

Webinar Series:
*Addressing the Needs of Adolescent EL Populations in a
MTSS Framework*

Webinar #3: Adolescent ELs with Limited or Interrupted Education in a MTSS Framework

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PDE's Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.

Outcomes

Participants will:

- Identify the characteristics and educational needs of adolescent ELs with limited or interrupted education (SLIFE) in a MTSS framework.
- Identify effective educational practices and interventions to address SLIFE students' literacy and academic gaps.

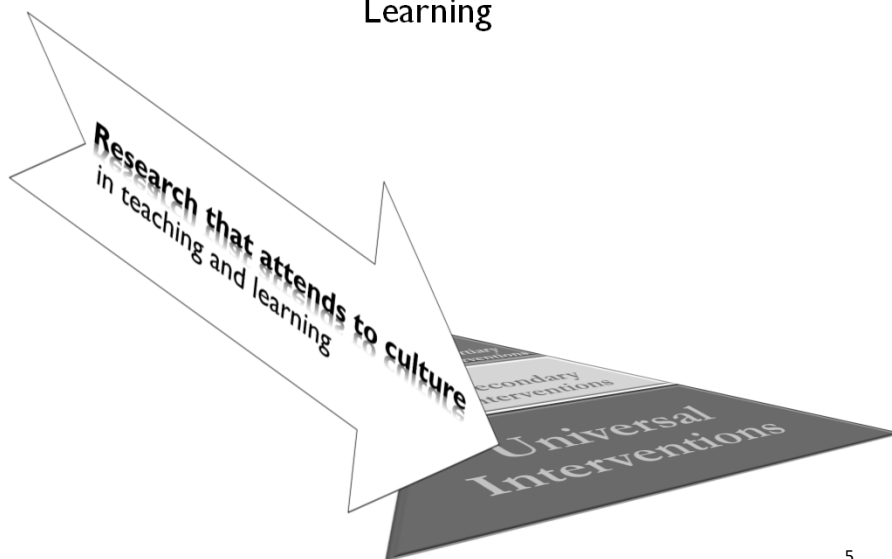
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MTSS Rationale

A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support framework is designed so that schools can provide the appropriate level of instruction and intervention for their students. Using performance data and monitoring learning rates through MTSS, educators can make important culturally responsive instructional decisions to meet the needs of students from different backgrounds, learning styles, and levels of academic attainment.

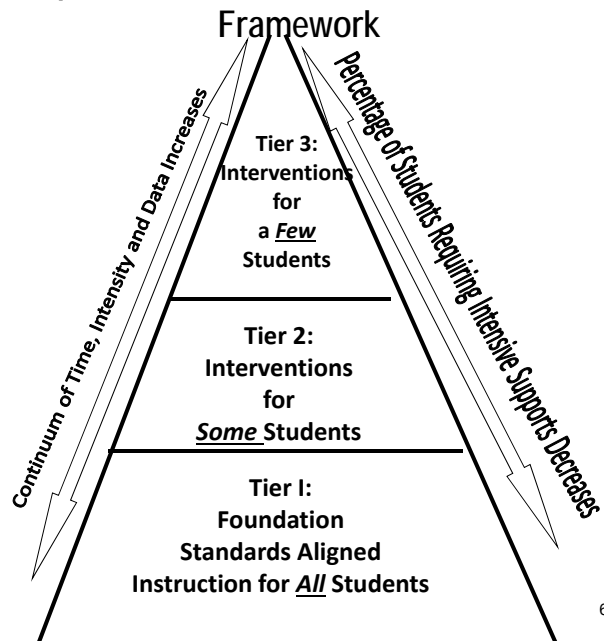
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Exploring the Research Base for Interventions Grounded in the Role of Culture in Teaching & Learning



