

# Professional Development in Action: Improving Teaching for English Learners

Edited by  
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**NCELA**  
National Clearinghouse for  
English Language Acquisition and  
Language Instruction Educational Programs

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON DC



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## **Professional Development in Action: Improving Teaching for English Learners**

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The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) is pleased to present *Professional Development in Action: Improving Teaching for English Learners*. NCELA is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). Our mission is to collect, coordinate, and convey a broad range of research and resources in support of an inclusive approach to high-quality education for English learners (ELs).

This monograph showcases professional development projects by school districts and colleges of education that train teachers to work successfully with English learners across the nation. The papers we present here offer real-life examples of successful and innovative practices, including institutionalized mentoring programs, new classroom methodologies, best practices for ELs with disabilities, collaboration between colleges of education and school districts, and the evaluation of PD programs.

The majority of papers in this volume emerge from projects funded by OELA's National Professional Development grant program,<sup>1</sup> authorized under §3131 of Title III of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, as reauthorized in 2001. These projects were screened through a rigorous and competitive review process to earn U.S. Department of Education funding, and represent some of the most promising practices for professional development for teachers of ELs in the country. The volume also includes innovative and well-designed projects which draw funding from state and other sources.

The papers in this volume are drawn from the pool of submissions originally sent in response to the public call for papers on professional development for teachers of ELs for *AccELLerate!*, NCELA's newsletter, in August 2009. NCELA was lucky enough to garner a surfeit of papers from the field, not all of which we could publish in *AccELLerate!* A number of the papers which were published in the Winter and Spring 2010 issues of *AccELLerate!* (2.2. and 2.3, respectively, both on the theme of professional development) are readapted here. We also have been able to present here a number of papers which for space and other reasons we were not able to include in the newsletter.

In addition to the papers, all of the current NPD grantees were invited to submit short descriptions of their projects for inclusion in the monograph. These descriptions appear at the end of this volume.

It is our hope that the papers in this monograph will provide a wealth of examples for our colleagues who recognize the need for increased capacity in the teaching corps to work successfully with this population of students, and who are considering implementing their own programs. As the number of ELs increases across the United States, teachers need to hone and adjust their craft and expand their teaching toolkit so that they are able to meet challenges and educate these children to their fullest potential. Education administrators at the state and district level, colleges of education, and education policymakers must provide the leadership and resources to ensure that teachers have access to ongoing professional education that allows them to meet the promise of all of our English learners.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the NPD program visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/grants/npdp/>. New competitions are announced in the Federal Register and disseminated via the NCELAlist. To subscribe to the NCELAlist, visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/listserv/>.



Few civil rights are as central  
to the cause of human  
freedom as equal educational  
opportunity.

**Secretary of Education Arne Duncan**  
March 8, 2010, Remarks on the 45th Anniversary of "Bloody Sunday"  
at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma, Alabama





## The National Professional Development Program

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Cynthia Ryan and Ana Garcia

Office of English Language Acquisition, U.S. Department of Education

The National Professional Development Program (NPD) is the only federal program that offers professional development exclusively to educational personnel who serve English language learners. Authorized under Title III of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, NPD is administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). The program provides five-year grants to institutions of higher education—including community colleges and tribal colleges and public and private universities—that work in partnership with local school districts or state educational agencies to meet the need for teachers and other professionals well prepared to serve English language learners.

NPD is a competitive, discretionary grant. Applications are reviewed by teacher trainers and administrators experienced in professional development, and judged on how they respond to published selection criteria related to program design, quality of key personnel, management plan, evaluation, and need for the program. Because of the high demand for program funds, not all high scoring applications can be selected for funding. Generally, about one third of submitted applications are funded in a given competition.

Reviewers' comments and OELA staff reviews indicate that some effective features of applications selected for funding include: prior and planned continuous collaboration with schools in assessing need, in developing and refining the program design, and in evaluating the program; follow-up of graduates to determine project effectiveness; use of participant and student achievement data to inform program design; incorporation of collaborative, inquiry-based professional development activities; extensive field experience and placement of participants in schools with high concentrations of ELL students; specialized support for paraprofessionals—such as mentoring, counseling, advisement, and release time—to ensure they progress through their studies; demonstrated commitment to the program through cost-sharing by the institution and the local school districts it serves; and clear and measurable objectives that specify expectations for participant learning, progress, and completion.

The great majority of NPD programs opt to use their funds to prepare new teachers or to improve the skills of practicing teachers. With its 2007 NPD competition, OELA announced an invitational priority for preparing mainstream content teachers to improve instruction and assessment of the growing number of ELL students in mainstream classes. Most of the 139 funded applicants responded to the priority.

The University of Illinois *Project ATTACH*, for example, is working with mainstream teacher teams in Chicago public schools to develop teachers' collaboration and teaching strategies. At the same university, *Project STELL*, responding to the shortage of secondary teachers prepared to serve ELL students, targets both pre-service and in-service secondary content teachers. Practicing secondary teachers will earn ESL or bilingual state certification. New teachers and their mentors will participate in professional learning communities.

To ensure that all secondary teachers have the knowledge and skills they need upon graduation from a teacher preparation program, Brown University's *Project BRITE* serves secondary higher education faculty, deans, and department chairs at Brown and other universities. Through supervised study of topics related to ELL pedagogy, participants will modify their course syllabi to address effective strategies and instructional standards.

Indiana University takes a multifaceted approach to addressing the need. In collaboration with six local school districts, the grant serves pre-service teachers, mainstream content teachers, ESL teachers, paraprofessionals, higher education faculty, and school psychologists through networking, collaboration, and peer coaching activities.

The University of Wisconsin *LADDER Project* works with teams of educators and administrators, helping them to base their student-related decisions on data, including decisions about improving teaching strategies. Teams work collaboratively to analyze their school or school district's data.

Leland Stanford Junior University, through its development of online instructional models, has replaced the traditional face-to-face professional development with a “networked learning” approach, reaching a large number of teachers who would not otherwise have access to high-quality professional development. Under the NPD grant, the university extended its program to school leaders and counselors—two groups critical to supporting ELLs effectively. Modules include classroom videos of exemplary content teachers.

In addition to providing professional development for higher education faculty, content teachers, early childhood educators, administrators, and counselors, the University of Alabama at Birmingham assists bilingual paraprofessionals of ELL students to earn teacher certification. Using a grow-your-own approach to increasing the supply of ELL teachers in Shelby County, the *Shelby STARS* project provides special support to paraprofessionals, including mentoring and pre-professional program advisement.

Although most NPD grants serve many types of educators, some focus on a specific type, such as early childhood educators, high school principals, or math teachers. San Diego State University, for example, provides specialized training for pre-service and currently practicing bilingual school psychologists in the San Diego County area. The grant supports induction and internship training, coursework leading to the California bilingual credential, annual institutes for school psychologists and project participants, and intensive language-culture immersion experience in Mexico.

If Congressional appropriations for the program remain at level funding, OELA anticipates the next cycle of new NPD grants to compete in 2011. For more information about the program, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/funding.html>.



## Guidelines for Professional Development: An Overview

Judith Wilde

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

Across the United States, many schools, districts, and whole states are dealing with a shortage of personnel certified to teach English language learners (ELLs). According to the 2008–09 Consolidated State Performance Reports completed by 50 states and the District of Columbia, there currently are 344,048 certified or licensed teachers in Title III-funded programs, with an additional 51,419 teachers needed in five years.<sup>1</sup> In 1994, only 18 percent of elementary teachers and 13 percent of secondary teachers reported that they had received training to teach ELLs.<sup>2</sup> It does not appear that a great deal has changed since then. As noted in a recent U.S. General Accountability Office report, “While the majority of [teacher preparation] programs required at least one course entirely focused on students with disabilities, no more than 20 percent of the programs required at least one course entirely on English language learners. Additionally, more than half of the programs required field experiences with students with disabilities, while less than a third did so for English language learners.”<sup>3</sup> Thus professional development activities are especially important for educational staff working with ELL students. It appears that there are a great number of individuals who may be in need of professional development.

What is “professional development?” Most would agree that this refers to processes and practices that improve the job-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes of school employees. Ideally, these skills, knowledge, and attitudes should assure the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development and well-being of each student within the school, regardless of their linguistic, cultural, economic, or national background.<sup>4</sup> Various initiatives within the U.S. Department of Education have included student success as a focal point, including the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) and its reauthorizations. Ultimately these initiatives and professional development have the same goal: better educational programs and outcomes for all students in the school. A Venn diagram, revised from work by Iwanicki (1990), can demonstrate this ultimate goal.

**Figure 1**

### Diagram to Improve Student Outcomes



<sup>1</sup> Based on analyses by the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA).

<sup>2</sup> National Education Goals Report as cited in Teachers of limited-English-proficient students in US schools, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. General Accountability Office, 2009, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, Fullan, 2005; Guskey, 2000; and Loucks-Horsley, et al., 2010.

If you were to ask many inservice teachers “What does professional development mean to you?”, they will answer, “A few days each year.” The professional development offered to teachers and other educational staff often fails to meet teachers’ needs; is brief, infrequent, and mandated by the district or state office; focuses on topics selected by administrators; and allows little opportunity to practice, receive feedback, or to participate in follow-up activities. Effective professional development must be ongoing, interesting, and meet the needs of participating personnel.

## The Core Principles of Professional Development

I believe that five principles, if followed, can lead to successful and productive professional development.<sup>5</sup> These principles are based on the tenets of adult learning and the fundamental belief that all teachers bring strengths to the profession and want their students to achieve and feel successful; teachers will attempt new ways of teaching when they are convinced that their students will benefit. (cf., Loucks-Horsley, et al., 2010)

*Principle 1: Build on foundation of skills, knowledge, and expertise.* Professional development must build upon the current foundation of basic skills, knowledge, and areas of expertise of the educational personnel involved. Professional development will link new knowledge and activities with what the practitioners already know and are able to do, and will extend their thinking.

Those attending any professional development activity will bring with them different experiences, knowledge, and skills. The individual(s) providing the activity must determine the current level of expertise, the needs of participants, and develop appropriate materials and activities. Professional development activities that do not target a specific audience must, at a minimum, offer basic knowledge to ensure that practitioners are operating from the same foundation.

*Principle 2: Engage participants as learners.* Professional development should include rich and varied opportunities that engage educational personnel as learners and offer the opportunity to apply new skills and knowledge.

Professional development is effective when the materials are presented in a hands-on manner using techniques that suit various learning styles. In addition, practitioners need time to try out new methods in a safe environment before either moving to another topic or attempting the method in the classroom.

*Principle 3: Provide practice, feedback, and follow-up.* Professional development should offer educational personnel opportunities for (1) practicing the new skills, strategies, and techniques; (2) providing feedback on performance; and (3) continuing follow-up activities.

A constructivist approach to staff development precludes the didactic presentation of decontextualized knowledge and skills. Principle 3 reinforces the precept that information about skills and knowledge must be presented to educational personnel in a manner that allows them to link new information to their current knowledge and skills, and allows them to construct their own meanings. Interactive, hands-on approaches to professional development make use of sound principles of adult learning. Modeling specific skills with practice sessions also will allow practitioners actively to make meaning out of the new information. Finally, a period of classroom application followed by formal observation and feedback should be used to reinforce the development of new skills.

*Principle 4: Measure changes in teacher knowledge and skills.* Successful and effective professional development should be manifested by measurable increases in participant knowledge and skills.

The evaluation of a participant's knowledge and skills is essential to the effectiveness of the professional development program. In order to evaluate the participant, an appropriate amount and variety of information about what participants do and their affect on people should be collected. Assuming that the participants are teachers, then a variety of evidence of the genuine teaching work and performance of the teacher should be collected.

<sup>5</sup> These five principles are garnered from the work of several authors/researchers including Fullan, 2005; Guskey, 2000; Loucks-Horsley, Stiles, & Hewson, 1996; and Loucks-Horsley, et al., 2010.

*Principle 5: Measure changes in student performance.* Professional development should be linked to measurable outcomes in student performance, behavior, and/or achievement.

A direct link to student outcomes is necessary to determine what types of professional development activities are effective within specific contexts. The local level district involved in focused, long-term professional development activities must first identify what measurable student outcomes it wants to change. The problem for which professional development is sought may provide the type of outcome to be assessed. For example, a school district recently wished to link professional development more closely to student outcomes. The outcomes this district identified as important to change were the number of ELL students (1) placed in pull-out English-as-a-second language (ESL) programs; (2) who received low grades in reading, math, and science; and (3) who dropped out of school. Principle 5 states that a link must be established as evidence that professional development contribute to significant improvement in the quality of educational programs or student achievement.

### **Assessment within Professional Development Activities**

When providing professional development (PD) activities for educational personnel working with ELL students, there are three areas in which assessment is necessary. The assessments should measure the success of the PD in providing the information and strategies of English language development, sheltered content, and bilingual instruction. When scoring the assessments, items should come from the curriculum as well as the program staff; rubrics will have to be developed carefully to ensure that scoring is appropriate.

*Assessment of PD program implementation* refers to the necessity of ensuring that the PD has merit and does provide requisite information to participants in a manner that is appropriate and useful. Methods for eliciting such information from participants include

- checklists;
- rating scales;
- interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

Items can be developed regarding PD development and the content of the PD. Some items that might be appropriate are listed in Figure 2; all could be modified for use in a checklist, a rating scale, a survey, or a focus group.

**Figure 2**

### Sample Items for Program Implementation

- A syllabus has been constructed for the program.
- Program staff monitor participants' progress by observing them in their schools.
- Program staff use different instructional techniques depending upon the topic.
- Based on the syllabus, it appears that the program will meet my needs.
- The program has been developed based on a needs assessment of potential participants and their supervisors.
- The program staff provide positive feedback and support.

By assessing the implementation of the PD on a periodic basis, the staff can continue to do what participants find helpful and begin changing what does not seem to be working. However, it must be remembered that in some cases an unpopular activity will have a crucial purpose in the PD and will need to be continued—its introduction and explanations might however be modified to improve the response to the activity.

*Ongoing, informal evaluation of each participant's progress* toward meeting the objectives of the PD is essential. PD should utilize one or more ongoing, informal evaluation procedures by which each participant's knowledge and skill development is monitored periodically. The ongoing evaluation focus should be on each participant's (1) knowledge of professional content presented during the PD and (2) demonstrated ability to implement the strategies and techniques successfully. Observation, monitoring, and feedback regarding each participant's efforts should provide the basis for ongoing informal evaluation as the PD proceeds.

Special assistance should be provided to individuals, where needed, to ensure the successful acquisition of the knowledge and skills offered by the PD. If participants are not gaining the skills necessary, the PD staff must be aware of this immediately; if participants are gaining skills more quickly than had been anticipated, PD staff also need to know this so they can move on to another topic. In addition identifying problems within the PD can help to ameliorate them before they are fatal. Assessment techniques that can elicit the information include

- surveys;
- observation checklists;
- rating scales;
- self-assessments.

Surveys will provide information about how participants feel about the PD. Self-assessments may assist participants to reflect upon their needs and skills, but they should not be used to measure actual progress. Observation checklists provide a relatively quick method for assessing participant progress, and do not require another “test” of participants. Rating scales will provide more in-depth information. Sample items are included in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

## Sample Items to Measure Participants' Ongoing Progress

- If you have begun to systematically apply the [new skill], have you noticed any impact on students?
- What kind of additional training or activities in this area would be useful to you?
- I preceded reading and writing activities with listening and speaking activities.
- I make frequent comprehension checks using different questioning types.

*Assessment of participants at the conclusion of the program* must utilize a valid and reliable procedure—both knowledge and skills are assessed at the conclusion of the PD. The assessment procedure should include the results of ongoing monitoring and feedback, as well as a general evaluation of each participant's learning of the professional development content. The assessment procedure should focus on the most important skills and knowledge presented in the PD, and should be flexible, multi-modal, and experiential. Successful completion of the assessment should be an essential part of the completion of the PD. This calls for a final overall assessment of participants' success. Such assessments should be numerically based so that gains and mastery can be identified specifically. In addition, such assessment implies that an evaluation of the PD must be completed. This evaluation is a summary of assessments utilized for all three of these assessment guidelines, plus a final assessment of skills.

It will be especially important to use several means of assessment knowledge at this point. The PD will provide a certificate, or some form of acknowledgement, to successful participants. It may be important that this be transferable to employment in other areas. Thus the assessment must be a fair, universal measure of the

participants' knowledge and all involved (PD staff, participants, and potential employers) must agree on the key skills to be assessed and the requisite skill level for "success."

It should be specified in advance to participants that "successful completion of the assessment shall be an essential part of the completion of the PD program." The clear implication here is that an appropriate acknowledgement can be presented to participants only if they can demonstrate ability to use the skills and knowledge provided in the PD.

Measuring knowledge is the first step in the process. Participants must have knowledge before they can exhibit expertise. PD staff should determine the key issues, concepts, and facts that participants should exhibit to demonstrate mastery. Some of the methods by which such summary knowledge can be assessed include

- a criterion-referenced test on the knowledge provided during the program;
- a norm-referenced test if one is available;
- a written assignment that covers the topics of the program;
- lesson plans incorporating appropriate techniques.

*Utilizing the knowledge* provided during the PD is a separate issue. Participants must demonstrate that they have a new repertoire of skills for teaching ELLs in order to receive appropriate acknowledgement of their PD experience. Some methods for assessing skills include

- creating a lesson plan for a given student or class;
- student achievement data;
- observation checklist;
- video demonstration.

Self-assessments should not be utilized as a method of measuring success since they tend not to be reliable indicators of knowledge or skills gained through the PD experience. However, it may be helpful to compare what participants feel they are doing with what trained observers see them doing. Observation checklists and rating scales as well as video demonstrations that are carefully observed and rated are clear methods for ensuring that knowledge has been gained and is being used.

*Looking at other information* acknowledges that some participants cannot take some type(s) of tests, some people may misunderstand assignments or test items, that some people may attempt the assessment even though they may not feel well that day, or that, as asserted by many, it is unrealistic and illogical to believe that a cutoff score can divide PD participants into two distinct categories—the competent and the incompetent. More importantly, this acknowledges that tests and assessments cannot be written perfectly and thus are open for mistakes on the part of test-taker and test-scorer—mistakes that are not reflective of the test-taker's actual skills or knowledge level.

## Summary

According to the 2007–08 *Consolidated State Performance Reports*, the most commonly offered professional development content concerned educational strategies specific to ELL students, followed by a focus on the assessment of ELL students. School districts also offered professional development on understanding and implementing both English language proficiency (ELP) standards and content area standards, on the alignment of ELP standards and the curriculum, and on content area knowledge for teachers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For more background on the *Consolidated State Performance Reports*, see <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/accountability/#accountability>

The foundational premise underlying the delivery of professional development, based on these five principles, is that professional development is a cultural, not a delivery, concept. Professional development

- must be ongoing, flexible, and supportive;
- should be developed with the educational personnel instead of for them;
- must fit within the institutional context of the educational personnel.

