

## THE (IM)POSSIBILITIES OF EQUITABLE EDUCATION OF MULTILINGUAL EMERGENT BILINGUALS IN RE- MOTE TEACHING: A SURVEY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION

*The purpose of this study is to identify how teachers of Emergent Bilinguals labeled “English Language Learners” (EL teachers) responded to the sudden shift to emergency remote teaching and learning (ERTL) due to COVID-19 in March 2020. Emergent Bilingual teachers from Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin were surveyed during ERTL and this paper details how these specialized teachers responded to ensure continued instruction for Emergent Bilingual students. We highlight what tasks EL teachers were asked to do by their schools, colleagues, and administration, as well as what was needed from students and families. Specifically, we organize their responses in terms of instructional and service-oriented activities. Data offer insights into existing disparities and demands placed on EL teachers (instructional and non-instructional services) which were exacerbated and made more visible by the ERTL condition. Findings suggest that districts are overwhelmingly out of compliance with requirements to provide equitable access to education as mandated by Title VI and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act.*

With the implementation of emergency remote teaching and learning (ERTL) (Milman, 2020) across most of the United States in March 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19, schools shifted from physical settings to distant ones. Because some form of remote teaching and learning continued to be implemented during the 2020-2021 school year, we identify this time period as “early COVID-19 ERTL” and refer to later and future remote teaching and learning as “RTL.” Teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals, alongside students and families, assumed emergency response roles to maintain school-based education in its many instructional and social service dimensions, while physically distancing. English language (EL) teachers of multilingual English learners (hereafter referred to as “Emergent Bilinguals”) were tasked with the role of mitigating barriers that restricted Emergent Bilinguals from experiencing fair and equitable education. This included bridging school language and cultural practices and, at times, serving as points of contact to address access to food and healthcare. This article focuses on this distinct group of EL educators, who teach in both stand-alone settings or as integrated group partners (e.g. co-teachers), working with their general education colleagues to ensure access to grade level and subject area content.

U.S. public schools are mandated to provide equitable educational

opportunities to Emergent Bilingual students. These mandates stem from Supreme Court rulings on *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) and *Castañada v. Pickard* (1981) which ruled that districts must provide students identified as English language learners with appropriate programming to remove barriers to accessing education in monolingual English schools. These mandates include providing adequate resources and personnel to ensure Emergent Bilingual programming. During ERTL, pre-existing social and educational inequities for Emergent Bilinguals became more visible and exacerbated. For example, access to computers and sufficient internet speed amongst Emergent Bilinguals living in rural areas and/or who live with restricted economic circumstances were not new issues. For instance, the U.S. Department of Education's (Zehler et al., 2019) study about supporting Emergent Bilinguals through technology found that seventy-eight percent of teachers reported that students' lack of internet access at home to [digital learning resources] was a barrier to their use of [digital learning resources] for instructing [Emergent Bilingual] students" (p. xv). However, uneven access to technology and high speed WiFi amongst Emergent Bilingual households became alarmingly apparent and shifted to a major equity issue as schools and districts scrambled to respond to these as necessities to maintain school attendance and access to teaching and learning. As primary points of contact with Emergent Bilingual youth and their families, EL teachers moved into action, taking on instructional and service dimensions of educational access and outcomes. With these conditions in mind, our research questions were:

- 1) What roles did EL teachers play during early COVID-19 ERTL?
- 2) How did EL teachers serve the instructional and non-instructional needs of Emergent Bilingual learners during early COVID-19 ERTL?

Using descriptive quantitative analysis of a survey of 405 EL teachers from three Great Lakes states (Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), we explored how EL teachers (and by way of this, schools and districts) specifically addressed both instructional and non-instructional services for Emergent Bilinguals. EL teachers in these represented states reflect similar (im)migration community histories and growth where social and school infrastructures for (im)migrant and refugee families are under-developed (Hilburn, 2014). When such programs are underdeveloped, then the focus tends to be on compliance with capacity growing as the immigrant community grows (Morita-Mullaney & Stallings, 2019). Findings point to the need for a (1) clearer understanding of the challenges with remote teaching and learning in relationship to Emergent Bilingual students' access to education provided by public schools and (2) the need for schools and districts to evaluate its programming, resourcing, and personnel (instructional and bilingual non-instructional) in order to rectify barriers Emergent Bilinguals are required to navigate to access education

which are both made more visible during (emergency) remote teaching and learning.

### **Emergency Remote Teaching & Learning**

ERTL is education implemented during governmental, national security, economic, social, and/or environmental instability that disrupts the primary model of an in-person public education (Davies & Bentravato, 2011). As Hodges, et al. (2020) explain, “[t]he primary objective... is not to re-create a robust educational ecosystem, but rather to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional supports in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis” (para. 13). During the COVID-19 pandemic, ERTL applies to the K-12 public education effort to maintain access to school-as-education despite physical school closures. As the pandemic continued into the 2020-2021 school year, the continuation of remote teaching and learning takes multiple shapes, including physical school closures and limited attendance in school settings, paired with continued virtual instruction.

Within ERTL, teachers must provide care and support for youth and families in holistic and integrated ways (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020), which we define as ‘service’ or non-instructional activities. This service aligns with the ethics of critical care (Nieto, 2018) regularly invoked by EL teachers prior to COVID-19. These ethics result in EL teachers taking on roles, responsibilities, and positions that extend beyond discrete language and literacy instruction, or access to content area instruction (Ajayi, 2011; Morita-Mullaney & Stallings, 2018). In the context of COVID-19, EL teachers provide access to both the ongoing and acute instructional and non-instructional needs that schools are required to meliorate in some cases (instructional), and positioned to support the navigation of in others (institutional and socioeconomic barriers).

Pre-COVID-19, EL teachers were already positioned as marginalized and peripheral, positioned as educational aides and language assistants to content area and grade-level teachers, not considered as primary and fully legitimate educators (Harvey & Teemant, 2012; Morita-Mullaney, 2019). This peripheralization accompanies the marginalization of Emergent Bilinguals in U.S. schools (Gitlin et al., 2003; Pettit, 2011). Further, EL teachers’ preparation often fixates on discrete language instruction and strategies for accessing academic content (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2016; Morita-Mullaney, 2019; Morita-Mullaney & Stallings, 2018), reducing focus on preparation for non-linguistic elements of teaching. However, in practice, EL teachers often take on roles, responsibilities, and identities that are subversive, creative, and adaptive in response to the needs and interests of Emergent Bilinguals and their families (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Thus, they are positioned in times of situational crisis (e.g. ERTL) to respond in meaningful ways to their students’ immediate needs. EL teach-

ers' responses and insights assist us in identifying the specific instructional and non-instructional supports, referenced hereafter as *instruction* and *service*. Thus, EL teachers highlight both the wider social support system needs that are transferred to public education, as well as the shortcomings of K-12 schools and teacher preparation programs in supporting EL teachers in navigating the demand that they perform these roles in order to support Emergent Bilingual students.

