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Research Report

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Examination of the Current Implementation Status of WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition

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> This report shares findings from Standards Implementation Study (Sep 2022-Feb 2024). The report explores the current status of standards implementation across layers of the educational system, primarily through the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and policy makers; identifies key educator and systems-level practices that support or hinder successful implementation; and identifies potentials and needs areas for additional resource development and continued research.

WIDA Research

WIDA advances academic language development and academic achievement for children and youth who are linguistically diverse through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators.

The overarching goal of research at WIDA is to promote educational equity and academic achievement for linguistically and culturally diverse students.

To achieve this goal, we work in partnership with districts, states, and national experts to conduct research focused on understanding and explaining the educational experiences and outcomes of language learners. Through our research, we also aim to inform the decision-making needs of educators and policymakers who serve these children and youth.

The WIDA research team is housed within the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER). Located at the highly ranked School of Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, WCER is one of the first and most productive education research centers in the world.

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In December 2020, WIDA published the *WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework, 2020 Edition.* The standards framework described within this publication has begun to be implemented across the consortium. Given the critical role of standards in shaping the actions of educators and education, it is important to study the current implementation status of the standards framework. Successful implementation may require more than minor adjustments in school, district, or classroom policies or actions and is dependent on many factors that interact in various ways across multiple and varied contexts. The complexity of the implementation network calls for a layered approach to research, with the examination of factors supporting or hindering change at the policy/system and classroom levels.

Purpose

With educators serving in various roles within PreK–12 schools, including as language and content teachers, curriculum and instruction coaches, and administrators such as directors and principals, local education agencies (LEAs) and state education agencies (SEAs), this initial empirical study aimed to explore the current status of standards implementation across layers of the educational system, primarily through the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and policy makers. A second aim was to identify key educator- and systems-level practices that support successful implementation during early stages of adoption and roll-out of the 2020 Edition of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework within states in the WIDA Consortium, in order to explore potentials and needs areas for additional resources and continued research.

To attempt to discover the extent of standards implementation, a large-scale survey was broadly administered to educators in WIDA states, and participants were recruited for individual interviews through convenience sampling. The findings of this comprehensive, broad-ranging study can inform the field of standards implementation in general, an area generally lacking in the field of education.

Research Questions

To refine the scope of our inquiry, this report elaborated on the educator's sensemaking of the standards, and on evidence and signs for manifestation of standards being implemented, followed by questions designed to elicit drivers and barriers as well as successes and challenges to implementation, guided by the following research questions.

Sensemaking

1. What sense do participants make of the Framework? What do they believe the standards require them to do in relation to their efforts to implement the Framework?

Manifestation

2. What do participants offer from their work as evidence in relation to their efforts to implement the Framework?
3. What parts of the Framework do they use (teachers)/expect to see used (administrators) to plan lessons and learning activities in relation to their efforts to implement the Framework?

Barriers and Drivers of Implementation

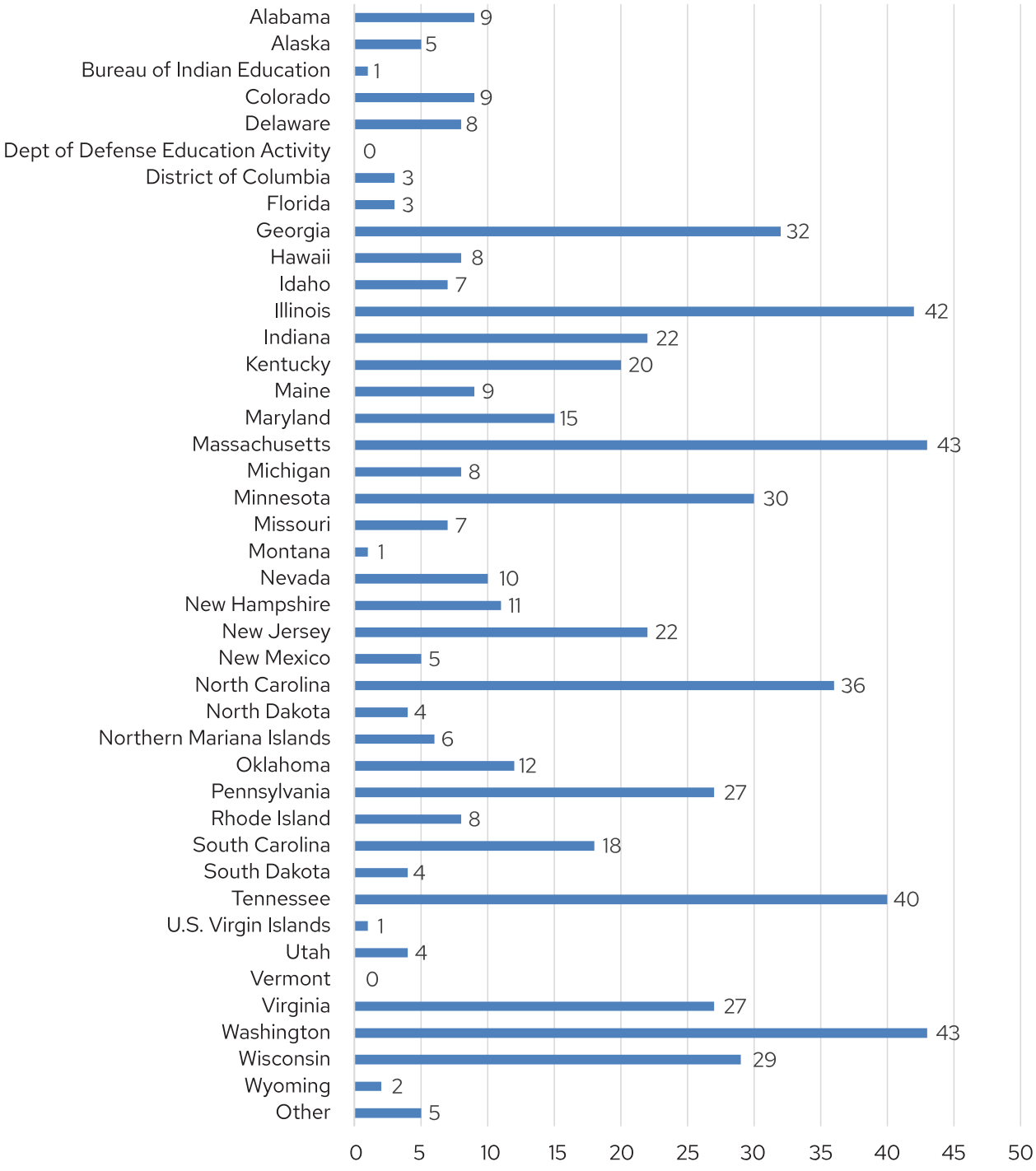
4. What barriers and drivers have educators experienced in relation to their efforts to implement the Framework?

