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INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM DESIGN FOR MINNESOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

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INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM DESIGN FOR MINNESOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ellen Bialka

IELR 82

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters of International Education at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

May 1, 2024

Dr. Sora Friedman, Advisor

INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM

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Name: Ellen Bialka

Date: May 1, 2024

Dedications and Acknowledgements

This research paper is dedicated to my beloved family for their continuous support through my master's program. Their belief in my abilities and potential has given me the strength and motivation to pursue excellence in my academic endeavors.

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Lastly, I dedicate this paper to all the multilingual learners I have had the privilege of teaching over the years, whose stories and experiences inspired this research. May it stand as a testament to your resilience in navigating multiple languages and cultures, encouraging you to always embrace and cherish your rich diversity.

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Abbreviations

EL - English Learner

ESL – English as a Second Language

MDE – Minnesota Department of Education

RAEL – Recently Arrived English Learner

ABSTRACT

The recent rise in undocumented immigrants in Minnesota has brought to light significant demographic shifts within the state. Many individuals in this population have limited or no proficiency in English, which highlights the challenges immigrant communities face in adapting to their new linguistic surroundings. As a result, educators have been presented with the challenge of serving a growing number of immigrant children in their schools. To tackle this issue, an intensive English program was developed for a suburban public school district in Minnesota to offer a more targeted approach to improving English proficiency among students before beginning courses required for graduation. An exploratory qualitative design assessed the need for an intensive English program utilizing in-depth interviews or surveys to gain insight into participants' perspectives and experiences with intensive English programs. The findings from data collection indicate that an intensive English program is essential due to the increasing number, demographic shifts, and intensified challenges of recently arrived English learners. By participating in the program, students will improve their English proficiency in academic content areas and progress into emerging adulthood as they learn to thrive in a new culture and educational system.

Keywords: Intensive English Program, Recently Arrived English Learners, Program Design, English Language Learners

Introduction

Immigration has dramatically increased in Minnesota and across the entire nation. Since 2019, the number of undocumented immigrants in Minnesota has risen to 81,000 individuals (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). This growth has brought to light significant demographic shifts within the state. Within this population, 37% self-identify as having limited or no proficiency in English, highlighting the challenges immigrant communities face in assimilating into the linguistic landscape of their new environment (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). A significant challenge immigrants face when assimilating is language barriers. Many immigrants struggle to learn their new country's language, making it difficult to communicate with others and participate in society. Cultural differences can also create barriers to assimilation. They may find it difficult to navigate new social norms and customs, which can cause misunderstandings and even lead to discrimination. Economic and social inequalities can also pose challenges for immigrants, leading to limited access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities.

Specifically, the United States has seen a sharp increase in immigrants from Latin America. In 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 66% of the recent immigrant population was born in Mexico, Central America, or South America (as cited by Migration Policy Institute, 2023). This surge is due to the massive number of Latinos seeking asylum at the Mexico-United States border. The rise in immigration has increased the number of Latino students admitted into schools across Minnesota and the entire nation.

Over the past decade, K-12 educators have faced the challenge of serving an increasingly large number of immigrant children in their schools. During the 2017-2018 school year, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) reported that students identified as “English Learners” (EL) represented eight percent, or 73,128 students, of the state’s K-12 student

population (2017). These students may arrive with limited education, low English proficiency, and even trauma from their migration journey. Children of recent immigrants often reside in low-income and linguistically isolated households, making it difficult to receive adequate support (Sugarman, 2023). Due to this, they may have extra responsibilities to fulfill, such as contributing to their household income or looking after younger siblings. This disparity in education and economic opportunities can significantly impact the success of these children as they progress through high school and prepare for postsecondary education (Sugarman, 2023). As a result, educators have had to expand their capacity to meet the needs of these students. Schools must adapt their curriculum and instructional methodologies to accommodate the linguistic diversity of the student body. Linguistic supports, such as intensive English programs and English as a Second Language (ESL) services, have become more critical to ensure equitable access to education for all students, regardless of their language background.

As an ESL teacher providing language services to multilingual learners, I have experienced this influx of EL students who need additional language, academic, and emotional support at school. I work at a public high school in a suburban city near St. Paul, Minnesota. Currently, the district has over 18,000 students enrolled from kindergarten to 12th grade, with more than 1,400 students speaking a first language other than English. Although the district has an array of languages spoken by students, the most prominent ones are Spanish, Hmong, Amharic, and Somali. English language services are offered at every school within the district to ensure equal educational opportunities and foster academic excellence for all students. Each school in the district employs an ESL teacher with a Minnesota ESL licensure, and a few schools have trained bilingual teacher assistants who support multilingual learners and collaborate with

other classroom teachers. On average, each school in the district has one to two licensed ESL teachers.

Since this school district is in a suburb of the Twin Cities, the number of multilingual learners grows yearly. From January 2023 to January 2024, the district saw a 20% increase in its English learner population (Minnesota Department of Education [MDE], 2023). Almost four percent of the EL population is currently considered a Recently Arrived English Learner (RAEL), defined by MDE (2023) as a "K-12 student who is identified as an English learner in Minnesota and who first enrolled in a school in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia on or after April 15 of the previous school year". As the number of recently arrived English learners surges, additional programming that provides sheltered English language education is needed to accommodate the growing numbers. An Intensive English Program provides a more concentrated approach to improving their English proficiency before beginning courses required for graduation.

An additional rationale for implementing an intensive English program is upholding government laws. The school district desires to uphold the Lau vs. Nichols decision of 1974, a federal ruling stating that identical education does not constitute equal education. The ruling stated that school districts must take affirmative steps to overcome education barriers faced by non-English-speaking students (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). The school district is also required to uphold Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a federal regulation prohibiting denying equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English (U.S. Department of Education, 2024). In addition, the school district desires to uphold Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, a federal regulation that guarantees English learners (ELs) and immigrant students can achieve proficiency in the English

language and meet the academic standards set by the state (Department of Education U.S.A., 2020). In the following section, this paper will comprehensively review and examine the theories and models that serve as the foundation for this intensive English program.

Theoretical Foundations

The program and curriculum design were modeled after popular theories utilized in international education. The Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate (ADDIE) model offers a structured approach to learning and includes five stages (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory emphasizes a dynamic, hands-on approach to learning to engage students. Both models play crucial roles in shaping curriculum development and guiding educational practices.

Program Design Model

The Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate (ADDIE) model is a standard instructional systems design method currently used in education. Founded in the 1970s at Florida State University, the ADDIE model allows program designers to create a set of general guidelines about specific components and their corresponding sequences (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). The ADDIE model has five phases: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Analysis refers to designers identifying the program goals, target audience, stakeholder perspectives, and required resources (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). The design phase utilizes those program goals and stakeholder perspectives to identify learning objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment methods (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). In the development phase, designers create program curricula, assessment tools, and learning resources (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). The implementation phase executes the program curriculum with the target audience (Instructional

Designers of Penn State, n.d.). Lastly, evaluation utilizes formative and summative assessments to determine the program's effectiveness and quality throughout each phase of the ADDIE model (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). The flexibility of the ADDIE model is one of its significant advantages, allowing it to cater to both individualized and traditional instruction when developing instructional material. Furthermore, the model's phases can be adapted to suit the user's specific needs, enhancing its overall versatility (Instructional Designers of Penn State, n.d.). Due to these advantages, many programs, including this project, utilize this model in their design.

