

Updating Classroom Language Models in a Planned Language Approach

Deborah Mazzeo: Hello. Welcome to this webinar on "Updating Classroom Language Models in a Planned Language Approach." My name is Deborah Mazzeo, and I am the cultural and linguistic practices coordinator at the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, or DTL for short. We know that many programs continue to remain closed at this time due to the pandemic. The information you will hear today will be relevant as you plan for reopening, and as you continue to support language and literacy development virtually. I am accompanied today by several colleagues, and you can see them all here, and you'll hear their voices as we move forward in the presentation. We have Karen Nemeth and Jan Greenberg also from DTL, and then we have special guests, Consuellis Hawkins-Crudup and Sheila Dandeneau, from the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, and we're really excited to have them here with us to share their practices. Here is what our agenda looks like for this hour that we have together. First, we're going to be providing an overview of the context for implementing classroom language models or CLMs. We're going to explain the four major CLMs. We're going to discuss steps to select and implement a model that meets programs' unique circumstances. And so, we know that Head Start requires coordinated approaches for children who speak multiple languages, and it will be important to assess your systems and services to support the full and effective participation of children who are DLLs and their families. There is a tool for that, and it's called the DLLPA, the Dual Language Learner Program Assessment, and it's offered in the "Resources" widget for download, and you'll hear us mention it throughout our presentation today. And then fourth, as I mentioned, you'll get to hear East Coast Migrant Head Start Project's planned language approach, and we'll conclude with a Q&A with the East Coast Migrant Head Start Program representatives, Consuellis and Sheila. Our hope is that by the end of this webinar, you'll be able to describe CLMs and how they support children's language and literacy development, and explore the new resource, "Supports for Classroom Language Models for All Children: Step by Step Guide." With that, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Karen to get us started on some context here.

Karen Nemeth: Well, thanks, Debbie. I appreciate the opportunity to get started with a slide full of words, but we wanted to show you what the opening page of this important report looks like. Several years back, the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Education issued this joint policy statement on how to support children who are dual language learners, and this is available on ECLKC, and this document did describe how to support children who are dual language learners within the context of classroom language models. They appear as a recommendation for one way that a program could implement social supports for development and learning. But although the Head Start Program Performance Standards do not specify or require the use of those classroom language models, they are a suggested practice to help programs make plans that will help them be successful. So, this report recommended that programs identify and implement an intentional approach to language use in the classroom to provide a rich language environment that should be carefully planned and implemented across all activities. The classroom language model

determines what language or languages the adults will use for instruction and communication with the children and the families and how to use those languages to promote learning. The classroom language models are part of a program-wide planned language approach that promotes learning within the context of your own research-based curriculum that you're already using. So, this policy statement actually says that programs should carefully choose their classroom language model or CLM, right, based on the home languages of the children in their program and their learning needs, as well as looking at the language proficiency of their teachers and providers and with the input of families. And so, they provide four suggested models that we have described for Head Start in our documents. But in this report, they mention dual immersion, which we now call the 50/50 dual language model. They describe home language with English support as another model, English with home language support, and the use of English only. These are four possible models.

So, now let's take a – a look at where this fits in terms of what programs in Head Start are being asked to do. As Deb mentioned, this is all – can be all part of a coordinated approach, which is required in the Head Start Program Performance Standards. But a key quote from that standard is that these coordinated approaches should be at the beginning of each year and on an ongoing basis throughout the year. A program must design and implement a program-wide coordinated approach to support dual language learners. So, the classroom language models and the resources that we share today in this webinar will help you to plan and implement the biggest coordinated approaches that are right for your particular program. So, when we talk about on the – the pieces of the Head Start Program Performance Standards that influence the plans we have to make, we always go to the section that describes what should be happening with dual language learners in the teaching and learning environment. So, for example, a program must recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths for children and families. The Head Start Program Performance Standards also talk to us about what should be happening for dual language learners, and we always like to remember that the official definition for dual language learners is a child who's learning two or more languages at the same time, or a child who started with one language and is now learning additional languages. So, that means all children who have two or more languages are considered dual language learners for the purposes of the standards. So, in part two, dual language – for dual language learners, a program must recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths. Oh, I already said that. For infants and toddler dual language learners, include teaching practices that focus on the development of the home language when there is a teacher with appropriate language competency and experiences that also expose the child's English. But for preschool dual language learners, we say there should be included teaching practices that focus on both English language acquisition and the continued development of the home language. Or if the staff do not speak the home language of all the children in the learning environment, they should include steps to support the development of the home language for dual language learners, such as having culturally and linguistically appropriate materials available and other evidence-based strategies. Programs must work to identify volunteers who speak children's home languages who could be trained to work in the classroom to support children's continued development of the home language. So, these are important and very strong requirements.