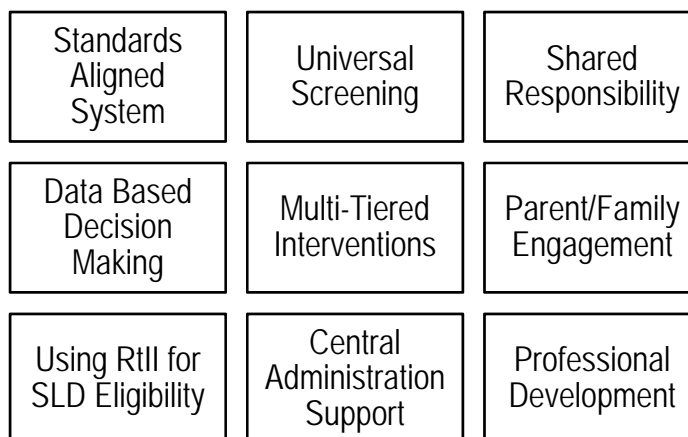
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Response to Instruction and Intervention Framework



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Technical Adequacy: 9 Key Elements



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Tier I: Foundation-Standards Aligned Instruction for All Students – A Year’s Worth of Growth

Definition:

Standards aligned instruction and school-wide foundational interventions provided to all students in the general education core curriculum and includes:

Access to High-Quality Standards Aligned Core instruction. Including ESL instruction and the implementation of English Language Proficiency Standards

Whole and Small Group Differentiation
·
ELs’ differentiation is based on their ELP levels

Evidence-Based and Culturally Responsive Practices.
ELs’ ecology (ELP level, culture, academic development in L1, SES, time in ESL Program) is considered

Reliable and Valid Assessment Practices and Measures including Universal Screening.
ACCESS for ELLs and W-APT scores data is part of the decision-making process

School Climate and Positive Behavioral Support.
Including considerations for cross-cultural misunderstandings and levels of acculturation

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"All hands on deck"

- General Educator
- Special Educator
- Reading Specialist/Title I
- School Psychologist
- Speech/Language Therapist
- School Counselor
- ESL Teacher
- Para-Educator
- Principal
- Other Related Service Providers



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Culturally Responsive MTSS Approach

- Create structures and practices that consider the cultural needs of students in the learning process.
- Continually provides training and development of all staff to broaden and deepen their cultural perspectives.
- The rate of progress differs from student to student, and many variables, including culture, may have an impact on this rate.



Retrieved from: <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/diversity/cultural-adaptations-when-implementing-rti-in-urban-settings>

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Working Definition of SLIFE Students

These students are defined as ELs, above the age of seven, who:

- have missed more than six consecutive months of formal schooling prior to enrolling in a U.S. school; and/or
- are more than two years below grade level in content due to limited educational supports prior to enrolling in a U.S. school.

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Characteristics of SLIFEs

- This under-schooled group of students is most at risk for academic failure (Short & Boyson, 2004).
- This group also has very high dropout rates. Gunderson reported that the disappearance rate of refugee students, one subgroup in the SLIFE population, is 75% or higher at the secondary level (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014).

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Characteristics of SLIFEs

- English learners with limited or interrupted schooling often experience more at a young age than their more fortunate peers will ever experience in a lifetime.
- Their families see the U.S. as a place where they can create a better future and encourage their children to take advantage of the educational system.

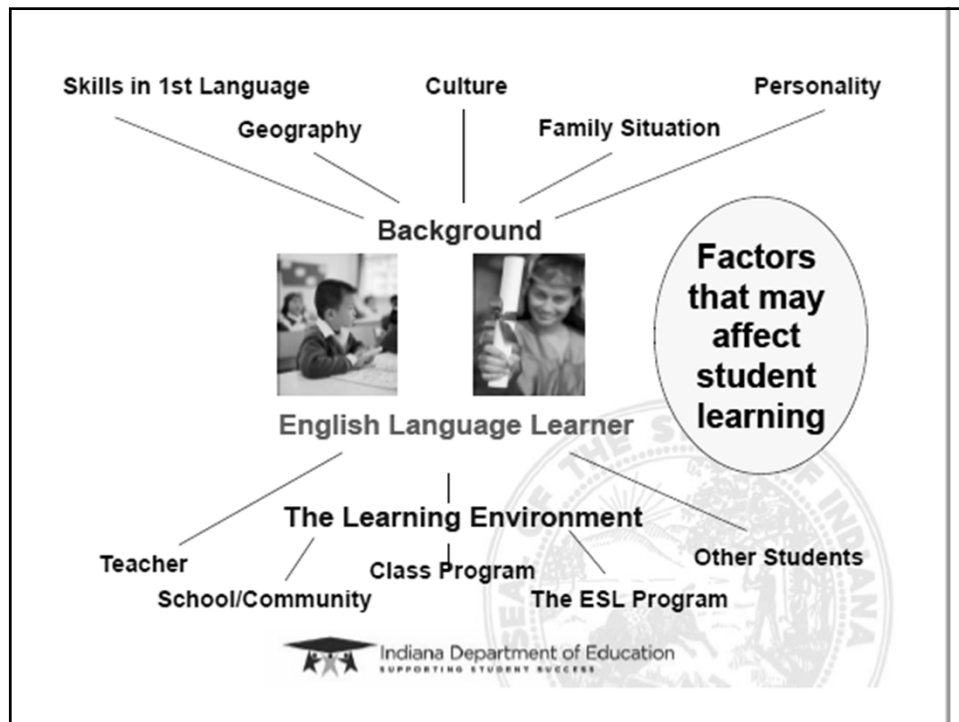
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SLIFEs