Curriculum Design Model

A standard theory that guides program curriculum development is Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory; it involves four stages: concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (1984). During the concrete learning stage, the student encounters a topic for the first time (Kolb, 1984). In the reflective observation stage, the student reflects on their encounter and relates it to their pre-existing knowledge (Kolb, 1984). This stage is particularly significant because it enables students to acknowledge their emotions, describe critical interactions, and identify thought patterns (Punteney, 2019). During the third stage of abstract conceptualization, the student identifies their learning or alters their pre-existing knowledge (Kolb, 1984). In the last stage of active experimentation, students apply their new or modified knowledge to the world around them (Kolb, 1984). In the context of experiential education, the role of the teacher is not simply to impart knowledge but to facilitate the learning process by structuring experiences, observations, reflections, and theories (Punteney, 2019). Moreover, experiential learning emphasizes practicality and connects the curriculum to realistic

problem-solving (Punteney, 2019). Students are guided through the Experiential Learning Cycle with the understanding that they may fluctuate between the stages and start at different points.

Literature Review

Student development and second language acquisition theories are currently utilized in educational settings and the design of language programs. A foundational framework discussed is the WIDA Consortium's English Language Development standards, created to guide English language instruction nationwide. The student development theories discussed are Jeffery Arnett's (2007) theory of emerging adulthood, Jean Piaget's (1952) cognitive development theory, and William Perry's (1970) ethical development theory. These theories are fundamental in understanding student growth and development stages. In addition, the foreign language acquisition theories discussed are Steven Krashen's (1982) input theory, affective filter theory, and James Asher's (1969) total physical response method, all of which provide insight into effective language strategies and factors influencing language learning success.

WIDA Framework

The WIDA Consortium, formerly World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment, is a national organization that produces language development standards that adhere to linguistic and educational theories and comply with federal regulations to support students and teachers (WIDA Consortium, 2014). Minnesota is a member of this organization, and all ESL instruction in public education must follow WIDA's standards and assessments. In order to stay compliant with state law, this program utilizes WIDA's standards and assessments in its curriculum and evaluation. The WIDA Consortium produced an English Language Development (ELD) framework based on various theories and pedagogies detailing the language multilingual learners must utilize in academic settings to succeed (WIDA Consortium, 2014). The standards

framework comprises performance indicators, definitions of performance, academic language appropriate for various ages and cultural settings, principles that guide language development, and descriptors of what learners can accomplish (WIDA Consortium, 2014). By adhering to WIDA's standards framework, this program ensures alignment with state regulations and provides multilingual learners with the necessary linguistic support to thrive academically. A complete list of WIDA's ELD standards can be found in Appendix A.

Student Development Theories

This intensive English program and its curriculum were developed based on thorough research in student learning development and foreign language acquisition. It considered the distinct stages of emerging adulthood, cognitive and ethical development theories, and the need to reduce cross-cultural stereotypes to develop culturally self-aware global citizens.

Jeffrey Arnett's (2007) theory of emerging adulthood outlines a distinct stage of life that begins at 18 and continues until 25. Although biological and neurological development remains consistent in this stage across all cultures, sociocultural development can vary based on prior and present cross-cultural exposure. Emerging adulthood is characterized by the development of various types of relationships, such as family, friendships, and romantic relationships, as well as increased media usage (Arnett, 2007).

Jean Piaget (1952) and William Perry (1970) proposed cognitive and ethical development theories regarding high school students. According to Piaget (1952), students transition from the concrete operational stage to the formal operational stage during high school, which enables them to understand abstract relationships and theoretical concepts (as cited in King, 2017). During the concrete operational stage, students' thinking is logical and concrete. As they transition to the formal operational stage, their thinking becomes more abstract as they utilize

inductive and scientific reasoning (Piaget, 1952, as cited in King, 2017). On the other hand, Perry's (1970) theory describes high school students as being in the stage of dualism, where they believe that every problem has a single correct answer provided by authority figures (as cited in King, 2017). However, as students encounter conflicting views, beliefs, and experiences of others, they transition into the multiplicity stage, where they understand that not everything is black and white (King, 2017). Self-regulation is a crucial factor that allows students to transition into these stages by actively seeking to comprehend new information while reconciling any confusion or contradictions it may cause with existing knowledge.

Moreover, high school students tend to possess cross-cultural stereotypes, which can hinder their ability to become culturally self-aware global citizens (Thorley & Davies, 2017). Teachers and the curriculum significantly reduce these stereotypes by setting an example and rejecting their legitimacy. This need is especially critical to address at the outset of an intensive English program to enable students to embrace new experiences and perspectives.

These student development theories can be helpful in understanding the experiences of immigrant students. Those entering a new cultural context experience a unique form of emerging adulthood. Immigrant students' sociocultural development is influenced by prior and present cross-cultural exposure, impacting their relationships and identity formation while transitioning into a new culture. In addition, as immigrant students encounter new academic challenges and cultural contexts, they may begin to develop abstract thinking and complex problem-solving, as described by Piaget (1952). This transition into formal operational thinking is crucial for immigrant students as they navigate academic and social environments that may differ from those in their home country. Immigrant students may also experience a shift in their ethical development as they navigate cultural differences. Initially, they may approach ethical dilemmas

from a dualistic perspective, relying on authority figures or cultural norms to determine right or wrong. However, exposure to new cultures and ideas can prompt them to transition into a stage of multiplicity, where they recognize the complexity of ethical dilemmas and acknowledge differing viewpoints. This evolution in ethical reasoning is essential for immigrant students as they navigate intercultural interactions and develop their beliefs and values.

Foreign Language Acquisition Theories

Steven Krashen (1982) conducted innovative research on foreign language acquisition that prompted various theories still referenced when teaching foreign languages. A fundamental theory in foreign language teaching is the acquisition versus learning distinction. This theory states that children and adults have two distinct ways of becoming proficient in a new language: acquisition and learning (Krashen, 1982). Language acquisition is a subconscious process when developing first and additional languages. Learners are aware of their ability to communicate in the language but not aware that they are learning the rules of the language (Krashen, 1982). This type of acquisition usually occurs in informal settings where learners can start to gauge if they are using the language correctly (Krashen, 1982). Language learning, on the other hand, is a conscious process when developing a foreign language. This type of explicit learning usually occurs in formal, academic settings and focuses on learning the rules of a language (Krashen, 1982). Language acquisition and learning are critical when developing foreign language skills, as students need to know the rules and sense the correctness when using those rules in various settings.

The Input theory discusses that language learners can acquire a foreign language using slightly more advanced structures than their current proficiency level (Krashen, 1982). By focusing on context, current knowledge of the world, and the meanings of words, students can

acquire new linguistic structures, even if it is above their current level of competence (Krashen, 1982). According to the Input theory, the classroom can serve as a conducive environment for acquiring a foreign language, especially for those at the beginner and intermediate levels. The classroom is more beneficial for these learners than the outside world because of the comprehensible input offered (Wagner-Gough & Hatch, 1975, as cited in Krashen, 1982). *Comprehensible input* is an instructional technique in which educators present information in a way that allows foreign language learners to grasp most of the content (Krashen, 1982).

The Input theory also states that language fluency cannot be directly taught but is developed over time through comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). Evidence of this is found in a common phenomenon called the "silent period," in which students acquiring a new language may remain silent for several months after initial exposure to the new language (Krashen, 1982, p. 26). During this period, students develop foreign language proficiency through active listening and observing the language in their surroundings. Their ability to use the new language verbally emerges once the student has attained sufficient competence through listening and observing (Krashen, 1982). Students learning a foreign language in an academic setting may not be provided a silent period. They may or may not be asked to produce language too early in their acquisition. Producing language too early can harm their foreign language learning, as students without a sufficient silent period substitute their first language rules into the new language instead of learning the correct rules through comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982).

One way to ensure a sufficient silent period and comprehensible input when developing a foreign language curriculum is by utilizing James Asher's Total Physical Response Method (1969). This teaching approach utilizes comprehensible input, focusing on communicating a message rather than the grammatical structure. For example, when learning actions commonly

found in an academic setting, such as “sit down” or “stand in a line,” students will physically act while learning the terms. The method is designed to encourage students to feel comfortable with the foreign language by utilizing physical responses before being expected to produce them (Asher, 1969). As a result, students can decide when they feel confident enough to produce language themselves.