And so, our work has been to create resources that will help programs meet these requirements. And you see that on this slide, we are showing the "Classroom Language Models, A Leader's Implementation Manual," which can be found as part of the overall planned language approach section on the ECLKC. The planned language approach represented by that pie there. The classroom language models actually are part of what a program does to plan their language approach. A comprehensive, systemic research-based way for Head Start and Early Head Start and child care programs to ensure learning for children who speak English and for those who are dual language learners. This guide is focused for Head Start and for classrooms, but others can benefit from the ideas about planning for language support for children and for families. So, it really is good for everyone. Also, under the pie, there is one slice of that pie that is about policies, practices and systems for supporting planned language approach. In that section, that's where you'll find the dual language learners program assessment, which helps you to assess your systems and services for dual language learners specifically, and the items throughout the dual language learning program assessment help you identify what you have and what you need so the appropriate classroom language models can be implemented in each classroom setting. So, what is a classroom language model? The classroom language models are determined, supervised, and managed at the program level, but they are implemented at the classroom or setting level. Some programs have all classrooms with the same classroom language model, but in most cases, the model chosen for each classroom or group will depend on the factors that enter into those decisions for that particular group. Each teacher and provider should follow the model chosen by their program, and you'll see that the classroom language models share these particular goals. They help children develop strong literacy and language skills as a result of skilled, targeted instruction and communication, that they will develop a clear direction on how the instruction will be delivered. There will be specific goals for each model and the instruction in the Big 5 for All in one or more languages will take place. So, we do want to see strong language models in both languages to support literacy and these Big 5 for All skills for early literacy development. In all cases, in all four models, there should be some support for continued development of the home language. There should be active family engagement to support the children's continued language learning at home and the staff should be aware of the classroom language models' goals that are part of the whole – of the whole approach to choosing and using classroom language models. OK. T

These are the four models, and then we're going to show you a poll. So, we're just introducing the four names of the models in the classroom language model guide and then be prepared for our poll question. The four kinds of models that are recommended in the joint policy statement and in our resources for today, number one – a model that uses English with home language support. Number two – a dual language 50/50 model previously called dual language immersion. Number three – focuses on a home language model as a foundation to support English development, and then the fourth kind of model is English only. And now, we're going to ask you a poll question, so please get ready to click your answer. How familiar are you with classroom language models? Choice "A," I have not heard of classroom language models before. Choice "B," I've heard of them, but I'm not intentionally implementing a specific model. And choice "C," I'm currently implementing one of the four major models. So, let's take a look

now at what you are – what your experiences are. Now, you should be able to see. Interesting balance. We can see that a little over a third have not heard of classroom language models at all. So, we're glad you're here, but you should also know that also about a third of your colleagues have heard of them. And so, there's opportunities for you all to talk with each other and to exchange ideas in the question and answer box. And also, we have almost a third that are currently implementing one of the four models, and you'll see that we have new resources to share for those of you already using them, that can help you continue and advance your work. So, thank you for responding to that poll.

