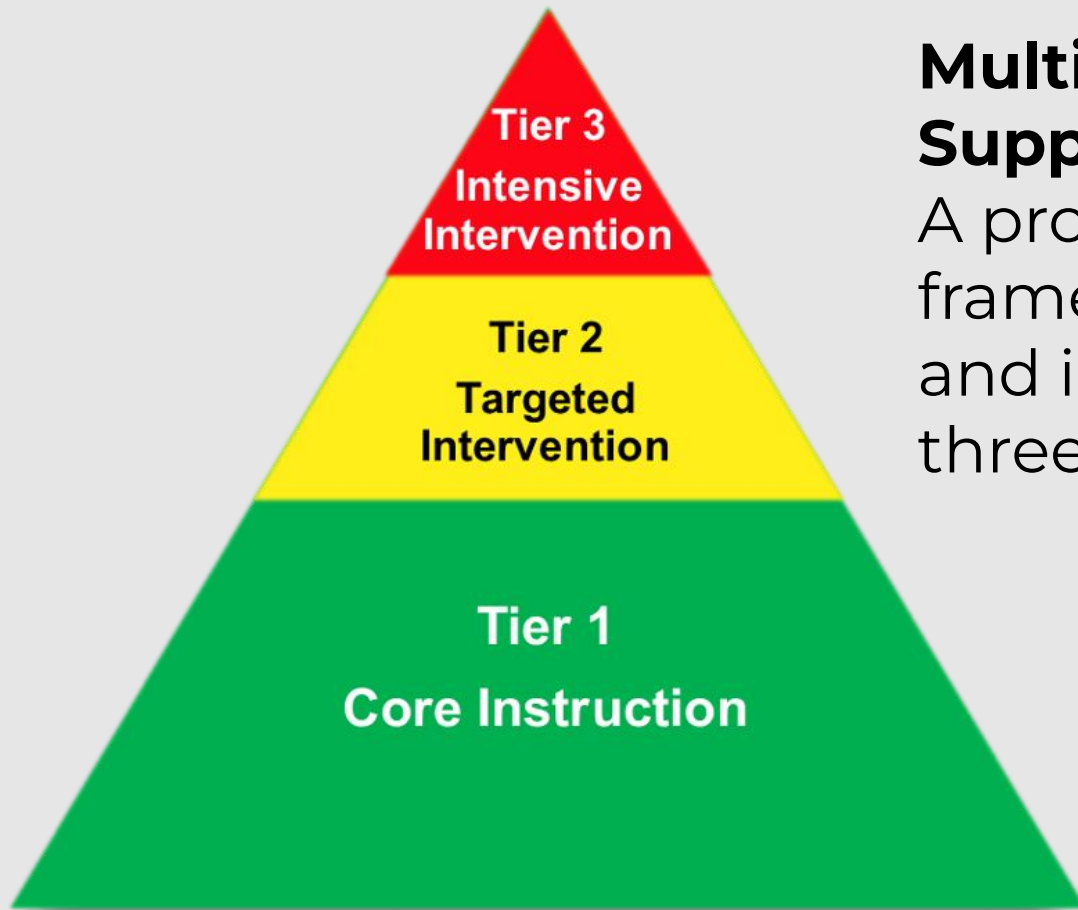
Three areas to ensure that language needs are addressed and being met:

1. present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)
2. annual goals and associated short term objectives
3. identify necessary language proficiency supports and ELD instruction in one or more of the IEP mandated components

Hoover, J. J., & Patton, J. R. (2017). IEPs for ELs: And Other Diverse Learners. Corwin.

"by incorporating academic language into IEP goals/objectives, we are in no way implying that we view language as a disability. Rather, incorporation of academic language development into the IEP is viewed as a necessary strength-based approach complementing methods used to help English learners with disabilities best achieve their IEP content goals and objectives."

Hoover, J. J., & Patton, J. R. (2017). IEPs for ELs: And Other Diverse Learners. Corwin.



Multi-Tiered System of Support:

A proactive, data-driven framework for instruction and intervention across three tiers

Pre-teach critical vocabulary and prime background knowledge

Identify and explicitly teach vocabulary and language structures that are unknown and critical to understanding a passage or unit of instruction; provide culturally relevant curriculum and make connections between new information and life experiences.

Calderón, 2007;
Carlos, et al. 2004;
Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2008;
Gay, 2000; Hollie, 2012;
Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; Nieto & Bode, 2008; Paris, 2012; Sleeter, 2011

Language modeling and opportunities for practicing

Teacher models appropriate use of academic language, then provides structured opportunities for students to practice using the language in meaningful contexts.