### EL Teachers' Multiple Roles

EL teachers provide both direct *instruction* and *service*. Instruction is specific language/literacy support that facilitates academic success. Service includes supports that facilitate material, cognitive, and social-emotional access to instruction. For example, EL teachers serve students in accessing school through facilitating home/school communications or transportation (Harvey & Teemant, 2012). Service may also include acquiring technology and internet connections, or connecting youth and families to health and human services.

Although EL teachers embody multiple roles and identities, attending to both instruction and service, service is often construed as tangential to instruction (Harvey & Teemant, 2012; Morita-Mullaney, 2019). Services, however, are the institutional barriers within and outside of school that foreclose on access to instruction in schools (Palmer, 2019). Whether ascribed or assumed, these instructional and service-oriented roles differ from those of general education teachers (Farrell, 2011; 2012). Further, the distribution of these roles is impacted by teacher racialization (e.g. Flores, 2011; Rauscher & Wilson, 2017), with teachers of color and multilingual teachers of color asked and expected to do additional labors, both explicit and invisible (Amanti, 2019). For example, when Spanish-speaking Latinx or Hmong EL teachers are asked to do translation and interpretation for the school, removing them from providing instruction with Emergent Bilingual students.

With the closure of physical schools and the quick pivot to distance learning, EL teachers' roles expanded to address the urgent challenges faced by Emergent Bilinguals. Institutional disparities, reflecting historic marginalization of multilingual communities with recent (im)migration experiences, are further exacerbated during times of crisis. Given the move to ERTL and restrictions on many essential resources, how schools operate has shifted, revealing underlying instabilities as they quickly assemble instruction for students (Hodges, et al., 2020). This study illuminates the needs of Emergent Bilinguals and their families during this crisis, thereby informing more responsive preparation and support of all educators to meet the distinct needs of Emergent Bilinguals and their families.

## Methodology

We analyzed 405 survey responses from EL teachers in three U.S. Great Lakes states: Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The survey was administered from May 18 through June 5, 2020 and findings detail the many roles EL teachers took on during ERTL.

### Participants

Survey participants were recruited from practicing K-12 EL teachers in public or charter schools in Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin who served as EL teachers before and during ERTL. Participants in these states share similarly growing EL and (im)migrant populations, yet their states' infrastructures to support their newer (im)migrant communities are still developing. Additionally, EL teacher preparation across these states have similar components of primary focus on language and literacy instruction, an inclusion of 'advocacy' as a standard of effective teaching practice, and limited inclusion of service elements in preparation coursework (Morita-Mullaney, et al., 2019). K-12 EL teachers were recruited through listserv and social media for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) affiliates in each state, where membership consists of 619 educators in Indiana, 908 in Minnesota, and 647 in Wisconsin. The survey was shared via hyperlink, allowing for word-of-mouth sharing amongst EL teachers, beyond affiliate membership.

**Table 1**

#### *State-level and Total Survey Participants*

State	Respondents	Rural %	City %	Suburban
Indiana	113	15.9%	56.6%	27.4%
Minnesota	189	9.0%	42.3%	46.6%
Wisconsin	103	22.3%	48.5%	27.2%
TOTAL	405	14.3%	47.9%	36.3%

A total of 405 EL teachers responded (see Figure 1): 113 Indiana teachers, 190 Minnesota teachers, and 103 Wisconsin teachers. Fifteen percent of respondents taught in rural schools (state-level breakdown: 16% Indiana, 9% Minnesota, 24% Wisconsin). Forty-eight percent of respondents taught in city schools (state-level breakdown: 56% Indiana, 43% Minnesota, 48% Wisconsin). Thirty seven percent of respondents taught in suburban schools (state-level breakdown: 28% Indiana, 48% Minnesota, 28% Wisconsin). Teachers taught across elementary, middle school, high school.

## **Survey**

The survey was divided into three distinct sections: teacher and school-level demographic information, instruction provided before and during ERTL, and services provided before and during ERTL. Items related to instruction focused on the methods for delivery of instruction, the platform and materials used, and the frequency of both instructional planning and instruction itself. In the area of service, items detailed how EL teachers provided services for Emergent Bilinguals, families of Emergent Bilinguals, and teacher and administrator colleagues at the school. EL teachers also contrasted the percentage of time they spent on instruction and service before and during ERTL. The electronic survey was done on Qualtrics, which could be completed by computer, tablet, or smartphone. Participants were given the opportunity to volunteer for a follow-up interview. Data from these interviews are part of Phase 2 of the study, and are outside the scope of this paper.

## **Data Analysis**

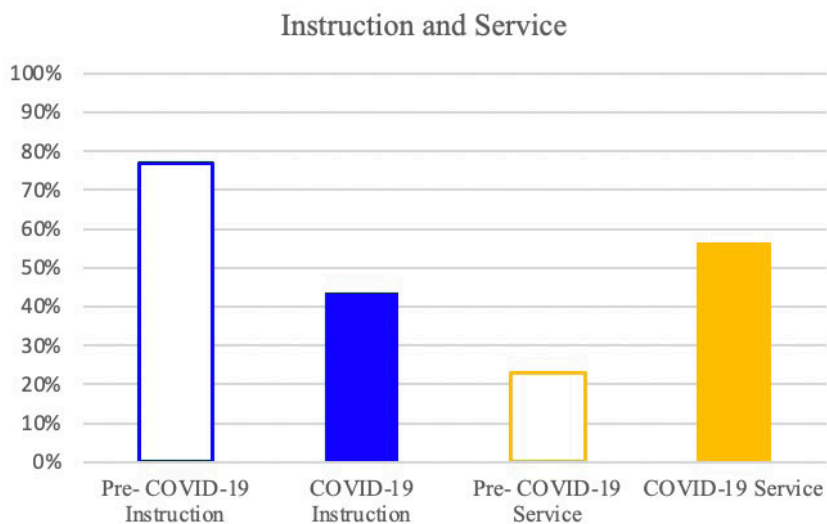
Using descriptive statistics, we analyzed the raw data and looked for the percentage of completion. Surveys with completion rates less than 33% were purged. Based on survey responses, we analyzed the types, frequency and effectiveness of 1) instruction; and 2) services provided by, and requested of, EL teachers pre- and during ERTL. Data were then disaggregated by state to examine patterns across these demographically similar contexts.