And now, let's provide you with some details about each of the language models. OK. First of all, the – the model, that's called English with home language supports. Children who speak English in this model will continue to develop English skills in the Big 5 for All for early literacy. At the same time, children in this group who are dual language learners will develop age level English skills in the Big 5 skills, and they will also continue to develop their home language, and they will experience home language as an asset and a strength and a source of identity. So, in this model, there will be intentional work done to make sure that the home languages of the children are – are celebrated and used for learning, and as ... The planned language approach website has lots of recorded webinars and tip sheets about how you can implement those strategies. Now, the next model, dual language learner 50/50 is based on research that shows that given high-quality instruction and sufficient exposure in each language, a 50/50 model can help children make significant progress in developing two languages and help them acquire literacy in both languages. So, having a 50/50 model where children – children in the group spend half the time learning in one language and half the time learning in the other language strengthens their literacy skills, and research has not shown any slowdown in their learning by being in that two-language environment. So, a dual language model may be an option to consider if there are qualified teachers and if and when all the necessary materials are available in the designated languages. Teachers might be bilingual, or you might have two teachers where each teacher is a strong language model in one of the two languages, and they work as partners. So, we use this table to help programs make decisions about whether a dual language learner – a dual language 50/50 model might be right for them. The category for the children. You have many children who speak a particular language, and many children who speak only English. So, for example, you might have half the class speak Spanish and half the class speaks English and – but it can be any home language, any pairing of home language with English – but the teachers have to be fluent in one or both of the languages designated, and they have to really agree to work together and be able to communicate to implement that language model. The goals of the 50/50 model are that all children in the group will become bilingual. That they will develop age-level skills in English and another language. They will learn the value of different languages and cultures. They will enhance each other's identity and positive self-concept by having that equal standing of both languages, and that staff and children will work together with families – oh, no – staff and families will work together to support the children so that there is a continuous supporting of both English and the home language program and at home.

Now, the next group is called "Home Language," as – with home language as a foundation for English. And in this program, this kind of classroom model we see it's generally used in infant/toddler programs particularly, but it can be used for older children as well. But all the children in the group would generally be from the same home language, and all the children would be dual language learners. And then, they are supported and nurtured and taught in their home language, while English is gradually and intentionally introduced to the children, to the families, and the whole community within the early childhood setting. The goals of the home language as a foundation for English setting are to develop solid foundation in home language that supports strong language and conceptual skills in the home language that will then serve to support an acquisition of English over time. Important for children to develop language skills associated with the Big 5. It will help children maintain strong bonds with their families and culture. Build strong language and concepts skills because they can understand the language that's being used, and it helps them experience home language as an important asset to support their identity and self-esteem. Now, the last model is called "English Only," and this happens when all the children are able to speak English and all the teachers speak English. So, English may be used as the language of communication and instruction. But even in this model, remember, the Head Start Program Performance Standards ask us to find ways to support the home languages and cultures of all children. And so, programs using this model will find ways to work that in using the resources that we'll be sharing with you today. And now, I'll hand it over to Deb Mazzeo to share some of those resources.

Deborah: All right. Thanks, Karen. So, in this next section, I'll be sharing the new guide, which is available for download in the "Resources" widget. And so, here it is. That's the front cover, and it's called "Supports for Classroom Language Models for All Children: Step by Step Guide." And so, this new guide supplements the CML manual that Karen just went through by providing further guidance on selecting a model that fits your needs and really reflects the language needs and assets of your children, the teaching staff, and families. And we're going to talk about the six steps outlined in this guide to prepare, establish, and support classroom language models. So, the first step in the guide is to gather data and information about families. So, you're going to want to identify the languages spoken by the families and the children, by your education staff, and specifically identify language proficiency levels of your available education staff. You're going to want to use multiple data sources. And, you know, when we think about the program information report and those questions. They do not necessarily provide the specific language information needed to plan for classroom instruction. So, what programs often do is they turn to their community assessment to identify languages in their community and their program. So, definitely use the community assessment, enrollment and ongoing assessment data to set relevant language goals for your program. The Dual Language Learner Program Assessment or the Foundations for Excellence can support you with this. And then, lastly, consider using this form that you see on the screen. It's a resource that is available for download as well, and it's called "Gathering and Using Information That Families Share." I think you'll find it very valuable. The next step is to match the classroom language model to the needs and resources in each classroom. So, in planning for classroom language models, it's important for staff to use age and developmentally appropriate practices that meet the cultural and linguistic needs of all children in the program. You'll want to use these questions that you