Dutro & Moran, 2003; Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2008; Gibbons 2009;
Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; Scarcella, 2003

Use visuals and graphic organizers

Strategically use pictures, graphic organizers, gestures, realia and other visual prompts to help make critical language, concepts, and strategies more comprehensible to learners.

Brechtal, 2001; Echevarria & Graves, 1998;
Haager & Klinger 2005; Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990

Systematic and explicit instruction

Explain, model, provided guided practice with feedback, and opportunities for independent practice in content, strategies, and concepts.

Calderon, 2007; Flagella-Luby & Deshler, 2008;
Gibbons, 2009, Haager & Klinger, 2005;
Klinger & Vaughn, 2000; Watkins & Slocum, 2004;

Strategic use of native languages & teaching for transfer

Identify concepts and content students already know in their native language and culture to explicitly explain, define, and help them understand new language and concepts in English.

Carlisle, Beeman, Davis & Spharim, 1999;
Durgunoglu, et al., 1993; Genesee, Geva,
Dressler, & Kamil, 2006; Odlin, 1989; Schecter & Bayley, 2002

Pre-teach Critical Vocabulary

- Intentionally pre-teach essential words and concepts before lessons.
- This gives multilingual learners access to background knowledge they need to engage successfully.
- Focus especially on academic and content-specific vocabulary.

Feature



Intervention in School and Clinic 2020, Vol. 55(6) 238-237
© Hammill Institute on Disabilities 2019
Article reuse guidelines: sagepub.com/journalsPermissions
DOI: 10.1177/034511882093736

ic.sagepub.com

Frontloading Academic Vocabulary for English Learners With Disabilities in an Integrated Classroom Setting

Melissa J. Cuba, MEd¹

Abstract

Previous research examining *frontloading* academic vocabulary establishes it as an effective instructional activity for students who are English learners. This article extends and builds from those earlier findings, showing the relevance and importance of explicit vocabulary instruction for all students identified with specialized learning needs, especially for students who are English learners with disabilities. Drawing from research-based practices as well as practitioner training to provide ideas of how to *frontload* academic terms using techniques that incorporate visuals and technology in an integrated classroom setting.

Keywords

students who are English learners with disabilities, frontloading, vocabulary instruction

Abel is a 16-year-old student who immigrated to a racially and ethnically diverse city in the United States from a rural community in Guatemala. Before leaving his hometown, he worked on a farm and took care of livestock. His first language is Mam, a Mayan language with half a million speakers in Guatemala, and Spanish is his second language, which he spoke at school (that he attended sporadically) and to conduct transactions in trips to a nearby city. When Abel arrived in the United States 2 years prior, he had a difficult time paying attention in class, was confused at times, and could not complete many of his assignments. After a referral, he was tested and diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and an intellectual disability, potentially due to a severe fall he had as a child. Abel is also a student with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) and struggles to read in Spanish at grade level. He is developing proficiency in English to complete academic coursework so he can graduate from high school. To receive a standard high-school diploma, he needs to complete grade-level coursework and pass five state-mandated assessments in math, science, history, and English (See Note 1).

This year, Abel is in integrated classes, so his success in those classes and their assessments will determine if he graduates with a standard diploma or an applied studies diploma, which is an option as part of his individualized education program (IEP). To secure better employment and

opportunities, Abel needs a high-school diploma. His current job as a dishwasher at a local restaurant pays him a poverty-level wage. In addition to needing a new job, Abel also needs to learn how to read in English for his own personal safety and as a young tax-paying resident of the community. He wants to go to college one day and study natural sciences. What does Abel need to successfully complete coursework and pass assessments required by the state? How can teachers support his specialized learning needs in an integrated setting? This article describes ways of *frontloading* academic vocabulary as an instructional activity and how teachers can support Abel's reading development, language acquisition, and his goal of graduating with a high-school diploma.

Students who are English learners are faced with the daunting task of not only acquiring proficiency in a new language, but also developing mastery in academic language and content needed for course and graduation requirements. While there are other terms, such as *dual language*, *multilingual learners*, and *English language learners*, that

¹Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA

Corresponding Author:
Melissa J. Cuba, MEd, School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA.
Email: cubamj2@vcu.edu

Language Modeling and Practice

- Provide consistent, rich models of academic language.
- Create multiple, varied opportunities for students to practice using language in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- This ensures active engagement and deeper internalization of language structures.

Use Visual Cues

- Provide visual supports to make content accessible:
 - Anchor charts
 - Diagrams
 - Timelines
 - Flowcharts
 - Concept maps
- Visuals reduce cognitive load and support language development for multilingual learners.

Systematic and Explicit Instruction

- Lessons follow a clear, organized sequence.
- Instruction is intentional: concepts and skills are taught directly, step-by-step, with clear expectations.
- Reduces guesswork for multilingual learners and builds confidence.