Many professional development programs are not successful, or may be successful in one venue and not another. This is important to remember when planning professional development programs. To develop a successful model, the needs of the learners (in this case, educational personnel, and most likely teachers) must be determined, and appropriate modalities for knowledge transfer must be utilized. The assessment system designed for the professional development program will be an elemental component of the entire program. In order to suggest an assessment system for the staff development program, we must define “appropriate assessment system,” then develop ideas for the assessment of programs and participants, and finally aggregate the assessments for evaluation purposes. It is not enough to ask participants what they learned, there must be actual assessments, observations, or formal reflections on specific behaviors, skills, and/or attitudes. While we may consider professional development an easy training for adults that will obviously improve the education of students—it is anything but! Improvement of student outcomes is requires not only the presentation of professional development activities to teachers, but also on a formal evaluation of teachers, and on other school improvement plans and activities.

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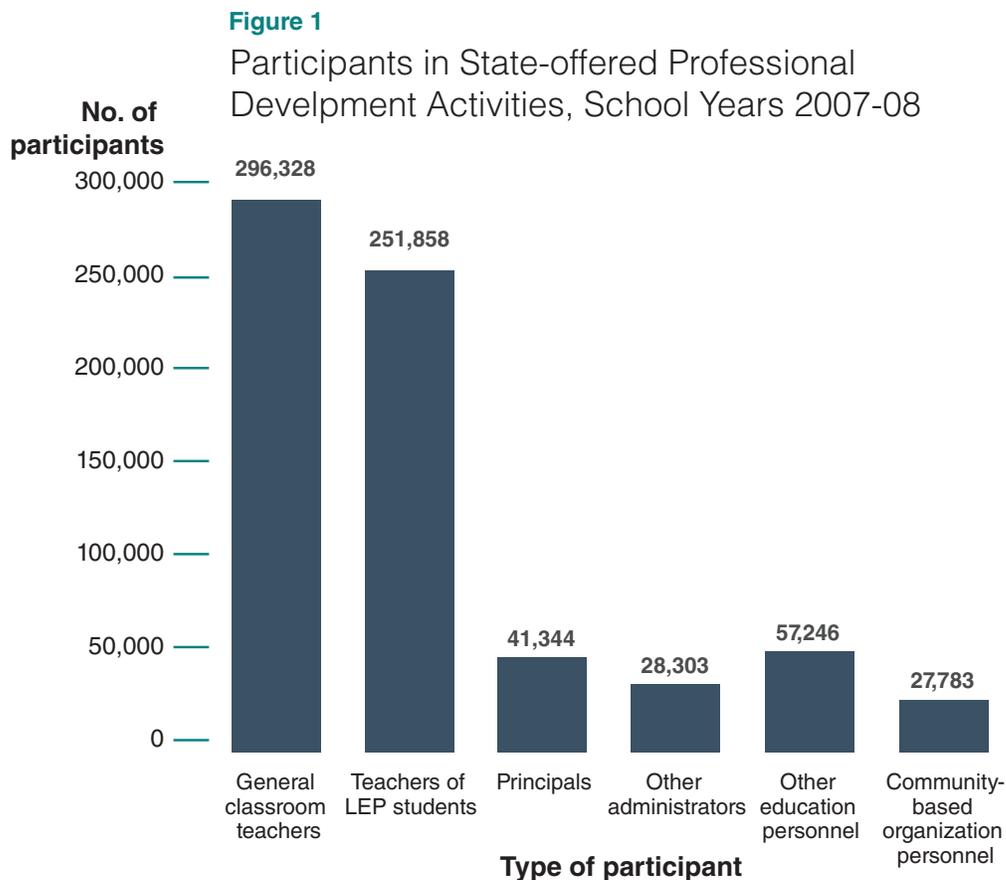
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*To keep America competitive, and to make the American dream of equal educational opportunity a reality, we need to recruit, reward, train, learn from, and honor a new generation of talented teachers.*

- Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

### Facts & Figures

- 702,862 educators received professional development activities specifically aimed at meeting the needs of ELLs in the nation's schools in school years 2007–08 (see Figure 1).
- There are currently over 250,000 teachers of ELLs in the United States.
- States anticipate needing an additional 67,140 teachers of ELLs by 2013.
- Most traditional teacher preparation programs require some training in working with English language learners for general classroom teachers, but only 20% have a stand-alone course focused on ELLs.
- Less than one-third of teacher preparation programs require field experiences with ELLs.
- 35.7% of public schools had teaching vacancies in the field of ESL in 2004.



Figures from National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition analyses of 2007-08 Consolidated State Performance Reports.

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## Selected Web Resources

### Resources on Language

For an overview of similarities and differences between **first and second language acquisition** see <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/vivian.c/SLA/L1%20and%20L2.htm>

For **stages of second language acquisition** see [http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/language\\_stages.php](http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/language_stages.php)

To understand **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)** see [http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/bics\\_calp.php](http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/bics_calp.php)

### Resources for Families of ELLs

NCELA's publication **If Your Child Learns in Two Languages** in English and six other languages, available from <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/faqs/view/12>

A wealth of resources, in English and Spanish, for families of ELLs are available at <http://www.colorincolorado.org>

### Policy

The U.S. Department of Education's **Office of English Language Acquisition** is online at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html>

An overview of **Title III requirements** can be found on NCELA's website at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/accountability/>

For general information on **laws and policies governing the education of ELLs** see <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/faqs/view/6>

### Teaching Strategies

A short primer on **comprehensible input** can be found at <http://esl.fis.edu/teachers/support/sum.htm>

Resource on working simultaneously with **language and content objectives**: <http://www.newhorizons.org/spneeds/ell/wallace.htm>

For background on **scaffolding for ELLs**, see <http://www.pgcps.org/~rosa/esoln/scaffoldingfeb09.pdf>

### Notes

Facts and Figures compiled by Keira Ballantyne, National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. Selected web resources contributed by Robert D. Leier, Auburn University, and Laureen A. Fregeau, University of South Alabama. Websites were operational as of June 2010 but readers should note that web content may change over time.

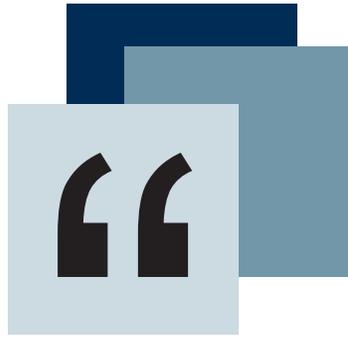
Secretary Duncan's remarks from a speech given at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, October 22, 2009: <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2009/10/10222009.html>.

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# **Coaching & Mentoring**





A teacher affects eternity.  
He can never tell where his  
influence stops.

Henry Brooks Adams  
1838-1918





## Coaching and Mentoring in Practice

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In 2007, about 20 percent of school-aged children in the U.S. spoke a language other than English at home, according to 2007 data from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) (Planty et al., 2009). Although not all students who speak a language other than English at home are identified as English language learners (ELLs), state counts indicate that approximately 10.5 percent of the total student enrollment in public schools in the United States are classified as ELLs (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2006). ELLs are students in the process of acquiring English who require support in accessing academic content and developing the academic language proficiency needed to be successful in school. The US Department of Education predicts that ELLs will comprise 25 percent of total public school student enrollment by the year 2025 (2006). The rapid increase of this student population will require the preparation and support of teachers to effectively meet the linguistic and educational demands of ELLs. However, as recently as 2002, while 41 percent of teachers in the US had experience teaching ELLs, less than 13 percent had actually received professional development training for working with these students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). The gap between the need and the availability of qualified teachers for ELL students is an area in need of attention.

From a research perspective, Goldenberg and Coleman (2010) identified factors associated with higher academic achievement for ELLs and found that, along with a sustained and coherent academic focus in schools and districts, professional development is one of the top school and district factors for ELLs' academic success. The National Literacy Panel report (August & Shanahan, 2006) suggests that in order for professional development to be effective, it must produce changes in teachers' classroom practices, in their beliefs and attitudes, and in students' learning outcomes.

Calderón and Marsh (1998) studied the impact of professional development on bilingual teachers and found that the most effective professional development approach integrated theory and research with demonstration of exemplary strategies, while providing time for practice and feedback. Saunders et al. (2009) conducted research on school-based professional development where teachers worked collaboratively over time and reported a substantial impact in whole-school improvement. Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders and Goldenberg (2009) refer to this approach as “moving the learning of teaching closer to practice.”

The projects highlighted in this chapter showcase different models that “move” the learning of how to teach ELLs closer to the actual practice of classroom instruction. Whether through coaching, mentoring or observations, each of these projects provides examples of effective collaboration within and across educational institutions. Each professional development model has strong, ongoing, job-embedded opportunities for educators to learn, practice, and reflect on their teaching. These models can be used to create sustained and focused professional development that is effective for preparing and supporting teachers of ELLs, and for closing the current gap between qualified and untrained public school teachers of ELLs.

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## Measuring the Effectiveness of an ESL Coaching Model

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**This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.**

Identifying professional development models that result in accelerated academic and linguistic development among English language learners (ELLs) is a pressing educational concern, especially in an era demanding that teacher performance be directly linked to student achievement. Classroom-based coaching has proven effective in helping teachers to expand skills, sustain change over time, and improve student achievement (e.g., Speck & Knipe, 2001). Coaching provides teachers with a “chain of assistance” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 83) in their efforts to implement research-based practices. This article describes the growth targets, process, and outcome data of the ESL (English-as-a-Second Language) Effective Pedagogy (EEP) Coaching Model. This is a new, sociocultural, performance-based coaching model (Teemant, Reveles, & Tyra, in prep) focused on research-based practices known to improve ELLs’ student achievement.<sup>1</sup> The EEP coaching model is grounded in Vygotsky’s (1978) premise that learning is social, and that through dialogue and interaction with more knowledgeable others—coaches and peers—classroom teachers receive assistance in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to gain the knowledge they need to competently promote the academic development of mainstreamed ELLs.

### The Growth Targets for Coaching: Teacher Pedagogy

Teachers want to understand more deeply how their instructional decisions and practices impact student opportunities for meaningful learning. This teacher concern defines the EEP coaching model. EEP coaching is goal-directed, performance-based (observable), and centered on student learning. It calls for teachers to move away from predominately whole-class, teacher-directed instruction to the use of multiple and differentiated small group activity centers.

The growth targets for EEP coaching are drawn from research disseminated through The Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) at the University of California, Berkeley.<sup>2</sup> CREDE has articulated a set of five enduring principles of effective pedagogy for working with culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, and Yamaguchi, 2000).

These five enduring principles call for teachers to (1) focus on assisted and sustained language use by students and literacy development across the curriculum (Language and Literacy Development—LLD); (2) ensure that learning experiences cognitively challenge students with clear expectations, feedback, and assistance (Cognitive Challenge—CA); (3) hold regular, small group, goal-directed, evidence-based, student-dominated conversations with students (Instructional Conversation—IC); (4) collaboratively create shared representations of learning with students (Joint Productive Activity—JPA); and (5) purposefully connect new academic concepts directly to the knowledge and expertise students already possess from home, school, and community (Contextualization—CXT).

When applied to coaching, teachers phase in use of each of these enduring principles while simultaneously moving toward increasingly differentiated small-group configurations. A valid and reliable rubric (Doherty, Hilberg, Epaloose, & Tharp, 2002), called the *Standards Performance Continuum* or SPC, outlines concrete, observable levels of teacher implementation. As teachers progress in their attention to these principles, they (1) design activities to use at least three of the principles simultaneously, (2) improve skills in assessing and assisting student development while in small groups, and (3) use differentiation to maximize student learning on a daily basis.

### The Coaching Process

The EEP coaching process begins with a 30-hour workshop focused on CREDE’s principles of effective pedagogy. Using the SPC rubric, teachers view and critique multiple video clips of classroom instruction, then collaboratively practice designing units that rely on multiple and differentiated activity centers, including the teacher instructional conversation.

The intensive workshop is followed by extensive classroom-based coaching with individual teachers. Seven coaching sessions (i.e., approximately 14 hours of coaching) are held across the school year. These instructional coaching sessions have four steps (Reveles, 2005): (1) a 30-minute pre-conference during which the teacher and

<sup>1</sup> See for example Doherty et al. (2004), Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, & Tharp (2003); Saunders & Goldenberg (1999).

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the CREDE program please see: <http://crede.berkeley.edu/>

coach collaboratively plan a lesson to be observed; (2) a 45-minute observation, during which the coach collects data about the interactions generated by designed activities; (3) a 30-minute post-conference, during which the coach and teacher collaboratively analyze and reflect upon what can be learned from the observational data and generate next steps for improving practice; followed by (4) a period of independent practice by the teacher before the next coaching session. The dialogue between the coach and teacher leads to ongoing cycles of preparing, implementing, assessing, and assisting teacher growth. The ultimate goal is for teachers to regularly have all students, meaningfully grouped for academic purposes, rotate through the teacher's instructional conversation center while the other students work with peers on challenging, meaningful, and language-rich academic tasks.

### Evidence of Effectiveness

The EEP coaching model of professional development has been in development for four years (Teemant, Banks, Tyra, & Reveles, in prep). Most recently, a quasi-experimental design was used to investigate the effectiveness of EEP coaching with 29 elementary school teachers (11 teachers in the control group; 18 teachers in the coaching intervention) during their 90-minute language arts blocks. Three pre- and two post-intervention observations (30 minutes each) were conducted using the SPC rubric, which captured teachers' use of effective pedagogy and activity centers. A teacher can score as high as a 4 on each principle, for a total of 20 possible points on the SPC scale. In addition, the highest level of cognitive challenge was recorded for each observation using Bloom's (1956) taxonomy (i.e., where 1 = know, 2 = comprehend, 3 = apply, 4 = analyze, 5 = synthesize, and 6 = evaluate).

Three findings demonstrate that the EEP coaching model led to radical and statistically significant changes in mainstream teacher pedagogy. First, Table 1 shows the baseline and post-intervention change score means (M) and standard deviations (SD) for control and experimental group teachers on the SPC observation rubric. While there were no baseline group differences, coaching did lead coached teachers to make significant improvements in their use of the five principles of effective pedagogy.

**Table 1**

## Means and Standard Deviations for Use of Effective Pedagogy by Teacher Groups

Groups	Scale	Pre-Intervention Baseline Scores			Post-Intervention Change Scores		
		n	M	SD	n	M	SD
<b>Control</b>	JPA Joint Productive Activity	11	2.33	.49	7	-1.19	.74
	LLD Language & Literacy Development	11	1.64	.69	7	-.21	.74
	CXT Contextualization	11	1.42	.34	7	.83	.66
	CA Cognitive Challenge	11	1.48	.90	7	-.10	1.17
	IC Instructional Conversation	11	.76	.58	7	.43	.86
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7.64</b>	<b>2.20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-.24</b>	<b>2.16</b>
<b>Experimental</b>	JPA Joint Productive Activity	18	1.79	.57	18	1.74	1.09
	LLD Language & Literacy Development	18	1.85	.63	18	1.93	.73
	CXT Contextualization	18	1.30	.51	18	1.97	1.14
	CA Cognitive Challenge	18	1.72	.85	18	1.78	1.27
	IC Instructional Conversation	18	.74	.52	18	2.76	1.13
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7.40</b>	<b>1.78</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10.16</b>	<b>4.19</b>

Note: All post-intervention change scores between groups are statistically significant:  $F(1, 23) = 42.11$  (JPA);  $42.68$  (LLD);  $6.07$  (CXT);  $11.40$  (CA);  $24.06$  (IC); and  $38.46$  (Total),  $p < .05$ .

Second, baseline data demonstrated that teachers used whole-class, teacher-directed instruction during their literacy blocks for 75% of the time, with only 25% of instruction being in small groups. Significant differences were shown in post-intervention observations. Coached teachers used significantly more activity centers ( $F [1, 24] = 11.22, p = < .01$ ), spending 86% of time in small-group configurations and only 14% in whole-class instruction.

Third, prior to coaching, 62% of observations showed that teachers used activities at the lowest levels of cognitive challenge—know/recall (43%) or comprehend (19%)—with no group differences ( $M = 2.29$  on a six-point scale;  $SD = 1.07$ ). Significant group differences resulted from coaching, with coached teachers ( $F (1,24) = 8.81, p = < .01$ ) using activities requiring higher levels of cognitive challenge (pre-to-post change score  $M = 1.87$ ;  $SD = 1.43$ ).

Taken together, these quantitative findings demonstrate that the EEP coaching model results in substantially transformed mainstream classrooms. Teachers differentiate instruction, contextualize new learning by using students' previous knowledge, value and promote student talk and interaction, require cognitively challenging work, and provide assistance and feedback that improves student learning. This professional development model, designed especially for coaching mainstream teachers, holds promise for helping all teachers to meet the needs of mainstreamed ELLs.

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# Coaching and Implementation Level of English Language Learner Strategies in Teacher Practice

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This study focuses on teachers' implementation of strategies presented in a National Professional Development grant program and coaching support for implementation. Teacher learning must include teacher application of learning, which necessitates implementation of new practices in classrooms (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Without teacher implementation of learning, changes in student achievement are not possible. The end result of teacher professional development should be a positive impact on student achievement.<sup>1</sup>

One of the chief limitations of conventional models of professional development is the passive role of teachers, who find it difficult to implement ideas that are often conceptually and practically far removed from their classrooms. A coach with expertise in professional development for teachers of English language learners (ELLs) can be the key to bridging teachers' learning to practice. Coaching increases teachers' implementation of new learning and the reflection elicited through coaching contributes to future use of the strategies.<sup>2</sup>

## **Theoretical Framework**

The CLASSIC ESL/Dual Language program from the Center for Intercultural and Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA, 2007) at Kansas State University was the basis for our professional development framework. Participants learned high quality, research-supported strategies appropriate for ELLs. During the semester each teacher implemented a minimum of two new strategies and reflected upon these with his or her group.

Reflective coaching, especially helpful for experienced teachers, was added to the base framework of CLASSIC (Huston & Weaver, 2008). Implementation of new teaching practices, reflective coaching, and adult learning theory were all part of the theoretical framework for this model.