can see bulleted out here to guide your thinking. And then, based on your responses, use the chart in the guide to determine which CLM to implement. And I'm going to turn it over to our special guest, Consuellis, to say a few words about their planning process and how they use the planning worksheet that you see here on the screen, it's from that original CLM manual, to share with us how – how – how they utilized this. Consuellis?

Consuellis Hawkins-Crudup: Yes. This past year, we embedded the use of the classroom language model worksheet into our education service plan. Our centers use the worksheet to determine the best approach to language and literacy development and to ensure we were using a staffing pattern to really match and support the language, and we're really interested in wanting to make sure that the language of the teachers we're matching the language of the children. So, based upon the centers that fully got to use the worksheet prior to COVID-19, we did a compilation of data that led our education coordinators and education specialists to really begin to be more intentional about observing languages being spoken in the classroom, being more intentional in observing how languages are being modeled to instruct children. And then, we were able to identify some TA topics. One being really beginning to concentrate on the trajectory of dual language learning, how to provide individualized support in children's home language, and then, in collaboration with families, we wanted to be able to do those efforts together. And then, the importance of being good language models – being good, strong language models – in the classroom was some of the things that we were able to identify. So, preliminary use of using these worksheets have really allowed our education team to gain more experience and develop deeper knowledge of the different classroom language models that Karen discussed earlier in the presentation.

Deborah: Thank you so much, Consuellis. I appreciated hearing that very systematic approach that you all used. Thank you. All right. So, on to step number three, connect with resources. So, this table that you see on the screen is a snapshot that is taken straight from the new guide, and it provides links to resources that will help you plan and implement classroom language models. The Dual Language Learner Program Assessment, or the DLLPA, also contains resources to support integrating culturally and linguistically responsive practices using a system-wide approach. For step four, you're going to want to identify goals for recruiting, hiring, and training staff for CLMs. And so, some tips that you'll want to consider in accomplishing this task is use your program's community assessment, again, to understand which languages are spoken in the surrounding community. Involve families and other community members in recruiting potential bilingual staff members and volunteers. Consider hiring a consultant or interpreter who can conduct interviews with candidates in required languages to gauge conversational proficiency. You'll want to ask explicit questions during the interview about attitudes, beliefs, and comfort with teaching and learning in English and the language other than English. You'll want to possibly use a language proficiency test or a self-rating assessment. For example, you might ask, "On a scale of one to five, rate your receptive language proficiency in English or the home language." "Rate your expressive language abilities in English or the home language." "Rate your written abilities in English or the home language." Those are all just examples that you might want to include. You also might want to use a self-rating assessment to determine teacher candidates' comfort with teaching in each language. So, again, for example, "On a scale

of one to five, how comfortable do you feel reading out loud in English or the home language," or "How comfortable do you feel conducting a lesson about science in English or the home language?" So, those are some ideas, and a few others might be to ask candidates to conduct a model lesson or read aloud in another language with an observer who is proficient in the language. You might want to reach out to the local education agency or public school to inquire about tests and procedures that they use to identify appropriate job candidates and whether they can be borrowed or shared. And you may even want to ask candidates to write a sample letter to families about a mock situation regarding concerns about the use of home language or English for the classroom. So, those are some ideas.

Going down to the next bullet, we'll recommend you use the guidance of the DLLPA to ensure that staff recruitment and hiring practices account for the Head Start Program Performance Standards related to culturally and linguistically responsive practices. And so, section two on human resources in the DLLPA will help you with that. And then, finally, be prepared to articulate the program's commitment to ensuring appropriate supports to retain linguistically diverse staff so that they feel included and part of the staff community. Next is step five, where you're actually implementing the classroom language model and planning for the language of instruction and communication. The first factor to consider is understanding dual language learning and development. There are key differences between the ways that monolingual and dual language learners acquire new languages, and the implications for this are significant because the strategies teachers use are determined by where children are in their development. So, definitely something important to consider.