Participants and Setting

Survey Participants

Survey participants (n = 801) were from 43 states and territories, including a participant from a nonconsortium state (New York). In addition to the participants from the 43 states and territories, there were three educators from three different countries: India, Romania, and South Korea. (Note: Total number of respondents varied per question.)

Figure 1: Survey Respondents per Location



Nearly 50% (49.41%) of respondents came from one of the following eight WIDA Consortium states: Washington, Illinois, Massachusetts, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

Interview Participants

62 interviews were conducted of 3 categories of participants. We use the abbreviations shown below in tables and graphics to indicate the category of participant.

- **CB:** Classroom-based teachers that include language and content teachers; 30 CBs from 19 states and 1 international.
- **LEA/SDL:** School and district leaders and LEA; 15 LEA leaders/SDLs from 14 states.
- **SEA:** State leaders and SEA representatives; 17 SEAs from 16 states.

Table 1: Interview Participants' Categories and Locations

Classroom-based Teachers (CB) 19 states and 1 int'l (n=30)	**School & District Leaders (LEA/SDL)** 14 states (n=15)	**State Education Agency Representatives (SEA)** 16 states (n=17)
CO GA (2) HI ID IL IN (2) MA (2) ME MI (2) MN (2) MO NC (2) NJ NM (2) OK TN (3) VA WA WI (2) (INDIA)	CO FL GA MA (2) MI NC (2) NJ SC SD TN UT WA WI	AL CO DE FL GA IN MA MI NM OK (2) RI TN UT VA WA ND

Interview participants (n = 62) were **classroom-based teachers** (n = 30) that included language and content teachers from 19 states and one international country (Colorado, Georgia (2), Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana (2), Massachusetts (2), Maine, Michigan (2), Minnesota (2), Missouri, North Carolina (2), New Jersey, New Mexico (2), Oklahoma, Tennessee (3), Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin (2), and India), **school and district leaders and LEAs** (n = 15) from 14 states (Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts (2), Michigan, North Carolina (2), New Jersey, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin), and **state leaders and representatives of SEAs** (n = 17) from 16 states (Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, Oklahoma (2), Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and North Dakota).

Findings

Findings are organized based on the four research questions. Each section is supported by synthesis of both survey and interview data with excerpts of participants' actual comments to provide supporting details and examples. In each case below, responses from both the survey and interview participants have been combined, unless otherwise noted.

Educators' Sensemaking of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition

To answer what sense participants make of the Framework and what they believe the standards require them to do in relation to their efforts to implement the Framework, findings are presented in five ways: (a) perceived status of implementation, (b) current reaction to the Framework, (c) understanding the components, (d) purposes for which the Framework is used, and (e) perceived actions to take.

Perceived Status of Implementation

Table 2: Survey Respondents' (Classroom-based Educators') Phases of Implementation

Implementation Stage	%	Count
Not yet learning or talking about the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition (aka Framework).	12%	72
Learning: We are learning about the Framework and have not yet begun planning implementation efforts.	32%	183
Planning to implement: My school/district has a team currently working on a plan that addresses how the Framework will be applied to our context (e.g., in the school and district's strategic plan, professional learning plan, or in curriculum and instruction).	17%	98
Initial implementation: My school/district and/or colleagues have begun to incorporate the Framework into curriculum and instruction, and has begun delivering units and lessons that include aspects of the Framework (e.g., language is taught in service of disciplinary learning; we are taking a genre-based, functional approach through Key Language Use; genres are explored with the help of Language Expectations, Functions, and Features).	29%	170
Scaling up: Educators in my school/district have had ample opportunity to learn about the Framework through professional learning, we are at least in the second or third year of developing and delivering curriculum, instruction, and assessments that are aligned to the Framework.	10%	57
Total	100%	580

Table 3: Stages of Implementation Identified by Interview Participants (N=62)

Stage	SEA	LEA/SDL	CB
Pre-adoption	1	0	7
Adoption	14	9	14
Initial implementation	3	6	24
Scaling up	4	4	6

Combining these two data sets, we observe that

- CBs (combined data sets) are mostly in the initial implementation stage.
- SDLs/LEAs and SEAs are mostly in the adoption stage.

Current Reaction to the Framework

Table 4: Current Reaction to the Framework by Interview Participants (N=62)

Participant	2a) Positive	2b) Negative	2c) In between	Other
SEA	5	3	0	0
LEA/SDL	7	12	0	0
CB	29	8	4	0

From this information we can observe the following things:

- From the interview data, whereas most CBs and SEAs had a positive reaction to the Framework, LEAs' reaction was mostly negative. (Note: This question was asked only of interview participants.)
- The following example comments were excerpts from the interview data that support our findings, per participant categories:

CB: Positive Reaction to the Framework

- "It's very much clearer to me after having studied it somehow you can tie the language into whatever content you're doing. And that's been really, really transformative…I do like how academic it is and challenging it is and rigorous it is for teachers. Because it really gives you a much more comprehensive idea about what it means to do language instruction."
- "I felt like this 2020 Framework for me was more clear and accessible in looking at the different levels of discourse sentence, phrase, etc, and really being able to translate that into teacher moves and student moves."