### **EL Teacher Survey Findings**

Survey results offered insights into how EL teachers' time and labor were distributed across instruction and service pre-COVID-19-induced ERTL and during ERTL. This included self-reporting of how EL teachers spent their time between providing instruction and meeting socioeconomic and material needs of Emergent Bilinguals and their families ("service") (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*State-level and Total Survey Participants*



EL teachers were asked to provide what proportion of their time had been spent on instruction and what proportion of their time had been spent on service prior to COVID-19 school closures. They were then asked to provide what proportion of their time was spent on instruction and what proportion of their time was spent on service during ERTL. These distributions were then averaged. Prior to physical school closures due to COVID-19, EL teachers reported that 77% of their time and energies were spent on instruction and 23% was spent on providing services. With the implementation of ERTL, time spent on instruction was reduced to 43.6%, with time spent on providing non-instructional services increasing to 56.4%. In this section, we outline findings connected to EL teacher instruction and non-instructional service

### **Service**

During COVID-19 ERTL, EL teachers shifted away from the majority of their time being spent on Emergent Bilingual student instruction. Instead, the majority of their time was spent identifying and facilitating services that they (1) recognized their students required; (2) learned their students or families needed; and/or (3) were asked to do in place of instruction by their schools or districts (e.g. their teaching colleagues or administration).

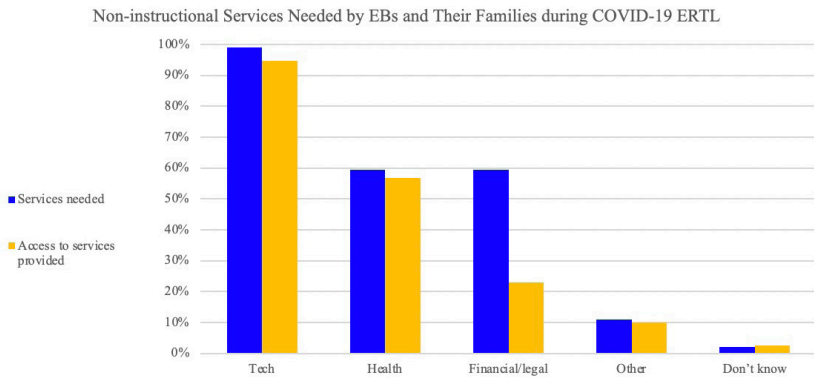
### What services were EL teachers providing?

EL teachers identified what services (non-instructional) their Emergent Bilingual students and their families were in need of immediately after, and in the three subsequent months, of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as how they learned of their need for support accessing these services (Figure 2). Services were related to accessing school-based education in the form attempted by schools following their closures, as well as other factors related to stay-at-home orders in their states and communities.

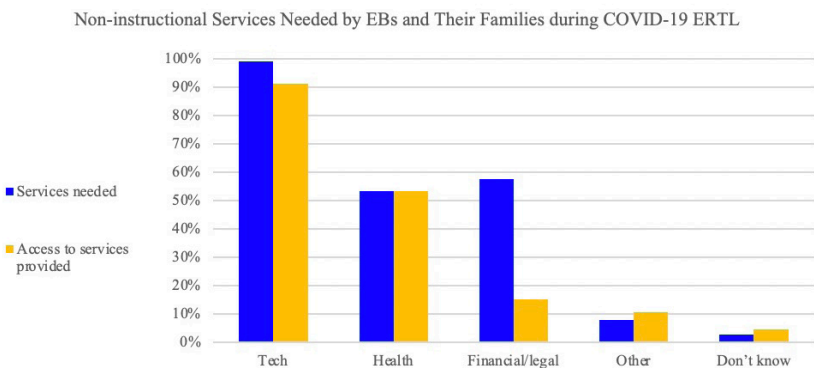
**Figure 2**

#### Non-Instructional Services Needed and Provided

Indiana, Minnesota, & Minnesota combined

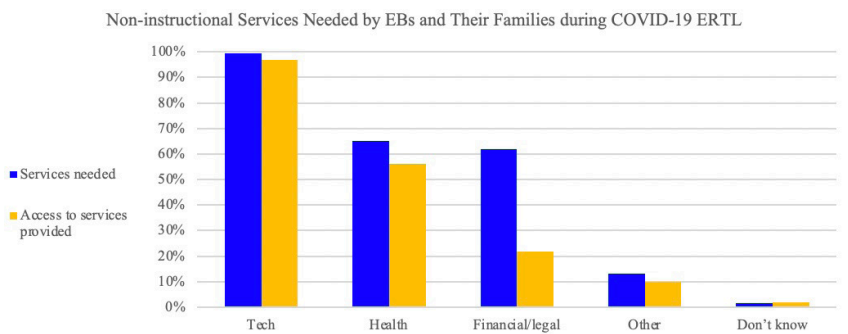


Indiana

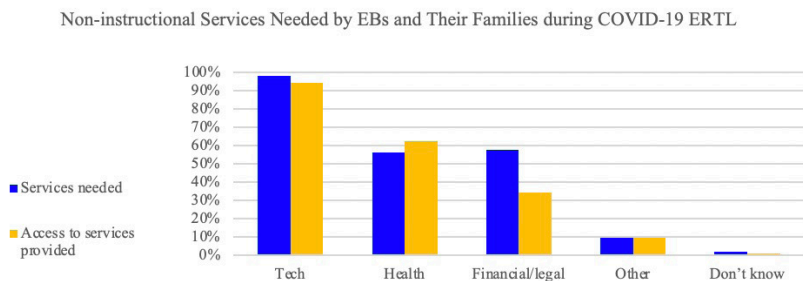




## Minnesota



## Wisconsin



Technology access was a large proportion of EL teachers’ time, with 99% of EL teachers reporting that their Emergent Bilingual students required technology support and 94.6% identifying that their time was spent providing access to school-required technology. These technology supports included connecting families with Internet access, WiFi, and hotspots; resolving technology issues when and if their services did not work; getting electronic devices that were needed to access instruction to students (e.g. computers, tablets); creating, translating, and interpreting community-based language resources; and anything related to virtual schooling.

EL teachers also spent a great deal of time determining and connecting families with health and wellness services. Nearly 60% (59.5%) of EL teachers identified this as a need, and 56.8% successfully facilitated access to these services. These services included sharing, translating, and interpreting rapidly changing information about COVID-19; connecting families with medical services; identifying mental health concerns and connecting children and families with mental health resources; providing resources for physical activity; food access; housing stability and safe living environments; connections with religious and spiritual communities central to the lives of some of their Emergent Bilinguals; connecting children and families

with reading and entertainment materials; and connecting with opportunities for physically-distanced social interactions.

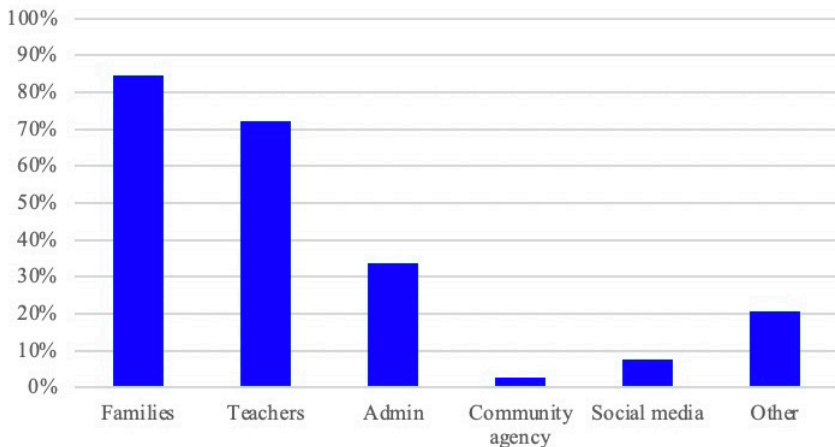
The greatest disparity EL teachers reported between which services Emergent Bilinguals and their families were in need of and what they spent their time providing were financial and legal services. Fifty-nine and a half percent (59.5%) of teachers reported the families of their Emergent Bilinguals were in need of financial and legal services to ensure stability and security that is important to participating fully in school. Only 23% of EL teachers reported that these services were provided or that these needs were addressed. Financial and legal services included income-based services due to loss of family member employment and income, school-aged youth taking on additional employment to supplement family income, school-aged youth taking on additional childcare responsibilities for younger family members, community services related to employment and/or unemployment benefits, services related to immigration processes, legal services, access to transportation, and services in response to family separations.

