

The CARE Instrument: Refining LAP Implementation

The **Continuum for Academic Rigor and Excellence (CARE)** is an instrument designed to offer schools and communities practical ways to implement and refine their Language Allocation Policy (LAP). The CARE instrument should be used continuously throughout the school year, regardless of whether a school is creating and implementing a LAP for the first time, or refining its ongoing LAP implementation process. Schools that continuously use this tool to evaluate their own LAP and how it is being implemented will be taking major steps toward maximizing their services for English Language Learners (ELL).

Ensuring academic rigor in ELL programs is at the heart of the CARE instrument. In order for ELLs to meet the high standards set for all students and to equally participate in the Common Core Learning Standards adopted by the New York State Education Department, it is imperative that each student have access to coherent programs that are uniformly delivered throughout the city, as well as rigorous instruction. In other words, schools need to have a consistent Language Allocation Policy to assist ELLs with cognitive development and academic skills. Student performance in city schools as well as other performance-related data show that ELLs who move among different programs tend to perform poorly compared to those who participate in strong, coherent programs that span their tenure as ELLs. Also, instructional programs with high levels of rigor and support result in higher academic achievement for ELLs, contrasting with the traditional approach of a simplified curriculum for ELLs.

The CARE instrument is a step-by-step tool that allows users to assess the coherency and academic rigor of their programs based on performance indicators emanating from the eight LAP principles. On the CARE instrument, each of the eight main LAP principles has several corresponding standards that are used to assess school performance. Using a predetermined scale, users must determine whether their school and programs are not meeting the standard (1), close to meeting the standard (2), or meeting or exceeding the standard (3); not all of the standards will be applicable to all schools and programs (NA). Based on where responses are clustered on the scale for each principle, CARE instrument users will be able to clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of their ELL programs. Users of this instrument are encouraged to develop a level of

comfort and familiarity with it by creating a small in-house team to administer it. Teams should consist of a coach, common branches or subject matter teachers, a parent, at least one ESL teacher and, if applicable, one bilingual teacher. The instrument should be used throughout the year by in-house teams, external teams, or a combination of school-based staff and Central staff members. It is important to remember that every LAP must fully adhere to relevant federal, state and city guidelines and regulations which apply to all students, and specifically, to ELLs.

THE Continuum for Academic Rigor and Excellence (CARE) Instrument

LAP Principle One: A coherent Language Allocation Policy (LAP) for each school	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. There is a language allocation policy document that includes a description of how it is applied to each ELL program model in the school.					
2. All stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students and others) are able to clearly articulate when and why the students' native language and English are used in teaching and learning. (Transitional Bilingual Education [TBE], Freestanding ESL, Dual Language).					
3. There are sustained activities for informing and orienting parents about the LAP.					
4. The Parent Survey and Program Selection Form are reviewed periodically to identify the trends of parental choice.					
5. The knowledge level is sustained through on-going professional development for all staff members on changes and status of the Language Allocation Policy.					
6. CR Part 154 regulation requirements are met.					
7. The teachers' schedules and flow of the day reflect the language(s) of instruction and are prominently posted.					
8. The school has implemented an instructional program that regularly ensures continuity of instruction and language development.					
9. There is a professional development program that targets the needs of all teachers of ELLs (e.g., supporting ELLs in academic vocabulary development, engaging ELLs in close reading).					
10. Activities are planned considering the family, cultural, and language background of students, to celebrate and include students in the school community and to educate staff about its diversity.					
11. The school strategically uses curricular, instructional, and scheduling flexibility to meet the diverse needs of ELL-SWDs within the least restrictive environment.					
Other:					

LAP Principle Two: Academic Rigor	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. ELLs participate in a Common Core-aligned instructional program that regularly ensures continuity of rigorous instruction with high expectations.					
2. ELLs use textbooks, classroom libraries and instructional materials that are aligned with the school's core curriculum and reflect the home language(s) of ELLs in the school.					
3. ELLs are grouped homogeneously or heterogeneously for targeted areas of instruction based on various data, such as but not limited to the LAB-R and NYSESLAT.					
4. ELLs participate in small group, task-oriented situations that guide the production of language both in verbal and written form.					
5. ELLs demonstrate learning through measurable product development, demonstrations, and exhibits.					
6. ELLs demonstrate technical/digital proficiency, in areas including, but not limited to, maintenance of an electronic portfolio or learning log, research on the internet and the use of computers.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Three: Use of two languages	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. The class library areas are clearly defined by language and age- and grade-appropriate books and materials are available to ELLs.					
2. There is consistency of language usage as per program design.					
3. There are adequate instructional materials in each language.					
4. There is evidence of the students' work displayed in each language.					
5. The walls are print-rich in each language.					
6. Languages are clearly defined by color in the lower grades consistent with NYCDOE practices. (black or blue – English; red – the native language)					
7. There is evidence of implementation of the core curriculum in all content areas in both languages.					
8. Classroom teachers can explain what informs their decisions for language use in instruction.					