## **Methodology**

Nineteen teachers participated in the study and they received coaching three times throughout the study. They were coached once per semester, for three consecutive semesters, using strategies especially helpful for ELLs. Pre-observation and post-observation reflective conferences were a part of the observation cycle. Field notes from observations and conferences were coded using qualitative methods and analyzed using the *constant comparative method* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The field notes from each semester's coaching sessions were compared using the implementation rubric. The level of implementation was tracked across three semesters. Once the data were collected from the field notes, they were used to place teachers in one of five levels of implementation: entry level, implementation level, adaption level, integration level, and innovation level. Since most teachers are familiar with Bloom's taxonomy levels (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956), these levels were used to categorize the implementation levels. (see Table 1)

1 Guskey (2000), Joyce & Showers (2002), Hammond (2005).

2 Joyce & Showers (2002), Costa & Garmston (2002), Zwart, Wubbels, Bolhuis, & Bergen (2007).

**Table 1**

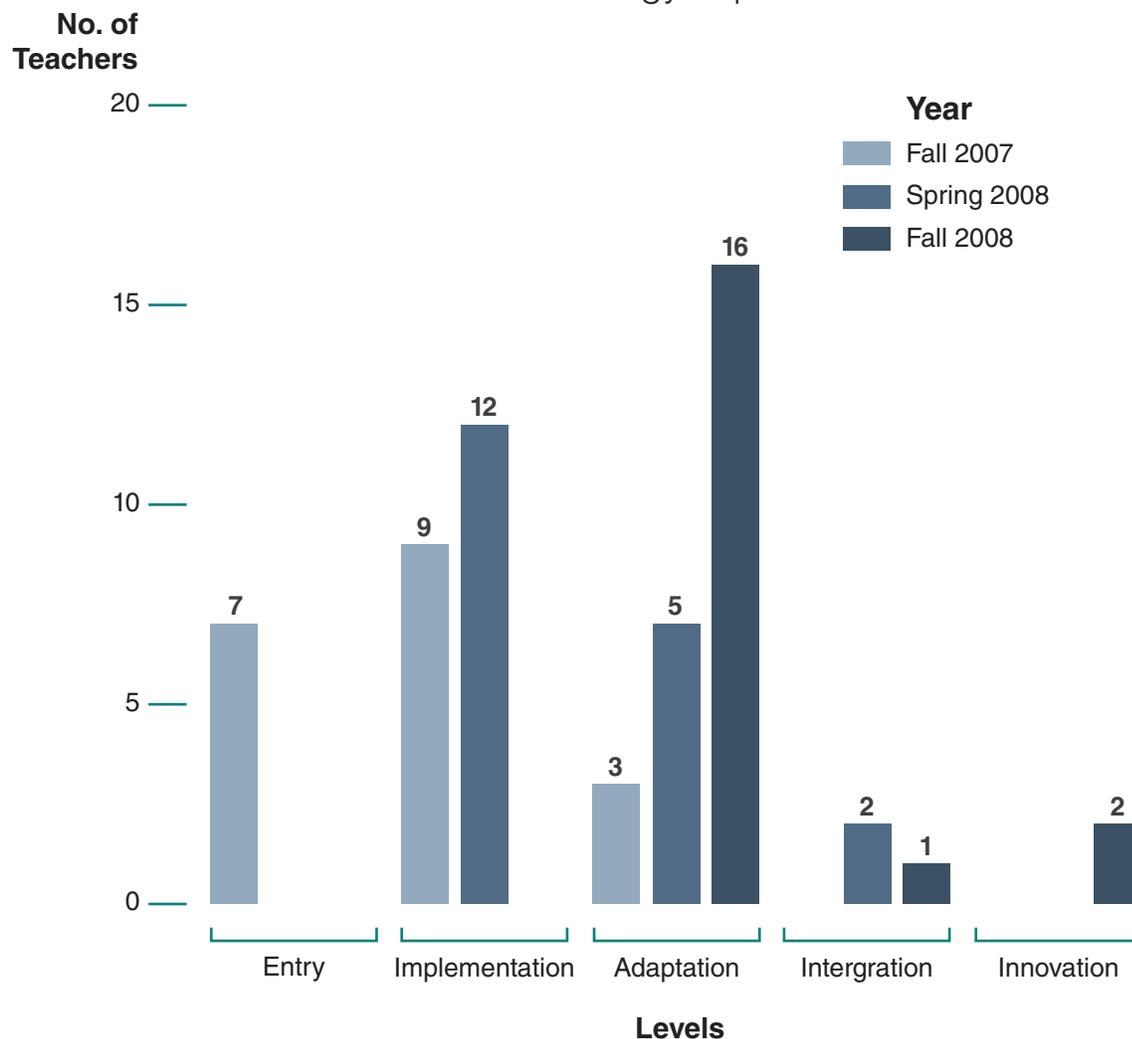
## Implementation Levels

<b>Entry Level</b> (Comprehension)	Minimal level of confidence using the strategy. Does not know which strategy is appropriate for a given lesson or how to implement for their content (subject) area.
<b>Implementation</b> (Application)	Increased comfort level. Regularly uses some strategies to deliver information. Movement toward being student-centered.
<b>Adaption</b> (Analysis)	Very comfortable with practiced strategies and begins to connect various strategies in different lessons for increased student benefit. Recognizes appropriate use of strategies in the content area.
<b>Integration</b> (Synthesis)	Comfort level allows educators to take risks in experimenting or modifying strategies through unique connections with their content.
<b>Innovation</b> (Synthesis & Evaluation)	Teachers adapt use of strategies in new and unique ways after evaluating how the strategy fits with their content area and different lessons.

At the *entry level*, the teacher knew the strategy well enough to use it in a given situation when prompted by the coach to do so. This strategy was aligned with Bloom's "comprehension" level. At the *implementation level*, the teacher used the strategy for certain lessons without having been coached to do so. This strategy was the equivalent of "true application." At the *adaption level*, the teacher applied the strategy across a wide variety of lessons and analyzed the lesson content. This strategy was considered to parallel Bloom's "analysis" level. At the *integration level* the teacher experimented with the strategy in different situations that were unique to the content. This strategy corresponded to Bloom's "synthesis" level. When the teacher was comfortable with using the strategies in a unique way and evaluated which strategy best fit a particular lesson, the teacher was at the "synthesis" and "evaluation" levels of Bloom's taxonomy and would be at the *innovation level* of our rubric.

### Findings

Teachers were identified and placed in the implementation rubric depending on their professional backgrounds and experiences. All of the teachers exhibited growth in implementation of strategies as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1****Three Semesters of Strategy Implementation Levels**

Seven teachers began at the *entry level*, nine at *implementation*, and three at *adaption*. By the end of the third semester, 100% of the teachers made gains by moving up one or two levels on the implementation rubric. Sixteen teachers (84%) were practicing strategies at the *adaption level*. They understood when and how to use strategies and were using them in combination with other strategies—and they saw how ELL students benefited. The remaining teachers (16%) were implementing strategies at the highest levels, experimenting and modifying strategies or using them in unique ways. As teachers critically reflected upon their practice through coaching, they became more comfortable in their use of strategies, and used the strategies more frequently.

### Conclusions

During the three semesters of professional development, teachers continued to learn ways to implement strategies. In the first semester, approximately one-third of the teachers needed coaching on how to match strategies with their content area and lesson objectives. About half of the teachers became comfortable with certain strategies and could implement those strategies automatically. Approximately one-sixth of the teachers actually were comfortable with modifying strategies for their particular content area and lessons. In the second semester, all teachers were above the entry level of implementation, and two teachers moved into the integration

level. By the third semester, all teachers were at or above the adaptation level and were comfortable with making modifications to the strategies and using them on a regular basis. The coach served as a support and an impetus toward the next level of implementation.

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# Providing Teachers with Strategies and On-Going Support for Teaching English Language Learners At Risk

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*This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.*

The public school district in Olathe, Kansas, USD 233, is a district like many others across the United States. As a growing suburban district, Olathe has seen an increase in the English language learner (ELL) population. During the 2007–08 school year, 6.5% of the students were considered ELL as compared to 3.6% in 2003–04. The district reported 200 more ELL students enrolled for the 2009–10 school year.

To support this population, MidAmerica Nazarene University, in partnership with USD 233, has secured an OELA grant to fund *Project STELLAR* (Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners At Risk). The grant program was designed purposefully to improve the English proficiency and academic achievement of students at risk of educational failure. The five-year project is designed to change systematically the way ELL students are taught and teachers are prepared in Kansas. Specifically, the seven schools in the program were selected to participate in the grant because of a major gap in service, infrastructure, and educational opportunities for ELL students in these schools. Table 1 summarizes details of the participating schools.

**Table 1**  
**Participating Schools**

Schools	ELLs 2006	No. of Languages	Classroom Teachers	ESOL Certified Teachers
Northwest High School	50	13	100	4
Indian Trail Junior High	72	9	49	4
Oregon Trail Junior High	81	6	55	4
Santa Fe Trail Junior High	64	6	46	1
Central Elementary	83	3	26	3
Ridgeview Elementary	140	8	31	6
Westview Elementary	65	3	25	5

Each of the chosen schools had a low number of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certified teachers in comparison to the number of classroom teachers and ELLs in the school. The teachers were not well equipped to address the learning needs of their ELL students. Professional development opportunities were needed to improve effectiveness in teaching ELLs.

*Project STELLAR* is currently in its third year. Each year, 15 in-service teachers (participants) are given the opportunity to take 18 hours of ESOL endorsement courses at MidAmerica Nazarene University at no cost. Because effective professional development is ongoing and relevant to classroom practice (American Federation of Teachers, 2002), *Project STELLAR* includes two unique features: instructional coaches and classroom observations by a university professor.

## **Instructional Coaches**

“The strength of peer coaching lies in its potential to promote a culture of collaboration and professionalism among teachers. It is also designed to improve the level of implementation of new instructional techniques and curriculum” (Wong & Nicotera, 2003). *Project STELLAR* funds one instructional coach per school. In each of the identified schools, certified ELL teachers were selected by the district’s ESOL coordinator to serve in the role of instructional coach. Duties of the instructional coach (IC) include: having the participants observe in the ELL classroom, observations of the participants in the general education classroom, providing supplies and resources, and conferencing with participants regarding any questions or concerns surrounding educating ELLs. Each IC is provided with a \$1,000 stipend.

Early in the program, participants are asked to conference with the IC and then observe in the ELL classroom. This allows for the participants to observe quality instruction for ELL students. During this time, participants specifically note effective Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies (Echevarria, Short, & Vogt, 2008; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short 2008 ) used by the IC. Comments from participants on the post-observation form have included items such as: “Stated content and language objectives in ‘kid friendly’ terms” and “Slowed rate of speech.” The participant and IC then engage in a post-observation conference. This conference provides the opportunity to explore the purpose for observed and other strategies.

During the first semester, the IC also observes in the participant’s classroom. Using the same protocol, the participant and IC hold a pre-observation conference and a post-observation conference. The IC guides the conversation to help the classroom teacher reflect on instructional practices. Each participant has at least one visit from the IC during the first semester.

Each IC is required to hold at least 10 meetings with participants or past participants during the second semester. Meeting topics may be brought up by participants, or they may be needs noted by the IC. The meetings may be one-on-one, or in small groups.

Although the schools may have adequate supplies for the general education students, many do not have supplies to specifically help the ELL student. With a \$1,000 budget, the IC guides the participants in selecting materials that would be beneficial for the ELL students in the general education classroom.

## **University Professor Visits**

Ongoing support for participants also includes periodic observations by a university professor. The first course in the ESOL endorsement program, *Methods and Instructional Materials for the ELL*, includes an overview of the SIOP model. Early in the course, the professor visits the classroom and uses the SIOP observation protocol to observe the lesson; the rubric for the protocol uses a zero-to-four scale from which scores can be calculated. The observation from early in the course gives baseline scores for each teacher, for each of the eight features of SIOP. During the *Practicum with ELLs* course, the professor visits each classroom twice, again using SIOP to guide the observation. The average score for each of the eight features of SIOP is reported for Cohort 2 participants. Table 2 shows teacher growth from the first observation during the methods course to the third observation during the practicum.

**Table 2**  
**SIOp Observation Scores**

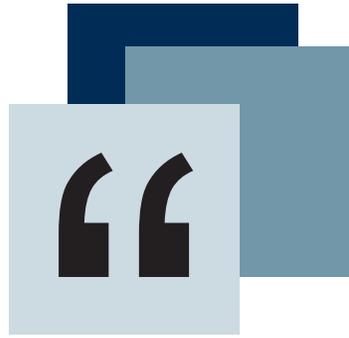
Feature	First Observation	Final Observation
Lesson Preparation	3.20	3.60
Building Background	3.24	3.79
Comprehensible Input	3.57	3.81
Strategies	3.02	3.58
Interaction	3.15	3.81
Practice and Application	3.05	3.34
Review and Assessment	3.44	3.68

### Conclusion

The grant is currently in its third year of implementation. Faculty have made a number of changes to meet the needs of the participants. It was found that the ICs have many instructional skills, but no coaching skills. To give the ICs the needed coaching skills, a book study has been planned for the year—the coaches and the university professor will read and discuss *Implementing The SIOp Model through Effective Professional Development and Coaching* (Echevarria, Short, & Vogt, 2008). The number of observations by the university professor has also increased. The methods course did not originally include an observation from the professor. However, it was deemed important to see the participants teaching in their classroom to assess their instructional needs better. Because of the extra ongoing support from the instructional coach and university professor, we have seen tremendous progress in participants' implementing effective instruction for ELLs.

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I wouldn't be here if it weren't  
for the public schools that  
nurtured me and  
helped me along.

**First Lady Michelle Obama**

February 2, 2009, Remarks by the First Lady to Department of Education Staff,  
U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC





# Collaborative Mentoring among K–12 Teachers: Professional Development on the Effective Instruction of English Language Learners

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*This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.*

Professional development (PD) on the effective instruction of English language learners (ELLs) is critical for meeting the needs of the nation's expanding ELL population (Batalova, 2006). Particularly important are local, ongoing PD efforts for *all* teachers (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). To support such efforts, *Project EQUAL*, a partnership between the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and the Shelby County School System (SCSS), prepared K–12 teachers to collaboratively mentor each other in effective ELL instruction.

## Background

Two Title VII grants, awarded in 2001, supported the creation and development of a cutting-edge curriculum for UAB's teacher-education program in English as a second language (ESL). Through *New Teachers for New Students*, ESL-teacher certification became accessible across the state by delivering courses in site-based professional learning communities and during one-week campus-based summer modules (Spezzini & Austin, 2011). Through *Project ACCESS*, PD sessions were designed and implemented for K–12 mainstream teachers, non-academic school personnel, and IHE faculty.

*Project EQUAL* was awarded in 2002 and leveraged these first two NPD projects while establishing a partnership with a school district in Alabama's fastest growing county. By using UAB's newly designed distance-delivery approach, this partnership supported mainstream teachers in becoming ESL certified. Learning groups, extensive reading, cyclical reflective activities, summer internships, and school-based action research resulted in collaborative mentoring (Spezzini, Austin, Abbott, & Littleton, 2009) and one-on-one PD (Spezzini & Austin, 2010). *Project EQUAL* also provided tuition support for paraprofessionals to obtain college degrees and implemented PD sessions for K–12 administrators, counselors, and librarians as well as for education faculty at neighboring IHEs.

Subsequent to *Project EQUAL*, UAB has been able to secure two further NPD grants, awarded in 2007, for projects entitled *Shelby STARS* and *Project HEART* (Spezzini & Becker, in press).

## Mentoring

Mentoring is one of several effective PD approaches (Díaz Maggioli, 2004). During teacher-to-mentor transformations, prospective mentors participate in structured experiences, become aware of needs, teach with targeted strategies, monitor activities, reflect on outcomes, adapt strategies, and harness personal strengths (Costa & Garmston, 2002; Tomlinson, 1998). Among various mentoring models, collaborative mentoring is defined as "practitioner centered, experiential and research oriented, reflective, and empowering" (Mullen, 2000, p. 4). As such, collaborative mentoring can entail "a spontaneous, unstructured, peer-to-peer coaching relationship that emerges when optimal conditions are created" (Spezzini, Austin, Abbott, & Littleton, 2009, p. 300).

## Project Implementation

SCSS, the only school district in Alabama's fastest growing county, serves rural and suburban communities from low to high socioeconomic ranges. From 2001 to 2008, SCSS's student body grew 27% (from 20,805 to 26,431), and its ELL population grew 174% (from 573 to 1,570). Language acquisition and academic achievement for ELLs received support through *Project EQUAL*, a five-year National Professional Development grant awarded in 2002 through Title III. In addition to the mentoring and licensure discussed herein, *Project EQUAL* also provided tuition support for paraprofessionals to obtain college degrees, and implemented PD sessions for K–12 administrators, counselors, and librarians as well as for education faculty at neighboring IHEs. In SCSS, implementation of grant-related PD included teacher mentoring and teacher licensure through use of UAB's newly designed distance-delivery approach.

The mentoring and licensure components began in spring 2003. SCSS selected 20 prospective teacher mentors, provided reference materials to schools, and hired mentoring experts as trainers. Prospective mentors attended three, day-long workshops over two semesters. By summer 2004, this teacher-mentoring component had not met project objectives. Possible reasons were inadequate “buy-in,” insufficient interaction with other mentors, and limited follow-up. While some mentoring had occurred, it resembled pre-training occurrences. Moreover, rather than changing practices and sharing first-hand results, trained mentors focused on the transfer of workshop content.

The licensure component, however, did produce teacher mentoring. The first cohort, 34 Teacher Fellows, took seven courses over 19 months. The fall and spring courses were delivered in professional learning communities and the summer courses in weeklong modules at UAB. These Teacher Fellows read extensively, completed cyclical reflective activities, interacted online with the instructor and students at other sites, implemented action research based on school needs, heard world-class speakers, and completed summer internships. By spring 2004, the licensure courses surpassed project objectives and produced an unexpected outcome: Teacher Fellows were mentoring untrained colleagues on effective ELL instruction.

Based on Year 1 data, *Project EQUAL*'s Advisory Council recommended adjustments to project implementation. Funding was redirected from the component with unmet goals (mentor workshops) to the one with surpassed goals (licensure courses). Increased tuition stipends allowed more teachers to participate in *Project EQUAL*, thus fostering increased collaborative mentoring and on-site PD.

## Study<sup>1</sup>

Early in the licensure sequence, written coursework revealed evidence of teacher mentoring taking place. To better understand how K–12 teachers were becoming mentors, we examined the unstructured coaching relationships that emerged spontaneously between Teacher Fellows and their untrained colleagues. We also examined how licensure courses fostered the evolution of collaborative mentoring.

To capture changes in teaching practices and occurrences of collaborative mentoring, we designed a questionnaire: *Capacity Building for Providing Professional Development*. Administered to all four cohorts in their fifth course, this questionnaire elicited information from 84 Teacher Fellows on sharing ESL best practices with colleagues and/or discussing other ways for helping ELLs and their families. In their seventh licensure course, the Teacher Fellows wrote a mentoring narrative about how they had mentored a colleague. Additionally, they identified long term effects through telephone interviews (January 2009) and electronic surveys (July 2009).

## Results

Questionnaires showed statistically significant increases in the frequency and duration of sharing interactions after only four courses. Frequency (daily and weekly) increased from 12% to 83% and duration (15+ minutes) from 7% to 88%. Open-ended descriptors suggested changes in interactional quality. From “confusing” and “nonproductive” to “enlightening” and “beneficial,” descriptors were mainly negative before program onset (41% nonexistent, 38% negative, 13% neutral, 8% positive) and positive after one year of coursework (1% negative, 10% neutral, 89% positive).

Mentoring narratives chronicled where (hallway, classroom, lounge) and when (break, lunch, before/after school) the Teacher Fellows had been mentoring. Proximity (same hall or lunch) and the convergence of responsibilities (same grades or students) proved to be causal links. Mentoring catalysts were their colleagues' commiserative comments (frustrated, overwhelmed) and commonly held misconceptions (“ELLs are lazy”) or myths (“No Spanish—Just English”).

Interviews and electronic surveys provided post-program insights. Though initially challenged by new paradigms, Teacher Fellows had been empowered through coursework. They became accountable for their own learning

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<sup>1</sup> The study and results are described in detail in Spezzini et al. (2009).

and their group members' learning. They embraced ESL best practices, assumed advocacy for ELLs, and mentored untrained colleagues.