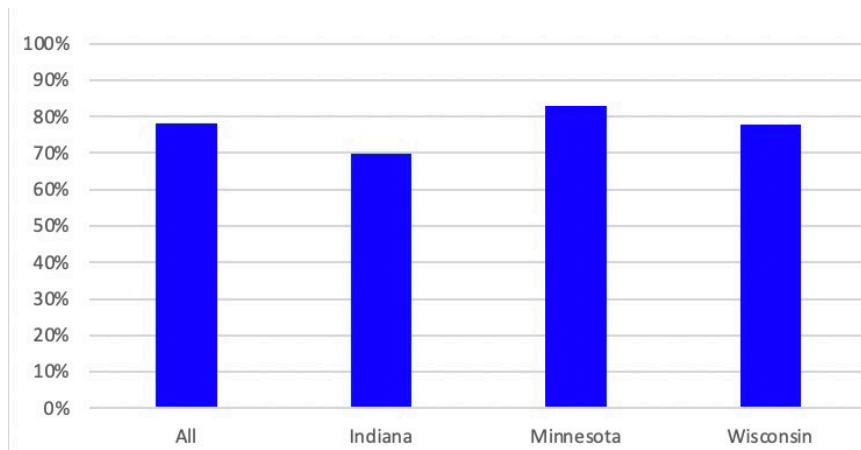
### *How did EL teachers learn about needed non-instructional services?*

EL teachers also identified how they learned of the services their Emergent Bilingual students and their families required, whether they were able to successfully facilitate access to these services, and the pulls they experienced from other teachers and administrators to provide services on behalf of colleagues, schools, and their district beyond individual discrete support for specific students (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

#### *Means of Discovering Services Needed by EBs and Their Families During COVID-19*



**Figure 4***EL Teachers Providing Non-Instructional Services for Other Teachers*

Teachers primarily learned about the services Emergent Bilinguals and their families were in need of directly from family members (84.7%), followed by other teachers who approached them to provide these services (72.3%), school administration (33.6%), information shared through social media (7.7%), reports from community agencies (2.7%), and a range of other sources (20.7%). Notably, a large percentage of EL teachers across all three states reported that they were not only spending their time providing direct service with their own Emergent Bilingual students and their families, they were also assisting other teachers in their communication with Emergent Bilingual students, so students would have access to the general education teacher's distance and/or virtual classrooms (Figure 4).  
Instruction

EL teachers reported how instruction was attempted, frequency and length of attempts at instruction, and their instructional goals and concerns. Identifying these instructional attempts is also related to understanding what Emergent Bilinguals experienced in terms of access to school-based education during ERTL.

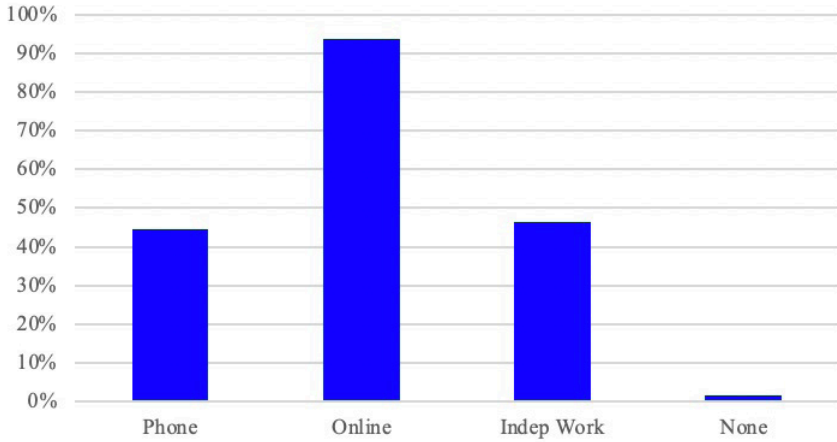
***Were EL students provided access to instruction?***

EL teachers reported they attempted to provide instruction through a combination of phone calls with students (45%), online platforms (92%), and giving Emergent Bilinguals independent work (e.g. packets) (47%) (Figure 5).

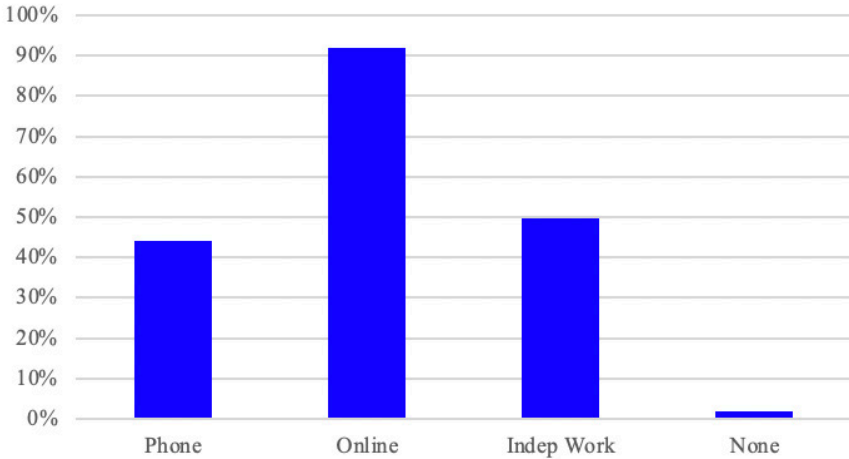
**Figure 5**

*Ways EL Teachers Attempted to Provide Instruction*

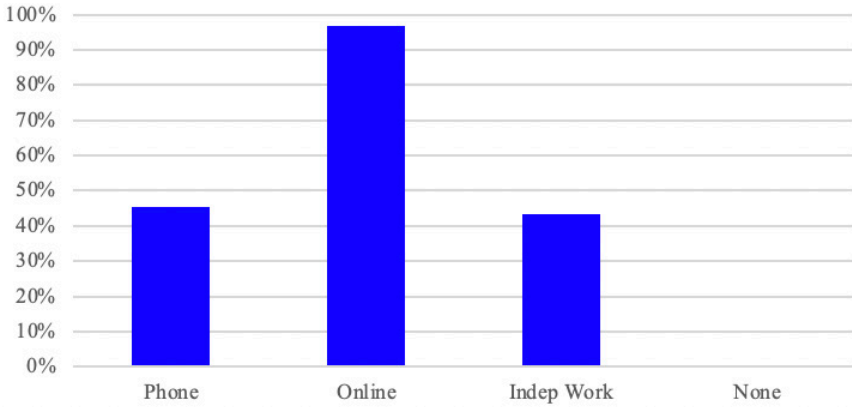
Indiana, Minnesota, & Minnesota combined