Any student who experienced limited or interrupted access to school for a variety of reasons, such as

- poverty,
- isolated geographic locales,
- limited transportation options,
- societal expectations for school attendance,
- a need to enter the workforce and contribute to the family income,
- natural disasters, war, or civil strife,
- possible victims of abuse or human trafficking

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Unaccompanied Minors

- These children may have histories of abuse or may be seeking safety from threats of violence. They may have been trafficked or smuggled.



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Case Scenario

Delon was 17 years old when he migrated to live with his aunt. Delon is originally from Haiti, but left with his mother at a young age to travel throughout the Caribbean islands. Delon's mother was working as a merchant, and they moved often so Delon did not complete many years of schooling. Delon learned some English in his travels to English-speaking Caribbean islands, but never learned to read or write in any language.

When Delon arrived in the United States, he did not know his birthday, his age, or how to count. A few weeks after arriving, Delon was enrolled and placed in a high school. Since enrolling, Delon has made no progress in improving his literacy skills and has joined a gang.

Students with Interrupted Formal Education: A Challenge for the New York City Public Schools. A report issued by Advocates for Children of New York, May 2010, p. 24

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Supporting SLIFEs in American Schools

- Because of their **families' high expectations**, these **students commonly enroll** in American schools with an optimistic outlook, eager to improve their personal and family circumstances.
- They view their arrival in the United States as a step towards a more stable future; enrolling in the American school system to increase their educational level is one more step.
- These experiential resources can be tapped in the classroom to build knowledge and skills for these students.

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School Supports for ELs with Interrupted Educational Backgrounds

Recognize the unique linguistic, literacy, academic, socio-emotional, and cultural needs of these students:

- Address their acculturation to the U.S. school system
- Attend to their socio-emotional needs (poverty, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), family separation or reunification, etc.)
- Provide focused initial literacy instruction appropriate for adolescents
- Provide focused academic skill instruction to bridge gaps in knowledge
- Provide integration of content and language instruction

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SLIFEs

- LEAs may want to include parent/guardian interviews, native literacy and math screeners to identify ELs, who are students with a limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFEs).

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Recommendations for an Effective SLIFE Program

- Thematically-coordinated literacy/content courses that promote transfer of learning across content areas
- Small classes
- Modified course structure that addresses student's individual learning needs while addressing the English language proficiency levels.

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Recommendations for an Effective SLIFE Program

- Team-based instructional approach
- Common planning periods that allow ESL and content teachers to coordinate their work
- When necessary, provide individualized long-term remedial instruction and tutoring by qualified teachers

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Adolescent SLIFE Students

- Develop programs that focus on simultaneous coordination of linguistic and academic development
- Implement flexible scheduling

*** High school programs will benefit from alignment with higher education and adult education programs.*

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After-School, Saturday, and/or Summer Programs

- Credit-accruing/ credit recovery classes in content-area subjects and ESL after the school day.
 - Students follow the general curriculum, use the regular textbooks, and receive grades.
- Non-credit accruing classes after-school, Saturday or summer programs are similar to tutoring programs.

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Serving English Learners with Interrupted Education

- A critical step in the educational process is building on the students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992).
- As part of this process, guidance counselors and teachers should become familiar with student experiential and cultural backgrounds, family histories, linguistic histories, and academic histories.
- By building instruction around the students' funds of knowledge, teachers and guidance counselors can begin to build language, content knowledge, and acculturation skills for this group of students.