- "So I think that the standards Framework has made me much more intentional with my language instruction. I think that prior to the standards coming out, I thought that it was enough to make sure that kids were really understanding the content and that they were able to show their understanding and conversation. And I realized that that wasn't enough that they really do need."
- "I'm really glad that we have these standards. I think that they're a huge step in the right direction compared to what we've had before."
- "One thing I do like is the satchel. It gives you all the information you need in one place, and you can copy and paste what you need, you can save it."
- "I really appreciated, I believe it was this summer, last spring, someone had added a technology piece on your website that was very helpful where you could just like find exactly those standards you needed and printed them out. You don't have to print the whole, the searching aspect of the standards was so helpful to actually look through that standard and you can just click in the standards and find exactly what you were looking for. That was a great additional piece on the site"

LEA: Negative Reaction to the Framework

- "...it still is a pretty lengthy document. And I think if I could do anything, if I were the queen, I would put out more of these [shows PLD page for K-1] in your newsletters"
- "Do less theory! Because there's a lot of theory, but a lot of teachers say, "okay, okay, I got my credential" or "I'm not interested. I gotta teach, you know, a class of 6 kids tomorrow or whatever"
- "I'm still hearing from people that it seems overwhelming."
- "I did look at the implementation guide today, and even though that's 70 pages versus 392 pages in the Framework. I still had to spend some time just reading out what really was practical to use with teachers"
- "The WIDA resources are voluminous. It's too much for me to easily get across the teachers."
- "It's very dense and not very accessible for classroom teachers"
- "I wish there was a version that was more accessible for a classroom teacher somebody that's not immersed in linguistics."
- "I think it's overwhelming, and so I think sometimes breaking it down into bite size pieces."

SEA: Positive Reaction to the Framework

- "The new Framework is much easier for us to use"
- "... desperately needed because they are very focused and I think teachers are getting that. That academic discourse and how they are handling it in the classroom, and how they use vocabulary fits really well."
- "... I felt that it really matched well with the common core standards. I also found really helpful that there's the proficiency level descriptors and then there's language functions, the different uses of language. Narrate, explain,,, was really helpful in just guiding my instruction..."

Familiarity With/Understanding the Components

Table 5: Survey Respondents' Familiarity with Framework Components

Component	Do not understand	Understand but have not used	Have used	Comfortable teaching to others	Total
ELD Standards Statements	8.62% (n=48)	24.24% (n=135)	37.16% (n=207)	29.98% (n=167)	557
Key Language Uses	8.08% (n=45)	26.75% (n=149)	35.73% (n=199)	29.44% (n=164)	557
Language Expectations	8.80% (n=49)	26.75% (n=149)	39.68% (n=221)	24.78% (n=139)	558
Proficiency Level Descriptors	6.82% (n=38)	21.54% (n=120)	38.42% (n=214)	33.21% (n=186)	558

Approximately 40% of participants indicated that they **have used** each of the major components of the Framework. One-third of participants understand it well enough that they are **comfortable teaching** it to others. Approximately 25% of those who have not yet used the Framework indicate that they understand it. Less than 10% of participants did not understand each of the components.

Some additional example comments of interest came from interview participants, such as:

CB: Understanding Components

- "So I've gone through the journey, the WIDA journey, the ACCESS.... it's been a passionate interest of mine to figure it out. I've done a lot of your online trainings. And, so yes, I'm very interested. I'm not an expert yet, but, or ever."
- "It is a little challenging because some of us have that experience of breaking down the standard. Looking at ourselves as the language—I call ourselves the language specialist, and breaking down...."
- "It's even better because we're learning, along with our students and we're trying to figure that out."

LEA: Not Understood (the Framework) Well

- "But again, the struggle is understanding language acquisition. If I'm a math teacher, for example, in the secondary context, knowing how to use some of these language functions and features, the connectors, the adverbial clauses. There's a gap in maybe background knowledge there, that's preventing the most effective use of the language functions and features in developing these language goals."

SEA (Observing Educators): Not Understood (the Framework) Well

- "I think just the effort to, first of all, have people become familiar with it. Most people, most educators who have had multilingual learners, have some familiarity with it, but they may not necessarily be aware of the difference between the 2012 Framework and the 2020. And when we share that with people and have conversations, most of them are shocked by how much more depth there is in the

2020. The next phase as I see it, don't know if this is specifically statewide, is trying to get a picture of what that actually is looking like in the classroom. And we've done training for hundreds of educators and if you count the self-paced workshops even thousands, but how is it actually impacting lesson plans and every day practice? And that's a lot harder to get a window on, it's something that we're thinking about, but not that far down that path yet."

Purposes for Which the Framework is Used

Survey participants (classroom-based educators) were asked in what ways (unit/lesson planning, curriculum mapping, formative assessment, goal setting, and peer collaboration) they use five Framework components (Standards Statements, Key Language Uses (KLUs), Language Expectations, Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs), and the collaborative planning process). Participants were given an option to name other parts of the Framework they may use for different purposes. The table below shows which of the Framework's components were used most frequently for each purpose.

Table 6: Purposes for Which the Framework is Used

Framework component	Unit/ Lesson planning	Curriculum mapping	Formative assessment	Goal setting	Peer collaboration	Total
ELD Standards Statements (1-5) (N=395)	70% (n=275)	42% (n=164)	33% (n=131)	47% (n=185)	38% (n=151)	906
Key Language Uses (N=377)	72% (n=271)	38% (n=143)	37% (n=141)	41% (n=156)	37% (n=141)	852
Language Expectations (N=383)	69% (n=263)	33% (n=125)	44% (n=169)	56% (n=213)	42% (n=159)	929
Proficiency Level Descriptors (N=404)	56% (n=226)	23% (n=92)	47% (n=191)	62% (n=252)	47% (n=188)	949
Collaborative Planning Process (N=315)	61% (n=191)	36% (n=113)	30% (n=94)	45% (n=141)	61% (n=193)	732
Other (Please specify):	25% (n=15)	10% (n=7)	18% (n=11)	17% (n=10)	30% (n=19)	62

In ranked order, the purposes for using the Framework were

1. Unit and lesson planning
2. Goal setting
3. Peer collaboration
4. Formative assessment
5. Curriculum mapping

In ranked order, the components of the Framework most commonly used are

1. Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)
2. Language Expectations
3. ELD Standards Statements
4. Key Language Uses (KLUs)
5. Collaborative planning process
6. Other

Perceived Actions to Take

Survey participants were asked what actions they believe they should be taking/doing in their current roles to implement the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition.

Table 7: Open-ended Responses about Perceived Actions to Take by Survey Respondents (58 responses)

Codes for Survey Q12	Total	Respondent
Learn more about the Framework	26	Mostly English Language (EL) teachers
Train others	9	A wide range of roles (including special education, district EL/ bilingual programs coordinator, EL teacher, instructional coach, general education teacher, state administrator)
Incorporate components in planning and instruction	9	Mostly EL teachers
No Actions/ Not sure what to do	9	Roles included 2 paraprofessionals, 1 general education teacher, 5 EL teachers, and 1 district bilingual/EL coordinator
Discussions about need for practical application resources	2	2 EL teachers
Get to know students	1	1 general education teacher
Collaborate	1	1 EL teacher

The desired action most frequently mentioned by classroom-based educators' (mostly EL teachers) was to learn more about the framework.

