ANA SAINZ DE LA PENA: Good afternoon. My name is Ana Sainz de la Pena. I am an educational consultant with Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network. Welcome to our webinar number six, Progress Monitoring Formative Assessment for Elementary ELLs. We are going to start our webinar soon, and I am going to give you just a couple of announcements. Next webinar will be March 15th, 2012. Title is Culturally Responsive Instruction, Working with ELL Families and Multicultural Communities. We are also going to have an all day workshop face to face, research based literacy instruction and assessment practices for English language learners in RtII. This will happen in Pittsburgh, April 11th, Harrisburg, April 24th, and King of Prussia, April 25th. We have very few seats available, but you’re welcome to check for these training opportunities in our PaTTAN calendar.

Our PaTTAN mission, as you know, we provide technical assistance and support to the Department of Education, working in partnership with families and local educational agencies to support programs and services to improve student learning. We also are committed to the least restrictive environment. The outcomes for today’s session are three: explore processes and resources for progress monitoring; identify elements to develop any progress monitoring plan to support English language learners, English language proficiency, and academic achievement; and identify tools available to assess students’ progress in second language acquisition and literacy development.

Our first slide shows us what we’re going to be focusing throughout our session. One important thing that we need to understand when we talk about core processes within RtII is that the classroom system is the most immediate environment in which students learning and positive socialization can be supported [inaudible]. Within classrooms, there is a convergence of a creation of cultures, what students and teachers bring with them and what is already there and the work that those classrooms do together. That is why we firmly believe that a classroom culture has to be viewed as an important element in student achievement.

So it is not just important to know the culture of the students who are sitting in our classroom, but also what kind of preparation as well as knowledge the teachers have in relation to those students and the best methods for these students to achieve academically and also to acquire a new language. So really we’re talking about the work that people do together in the classroom, students, teachers, and the background knowledge about what parents also are bringing to the table. All of that is centered on what we consider student learning.

More specifically, when students and their families enter schools and classrooms, they enter educational environments with histories of doing things in certain ways. For example, patterns, routines,
and rituals have already been established at the school district or district level. Some examples of what’s already there include the school-community relations, physical environments, and functions of the school building and grounds, who leads, and how leadership is shared, and the structure and use of time.

These examples are also applicable to classrooms with slight modifications. Teacher-family relations, the physical environment of the classroom, what languages other than English are represented, literature materials available to students, expectations for knowledge levels, routines for leaving and entering the classroom, and the languages utilized in academic and social conversations. All of that is part of what the classroom really is.

The comprehensive approach to monitoring students’ progress. When we look at student progress, we need to be very much aware that the methods of gathering data on student achievement and the rate of progress need to be adapted and also viewed as measures that could be quantitative as well as qualitative measures. Who is interpreting this data is also important. Are teachers prepared to look at all different kinds of data in relation to English language learners? Are they aware of access for ELLs’ data.

Access for ELLs, as we know, is the assessment that measures English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for English language learners. It is a state mandated assessment. How are we interpreting that data when we look at monitoring student progress? What decisions about instruction are grounded in the interpretation of this data? Those are some of the questions we need to continue asking when we talk about English language learners and when we talk about a comprehensive approach to monitoring all students’ progress.

Our definition of progress monitoring is on the screen. As we said before, we look at all the variables around student learning. So it is not just one score that is going to let us know what is happening in relation to student achievement. Monitoring student learning to inform culturally responsive construction of practices is part of the ensuring opportunities to learn cycle that you see here on the right side of your screen.