Lastly, Krashen (1982) analyzed the variables that can affect a student’s success in learning a new language using the Affective Filter hypothesis developed by Dulay and Burt (1997). Krashen (1981) found three main variables contributing to a student’s success in developing a foreign language: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety (as cited in Krashen, 1982). If students have low anxiety, high self-confidence, and a high motivation to learn a new language, then they have a low filter that elevates the chance of success in gaining fluency (Krashen, 1982). Students who have high anxiety, are not self-confident, and are not motivated to acquire a foreign language have a high filter. High anxiety causes them to seek less language input and, therefore, have a reduced chance of gaining fluency (Krashen, 1982). To effectively impart knowledge, teachers must not solely provide comprehensible input but also foster a safe learning environment that minimizes the affective filter and creates a setting conducive to learning (Krashen, 1982).

While acknowledging the foreign language acquisition theories, the question must be asked, “Is the intensive, sheltered instruction of a foreign language effective in foreign language acquisition?”. According to Krashen (1982), a sheltered classroom aims to provide comprehensible input in a low-filter environment. This learning environment is especially valuable for beginners who cannot easily obtain comprehensible input outside the classroom. However, a sheltered language class may be of less value to advanced learners, defined by a

higher proficiency level, who have more access to other sources of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). This confirms the generalization that intensive, sheltered instruction supports foreign language acquisition when offering comprehensible input and a low filter environment.

Needs Assessment

Exploratory qualitative research assessed the need for an intensive English program. This methodology aligned with the research question, which asked about the individual lived experiences of EL teachers through an exploratory approach. Participants were asked to engage in an in-depth interview or survey to provide a deeper understanding of their perspectives and experiences regarding intensive English programs. These interviews accounted for the comprehensive needs assessment informing the program design.

Methodology and Participants

The sample population was selected through criterion and convenience sampling. Participants met the criteria of being current district employees with a valid Minnesota teaching license and are teaching English as a Second Language at the middle or high school level. The target population included 15 ESL teachers at four district schools. This study's target and actual participation number was eight ESL teachers representing all four schools. A recruitment letter was sent to 15 ESL teachers, but only eight responded.

Data Collection and Analysis

Informed consent was received utilizing DocuSign, and data collection commenced through interviews and surveys. The questions included in the survey were identical to those found in the interviews. The data collection methods were centered around the main research question: What is the need for an Intensive English Program in the district? After data collection, the recordings, informed consent forms, and transcriptions were stored and organized into folders

on the School for International Training (SIT) OneDrive, which was password-protected and secured through the university's server. Dedoose was used to analyze and code data using concepts in the research questions to create deductive codes. As interviews and surveys were conducted, participant statements and thematic patterns were used to create inductive and in-vivo codes.

Interviews

The first data collection method was in-depth, semi-structured, in-person interviews. Semi-structured interviews allowed the quick collection of quality data and immediate follow-up and clarification. I originally planned for eight participants to partake in an interview; however, the online survey discussed below was a more suitable option for some due to availability, which resulted in three participants completing interviews. The interview questions are found in Appendix B. Interview recordings were transcribed using Otter.ai, an online transcription software. Transcribing was completed within two weeks of the interviews being concluded. Transcripts were used to analyze the qualitative data and inform the program design.

Survey

An online survey was provided through Google Forms to those who declined participation in an interview, and five participants opted for this alternative due to scheduling conflicts. The survey included open-ended questions that replicated those in the in-person interviews.

Ethics of Research

I completed and passed the CITI-certified Training for Ethical Research to ensure I acted ethically throughout this research study. The study also had IRB approval from SIT and the school district before data collection to ensure the research met ethical standards. The Informed

Consent Form ensured that participants knew the purpose and duration of the study, data usage, voluntary participation, and withdrawal at any time. Protecting participant data (identities and anonymity) was paramount. Participant identities were protected using pseudonyms throughout data transcription and reporting. These steps allowed participants to understand all aspects of the study, including how I preserved both their safety and the integrity of the study. Before presenting any findings, I provided a copy of the transcript for participants to check and consent to all the information stated in the interview. In addition, peer debriefing by my program cohort and member checks were utilized to minimize bias. The Human Subject Research form, a document that communicated the details of the project to the Institutional Review Board, showed that the risk/benefit ratio was reasonable and that participant selection was equitable. Informed consent and other monitored data were obtained, documented, and secured. As a result of these efforts and a non-threatening topic, minimal risks were associated with research participation.

Researcher's Positionality and Limitations

Being a school district employee impacted how I collected and analyzed data regarding my professional relationships with colleagues and the district. Due to convenience sampling, I knew all the participants through our professional relationships. I maintained professional boundaries and standardized interviews and surveys for consistency during data collection. My professional relationship with the participants may have impacted the amount and depth of information gained from them. The participants may have shared more information because our preexisting relationships created a more comfortable and informal interview environment, as opposed to interviewing with a stranger or new acquaintance. Participants may have also provided more detailed information due to our shared experiences in the school district.

In contrast, some participants may have felt inhibited from sharing information due to fear of judgment, power dynamics, concerns about perception, or fear of repercussions. Another limitation is my experience working in the school district, which may have affected how I analyzed the data. I may have looked for data that echoed my experiences instead of being more open to new findings that contrasted mine. The sample size was another limitation of my study. It would have been ideal to expand my sample size to include general education teachers and administration knowledgeable about our EL services and needs in the district.

Findings

Through the various in-depth interviews with ESL teachers across the district, three common themes emerged that showed a demand for and informed the design of the intensive English program. First, the educators interviewed communicated an increasing number of recently arrived English learners at their schools. Additionally, participants reported noticeable demographic changes within the recently arrived English learner (RAEL) population. Finally, the participants described various challenges currently experienced by RAELs, which indicated a high need for an intensive English program within the district.

Increasing RAEL Population

Each year, schools within the district have seen an increase in recently arrived English learners. All participants noted that their population of RAELs has increased over the past few years. The average number of RAELs indicated at each school surveyed was ten students during the 2023-2024 school year. One school surveyed saw a 100% increase in RAELs within the first four months of the school year. Ms. Ross explained that “more and more recent immigrants are coming, settling in the suburbs, and other things that we are not equipped to handle. City schools have been dealing with immigration for much longer” (personal communication, January 2024).

Mr. Johnson added, "[we have] more new-to-country students from all over the world, thus, having four or more languages and cultures represented in one classroom. Therefore, more time and resources are spent translating and supporting students in their classes" (personal communication, January 2024). An increase in the number of recently arrived English learners in mainstream or general education classrooms can make it more difficult for teachers to provide the necessary support, such as translations, modifications, and pre-taught content, to all multilingual learners. Instead of supporting one or two RAELs per class, teachers report they are now supporting five or more students per class who have low English proficiency, limited or interrupted education, and speak various languages.

Demographic Changes

In addition to the continuous increase of RAELs, demographic changes have reinforced the need for an intensive English program. These changes, encompassing factors such as home country, guardianship status, and prior schooling, have significantly altered the education landscape, posing unique challenges in servicing these students.

Recently, the United States has seen an increase in the number of immigrants from Latin America, which has translated into school districts accepting more Latino RAELs in Minnesota. For example, Ms. Teagues shared what the administration at the district level sees in terms of numbers, stating:

> We have noticed an increase in our Spanish-speaking population coming from Central and South America right now. Families and students are much more vulnerable, have more significant needs, and need access to resources. They literally come with nothing. That is something I noticed in the last two years…I think that with the sheer number of

> families arriving, they do not know where to start (personal communication, January 2024).

