January 11, 2021

To Building Administrators, District Leaders, and Board of Directors -

As Multilingual Learner (MLL) Facilitators and Learning Assistance Program (LAP) Facilitators of elementary buildings, we are writing as a collective team to advocate for our students who are receiving MLL and/or LAP services, to acknowledge and share the work educators have contributed during the current global pandemic and heightened incidences of racial injustices. We are requesting a response for how we can collaborate at a district level to meet the needs of our students, families, and teachers in a safe manner.

As MLL and LAP facilitators, we know our role, we know our students, we know our schools and we know our individual risk factors (see addendum A and D). As stakeholders, we want to be part of the decisions that are being made alongside the MLL Department Director, Chitra Bhardwaj. Elementary MLL facilitators work K-5 with caseloads ranging from 72-123 MLL students (see addendum Table B). Elementary LAP facilitators work with K-5 below grade-level students supporting their growth to reach grade-level expectations. In service of our most vulnerable students in the Bellevue School District, jointly, we propose the following considerations:

Priority 1 recommendation is to continue our work in a responsive and flexible manner
- Allowing the highest number of students to receive the maximum amount of support
- Making decisions in partnership with administration to facilitator's role and responsibilities to virtual or in-person placement per building need
- Preserving collegiality with classroom teachers so that they can thrive in the co-teaching cycle safely and virtually
- Honoring virtual placements for high-risk category colleagues who have personal or immediate family members whose health precludes them from participating in hybrid settings

Priority 2 recommendation is to stay safe by following the CDC/L&I guidelines
- Matching the contacts of the K-2 classrooms to a maximum of 16
- Allowing a safe space to work. Keeping 6 ft distance for sustained instruction
- Providing proper PPE including, but not limited to, fitted N95 masks
- Having flexibility with schedules to limit contacts for facilitators serving in 2 or more buildings

In a virtual world, working with multiple grade levels and different schools has allowed us to serve more students due to the consistency in scheduling across grade levels, and no travel/transition time. Since facilitators have been told to come back to our buildings to support K-2, we know that we are not able to maintain that same student support for all of the students we serve. Some of what facilitators are doing to support students virtually during synchronous and asynchronous times are:

MLL facilitators:	LAP facilitators:
• Using grade-level content to build language acquisition through data-informed small groups	• Delivering targeted, individualized literacy and math instruction in small group and individual settings
• Co-Planning, Co-teaching, Co-Assessing, Co-Reflecting by pre-planning in order to align CCSS & ELPS	• Co-Planning, Co-teaching, Co-Assessing, Co-Reflecting to support Tier 1 instruction
• Recording lessons to model strategies for synchronous and asynchronous times	• Planning and leading professional development for staff based on data-supported needs and interests
• Progress Monitoring with Achievement Level Descriptors during whole and small group instruction. Interpreting data in collaboration with LAP facilitator. Administering ELPA21 screener	• Administering Progress Monitoring and Benchmark assessments in individual and small groups; interpreting student, group, class and school level data with MLL Facilitator
• Participating in PLC and grade-level planning meetings	• Participating in PLC and grade-level planning meetings
• Advocating on behalf of MLL students and families and communicating information in preferred language	• Communicating with families of students receiving LAP services
• Participating on leadership teams (BLT, RE&I) and providing DDPD, BPD, EDPD	• Participating on leadership teams (BLT, RE&I) and providing DDPD, BPD, EDPD

All of the instructional practices listed above are essential components in supporting students' language, social-emotional, and academic development. Our goal as facilitators is to be responsive to the needs of students K-5 virtual and hybrid during synchronous times and asynchronous times. We will work with our administrators and teachers to determine what support is best. We believe that having flexibility in the above recommendations and what instruction looks like is crucial for our students' success this year (see addendum Table B) and the health and safety of our facilitators. We are requesting a response from the board and district leadership on our recommendations.

Addendum

A: From Reopening Washington Schools 2020 Guidance for Supporting Multilingual English Learners, Appendix A (page 12), "It is our obligation to provide MLLs with:

1. Appropriate English language development instruction
2. Meaningful access to rigorous, grade-level content
3. Recovery of learning loss through an accelerated model, not remediation, for students who were not able to access instruction last spring"