Monitoring student progress involves students as active participants in assessing their own progress. That is the optimum level of monitoring student progress. Students need to be empowered not only to learn, not only to participate or engage in an academic setting, but also they need to be empowered to monitor their own progress.
How are we using this courseroom access for ELLs to inform your students regarding their continuing progress of English language acquisition. It is of highest importance that our ELLs appropriate the process of measuring their progress. Many times I talk to ESL teachers and sometimes they have expressed, how could they motivate their students to continue in their progress of English language acquisition? Well, one way to help students achieve in this area is to share their scores in access for ELLs. We know that is an annual test, but it is also part of the conversation of where you are in that continued cycle of acquiring English as a second language. If students don’t know where they are, they don’t know how they can correct. And that is very important in an RtI model, how to progress monitoring students - - at the same time how students’ progress -- I mean monitor their own progress.

This is an overview of schoolwide progress monitoring. We know that there -- we must develop a schoolwide plan to establish a common and consistent progress monitoring progress in order to equitably and effectively measure student progress. This schoolwide plan for progress monitoring should include an instrument which will be utilized, and the observational data which will be collected, as part of the schoolwide progress monitoring approach.

As you see here on this screen, you have in the center the schoolwide in green, schoolwide plan for progress monitoring that will include summative assessments as well as formative assessments. The distinction in the plan is to really target how -- first of all, what instruments are going to be used. And then how often and what areas we’re going to assess. And the most important part is also how are we going to utilize this data to improve achievement for all students in my school? So it is comprehensive and it has to be planned systematically with evidence in all the different steps to see how well or what we need to change in our schoolwide plans to improve student achievement.

With that schoolwide plan, we also need to look at our classrooms and see how schoolwide plan is really implemented at the classroom level. Progress monitoring, whether schoolwide or in the classroom, is not an afterthought. And that is very important. We cannot expect to last minute create tools or instruments to measure student progress. We know that ahead of time we need to think about what we need to use to measure progress, and at the same time where and how long or how many times we’re going to implement these tools.

Progress monitor is integrated in daily activities, as with formative assessments. Progress monitoring starts in the classroom with culturally responsive teachers who assess students’ learning and the responsiveness of their teaching to students. As a first step, teachers use data collection throughout the day. The goal is to make sure all of the students are getting it. And if not, address this through
changes in instructional practices that meets students’ individual and group needs, and of course deals from their strengths. And in order to find their strengths, we really need to be very good at assessing our students.

Things to think about. Are the students understanding -- are the students understanding the curriculum? If so, what are they understanding? What can they do? If not, who isn’t understanding the curriculum? Are there patterns that those learners’ needs, different characteristics that can better inform the instruction? For example, if the majority of students are not getting it because they are leaving the classroom for separate ESL or English as a second language instructional time, are there ways to restructure teaching so that the ESL teacher and the general education teacher work together on lessons and co-teach throughout the day? This collaboration is essential for RtII.

Progress monitoring and culturally responsive RtII frameworks that help educators really look at students from the perspective of what are we doing to inform students and also inform our practices to meet all the different challenges that we find in the classroom.

**PAULA ZUCKER:** On this slide, we see that progress monitoring in culturally responsive RtII framework helps educators in several ways. We can see [inaudible] on this cycle. This is a cycle that we must consider when we implement progress monitoring in culturally responsive RtII. There are many benefits to the use of systematic progress monitoring in the classroom. This process assists educators in determining expected outcomes for the quality and rate of student progress informed by students’ English language proficiency and other relevant factors such as attendance patterns, migration patterns, and L1 literacy.

Progress monitoring also helps teachers to consider patterns of different performance or progress across gender, race, ethnicity, or English language proficiency. This information helps teachers in building culturally responsive instruction and interventions for students not benefitting from current practices, while making increasing more individualized plans for instruction and intervention for certain students who demonstrate the need for more intensive supports.

Everything must be systematically planned. As we can see, planning is key to implementation of effective progress monitoring. Teachers must come together to provide feedback. Content in English language development curricula must have clear links, and the assessments must be connected to outcomes, to students’ English language proficiency levels. This is an important question. Who will monitor for fidelity of implementation?
Let’s look at this slide together. Please read along with me. In order to create or select appropriate progress monitoring tools, we must know where to begin. We start with what we want students to know and be able to do. Or in other words, we begin with learning outcomes because we can’t effectively assess student learning unless we ourselves are clear about what we want students to know and be able to do. Moreover, students themselves won’t know what we expect them to learn unless we make those learning outcomes clear and explicit to the students themselves.