Excerpts from Open-Ended Survey Responses

- "I believe I should be setting aside time to better familiarize myself with the different components of the WIDA Standards Framework so that I can ensure I'm considering them within the context of my own role and so that I am able to support teachers in thinking about and utilizing them."
- "Familiarizing myself with the new standards so I can use them and explain what they mean to my content teachers"
- "All teachers should receive training together."
- "Identifying students as they transfer to our school; understanding services they received in the past."
- "Co-planning with collaboration partners (algebra and chemistry)"
- "I am incorporating the language functions and features particularly in speaking and writing
- "I need to enclose the standards on every assignment's lesson plan."
- "Try to make sense of the standards and reviewing our curriculum to ensure that the ELD standards are in place"
- "The process is very top down. The info is handed out by an administrator and we are told to use it. We need practical application and discussion to make the use relevant to our school and the students in front of us. Examples of successful use in schools would be great. So much effort goes into teaching non-ELD teachers about ELD and then the ELD teachers never get time or training specific to us. In my district, we have a program director that tries, but this is not her sole responsibility to help us fully comprehend. Mostly it is left on the teacher and it can be overwhelming instead of a useful tool that it has potential to be."

Table 8: Perceived Actions to Take to Implement the 2020 ELD Framework by Interview Participants

Participant	4a) Lesson planning	4b) Unit planning	4c) Collaboration with/across content teachers	4d) Align instruction with the Framework and proficiency level	Other
SEA	1	1	3	1	3
LEA/SDL	10	1	12	13	7
CB	32	18	16	28	17

Both CBs and LEAs feel called to align instruction to the Framework. For CBs, this is most often seen as lesson planning. For LEAS, it is most often seen as planning collaboration across content area. SEAs also feel called to develop/plan collaboration across content areas.

Other (examples of 17 comments) Perceived Actions to Take by Classroom-based Teachers' Interview Responses in Table 8

- "It's kinda hard to make that transition after a long time of teaching together. These are not actually skills; these are performance and indicators; these are uses, so trying to think of them across the curriculum is something that I'm still working on, I'm trying to change my thinking to kind of flip it into a different direction…"
- "And so I've been really trying to align my instruction with the standards and using the Framework as a planning tool. In the past, I have sometimes felt like my instruction was more intervention-based or like unconnected lessons. And so I've been really trying to do like more of a unit-base lesson where it's more connected with what's going on in the classroom rather than just like isolated language instruction."
- "To become more explicit, more focused. It gave us a guidance on how to focus on what is important. And a guide to what explicitly we need to teach. Like it gave us a framework for our lessons."
- "I think I need to learn how to put those four components of the framework together. I know a little bit about them separately, but like writing a really good objective for a lesson is something that I definitely need to work more on, like putting the content area and the language uses and functions together. That's challenging."

CBs'* (mostly EL) most frequently mentioned a desire to learn more about the Framework. Both CBs and LEAs/SDLs* feel called to align instruction to the Framework. For CBs, this is most often seen as lesson planning. For LEAs/SDLs, it is most often seen as planning collaboration across content area. SEAs also feel called to develop/plan collaboration across content areas.

Manifestation of the WIDA ELD Standards Implementation

To explore the manifestation of the standards implementation, the following sections explored (a) how educators reported evidence of implementation actions and (b) which components were used.

Evidence of Implementation Action

Table 9: Implementation Actions (Manifestation) Sorted by Role from Survey Data

Implementation Action	Classroom educators	District Coordinator	Instructional Coach	Admin (school/ district)
Understanding PLs* (n=3)	2	1		
Teacher Observations (n=2)	2			
Scaffolding (n= 6)	6			
Plan Units (n=52)	35	12	5	
No Action (n=28)	21	2	3	1
Measure Growth (n=2)	2			
Goal Setting (n=10)	9		1	2
Curriculum Mapping (n=12)	10	4		
Communication among Stakeholders (n=37)	20	8	4	4
Can Do Descriptors (n=3)	3			

Note: PL stands for professional learning offerings.

Table 10: Manifestation by Role from Interview Data

Role	5a) SI*-related trainings being implemented	5b) Development of classroom-ready resources	5c) Understanding of the standards	5) Evidence of implementation efforts (Other)
SEA	1	1	6	8
LEA/SDL	7	14	15	15
CB	7	34	22	62

Note: SI stands for standards implementation.

Considering both data sets together, classroom-based educators' implementation centers around developing lesson plans and unit plans that align with the Standards Framework. Over one third of them are also developing brief training sessions for their colleagues. SEAs' implementation centers around developing networks/systems of support for standards-related trainings, while LEAs' implementation includes both the development of classroom-focused resources (lesson and unit planning) and planning/delivering training for others. Additionally, a high number of teachers and district coordinators named communication with stakeholders as evidence of their implementation.

Component Parts of the Framework Teachers Use or Administrators Expect to See Used to Plan Lessons and Learning Activities

Table 11: Interview Respondents' (Expectation of) Use of the Framework for Lesson Planning

Code	SEA	LEA/SDL	CB
6) Parts in use	0	4	1
6a) Four Big Ideas	4	10	8
6b) Can Do Descriptors	9	11	18
6c) Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)	5	24	18
6d) Key Language Uses (KLUs)	13	22	47
6e) Language Functions/ Features/Expectations	16	28	32
6f) Functional approach	1	4	2
6g) Collaborative planning process	4	1	3
6h) Implementation guide	0	2	0
6i) Others	4	7	9
6j) Good parts	1	2	1
6k) Bad parts	0	0	0

All three stakeholder groups use the KLUs and Language Features and Functions frequently. Additionally, LEAs/SDLs frequently use the PLDs.

