

Curriculum and Instructional Practices

Do we implement appropriate curriculum and instruction to ensure the success of English language learners and prevent school failure?

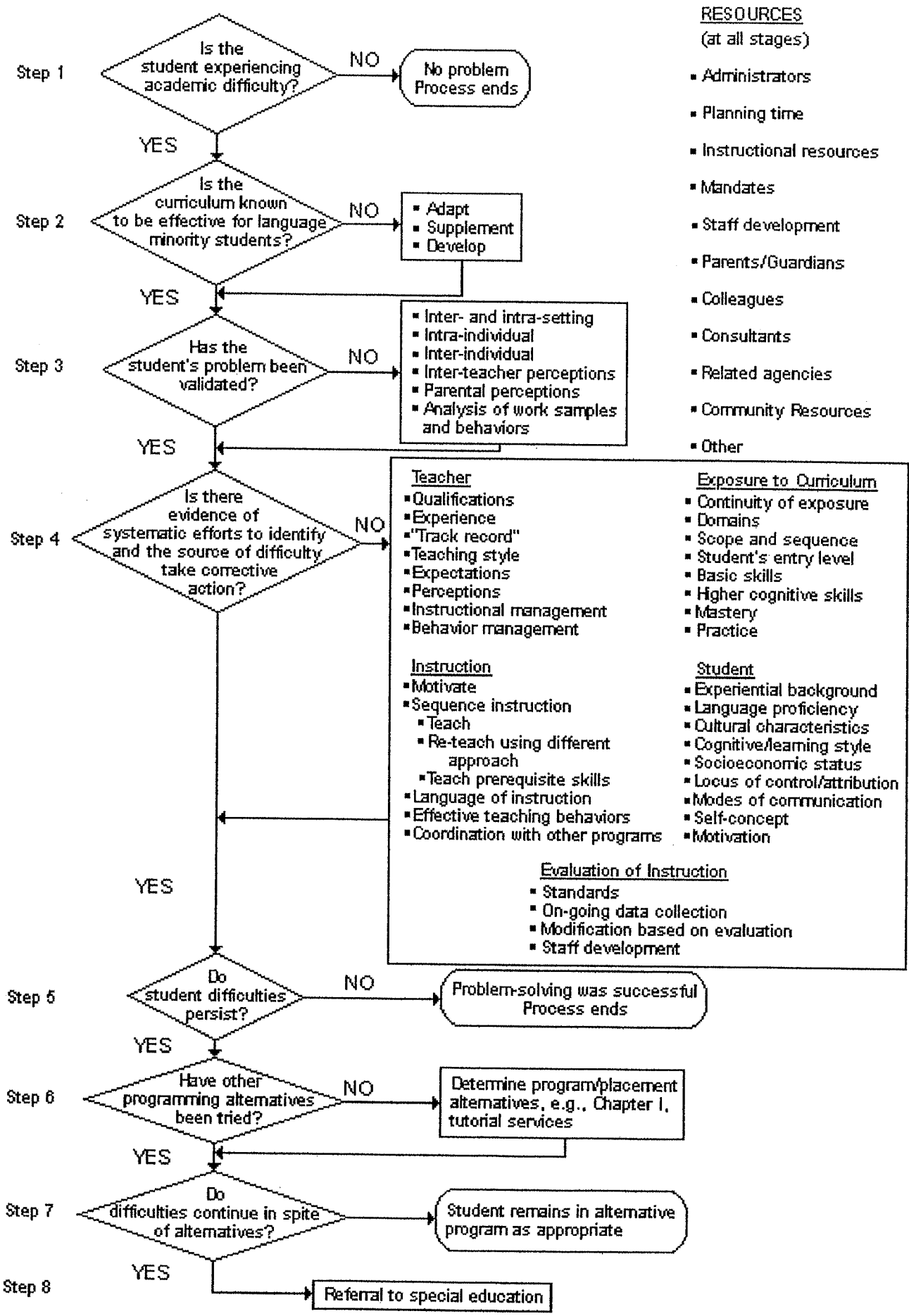
In your grade-level or vertical team, review each practice and check the box that indicates the presence or absence of the practice.

	yes	no*
1. Do teachers facilitate the development of essential language and literacy skills at a student's level of oral language proficiency in English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do teachers provide opportunities for students to interact with peers or adults who speak their native language?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do teachers provide meaningful opportunities to use English and interact with peers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do teachers preview lessons to be conducted in English and in the native language, if possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do teachers use language during instruction that is comprehensible and meaningful to students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does the instruction build on words and concepts that transition easily from one language to another? (This helps students access what they know about the topic in their first language and apply it to English.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do teachers adjust the level of English vocabulary to the appropriate level for the student?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do teachers repeat, rephrase, and extend the students' language to support language learning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do teachers use nonverbal cues, including gestures, facial expressions, dramatic portrayals, physical responses, pictures, and concrete objects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do teachers slow the pace of speech, but keep it natural? Do teachers enunciate clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Do teachers provide opportunities for students to engage in extended dialogues and concentrate on second language learning in small groups and one-to-one settings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Do teachers simplify vocabulary? Do teachers teach key vocabulary words?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Does the instruction activate background knowledge and connect to students' lives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Do teachers provide discussions about a topic prior to reading and make connections to students' lives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Do teachers repeat key points and main ideas during the course of the lesson?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Do teachers review key points and main ideas at the conclusion?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Do teachers use videos and pictures to provide a context for language and conceptual content?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Do teachers preview the main idea?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Do teachers use graphic organizers, charts, and other visuals to enhance comprehension?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Do teachers provide opportunities for discussion of topics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Do teachers provide extra support for students who speak dialects, especially when they begin to decode and spell words?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Do teachers use instructional materials that are appropriate to the student's culture and other background characteristics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Note: Develop an action plan for any item marked "no."

Figure 1

Preventing Inappropriate Placements of Language Minority Students in Special Education:
A Prereferral Process



RESOURCES
(at all stages)

- Administrators
- Planning time
- Instructional resources
- Mandates
- Staff development
- Parents/Guardians
- Colleagues
- Consultants
- Related agencies
- Community Resources
- Other

Referring to Special Education

When should English language learners be referred to special education?

Unless the general education system has programs and services for students such as the ones described, teachers may feel that they have no alternative but to refer students to special education.

When prevention and early intervention efforts fail to resolve learning problems, then referral to special education is warranted. Referral committees should consider the following questions before recommending a comprehensive evaluation.

Educators should be sure that the characteristics exhibited by the student are not confused with characteristics of students with language or learning disabilities (see Appendix A).

Referral Consideration Questions	yes	no
In addition to the teacher who is making the referral, have others (e.g., the ESL teacher, remedial program personnel, parents) noted similar difficulties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the problem exist across contexts (e.g., in general education and ESL classes, at school, at home)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the problems evident in the student's first language?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the student failed to learn to read in the native language, despite effective literacy instruction in that language?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the student exhibit the same types of problematic behaviors in the native language as in English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the student's progress in acquiring English significantly different from that of peers who started at about the same level of English language proficiency and have had comparable instruction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there evidence that difficulties can be explained by cultural differences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the student had consistent native language instruction? If yes, for how long? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the student had consistent English as a second language instruction? If yes, for how long? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do grade placements (social promotion, retention) reflect underachievement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there significant life events (e.g., illness, accident) that might explain the problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there teacher variables (e.g., attitudes, bias, expectations, language proficiency, certification, experience) that might affect performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do data show that the student did not respond well to general education interventions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there other variables that could explain the difficulties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, list: _____		