That is why we need a team of teachers planning for clear outcomes, told to assess students over time, and [inaudible] data to chart progress. If we are working with ELLs, it is crucial to include English language development assessments. And the interpretation of data needs to consider the English language proficiency level of the student as well as other important information about time in USA schools, time in the ESL program, [inaudible] literacy, and other information that we can gather.

Progress monitoring in the classroom. Designing and selecting appropriate progress monitoring tools. Again, desired outcomes for students come first. An example of an outcome that meets the criteria outlined on this slide is, at the end of this week, every student will be able to identify the parts of the plant, which is the content outcome. This is a clear outcome. At the end of this week, students will be able to summarize text both orally and in writing. There we have our language objective.

Think about all the different kind of assessments that you implement in your school. Do they provide information about what the student knows and is able to do? Do they provide information about how ELLs are developing English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing? Many forms of assessments are designed, selected, and implemented every day, questioning students, conferencing with students, and administering written tests. How are these assessments informing instruction? Were these tools selected because they were norms with ELLs? Is there evidence that they are effective tools with ELLs?

A note of caution. If the students’ cultural and linguistic experiences are not taken into account when progress monitoring tools are developed and interpreted, the evaluation process of how well a student has learned within the school’s culture will be flawed. Struggling performance may indicate the degree of disconnection between the tool itself and the student’s cultural and linguistic frames of reference rather than the degree of mastery of the knowledge and skills being monitored. If there’s no connection between what you’re teaching and assessing, there’s no value to the entire process. And now Ana will begin with the next portion of our webinar.
**ANA SAINZ DE LA PENA:** Thank you, Paula. So summarizing somehow what Paula just mentioned about the tools that we need for progress monitoring. I think that to determine what to monitor, we need to have focus that is two-fold: progress in all four domains, listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and progress in literacy in this case.

And this is very important because, in many instances, what we really want is that these children achieve proficiency in both of these areas. If I want these children to achieve proficiency in English language skills and literacy skills, I must monitor their progress toward these goals. In short, we should not wait for access for ELLs once a year to determine growth. We should be charting growth throughout the school year.

We’re going to look at a case study. Our student here is a fourth grader. Her name is Matilda. So we will talk about Matilda and find out what she knows and is able to do. Matilda is presently in fourth grade. We have ESL data. She came in third grade. She came from the Ukraine in third grade. She came in the fall, so she was given the WAPT and score entering, 1.2 entering. That same school year, she also has access for ELL scores and she went up to 2. So she ended up third grade as in the beginning level.

We’re going to see her scores in fourth grade. So now it’s almost at the end of fourth grade and we are going to take some examinations about her instruction -- her instructional plan as she transitions into fifth grade. As you can see here, based upon Matilda’s performance in the spring of fourth grade, and as measured by the annually required access for ELLs, we can get a sense of her mastery of the English language in light of her response to instruction.

Matilda’s overall performance in the area of foreign language, which is a combination of the listening and speaking subtests, appears to be relatively well developed, or what we call expanding. Conversely, her performance on the reading and writing subtests for literacy composite indicates that her reading skills are beginning. Beginning means that Matilda has acquired general language related to content areas and phrases or short sentences. In order to further develop her basic reading skills in English, Matilda might benefit from instruction [inaudible] of reading skills.

It should be noted that Matilda’s writing skills are slightly better developed in comparison to her overall reading skills. This pattern may be somewhat difficult to understand, but it’s not atypical for most English language learners, who often develop oral and written expression skills, we call them productive skills, before reading comprehension skills. Matilda’s listening skills are well developed. Her performance on the literacy and comprehension composites suggests that her instructional emphasis
should continue to include grade level content and concepts in order to enhance listening comprehension skills. She also should be provided direct instruction in basic reading skills using grade level texts and materials. This instructional focus may be incorporated as part of her ESL program or programming, ESL instruction, as she transitions to fifth grade.