Many participants also noted an increase in RAELs who are unaccompanied minors. The National Immigrant Justice Center designates unaccompanied minors as individuals under 18 years of age who enter the United States without lawful status and are without a parent or legal guardian accompanying them (n.d.). Mr. Hill commented, “The students that we are getting now, some of their situations are more, maybe dire might be too extreme of a word, but they do not have the resources that students maybe five to 10 years ago had that we are serving in this district, such as a stable family” (personal communication, January 2024). Unaccompanied minors add another level of challenges and resources needed for schools. For example, counselors and social workers are needed to secure minors’ necessities, assist in legal matters, and provide mental health services.

There has been a noticeable shift in the educational backgrounds of recently arrived English learners in recent years. Participants mentioned that RAELs have had more frequent interruptions in their education within the past few years. These interruptions can stem from various factors, such as extended stays in refugee or detainment camps, extensive travel from their home country, the necessity to work for additional income, or exposure to war and conflict. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) defines students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) as students with at least two fewer years of education than peers in the same grade level when entering the American education system (2023). This designation emphasizes the significant disparity in educational backgrounds that many multilingual learners face upon arrival in the United States. Educators must teach SLIFE students below-grade standards and foundational skills to succeed in school and earn a high school diploma.

In addition, the nature of their home country's schooling and education system plays a crucial role in shaping these students' English proficiency. Ms. Coleman highlighted the diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds among her multilingual learners. She noted, "It depends on the student and where the student is coming from. I have found that students from Latin American, African, and European countries come with some sense of speaking and listening and have a gap in reading and writing. On the flip side, many students from Asian countries have great reading and writing skills but have a gap in speaking and listening" (personal communication, January 2024). This disparity emphasizes the need for a tailored language program that addresses the specific linguistic and educational needs of RAELs.

Real Challenges for RAELs

The challenges recently arrived English learners face in the United States are multifaceted and can significantly impact their academic success and overall well-being. A significant obstacle is finding success in mainstream content courses. Ms. Howard observed a lack of knowledge and time with general education teachers in modifying their content to make it accessible for EL students, which is an essential equity issue (personal communication, January 2024). An absence of content modifications can leave multilingual learners struggling to understand the material and participate effectively in class. Ms. Ross added that recently arrived English learners "have difficulty operating in a content class without direct assistance from an ESL teacher or paraprofessional. They cannot be in classes independently and find it difficult to communicate with their content teachers, or their content teachers do not communicate with them" (personal communication, January 2024). When RAELs are thrown into general education classes without proper resources or support, it prevents them from succeeding in courses required to graduate. Ms. Williams commented, "Often, our students must 'check boxes' to work towards

graduation. Instead of having explicit language instruction for more than one class period a day, they are expected to attend higher level courses in math, social studies, and science" (personal communication, January 2024). This approach overlooks the crucial need for dedicated language instruction, potentially limiting student's linguistic proficiency and overall academic success.

However, when ESL teachers and paraprofessionals are available to attend content courses with RAELs, due to the high level of need, the number of students, and the low level of English proficiency, it can be difficult for staff to support them successfully. Mr. Johnson stated that "many students at the high school level are "pushed" into a regular content course (i.e.-math, English, History, Science) despite having limited or no English proficiency. Even with scaffolding, for many students, it is like trying to scaffold the Empire State Building" (personal communication, January 2024). An excessive focus on their content courses can hurt their English proficiency, as English instruction may be overlooked, instead focusing on graduation requirements. This neglect can leave students without essential language and literacy skills for accessing content across various subjects. Ms. Teagues stated:

> Notably, our older students have more difficulties because it is more of a race to ensure they have adequate credits to graduate. I think that sometimes their English instruction gets neglected… We need to use our ELD (English Language Development) courses more for intensive English instruction. We need to teach kids how to read. We have so many students who never learned how to read and then come to secondary schools and cannot read. We need to find more time during their day for specifically reading instruction. Once they have that, they can catch up on content areas (personal communication, January 2024).

Prioritizing time for intensive English instruction can help bridge the gap in students' language and literacy skills, ensuring they are better equipped to succeed across all subjects and ultimately graduate with essential proficiency.

Program Description

Program Scope

An intensive English program will allow recently arrived English learners to develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in English to be more successful in courses required for graduation. Additionally, recently arrived English learners may have more significant needs, such as dealing with trauma and separation from family members, which can further impact their academic and language development. A program focused on language development and mental health will create a stronger foundation for their transition into content courses and the United States education system, as discussed by Krashen (1982). An intensive English program will aim to quickly bring students from a low to a high level of English proficiency. This program will provide a seven to ten-month intensive English learning opportunity for recently arrived English learners. This period will allow low-proficiency students to gain enough of a foundation in the English language in both academic and informal settings to succeed with support in mainstream content courses. The specific length of time in the program is determined per student depending on the student’s previous English language education. For example, if a student has one full academic year of English language instruction in their home country, then they would participate in the program for two trimesters (seven months) to get accustomed to the U.S. culture and education system and reinforce their language skills. If a student has less than a full academic year of English language instruction in their home country,

then they would participate in the program for an entire school year (three trimesters). Discretion is given to the ESL teachers at the student's school intake meeting upon arrival.

The district's intensive English program is a district-wide initiative at each high school, with a total of three program sites. Since the current number of RAEL students at each high school is relatively low, the program will be able to solidify its curriculum and practices as the number of students grows each year. Every high school follows a similar daily schedule with six 50-minute periods. Each 50-minute period will consist of a different language focus, including the language of science, social studies, math, and language arts. The language of social and instructional purposes will be embedded throughout each language focus. The program will occur in each high school's designated ESL classroom and will be taught by one ESL teacher. Each language content area will be co-taught by a licensed teacher in that subject so that students can receive graduation credits in that content area. For example, an ESL teacher and an Algebra teacher will co-teach the language of math course. RAEL students participate in the program during the first four periods, totaling four and a half hours of daily English instruction. During the last two periods of the day, students attend mainstream elective classes, such as band or physical education.

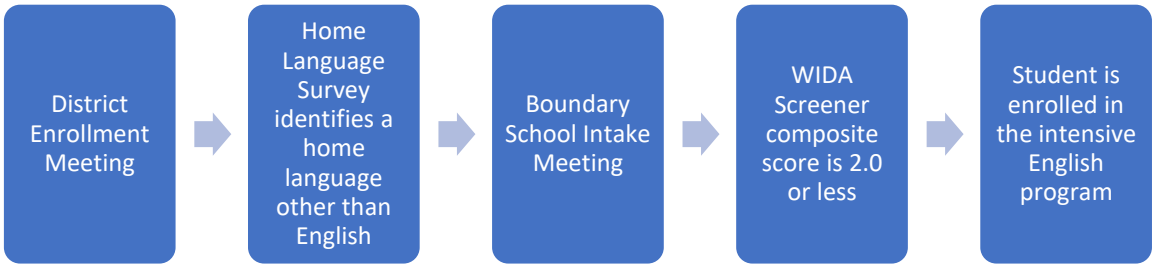
Participants

This program is geared toward participants in grades nine through twelve identified as Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs). The participant enrollment process can be found in Figure 1 below. First, participants are identified through the enrollment process at the district level. Families meet with the EL supervisor and cultural liaison during the district enrollment meeting to complete a home language survey identifying the student's home language. If any language other than English is identified, the student is flagged as a potential English Learner.

During the student's intake meeting at their boundary school, the school closest to their permanent residence address, the ESL teacher and academic counselor are present to gain additional information regarding the student's academic history and English language abilities. Next, the ESL teacher administers the WIDA screener, a mandatory research-based assessment that measures students' current English proficiency levels in reading, writing, speaking, and listening (WIDA Consortium, n.d.). If a student scores a composite proficiency level of 2.0 or lower and meets the MDE's definition of a Recently Arrived English Learner, then the student is enrolled in the intensive English program.