## Recommendations

Findings suggest that traditional mentor training is insufficient for transforming teachers, even caring and dedicated teachers, into teacher mentors—especially for the mentoring of veteran colleagues. Rather, optimal conditions can nurture collaborative mentoring and, in turn, generate on-site PD. The following recommendations serve in guiding these efforts:

1. Be aware that mentoring models for new teachers are often ineffective for experienced teachers, especially regarding formal participant matching and interaction (Abate & Eddy, 2008).
2. For at least a year, provide access to ESL licensure courses delivered through diverse formats, e.g., professional learning communities, online interaction, extensive reading with short written responses, cyclical reflections, world-class speakers, and action research on school needs.
3. Enhance teacher-to-mentor transformations by introducing content knowledge and strategy building that promote changes in the prospective mentors' own practice.
4. Prepare prospective mentors "to respond effectively to 'mentorable moments'" similarly to how teachers respond to teachable moments (Spezzini et al., 2009, p. 311). By listening attentively as colleagues discharge emotions about an unknown, and empathetically encouraging them in self-discovery (Díaz Maggioli, 2004), collaborative mentors can share what works for them and, in turn, provide personalized PD on effective ELL instruction.

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## Satisfying Conclusion to a Five-Year Grant

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***This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.***

In early 2004, a group of faculty and staff at National-Louis University got together with administrators from three school districts in DuPage County, Illinois to design a grant proposal that would address the professional needs of teachers in the districts. Addison, Villa Park, and Lombard, Illinois were seeing increasing numbers of English language learners in their schools, and the faculty and staff at the schools were not entirely clear on how to address the challenges. Dr. Jerry Olson, a retired dean and experienced grant writer, helped guide discussions in developing the grant application, which ultimately became “Building Community for English Language Acquisition,” a five-year grant of \$750,000 from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of English Language Acquisition. It has just completed its five-year tenure.

The goals of the grant were three-fold: to enable 60 teachers in the districts to gain their state ESL approvals by providing coursework, to develop district leadership through a cadre of expert ESL teachers who would serve as mentors, and to provide professional development opportunities for general teachers and support staff on ELL-related topics. The university would provide the project director and administer the grant. We are pleased to report that the grant experience can be considered a resounding success on all fronts.

### **Goal 1: Obtain ESL Approvals for Teachers**

Our first goal was to obtain state ESL approvals for 60 teachers in the districts. By giving district teachers the opportunity to become highly qualified, the districts showed a commitment to investing in their existing faculty while also addressing *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2001)* directives. Teachers were recruited in equal numbers from across the three districts, and districts took turns hosting the cohorts. Each cohort undertook six graduate courses, which met for four hours, once a week, for six consecutive quarters. The sizeable tuition assistance available heightened the incentive for participation. We intended to have four cohorts of 15 students each in order to reach the goal of 60 completers; however, the first two cohorts lost several people through mobility, childrearing leaves, and, in at least one case, job loss. Since the first two cohorts had only 25 completers, it was necessary to step up the numbers for the third and fourth cohorts, and we were thus able to attain 59 completers, or 98% of our goal, by the end of the grant.

Several students from the cohorts have seized this opportunity for professional advancement, as seen in the following examples:

- Matt Granger graduated with the first cohort and moved on to become a sheltered English teacher and adjunct instructor at National-Louis. He taught a class for both the third and fourth grant cohorts. Matt’s expertise continued to grow, and when his district won a large technology grant, Matt was named faculty technology coordinator.
- Elaine Buch gradually became aware of gaps in the library collection at the high school where she headed the resource center, and proposed to fill it through the acquisition of a large number of content-area books for ELLs, which the grant was able to fund. Elaine followed up with a greatly improved website for the resource center, which included a slideshow called Research into Best Practices for Teaching ELLs.

Students also engaged in important discussions with their administrators about modifying instructional models for ELLs as a result of having cross-district conversations through the cohorts; research confirms that school districts that have implemented a new program for ELLs within the most recent four years have higher levels of student achievement (Williams, Hakuta, & Haertel, 2007).

### **Goal 2: Develop ESL Mentors**

The second goal, to develop expert teachers to serve as ESL mentors, was equally successful. The superintendents initially forwarded names of strong ESL teachers from the three districts, and although not all could stay with the grant, three of the initial appointees remained through all five years. Five years in the mentoring job resulted in

tremendous capacity building and leadership development. A job description that revolved around observing and advising cohort members grew into much more by the fifth year. Mentors helped to develop an excellent observation protocol used by another university with a similar grant. The mentors presented at four professional conferences on grant-related subjects, and presented in-district on grant-related topics. During the final year, they were responsible for organizing PD for general education teachers through the grant's Forum series, drawing upon presenters who had come through the grant cohorts. Two mentors began teaching graduate courses for the ESL approval at the university. In addition to these high profile roles, they also reserved the rooms, sent out the invitations and kept the list of attendees, collected the evaluation forms, and even organized the refreshments. The following are reflections of accomplishments of individual mentors.

- Mentor Jamie Porter, a high school teacher, reflected on the decision to use only presenters who had come through the grant cohorts in the final year: "I think the use of in-district presenters was really successful in increasing the turnout as well, as a great opportunity to showcase the success of the program. It was a 'pay it forward' system with the students becoming the teachers."
- Margaret Gigous became the head of the Elementary Education Special Interest Group of Illinois TESOL/BE in the third year of the grant and has continued to hold the position. She further initiated a writing contest for elementary ELLs which Illinois TESOL holds every year.
- Jenn Parde was chosen as co-chair of her district's School Improvement team.

The mentors successfully collaborated to organize a large family literacy event in one elementary district to which parents from the other elementary district were invited; additionally, mentors helped plan the program and publicity. Margaret Gigous was determined to give a bag of carefully chosen books to each participant at the Family Literacy Night, and prepared a large book order, which the grant was able to fund. The pleasure and delight on the faces of the children and their parents as they left with a bag of books with their name on it was heartwarming for all.

### **Goal 3: Forum Program**

The third leg of the grant consisted of the Forum programs offered to the general teaching staff. Approximately six Forum programs each year attracted upwards of thirty teachers each by the last two years. A small stipend, hot pizzas, and a reputation for interesting programs complemented the carefully chosen topics, which included content-based instruction for middle school ELLs, new technologies, writing methods for ELLs, and much more. Written feedback on the sessions was universally positive across all the years of programming. A final Forum in late spring of 2009 included a performance by the Spanish club from one of the schools, where more than a hundred beaming parents watched their children perform folkloric dances for the graduates of the cohorts and their professors.

### **Conclusion**

Five years of high profile attention to the academic and social needs of ELLs had a valuable impact on all three districts. One measurable advantage was the award given in 2009 to North School in Villa Park for high achievement in a high-poverty district. One mentor and several cohort members teach at North School.

Most of all, the grant generated excitement and enthusiasm about providing the best possible educational conditions for English language learners, creating a climate that celebrates diversity and increases professional capacity. The benefits will continue to reverberate for a long time to come.

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# **Classroom Teaching & Methodology**





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**Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana**  
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education,  
February 3, 2010, National Association for Bilingual Education, Denver, CO





## Content and Language: A Critical Overview

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Phyllis Jacobson

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

The professional development projects described in the four articles in this chapter represent a variety of successful approaches that can help teachers of English learners make academic content more accessible to all students. Two articles focus on the need to provide consistency across the curriculum to facilitate English learners' understanding of academic content both within and across grade levels ("Curriculum Mapping to Support the Linguistic and Academic Development of K–6 ELLS," and "Math ACCESS: Building Mathematical Proficiency in Linguistically Diverse Schools"), and offer examples of successful research-based strategies to meet EL student needs. The third article, "Meeting the Professional Development Needs of Teachers of ELLs," focuses on strategies for helping teachers in a variety of academic disciplines accelerate the learning of content vocabulary in ways that can provide consistency and scaffolding for EL students as they access academic concepts of increasing complexity. The fourth article, "Academic Literacy for All Projects: A Professional Development Model," addresses a systemic approach to professional development that includes school-wide support, sustained effort, and follow-up in order to help all teachers who may have had little to no prior training in facilitating language and literacy development for EL students.

EL students share two key needs: accessing the core content in English in ways that make the content more accessible and understandable, and learning English as a language in its own right that has its own vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, structure, and conventions, along with a distinctive set of literary and cultural texts and traditions. The articles in this volume provide a thoughtful set of ideas and approaches addressing the first need that can benefit teachers, particularly those new to the profession, or whose training encompasses teaching in the content areas. The projects described respond well to OELA's strategic priority, namely ensuring that mainstream teachers of ELs receive opportunities to enhance their teaching in ways that is responsive to the needs of ELs.

Critical as that need is, and as helpful and necessary as the range of strategies presented in this chapter are for teachers, nonetheless we also need to find ways to address through professional development EL students' need to become fully fluent in English beyond the minimum level set for redesignation. As well as supporting teachers in the content areas, we must also support teachers of ESL or bilingual education in their role both as language teachers and often as the primary liaisons between content area teachers and professional knowledge about EL students.

Years of EL student academic achievement data point to the fact that English learners do not close this English language gap between themselves and native English speaking peers. The persistently diminished outcomes for EL students raise significant questions and carry significant implications for professional development.

It might be helpful for focusing our thinking and our future professional development planning to consider the following questions: What set of knowledge, skills and abilities are needed by teachers to help EL students reach full fluency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English at a level comparable to their native English-speaking peers? What type of professional development is needed in this area? Is it a reasonable expectation, as touched upon in the "Academic Literacy for All" paper, that all subject area teachers also be fully trained as *language teachers*? What should teaching and learning the English language for non-native speakers look like? How should English language learning be integrated with learning academic content in English? Who should be providing this instruction to EL students, and are there successful models of professional development in this area available now? How can what we have learned from the effective professional development efforts described in this chapter be helpful in meeting other EL student needs? These and other related issues might well provide a roadmap for future professional development projects that will add to the foundational knowledge base provided by the successful approaches described in this monograph.





## The Academic Literacy for All Project: A Professional Development Model

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*This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.*

One of the greatest challenges facing education in the United States today is reversing the alarming number of students who drop out of high school before they graduate. A large percentage of the dropouts are Latinos, many of whom cite their lack of English skills as an important factor in their decision to leave school. These students' lack of English proficiency affects their performance in classes across the content areas. This problem is often masked because many English language learners (ELLs) at the secondary level have reached oral proficiency, but lack the academic English and academic literacy needed to succeed in content area classes.<sup>1</sup> A compounding factor in meeting the challenge of English language learners is that secondary content-area teachers have not been trained to facilitate language and literacy development while they are teaching the content-area material. "In most states, subject-area teachers have little or no training in developing literacy skills of adolescents, and even fewer have expertise in helping ELLs gain second language literacy. These teachers need sustained, job-embedded professional development in helping ELLs understand not only course content but also the academic language used to teach the content" (Edvantia, 2007). The *Academic Literacy for All (ALA)* project, funded by a National Professional Development grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, is a professional development initiative that addresses this challenge.

### The ALA Model of Professional Development.

Research has shown that one-time workshops rarely lead to changes in practice that will benefit ELLs. Rather, effective professional development requires school-wide support, sustained effort, and follow-up (Richardson, 2003). To help effect such transformations, the ALA project provides content-area teachers of ELLs with several long-term professional development initiatives. Teams of two or three teachers from each selected school site attend a graduate-level spring seminar and a summer institute to learn about theories and practices that support ELL language and literacy development. They are joined at the summer institute by university faculty who learn about ways in which they can modify their secondary teacher education courses to ensure that their pre-service students understand how to teach ELLs effectively. Other ALA initiatives include professional development workshops and study groups as well as support for teachers who have participated in ALA-sponsored activities.

Due to the lack of focus on developing the academic and conceptual thinking that underlies academic literacy and language, ALA professional development initiatives center on how best to support ELLs' language and literacy development with an emphasis on facilitating development of their conceptual thinking (Vygotsky, 1998).

### The ALA Protocol

To help teachers develop academic language, literacy, and thinking, the ALA project developed a protocol that incorporates effective instructional strategies for ELLs in a coherent lesson that requires a minimum amount of training and can be easily used across content areas. The ALA Protocol, which allows students to draw on their own experiences and use writing as a way to think and learn, is designed as an introduction to a unit in content-area classrooms. The protocol engages students in academic thinking as they synthesize ideas through dialogic interaction and analyze academic texts to support development of conceptual thinking.<sup>2</sup>

To begin the ALA Protocol, the teacher divides students into groups of four, based on their language proficiency. Students who are proficient in a language other than English are paired with other students who are proficient in both that language and English. The teacher initiates the protocol by giving students a writing prompt designed to elicit writing based on students' knowledge and experiences. The difficulty of developing this prompt, which is crucial to the success of the protocol, is the temptation to create a prompt that asks for a definition based on knowledge that the unit is designed to instill.

<sup>1</sup> For statistics on high school dropout rates, see Alliance for Excellent Education (2009), National Center for Education Statistics (2009) and also Lopez (2009) specific to ELL Latinos. For research on oral proficiency vs. academic literacy, see Biancarosa & Snow (2006), Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian (2006), Short & Fitzsimmons (2007).

<sup>2</sup> Step-by-step instructions for the ALA Protocol and more information on the ALA Project are available at <http://ala.unm.edu>.

The teacher asks students to write two sentences about the prompt and tells them that there are no right or wrong answers. Writing their ideas helps students clarify their thinking and puts the concept in a broader context. Encouraging ELLs to write in their strongest language gives them the opportunity to access the concept in their own language, and then with their partner to find the English words to express their ideas.

After the students write two sentences, the teacher asks them to work with a partner and create two new sentences combining ideas from each student's sentences. The students who have written their two sentences in a language other than English have the opportunity to access the concept in their native language and to learn the English words connected with them, which helps their conceptual and language development.

After creating two new sentences, the two pairs of students take the two sets of two sentences and as a group discuss the ideas in them. They then create two new sentences and copy them onto a large piece of paper to be displayed in front of the classroom. They focus on ideas as they learn to persuade and compromise, and observe how revising writing can help to clarify an idea or concept.

After groups post their sentences, the teacher reads each contribution aloud, helping to scaffold the texts for ELLs and giving them the opportunity to read along and become more familiar with English vocabulary. The teacher then asks the students to individually write down the number of the group that they think best captures the concept in the writing prompt, without choosing their own group's sentences. This encourages students to read all selections and analyze the ideas in them. Once students write down their choices, the group reaches consensus on one selection. The discussion helps students gain different perspectives on a concept and deepens their understanding of its relationships with other concepts.

After votes are tallied, the teacher asks the groups to look for similarities in themes and "academic" words among the groups' sentences. The teacher also leads the students in a discussion of words key to understanding academic concepts such as *because*, *although*, *if*, and *then*, that are often difficult for ELLs. Finally, the teacher reads aloud an academic text related to the writing prompt and thematic unit, and displayed on an overhead projector. The students analyze the text, looking for similarities and differences with the student-generated texts and for difficult words and syntactical construction.

The school-based ALA teams conduct professional development workshops at their school sites, during which the teachers experience the ALA protocol themselves. They read articles addressing the issue of academic literacy for ELLs at the secondary level, view a video of the ALA protocol being conducted in a secondary classroom, and then implement the ALA protocol in their own classroom with a colleague who observes and completes the ALA observation protocol. The ALA team provides continuing support to teachers, helping them to: develop prompts, conduct the protocol, bridge from the ALA protocol to the central concepts of the thematic unit, deepen their understanding of the theoretical foundation underlying ELL language and literacy development, and facilitate development of ELLs' academic and conceptual thinking. Teachers who have participated in ALA professional development initiatives report that applying what they have learned in their ALA professional development activities and using the ALA protocol in their classrooms brings a higher level of engagement from all of their students, especially their ELLs, who exhibit greater understanding of a unit initiated with the ALA Protocol. One geometry teacher, after using the ALA Protocol to initiate a unit on proof, said, "I felt that I should call all my students for the past ten years and apologize for not having given them the same depth of understanding."

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## Meeting the Professional Development Needs of ELLs

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***This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.***

*Language Development in the Context of the Disciplines* (LDCD) is an OELA-funded professional development program at Touro College in New York City. Designed and implemented in partnership with the New York City Department of English Language Learners, the LDCD Program offers secondary content-area teachers three tuition-free graduate courses in TESOL. Also offered through the LDCD Program are free one-day seminars presented by prominent practitioner-leaders in the field of teaching English language learners, as well as sponsorship to a five-day Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL) Institute, offered by the New York City Department of Education in collaboration with WestEd.

In the two years since the LDCD Program's inception, secondary content-area teachers who have participated have evidenced growth in their teaching practice.<sup>1</sup> Equipped with a solid introduction to second language acquisition (SLA) theory and cultural sensitivity training in the first of the three courses, they move on to study and apply practice related to both SLA theories and adolescent literacy.

In our second LDCD course, we concentrate on research-based strategies that improve and accelerate the learning of content vocabulary, such as the Frayer Model. Other strategies include visuals and vocabulary games, as well as sensitive choices regarding which vocabulary to teach from their texts. The role of Spanish cognates is explored. Teachers come to realize that students need to have these words pointed out to them, especially in the fields of math and science. Teachers who take this course have mentioned their increased use of vocabulary graphic organizers to help students categorize words and make connections to the words from their lives and from the outside world. An English teacher stated, "I think the graphic organizers actually have really lit up my ESL students where they're actually performing at a higher level than my native speakers; they feel success when they have something to show."

Since LDCD teachers come from a variety of content areas, they appreciate hearing strategies that work across domains. This is especially true for special education teachers who may teach more than one subject. Indira, a special education teacher said:

Well, in all honesty, I never thought of using some of the stuff we used in class back in my classroom, but I found so many ideas from the other teachers on such organizers like using the same organizers in English, social studies, math, and science, and I always feel I only use them for English. But seeing that I teach all the subjects, it was amazing, especially for science. I've been using it so much! I never, up to this point in my six years of teaching have I used it until this first semester.

The community of learners created by the LDCD program has given content-area teachers added confidence that they can teach ELLs at different levels in their classes. The courses include practical strategies that teachers can implement in their classrooms paired with essay-writing assignments where implementation is written up and reflected upon. They also share samples of student work with their content-area colleagues and offer feedback to each other.

In exit interviews conducted with program completers in 2009, teachers were asked to respond to the question, "How has your teaching practice changed since you enrolled in the LDCD program?" One response illustrates a common change in perspective—many participants now see themselves as "language" teachers instead of only as "content-area specialists." Lee, a science teacher, articulated this. "I can see now that I have become a language teacher. Now I pay attention to the vocabulary and language improvement and I think it's very useful to the students." Lee was not alone. The majority of teachers responded that they were much more aware of the need to explicitly teach vocabulary using strategies that they had learned in the courses.

<sup>1</sup> Selected course readings for LDCD include: Cummins (1991), Vygotsky (1978), Walqui (2002), Biancarosa & Snow (2004), Short & Fitzsimmons (2006), Frayer, Frederick, & Klausmeier (1969), Marzano (2005), Beck, McKeon, & Kucan (2008), Calderón (2007), and Allen (2007).

A math teacher commented:

Before I used to just write down vocabularies on the board, then just discuss it mathematically with them. But now I try to begin the lesson by asking them what they know about the vocabulary on the topic; it's not just the teacher talking, it's the students now explaining in their own words.