Let’s take a look at her performance on other measures to see if it aligns with this measure. Matilda’s performance on screening measures associated with reading skills development suggest that her phonemic awareness skills are adequately developed. This is consistent with her performance on the oral language composite on the access for ELLs measure. In addition, her performance relative to [inaudible] principal skills developing as measured by DIBELS nonsense word fluency is consistent with her performance on the literacy composite for the access for ELLs.

Matilda has mastered some decodable and oral sight words as measured by her performance on an oral reading fluency subtest using a first grade passage. On the Warner and Rowe IRI listening comprehension subtest, Matilda’s teacher reported that she was able to understand and respond to oral questions at grade level. However, on the reading portion of the DRA, she was unable to read the passages, and therefore evidenced difficulty answering questions.

Matilda’s listening comprehension skills are adequately developed in comparison to other fourth grade students, and she’s able to demonstrate her understanding of concepts when provided with accommodations such as orally read test items by a teacher.

Given her performance on the axis for ELLs measured, a subtest that measure the acquisition of basic reading skills, we would anticipate that Matilda’s performance on the fourth side measure would fall below grade level at this time.

[inaudible] these curriculum-based measures with access for ELLs. So what we have here is a full picture of Matilda’s achievement in content as well as how her English language skills and listening, speaking, reading, and writing are developing.

Let’s continue our conversation. So when we met, we talked about all of these results, and some decisions were made based on the input from the scores as well as the input from the ESL teacher about what else do we know about Matilda. At this point, we have an instructional plan for Matilda.

Matilda’s performance on the aforementioned measures suggest that she has well-developed grade level listening comprehension skills, and is benefitting from exposure to core reading and content area instruction. Her ESL programming should include a proportional emphasis on direct instruction in
beginning reading and reading comprehension skills in order to help Matilda access grade level concepts. Until she's able to access grade level passages with relative speed and accuracy, she may benefit from accommodations such as adapted materials, an emphasis on visual and graphic organizers, the use of paraphrasing, strategic use of her native language, and structured notetaking guides.

As indicated by the fourth bullet on this slide, the instructional team should consider the administration of additional diagnostic reading and progress monitoring measures, and use of supplemental research-based interventions. In terms of culturally responsive instruction, the instructional, curricular, and assessment planning team may reveal and adopt culturally responsive instruction and curricula. The purpose is to help all children make connections by seeing themselves and their life experiences reflect that within reading passages, writing prompts, and learning activities.

Matilda’s academic and linguistic needs can be met in tier one with appropriate interventions and accommodations. So all of these interventions and all of the accommodations that Matilda will require will be done during tier one core instruction. At this point, her progress indicates that that is a typical progress of an ELL in her linguistic or level of proficiency and the development of language acquisition, as well as the supports that she will need in order to be successful at grade level.

Looking at what happened with Matilda, what we saw was that there are many scores that we have that are quantitative. Now we’re going to look at also, when we monitor her progress, at some performance assessments. As we see here in this graphic, we still are looking for monitored progress in the classroom, and we are looking at the formative portion of that part, of the part of progress monitoring. So within that formative section, we’re going to focus on performance assessment.

Let’s take a look at why are we doing this. Performance assessments are authentic tasks such as activities, exercises, or problems that require students to demonstrate their learning by applying their knowledge and higher level thinking skills. So it is important to add performance assessment if we really want our children to reach those levels of higher order thinking skills.