Barriers and Drivers of Standards Implementation

Barriers to Implementation

Table 12: Barriers Identified in Interviews

Code	SEA	LEA/SDL	CB
14) Lack of alignment	4	0	2
14a) Lack of Instructional alignment	0	3	7
14b) Competing initiatives	13	5	6
14c) Peer review requirement	3	0	0
14d) Curriculum map revision (e.g. vertical alignment)	4	4	4
14e) Lack of aligned curriculum; content-language connection	8	7	8
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	8	3	6
15a) Teacher shortage	12	2	2
15b) Shortage of trained educators	3	7	7
15c) Insufficient time	2	7	11
15d) Lack of administrative support			
15e) Lack of knowledge or resources to deal with shortage	5	1	2
15f) System's inability to engage parents' involvement	0	6	7
15g) Lack of compliance	1	1	0
15h) Lack of buy-in	6	2	9
15i) State policy	0	0	4
15i) Environmental factor	6	2	9
16) Other barriers	1	2	8

Table 13: Barriers Identified in Survey (N= 392)

Code for Q27	Number of responses	Majority of responses were
Time	87	EL teacher
Complexity of Framework	71	EL teacher
Low engagement of content teacher	40	EL teacher
Need for training	40	EL teacher
Curriculum alignment (lack of)	29	EL teacher
Expertise (lack of)	24	EL teacher
Administration (lack of support)	23	EL teacher
Examples	13	EL teacher
Initiative	12	EL teacher
NOTHING	12	EL teacher
Proficiency levels	10	EL teacher
Support (lack of)	4	EL teacher
Buy in (lack of)	2	District coordinator, EL teacher
Scheduling	2	EL teacher
COVID	1	District coordinator
Planning	1	EL teacher
Resources	1	General education teacher, EL teacher
Service models	1	District coordinator
Speaking focus	1	EL teacher
Student engagement (LACK of)	1	EL teacher
Student records (LACK of)	1	General education teacher

Things that were named as barriers for **classroom-based teachers from both groups:**

- Insufficient time
- Lack of aligned curriculum
- Low engagement or buy-in from content teachers

Things that were named as barriers by SEAs:

- Competing initiatives
- Shortage of trained teachers

Drivers of Implementation

Table 14: Drivers/Supports and Needs Areas Identified by Interview Participants

Code	SEA	LEA/SDL	CB
10) System of support	2	3	10
10a) Regional network; regional training; cohorts	8	0	3
10b) Programmatic commitment	17	18	16
10c) Learning audit; rubric to assess	0	2	0
10d) Expertise; knowledge	0	3	8
11) Accountability	3	2	0
12) Collaboration with others	0	5	3
12a) Programmatic collaboration; structuring initiatives for SI phases	10	4	4
12b) Collaboration for the purposes of classroom work	0	7	8
12c) Collaboration for the purposes of shared learning	0	2	9
13) Needs area	24	32	37
13a) Professional learning	12	2	9
13b) Standards unpacking process	2	0	13
13c) Collaboration with content teachers	10	5	11
13d) Support based on ML sizes	5	1	2

Table 15: Drivers and Supports Identified by Experienced Administrators (SEAs) in the Survey (n=8)

Code	Respondents
Collaboration with teachers	1
Access to resources and training (PLs, learning activities and regional networks)	5
Access to supportive tools	1
Supportive state and its rollout plan	1

Table 16: Drivers and Supports Identified by Classroom-based Educators in the Survey (n=359)

Code for Q28	Majority of respondents were
Administrator support	EL teacher
Collaboration with others	EL teacher, plus a few instructional coaches
Format	EL teacher, 3 district coordinators
PL, WIDA	EL teachers, some administrators, some district coordinators
PL or coaching outside of WIDA	EL teacher, a few general education teachers
PL, unspecified source	EL teachers, 3 general education teachers
WIDA online resources	EL teachers, coaches, administrators
Self-study	EL teachers, 1 administrator, 1 district coordinator
Usefulness of Framework	EL teachers, 3 district coordinators
Getting buy-in from others	EL teacher, 2 instructional coaches, 1 counselor, 2 district coordinators
Dedicated paid learning time	EL teachers, 2 administrators
Prior knowledge	EL teachers
Nothing has supported	EL teachers, 1 general education teacher, 2 district coordinators, 1 instructional coach
WIDA newsletter	EL teachers, a few general education teachers

Code for Q28	Majority of respondents were
Taking action; using it	EL teachers
Personal goal or characteristic	EL teacher
Component-KLUs	EL teacher, instructional coach
Administrators' clear expectations	EL teacher
State-level support or actions	Instructional coaches
Recognition of need or importance	EL teachers
Component-Language Expectations	Program coordinator
Component-Annotated Language Samples	EL teacher
Using older version	EL teachers, 1 district coordinator
WIDA conference	EL teachers
Curriculum	EL teacher
Component-PLDs	EL teacher
Component-Can Do descriptors	EL teacher
Breaking learning into chunks	District coordinator, instructional coach
WIDA social media	EL teacher
WIDA Fellows or relationships	EL teachers
Component-Language Functions	Program coordinator
Component-4 Big Ideas	District coordinator
Administrators who are trained	District EL coordinator
State-level work to align content and ELD Standards	EL teacher

Combining these data sources, we observe that having a solid, programmatic commitment (e.g., shared planning time, attendance at WIDA/other trainings) to standards implementation was a driver across all three categories. For SEAs, additionally, having a plan for moving through phases, and having access to resources (PLs, learning activities and regional networks) were mentioned as drivers.

Additionally, classroom-based educators identified their reliance on expertise (their own or that of others) plus collaboration with others as supporting their implementation.

Discussion

Implications for Future Research, Development, and Pedagogical Practice

These two research activities have yielded a significant amount of data about standards implementation, a new research effort for WIDA. However, as large as this convenience sample is, it is important to note that because these are self-selected participants, not representatives of the entire WIDA Consortium, the findings of this study are limited in their generalizability. Additional research using representative sampling would provide a more complete picture of standards implementation across the Consortium.

A multi-tiered case study of teachers, districts, and states in K–12 settings should be conducted to determine the actual actions that are being taken and specific needs in different contexts. It would be helpful to sample districts that are scaling up, as well as those that are not moving through the stages as quickly. Research across multiple years following the progression of implementation would enable WIDA to more specifically target resource development to support various stages of implementation.

K–12 classroom-based research using a research-practitioner partnership model can explore in-service teachers' needs. Additionally, because several SEAs who participated in our study are developing professional development courses for pre-service teacher education programs, it could be helpful for WIDA to conduct research on pre-service teachers' knowledge and skill related to ELD standards and their implementation.

The findings of this standards research initiative identified the targeted and in-depth needs areas across the layers of the education system. WIDA will continue to follow through in the upcoming development of standards resources to align with these findings by addressing these needs to bolster the implementation of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, while linking to best pedagogical classroom practices that are research-based and up to date.