A second revealing question in the exit interview probed "surprising moments" over the semester. The majority of respondents were surprised at how effective vocabulary and differentiated instruction were in their classrooms. From a science teacher:

Because I used to give them one lab experiment and everyone's doing it at the same time, but this time, I give them differentiated material. One group did a lab experiment on igneous rocks, one did a graphic organizer, and another group made a poem frame. I was blown away when they stood up and they actually understood the topic's specific language and discussed with me how igneous rocks are formed and the relevant information and the core information about igneous rocks.

Teachers also expressed that, when given an opportunity to articulate ideas in multi-modal ways, ELL students could demonstrate successfully that they had learned the material taught. In the words of a participant who was an English teacher: "The 'A-ha' moment I had was that many of them are very artistically talented and when you go from their weaknesses to their strengths it really, really heightens the interest, the motivation." Teachers have expressed the importance of giving students more opportunities to work in groups or with partners to help ELL students learn. They realize that when students learn through *doing* and when they produce a visual product, ELLs can shine in their classroom of diverse learners. One teacher summed up her experience in the LDCD program by saying, "This is the first time I actually took a theory course and got some application out of it!"

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It has been established that teachers with good professional preparation can make a significant difference in students' learning, which is equally true for teachers of English language learners (ELLs) (e.g., Hayes, Salazar, & Vukovic, 2002). Research acknowledges an important relationship between language and mathematical understanding (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2000). While many experts agree that teaching a second language through content instruction is appropriate, it requires specialized knowledge and skills to organize instruction in a way that meets the needs of both English learners and English speakers simultaneously. This is a big job, and there is a dearth of professionals with the requisite skills (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006). Therefore, providing professional development (PD) for teachers of ELLs to help them understand the challenges that ELLs face and to develop pedagogical strategies to address these challenges is of great importance.

This article reports on a PD project that worked with teachers to develop professional communities of practice and helped them not only build knowledge but also develop ways of *knowing* (Kazemi & Hubbard, 2008) "that make use of knowledge in new, innovative, and more productive ways" (Cook & Brown, 1999, p. 398). The project was supported by the *Teacher Quality Partnership Grant* program from the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education. The PD project focused on developing support for student learning in mathematics. We partnered with four schools in an urban district in which 45% of the students speak a language other than English at home, 94% of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch, and 96% of the students are categorized as minority students (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2008).

## Math ACCESS conceptual model

As part of the *Math ACCESS* project, teachers worked to organize in their classrooms what we termed a *mathematics learning discourse* (Staples & Truxaw, 2009). Such a classroom has the following qualities, or conceptual pillars, that support student learning (Figure 1).

- Promoting the development and use of *academic language*, including the mathematics register, by all children, including ELLs<sup>1</sup>
- Pressing for higher order thinking, including justification and sense making that support all students, including ELLs, in learning mathematics<sup>2</sup>
- Affording *access for ALL students* to cognitively demanding tasks and rigorous mathematical activities<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1

## Conceptual Pillars of a Mathematics Learning Discourse



<sup>1</sup> Cummins, 2000, Janzen, 2008; Moschkovich, 2002; Pimm, 1987; Schlepppegrell, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Boaler & Staples, 2008; Brenner, 1998; Stein, Grove, & Henningsen, 1996; Wood, Williams, & McNeal, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Cohen & Lotan, 1997; Stein, Grove, & Henningsen, 1996.

## Math ACCESS teaching practices

Twenty-four grade 4 through 10 teachers participated in 45 hours of professional development (PD) 19 of these teachers participated in follow-up collaborative work that comprised a modified form of lesson study. In this modified form of lesson study, teachers, organized in grade-band teams, collaborated to develop, implement, and debrief higher-order thinking (HOT) lessons<sup>4</sup> that fostered increased awareness of academic language, enhanced higher order skills, and engaged all students in cognitively demanding activities. HOT lessons, archived through the University of Connecticut's *Center for Research in Mathematics Education*, use the following language-developing strategies to support students' performance.

- Incorporate *language objectives* into math lessons. This strategy, recommended by Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) experts (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008), includes language functions, skills, and structures, and focuses on everyday language necessary to explain contexts of problems as well as mathematical language necessary to express and justify mathematical ideas. For example, the language objective "Students will be able to express the likelihood of various events using everyday language" focuses on *language functions*; "Students will be able to restate the problem in their own words" focuses on *language skills*; and "Students will be able to use complete sentences with time sequence words to explain their answers" focuses on *language structures*.
- Use *sentence frames* to scaffold verbal and written responses. For example, in a lesson using pattern blocks to represent fractions, the sentence frame, "I think \_\_\_(shape) is \_\_\_(fraction) of the whole because \_\_\_\_\_," supports students' ability to explain and justify their responses while still requiring that they work through and make sense of the mathematics.
- Encourage the use of *time or sequence words* (e.g., first, then, next, finally) in written explanations to help students organize their ideas and promote attention to narrative structure.
- Attend to *student explanations* in whole class and small group discussions to support the development of language, higher order thinking, justification, and mathematical understanding. Teachers ask "HOT questions" (e.g., "Why?" "How do \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ compare?" "Do you agree/disagree ... and why?") and use "checkpoints" at which students explain their work.

The teachers reported perceptions that these and other language-related practices not only increased students' awareness of the mathematics register and of academic language, but also enhanced mathematical performance and higher-order thinking.

## Project Outcomes

To gauge student performance in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 in three public schools, we administered a single-item pre- and post-assessment. The item was an open-ended released item from the state tests that was different for each grade level and scored on a scale of 0–3, with *mastery* level being designated by a 2 or 3. Numbers of students tested ranged from 19 (pre-test, 5th grade) to 116 (pre-test, 4th grade). The post-test showed that mastery increased (from 0–26% to 24–51%) and scores of "0" decreased across all *Math ACCESS* classes.

These increases in student scores correlate with changes we documented by pre- and post-assessments of teachers' content knowledge, abilities to analyze prompts for the language demands, confidence in teaching for the development of academic language, and confidence in teaching in a manner that supports student participation in justification and higher order thinking. For example, 96% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their content knowledge in academic language increased as a result of this professional development

<sup>4</sup> Further descriptions of HOT lessons as well as the lesson archives are located at <http://www.crme.uconn.edu/lessons/>

experience, and 100% agreed that their overall ability to teach students in a way that develops their academic language improved. There was also a statistically significant increase in total mean scores from pre- to post-self-assessment (using a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = not at all knowledgeable to 7 = expert knowledge), demonstrating a positive impact of the PD on the teachers' sense of professional knowledge with respect to language issues.

## Conclusions

The positive outcomes of the *Math ACCESS* project suggest that PD that provides teachers with tangible strategies for better meeting the educational needs of their students is likely to enhance teachers' knowledge and ways of *knowing*, increase their sense of competence, and potentially foster learning, particularly for linguistically diverse students.

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What sculpture is  
to a block of marble,  
education is  
to the soul.

Joseph Addison  
1672-1719





## Curriculum Mapping to Support the Linguistic and Academic Development of K–6 ELLs

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*“Our maps are always in pencil.”*

—Terry Sales, ESL Teacher

### Context for ESL Curriculum Mapping

For the past three years, general education teachers within Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen have embraced the use of curriculum maps to strengthen the K–6 literacy, math, science, and social studies curricula. Our practice has been informed by the work of Heidi Hayes Jacobs and Susan Udelhofen, the latter of whom identifies curriculum mapping as a process “that is respectful of the knowledge of every teacher, encourages collaboration and reflection, and is sensitive to the complexities of student learning and the teaching profession” (Udelhofen, 2005). Jacobs defines curriculum mapping as a communication tool that allows all teachers to see not what ought to happen on each grade level in each content area, but what is actually taking place throughout the year. Most maps reveal four types of information: the content (essential knowledge taught), the processes and skills used to teach the content, the assessment tools, and key resources used (Jacobs, 1997).

### Challenges

We have also observed in our schools what Glatthorn, Boshee, Whitehead, and others have noted as an all-too-common disconnect among some of the key components of effective schooling: state standards, district curriculum guides or frameworks, the teachers’ instructional plans and their actual lesson delivery, and the assessment measures used locally and statewide (2006). A suggested remedy to this disconnect is curriculum alignment, which “is a process of ensuring that the written, the taught, and the tested curricula are closely congruent” (Glatthorn et al., 2006). Embracing these ideas, in 2006 we initiated a comprehensive, district-wide approach to school reform through curriculum mapping and alignment. Given the heterogeneity of our classrooms’ designs and the classroom teachers’ generalist approach to teaching, we have been working on first mapping, then aligning, the curriculum for each content area both horizontally (by grade level) and vertically (across grade-levels) in order to organize the necessary content, skills, resources, and assessments in each content area.

Due to the dearth of resources on how to proceed with a specific focus on ELLs, we developed a curriculum mapping and alignment framework within the context of a year-long professional development over the past academic year.

### The ESL Curriculum Mapping Initiative

*The Purpose.* The five-member ESL department in Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen offers a freestanding, pull-out ESL program in grades kindergarten through 6, serving over 110 students from approximately 17 different languages. The purpose of engaging in a year-long departmental professional development (PD) program was two-fold:

1. To ensure enhanced collaboration and communication among the five teachers who work in four different school buildings and otherwise may have limited shared professional learning opportunities, and
2. To develop an ESL program that is neither fragmented nor segregated from the general education literacy and content curricula.

The professional development's (PD) goals were set in collaboration with district leadership and with guidance from a professional developer in response to concerns expressed by the ESL department. Both organizational and instructional matters were addressed: since all content area teams have been working on curriculum mapping, the ESL department recognized the need to be in alignment with district goals and initiatives; the pull-out ESL service delivery model may have resulted in ELLs leaving their classrooms to work on skills and concepts without any direct connection to the learning that took place in their classrooms, thus resulting in a discontinuity in curricular goals.

*Anticipated Outcomes.* We anticipated that the curriculum mapping project would allow the five teachers to reflect and improve their instructional service delivery by implementing a more uniform ESL program that establishes a purposeful connection to the grade-level content and literacy goals. We also hoped that curriculum mapping and alignment as a professional development activity would serve as a potential avenue to building a teacher learning community (TLC).

*PD Implementation.* In Fall 2008, the ESL teachers began a systemic examination of their taught curriculum, and explored existing curriculum mapping frameworks—those of Jacobs and Udelhofen—while they became familiar with similar district-wide initiatives and began mapping the K–2 and 5th grade ESL curriculum. They began by drafting year-at-a-glance maps for select grade levels (due to very low ELL enrollment in grades 3 and 6), and then moved to create month-at-a-glance maps. Through intense professional conversations, the five participating teachers redefined curriculum mapping and developed a unique form of hybrid mapping. This locally emerged, previously undocumented practice was carried out both by looking back (backward mapping) and looking ahead (forward mapping), thus combining the historical perspective as well as a forward projection.

### **Outcomes at the End of Year 1**

Through regularly-scheduled collaborative inquiry sessions, the curriculum mapping project allowed the ESL team to engage in both reflections on the taught curriculum and planning for the future. As the hybrid form of mapping emerged, ESL teachers systematically documented their own practice and incorporated parallel curricular goals from existing mainstream literacy and content area maps, thus starting work on curriculum alignment. The district administration was committed to providing both human and material resources (release time, summer pay, consultant, purchase of related professional books) to ensure ongoing support for in-depth teacher engagement and professional learning.

Our professional development focusing on ESL curriculum mapping and alignment resulted in enhanced understanding of the mainstream curriculum by ESL teachers and, at the same time, recognized the need for differentiated, multilevel (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced) ESL curricular goals by classroom teachers. Our aims of ensuring more interconnected instructional practices and a shared responsibility for our ELLs were met as indicated by the end-of-year teacher surveys. Some comments captured the varied experiences mapping provided.

“Curriculum mapping is a challenging process. Our maps are continually evolving to meet the needs of our dynamic ELL population.”

“The highlight of the experience was the opportunity to work collegially.”

“The students will ultimately benefit and that's what's so important even though we have to admit that it was a little bit daunting at the onset.”

In the 2009–10 school year, the teachers continue their work of refining and expanding existing maps, creating and aligning maps for grades 3 and 4 to coordinate further their instructional practices.

### **ESL Service Delivery: The Administrative Perspective**

Through examination of student data, extensive participation in the PD, and regular dialogues and observations of teachers, district administrators found that curriculum mapping by classroom and ESL teachers has helped to identify gaps and to parallel the scope and sequence of the curriculum in all target content areas. Through the process of collaborative curriculum mapping, the changing curricular needs of the school district's population are addressed. In addition, we also found that engaging teachers in curriculum mapping invites active participation from all teachers, enhances collaboration among them through sharing expertise and resources, and yields enhanced student performance (Hale, 2008).

Since the project started, uniform curriculum maps have been developed by educators across Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen. In general, curriculum maps have allowed teachers to be consistent regarding student expectations and have improved consistency in monitoring student learning. Moreover, long-range planning has improved, day-to-day preparation has been strengthened, and clear communication between teachers is facilitated better. Specifically, the ESL department has embraced using the general education grade-level curriculum maps to develop a differentiated, parallel curriculum for beginner, intermediate, and advanced ELLs. Mapping has allowed all teachers to find complementary resources and provide meaningful learning connections across the content areas. Classroom observations documented that teachers are working together to teach the same material whenever possible. Because of this, ELLs are able to return to their general education classrooms and participate more readily in activities. In Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen, the curriculum at each school has become more connected, thus student engagement has been enhanced. Everyone works together so that students begin to achieve at higher levels.

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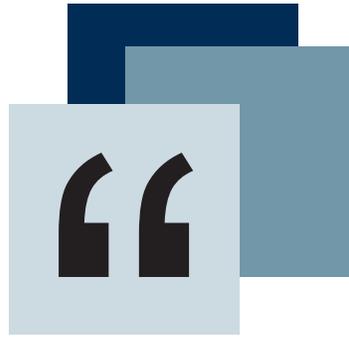
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# **Bilingual Special Education**





Every young person, every child—regardless of what they look like, where they come from, how much money their parents have—every child who walks through your schoolhouse doors deserves a quality education. No exceptions.

**President Barack Obama**

June 7, 2010, Remarks by the President at Kalamazoo Central High School Commencement, Kalamazoo, Michigan





## Professional Development for Teaching ELLs with Disabilities

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In this monograph on professional development for teachers of English language learners (ELLs), we are fortunate to have a chapter that addresses teachers of ELLs with disabilities. In addition to our overview of some of the critical issues to address in this area, we have two articles highlighting effective practices. Dr. Echevarria addresses the elements of a professional development program to meet the achievement needs of ELLs with disabilities. She highlights a case study that shows the coupling of effective professional development and research-based practices. Drs. Brown and Miller address the critical shortage of bilingual special educators. They describe the development, goals, and impact on stakeholders of an OELA-funded program called *BiSped*, designed to address the critical gap in preparing bilingual special educators.

These articles are particularly important in light of the many issues that face those who work with ELLs with disabilities in today's educational systems. Although it is difficult to determine the precise number of K–12 ELLs with disabilities who attend schools in the United States, estimates of the size of the overall ELL population for the 2007 school year ranged from 4.7 million students (U.S. Department of Education, 2010) to 5.1 million students (Zehr, 2009). Special education child counts for 2007 indicated that there were 445,784 ELLs with disabilities in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Bureau of Indian Education schools, a figure consistent with Zehler, Fleischman, Hopstock, Stephenson, Pendzick and Sapru's (2003a, 2003b) estimate that 9% of ELLs are identified as having a disability. The greatest number of ELLs with disabilities were students with specific learning disabilities and speech/language impairments (Zehler et al., 2003a). Other types of disabilities (e.g., emotional disturbance, hearing impairments, autism) were identified much less frequently in the ELL population.

ELLs with disabilities make up a greater proportion of the K–12 student population in states with high incidences of ELLs, including California, Texas, Florida, and New York. Yet despite these patterns, we can presume that because many areas of the country have experienced a substantial increase in the numbers of ELLs (Editorial Projects in Education [EPE] Research Center, 2009), all teachers must be prepared to address the needs of ELLs with disabilities.

### Areas Needing Professional Development for ELLs with Disabilities

There are many areas that need to be covered in professional development opportunities for those who work with these students. We identify several of these areas of need, with brief explanations of each.

*How are ELLs with Disabilities Identified?* Determining whether an English language learner also has a disability is a challenge (Geva, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Care must be taken to ensure that limited proficiency in English is not mistaken for a disability. Researchers and educators have written about both the over-identification of ELLs as having disabilities and the under-identification of these students (Zehler et al., 2003a & b). States, districts, and schools across the country struggle with the process and procedures to follow in order to identify accurately those students who are learning English and who also have disabilities (Keller-Allen, 2006; Thurlow, Barrera, & Zamora-Duran, 2006).

*Are ELLs with Disabilities Provided with Access to Grade-Level Standards-Based Content?* Title I and Title III legislation require that ELLs, including those with disabilities, be taught the same challenging content standards as their fluent-English speaking peers. State-level content assessments show that ELLs with disabilities are among the lowest achieving students (cf. Liu, Barrera, Thurlow, Guven, & Shyyan, 2005; Liu, Thurlow, Barrera, Guven, & Shyyan, 2005). It may be tempting to attribute poor outcomes to the learning difficulties ELLs with disabilities face. Yet, national survey data (Zehler et al., 2003a, 2003b) indicate that as recently as six years ago, instructional services for ELLs with disabilities were less closely aligned to state standards than services for fluent-English speaking students with disabilities or ELLs without disabilities. Even when ELLs with disabilities are included in grade-level standards-based instruction, they may not receive the types of instructional supports that they need to access the materials (Shyyan, Thurlow, & Liu, 2008).

*What Kinds of Training and Instructional Support do Classroom Teachers Receive?* In Zehler et al.'s surveys (2003a, 2003b), teachers, aides, and district staff who served ELLs with disabilities reported receiving general materials and training on standards-based curriculum development that often were not specific to the needs of these students, or even to ELLs more broadly. The availability of materials and training varied by the size of the district's ELL population and the grade-level of the school. Fewer than one-fourth of school districts with smaller numbers of ELLs reported owning manuals or guides for applying standards to the instruction of ELLs with disabilities, while slightly more than a third of larger districts had such materials. The same pattern was evident in the availability of in-service training on ELLs with disabilities in standards-based instruction. Elementary-level teachers were more likely to have participated in trainings on instructing ELLs with disabilities than their middle-school and high-school teacher colleagues.

*Providing Accommodations for Instruction.* Providing accommodations is an important part of ensuring that ELLs with disabilities have full access to the general curriculum (Albus & Thurlow, 2007). ELLs with disabilities may need accommodations that support them linguistically (e.g., translated assignments, simplified English), and may also need accommodations that compensate for the student's disability. In making the decision whether to use an accommodation, the IEP team should consider such factors as the student's proficiency in English and learning goals to determine which accommodations are appropriate. Data on the effectiveness of each accommodation should be collected as part of the decision-making process. Professional development can help all decision-makers better understand the problem-solving process that should be used to determine which accommodations will be most helpful for an individual ELL with a disability.