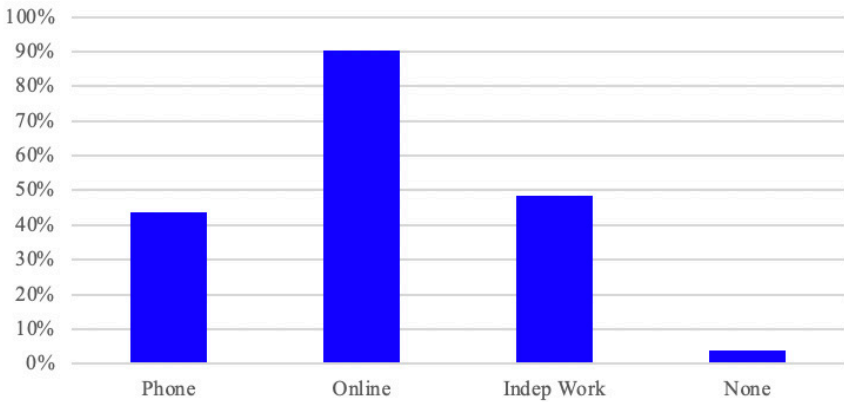
Indiana



Minnesota



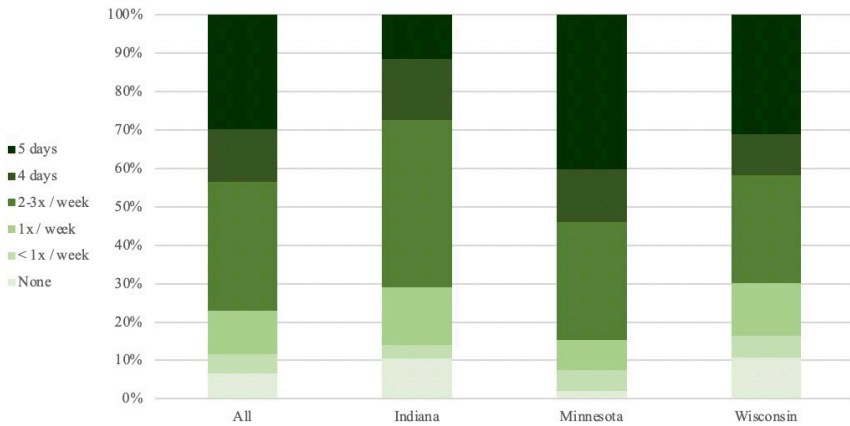
Wisconsin



Three percent of EL teachers reported providing no instruction to Emergent Bilinguals once physical school buildings closed. EL teachers who attempted to provide instruction identified that there was a wide range in the degree and amount of instructional contact with students (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

*Frequency of Instruction with EB Students*

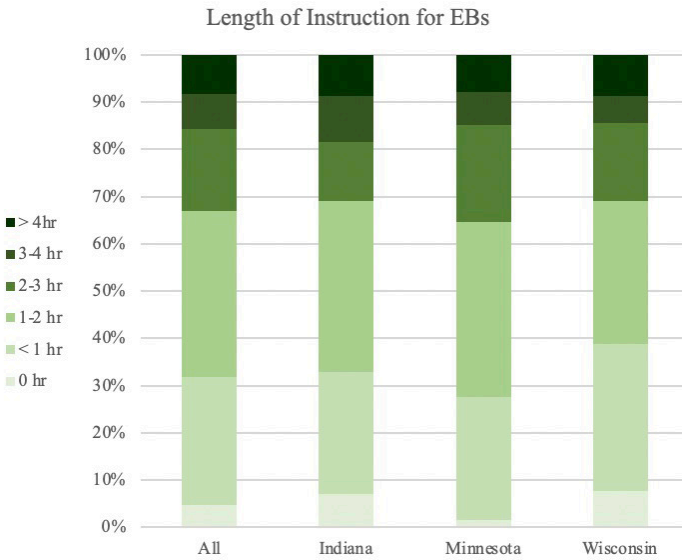


Just over a third of EL teachers (33.5%) reported they provided instruction for Emergent Bilinguals at least once a day on four or five days of the week. Another third of EL teachers (33.6%) reported that they did not provide consistent instruction in terms of daily contact, instead providing instruction for Emergent Bilinguals two to three times per week only. Nearly a quarter (23%) of EL teachers reported that they never provided instruction for Emergent Bilinguals and another 6.7% of teachers only did so on occasion (once per week, inconsistently). However, there were variances across states in terms of providing and not providing daily instruction. Both Indiana and Wisconsin EL teachers had higher percentages of never providing instruction for Emergent Bilinguals or providing instruction only once per week, but inconsistently. Twenty-nine point one percent (29.1%) of Indiana teachers, compared to 23% across the three states reported this, with 10.6% never providing instruction (compared to 6.7% across the three states). Nearly a third (30.1%) of Wisconsin teachers, compared to 23% across the three states reported this, with 10.7% never providing instruction (compared to 6.7% across the tri-state area). Minnesota EL teachers reported providing more instructional contact overall. Even so, 15.3% of EL teachers reported never providing instruction for Emergent Bilinguals or only provides instruction once per week (compared to 23% across the three states), with 2.1% of Minnesota EL teachers never providing instruction.

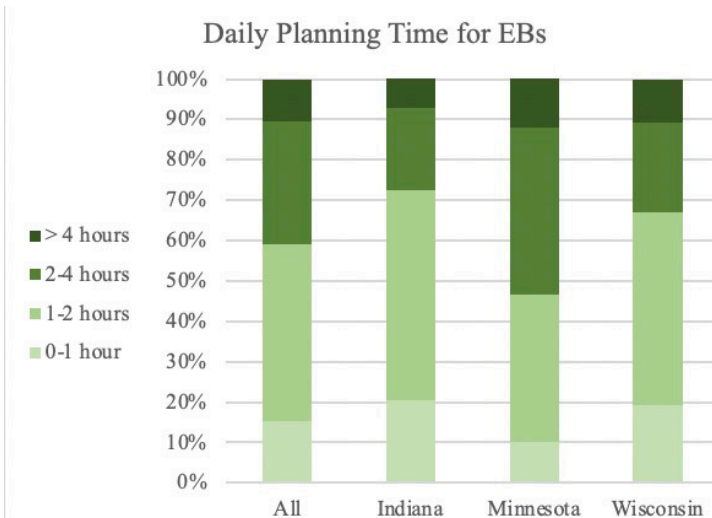
EL teachers reported spending as much, if not more, of their daily time in planning for instruction and behind the scenes preparation (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*Time Spent on Instruction and Time Spent Planning and Preparing Instruction*



**Figure 7 (cont.)**



Here, we highlight what teachers reported as daily time spent on planning and preparation, as compared to time spent on instruction. Ten point four percent (10.4%) of EL teachers identified spending more than four

hours every day on planning and preparation. Almost half (41%) of EL teachers reported spending between two to more than four hours on planning and preparation every day. Recalling that 45% of teachers reported providing instruction only one to three days per week (see Figure 7), teachers reported spending significantly more time in preparing instructional materials and supports than engaging in instruction itself.