Next is the importance of planning. And so, knowing about children's linguistic backgrounds is key so that interactions and content can be introduced to children based on what they already know and what they will soon need. And this requires everything from planning the choice of books, to words that will be introduced to the questions that teachers will ask. Next is supporting multiple languages in one classroom. When children in a classroom do not speak the language being used for instruction, it is important to scaffold language with other ways for children to understand what is being said. So, teachers must use a variety of strategies, to not only say, but also show what they mean, and strategies that support this include the use of gestures, pictures, videos, books, and objects to provide visual cues for children of other languages in a classroom.

Next is when the paraprofessional is the home language speaker. So, the presence of a paraprofessional or an assistant teacher to support the home languages of children in the classroom is an absolutely wonderful asset, and there are three critical elements to ensure that this happens effectively. So, first, being sure that they understand the goals of the chosen classroom language model and their language inputs or teaching will be relied upon to implement the model effectively is key. Also, co-planning with the lead teacher and knowing what books or lessons will be shared in advance is also really important. This allows the paraprofessional or assistant teacher to practice and plan for instruction. And then, third, attending professional development opportunities or receiving information from PD or coaching that the lead teacher has participated in is also very critical. And then, finally, we have

curriculum implementation. There is a chart in the new guide to understand the ways different CLMs impact daily routines and transitions and learning opportunities and interactions. Teachers should definitely consult their chosen curriculum for specific guidance related to routines, transitions and learning opportunities, as well as any recommendations for supporting children who are DLLs. Distinctions in the new step by step guide are made for morning meeting and small group time, free play time, reading our book discussions, transitions, and routines. So, you'll see how across all of those activities it differs among the models. You'll want to note that some activities like morning meeting, for example, will not be relevant for infant and toddler classrooms. So, I'd like to just ask our other special guest, Sheila, to talk about the role of staff who speak different languages in their program. Sheila, can you share a little bit?

Sheila Dandeneau: Sure. So, I think, one of the most important things that we really wanted to make sure that all of our staff understand is that they're all language models, no matter what their assigned language model is, that they stay in that role and that they are using that language consistently throughout the day. Years ago, we may have seen more of the staff who were speaking Spanish or another language that was not English with more directions than instructions – "Wash your hands ... Line up," and interpreting for teachers. We really have seen a big shift, and we see a lot more conversation happening in all languages, which is wonderful to see. Before that, there's always two teachers in the classroom. So, we always have someone who is there to support all languages and children.

Deborah: Wonderful. Thank you so much, Sheila.

Sheila: You're welcome.

Deborah: All right, so then our last step is number six, tracking the implementation and progress of CLMs. And with any educational intervention, the measure of growth and progress is key to successful implementation. While there is not currently any specific tool that can assist with monitoring the fidelity of implementation of any of the classroom language models, it's important to note that many of the strategies in this document are closely related to more global measures of classroom quality, such as the classroom assessment scoring system for Pre-K or the infant class or the toddler class. You may be familiar also with the ECERS and with the FCCERS, Family Child Care Rating Scale. It's important to note that some tools average the interactions of teachers. So, you may have a strong lead teacher speaking one language and a less strong teacher speaking another language. The tools typically do not differentiate the quality of language children are experiencing in each language. Therefore, it's important that the observer or coach speaks the language that's spoken by the teaching staff to support staff in all languages and adequately measure the language experiences in the classroom. Next, research-based coaching strategies, such as the practice based coaching model, could be used to support teachers as they implement the various strategies. And then, finally, the DLLPA can help manage a coordinated approach across management systems and program service areas. The self-assessment allows programs to engage in continuous improvement cycles related to their culturally and linguistically responsive practices for children who are DLLs by reflecting on a variety of questions and arriving at a score. So, now, I'm excited to turn it over to Consuellis

and Sheila to tell us about their program and how they establish a planned language approach. Take it away.