Figure 1

Participant Enrollment Process



Program Goals and Objectives

This program aims to quickly increase the English proficiency of recently arrived English learners to prepare them for completing general education content courses required for graduation. This is a specially designed program with educational practices, methodologies, and curriculum to explicitly teach ELs about the English language. The curriculum includes the essential academic vocabulary necessary to access content instruction and enhance multilingual learners' proficiency in all four language domains - speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Upon program completion, students will improve their English proficiency, develop relationships with teachers and peers, gain knowledge of American culture, and understand the foundational language of math, science, social studies, and social and instructional language. The program's objectives are as follows:

1. Following program completion, students will increase their composite score on the annual WIDA ACCESS test by at least one point.
2. Students will successfully transition into mainstream content classrooms once they are proficient.
3. Students will gain foundational literacy skills in English.
4. Students will gain foundational skills and vocabulary in the content areas of math, science, social studies, and language arts.
5. Students will be aware of and utilize the various supports offered by program and district staff, such as mental health counselors, legal supports, or cultural liaisons.

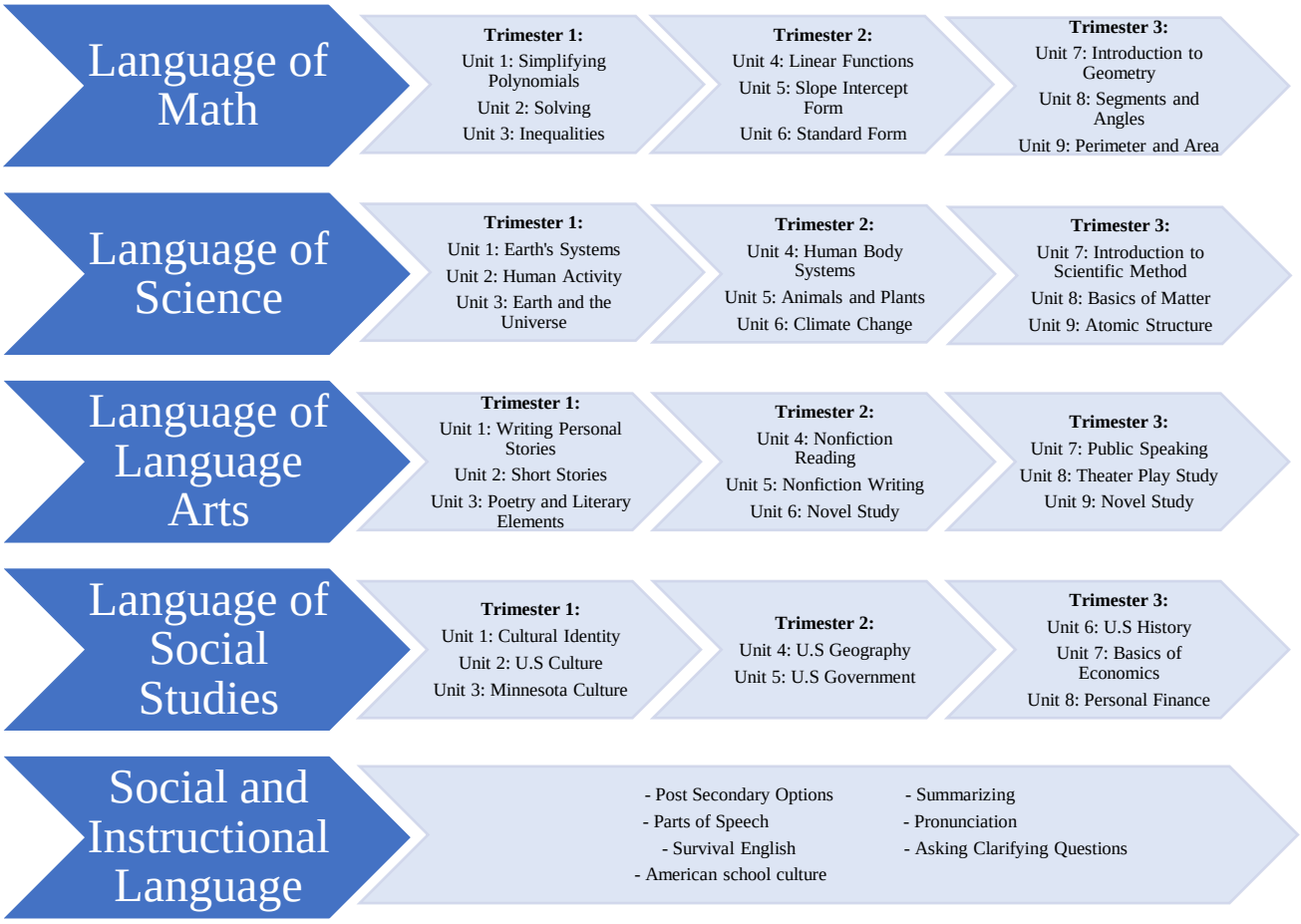
Curriculum

The program's curriculum adheres to national and state educational standards from the WIDA Consortium and Minnesota. It emphasizes four courses per academic year, covering the language of math, science, social studies, and language arts. Each content language focus incorporates instructional and social language to ensure students can communicate effectively in academic and social settings. Each course includes three units per trimester that teach students the foundational skills and language required to excel in mainstream content classes necessary for graduation. The program's curricular scope and sequence can be found in Figure 2 below.

The curriculum outlined in this program contains an overview of the courses and units found within the program. The ESL teachers at each high school will collaborate during professional development to create a detailed curriculum that follows the WIDA standards and maintains consistency between each school. An example of a detailed unit outline can be found in Appendix C. By following this curriculum, students will develop the language skills they need to succeed academically and personally.

Figure 2

Program Scope and Sequence



The WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework provides a foundation for designing curriculum, teaching methodologies, and evaluating academic progress for multilingual students from kindergarten to 12th grade (WIDA, 2020). In Minnesota, WIDA's ELD Standards are a mandatory guideline for all English language services. For additional information regarding the WIDA English Language Development Standards, visit https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld. In this program, the WIDA standards serve as a guide for creating the curriculum in accordance with state requirements and utilizing research-based topics and practices regarding foreign language acquisition. The standards also provide guidelines for assessing students' progress throughout the program. A complete list of WIDA's ELD standards can be found in Appendix A.

In addition, this program's curriculum will follow the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in math, social studies, science, and language arts. These standards are a state requirement for all public schools. Including them in the program will best prepare students for classes in these content areas. For additional information regarding the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards, visit https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/.

Each curriculum unit includes outcomes based on WIDA's Can Do Descriptors (2016), WIDA's Proficiency Level Descriptors for grades 9-12 (2020), and Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The unit outcomes describe in detail what skills and knowledge students should achieve at the end of each unit. As part of WIDA's ELD Standards Framework, the Can Do Descriptors (2016) offers examples of the linguistic competencies language learners can achieve at different levels of English language development in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The Proficiency Level Descriptors showcase a spectrum of language growth for students who speak multiple languages (WIDA Consortium, 2020). It covers six

levels of English language proficiency, from Entering to Reaching, and is tailored for each grade-level grouping (WIDA Consortium, 2020). These descriptors encompass three aspects of language development: discourse, sentence structure, and word and phrase usage (WIDA Consortium, 2020). Utilizing WIDA's and Minnesota's language and academic standards ensures that the curriculum follows state requirements and is founded on best practices in education.

Staffing Plan

Program staff includes on-site employees at each high school and those at the district level. On-site employees include EL teachers and mental health counselors. Employees working at the district level include the EL supervisor and a cultural liaison. These positions already exist and will not add to the program's cost. The descriptions and responsibilities of each staff member are detailed below.