On days when EL teachers did provide instruction with Emergent Bilinguals (Figure 8), 31.9% of EL teachers reported the total amount of this instructional time across all of their students in a day was less than one hour, with 35.1% reporting they spent between one to two hours of time on instruction, 17.3% spending two to three hours of time on instruction, 7.4% spending between three and four hours of time on instruction, and 8.4% spending more than four hours of time on instruction. The survey question did not disaggregate for direct instruction and instructional planning. Regardless of time that EL teachers were spending on attempting to provide instruction, though, only 7.9% reported that all of their Emergent Bilinguals were participating in instruction when it was happening, and most notably, in Indiana, only 2.7% reported all of their EL learners participated in instruction when it did occur.

### ***What kinds of instruction were EL teachers able to provide?***

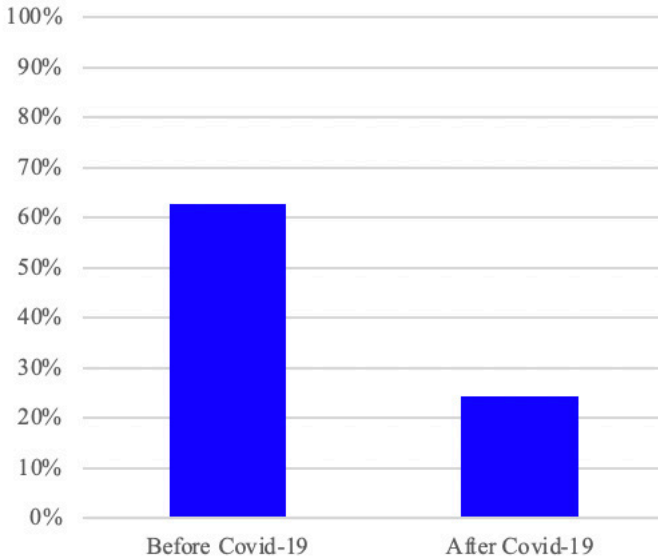
EL teachers reported striking shifts in the type of instruction they were able to provide Emergent Bilinguals and, thus, EL students' access to education regardless of the language barriers in place due to an English-dominant or English-only school environment. Pre-ERTL, 62.7% of EL teachers reported that they were able to partner with content area teachers to provide co-taught content-based language and literacy instruction. During ERTL, the number of EL teachers who were able to provide this long-standing, research-based best practice (e.g., Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Wesche, 1993) for Emergent Bilinguals academic success decreased 38.4 percentage points to only 24.3% reporting they were able to provide co-teaching content-based language and literacy instruction (Figure 8).



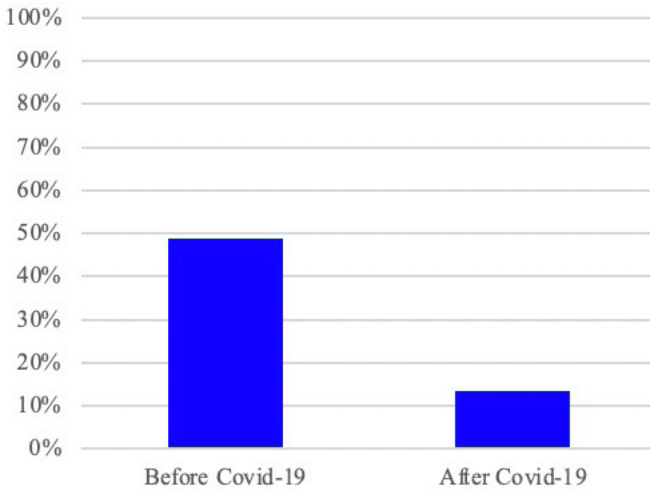
**Figure 8**

*Reported Before and During ERTL Language/Content Teacher Co-teaching*

Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin combined

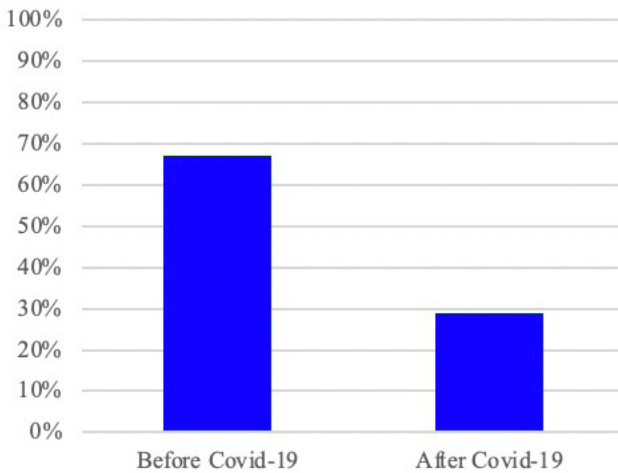


Indiana

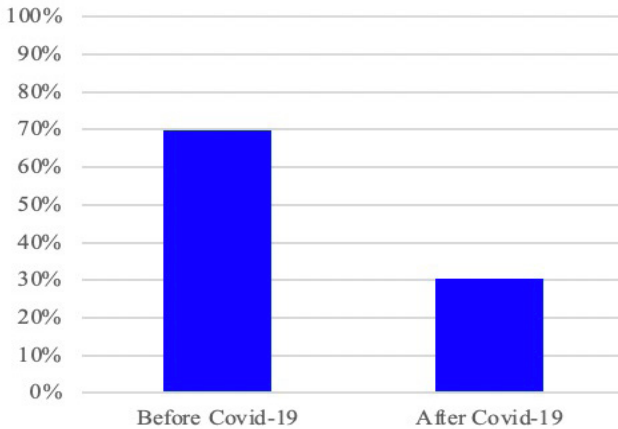


**Figure 8 (cont.)**

Minnesota



Wisconsin



Co-teaching was a highly reported practice prior to ERTL, with 48.7% of Indiana teachers, 67.2% of Minnesota teachers, and 69.9% of Wisconsin teachers reporting they were able to provide co-taught content-based language and literacy instruction. During ERTL, EL teachers able to continue co-taught, content-based language and literacy instruction decreased amongst Indiana teachers by 35.1 percentage points, amongst Minnesota teachers by 38.4 percentage points, and amongst Wisconsin teachers by 39.4 percentage points.