Strategic Use of Home Languages

- Encourage the use of students' home languages to build connections to English and academic content.
- Explicitly teach students how to transfer skills (like literacy strategies, content knowledge, and metacognitive skills) from their dominant home language to English.
- Recognize that languages interact in positive ways — home languages are assets.

Compare and Contrast

5th Grade Co-teaching
Observation



What do you see?

- How did they pre-teach critical vocabulary and prime for background knowledge?
- What else did you see in this video in terms of language supports that are represented in the PLUSS framework?

Here we will stop the recording and shift to independent and/or small group work for the next video.





What features of the PLUSS framework do you notice?

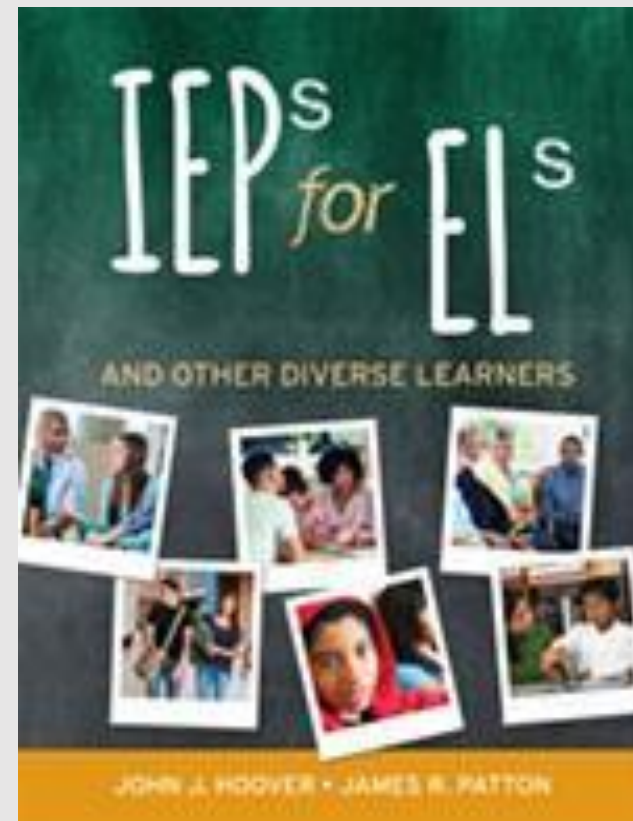
- Glows: Identify a few instructional strengths that supported MLs.
- Grows: Identify any opportunities for improving support for MLs.

Project Lee Tools

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the MLs*	Note supports, responses, and/or opportunities	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
Pre-teaching vocabulary, priming background knowledge & making cultural connections	Addresses vocabulary & background knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fast mapping unknown vocabulary, using system to ID unknown words, pre-teaching difficult vocabulary words, pre-teaching necessary background knowledge make connections to students culture/language 		0	1	2
Language modeling, instruction & opportunities to practice	Opportunities for students to practice targeted language skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sentence frames opportunities to talk/write 		0	1	2
Using visuals & graphic organizers	Uses visuals and graphic organizers in lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sentence strips pictures, realia motions or TPR (Total physical response) 		0	1	2
Systematic & explicit instruction	Includes systematic and explicit instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> modeling guided practice with feedback partner and independent practice 		0	1	2
Strategic use of native language, culture and teaching for transfer	Addresses student's native language needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides additional practice on skills relevant to student's native language and culture 		0	1	2

Session 4 resources: [Multilingual Learners with Disabilities Resources Padlet](#)

- ❑ Project Lee PLUSS framework- videos, tools and resources
- ❑ IEP team checklists
- ❑ ESOL Teacher IEP planning checklist



Date	Focus
January 21	Foundational Knowledge: legal regulations, civil rights and data overview
February 27	Collaboration and Integrating IEPs and ILAPs
March 18	IEPs for MLs: Section 3 Special Factors
April 29	IEPs for MLs: Section 6 (Supplementary Aids, Services, Modifications and/or Supports)
May 22	IEPs for MLs: Assessment participation guidance and accommodations
June 10	Culmination



Contact Information:

Jane Armstrong (she,her,hers)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) State Specialist

Office of Teaching and Learning

Maine Department of Education

23 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Email: jane.armstrong@maine.gov

Phone: 207-446-3294

Melissa Frans

Multilingual Teacher Leader Fellow

Office of Teaching and Learning

Maine Department of Education

23 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Melissa.Frans@maine.gov

Leora Byras

Education Specialist III

Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education

Maine Department of Education

23 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0023

Email: leora.byras@maine.gov

Phone: 207-624-6618



Stay Connected!

Find Us Online!



www.maine.gov/doe



@MaineDOEComm



@mainedepted



@mdoenews



@MaineDepartmentofEducation1