On-Site Staff

English Language (EL) Teacher (3 total)

There are three program sites, each with one full-time English language educator teaching the curriculum to students. All EL teachers have a Minnesota teaching license in Teaching English as a Second Language for grades 9-12. The EL teachers are the main point of contact for the parents and families of the program participants.

Mental Health Counselor (3 total)

As highlighted by the needs assessment, a mental health counselor is crucial to support recently arrived English learners in dealing with trauma, supporting their mental health, and transitioning to the United States. Each of the three program sites has a mental health counselor

to support program participants with their mental health needs. The counselor conducts diagnostic assessments and helps participants manage their mental health symptoms.

District Staff

English Language (EL) Supervisor

The English Language supervisor advises the Superintendent on developing, implementing, and coordinating the district's EL services. As the district's EL department leader, this individual provides vision, management, and guidance while promoting effective collaboration among all departments and services. In addition, the supervisor possesses an in-depth understanding of local, state, and federal regulations, rules, policies, and administrative directives concerning English language education and can apply these standards accordingly. As the head of the EL program, the EL supervisor leads staff to ensure that the needs of multilingual learners are met efficiently and effectively.

Cultural Liaison

A cultural liaison strongly advocates for program participants, families, and students, creating close and trusting relationships that guarantee fair and equal access to the school and district's various services. The cultural liaison collaborates closely with other school and district staff to help students achieve their academic and social aspirations through guidance and support. This individual is also involved with new student intake meetings at the district level, during which they meet with the family and support their transition. An additional responsibility of the liaison is to hold weekly small group sessions with program participants who are unaccompanied minors. The cultural liaison is also fluent in Spanish to support Hispanic students linguistically.

Program Marketing and Participant Recruitment

Program marketing is done through the district service center, which conducts new student enrollment. During the district enrollment meeting, the program is marketed to all new students from another country. During the student intake meeting at their designated boundary school, the ESL teacher offers the opportunity for program participation if the student scores an English proficiency level of two or less on the WIDA screener. Currently enrolled students identified as RAEL who have been in the district for six months or less are also offered the opportunity to participate. These students' parents or legal guardians are notified via email, and paper letters are sent home in their preferred language. This program is also marketed under EL service offerings on the district's website.

Logistics

Meals

Program participants eat breakfast and lunch at their boundary school. The district participates in the Free School Meals Program, a state-funded program that provides free meals to all students at K-12 public schools (MDE, 2023). This program provides students with one complimentary breakfast and lunch on in-person academic days. In addition to the free meals, all other food purchases are at the student's cost.

Classroom Space

The building space required for this program is one classroom at each high school. The classroom must accommodate at least 20 students, desks, chairs, and a teacher's desk. Since each program site already has a designated "EL" classroom that meets these requirements, those rooms will be utilized for the program during the morning class periods.

Technology

The technology required for this program includes audio-visual equipment in the classroom, a laptop for the teacher, one set of headphones per student, and one Chromebook per student. Specific audio-visual equipment required includes a SMART board, audio sound system, and microphone. The school district already provides these technology items as standard offerings for every school in the district.

Health and Safety Plan

This program follows the school district's predetermined health and safety plan. This includes a school behavioral and mental health team, a health services center, required immunizations, safety drills, and general security elements (SoWashCo Schools, n.d.b).

Crisis Management Plan

When a crisis occurs, it is essential to have a plan in place to keep staff and students safe and out of harm's way. The district has general plans that encompass all hazards that could occur on school grounds and specific plans for weather emergencies and infectious disease outbreaks, such as COVID-19 (SoWashCo Schools, n.d.a). The intensive English program utilizes the district's plans in case of a crisis.

Budget

A new budget is not required for this program because the district's preexisting budget, building space, and teacher time are already allocated to support programs of this nature. The district receives state government funding through the general fund, which encompasses different sources of revenue, including state, federal, and local. English learner services receive state funding through the General Education Aid, which allocates funding to school districts based on

the number of students that meet MDE's definition of an English learner (SoWashCo, 2023). In addition, the federal government funds English learner services through the Title III fund (SoWashCo, 2023). The intensive English program directly utilizes both funding sources.

Evaluation Plan

This program will be evaluated using a logic model focusing on outcome assessment. While the district has a preexisting evaluation plan for its EL services, the intensive English program will have an additional, more specific evaluation plan to assess its effectiveness and needs. A team incorporating district administration, the EL supervisor, and ESL teachers will evaluate the program annually. Short-term outcomes will be assessed three times per academic year through individual surveys completed by program participants. Long-term outcomes will be assessed yearly through participant surveys, ESL teacher interviews, and classroom observations. In addition to the logic model found in Figure 3, the program will also be assessed using the WIDA ACCESS test results, the annual English proficiency test, to evaluate if participant English proficiency is improving as a result of the program.

Assessment outcomes can identify areas of strength and weakness within the program. For example, if the surveys reveal that participants are struggling with a particular aspect of the program, such as the instructional materials or teaching techniques, then adjustments can be made to improve those areas. Similarly, if the WIDA ACCESS test results show that participant English proficiency is not improving as expected, then the program can be modified to better meet the needs of its participants. Overall, the evaluation results can provide valuable feedback that can be used to refine and improve the program in the future.

Figure 3

Logic Model for Program Evaluation

Problem Statement
As the number of Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs) continue to increase, there is a lack of EL programming to accommodate the increasing numbers. Since more of these students do not have an adequate English proficiency level to succeed with supports in mainstream courses required for graduation, this leads to a higher need for translations and modifications by ESL teachers in content courses, an increased number of students failing content courses, longer graduation pathways for RAELs, and fewer RAELs exiting EL services during high school.
Program Goal
For additional RAELs to have a higher English proficiency to be successful with support in content courses required for graduation. As a result, RAELs will be literate in English as they enter the workforce and post-secondary education.
Resources
The school district is a government funded K-12 public school system that services almost 1,500 English Language Learners. With the ability to increase spending through raised public taxes, the community members can provide the district with additional funding. Pre-existing resources also include experienced ESL-licensed teachers, classroom facilities, audio-visual equipment, one-to-one technology, an EL district program coordinator, cultural liaison, and educational materials.

Strategies/Activities	**Outputs**	**Short-term Outcomes**	**Long-term Outcomes**	**Impacts**
Students attend 4 hours of intensive English classes, 5 days a week for a minimum of 7 months during the academic year.	70% of students will be able to read at a third grade reading level in English by the end of the program.	Students will gain foundational literacy skills in English.	Students will continue to increase their literacy skills as they continue through high school.	More RAELs will be literate in English as they enter the workforce and post-secondary education. Program sites will see an increase in state test scores around literacy from EL students.
Students attend 4 hours of intensive English classes, 5 days a week for a minimum of 7 months during the academic year.	90% of students will increase their WIDA ACCESS composite score by at least one point upon program completion.	Increased confidence in using English in academic settings.	Improved academic performance in content areas due to strengthened language proficiency. EL teachers report a decrease in the intensity of support	Decrease in the length of time it takes for new to country students to graduate from high school.

Strategies/Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Impacts
			needed for EL students after program completion.	
Curriculum units and field trips regarding post-secondary options are offered to program participants.	90% of students identify a personal post-secondary goal by the end of the program.	Increased number of students considering pursuing post-secondary training and educational opportunities.	Increased number of students applying for post-secondary training and educational opportunities.	Increased number of new to country students attending post-secondary training and educational opportunities.
Curriculum units and field trips regarding United States culture are offered to program participants.	95% of program participants complete course-linked assignments and projects on American culture by the end of the program.	Students report increased comfort and preparedness for living in American society.	Students will use their improved English Language proficiency and knowledge of American culture in day to day life with native English speakers.	Improved cultural integration of new to country students.
Mental health resources, such as psychologists, cultural liaisons, and social workers, are available for students to utilize during the program.	50% of program participants utilize at least one mental health resource during the program.	Provide a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment for all students.	Participating students report improved mental health.	Higher quality of life, integration, support, and confidence after graduation.