*Making Decisions about Assessment Participation.* ELLs with disabilities can participate in accountability assessments in a number of ways. Most ELLs with disabilities can take the general assessment without accommodations. Some may need accommodations to ensure accurate assessment of abilities rather than disability or language skills. A very small number of ELLs may have a significant cognitive disability that makes an alternate assessment appropriate (Albus & Thurlow, 2007). No matter how an ELL with a disability participates in an assessment, it is important that the student is included in the assessment system. Professional development for teachers in the area of participation decisions for ELLs with disabilities can help teachers and other members of the IEP team determine the most appropriate participation options.

## Conclusions

We have covered a range of issues that face educators who work with ELLs who have disabilities. These issues ranged from appropriate identification, to access to the grade-level standards-based content, to training and instructional supports, to instructional accommodations, to decision making about assessment participation. Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of school leaders for ensuring that students have access to the curriculum and succeed, and the challenges that schools and their leaders must address.<sup>1</sup> Educator leadership provides the frame for addressing these issues, as does the important work of researchers such as those included in this chapter.

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# The Role of Professional Development in Helping English Learners with Disabilities Achieve High Standards<sup>1</sup>

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In the quest to provide high quality instruction for English learners, including those with disabilities, the focus is often on finding research-based strategies, interventions, and methods that will help these students achieve high standards. However, there is another factor that contributes to effective instructional programs: the way teachers implement those effective practices. Ongoing professional development and teacher support are critical for ensuring high levels of implementation so that these best practices have a positive impact on student achievement.

In many cases, special-education personnel are not included in general-education staff development sessions and this exclusion perpetuates a perception that special education is a separate entity. In reality, students with disabilities are usually with their grade-level peers in general education for most of the day. General-education teachers and special-education teachers should learn best practices for English learners alongside one another so that all teachers work in concert to serve all students.

This article describes the elements of an effective professional development program that was used successfully with English learners with disabilities (Echevarria & Short, 2009). The case study shows that research-based practices coupled with effective professional development ensure high levels of implementation.

## Effective Professional Development

Lela Alston Elementary School's population of approximately 400 K–3 students consisted of 70% English learners and 94% students who qualified for free or reduced breakfast and lunch. It was an inclusion school for special education; approximately 10% of the students had IEPs and were enrolled in the general education program.

In an effort to close the achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs, the goal of their professional development project was to improve the achievement of English learners in reading and oral language. All teachers (n = 23) received training in using the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model of instruction (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008). The SIOP Model is a lesson planning and delivery system that shares many of the characteristics of effective instruction for general-education and special-education students alike, but also addresses the unique linguistic needs of English learners. The SIOP Model consists of 8 components and 30 features that, when implemented well, has been shown to increase student achievement.<sup>2</sup> See Figure 1 for a brief listing of the eight components of SIOP.

**Figure 1**

## Eight Components of the SIOP Model

- Lesson Preparation—language and content objectives
- Building Background—vocabulary development, student connections
- Comprehensible Input—ESL techniques
- Strategies—metacognitive and cognitive strategies, scaffolding
- Interaction—develop oral language
- Practice & Application—practice all 4 language skills
- Lesson Delivery—meet objectives
- Review & Assessment—review lesson's vocabulary and concepts

<sup>1</sup> This article was originally published in NCELA's newsletter, *AccELLerate!* 1(3).

<sup>2</sup> Evidence for the effectiveness of SIOP is elucidated in Echevarria, Short, & Powers (2006), Echevarria, Richards, & Canges (in prep), Short, Fidelman, & Louguit (in prep).

A team from Alston School consisting of the principal, the literacy coach, and a lead teacher attended a SIOP Institute to learn the model. Afterwards, they designed a professional development plan, through which the coach and lead teacher would train all the teachers at the school on one component of the SIOP Model per quarter over two years. The elements of their professional development plan were consistent with those reflected in the standards for professional development (National Staff Development Council, 2001) and included.

- Conducting whole staff trainings, including the principal, during quarterly early release days focusing on one SIOP component
- Co-planning SIOP lessons with each teacher and providing individual coaching as needed
- Modeling and/or team teaching a SIOP lesson with each teacher per quarter
- Having teachers observe and analyze one another's SIOP lessons, followed by group discussion and feedback
- Videotaping of teachers' SIOP lessons so the coach and teacher could analyze the lesson together

From interview data, we discovered teachers' perceptions of the impact of the SIOP professional development on their teaching and student learning, especially as it related to students with disabilities. The special-education teacher who served as a resource specialist in general education classrooms commented that:

SIOP has really held me accountable piece by piece of what I need to put in my lesson plans because nine out of ten of my special education students are also English learners. So there was a whole aspect of their education that I was missing [as a special education teacher]. ...The hands-on [activities], the small group interaction—all of the components really lend themselves toward making sure the special education students are active so I don't need to be there to know that they are engaged, to know that they are part of the class.... Any class you go into, a lot of times you can't even tell who the special education students are because they are with a group of students...and involved in everything. It's been really neat to see that.

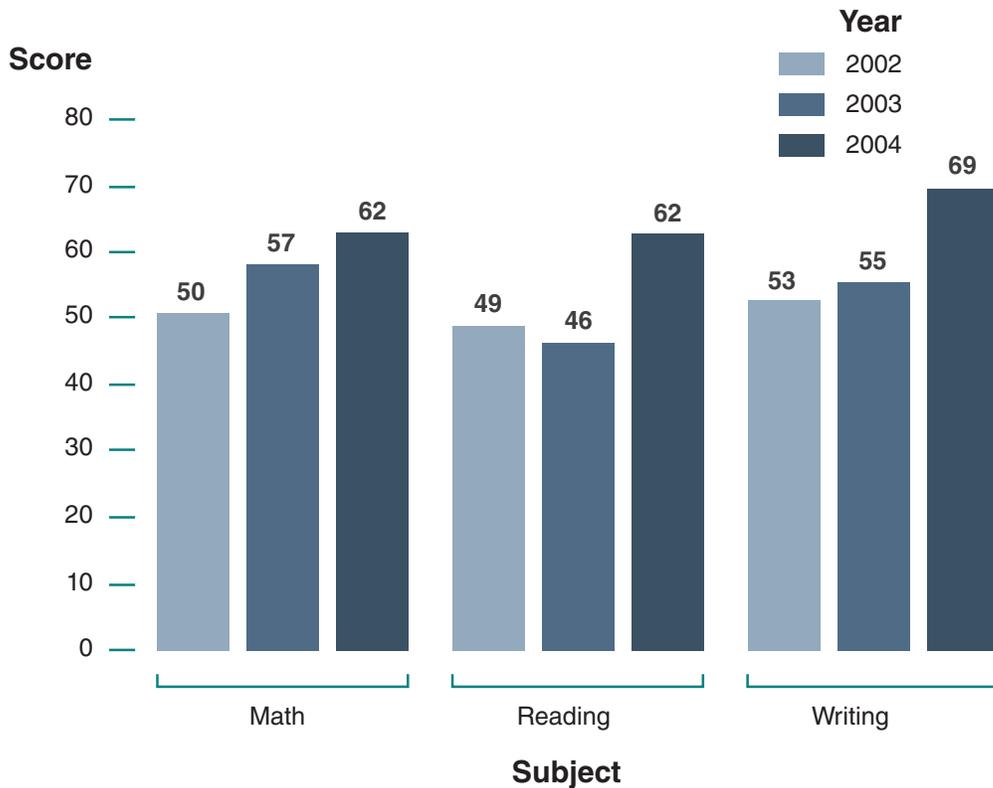
A first-grade teacher who team taught with the special-education teacher added:

The impact that the SIOP has had on children is that it really allows for all children to participate; it allows them to be involved in the lesson. Since I've been using the SIOP, I think students are just more engaged. Now we are...touching every child in the room so that they are succeeding.

Teachers' perceptions of the impact on students were reinforced by data from the state's annual standardized assessment, Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS). Students made steady growth over the years (2002–04) as the SIOP Model was implemented. Further data analysis showed that when matched with similar neighboring schools, students at Alston School outperformed students in those schools in the areas of reading, writing, and math. Finally, the performance of third graders who had attended Alston since kindergarten (during the years that teachers received professional development and were implementing the SIOP Model) was examined and it was found that 86% of those students who had SIOP teachers exclusively were performing at or above grade level (50% at grade level; 36% above grade level) as measured by the AIMS assessment. See Figure 2 for a visual presentation of the data.

**Figure 2**

Alston School's Average Student Performance on State Tests, 2002–04



### Conclusion

For teachers to learn and implement research-validated practices well, there must be a commitment to ongoing professional development, including teacher support in the classrooms. In our extensive work on professional development with the SIOP Model (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008), we have witnessed the academic and social benefits of collaboration between general-education and special-education teachers, such as that illustrated in the Alston School exemplar.

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## BiSped: Filling a Critical Shortage Area

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Portland State University's (PSU) *BiSped* Program is a pathway for district partner bilingual paraprofessionals to achieve special education licensure and expertise in the education of ELL students. Oregon, like most other states in the nation, has a shortage of teachers prepared to teach ELL students. Fewer than 20% of public-school teachers throughout the U.S. with at least one ELL student in their class are certified to teach ELL students (Waxman, Tellez, & Walberg, 2004). The percentage of teachers with expertise in English as a second language (ESL) issues with special education certification is even lower. In 2007, a consortium of ten school districts and faculty from PSU's Bilingual Teacher Pathway Program, a pipeline bilingual teacher certification program with previous funding through the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA), met to discuss the critical need for educators who could address the key factors in assessing when an ELL student's academic difficulties are due to a disability and when they are a function of the difficult task of learning in a second language. The outcome was an OELA-funded program called *BiSped*. *BiSped* is now entering its third year and has faced many successes as well as challenges in accomplishing its mission and goals. This article describes *BiSped*'s development, goals, and impact on stakeholders.

### Mission and Goals

*BiSped*'s mission, preparing bilingual special educators, is accomplished through the following goals.

1. Develop and provide a research-based licensure program leading to highly qualified special-educator status with expertise in ELL instruction to 40 bilingual/bicultural paraprofessionals.
2. Mentor participants during their full-time field experience and first year teaching to increase retention of special education with expertise in ELL instruction.
3. Provide on-site professional development in distinguishing *difference* from *disorder* to full-time student-teachers and first-year graduates as well as their pre-referral and Response to Intervention (RTI) teams.

### Specialized Curriculum

After receiving funds, the consortium's first task was to determine the competencies desired for participants beyond those needed for state special education licensure. They reviewed competencies required by the few states with bilingual special-education certification and by bilingual special-education licensure programs offered at other universities to determine the focus for specialized coursework. Optimally, *BiSped* participants would have completed coursework for both the special-education license and the state's ESOL/Bilingual endorsement; however, the number of credits required was prohibitive. Thus, the consortium recommended additional courses related to second language acquisition, biliteracy, and the assessment of ELLs. In addition, to extend and enhance both their licensure and specialized coursework, *BiSped* faculty and participants meet quarterly. District partners are also invited to all professional development events; each year, *BiSped* hosts a conference for participants and district partners that includes current topics such as RTI and Progress Monitoring for ELL students.

Participants are admitted to the program once per year and are infused into a part-time cohort with other special-education licensure students. While this has been enriching in many ways, it also brings challenges participants have identified through focus group discussion with the program's external evaluator.

### What BiSped Participants Say

Focus groups conducted with each cohort provided unique insights. In general, their knowledge of issues facing ELLs is greater than their graduate school counterparts and instructors.

*Cohort 1.* When asked to describe what is working best for them in the program, participants offered, “working with classmates and learning from them,” “classes based on scientific research,” and course content that “rolls over into useful lesson plans.” In describing what they learned about ELLs with and without special needs, they voiced some reservation regarding the level of ELL knowledge held by course instructors. It is key to remember that participants are bilingual and have themselves often faced the challenges of second language acquisition. This is not necessarily the case for many course instructors. This led one respondent to point out:

Teachers do not go into detail and point out what works best for ELLs. I need to pick out what works for them. Nothing presented has been explicit for ELLs, but our experience allows us to pull out ELL-related content.

When asked for recommendations to help instructors relate content to ELLs, participants suggested “simply mentioning ELLs in the context of strategies,” “using pictures,” and “bringing out assessment issues in working with ELLs.”

*Cohort 2.* Responses were similar except in one respect. This cohort included more general-education-licensed teachers and each of these licensed teachers also holds an ESOL/Bilingual Endorsement. Thus, their responses tended to reflect more on program curriculum and design. The longer a participant had taught, the more they expressed what they perceived as program limitations. They felt they knew more about the needs of ELLs than many of the faculty. One participant said:

There has been a lot of information presented that experienced teachers already have. For example, we need collaboration taught with a bilingual/bicultural twist. It would be good to have two tracks: one for brand new teachers and one for teachers/people who have quite a bit of teaching experience already.

A less-experienced participant offered a different perspective:

A world of knowledge has been provided to me from my position as a non-teacher. Everything I learned in each class is new, but most important has been the current information of how to best serve our target ELL student population.

Interestingly, participants were unanimous regarding the value of a course on assessment of ELLs, which they felt focused on what they most needed. This course was developed by the project director as a mechanism to infuse ELL knowledge into the special education program and led one student to say:

The class last summer (bilingual assessment) was the most helpful so far. It offered truly new information. I felt like that course has been the missing link between teaching ELLs and students with learning issues and disorders.

This course in particular appeared to establish a standard for addressing the ELL needs expressed by program participants.

## **Other Perspectives**

Two liaisons (one from the ELL department and the other from special education) from each district attend meetings held every other month to discuss field placements, participant progress, coursework, and professional development opportunities. Although it is often difficult for busy district personnel to attend meetings, attendance has been consistent, indicating their commitment to the partnership. One district liaison reports:

*BiSped* helps us to train teachers in ELL/special education issues who can be “in-house” experts to serve in advisory roles to other teachers/administrators.

Sentiments regarding the need for a program with this focus include the following:

This program is fulfilling a huge need in the field one educator at a time. Although the program is small, there are that many more people in this field locally than prior to this program. The professional development piece is a wonderful way to spread the knowledge and commitment to this work.

One of the special education faculty members made the following observation:

Overall, the faculty [members] believe *BiSped* benefits the department. We are currently working on a curriculum redesign. *BiSped* faculty consults with us to reconceptualize course content to appropriately address the unique needs of ELL students and their families. *BiSped* participants help their peers understand the cultural capital that diverse students bring. Their stories and perspectives are invaluable.

## The Future

While we have anecdotal evidence that district partners are now more aware of the disproportionality rates of ELL and other minority students in special education, it continues to be difficult to obtain district and building level data. We will continue to work with partners to measure the program's impact on disproportionality as well as staff knowledge.

Recruitment has been challenging. Our target group has been bilingual paraprofessionals. However, the program is currently offered only at the graduate level, so the consortium has decided to widen the pool to include bilingual substitutes and temporary employees. This partnership provides promise for filling a critical educational niche as described by one participant:

*BiSped* is offering me the opportunity to fulfill a career dream on working with ELL students who have learning disabilities.

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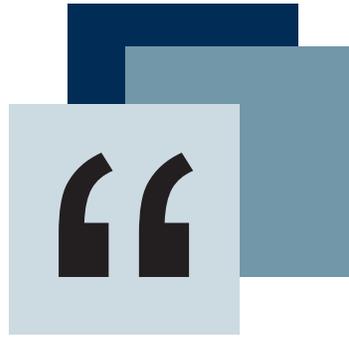
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# **Collaboration with Institutes of Higher Education**





At the desk where I sit, I have learned one great truth. The answer for all our national problems –the answer for all the problems of the world– come to a single word. That word is “education.”

Lyndon B. Johnson  
1908-1973





## School-University Collaborations for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

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The number of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners in schools throughout the nation continues to increase. The population of K–12 students who are learning English as a second language grew by over 57% from 1995–2005, while the total student population increased by only 3.7% (NCELA, 2007). The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 40% of students will speak a home language other than English by the year 2030.<sup>1</sup> From 1993–2003, the total student population also grew more racially and ethnically diverse (with the proportion of non-white students increasing from 34% to 41%), with Latino/a students representing the greatest increase (KewalRamani, Gilbertson, Fox, & Provasnik, 2007). Awareness of these changing demographics often results in hesitancy, fear, or frustration on the part of educators, as most have not been sufficiently prepared to address the needs of students whose backgrounds differ significantly from their own (NCES, 2002).

At the same time, the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) requires schools and educators to provide evidence that English learners and other subgroups of students are continuing to progress in their ability to demonstrate excellence on standardized measures of academic achievement. This presents a challenge, especially as second language learners must meet the double demands of learning grade-level academic content while simultaneously acquiring English as an additional language (Herrera, Murry, & Morales Cabral, 2007; Wessels, 2008). An achievement gap between CLD students and their monolingual English-speaking peers is especially apparent in areas such as reading (in English), where the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2007 indicated, for example, that only 7% of English learners in fourth grade scored at or above the proficient level compared with 36% of their monolingual English-speaking peers (August et al., 2009). Grant and Wong (2003) call attention to the achievement gap saying, “As the population of language-minority students grows and higher levels of literacy are expected for all students, more must be done to help English learners achieve educational parity with native English speakers” (p. 386). Gaps in achievement exist in other content areas as well. The 2009 NAEP data demonstrated that 43% of fourth graders and 72% of eighth graders identified as second language learners scored below the basic level in mathematics—compared to 18% of monolingual English-speaking fourth graders and 27% of monolingual eighth graders.<sup>2</sup>

To reduce this noted achievement gap, greater efforts must be taken to ensure that teachers receive the necessary professional development to better meet the needs of their CLD learners. Recent analyses indicate that, among teachers who serve CLD students in their classroom:

- Only 26% have received differential staff development for CLD students/families;
- Fewer than 20 states require that these teachers obtain professional development specific to the needs or assets of these students;
- Fewer than 17% of their preservice preparation programs required training designed to meet the learning needs of CLD students; and
- More than 57% believe that they need more professional development specific to the educational assets and needs of these students. (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008)

A few studies also suggest that the persistence of certain key myths among teachers is a strong indicator of teachers' lack of preparedness for CLD students. For example, Reeves (2006) found that 71% of surveyed teachers believed that second language learners should be able to learn English within two years. Karabenick and Clemens Noda (2004) found that 52% of teachers surveyed held the belief that students' first language knowledge interfered with their capacity to acquire a second language.

<sup>1</sup> Data from the American Fact Finder database, available at <http://factfinder.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> Analysis by the Institute of Education Sciences, as reported in their (2007) request for grant proposals.

In these complex times, the field of education must take a moment to reflect on where it has been and where it is going. At the fundamental level of classroom achievement, Nieto (1992) has argued that *mutual accommodation* between teacher and student is essential to CLD student success. For her, a reciprocal relationship grounded in collaboration best maximizes the resources and strategies that each partner brings to learning. In like manner, we assert that mutual accommodation between university-based programs of teacher preparation and development and school systems are, given the current demographic and political realities, essential to the large-scale, effective development of teachers for this complex and growing population of students.

New ways of working together must be envisioned and enacted if the goal of providing all learners with an equitable education is to be achieved. Breaking away from existing paradigms of partnerships and collaborations between school system and university communities and forging creative solutions to today's dilemmas of practice is a shared imperative. Often we get bogged down in toxic conversations on perceived deficits of schools and institutions of higher education, and we miss the power of collaboration to address identified needs in praxis. In our efforts, Slater calls for "reciprocal altruism among institutions, helping others who help you, in an open and trustworthy environment within and without those institutions that support change" (2010, p. 6). The successes of existing synergies can provide building blocks to the creation of collaboration structures and practices that are most likely to address the needs of a given population in a specific context.