If we take a look at our next slide, we will see that there is research that tells us that performance assessment is considered to more accurately measure higher order thinking skills of all students and provides a more fair assessment of students of color. That is from Simons and Rensink, research in 1993. And those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as Wiggins researched in 1989. Further, they require students to display a more comprehensive array of knowledge and skills than do traditional tests, and facilitate teachers’ opportunities to see students problem solving in like
context. That is part of Wiggins’ research in 1989. They also are linked tightly with instruction and allow scoring that goes beyond qualitative scoring of right or wrong answers. So we have to take advantage of performance assessment for our ELLs.

If we talk about ensuring progress monitoring that is culturally responsive, we’re going to really look at these characteristics. First of all, we need to incorporate performance assessments because it’s going to give us a better picture of what our children know and are able to do. We need to develop, select, and interpret tools that are both quantitative and qualitative assessments. Because if we’re just going to look at scores without really looking at children performing, children accomplishing tasks, observations of how they work, we will just be given part of the picture, but not the whole picture. We need to ensure measures that are truly aligned with what students have been learning, and that is important because sometimes the assessments are developed based on, yes, what was taught in the classroom, but sometimes our ELLs were not in the classroom at that time.

We need to link instructional decisions and changes to performance patterns across student factors. And that we have been saying over and over again throughout all of our webinars, that we need to look at the realities of these students, their ecologies. We need to know who they are, what they bring to the table. And we need also to consider, you know, the time that these students have moved from one school to the other and other factors that are going to be, you know, be part of the whole picture.

We also need to utilize tools that assess skills in the language in which we are teaching. So it doesn’t make any sense to provide students with assessments in Spanish when we haven’t taught this child in that language. So take a note about that because sometimes when we really try to be fair somehow in choosing the language of the test, sometimes we do not consider that the student has been in our schools for three or four years and only taught in English. Their Spanish academic skills, or academic skills in Spanish, will not be at the same level as a child who has been taught in that language.

Now let’s take a look at what we need to use in order to develop tasks and assessments that are going to monitor the progress of our ELLs. The title of this slide is can-do descriptors and ELP MPIs. For people or for teachers who are listening to us and do not -- are not familiar with what the can-do descriptors and the ELP MPIs really mean, this is what it means. The can-do descriptors are statements related to language functions that you can find in the WIDA webpage. We have them for students that are K through 12. And we will be talking about them in the next slides.
The English ELP means English language proficiency, and that refers to the English language proficiency standards. And the MPIs are model performance indicators that are part of the English language proficiency standards. Now let’s look at the chart here. What we have done here is we have the levels of English language proficiency at the top part of the chart, and also the names for each of the levels. What we have here is we have developed tasks for a particular lesson that is trying to develop concepts about cause and effect, and this is a typical part of a standard in language arts or in the -- excuse me, the reading language arts curriculum. And what we have done is we have used what we call an MPI three parts of a test.

The very first part, which is in this case the identify, match, sequence, explain is the language part or the language function of the part of the MPI. In the middle, you have the content part of the MPI, which is the content that you’re going to teach. And on the bottom part, we have the supports that the students need in order to accomplish the task. So when we look at this chart, we have to remember those three parts: the language function, the content, and the supports that we need for these students to be able to perform the task.

Every one of these tasks can become a formative assessment of the student’s performance. If you want to collect data, you can do it through these tasks. Let’s take a look at another task or tasks in a lesson. This one here, remember what we said, that every MPI has three parts? The language function: identify, sequence, explain, ask questions. The content, which is the cause and effect in the story, or whatever you’re going to teach. And then the supports: working with a partner, using a graphic organizer.

In this case, let’s take a look at the chart that, you know, presents these tasks. What am I -- or what is my purpose for having these tasks? What is the content that I am teaching at this point? I would like you to just take a look. Right, in this case, what we’re teaching here are literary elements, which is part of a standard that we find in grade five. So what I have done here is I have scaffolded the tasks aligned to the levels of English language proficiency.