In the instruction that EL teachers reported they were able to of-

fer within the severely restricted instructional environment of ERTL, they identified a range of instructional goals they attempted to maintain (Figure 10). These goals included: supporting students in understanding content created by general education/content area colleagues who had Emergent Bilinguals in their classes (i.e. “general education”); developing English literacy and biliteracy (i.e. “develop English”); academic test preparation (i.e. “academic test prep”); explicit language development, including holistic, academic talk and discussion, language specific to content areas, reading and writing across content areas (i.e. “language development), and sustaining bilingualism and biliteracy in languages other than English (i.e. “bilingualism”). Respondents were able to select all goals that applied to their instructional efforts.

**Figure 9**

*Instructional Goals of EL Teachers During ERTL*

Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin combined

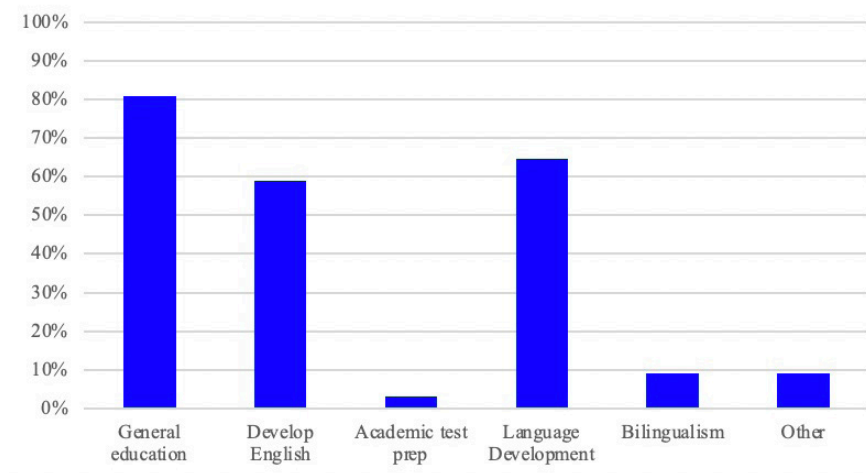
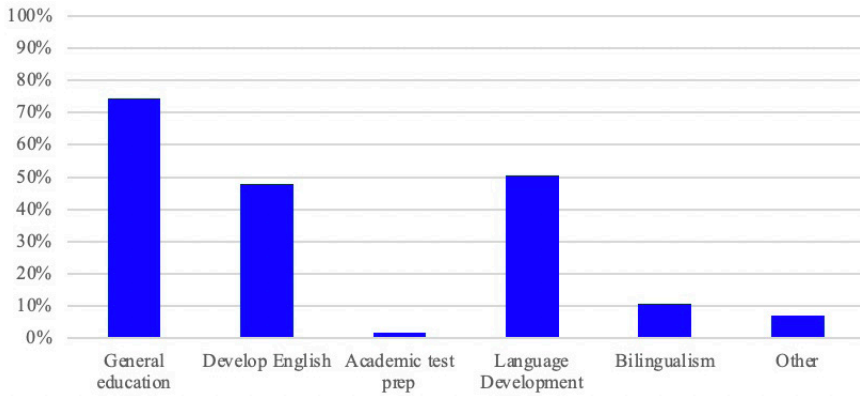
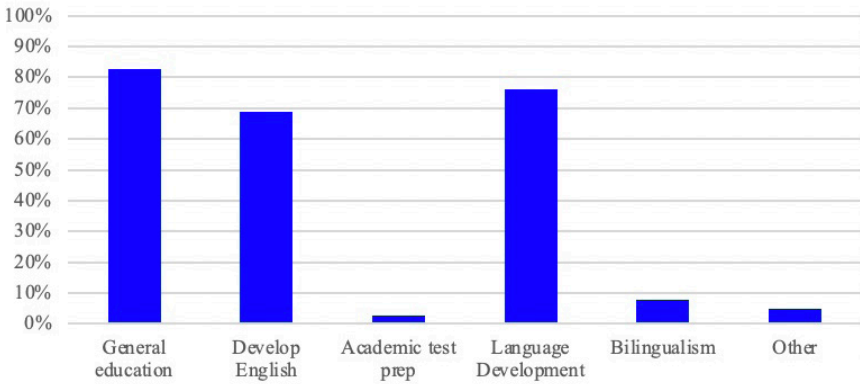


Figure 9 (cont.)

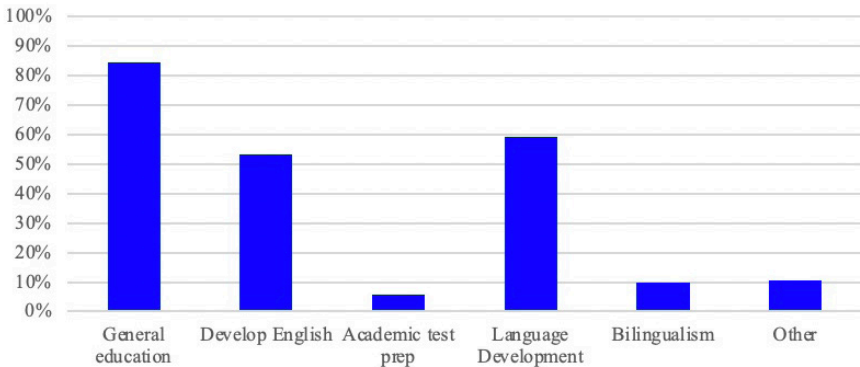
Indiana



Minnesota



Wisconsin



Supporting students in understanding content created by general education/content area colleagues was the primary instructional goal reported across all three states, with 80.7% of teachers identifying this goal. The absence of explicit language and literacy instruction opposes research-based approaches to support Emergent Bilinguals' academic success and English language development (Goldenberg, 2008). This was followed by "developing English" (21.7 points lower), content-area "language development" (16 points lower), "academic test prep" (77.5 points lower), "bilingual maintenance" (71.6 points lower), and focusing on other instructional areas (71.6 points lower).

Maintenance of bilingualism and development of biliteracy are research-based approaches to support Emergent Bilinguals' academic success and English language development (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Goldenberg, 2008). All states had sizable distinctions between EL teachers' supporting general education content in non-language specific ways and providing bilingual/biliteracy instruction. Indiana EL teachers reported supporting bilingual/biliteracy maintenance 67.2 percentage points lower than supporting general education colleague's content in non-language specific ways. Wisconsin teachers reported this at 73.8 percentage points lower, and Minnesota teachers reported this with 77.7 percentage points lower.