In our own work to promote educator capacities for intercultural interactions with CLD students and families, the CLASSIC© acronym has great significance. Though it is most commonly associated with a Differentiated Professional Development (DPD) Model (Herrera, Murry, & Pérez, 2008), the core concepts have direct applicability to the development of successful collaborations between schools and universities. The first "C" relates to *critically reflective practice*. Doing things differently requires us to think in new and different ways and continually adjust our mindset as needed. The "L" reflects the need for *lifelong and collegial learning*. We create long-lasting solutions by pooling our resources and expertise. In collaboration, we more effectively *advocate* ("A") for students, especially those who are *second language learners* ("S"), and develop best practices to address their individual needs.

We simultaneously work together to ensure that teachers receive professional development that addresses their *site-specific school and community dynamics* ("S"). All parties involved in a school-university collaboration must be committed to developing a trusting relationship in which concerns and needs are openly aired and taken into consideration during planning and implementation. Collaborations do not revolve around using prescriptive checklists of components and processes to duplicate programs that others have found to work in their specific contexts; rather, lasting collaborations emerge as creative *innovations* ("I") that represent new possibilities for everyone involved and that challenge the ways things have always been done. In a successful collaboration, institutions develop *cross-cultural and cross-linguistic competencies* ("C"). Those immersed in the culture and language of one institution become adept at understanding the culture and language of another, so that mutual understanding becomes both the means to reaching shared goals as well as an end itself. With this level of understanding, the collaboration is more likely to withstand unforeseen challenges and evolve to address changing dynamics.

The purpose of this chapter will be to introduce innovations in teacher development for diversity, especially those that have emphasized: (a) collaboration between IHEs and schooling systems; (b) theory or research-based but practice-driven professional development for complex classrooms, and (c) teacher development for the differential assets and learning needs of second language learners. Taken together, they serve as a source of inspiration for educators, nationwide, as we journey together toward academic excellence and increased achievement for CLD students.

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## Collaboration is the Key to Successful Professional Development: The STEP T for ELLs Program in Maryland

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When developing a program for professional development of secondary content teachers, collaboration is the key. This article briefly describes the *STEP T for ELLs* (Secondary Teacher Education and Professional Training for English Language Learners) Program as an effective model of collaboration in the state of Maryland. The *STEP T* Program built a dynamic relationship between an institution of higher education (IHE) and local school districts.

Professional development (PD) should be embedded in the daily lives of teachers, with strong administrative support and use of strategies that are tailored to their specific needs. The *STEP T for ELLs* Program embraces characteristics of effective professional development<sup>1</sup> by including in its PD design the contributions of ESOL teachers, content teachers, local school district administrators, graduate students, and university professors; this ensures that the PD incorporates points of view from all levels and encourages the active participation of teachers in the development and implementation of the program. With the collaboration of development teams, including representatives from both the IHE and local school districts, instructional modules that are aligned with Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) standards were developed for math, science, and social studies teachers; these modules can be taken for state-certified PD credit or as in-service workshops.

“Professional development does not come in one-size-fits-all. It needs to be tailored to fit the context in which teachers teach and their students learn” (Louks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, & Hewson, 2003, p. 53). Many context factors are influential in developing effective professional development for math and science, such as national, state, and local policies; students, standards, and learning results; teachers and their learning needs; curriculum, instruction, assessment practices and the learning environment; organizational culture; and organizational structure and leadership.

The *STEP T for ELLs* Program incorporates characteristics specified by Díaz Maggioli (2003) and context factors as outlined by Louks-Horsley et al. (2003) by creating a collaborative model of development and implementation. This process incorporates many levels of collaboration.

- Collaboration in the development and implementation of PD with the state educational agency, local school districts, and university
- Collaboration among content area coordinators, resource teachers, and teachers within local school district
- Collaboration between content teachers and ESOL teachers
- Collaboration among teachers in the PD workshop

The collaborative teams for development and implementation in each subject area are presented in Table 1.

The development teams included representatives from the university and local school districts, from ESOL and subject areas, and teaching professionals at different levels, from administrator to teacher. The dynamic interaction between research on teaching content to ELLs and the real-life knowledge and skills of practitioners in the field allowed the program to be tailored to the needs of teachers in the cooperating school district. In addition, the different areas of expertise and levels of administration were helpful in implementing the program successfully. With enthusiastic support coming from the Secondary Science Coordinator and the Secondary Math Resource Teacher, pilot programs were easily set up in the local school district.

<sup>1</sup> As outlined in Díaz Maggioli (2004) and Sparks (2002).

**Table 1**

## STEP 'T' for ELLs: Program Teams for Development and Implementation

Content Area	Members of Development and Implementation Team
<b>Science</b>	University ESOL professor
	University secondary science professor
	Local school district secondary science coordinator
	Local school district ESOL teacher <i>(co-teaches a biology class with a science teacher)</i>
<b>Math</b>	University ESOL professor
	University secondary math professor
	Local school district secondary resource teacher
	Local school district ESOL teacher <i>(teaches a sheltered algebra class for ESOL students)</i>
<b>Social Studies</b>	University ESOL PhD student
	University secondary social studies instructor / local school district social studies department chair
	Local school district ESOL teacher <i>(teaches sheltered social studies classes)</i>

### Collaboration in Practice

Most important to the development of a successful PD program for math, science, and social studies content teachers working with ELLs was tailoring the program to the teachers and their specific teaching context. The *STEP T for ELLs* Program provides 15 hours of PD in the following areas: Profiles of ELLs, Cross-cultural Communication, Literacy Development for ELLs, Teaching Strategies for ELLs, Adaptation of Materials for ELLs, and Classroom Assessment for ELLs. Two examples from this program demonstrate the process of tailoring the content of PD via collaboration among professionals from the IHE, the local school district, and the state educational agency. The first is the effective use of ELL profiles, and the second is the incorporation of a student-centered “funds of knowledge” approach for teaching content, which is one important strategy for teaching ELLs.

*Profiles of English language learners (ELLs)*. “A first step in helping English language learners (ELLs) succeed in mainstream classes is understanding more about who they are and how their family backgrounds can influence their success in school” (Walqui, 2005, p. 7). One important part of the PD program for content teachers includes guiding them toward an understanding of the individual ELLs in their teaching context. The designers of *STEP T* felt that participants in their program should come away knowing much more about ELLs as individuals, rather than just learning facts and generalizations. ESOL professional development materials often include profiles of ELLs in order to give the teachers in training a closer look at several individual ELLs (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002; Walqui, 2000). Through research conducted by the university professors, the ELL profiles written by Walqui in “Who

are our students?" (Richard-Amato & Snow, 2005) were assigned to science teachers in the first pilot. In this text there are detailed profiles of ELLs from different parts of the U.S. Although teachers could read about students' lives and extract the main factors that affect ELL academic achievement, the issues reflected in the profiles were not necessarily specific to the students found in the local school district in Maryland. In addition, the teachers were not engaged in an activity that could help them connect with ELLs on a personal level, which the development team felt was important for content teachers who may not have the same opportunities to get to know ELLs as ESOL teachers. To tailor the PD to the school district, one of the collaborating high school ESOL teachers was asked to write profiles based on students he had known over the years. This proved to be more effective because the teachers reading the profiles could read about ELLs who more closely resembled the ELLs in their own region. Many commented that they felt they "knew that kid."

The use of ELL profiles in the PD program went through the process of development outline in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Steps in Development using a Collaborative Model**

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Process of Development</b>
<b>Step 1</b>	Participants read and reviewed Walqui (2005), which presents example profiles of ELL students.
<b>Step 2</b>	An ESOL teacher from local school district wrote six new profiles based on students who can be typically found in his school and local area in Maryland.
<b>Step 3</b>	The six profiles were reviewed and approved by all development teams (i.e., math, science, and social studies) and the STEP T Advisory Board (members from university, local school district, and MSDE).
<b>Step 4</b>	An activity was developed to connect teachers to ELLs on a personal level by <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading one ELL profile and filling in graphic organizer</li> <li>2. Role playing an ELL in a jigsaw activity</li> <li>3. Discussing the main factors that can affect the academic achievement of ELLs and connecting those factors to teachers' classrooms</li> <li>4. Interviewing the ESOL teacher in their school to find specific information about the ELLs in their school/class</li> </ol>

As this process shows, the collaboration among different levels of teaching professionals from the university, state educational agency, and local school system helped to develop an effective PD program that encouraged collaboration among teachers to connect them with their English language learners.

*Student-Centered Funds of Knowledge Approach.* The STEP T for ELLs Program designers felt that it was important for content teachers to utilize the "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) that ELLs bring to the classroom as part of PD for content teachers. With Moll's approach, teacher researchers go into the communities to learn about the home and community culture of students and then apply this in the classroom by drawing on the cultural knowledge that students have. The original funds of knowledge approach established by Moll was modified to accommodate

the diversity in Maryland's immigrant population by making it more student-centered. In the student-centered model, teachers assign students to talk with family members (especially parents) to find out what knowledge they have from their culture that can be useful in class. For example, a math teacher may have students talk with a parent about how they use math in their daily lives and have them illustrate how they solve a mathematical problem on the job or at home. Students then have the opportunity to discuss a topic in their native language before discussing it in English. This gives the student time to make home and school connections and it engages the parents in the student's learning.

The *STEP T for ELLs* Program incorporates use of a student-centered funds of knowledge approach in PD for content teachers. First, the trainer explained how and why to use a student-centered funds of knowledge approach. Then teachers collaborate with one another to develop lesson plans based on their school curriculum that incorporate the use of this approach. Teachers voluntarily agreed to give us copies of their lesson plans in order to share their work with other teachers on the *STEP T for ELLs* website. In this way, the *STEP T for ELLs* Program has encouraged Maryland educators to work together collaboratively through PD to address the needs of ELLs, and will continue to build a repository of shared resources developed by the teachers.

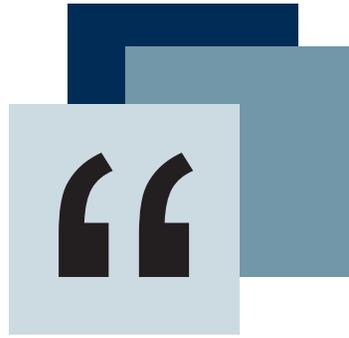
## Conclusion

Although the grant was awarded to an institution of higher education, the success of this professional development program is contingent upon collaboration with both local and state educational agencies. Having a program that is grounded in theory and thoroughly researched by an institution of higher education, and also aligned with state standards, is essential. However, an effective professional development program must also involve local public school teachers and administrators in both the creation and implementation. The *STEP T for ELLs* Program was able to bridge institutional divides between IHE, state, and school personnel by providing a program relevant to the context of the participating teachers. The local teachers knew what materials the teachers used, what resources were already available, and what the state assessments looked like. Moreover, they were able to gather local data to show that success on the state assessments was strongly correlated with language skills, and argue that teachers could make better gains by focusing on literacy instead of just content subject matter. In addition, the public school collaborators were able to use their personal relationships within their school district to promote the professional development initiative and make it more successful because they were insiders. In fact, successful implementation depended on the cooperation of people inside the local school districts and schools who had the ability to get the program placed into professional development catalogs and introduced into sessions during staff professional development days.

The development phase of the *STEP T for ELLs* Program was completed in the second year of the five-year grant; however, implementation still requires continued collaboration among professionals at the cooperating IHE, the state educational agency, and the various local school districts throughout the state who are requesting PD from this program. For example, when the ELL Profile activity was recently implemented for PD at a school in another part of the state, the ESOL teacher at that school was asked to contribute information about the ELLs at that particular school. In fact, the next phase of implementation includes recruiting teacher leaders across the state to present the *STEP T for ELLs* PD Program to teachers in their local school district and to add materials relevant to their particular needs. Because the strength of this professional development program is a collaboration among different educational agencies and among different levels of educational professionals, the program continues to be a work in progress; as *STEP T for ELLs* is implemented across Maryland in various school districts, it requires tailoring that only a teaching professional from that local context can provide.

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Teachers possess the power to create conditions that can help students learn a great deal—or keep them from learning much at all. Teaching is the intentional act of creating those conditions, and good teaching requires that we understand the inner sources of both the intent and the act.

Parker Palmer  
*The Courage to Teach*, 1998



The purpose of Project East Carolina University Leading Exceptional Annual Progress (*ECU LEAP*) is to prepare teachers for integrated inclusive settings. These teachers will be highly qualified to work with all students, but particularly with students for whom English is a second language. Kansas State University (KSU) developed a model distance-learning program, the CLASSIC® ESL/Dual Language Program.<sup>1</sup> KSU agreed to help ECU adapt the model to address the critical needs of teaching English language learners (ELLs) in eastern North Carolina. CLASSIC® is a copyrighted acronym for *Critically reflective Lifelong Advocacy for Second language learners, Site-specific Innovation, and Cross-cultural competency*. Its developers and faculty are Drs. Socorro Herrera and Kevin Murry. The curriculum for the program is a 5-course sequence that leads to add-on licensure in ESL for teachers in the state of North Carolina—see Figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
CLASSIC 5-course Sequence



### Course Descriptions

The courses provide an in-depth focus on key issues relevant to teaching English language learners.

- *Planning, Implementing and Managing ESL Instruction* examines contemporary methods and strategies appropriate for providing comprehensible instruction for second language learners in the K–12 classroom; it provides a foundation for understanding multiple perspectives on ESL approaches to education.
- *Assessment in ESL Instruction* provides an overview of current issues in assessing and teaching students with limited English proficiency in K–12 settings, including: assessment and placement, development of appropriate plans and reports in schools, informing instruction based on assessment, and implementation of effective strategies for working with culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families.
- *Culture and Language in ESL Instruction* presents an overview of issues relevant to cross-cultural dynamics of ESL settings in K–12 schools, adaptations appropriate for the development and implementation of a multicultural curriculum, and essential skills for professional educators related to linguistic concepts and literacy development among ELLs.
- *Linguistics in ESL Instruction* provides an appropriate foundation in linguistics for K–12 teachers in ESL settings. It emphasizes the structure and function of language and planning for effective delivery of curriculum based on state standards for second language learners.
- *Professionalism and Evidence-based Accountability* offers a critically reflective process supported by development of a cross-culturally sensitive portfolio of artifacts, evidences, and tools for use with ELLs and their families in the K–12 setting.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the CLASSIC ESL/Dual Language Program at Kansas State University see <http://coe.k-state.edu/esl/classic.html>

## Program Description

In this region of the South, it is not surprising that the astronomical increase in the cultural and linguistic diversity of public school classrooms has resulted in discernable gaps in quality educational services for ELL students. An intensive program of outstanding professional development emphasizes the ways in which schools may begin to accommodate ELL student needs and adapt instruction for ELL students in their grade level. Models of programming for ELL students that are less appropriate for the increasing ELL population, such as ESL pullout, remain prevalent in many school districts of the South, but no longer remain viable in schools that have experienced such radical changes in demographics. North Carolina teachers serve increasing numbers of ELLs, and perceive the need for significant professional development regarding second language acquisition in their classrooms. In rural districts, the need can present special challenges, since traditional course attendance is often not feasible for teachers who are distant from the universities which could provide courses and experiences in support of English as a second language (ESL) licensure. In addition, rural districts may not be able to generate the "critical mass" of teachers necessary to support satellite delivery of courses at a single off-campus site.

The CLASSIC® Program offers rural endorsement participants relevant and compatible professional development through instructional approaches that emphasize process thinking and critical reflection on the appropriate adaptations and modifications of theory and concepts. Throughout this instruction, capacity building for cross-culturally competent professional practice and advocacy is highly emphasized. Rural educators in particular are unlikely to have had long-standing contact with either linguistic diversity or advocacy skills training to safeguard the rights of ELL students and families.

While the model is provided largely through electronic modalities, face-to-face opening and closing sessions provide participants the opportunity to meet with other site-based participants in collegial learning communities; this important feature of the professional development also is offered on an as-needed basis. This blended model, composed of an effective combination of online and site-based inquiry, was considered essential given the remoteness of school sites from the university campus, as well as the smaller number of teachers to be served in most rural communities of the geographical area.

Much has been written regarding the social distance attendant to online learning, but when coupled with the site-based learning communities developed in the *Project ECU LEAP* model, the online component ceases to create social distance, and becomes rather an efficient communication pathway as well as an effective communicative archive for collaborating professionals.

## Conclusion

Although *Project ECU LEAP* provides professional development for current classroom practitioners at the graduate level, the authors recommend initiating the model within initial teacher preparation programs as well. Such a comprehensive approach would support the development of teacher candidates prepared to merge ESL methods with curricular content as soon as the need appears. In its present iteration, the five-course sequence provides a response to the immediate needs of practicing teachers, and, as such, presupposes a lag in providing services to ELLs related to the teachers' learning curve as skills and knowledge are developed. An expansion of the program to include undergraduates in Teacher Education would create a more coherent approach, in which the efficacy of integrating ESL methods with curricular content would be operational at the time of initial certification, as well as continuing to be available to in-service teachers at the graduate level.

An integrated approach to ESL that combines language instruction and content makes the most sense for second language learners. This approach benefits all learners, as multi-modality instruction provides a significant way to accommodate a number of cognitive styles. In the view of the authors, programs that connect such integration of strategies and content will serve elementary, intermediate, and high school students and their teachers, as well as the colleges of education that prepare the new generation of professionals. Essential partnerships reflecting such restructuring are imperative, so that an expanding number of professionals will be prepared to implement effective instruction and make appropriate progress.



## Project ESOL MIAMI: Infusing the Teacher Education Curriculum to Address the Needs of English Language Learners

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**This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.**

The state of Ohio has experienced an 88.5% growth in its English language learner (ELL) population in the last ten years (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). During this time, the state has made strides in preparing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certified teachers, but a 34% increase in ESOL teachers over the next five years still is needed to match the expected growth of the ELL population (*Education Week*, 2009).

Although preparing more ESOL specialists may be ideal for meeting this growing need, it is important to acknowledge the role the generalist teacher plays in supporting the ESOL teacher, as well as the responsibility of all teachers to support ELLs in mainstream classrooms.

Currently, only four states (Arizona, California, Florida, and New York) require all teacher candidates to demonstrate competencies in ELL instruction (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). Though Ohio has not mandated these competencies for teacher candidates, licensure preparation faculty believe the skills, knowledge, and professional attitudes for working with this unique population are essential and this approach is the direction and future of teacher education in the nation. To make this vision a reality, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) funded the *English for Speakers of Other Languages Mentoring Initiative for Academics and Methods Infusion (ESOL MIAMI)* Project in Miami University's School of Education, Health, and Society.

The primary goal of the five-year *ESOL MIAMI* project is to improve the preparation of teachers to work with ELLs in the mainstream classroom. In collaboration with higher education faculty and local public schools, and under the guidance of experienced infusion specialists from the state of Florida, the *ESOL MIAMI* project developed an infusion-based, licensure-specific ESOL curriculum to enhance teacher candidates' preparation to increase the academic achievement of ELLs in mainstream classrooms.

