**Guide for Facilitators of ICMEE eWorkshops**

**What does it mean to be a facilitator for an ICMEE eWorkshop?**

Welcome to ICMEE and our professional learning! This facilitation guide is meant to introduce you to our eWorkshops, our philosophy, and provide you with tips to facilitate the eWorkshops. We are eager to work with you and hope that this opportunity will provide a strong learning experience for the teachers and/or school personnel who are taking the eWorkshops, but also provide a rich experience for you as the facilitator. Our goal is for all persons involved with our eWorkshops to grow their professional expertise surrounding multilingual students today and into the future. And we’ve had great success doing this! One eWorkshop completer said:

“This course has equipped me with the most valuable and essential tool in breaking down the language barrier, and that is a mindset of transcendence and a willingness to relentlessly find new ways to meet the needs of our multilingual students with the same vigor in which I teach all subgroups.” (eWorkshop completer)

Multilingual learners have unique pathways of learning that are different from their monolingual peers. And yet, too often our teaching is grounded in monolingual practices. Home languages are often neglected in classrooms even though they are an important foundation for multilingual student learning of both content and language. Our eWorkshops are fundamentally about enhancing, supporting and expanding multilingualism for all multilingual students and embracing the unique learning assets they bring to the classroom.

Just as we operate from the notion that students bring important assets for learning to the classroom, we believe teachers do too! Therefore, we have developed learning opportunities for teachers to further their understandings, knowledge and skills in working with multilingual students through professional learning that is grounded in teacher agency, leadership and collaboration. We view leadership and collaboration as integral components of agency, while at the same time, agency is the vehicle for which leadership and collaboration can be engaged. Leadership is carried out in collaboration where perspective, individual’s voices, students, stories, lines of inquiry and experiences can take shape and drive the content.

Our eWorkshops are driven by teacher agency. We have provided useful tools and information for participants to explore, and then, implement into their professional, classroom practice. However, we know that teachers are the experts in their own classrooms. It is impossible for someone outside of their classrooms to tell teachers what is best for their practice, or for their students. We encourage teachers to use their agency to find their most meaningful learning path through the eWorkshop that matters to them and will be most beneficial for them and the students in their classroom. Teacher agency in our eWorkshops has led to strong learning outcomes for teachers

across the U.S by providing teachers with the agency needed to direct their own learning, and in doing so, their leadership and collaboration skills are nurtured.

Because our eWorkshops were designed to fundamentally support, enhance and rely on teacher agency, leadership and collaboration, our eWorkshops are not a traditional type of professional development. We have created and curated high-quality multimedia resources that are organized in a way to ensure each participant can find a meaningful learning path forward for themselves while also contributing to the broader learning of the whole professional learning community.

Each eWorkshop is organized into six modules with content and learning activities to support the development of a response to the eWorkshop essential question. Each of the six modules follows a three-part learning cycle that provides a flexible learning path for each eWorkshop participant to answer the guiding question for the module. We start with *Explore*, where new ideas and content are shared. We then move to *Make-It-Work*, where participants are given opportunities to put the ideas from Explore into practice. We’ve designed activities for participants to try out or tweak, but we also offer the opportunity to design their own *Make-It-Work* approach, affording the participants the opportunity to customize the material in a way that best serves the needs of their students. Finally, eWorkshop participants share their work with their professional learning community and engage in a collaborative conversation about the learning in each module. In our opinion, *Share* is the most empowering element of the teachers’ participation in the eWorkshops as it is the time when they have the opportunity to learn, grow, clarify, and process with their professional colleagues. With this approach to professional learning, teachers are in charge of their own learning. This is their chance to assert their agency, while providing leadership for their learning and that of their peers as they learn in collaboration with a professional learning community.

Even though this learning takes place in an online platform, teachers can collectively work together. There are opportunities to ask questions of each other, problem-solve together, and share ideas to benefit the practices of all of the teachers involved. Teachers are not working alone in this learning process. Therefore, participants should plan to follow the agreed-upon timeline for doing the various components of the eWorkshop. By sticking to that timeline, they will be able to provide leadership to support the learning of others as well as be a great collaborator and learn from the leadership and ideas provided by their peers.

Our eWorkshops provide the opportunity for teachers to grow with the material together. For this reason, we have deliberately not set this up as an online course with an instructor or even someone who is responsible for ongoing facilitation within the threaded discussions and eWorkshop spaces. We believe that teachers, along with their peers, are the best leaders of their learning. Therefore, ICMEE is not here to tell them the “answer,” because there is probably not one *right* answer. The *right* answer is what is best for each teacher and the students in their classroom.

**What do I need to do as an ICMEE eWorkshop Facilitator?**

The following information can be adapted or modified as you need to in order to meet the needs of the participants in your eWorkshop. Your group may choose to share all of the Make-It-Works in person (which is perfectly fine – we will just need to have everyone post in Module 6 so that we can send the appropriate certificates of completion). You may choose to hold webinars or Zoom meetings, and also post on the discussion boards. Or, you may choose a hybrid. Whatever your group decides, maintaining consistency will produce the best results and your eWorkshop will have a high rate of completion.