Implications for Educators and Policy Makers

Findings from this research suggest several implications for educators, policy makers, and researchers.

Because many respondents are in the early stages of implementation (CBs are mostly in the initial implementation stage and LEAs/SDLs and SEAs are mostly in the adoption stage), additional resources could be developed to support their ongoing efforts. This is particularly true for leaders, since classroom educators, using their own agency, are further along in the implementation of the Framework. To support implementation across the Consortium, WIDA could explore what resources might be developed to support the drivers or minimize the barriers educators are experiencing.

Significance and Conclusion

This study aims to provide a sense of the current educational environment regarding standards implementation, as a way to support educators who work with multilingual learners. Our hope is that the knowledge we gather will guide the design of professional learning workshops, guides, and resources to support the implementation of WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. Another purpose is to facilitate the internal work of our organization as we develop, publish, and implement new language standards. Our work is still in an initial stage.

By taking a well-informed inquiry approach, we can decide how appropriate the choices we are making are (such as taking a genre-based approach, functional approach, or an equity and asset-based approach). This study is an initial step in testing our own assumptions and decisions represented in the 2020 Edition and can inform future decision making. Ultimately, we keep in mind our institutional goal of serving educators who serve multilingual learners.

To the field, this study also sheds light on educators' uptake of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, and its impact on classroom practice, students' learning, and language policy. Results will also contribute to previous research around academic standards, especially by including the perspectives of classroom teachers and district/state leaders and by systemically triangulating data to a degree greater than most previous studies. Descriptions of not only the day-to-day classroom practices and teacher enactment but also systemic influence and implementation of the current education of ELD standards will add richer perspectives.

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Appendix A : Survey Questions

Demographic Questions

Survey Question	RQ	Sub Group: Teachers	Sub Group: School/District leaders	Sub Group: SEAs
1. Where are you located? Please select your location from the menu options. (Select all that apply)		X	X	X
2. Generally speaking, in what stage of implementation would you say your school or district is?		X	X	X
3. Which of the following best describes your district?		X	X	X
4. What is the total number of K-12 students in your district?		X	X	X
5. What is the total percentage of ELs (i.e. multilingual learners receiving language support) in your district(s)?		X	X	X
6. What is your current position?		X	X	X
7. What grade level(s) do you support?		X	X	X
8. How many years of experience do you have supporting ELs?		X	X	X ELs and educators who are working with ELs?
9. What is your highest level of education?		X	X	X
10. What types of academic preparation have you had to teach and support multilingual learners that are recognized by your state?		X	X	X

Sensemaking

Survey Question	RQs	Sub Group: Teachers	Sub Group: School/District leaders	Sub Group: SEAs
11. How familiar are you with each component of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020?	RQ1	X	X	X
12. In your current role(s), what actions do you believe that you should be taking/doing to implement the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition?	RQ2	X	X	X

Manifestation

Survey Question	RQ	Sub Group: Teachers	Sub Group: School/District leaders	Sub Group: SEAs
13. What do you use the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition for? (Check all that apply.)	RQ3	X	X	X
14. Please describe specific, observable actions you have taken or have observed others taking, when teaching, while implementing the Framework:	RQ3	X	X you would look for when identifying evidence of implementation.	X you would look for as evidence of implementation when looking at your state.
15. From your perspective to what degree do you believe the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition is influencing district- and state-wide curriculum?	RQ3			X
16. From your perspective to what degree do you believe the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition is influencing district- and state-wide policy?	RQ3			X

Survey Question	RQ	Sub Group: Teachers	Sub Group: School/District leaders	Sub Group: SEAs
17. What particular changes can you point to at the district- and state-wide levels to show the influence of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition?	RQ3			X
18. In your experience, what has hindered your efforts toward your implementation?	RQ4	X	X	X the districts across your state from implementing the Framework?
19. In your experience, what has supported your efforts toward implementation of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework?	RQ4	X	X	X the districts across your state to implement the Framework?

Thank you for your response. Please share your contact information: (Your previous responses will remain anonymous)

Name:

Email:

State:

District name:

[Follow up interview solicitation]

Do you want to participate in standards implementation research? Are you open for a possible interview about how you implement the standards? (Y/N)

Click on this link to exit the survey. The contact information you provided will not be linked to the survey.

Yes: Introduce yourself and context and tell us why you are interested.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Key to abbreviations: SM= sensemaking, M = manifestation, DB= drivers & barriers

Classroom-based Teachers

Can you please briefly tell me your current role, location including city, state, district, and school name?

1. S: How has implementation been going so far?
2. SM: What part of the 2020 edition of the Framework did you start with? How did you start it?
3. SM: What new or different actions do you feel called to take based on the 2020 edition of the Framework?
4. M: What changes have you made in your instruction as a result of using the Framework?
    a. DB: (Only ask this if it makes sense in relation to prior Q) How successful do you feel you've been in implementing those changes?
5. SM and M: If you could share evidence or an anecdote or an artifact of your implementation efforts with me, what would it be?
    a. PROBE, IF NEEDED: How does this represent or reflect your implementation of the standards?
6. DB: What has supported or hindered your implementation efforts?
7. S and M: (How) Do ou share information about the framework with parents and families?
    a. PROBING QUESTON: If so, could you tell me more about it?
8. NEW: Is there anything else you want me to know?

School/District Leaders

Can you please briefly tell me your current role, location including city, state, district, and school name?

1. How has implementation been going so far?
    a. PROBING QUESTION: If not answered, go ahead and ask directly: Could you describe some of your successes in implementation? What have the challenges been for you? What has supported or hindered your efforts?
2. What part of the 2020 edition of the Framework did you start with? How did you start it?
3. S: What new or different actions at the district/school/classroom level do you feel called to take based on the 2020 edition of the Framework?
4. S, also M: How would you define full implementation of the Framework?
    a. PROBING QUESTIONS: Who would be doing what? With whom? How often? [This might answer M: What evidence do you look for related to the standards implementation of the 2020 edition?]
5. S: What have you noticed about the conversations happening in your school or district about the Framework? What have been some hot topics?
6. S: How has the implementation of the Framework related to other initiatives in your school or district?
7. S and M: Do you have a plan for sharing it with parents and families?
    a. PROBING QUESTION: If so, could you tell me more about it?
8. NEW: Is there anything else you want me to know?

SEAs

Can you please briefly tell me your current role, location including city, state, district, and school name?

