

# The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners: Grades K-12

## *Discussion Questions for Chapter 4 - Additional Roles for Teachers of English Learners*

1. Have your English learners confided in you about their backgrounds and/or hardships? Do all teachers who work with these learners know their histories? Discuss ways that you can confidentially share with colleagues significant information that may be affecting students' abilities to perform well in school. How else can you share information in general (and anonymously) to foster sensitivity among staff?
2. Describe some ways that you informally share strategies and best practices for working with English learners. Create a list of techniques and strategies that all teachers in your program or school should know. Discuss how you can help them learn about them and implement them.
3. What professional development does your school, district, or program provide for teachers who work with English learners? Is it accessible to all teachers? Do all participate? Is additional professional development needed? If it is not sufficient, discuss what professional development you and your colleagues can plan in order to share your collective expertise and learn from each other.
4. Describe procedures for determining if an English learner is suspected of having special needs. What is working well? What is not? Are there any actions you can take to further explore this issue and/or develop or improve the protocols currently in place? (See page 118 for resources.)
5. What protocols are in place when families with English learners arrive at your school district? Are interpreters available? Do school staff greet families in a positive way? Share successes or talk about possible changes that need to take place to ensure a welcoming experience for all families.
6. In which schoolwide or districtwide committees (such as curriculum revision, materials selection, assessment development) do you participate? Are the needs of English learners addressed during these committee meetings? Think of issues or concerns related to English learners that you might want to bring up the next time you are a participant on one of these committees.

7. If you work in a secondary school setting, are there appropriate courses available (such as sheltered content courses) for newcomer English learners? If not, what can you do to promote such courses? Perhaps you can shadow newcomer English learners for a day to gather data on whether or not they are meaningfully engaged in their classes. This data can then be used to promote the establishment of appropriate courses.
8. Do you know or suspect that some of your students and/or their family members are undocumented? If so, divvy up assignments to find out which community services are available for undocumented families. For example, research resources for undocumented students to obtain financial aid for college or to seek legal services.