Rationale:

- The school district desires to uphold the Lau vs. Nichols decision of 1974, a federal ruling that stated identical education does not constitute equal education. The ruling stated that school districts must take affirmative steps to overcome education barriers faced by non-English-speaking students in the district.
- The school district desires to uphold Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a federal regulation that prohibits the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.
- The school district desires to uphold Title III of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, a federal regulation that guarantees English learners (ELs) and immigrant students achieve proficiency in the English language and can meet the academic standards set by the state.
- The school district is committed to reviewing its policies, practices, procedures, and programs with an equity lens.
- The Theory of Change suggests a promotion of equity in the pursuit of goals and to acknowledge and address power differences between those involved.

Strategies/Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes	Impacts
Assumptions: • The number of Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs) continue to increase. • All ESL teachers are certified to teach ESL in Minnesota, but may not have training specific to low-literate/non-literate populations. • New to country students are motivated to increase their English language proficiency. • The necessary resources will be available throughout the program's duration (i.e. teacher employment, funding, building space). • Societal attitudes and acceptance towards immigrants and refugees in Minnesota continue to be positive.				

Conclusions and Implications

While the district already provides some EL services, the growing number of recently arrived English learners in Minnesota needs more concentrated programming to meet their language needs. The district's need for an intensive English program to support recently arrived English learner's personal, linguistic, and academic growth is evident from the data collected in the needs assessment. As the number of immigrants and refugees grows, this intensive English program allows the district to expand its offerings to provide these new-to-country students with rigorous English language programming. The program takes place at all three high schools in the district, considering the demand for this type of programming at all sites. The program aims to quickly increase participants' English language proficiency in academic content by providing valuable, intentional learning experiences through comprehensible input. To aid in the marketing, all families from other countries enrolling in the district are introduced to the program as an option for their high school students, depending on their English proficiency level. In addition, all currently enrolled English learners with a proficiency level of 2.0 or fewer enrolled in the district for six months or less also qualify to participate in the program.

The intensive English program incorporates Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which enables students to learn through real-life experiences and apply course concepts to

practical situations. During the program, students will have concrete experiences with the English language and culture through field trips and cultural excursions, exposing them to English-speaking environments, such as local stores, events, and performances. After these experiences, students will engage in reflective practices through writing, drawing, or speaking. This will allow students to reflect on their experiences, language challenges, cultural differences, and how they navigated communication barriers.

This program is also deeply grounded in the foreign language acquisition theories created by Krashen (1982) and Asher (1969), which support students' success in their language acquisition. Teachers will use simplified language, gestures, visuals, and context clues to make input comprehensible. Incorporating action-based learning activities where students physically respond to teacher commands and instructions will facilitate students' connection between new language and actions. Storytelling and reader's theater activities utilize Krashen's (1982) and Asher's (1969) theories by engaging students in language acquisition through various comprehensible inputs, total physical responses, and creative expression.

The needs assessment collected data from current English language teachers within the school district. Future lines of research should include data from general education teachers and administration to gain multiple perspectives on the district's need for an intensive English program. To gain insight into the program's effectiveness and whether any modifications are necessary, it is recommended that future research involve conducting interviews with district staff to confirm if the program has been implemented as intended and adequately addresses the needs it aims to meet. An additional line of future research should be creating intensive English programs for elementary and middle school levels and analyzing if they would effectively increase the participant's English proficiency.

Ultimately, the intensive English program is designed to fill gaps and meet the school district's needs. This is done by providing a new, distinctive program for students that offers experiential learning opportunities, mental health supports specific to new immigrants and unaccompanied minors and expanded and intensified language instruction, strengthening the district’s English language services. Through participation in the program, students will improve their English proficiency in academic content areas and progress into emerging adulthood as they learn how to thrive in a new culture and educational system.

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Appendix A

WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework

Key Language Uses	Standard 1: Social and Instructional Language	Standard 2: Language for Language Arts	Standard 3: Language for Math	Standard 4: Language for Science	Standard 5: Language for Social Studies
Argue	**ELD-SI.4-12.Argue** Multilingual leaners will: • Generate questions about different perspectives • Support or challenge an opinion, premise, or interpretation • Clarify and elaborate ideas based on feedback • Evaluate changes in thinking, identifying trade-offs • Refine claims and reasoning based on new information or evidence	**ELD-LA.9-12.Argue.Interpretive** Interpret language arts arguments by: • Identifying and summarizing central ideas of primary or secondary sources • Analyzing use of rhetoric and details to advance point of view or purpose • Evaluating and corroborating relevance and sufficiency of evidence as well as validity of reasoning to support claims **ELD-LA.9-12.Argue.Expressive** Construct language arts arguments that: • Introduce and develop precise claims and address counterclaims • Support claims and refute counterclaims with valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence • Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone • Logically organize claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence; offer a conclusion with recommendations	**ELD-MA.9-12.Argue.Interpretive** Interpret concepts in arguments by: • Comparing conjectures with previously established results and stated assumptions • Distinguishing correct from flawed logic • Evaluating relationships among evidence and mathematical principles to create generalizations **ELD-MA.9-12.Argue.Expressive** Construct mathematics arguments that: • Create precise conjecture, using definitions, previously established results, and stated assumptions. • Generalize logical relationships across cases. • Justify (and refute) conclusions with evidence and mathematical principles. • Evaluate and extend others' arguments.	**ELD-SC.9-12.Argue.Interpretive** Interpret scientific arguments by: • Identifying appropriate and sufficient evidence from data, models, and/or information from investigations of a phenomenon or design solutions • Comparing reasoning and claims based on evidence from competing arguments or design solutions • Evaluating currently accepted explanations, new evidence, limitations (trade-offs), constraints, and ethical issues **ELD-SC.9-12.Argue.Expressive** Construct scientific arguments that: • Introduce and contextualize topic/phenomenon in current scientific or historical episodes in science • Defend or refute a claim based on data and evidence • Establish and maintain an appropriate tone and stance (neutral/objective or biased/subjective) • Signal logical relationships among reasoning, evidence, data, and/or models when making and defending a claim, counterclaim, and/or rebuttal	**ELD-SS.9-12.Argue.Interpretive** Interpret social studies arguments by: • Identifying topic and purpose (argue in favor of or against a position, present a balanced interpretation, challenge perspective) • Analyzing relevant information to support and/or revise claims with reliable and valid evidence from multiple sources • Evaluating credibility, accuracy, and relevancy of source based on expert perspectives **ELD-SS.9-12.Argue.Expressive** Construct social studies arguments that: • Introduce and contextualize topic • Select relevant information to support precise and knowledgeable claims with evidence from multiple sources • Establish perspective • Show relationships between claims and counterclaims, differences in perspectives, evidence, and reasoning

