

BOARD BRIEF

Date: March 22, 2024

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION: _____

FROM: Bethany Nickerson, Ed.D. Executive Director of English Learner Services

THROUGH: Pierrette Finney, Ed. D., Chief Academic Officer
Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Project GLAD® (Guided Language Acquisition Design) Update

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support

SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:

Academic Achievement

Student Supports

Staff Supports

Recruitment and Retention

SUMMARY:

This Board Brief is an overview of Project Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD®) and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) becoming a Project GLAD® Regional Training Center. Project GLAD® is a model of professional development that provides depth and understanding behind best practices for language learning and development with practical applications in the classroom. Project GLAD® uses innovative design practices to ensure that lessons are designed to meet the needs of all students, most intently the needs of our language learners/ emergent bilingual students. The following Guiding Principles inform the work within ACPS:

- All students have valuable assets that foster life-long success.
- Diversity and respect are cultivated and celebrated.
- Research and data drive our practice.
- Development of language proficiency with language learner students is a core value.

DETAILS:

Orange County Department of Education is home to the National Training Center (NTC) for Project GLAD® (Guided Language Acquisition Design). This model supports the needs of all learners while emphasizing the distinct targeted support of Multilingual Learners/English

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Learners in classroom settings. The NTC team works with school systems, administrators, educators, coaches, and families in research-based and practiced strategies to make content comprehensible into and through all content areas while acquiring language. This model, with over 60 strategies, builds academic language, increases language proficiency, and builds confidence within educators and students in teaching and learning. Realizing comprehensive English language development (ELD) through integrated and designated ELD instruction, the NTC provides for GLAD® Educators, Administrators, Coaches, and Educators:

- Foundations Training: Research & Theory Workshop and Classroom Demonstration
- Certification Trainer-in-Training Pathway
- Customized Training and Support
- Renewal Training for Agency Trainers and Field Consultants

Our goal in ACPS is to prepare all teachers, division-wide, to use EL best practices and strategies in core content, Tier I instruction, in order to promote equitable outcomes for multilingual learners. To that end, our professional learning and follow-up centered around Project GLAD is expanding. We now have the opportunity to become a professional learning leader within the Northern Virginia region by becoming a Project GLAD® Regional Training Center.

A Project GLAD® Regional Training Center is an educational agency that has:

- designed a vision for Project GLAD® implementation and sustainability across their agency
- built organizational capacity to support envisioning and executing on growth goals for Project GLAD® implementation
- a lead Project GLAD® Trainer who oversees operations, accountability, sustainability, and instructional design
- a minimum team size of two Project GLAD® Lead Trainers that are Active with the National Training Center, that lead in Certification efforts and additional authorized strands
- an additional team of Project GLAD® Trainers that are Active with the National Training Center that support in delivering Foundations training within one's region and other authorized strands
- as an organization been implementing Project GLAD® within their region for a minimum of 5 years and has records of success
- built rapport in their community as local experts in Project GLAD® implementation

Project GLAD® incorporates EL best practices which are good instructional practices for all students, and essential practices for EL students. Our next steps are to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the National Training Center to become a Project GLAD® Regional Training Center. We will continue to expand our training within ACPS and our collaboration with surrounding jurisdictions. Project GLAD® professional learning opportunities are in high demand to support the growing multilingual learner community in Northern Virginia.

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BACKGROUND:

Implementation of Project GLAD® strategies began in the Dual Language Program in ACPS in 2014 in response to a grassroots teacher movement for these effective Project GLAD® strategies, to help meet the needs of our learners. For four years we contracted training services from Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLENM), primarily supporting our dual language programs. Interest in the strategies began to grow across the school division, and training expanded in 2017 to other ACPS schools with high EL student populations. Beginning in 2018, the Office of English Learner Services established a Project GLAD Specialist position to be able to more effectively respond to increasing training requests. Under the leadership of the Project GLAD specialist, an ACPS Project GLAD trainer team of teachers was developed, increasing ACPS' capacity to train its own teachers.

With the support of our ACPS Project GLAD Trainer Team, we have continued to grow our capacity to deliver Project GLAD Foundations Training and also be responsive to school needs for follow-up through a variety of tailored professional learning opportunities, coaching, PLC work, afterschool sessions, data-driven strategy sessions, modeling, and teacher planning. We are becoming a model nationwide for how to provide customized follow-up training in Project GLAD strategies (see attachment).

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information in this Project GLAD® School Board Brief.

IMPACT:

Project GLAD® prepares our ACPS teachers to effectively serve multilingual learners by integrating content and language instruction, focusing on equity, and integrating social and emotional learning all day long. These effective EL best practices will ultimately improve student outcomes.

REFERENCES:

N/A

ATTACHMENT:

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