Consuellis: All right, thank you, Deborah. So, as shared in the introductions, Sheila and I both work for East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, and we are based out of the Raleigh, North Carolina, corporate office. However, we have 37 centers operating in seven states where services are provided to children birth to five. So, I'll start with our journey to PLA, planned language approach. We were initially introduced to PLA several years ago, and we were so excited when this model was released, and we immediately connected with the model because it really provided concrete teaching practices to support biliteracy and bilingualism. And that was very important to us. And so, after initial PLA training, we had to reassess our approach with PLA because we conducted center visits. And those center visits really began to tell us that after the initial training of the PLA components, we really needed to focus more on helping staff understand those components, and how could we go about connecting PLA to curriculum and really dig in deeper to support the language in modeling for dual language learners. So, ensure the sustainability of PLA, East Coast took a coordinated approach to include the model in our East Coast strategic plan. So, everyone began to have a role in understanding the components of PLA, and we began to make decisions about program policies and curriculum instruction. And so, we took some steps by first initially just reviewing our current strategic planning goals and objectives with major stakeholders. That was inclusive of our Board of Directors, policy council members, and center directors. And then, we went to more of a detailed review with our education committee. Because we are representative of seven states, we have education specialists that supports these regions, and we collaborate, Sheila and myself, collaborate with the regional specialists throughout the year, throughout several meetings. And so, this detailed review with this group that consisted of the specialists, and the Head Start administrators, and our early childhood education coaches. We've really evaluated in our education service manual how were we doing dual language learning and what did we want to make changes to.

And so, as we were evaluating and analyzing and really looking at our policies and procedures, we collaborated with our regions XII education specialists, and we wanted – we decided that we needed to hold some actual webinars around PLA. And we wanted to strengthen our level of PLA by doing these PLA webinars, and we wanted to determine the best approach to supporting a classroom level with language modeling and high-quality instruction. And so, as we collaborated with our specialists, they really gave us insight to what we already were doing and where we needed to go with the implementation of PLA. And by us doing that, the whole in-depth review led to us actually establishing a program, what we consider our "Program Goal 3," which is, "East Coast Migrant Head Start Project will implement curriculum and practices to ensure all children develop a high level of language proficiency in English and their primary language to maximize the cognitive, social, and educational advantages of speaking more than one language." Where this goal aligns with the Head Start Program Performance Standards for birth to three, we use it for birth to five. We use it for all age groups because our agency, we are really committed to staff and families knowing how critically important a strong home language is to the school and life success of dual language learners. So, this was a very important goal that we were able to get completed and embedded into our strategic plan. And

as we move forward, we're really beginning to create objectives and action steps for this program goal – this language goal. We use our data.

So, first we looked at our child assessment data and what information was – what the data was telling us there. For infants and toddlers, we used their early learning accomplishment profile and for preschool, we used a learning accomplishment profile. We also gather information from our classroom observation tools, such as the teaching pyramid observation tool, our curriculum ability tool implementation, and class data, preschool class data. To determine our starting point, we wanted to make sure that we were creating objectives where we know the data was telling us what we needed to focus on. And so, some of those action steps that we were able to create for Program Goal 3 was why we wanted to be able to develop guides and trainings for centers to use the classroom language models to determine classroom staffing patterns, which is what I shared earlier when Deborah was talking about the steps and also, when Karen was talking about the language models examples. We also, as an action step, developed training webinars to help staff and parents understand teacher practices that focus on the development of the home language and English acquisition identified by PLA. And then, the last action step that was really important for this goal was that all classrooms that consistently used three to five dual language teaching practices supported by PLA. So, now, I'm going to turn it over to Sheila so that she can share some of the data results of teachers using these dual language teaching practices.