Key Language Uses	Standard 1: Social and Instructional Language	Standard 2: Language for Language Arts	Standard 3: Language for Math	Standard 4: Language for Science	Standard 5: Language for Social Studies
Explain	**ELD-SI.4-12.Explain** Multilingual leaners will: • Generate and convey initial thinking • Follow and describe cycles and sequences of steps or procedures and their causes and effects • Compare changing variables, factors, and circumstances • Offer alternatives to extend or deepen awareness of factors that contribute to particular outcomes • Act on feedback to revise understandings of how or why something is or works in particular ways	**No Standards Available**	**ELD-MA.9-12.Explain.Interpretive** Interpret mathematical explanations by: • Identifying concept or entity • Analyzing data and owning problem-solving approaches • Evaluating rationales, models, and/or interpretations based on evidence and mathematical principles **ELD-MA.9-12.Explain.Expressive** Construct mathematical explanations that: • Introduce mathematical concept or entity • Share solutions with others • Describe data and/or approach used to solve a problem • State reasoning used to generate own or alternate solutions	**ELD-SC.9-12.Explain.Interpretive** Interpret scientific explanations by: • Defining investigable questions or problems based on observations, information, and/or data about a phenomenon • Paraphrasing central ideas in complex evidence, concepts, processes, and information to help explain how or why a phenomenon occurs • Evaluating the extent to which reasoning, theory and/or models link evidence to claims and support conclusions **ELD-SC.9-12.Explain.Expressive** Construct scientific explanations that: • Describe reliable and valid evidence from multiple sources about a phenomenon • Establish neutral or objective stance in how results are communicated • Develop reasoning to illustrate and/or predict the relationships between variables in a system or between components of a system • Summarize and refine solutions referencing scientific knowledge, evidence, criteria, and/or trade-offs	**ELD-SS.9-12.Explain.Interpretive** Interpret social studies explanations by: • Determining multiple types of sources, points of view in sources, and potential uses of sources for answering compelling and supporting questions about phenomena or events • Analyzing sources for logical relationships among contributing factors, causes, or related concepts • Evaluating experts' points of agreement and disagreement based on their consistency with explanation given its purpose **ELD-SS.9-12.Explain.Expressive** Construct social studies explanations that: • Introduce and contextualize multiple phenomena or events • Establish perspective for communicating intended and unintended outcomes, consequences, or documentation • Develop sound reasoning, sequences with linear and nonlinear relationships, evidence, and details with significant and pertinent information, acknowledging strengths and weaknesses • Generalize experts' points of agreement and disagreement about multiple, complex causes and effects of developments or events

Key Language Uses	Standard 1: Social and Instructional Language	Standard 2: Language for Language Arts	Standard 3: Language for Math	Standard 4: Language for Science	Standard 5: Language for Social Studies
Inform	**ELD-SI.4-12.Inform** Multilingual leaners will: • Define and classify facts and interpretations; determine what is known vs. unknown • Report on explicit and inferred characteristics, patterns, or behavior • Describe the parts and wholes of a system • Sort, clarify, and summarize relationships • Summarize most important aspects of information	**ELD-LA.9-12.Inform.Interpretive** Interpret informational texts in language arts by: • Identifying and/or summarizing central ideas • Analyzing descriptions and inferences in textual evidence for key attributes, qualities, characteristics, activities, and conceptual relationships • Evaluating cumulative impact and refinement of author's key word choices over the course of text **ELD-LA.9-12.Inform.Expressive** Construct informational texts in language arts that: • Introduce and define topic and/or entity for audience • Establish an objective or neutral stance • Add precision, details, and clarity about complex attributes, qualities, characteristics, activities, and conceptual relationships • Develop coherence and cohesion throughout text			
Narrate	**ELD-SI.4-12.Narrate** Multilingual leaners will: • Share ideas about one's own and others' lived experiences and previous learning • Connect stories with images and representations to add meaning • Identify and raise questions about what might be unexplained, missing, or left unsaid • Recount and restate ideas to sustain and move dialogue forward • Create closure, recap, and offer next steps	**ELD-LA.9-12.Narrate.Interpretive** • Interpret language arts narratives by • Identifying themes or central ideas that develop over the course of a text • Analyzing how author choices about character attributes and actions relate to story elements (setting, event sequences, and context) • Evaluating the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, and explicit vs. implicit points of view **ELD-LA.9-12.Narrate.Expressive** • Construct language arts narratives that • Orient audience to context and one or multiple point(s) of view • Develop and describe characters and their relationships over a progression of experiences or events • Develop story, advancing the plot and themes with complications and resolutions, time and event sequences • Engage and adjust for audience			

(WIDA, 2020).

Appendix B

Interview and Survey Questions

Personal Background

1. Please state your name, current professional role, and school of employment.
2. Please state your educational degrees relating to ESL.
3. How long have you been teaching ESL? Please expand on the grade levels and types of institutions taught at.
4. Are you proficient in languages other than English? If so, which languages and what is your proficiency level?

Intensive English Program

1. How many new-to-country and level 1 proficiency EL students are at your school?
2. What demographic trends or changes, if any, have you observed that highlight the need for additional support in English language learning?
3. What specific challenges, if any, do students face in developing their English skills within our school district?
4. Do you have any previous experience or knowledge of intensive English programs in other schools or districts? If yes, what insights can be drawn from their programs addressing EL support if we implement a program here?
5. In your opinion, what is the need for an Intensive English Program in District 833?
6. Are there any specific instances or gaps indicating a need for intensified English support?

7. What aspects would you like to see if the District implemented an Intensive English Program? (curriculum type, teaching methodologies, online language programs, technology, wellness support, family collaboration, etc.)

8. What, if any, additional training would you recommend for teachers starting an Intensive English program?

9. How would you envision involving parents and the community in developing and implementing an Intensive English program?

10. What, if any, are some challenges you can foresee when implementing an Intensive English program in our district? In your opinion, how could we relieve these challenges?

11. How would introducing an Intensive English program impact existing resource allocations in our district?

13. How can teachers, administrators, and support staff collaborate effectively to ensure the success of an Intensive English program?

14. How does implementing an Intensive English program align with the long-term educational goals of our district?

15. In what ways do you anticipate that enhanced English proficiency will contribute to overall student success?

16. Are there any other thoughts or reflections that you would like to share?

Appendix C

Curriculum Unit Example

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Intensive English Program Scope and Sequence: Language of Math</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Trimester 1</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Unit 1: Simplifying Polynomials
Order of operations
Exponents
Squares and Roots
Combine Polynomials
Multiply Polynomials
Dividing Fractions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Unit Outcomes</td><td>Students will be able to:
Add and subtract integers without a calculator.
Multiply and divide integers without a calculator.
Evaluate and simplify expressions with whole number exponents.
Evaluate expressions using order of operations.
Combine like terms.
Add, subtract, and multiply polynomials.
Distribute a monomial with a polynomial.
List the numbers 1-50 in English.
Identify a concept using mathematical terms and phrases (i.e two plus four equals six).
Share solutions with others using sentence frames (i.e. My answer is seven).
Ask and respond to select yes/no or Wh- questions.
Match everyday oral content related words and phrases to pictures, diagrams, or photographs.
List content words or phrases that relate to the topic
Use nonverbal signals to demonstrate engagement in conversations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards</td><td>Classify real numbers as rational or irrational. Know that when a square root of a positive integer is not an integer, then it is irrational. (Benchmark 8.3.5.1)
Know and apply the properties of positive and negative integer exponents to generate equivalent numerical expressions. (Benchmark 8.3.5.3)
Evaluate algebraic expressions, including expressions containing radicals and absolute values, by applying computational hierarchy of operations at specified values of their variables. (Benchmark 8.3.6.2)
Use the relationship between square roots and squares of a number to solve situations. (Benchmark 8.3.6.4)
Add, subtract and multiply polynomials. (Benchmark 9.3.6.1)
Show an understanding of the order of operations. (Benchmark 9.3.5.5)</td></tr>
<tr><td>WIDA ELD Standards</td><td>Interpret mathematical explanations by identifying concept or entity (ELD-MA.9-12.Explain.Interpretive)
Construct mathematical explanations that describe data and/or approach used to solve a problem (ELD-MA.9-12.Explain.Expressive)
Construct mathematical explanations that shares solutions with others (ELD-MA.9-12.Explain.Expressive)</td></tr>
</table>

Note: The daily curriculum will follow this unit outline and be designed by the ESL teachers who deliver the curriculum.

(MDE, n.d.; WIDA, 2020).