Table B

School	MLL Caseload* & Number of Facilitators
	* This number reflects students receiving MLL services under TBP/Title III funding. This does not include additional contacts facilitators interact with as part of the inclusion model when co-teaching in the classroom.	
Ardmore	168	1.5 Facilitators
Somerset	117	1 Facilitator
Bennett	80	.6 Facilitator
Cherry Crest	72	0.8 Facilitator
Clyde Hill	111	1 Facilitator
Eastgate	83	1 Facilitator
Enatai	85	1 Facilitator
Jing Mei	123	0.7 Facilitator
Lake Hills	197	2.5 Facilitators
Medina	50	0.4 Facilitator
Newport Hills	95	1 Facilitator
Phantom Lake	88	1 Facilitator
Puesta del Sol	53	0.2 Facilitator
Sherwood Forest	145	1.5 Facilitators
Spiritridge	77	1 Facilitator
Stevenson	306	3 Facilitators
Wilburton	138	1.5 Facilitators
Woodridge	78	1 Facilitator

Table C

Student Need	MLL Service
Small Group Instruction	In order to see language models, students need to be able to practice language in small groups (4 – 6 students maximum) in proximity to peers. These groups need to both target language needs for the MLL student AND provide grade-level appropriate support by way of language model peers. This instruction should be in addition to, not in replacement of, classroom instruction with the teacher. We feel the best way to do this is with Priority 1.
Visual and audio practice of language	Students need to be able to see expression, demonstration, and mouth movements to mimic language practice. Masks inhibit this instructional necessity. We feel the best way to facilitate this learning is with Priority 1. Priority 2 does not allow facilitation of this learning due to wearing masks while in the building.
Co-teaching	Co-teaching can continue in Priority 1 or Priority 2 if we are virtual, like specialists. With return to in-person, students are losing the small group instructional portion of their day with the classroom teacher. Some of this could be delivered by a facilitator during their asynchronous time.

D: LAP BOY to MOY Virtual Learning Insights

MOY data collection began January 4th and ends February 5th, so we are unable to report definitive results however, preliminary observations of the impact of small group virtual instruction include:

- Indication of LAP and non-LAP students maintaining and growing academically as observed in STAR Reading, DIBELS, and SRI Benchmark results
- Observation by LAP facilitators and classroom teachers that students are highly engaged in virtual small group instruction
- Continuing data-driven Guidance Team processes that include multiple stakeholders like teachers, families, counselors, administrators in virtual settings
- Parent feedback that small group virtual instruction is helpful and meaningful
- Students reporting feeling positive and connected during small group times
- Grouping of students across classes therefore increasing minutes of instruction and opportunities for social and academic interactions
- One-on-one supports as needed at various times as facilitators are able to "catch" students whenever they may happen to be online
- Traditionally less-verbal students being more willing to engage and participate as a result of feeling safe in the virtual small group setting
- Our students having reached a comfort level with computer-based virtual learning and being in a strong place to continue these academic habits

We commit to being antiracist by promoting educational, linguistic, and racial equity for our students, families, educators, and community members. We engage in high-quality culturally relevant and rigorous educational practices that uphold respect, non-discrimination, and fairness. As social justice advocates, we affirm student identity, promote multilingualism through an additive mindset, and structure our work for integration of all voices. (MLL Mission Statement 2020)

Eve Chan - MLL / Ardmore & Sherwood Forest

Corinne Larsen - MLL / Eastgate

Lily Martin - ESC / Title III PD Coach

Justine Szymala - LAP / Lake Hills

Vicki Capestany - LAP / Lake Hills

Allyson Guida - MLL / Lake Hills

Dunya Gasimova -MLL / Lake Hills & Wilburton

Lauren Flood - MLL / Woodridge

Jennifer Rivera - MLL / Bennett & Medina

Ryan Wahlberg - MLL / Ardmore

Christie Brown - LAP / Wilburton

Krysta French - LAP / Phantom Lake

Siobhan Chan - LAP / Lake Hills

Robin Lessing - LAP / Enatai

Elena Houghton – MLL / Enatai

Masakazu Yamakawa – MLL / Sherwood Forest

Bev Doleac - LAP / Ardmore

Anne Thapa - MLL / Lake Hills

Irene Kearns - LAP / Ardmore

Xing Wei - MLL / Jing Mei

Sydonie Magelssen - MLL / Stevenson

Sue Shannon - MLL / Stevenson

Kelsi Baldwin - MLL / Wilburton

Christine Choi - MLL / Spiritridge

Susan Foley – MLL / Clyde Hill

Jill Suresh - MLL / Newport Heights

Hannah Hwang - MLL / Somerset

Pushpanjali Sengupta - MLL / Stevenson

Matthew Pennewell - MLL / Phantom Lake

Samantha Tuan - MLL Department ITCL

Alicia Feuling - MLL / Cherry Crest & Puesta del Sol