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Counseling Needs

SIFE often have intensive social and emotional needs as well as academic ones stemming from:

- their lack of experience in a formal school setting,
- their academic difficulties in schools,
- and for some, the traumatic experiences and unstable living conditions they had in their native countries and in the United States.

These students require counseling or other supports, but few receive them.

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Counseling Needs

Without counseling supports,

- SLIFE students become disengaged with school and have behavioral issues in and outside of the classroom, often dropping out of school.
- some SLIFE students who have very little prior school experience, will have significant trouble adjusting to a formal school setting and participating in group activities.

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Tips for Connecting with Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education

WIDA Consortium. SLIFE: Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education, Focus Bulletin, May 2015, p.4-5

Factors that Influence ELLs' Performance in School	Tips for Connecting with Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education
Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a welcoming environment for both students and their families/guardians • Develop a school climate that values multilingualism • Train school staff in cultural competency and methodology for teaching linguistically diverse students • Provide native language materials and support whenever possible
Academic Achievement and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share school and program goals for language and academic learning in both English and the native language • Encourage ESL/Bilingual and General Education staff to collaborate around supporting both language acquisition and academic achievement • Ensure that assessment practices measure content area skills independently of language proficiency
Oral Language and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach literacy in context, for example through thematic units • Assess student and family funds of knowledge to create meaningful contexts for literacy development • Teach oral language skills in connection with literacy • Collaborate with the community public library to ensure that all families have a library card and have access to books in English and the native language • Encourage parents to explore concepts in the native language with their children • Connect units of study to funds of knowledge of the student, family, and community
Personal and Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assure that students are aware of the school district subsidized lunch program • Be flexible with homework assignments for students who work after school and at night to contribute to the family income • Consider offering transportation to school events or make sure families know how to use the public transportation system • Provide access to interpreters or translators when needed for native language interpretation • Send correspondence in the native language whenever possible • Incorporate student experiential backgrounds and interests into lessons to promote engagement and cultural responsiveness
Physical and Psychological Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create partnerships with community agencies or local universities that provide therapy in the native language or creative therapy groups such as art/music/dance • Connect students and families with local community agencies that provide assistance to those in poverty • Create support groups for students/families in similar situations of reunification, separation, etc. • Find out the living situation of the student, such as reunited with estranged family members, family members separated during immigration, living with extended family or friends, refugee placed with host family, or overcrowded living conditions

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Tips for Connecting with Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education

Factors that Influence ELLs' Performance in School	Tips for Connecting with Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education
Previous Schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather information on the previous schooling experiences of the student during intake Conduct informal, confidential interviews with students and family members regarding prior schooling experiences, identifying inconsistent programming as well as periods of interrupted education
Cross-Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer orientation that explains the U.S. grading system and expectations for homework completion, student attendance and reporting of absences, and provides an opportunity for them to ask about the school and/or community Make a personal phone call to invite parents/guardians to parent-teacher conferences and explain what to expect when they come Form a bilingual parent committee that can assist families and guardians in the acculturation process in the native language

Adapted from Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez-Lopez, Damico. (2007, 2013). *Special education considerations for English language learners: Delivering a continuum of services*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon, Inc.

WIDA Consortium. SLIFE:
Students with Limited or
Interrupted Formal Education,
Focus Bulletin, May 2015, p.4-5

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Equality vs. Equity

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

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Resources

Early Warning Systems Videos

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HJYb4DdrIc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDf8-Wvjk5M>

Students with Interrupted Education

- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/how-support-ell-students-interrupted-formal-education-sifes>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StQxnIQAAtxA&list=PLrEC3WwWXAnQk94FVzhnHBy6MLQQH4Fx&index=1>

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Resources

Students with Interrupted Formal Education: A Challenge for the New York City Public Schools. A report issued by Advocates for Children of New York, May 2010

Tuckman, Olga. *Effective Programs for English Language Learners with Interrupted Formal Education*, Bridging Refugee Youth and Children Services, 2015.

WIDA Consortium. *SLIFE: Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education*, Focus Bulletin, May 2015.

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Tom Wolf, Governor