1. S: How has implementation been going so far?
    a. PROBING: DB: (Could you describe some of your successes in implementation? What have the challenges been for you?)
2. S: How does the Framework fit into your state's priorities and initiatives?
3. S: What have you noticed about the conversations happening in your state or districts about the framework? What have been some hot topics?
4. NEW, M: Do you see anything different happening at district or state level because of the 2020 edition?
5. DB: What has supported or hindered those efforts?
6. DB: What is still needed to support implementation in your state? (What are folks asking for)
7. NEW: Is there anything else you want me to know?

Appendix C: Coding Scheme

Parent Code: Sensemaking

Child Code	Code	Definition
1) Perceived status of implementation	1a) pre-adoption	Not yet started; Not so going well; struggling, challenging
1) Perceived status of implementation	1b) adoption	Phase I; Just started; roll out
1) Perceived status of implementation	1c) initial implementation	Phase II: Going well; ahead of the game
1) Perceived status of implementation	1d) scaling up	Phase III; Getting ready for scaling up
2) Current reaction to the Framework	2a) positive	Well-organized; most helpful document; clarity and concrete nature of the language functions and features as they exist by content area; much more discreetly articulated than the old standards
2) Current reaction to the Framework	2b) negative	Overwhelmed; Big volume; massive documents; size, length, complexity; heavy in theory, light on application; request for practical application; massive documents
2) Current reaction to the Framework	2c) in between	Partially positive or negative; mixed reaction; describing changes in their initial to current reactions; learning curve
3) Understanding components	3a) Understood it well	Easy to use
3) Understanding components	3b) Not understood it well	Some parts are helpful; other parts are difficult to understand; figuring out
3) Understanding components	3c) Naming specific parts	Naming parts of the Framework such as Four Big Ides, CDDs, PLDs, KLUs, language functions, language features, etc. a+ positive b- negative
4) Perceived actions required to take	4a) Lesson planning	Either collaborative or pull out; improve/change approaches in teaching; being intentional

Child Code	Code	Definition
4) Perceived actions required to take	4b) Unit planning	
4) Perceived actions required to take	4c) Collaboration with/ across content teachers	
4) Perceived actions required to take	4d) Align instruction with the Framework and proficiency levels	E.g., ACCESS scores; SIOP Integration
4) Perceived actions required to take	4e) Other	

Parent Code: Manifestation

Child Code	Code	Definition
5) Evidence of implementation efforts	5a) SI-related trainings being implemented	Within school or district wide trainings; Instructional trainings; Embedded in their roles; Co-teaching partners; schoolwide; visiting teams of teachers; PLC; WIDA trainings; communication
5) Evidence of implementation efforts	5b) Development of classroom-ready resources	Instructional resources being created based on the Framework Lesson planning; templates, Posters, modules, canvas courses, etc. Developing training resources
5) Evidence of implementation efforts	5c) Understanding of the standards	When educators address the understanding about different parts of the Framework as evidence; district EL specialists giving trainings for teachers to understand components and uses
6) Part(s) in use	6a) Four Big ideas	Naming all or parts of the four Big Ideas and how they start when using the Framework
6) Part(s) in use	6b) Can Do descriptors (CDDs)	Note: If they mention can-do descriptors, as them what editions (what they are doing with CDD that can shift the Framework
6) Part(s) in use	6c) Proficiency level descriptors	Pointing to PLDs when describing how they start implementing the Framework in their instruction
6) Part(s) in use	6d) Key Language Uses (KLUs)	Naming which KLUs PLDs when teaching with the Framework in their instruction

Child Code	Code	Definition
6) Part(s) in use	6e) Language functions/ features/ expectations	Content and grade specific
6) Part(s) in use	6f) Functional approach	Explaining how SFL or functional approaches influence/shape their instruction or understanding of the Framework
6) Part(s) in use	6g) Collaborative Planning Process	
6) Part(s) in use	6h) Implementation Guide	
6) Part(s) in use	6i) Others	E.g., any other parts mentioned such as mentor texts, annotated language samples
6) Part(s) in use	6j) Good parts	Participants say what parts are helpful; informative; well-written
6) Part(s) in use	6k) Bad parts	Participants address areas of confusions, difficulties, improvement.
7) Definition of full implementation	7a) Ownership over standards	Respect WIDA standards were part of that standards collections; shared responsibility; both content and EL teachers full understanding, use, and application
7) Definition of full implementation	7b) Content teachers' buy-in	Describing a full implementation with content teachers' full participation and buy-in
7) Definition of full implementation	7c) Collaborative planning	Collaboration, co-planning, co-teaching (note: pull out model, grammar instruction); partnership between EL teachers and content teachers
8) Observable conversation and topics about SI	Naming hot topics	Conversations and hop topics regarding, but not limited to, SI, observed happening in state and/ or districts; noticing and identifying hot topics and conversations and naming what they are
9) No conversation topics about SI	Not observed	They noticed little to no active conversation or hot topics happening in their location.

Parent Code: Drivers

Child Code	Code	Definition
10) System of support	10a) Regional network; regional training; cohorts	Regional network; regional training; cohorts (Note. Often mentioned by state leaders organizing it as drivers of SI)
10) System of support	10b) Programmatic commitment	Programmatic commitment; administrative support; training and workshop
10) System of support	10c) Learning audit; rubric to assess	Learning audit; rubric to assess
10) System of support	10d) Expertise; knowledge	Naming expertise and knowledge as drivers of SI; making one's own resources
11) Accountability		E.g., Self-assessment protocol tool; how to follow up after PLs
12) Collaboration with others	12a) Programmatic; structuring initiatives for SI phases	Planning time; attending/giving/planning for workshops and trainings
12) Collaboration with others	12b) For the purposes of classroom	Classroom instruction; language-content integration collaboration
12) Collaboration with others	12c) For the purposes of learning	Student learning, teacher/educator learning
13) Needs area (what folks are asking for)	13a) Professional learning	More targeted PLs; mixed modes; support class of a wide range of PLs; webinars, online courses
13) Needs area (what folks are asking for)	13b) Standards unpacking process	Standards unpacking protocol; scope and sequence; where to start; step 1, 2, 3… Must-do's; wish-to-do's
13) Needs area (what folks are asking for)	13c) Collaboration with content teachers	Need resources for communication with content teachers
13) Needs area (what folks are asking for)	13d) Support based on ML sizes	Tailored support based on ML sizes; High incidence vs. Low incidence; international schools