I’m going to show you where did I get my language functions here. I looked at the can-do descriptors for grades three to five. And I focus on the [inaudible] portion of the can-do descriptors. You can find these can-do descriptors, and all ESL teachers are very familiar with can-do descriptors. Actually, they need to share the can-do descriptors with all the content teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms so they are empowered to really adapt or accommodate or link whatever they are teaching in the classroom for their ELLs.
This is what I have done. I have picked from all the suggested language functions the one that will accommodate to what I intended to teach. So the very first one in red is answer, yes, no, and shows questions. And you will see it in level one tasks. Number two, or level two, excuse me, describe pictures, events. So I use that one there.

So the important thing is that you know what you’re going to teach. You have to select and write function, that you are going to really start observing your students performing. Then they retell short stories and compare and contrast, and then justify different or summarize facts and opinions, or opinions about a text, or explaining a text.

So as you see how the functions become more complex as we move through the different levels of English language development.

I also have here in the next three slides some graphic or sensory supports that you may like to add to your tasks to adapt or to make it, you know, more -- somehow providing the supports that these children need to complete the tasks. So it is important to consider sensory supports: you know, video, films, listening, manipulatives; graphic supports: graphic organizers, charts, et cetera; and interactive supports that are so important for our students.

I also have another chart here, and we have the source where you can find more about these charts. These are specific examples of sensory supports based on content areas. Something important to share with your content teachers. And if you’re a content teacher, please look for Margo’s book that is, according to my colleague Paula Zucker here, who teachers some courses at the university level, she says that they are very, you know, friendly, from the perspective that they are teacher-friendly and very easy to implement.

We also have, of course, graphic organizers. And there are many, many ways to use graphic organizers with our ELLs. So we have here, you know, the kinds of supports that you should be looking at when you develop tasks, assessments, formative assessments, performance-based assessment to collect data so you will be able to show progress or not with your ELLs. [inaudible] of English language proficiency.

So how would we show that when the only thing that sometimes we see in schools are [inaudible] that are not where our ELLs can really be able to show progress. So most of the time, you implement assessments or you implement formative assessments or even programs to support children that are really not really supporting them. Okay, so this is a way to really design, work with groups of
teachers to put together these kinds of tasks embedded in your lessons. Now Paula will continue with the next part of our presentation.

**PAULA ZUCKER:** On this slide, we see about how formative assessment is defined in the Pennsylvania Department of Education standards aligned system. We see that, firstly, [inaudible] Pennsylvania classroom-based assessment that allows teachers to monitor and adjust their instructional practice in order to meet the individual needs of their students. Formative assessments can consist of formal instruments or informal observation. Assessments are formative when the information is used to adapt instructional practices to meet individual student needs, as well as providing individual students corrective feedback that allows them to reach those goals and targets.

Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of effective instructional routines that provide teachers with the information they need to differentiate and make adjustments to instructional practice in order to meet the needs of individual students. And we have addressed all of this up until this point.

And as we continue, we need to realize that formative assessment encompasses the following points: questioning strategy, active engagement, analysis of student work based on set rubrics, and standards including homework and tests. Best practices of formative assessment would include embedded, ongoing formative assessment. They must be embedded in the lesson plan, not set apart from it. And it must be an ongoing part of the instructional process. These must be linked to outcomes, to learning outcomes. Formative assessment should be linked to sequentially articulated teacher and student primary learning goals as described by each [inaudible].

Why are we addressing universal screening. The field has been asking questions regarding curriculum-based measures such as DIBELS, so we feel this needs to be addressed at this time. Universal screening is a schoolwide, quantitative, and formative type of progress monitoring, most often CBM, curriculum-based measurement, used in tier one of RtII frameworks. The data collected in universal screening tools are used to determine if curriculum and instruction is effective, and for movement.