State level variances showed that EL teachers in different states spent more or less time - though still markedly less than general education colleague support - across the two remaining research-based approaches to Emergent Bilingual academic access and success: content-based language and literacy development (e.g., Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Wesche, 1993) and explicit English language development. Indiana and Minnesota EL teachers reported providing much less content-based language and literacy instruction than the tri-state total, with Indiana teachers reporting this at 23.9 percentage points lower and Wisconsin teachers reporting this at 25.3 percentage points lower (compared to the tri-state total of 16 points lower than general education colleague support). Minnesota teachers reported providing content-based language and literacy instruction 6.3 percentage points lower than supporting general education colleagues - far more than Wisconsin and Indiana. Minnesota teachers also reported providing more explicit English language and literacy instruction, though they still reported this 13.7 percentage points lower than general education colleague support. The tri-state total distinction between general education support and explicit English language instruction was 21.7 percentage points lower. Indiana EL teachers' reported this at 26.5 percentage points lower, and Wisconsin EL teachers reported this far less commonly at 31.1 percentage points lower.

## **Implications for Schools/Districts**

Findings demonstrate that, in large part, EL teachers were not providing (or able to provide) language, literacy, and content-based language instruction, placing schools and districts in direct violation with federal law (Equal Educational Opportunities Act and Office of Civil Rights Title VI Policy on Language Minority Students) and accompanying state laws. Specifically, the 1981 Supreme Court ruling on *Castañeda vs. Pickard* requires adequate ESL programming (as a form of bilingual/bicultural education and educational access for language minoritized students, as established by *Lau vs. Nichols*, 1974). Program adequacy is determined across three dimensions: (1) that it is based on expert-recognized sound educational theory; (2) that programming, practices, resources, and personnel are sufficient to effectively implement this expert-recognized-as-sound educational theory; and (3) that the school district evaluates its programming and makes adjustments as needed to ensure that barriers that limit access to education for Emergent Bilinguals are removed so they have full access to educational offerings.

All states had sizable distinctions between EL teachers' supporting general education content in non-language specific ways and providing bilingual/biliteracy instruction, fundamental to sustainable multilingual English language and literacy development that is evidence-based theory to support academic access and success amongst Emergent Bilinguals. States where there were sizable differences in relationship to explicit instruction that is research-based as supporting Emergent Bilinguals in accessing academic content and developing language and literacy skills necessary to navigate barriers to equal opportunities for education in an English-dominant school context.

In place of providing effective language and literacy instruction, as well as instruction that supports accessing content provided primarily in (disciplinary specific) English, EL teachers served as school-family translators and interpreters, technology support, advocates for myriad needs of EL learners, and providers of myriad services needed to alleviate pre-existing economic stressors that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Because of the proximity to when these stay at home orders and school closures occurred, EL teachers' rapid identification of particular challenges highlights that access to these necessary services was already precarious, tenuous, or non-existent amongst Emergent Bilinguals and their families. This range of services, while non-instructional, are also necessary for accessing and participating in school, particularly in a remote or virtual environment.

## **Conclusion**

EL teachers in Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin reflect states

with similar (im)migration community histories and growth, and where social and school infrastructures for (im)migrant and refugee families are under-developed (Hilburn, 2014). Findings have significance for (1) clearer understanding of the challenges of remote teaching and learning in relationship to Emergent Bilingual students' access to education provided by public schools; (2) the need for schools and districts to evaluate programming, resourcing, and personnel in order to rectify the barriers Emergent Bilinguals are required to navigate to access education, which are both made more visible and created by contexts that result in (emergency) remote teaching and learning; and (3) preparation of remote teaching infrastructures that may become a future reality for our Emergent Bilingual students, families, and teachers, including the roles that social workers, guidance counselors, and other support staff take on during ERTL.

If schools and districts are to remain in compliance with federal and state laws, these findings point to key measures that are needed, regardless of state or district type. Our findings demonstrate that schools and districts need to evaluate their programming in relationship to Emergent Bilinguals, with specific attention to the realities made apparent through both early-COVID-19 ERTL and ongoing remote teaching and learning that continues into the 2020-21 school year. Specifically, program evaluation and subsequent changes must span the range of instructional and service areas that directly shape and impact Emergent Bilinguals ability to access content and instruction. Drawing from the positive relationships that Emergent Bilingual teachers have fostered with their Emergent Bilingual families can illuminate how such connections can be broadened across multiple players in the school and community.

Example need for programming change - language-conscious technology support: EL teachers reported serving as technology support (in place of providing language, literacy, and content-based language instruction). This shows a need to hire bilingual service technology support personnel who are able to communicate in languages spoken amongst families of emergent bilingual students. Similarly, it highlights the need to develop programming infrastructure that creates pre-existing materials and access to shared services that facilitate the school's ability to serve myriad potential technology needs, gather immediate information from families about specific needs and for troubleshooting technology needs as they arise, and to create both information sharing resources and materials, as well as plans for rapid development, in languages other than English.

Example need for programming change - colleague support overwhelming student support: In the case of EL teachers primarily serving as assistants to general education and content-area colleagues without providing explicit language and literacy instruction, this points to a need for increased training and support of general education and content area teachers in providing language and literacy instruction across content areas, with an understanding of sustainable multilingual English language

development. We suggest that Minnesota EL teachers reporting they were able to provide more language and literacy instruction than was reported by EL teachers in Wisconsin or Indiana is directly related to the fact that Minnesota requires content area and general education teachers to have explicit preparation and ongoing professional development in language and literacy instruction across content areas. In working with content area and general education colleagues who already have been skilled in supporting language and literacy development of Emergent Bilinguals, EL teachers are able to direct more of their attention towards their students, and less so in supporting other teachers.

Example need for programming change - existence of robust bilingual/biliteracy support: In the event of ERTL, we recognize that instructional services shift, transform, and are likely to become restricted to those that are considered most central and essential to the education a school is able to provide. The extreme disparity between support of general education colleagues and provision of bilingual and biliteracy supports amongst EL teachers highlights a pre-existing void of sustainable multilingual approaches to English language development programming. We recognize that not every school is equipped for comprehensive dual or bilingual language education. However, bilingual and biliteracy instruction is not relegated to only dual language programming. If these sustainable bilingual and biliteracy approaches to English language development were fully integrated in existing EL teacher instruction and content-area teacher understandings of best practice teaching, then a sudden shift to ERTL would see bilingual and biliteracy development continue to be available through school-based mechanisms facilitating academic success of Emergent Bilinguals.

Lastly, ERTL and current virtual teaching is not just a problem to be solved at the site of school. Collaboration and communication is needed across multiple systems and stakeholders to address systemic infrastructures that foreclose on the inequities experienced by EL educators and their Emergent Bilingual students and families. Schools are not the panacea for such solutions and need to include internet service providers, public institutions, such as libraries and local universities, housing, and health care. The virtual and distance-learning environments that were put in place as emergency responses in spring 2020 are increasingly likely for the 2020-2021 academic year, as calls for distance learning and hybrid teaching were rolled out in states and districts looking toward Fall 2020 opening weeks, and reports of likely vaccination availability stretch further into the months of 2021. Thus, lessons learned from ERTL-to-date must inform ongoing Emergent Bilingual education realities, and can inform necessary changes to ensure Emergent Bilingual access to education more broadly.



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