



Understanding and Advocating for High-Quality Instruction for MLLs with Disabilities

May 12, 2026

Webinar Guest Speakers

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Webinar Overview

This webinar examines how current policies are shaping access to high-quality instruction for multilingual learners with disabilities. Panelists will discuss the integration of support for language development and services for students with disabilities, along with an examination of the current strategies educators are using to navigate evolving requirements and policies. This session will explore opportunities to improve identification of multilingual learners who need special education services, and how strengthening collaboration across teams can improve the quality of instruction received by these students. Participants will gain insight into practical, forward-looking approaches that can expand access and improve outcomes for students.

Key Insights

- Changes to the federal landscape and the rescinding of “Dear Colleague” letter has complicated access to high quality services for MLLs with disabilities.
- Restricted access to high-quality services for MLLs with disabilities persists, including lack of English language development (ELD) and bilingual education/services.

CAL Disclaimer

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Policy Implications

- Access to high quality services requires accurate identification of MLLs with disabilities, including changes to home language surveys (HLSs).
- High quality services require more attention to individualized education programs (IEPs), specifically their cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

Calls to Action

- Teacher certification competencies and licensure pathways should be revised to account for MLLs with disabilities.
- States and districts should create liaison positions that build bridge departments and facilitate cross-department collaboration.
- School personnel should examine their current policies (IEPs, HLSs, etc.) and make changes to increase access to services and instruction for MLLs with disabilities.

Resources

- Kangas, S.E.N. (2025). *Promoting equity for multilingual learners with disabilities*. Teachers College Press.
- Moen, T., Restrepo, M.A., and Smith, B. (in press). Misclassification of Emergent Bilinguals: Diagnostic Profiles and Policy Action for Speech-Language Pathologists. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*.

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