While universal screening data also provides information about which students may require additional support, upon further analysis, if they are in fact receiving high-quality, responsive curriculum and instruction, it is also used to inform student movement to more intensive tiers of support. Universal screening process is utilized to interpret [inaudible] with all students in order to determine expected performance level within the context of schools and classrooms.
Curriculum-based measurements as formative progress monitoring tools are scaled up into universal screening tools when the same curriculum-based measurement tools are given to all students across a given group of students. For example, [inaudible] on regular intervals. CBMs are then scored, results interpreted, and educational decisions are made about which students require more support and how curriculum and instruction needs to be adjusted.

In culturally responsive RtII frameworks, there are conditions in school that allow for the use and interpretation and application of our CBMs that take into account the unique context of schools. These contexts can be thought of as states where three areas of culture overlap: the cultures people bring into schools such as their beliefs about purpose of schooling, the cultures that are already there in our schools such as the system set up to assess student learning, and the cultures created through the work educators, families, and learners do together. Next, Ana will take another look at our friend, Matilda.

ANA SAINZ DE LA PENA: Thank you, Paula. And as Paula has mentioned, it is looking at our students from all of those three lenses, not just from the perspective of a score, not just from the perspective of a score of assessments that sometimes are not developed with -- or for English language learners. So let’s take a look at Matilda’s plan again because it is important that we consider certain aspects of it.

So we know now that -- at this point that Matilda came in third grade from the Ukraine, that she was given WAPT and started as an entering student with 1.2, that she moved all the way to 2 by the end of third grade. And now in fourth grade in spring, she is at 2.9. So she moved, you know, in a very steady way from one level to the other with a strong development of oral language skills that have really supported academic learning throughout third and fourth grade.

Now what we are looking at is, so how is he going to transition into grade five? And what needs to be done in order to move, you know, the development of these skills at a different rate, at a little faster rate for Matilda?

So this is what the team came up with in regards to the instructional plan and how we’re going to see -- now how we’re going to look at Matilda from the perspective of monitoring her progress. What has helped come up with a sound plan for Matilda is information that the ESL teacher shared with the rest of the team regarding Matilda’s skills in native language. We learned that Matilda is literate in native language. She has also learned some basic English when she was in the Ukraine.
She learned English as a foreign language in grades one and two. Her grades in the Ukraine were above average in math and reading. And parents want to maintain Matilda’s native language at home and plan to have books in both English and Ukrainian available for Matilda because for her parents, it is very important that Matilda is bi-literate. So now we know what parents feel about learning also, not only English at a proficient level, but maintaining Matilda’s language at home from the perspective of being a reader in two languages.

She also -- Matilda has been gaining steadily excellent and very strong English language development skills and becoming more fluent with academic language during the ESL instruction. And she has shown a great interest to continue reading and using her first language somehow strategically to improve her comprehension. So after this point, we only know scores, but we also know Matilda and Matilda’s parents’ desires.

So what we have done? Very simple. First, we define the problem. We look at where the gaps were. We analyze Matilda’s scores. We analyze what was going on in instruction. How can we speed up the process for Matilda? She’s moving along nice, but we need more. We develop a plan where we set goals, for goals: language acquisition and literacy development. We collected data. We asked teachers to collect data. We asked teachers to meet frequently, every two weeks, to compare data and design new steps.

We evaluate. That means we look at the tools. Were they reliable? What else can we use? And if Matilda’s progress had been slower than expected, then maybe we would increase instruction in reading and ESL, or also, you know, consider her progress as compared to peers. That is so important before we take the next step. When we say compare to peers, to true peers, we are really focusing in how we’re going to look at Matilda in relation to other ELLs and see whether she’s moving along the same -- at the same rate, or if maybe she’s not. And if she’s not, then we will consider then maybe more strategic evidence-based interventions in tier two.