Parent Code: Barriers

Child Code	Code	Definition
14) Lack of alignment	14a) Lack of Instructional alignment	Teacher's teaching – students' needs; Lesson planning and ACCESS scores need to align
14) Lack of alignment	14b) Competing initiatives	Initiatives – school improvement goals; with other initiative (e.g. reading)
14) Lack of alignment	14c) Peer review requirement	Federal peer review requirement competing priorities; Burden to complete peer review requirement
14) Lack of alignment	14d) Curriculum map revision (e.g. vertical alignment)	Using older versions of content standards and/ or older versions of part of the Framework; Old version; teachers' unwillingness to revise;
14) Lack of alignment	14e) Lack of aligned curriculum; content-language connection	Integration of state standards and WIDA standards; content standards and WIDA standards (published curriculums available for purchase that are already aligned to the Framework); Disciplinary literacy and WIDA standards
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15a) Teacher shortage	Lack of sub teachers; teachers with ML
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15b) Shortage of trained educators	Skillset; new teachers; Expertise by whom; teachers' background knowledge; content teachers' capacity building
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15c) Insufficient time	Competing priorities; Initiatives – school improvement goals; with other initiative (e.g. reading); bandwidth; Student case load; capacity of time; lack of time for training; lack of time resulting in funding issues
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15d) Lack of administrative support	Lack of administrator buy in, SDL buy in, etc.; lack of district support
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15e) Lack of knowledge or resources to deal with shortage	Newcomers or MLs overlooked; People, technology, books, rooms, etc.

Child Code	Code	Definition
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15f) System's inability to engage parents' involvement	Not as verbal as monolingual parents; unaware of how to advocate; little to no communications from school to parents about the Framework; parents' illiteracy
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15g) Lack of compliance	Superficial compliance only; Lack of requirement; Implementation not required
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15h) Lack of buy-in	Complaints about content teachers; challenging to get everyone onboard
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15i) State policy	Requirement to re-select ELD standards on regular basis; state not approved
15) Lack of capacity (individual & system)	15j) Environmental factor	E.g., pandemic and post pandemic; rural districts; rural area.
16) Other barriers		E.g., curriculum set for pull out model

Participant Categories

Code	Definition
17) CB	Classroom-based teachers
18) LEA	School and district leaders; cooperating teachers; instructional coaches; district ML specialists
19) SEA	State education department representatives
20) Other	All other categories of educators including higher education faculty and administrators

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

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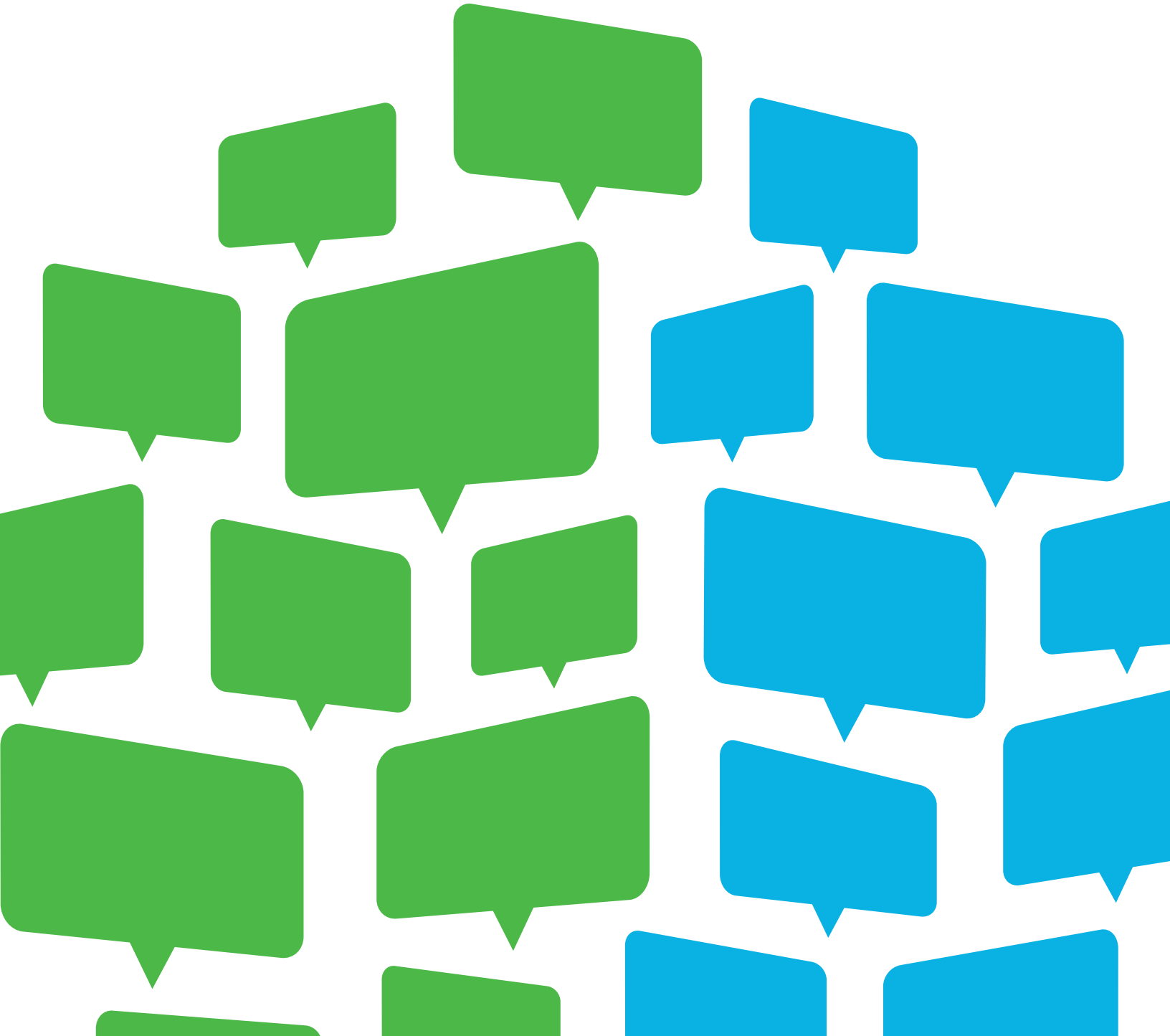
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