Sheila: Thank you, Consuellis. So, as Consuellis said, we use the creative curriculum, and the Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool was where we – Let's look and see what's already here. What are some of these indicators that tell us that teachers are using strategies that effectively promote English language acquisition of children who are English and dual language learners, when appropriate for infants, toddlers, and twos? We know that some of them aren't yet speaking, but certainly are giving cues for that. So, during our 2018-2019 season, there were 174 classrooms in our 37 centers that were observed three times during the year, focusing specifically on – on the indicators that we were looking for. So, we were focusing on the teachers' use of gestures and other visual cues when they were speaking. If they're repeating words and phrases, how they respond to children's efforts to communicate in English or their home language for infants, toddlers, and twos, and their acceptance of their use of English or their home language for preschool. And lastly, we looked at how they were reading to children. What types of books were they reading? Did they have repetitive text, did they rhyme, were they simple stories? And did they read to children in small groups and individually, and not just in large group settings? So, it was interesting when we looked at this, and we did, you know, our goal, 100%, we want to see everybody using all these strategies. And of course, the first year we said, "Oh, well, we didn't quite meet our goal," but we were seeing a lot of great things that were happening, and that really helped us to focus on what are our next steps, where are we going to go from here for that. And we provided some – some additional training to staff, went back and said, "What does our curriculum tell us, what resources do we have?" And saw by the end of the season, that we really saw some big changes. Before that, you know, we started, I think we were at 80% of the classrooms were using strategies to support language at the beginning observation, and by the end of the season we were around 94%, And this year,

our observations got cut short due to COVID. We only had 81 classrooms that we were able to observe more than once, and we're seeing the sort of very similar results. So, we know that we are – we're making progress. We've identified the areas we – we want to strengthen and – and teachers are all-in. So, we're excited. I think that brings us to you, Jan.

Jan Greenberg: Yes, it does. And so, now Sheila, Consuellis, and I are going to turn our cameras on, and we're going to chat for the next couple of minutes. Hello, Sheila. Hello, Consuellis. And so, I actually just want to jump in and ask some questions that are likely on a lot of folks' minds, whether they're serving children who speak only English, or they're serving children who speak English and other languages. So, now you guys have had your programs opened and closed and opened and closed. So, how have you been supporting learning virtually, and in particular, how have you been supporting language and literacy and home language and literacy learning? And I think Consuellis, we're starting with you.

Consuellis: Right. So, thank you, Jan. So, yes, we have, you know, like you said, we've had several plans as we have been working with what we call COVID-19, and one of the things that we have been doing is serving children remotely. And as a part of the remote service plan, we have established where we conduct weekly family connection calls, and those family connection calls are with the families' assigned primary caregiver, teacher, and that is delivered in, of course, the family's preferred home language. And for children that were previously enrolled, and then, when the center had to close, what we did was we picked up, based upon our last assessment checkpoint, to begin to really individualize the services according to our school-rated domains and provide actual family engagement activities for the families to be able to do on a weekly basis. So, we were able to do that with all age groups, and then, also we all brought food distribution boxes weekly to families, and that included educational materials that supported their children according to their individualized skills. And in the Center for Preschool, in collaboration with our IT Department, we were able to create an East Coast YouTube channel, and the YouTube channel was available for preschool children and their families to be able to see their preschool teacher conducting several activities related to a story time, finger plays, physical activity movement. And, of course, at the end, going with the classroom language modeling, ensure that if they were modeling English in a classroom, then the video would be done in English. If they were the Spanish role model, then the video would be done in Spanish. And then, we also have children that speak Creole. And so, it would be done in Creole. So, we to ensure that we followed the same philosophy that was in the classroom, but it would just be through a video setting. And then, for children that were newly enrolled, we offer the same remote services to them. Also, the family can make connection calls. So, that is, in summary, what we've been doing thus far. Jan: That's a lot of work, and I love the idea that you and in particular for preschool, because the performance standards for preschool talk about continuing home language development along with English language acquisition. And so, you have teachers in your classrooms – one who's your Spanish language model, one who's your English language model, and both are providing those supports through those videos and your YouTube channel. And I have to say, I actually did get to see some of the videos on your YouTube channel, and they are fabulous. They are absolutely fabulous.