So at this point, Matilda is still a tier one student. What resources were used to develop these progress monitoring tools? We have seen that and I showed you how we have used not only curriculum-based measures, but rubrics for speaking and writing. Those, you have them. They are research-based. You have them at your fingertips. Ask your ESL teacher about those rubrics. We also have the can-do descriptors that are research-based and very effective to teach children who are English language learners. Use the English language proficiency standards, model performance indicators. There’s also access for ELLs released items, WAPT items, and of course now we have another tool, the SAS voluntary
curriculum lessons that have been adapted and accommodated for all five levels of English language proficiency. You can go to your SAS portal and find them.

A word of caution about commercially prepared interventions. If your district has specific programs for interventions, make sure that they have been developed for ELLs considering the different levels of English language proficiency. Not all these programs are really effective for ELLs. You need to stop the practice of using programs that are ineffective for ELLs and then reporting that they are making progress. And that’s why we have so many ELLs, you know, that have been evaluated for special education.

In Pennsylvania, one out of eight ELLs is in special education. Progress monitor needs to be conducted in this manner. Research of progress monitoring for ELLs informs us that it is effective when it is used appropriately and it is designed to accomplish all of these goals. And especially Laura, Dr. Saenz, has a lot of good information about this. I gave you the information at the bottom of the slide. You can go there and see what else we can learn about progress monitoring.

The key, actually, is you have a plan. That’s what is important. And when we have a plan to be targeted and specific in differentiated instruction. And remember, not all of us develop skills at the same time. Not all of us can actually develop all skills at the same level.

Another key that is important is that we need to look at the results of assessment and use them appropriately so they can shape the way we teach and the way children learn. Formative assessment needs to include formats that teachers utilize in order to get information that, when used diagnostically, really are very effective to impact student learning. So let’s not forget about that.

Universal screening, we approach universal screening from this perspective. This is something that all of us need to read about. We have them on the slides. We have to be able to collect data and also be able to identify how we are going to use the data and disaggregate the data. That is very important in RtII. So these are just ways that we can use universal screening in an effective and equitable manner.

We need to understand that sometimes there’s tension with universal screening. We understand that DIBELS has been, you know, questioned about the scores. Let’s not forget that we need to use DIBELS in order to fine tune literacy instruction, but not all the data that we use from DIBELS can be used in isolation. We need to look at all of these other measures.
This is also very important. The delineation between tier one and two is really how do we provide interventions to these children. It has nothing to do with really looking at putting out students for special interventions. We need to take a look at what works with our students.

One issue is that we need to continue supporting learning and really supporting our teachers in the content areas to understand how language composition really happens with our ELLs so they can in turn support the students when they are learning content.

Again, this is very important to share with your colleagues if they haven’t been able to be in our webinar. We have to consider that in addition to the high quality opportunities to learn provided in RtII, educators need to provide supports that consider the role of culture in teaching and learning. If this is not considered, RtII frameworks run -- you know, they will become really just like before. They will not work with all students, just with some students.

In addition, we need to consider that there is a disproportionate number of ELLs in special education. One out of eight ELLs in Pennsylvania are -- have IEPs. So we need to start looking and asking -- looking at the data and asking questions, why?

Just to finish with our webinar, remember, we have provided you with this diagram. The diagram is very important when we talk about our goals as educators, what tools we’re using, and what we’re teaching. All of that is influenced by the culture that the students bring, that the teachers bring, and the culture for students.

Thank you very much for being with us. Today, our last friendly reminder that we are going to have our next webinar March 15th, Culturally Responsive Instruction: Working with ELL Families in Multicultural Communities. We also have our all day workshop, face to face, where we’re going to develop practices for everything we have been presenting so far. And April 11th, Pittsburgh. April 24th, Harrisburg. And the 25th at PaTTAN KoP, King of Prussia.

With that place, the resources used for this presentation as well as implementation checklist on the PaTTAN website. If you would like to use the information provided in this webinar as part of the face to face training, we have provided extended activities which can also be found on our website. Thank you very much and we have all the resources here for you. And we hope to have you again with us next time we present. Send us your email with feedback. We will be glad to hear from you. Thank you.