

WAYNE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EL/TITLE III DEPARTMENT

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## EL Happenings

The EL Department/Title III is offering the first publication of our monthly newsletter *EL Happenings* to stakeholders, administrators, and staff members. Each month, the publication will provide information on upcoming events and professional development opportunities. *EL Happenings* will highlight innovative practices within our department to enhance EL academic achievement as well as provide strategies for meeting the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse learners in our district. We are excited to present the first issue of *EL Happenings* and hope that you find the newsletter a valuable resource.

## Upcoming Events

### March 26, 2021

The North Carolina Society of Hispanic Professionals will hold their 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Virtual Hispanic Educational Summit on March 26, 2021. The virtual summit is open to Hispanic youth enrolled in grades 7-12 and offers presentations by motivational speakers to encourage Hispanic youth to stay in school and pursue higher education.

Please contact the EL Department at your school to register students, or contact Mary Leslie Wellmer via email ([marywellmer@wcps.org](mailto:marywellmer@wcps.org)) or at extension 3052.

### WIDA Professional Development Opportunities

WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) has added two new professional development opportunities to their learning portal for educators.

- Educational Equity for Multilingual Learners during COVID-19
- Connecting Educators to Tools for Oral Language Development

EL educators can access the PD through their WIDA Secure Portal. Content educators who would like to take advantage of this opportunity can contact Mary Leslie Wellmer via email ([marywellmer@wcps.org](mailto:marywellmer@wcps.org)) or by calling extension 3052.

## SPOTLIGHT ON BROGDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL EL TEACHER NYDIA NEGRON-LOPEZ

English as a Second Language Teacher Nydia Negron-Lopez has collaborated with the ELA content teachers at BMS to provide a shared learning environment for her EL students. Many EL students depend on individualized and scaffolded instruction to access curriculum content. Limited face-to-face instructional time means using innovative strategies in a virtual platform to meet the needs of all learners. For Mrs. Negron-Lopez and her dedicated team of ELA teachers, that meant collaborating to ensure academic success for their ELs.

Within the CANVAS classroom, Mrs. Negron-Lopez and the ELA teachers collaborated to provide differentiated and scaffolded instruction to the EL students embedded with linguistic support to make challenging content comprehensible. Mrs. Negron-Lopez stated that the shared learning environment has been beneficial for her EL students.

Concerned about her EL students at the beginning levels of English proficiency, Mrs. Negron-Lopez began an after school, virtual classroom to provide these students with additional linguistic support and opportunities to practice using their new language. Mrs. Negron-Lopez reports that approximately 90% of her newcomer students consistently take advantage of this opportunity.

Mrs. Negron-Lopez's goal as an educator is to prepare students to succeed in school and life. Her dedication to her students through collaborating with colleagues to differentiate instruction, as well as the after school virtual program, is building a solid foundation for their success.

## Instructional Strategy – Independent Reading and ELs

Research studies show that independent reading increases literacy skills, comprehension, and vocabulary (Ferlazzo & Sypniewski, 2018).

During independent reading, EL students can practice the reading skills and strategies taught during explicit reading instruction.

English learners at beginning proficiency levels can benefit from using technology to engage with texts during independent reading. Online sites that provide adaptive and interactive content, visuals, native-language support, and audio read aloud can enhance linguistic skill acquisition for these learners.

Reading Websites for ELs

[Unite For Literacy](#)

[Oxford Owl](#)

[Story Place](#)

[ReadWorks](#)

[Imagine Learning](#)

*“Today a reader,  
tomorrow a leader.”*

Margaret Fuller

## Diversity Among English Learners

English learners come from diverse socio-economic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds but are often viewed as a homogenous population of learners.

Immigration Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Newly arrived to the United States</li><li>• Undocumented</li><li>• Refugees</li></ul>
Migrant Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May be transitory and attend several schools during one academic year</li><li>• May permanently reside in the same school district</li></ul>
Prior Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formal grade-level instruction in home country</li><li>• Informal or interrupted education in home country or in U.S. schools</li><li>• Formal grade level instruction in U.S. schools</li></ul>
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monolingual</li><li>• Bilingual</li><li>• Multilingual</li><li>• Speaks dialect</li></ul>
English Language Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Entering</li><li>• Emerging</li><li>• Developing</li><li>• Expanding</li><li>• Bridging</li><li>• Reaching</li></ul>

(adapted from Honingsfeld & Dove, 2019, p. 23)

# Parent Engagement Tip

## LEARN ABOUT YOUR EL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Parent involvement in their child's education is critical for their success. Learning about your EL students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds is the foundation for building strong relationships with parents and families. Remember, ELs are not a homogenous group of learners and what works with one family may not be as effective with another family.

- **Ellevation**

Ellevation is the EL database used by the district that houses testing and background information on each EL student. From your account in [Ellevation](#), you can access student profiles that includes demographic information, length of time in U.S. schools, and English language proficiency test results.

- **EL Teachers**

The EL teacher(s) who serve your school can assist you with learning about the background and prior experiences of your EL students.

### Questions or Comments?

Please contact Mary Leslie Wellmer (3052) or via email ([marywellmer@wcps.org](mailto:marywellmer@wcps.org))

#### References

Ferlazzo, L., & Sypniewski, K. L. (2018). *The ELL Teacher's Toolbox*. John Wiley & Sons.

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. G. (2019). *Collaborating For English Learners*. Corwin.



## My Name: My Identity

An individual's name is connected to their personal identity, culture, and family. Almost every name has a story, and it is important to honor every child's name.

When a child's name is repeatedly mispronounced, or they are given an "Americanized" name at school, it can signify disrespect and disregard of the student, their families, and culture. This practice can also have a negative effect on a child's socio-emotional well-being and academic success. For additional information on the importance of my name, please access the following links:

[My Name Lasting Impact of Mispronouncing Student Names](#)