Consuellis: We're very proud of our teachers. Very proud of your teachers. Jan: You absolutely should be. So, kind of piggybacking on – on some things that you were saying and going to Sheila. Is there anything more that you can say or add about planned language approach, classroom language models, and curriculum implementation, kind of where you are now going in forward?

Sheila: So, one of the things that we really picked up on as we did our classroom observations was that teachers were reading. But really needed some more guidance on how you read a book. What is a read aloud? What is a repeated read aloud? And really, some of those would be good examples of this is what it sounds like when you have a conversation with children. Here's how you support language. So, we're putting together a series of calls where we will share video clips of teachers that are modeling language or that we can have discussions with the teachers and say, "All right, so what did you hear? What was the teacher saying? How could you use that in the classroom?" And even with their lesson planning, don't just write the name of the book on your lesson plan. Think about the questions you're going to ask, how you introduce the book, how will you introduce it? What questions will you ask when you read this story? After the story, how will you follow up with children through that to really get into thinking more about what they're doing and how they're planning and being intentional about it and not just pick a book off the shelf, but really think about how am I going to use this? Jan: And any other thoughts that either one of you want to share or, actually, we do have one audience question that I will ask you before we start to wind down. Someone actually wanted to know, how did you do the language activity virtually?

Consuellis: So, as far as how did the teachers do the language activity, how are they doing? So, one, we use what we call Microsoft Teams, and that was our platform where we were able to communicate with families. And so, – and so, we provided classroom staff training on how to use the video and make calls using that platform so that we could be able to see families, again, according to their capabilities. And so, we're able to move forward with that as we continue to do remote services, offering more opportunities for the families to see the teachers demonstrate activities as we're sharing them remotely doing this time. Jan: I have one other question. Are you providing any type of coaching or support to the teachers in terms of helping them with their strategies and techniques so that they can turn around and use those techniques using these virtual platforms and recordings?

Consuellis: Yeah, so, as a part of our process of how we determine coaching these, we've been able to follow that same process and have our education staff self-identify what teaching practices they want to work on. And then from there, our coaches that are assigned to them were using the same platform, Microsoft Teams, and they are able to go through – and we currently use PBC – so they go through the actual curriculum process of developing a relationship and then deciding what the goals they're going to work on and then creating that action plan, which we were talking about to help them implement the goals they have self-identified. And just remotely.

Sheila: And we made sure that that needs assessment that teachers complete includes a dual language strategy so they can identify if this is something they got or if it's something that they want to work on. Jan: That's great. It's all very thoughtful, very intentional in helping teachers think about what it is that they need and helping you figure out how you can support them around what they need so they – they can deliver the best services they can, whether remotely or some day when they get back in classrooms with – with children. So, I want to thank you both for chatting for these last couple of minutes and sharing what you've been doing. I think everything you told us is going to be really helpful for everybody who's been listening to this. And so, I think I know I'm now turning this back over to Deb. Deb?

Deborah: Hey, Jan. I have my webcam on here, too. So, hopefully you can see me. And let me go ahead and advance to the next slide here and just close us out. So, you know, as we conclude, I know these are really uncertain and stressful times. So, we just wanted to leave you all with this mindfulness activity, and it can be done anywhere, any time. You may just want to breathe in peace and then breathe out stress. And, you know, hopefully that will be able to carry you forward as you think about how to continue to deliver services. And so, I just want to say thank you so much for your attention during this webinar, whether it was your first PLA webinar or whether you've been with us throughout the series. This is the fifth in a five-part series. And so, I really encourage you to get on to the ECLKC, to the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center and Google PLA or planned language approach, and you'll be able to see all of the other webinars in our series. There was a five-part webinar series last year as well on the Big 5. And so, I encourage you to do that. So, again, I just hope that you enjoy the rest of your day, stay healthy, stay well, take good care of one other. And again, I thank you all.