9. Native language is used to support high demand, high challenging areas of instruction.					
10. There is native language support in freestanding ESL classrooms.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Four: Explicit English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Arts (ELA) and Native Language Arts (NLA) Instruction	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. Language instruction is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards.					
2. Teachers scaffold academic language to support students' participation in content areas.					
3. Teachers use a rich repertoire of scaffolds to support students' understanding of the main academic content.					
4. Teachers model the use of the academic language in ways in which students are expected to respond and participate.					
5. Instructional materials include a wide range of print, visual and digital resources designed for increasing English language proficiency.					
6. Language functions and structures are taught within the context of the lesson.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Five: Literacy Instruction in Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)/Dual Language programs	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. All TBE and Dual Language classrooms have leveled libraries in English and in the native language.					
2. All students have access to standards-based instructional materials.					
3. Literacy development and refinement are provided for every student.					
4. Literacy instruction is consistent with the instructional goals and objectives of the individual program design.					
5. Instructional strategies and activities reflect scientifically-based research.					
6. The balanced literacy model is used in Native Language Arts instruction.					
7. The balanced literacy model, with appropriate language development supports, is used for ESL instruction.					
8. Students receive the mandated minutes of					

instruction in NLA, ESL and ELA.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Six: Content Area Instruction	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. Content area instruction (e.g., mathematics, science, social studies, technology) is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and is provided in both English and the native language according to the school's LAP.					
2. Content area instruction is supported by instructional materials in both languages, in sufficient numbers, of appropriate quality and aligned to standards.					
3. Content area instruction is conducted in the languages identified on the LAP schedule in TBE and Dual Language programs.					
4. Content instruction teachers develop obligatory academic language and cognitive skills through content topics and themes.					
5. On-going assessment strategies are used to determine movement towards acquiring content standards.					
6. Instruction is designed to mediate the learning of various proficiency classifications: newcomers, SIFE, long-term ELLs, beginner, intermediate and advanced proficiency levels.					
7. Lessons are designed to meet standards while there is differentiated instruction to meet student needs.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Seven: Assessment in Two Languages	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. The School Leadership Team, teachers, cross-grade, -content, and -program teams, use data to inform decision making and drive instruction.					
2. On-going assessment is designed to collect evidence of student learning or need for mid-course changes that are systematically implemented across grades and programs.					
3. Students practice the use of, and are provided the English and native language versions of (when available), formal and informal assessments.					
4. Teachers work collaboratively to evaluate student work and data to ascertain the language and cognitive demands of tasks aligned to standards.					
5. Teachers maintain a portfolio for each student where reading and writing products in two languages are collected to be assessed periodically by the student, teacher and parent.					

6. School leadership and teachers effectively use assessment data to make instructional and grouping decisions for ELLs within the RtI framework.					
Other:					
LAP Principle Eight: High Quality Teachers of ELLs	1	2	3	NA	Comments
1. Teachers hold the appropriate teaching certification(s).					
2. Teachers plan for the development of both social and academic language.					
3. Teachers develop both content and language objectives for each unit of study.					
4. Language functions, language structures and vocabulary lessons are planned as part of every topic.					
5. Teachers give students who are less proficient in either language the necessary time to interact with those who are more proficient.					
6. Teachers model academic language and consistently spiral language so that students' language proficiency grows increasingly more complex.					
7. Teachers demonstrate knowledge about:					
• Current scientifically-based research in the fields of bilingual and ESL education;					
• Effective practices for ELLs;					
• The impact of culture on learning and cognitive styles;					
• How to differentiate instruction to align with students' prior knowledge, learning and language needs.					
8. Teachers plan lessons that complement instead of merely translate the content instruction in the other language.					
9. Teachers can articulate the English and native language level for each student in their classroom and the lesson design and student products that have been differentiated to meet their needs.					
10. Teachers demonstrate commitment to professional development by attending off-site workshops, seminars and conferences related to ELLs.					
Other:					