*Discussion Boards*

Our strong stance with regard to teacher agency and leadership is most evident on and through the Discussion Boards. It is important for you to recognize your own understandings and perspectives of monolingual/multilingual practices in classrooms to ensure that your perspective does not influence the nature of the discussions. Facilitators are asked to allow the learning to be constructed by the eWorkshop participants, through experiences and the content. For this reason, we ask that you view the Discussion Boards but do not engage in them, unless you are also participating in the eWorkshop as a full, equal, learning participant. However, if your role with the eWorkshop is not to be a co-learner, rather just to facilitate, your voice will automatically hold the most power in the discussion board and therefore, the participants will automatically defer to you. To ensure that the eWorkshop stays in the hands of the participants, we ask for their voices to be heard in the discussion board with no further input.

If, as the facilitator, you observe that a participant continues to miss the deadline, please send her or him a personal message asking how you can help her/him to stay on course. At this time, you may remind the teacher that not only are they missing out on the material, they are missing a powerful opportunity to gain insight from as well as share insight with their colleagues in the eWorkshop. Much of the power of this eWorkshop approach lives in the interactions of participants.

The following are some suggestions for starting emails to non-active participants on the discussion board. Please feel free to add additional points as needed.

* Dear\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I thought I would check in with you and see how you are doing. I was wondering if there was anything we could do to assist your experience in the ICMEE eWorkshop. I don't know if you've had the opportunity to engage with the materials in the modules but I've enjoyed reading the experiences of your colleagues. Please let me know if there is anything that you need. I'm an email away and I look forward to hearing from you!
* (At the beginning of a MIW/Share week) Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I hope that you know that you are a valued member of the online PLC that is exploring [name of eWorkshop]. Last week’s discussion was about \_\_\_\_\_, and you can still jump in to your group’s discussion. This week is when each of you tries out a Make It Work activity that best fits your educational context and then shares what you observed with your colleagues. It will be exciting to see what you

and your colleagues bring to share with each other in the Discussion Board and in our upcoming meeting. Please contact me if you would like to talk about any challenges you are experiencing. I would be happy to hear from you, and I will do my best to help you enjoy and engage in this PLC.

Key points:

* Do not participate on the Discussion Boards. Your role is to monitor for participation, support those who might need assistance and plan for future discussion topics in upcoming meetings.
* Send emails to individual participants who have fallen behind on the agreed-upon schedule and work with them to engage and get caught up.

*Weekly tasks (these tasks should be completed regardless of how your group has decided to engage)*

Teachers are incredibly busy. This is not a new fact or observation. As such, it is easy to fall behind in the eWorkshops and not follow the agreed-upon timeline. To counter this, a facilitator should send weekly reminders as to where each participant should be in the eWorkshop, and what should be completed that week.

Additionally each week, please monitor the discussion boards to see what the participants have posted. These discussions are very interesting and informative and will provide an opportunity to see how the content is being utilized in classrooms around the country. Further, the ideas and discussions will provide important context for the online meeting discussions.

Key points:

* Send weekly reminders to the participants to remind them of where they should be in the eWorkshop
* Monitor discussion boards to follow participants’ engagement. Take note of thoughtful comments, questions or lines of inquiry that can provide helpful context as you work with participants in the online meetings.

*Additional Meetings (if your group chooses to do this)*

The **eWorkshop** **participants’ voices** are the most important voices in any additional meeting that you might schedule. Some groups plan time to meet face-to-face and other plan times to meet online (e.g., via Skype, Google Hangouts, Zoom, etc.). Many groups do find benefit in having some coordinated time to discuss. We often recommend a three meeting schedule – one meeting at the beginning of the eWorkshop, one at the middle and one at the end.

As a facilitator, your major task during a meeting is to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to share their learning and to help with the technological aspects if your meeting is online. You can and should respond to participant questions, offer additional resources, etc. as appropriate. But meetings, like the online work in the eWorkshop, should be mostly participant-driven discussion.

Prior to the meeting, send the questions that you will be starting the conversation with through the Announcements feature of Canvas. The following are examples of questions you could use to start the discussions:

* What success have you had that you would love to share? Why?
* What has been coming up for you in your context?
* What would you like to problem solve with your group?
* How is your teaching practice shifting?

In addition to the questions, if you are holding your meeting online, be sure to let the participants know that they will get the most out of the online meeting if they are able to fully participate, meaning that they should have a microphone ready to use on their computer.

During the meeting, help direct the conversation by asking the prepared questions and then let the eWorkshop participants guide the conversation. Be sure to give participants time to collect their thoughts prior to sharing. If you feel that a statement needs clarification, ask the question for the benefit of the whole group. Remember, the participants are the experts in their practice and letting them share their expertise freely benefits all of the participants in the meeting. Some groups will be more talkative than others, and that is okay. By creating a warm atmosphere for the meeting, participants will be more likely to actively engage. This encourages participants to ask each other questions when topics are of interest to them.

Key points:

* Send questions and instructions for sharing artifacts to participants at least one week prior to the online meeting, and remind them to have a microphone.
* Facilitate the discussion but make sure that the participants’ voices are the ones that are heard. Your participation in the meeting should be minimal and for the main purpose of ensuring participants are getting a chance to actively engage.

**Let’s Get Started!**

We thank you for becoming a facilitator for the ICMEE eWorkshops! We are very proud of our work and are excited for you to begin your work with us as well. We would be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding our eWorkshops and the best approaches to supporting quality learning experiences for participants. Our email address is [icmee@unl.edu](mailto:icmee@unl.edu). Now, let’s get started!