The *ESOL MIAMI* Project does not seek to prepare specialists to work with ELLs; rather, the Project aims to equip all mainstream teachers with the knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes that support student learning and development when working with ELLs in their subject area classrooms. The Miami ELL Certificate Model leading to teacher candidate preparation is comprised of two tiers. The first tier prepares mainstream teachers through the infusion of ELL competencies in the required coursework for all licensure candidates. The second tier provides additional coursework and field experiences for candidates who wish to extend their expertise in working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom, which earns these candidates the special ELL Certificate. This new approach, which is different from preparing ESOL specialist teachers, challenges the dominant paradigm of teacher preparation and requires a rethinking and reworking of curriculum to prepare candidates to serve all pupils successfully (Costa, McPhail, Smith, & Brisk, 2005; Meskill, 2005). In order to attain these curricular goals, the *ESOL MIAMI* Project, in collaboration with faculty, administration, and school partners, extended an infusion framework with coursework and field experiences to enhance multiple licensure preparation programs.

### Infusion Framework

The *ESOL MIAMI* Project initiated this curricular change by seamlessly integrating ELL content into key courses in the curriculum, each course requiring a minimum level of content and competency infusion. According to Nutta (n.d.), a pioneer in ESOL infusion, an infusion approach incorporates ESOL content into existing classes and field experiences, making ESOL a natural part of all the curriculum and instruction, not an add-on. Infusion can occur at various intensity levels: 1+, 2+, 3+. At the one plus (1+) level, teacher candidates have an opportunity to develop basic foundational knowledge at an awareness level typically focused on English language learners, how these learners acquire a second language, and how to use knowledge gained to inform teaching. At a two plus (2+) level of infusion, teacher candidates apply knowledge gained through lesson planning and implementation

<sup>1</sup> Note: A special thank you to Kouider Mokhtari from Iowa State University for valuable feedback and comments during the development of this piece.

skills essential for meeting the needs of ELLs in the classroom. Lesson plan modifications for ELLs are practiced in content-specific methods courses (language arts, science, mathematics, social studies, and foreign language). At the three plus (3+) level, teacher candidates discuss language-specific challenges and solutions encountered by ELL students in real-life classrooms.

## Courses

The proposed infusion framework, which is the backbone of the *ESOL MIAMI* infusion model, exposes candidates to key concepts and basic knowledge about ELLs in the mainstream classroom. This knowledge serves as a foundation from which a teacher candidate can elect to become an ELL mainstream specialist (tier two of our model) and be eligible for an ELL Certificate. Candidates in the certificate program take additional, independent ESOL specific courses to meet the extra requirements. Two courses (equivalent to six credits) taught by ESOL specialists equip candidates with in-depth knowledge of ELLs. These courses focus on curriculum, pedagogy, culture, language acquisition, applied linguistics, and best practices in teaching and testing ELLs. A third course (three credits) examines the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills candidates need to develop meaningful learning experiences to facilitate learning for all students, providing opportunity for candidates to reflect on their practice, connect concepts and apply the ideas to real-world issues.

## Field Experiences

Field experiences with ELLs are an integral part of the certificate program. These field extensions are embedded in the ELL certificate-specific courses, infused methods courses, and student teaching experience. Through these experiences, candidates are given the opportunity to put theory into practice and document success with ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Experiences range from working one-on-one with ELLs (e.g., teacher candidates tutor an individual ELL under the guidance of faculty in charge of tier one courses) to managing their instruction in larger groups (e.g., during student teaching, teacher candidates assume the responsibility of teaching a whole class that contains at least one ELL, under the mentorship of a cooperating teacher).

## Conclusion

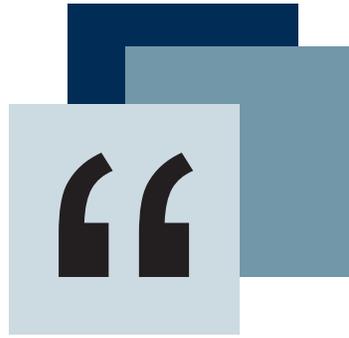
In today's world, teacher preparation programs must ensure that all teachers are prepared to teach and reach all students effectively, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The elements of the *ESOL MIAMI* Certificate Model follow a curricular trajectory that spirals, revisits, and builds upon the content throughout a student's experience in the program. The culminating ELL Certificate acknowledges that teacher candidates are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and professional attitudes to work effectively with ELLs.

Although Ohio does not yet require higher education institutions to provide all teacher candidates with competencies to work with ELLs in the mainstream classroom, Miami University's *ESOL MIAMI* Project is leading the way in ensuring that teacher educators and teacher candidates are prepared to address the needs of these learners. The aim is to share lessons learned from Miami's ESOL infusion experience with other higher education institutions statewide and nationally. Ultimately, interested higher education institutions will have an opportunity to adopt or adapt the *ESOL MIAMI* infusion framework to their teacher education contexts with the goal of enabling all teachers to effectively address the needs of all learners in their classrooms.

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Teaching is the profession  
that teaches all other  
professions.

*Anonymous*





## Collaboration in Professional Development for ELL Content Achievement

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With the growing number of English language learners (ELLs) in K–12 public schools, more and more professional development (PD) efforts in districts and schools have started to focus on enhancing teachers' understanding of working with ELLs. In order to work with ELLs more effectively, every teacher must know about topics such as language acquisition and development, students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and specific teaching models and strategies that facilitate ELLs' growth in both language and content areas. More importantly teachers need to have opportunities to apply this knowledge in their daily teaching practice and work collaboratively to enhance ELLs' academic achievement.<sup>1</sup>

Our project received funding through the National Professional Development grant, allowing us to engage in collaborative PD activities at our university and with local school districts over the last two years. In this article, we describe the collaboration between university faculty and one local school to design and deliver a one-year PD program targeting ELLs' science achievement. The impact of our PD efforts on both ELLs' achievement and school capacity building are reported.

### Professional Development Program

Unlike traditional PD offered by faculty from the university, this year-long PD program was co-designed and co-delivered by university faculty and school personnel based on the school's specific needs. One of the major concerns was the low proficiency rate on the science End-of-Grade (EOG) test (4%). The majority of students (63%) were ELL, so teachers needed support in both English language development and content instruction. The goals for the PD were to (a) discuss content-based instruction for ELLs, and (b) facilitate the development of science units for each grade-level that incorporated strategies for English language development. Through the PD experience, we also hoped to strengthen the collaboration among teachers and to build capacity in working with ELLs at the school. All faculty and staff from the elementary school, including interns and student teachers from our teacher education program, participated in the PD.

In spring 2008, university faculty, school administrators, and teachers had three meetings to discuss the content, design, and schedule of the PD sessions. We planned eight three-hour sessions to develop teacher knowledge related to specific needs of English language learners and provide a framework for planning science units at each grade level. Building upon teachers' prior PD on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008) and their desire to plan the units together, we introduced the Backwards Design process (McTighe & Wiggins, 1999) as a model for planning. The Backwards Design process identifies the desired results and then works "backwards" to develop instruction. There are three steps in this process: identify learning goals, determine acceptable evidence, and plan learning activities and instruction. The science units were implemented in Spring 2009.

In addition to the eight PD sessions, we also scheduled time to join grade level meetings to facilitate the discussion of the unit planning. After completing the PD, each grade-level submitted a science unit, and participants reflected on the process of working together as a group.

### Professional Development Impact

In order to measure the effectiveness of the PD, we collected session feedback from participants, participants' personal reflections, and students' science EOG scores.

Based on Spring 2009 EOG test results, 67% of the students at the school scored "proficient" in science (compared to 4% in Spring 2008). Although the school may have implemented other initiatives or programs that enhanced the

<sup>1</sup> See for instance Echevarria, Vogt, & Short (2008); Walton, Baca, & Escamilla (2002); Wong-Fillmore & Snow (2000).

science achievement test scores, the PD provided a focus for teacher planning at the school and, we believe, contributed to the enhanced student achievement.

The session feedback indicated that over 80% of the participants rated all PD sessions as Excellent or Good, and agreed that the PD improved their knowledge of the Backwards Design model and strategies to work with students. Participants especially liked having "multiple instructors to provide instructions that allowed for multiple perspectives;" having "time to work with grade-level;" and "working with other teachers on our grade-level to make an assessment and rubric for our science unit." While teachers had the opportunity to work in groups during the session, several teachers did comment that they would like to have more time to work in their grade-level groups.

An unexpected outcome of the PD was noted. During summer 2009, 25 teachers worked together to extend what they had done in the PD and designed 11 more science units to be shared and used in the 2009–10 academic year. Using the Backwards Design model, each unit included content and language objectives, formative assessments and rubrics, and relevant supplementary materials to facilitate instructional activities. The SIOP strategies were also integrated in the lesson planning.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Collaboration was key in the success of this year-long PD program. The collaboration between the university and school in PD design and delivery made it possible for us to deliver research-based information that teachers used immediately to impact student achievement. Providing time and a structure for all teachers, including ESL and content area teachers, to collaborate, plan, and teach science units enhanced instruction across the school. Collaborating with school personnel enabled us to provide effective PD that addressed specific local concerns related to English language learners.

The key to the success of the year-long PD program was the collaboration between the university faculty and the local school. The PD program made it possible for the faculty to provide research-based information directly to the teachers, thereby making it possible for the teachers to use it immediately in their classrooms. During the eight PD sessions, the science teachers and the ESL teachers collaborated to complete science units in each grade-level by using the SIOP strategies and the Backwards Design model. This pedagogical model gave teachers more time to collaborate, plan, and teach science units, and enhanced instruction across the school. The faculty also collaborated with the school personnel who provided specific local concerns related to English language learners. All of these collaborative elements helped the faculty to create an effective PD program.

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# National Professional Development Project for Secondary Content Teachers of English Language Learners

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In Texas, as in many states across the nation, school districts aspire to increase achievement for all students and close persistent achievement gaps. The increasing numbers of English language learners (ELLs) in mainstream classes creates the need for high-quality, sustainable professional development for content-area specialists. This article describes a collaborative professional development project that was designed to meet the needs of teachers in mathematics, social studies, and science, who are confronted with the challenge of providing comprehensible, grade-appropriate content to the ELLs in their classes.

Given the recent increase in ELL students, project partners determined that the first and most pressing need was for the teachers to understand the foundations of culturally competent pedagogy and multicultural education. From there, project participants learn about second language acquisition (SLA) theory, and finally, English as a second language (ESL) methodology appropriate for their own classes. Participants in project *Accelerate* take nine graduate hours in English as a second language (ESL) and then present turnaround training to other teachers on their campuses.

Project *Accelerate*, sponsored by The U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) National Professional Development Program, is a collaboration between the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD), a large urban district in Texas with a culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) population, and Texas Woman's University (TWU), a public institution with a long history of teacher training. From its inception, the project was conceptualized as a partnership between the two institutions for the integration of research-based knowledge about effective practice for teaching ELLs with the district's instructional model.

Curricula for the courses were developed collaboratively. The school district first outlined the needs of their teachers, and the university partner then worked with the district to meet those needs through the course work and support offered to *Accelerate* participants. The district's model, *Sheltered Instruction (SI) for Secondary ELLs*, focuses on two critical, interwoven areas—multicultural competence and effective instructional strategies for ELLs. The FWISD views SI as the use of instructional strategies and lessons that teach both English language skills and grade-level content simultaneously to ELL students.

Project *Accelerate*, then, incorporates the two foci of this model—multicultural competence and instructional strategies for ELLs—and adds a third, largely theoretical component, SLA, to complete its tripartite content focus. This content is presented to participants in the form of three semester-long graduate classes: (1) education in culturally diverse environments, (2) second language acquisition (SLA), and (3) ESL methods. The majority of the courses are designed to be online, with Blackboard as the primary means of communication between instructor and students, as well as among the students themselves. A cohort model is used to promote community throughout the time participants are involved in the project.

## Cohort I

Students participating in the first cohort of Project *Accelerate* began their training in foundations of multicultural education. The course was developed around four basic tenets: individual identity, collective identity, educational equity, and culturally responsive pedagogy. The overarching task the participants were charged with in this course was to identify an issue related to teaching and learning in their culturally diverse classrooms. As they gained content knowledge through the readings, discussions, and reflections, participants worked to resolve these issues and improve student learning.

The second course focused on issues of SLA with secondary students, and the final course addressed ESL methods. The SLA course foci were quite theoretical, but participants worked in groups to apply important notions of SLA to their particular CLD students.

The ESL methods course highlighted research-based strategies and encouraged participants to try out a variety of methods to determine which were best suited to both their content area and their students.

In each of the three courses, participants video-recorded their classrooms, and used a variety of web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs, and TeacherTube, as well as Powerpoint and the many tools and resources available on the Blackboard course platform.

### **Presentation of the turnaround training**

Project participants will work in concert with colleagues at their home campuses and with project personnel to develop and present training modules appropriate to the unique needs of their schools and students. Training manuals and resources for this turnaround training adapt the research-based knowledge and skills participants acquired in their academic courses and offer a wide variety of choices they can use to facilitate the professional development of their colleagues. This phase of the project—the turnaround training—begins in the spring of 2010.

### **Final Thoughts**

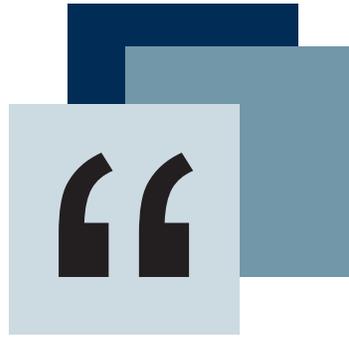
The goal of Project *Accelerate* is to improve student performance by enhancing the skills of secondary teachers who are already skilled practitioners in their content areas, but who are confronted with the challenges of meeting the needs of students who are learning English and course content simultaneously. The collaboration between university faculty and school district personnel provides an authentic context and balance between theory and practice for this project. The participating teachers will tailor the program to fit the needs of their respective campuses as they present the turnaround training.

We are enthusiastic that participants will work collaboratively with each other, while drawing on their newly-garnered experiential, theoretical, and technological knowledge in order to help themselves, their students, and their colleagues to provide some critically important solutions to the challenges they face in their classrooms. In this way, the teachers of FWISD will *Accelerate* the learning of math, science, social studies, and English for the secondary-level ELLs in their classes.



# Evaluation of PD Programs





What we want and need is education pure and simple, and we shall make surer and faster progress when we devote ourselves to finding out just what education is and what conditions have to be satisfied in order that education may be a reality and not a name or a slogan.

John Dewey  
Democracy and Education, 1916

Thomas R. Guskey, Ph.D., is a professor in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky and an expert in research and evaluation who has authored or edited 12 books, including *Evaluating Professional Development* (Corwin, 2000). He has twice won the National Staff Development Council's prestigious Book of the Year Award and three times won the Article of the Year Award. Below, he discusses his five-step process for evaluating professional development in education and its connection to professional development planning.

**Q: What is your five-level model for evaluating professional development, and how did it come to be?**

A: My thinking was influenced by the work of Donald Kirkpatrick, who developed a model for evaluating training programs in business and industry. Kirkpatrick described four levels of evaluation that he found necessary in determining the value and worth of training programs. The first was participants' reactions to the training—whether they liked it or not. A second level was what new knowledge and/or skills participants gained from the training. A third level was how it influenced what they did on the job. And a fourth level considered how the training affected their productivity. I thought this model could be useful for what we do in professional development in education. As we applied the model, however, we found that professional development efforts still were not yielding positive results—but nothing in the model explained why. Examining programs more closely, I found that things were done right from a training perspective, but educators were then sent back to organizations that did not support them in what we asked them to do. Things broke down at the organization level. So I added a new level in the middle of the model, labeled “organizational support and change,” to consider those aspects of the organization that have critical influence on the implementation of new policies and practices.

**Q: What do you hope people take away from your model?**

A: There are three major aspects of the model that I hope people will consider. First, each of these five levels is important in its own right. Each level provides different types of information that can be used in both formative and summative ways. Formatively, we need to find out at each level what's been done well and, if not done well, how it can be improved. Summatively, we need to know the effectiveness of elements at each level to judge the true value and worth of any professional development endeavor.

Second, each level builds on those that come before. For example, people must have a positive reaction to a professional development experience before we can expect them to learn anything from it. They need to gain specific knowledge and skills before we look to the organization for critical aspects of support or change. Organizational support is necessary to gain high quality implementation of new policies and practices. And appropriate implementation is a prerequisite to seeing improvements in student learning. Things can break down at any point along the way, and once they break down, the improvement process comes to a screeching halt.

Third, many educators are now finding how useful it can be to reverse these five levels in professional development planning. In other words, the first thing people need to do when they plan professional development is to specify

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<sup>1</sup> The majority of this article was originally published as Kreider, H. & Bouffard, S. (2005/2006). A Conversation with Thomas R. Guskey. *The Education Exchange*, XI(4), 12–14. *The Education Exchange* is a publication of Harvard Family Research Project. Copyright c. 2010 President and Fellows of Harvard College. Adapted and reprinted with permission of Harvard Family Research Project. Since 1982, HFRP has helped stakeholders develop and evaluate strategies to promote the well-being of children, youth, families, and their communities. To learn more about how HFRP can support your work with children and families, visit [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).

**Table 1**

# Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation

Evaluation Level	What Questions are Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered?	What is Measured or Assessed?	How Will Information Be Used?
1. Participants' Reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did they like it?</li> <li>• Was their time well spent?</li> <li>• Did the material make sense?</li> <li>• Will it be useful?</li> <li>• Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful?</li> <li>• Were the refreshments fresh and tasty?</li> <li>• Was the room the right temperature?</li> <li>• Were the chairs comfortable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires administered at the end of the session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial satisfaction with the experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve program design and delivery</li> </ul>
2. Participants' Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper-and-pencil instruments</li> <li>• Simulations</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Participant reflections (oral and/or written)</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New knowledge and skills of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve program content, format, and organization</li> </ul>
3. Organizational Support & Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the impact on the organization?</li> <li>• Did it affect organizational climate and procedures?</li> <li>• Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported?</li> <li>• Was the support public and overt?</li> <li>• Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently?</li> <li>• Were sufficient resources made available?</li> <li>• Were successes recognized and shared?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District and school records</li> <li>• Minutes from follow-up meetings.</li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Structured interviews with participants and district or school administrators</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To document and improve organizational support</li> <li>• To inform future change efforts</li> </ul>
4. Participants' Use of New Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Structured interviews with participants and their supervisors</li> <li>• Participant reflections (oral and/or written)</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> <li>• Direct observations</li> <li>• Video or audio tapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree and quality of implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To document and improve the implementation of program content</li> </ul>
5. Student Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the impact on students?</li> <li>• Did it affect student performance or achievement?</li> <li>• Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being?</li> <li>• Are students more confident as learners?</li> <li>• Is student attendance improving?</li> <li>• Are dropouts decreasing?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student records</li> <li>• School records</li> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Structured interviews with students, parents, teachers, and/or administrators</li> <li>• Participant portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cognitive (Performance &amp; Achievement)</li> <li>– Affective (Attitudes &amp; Dispositions)</li> <li>– Psychomotor (Skills &amp; Behaviors)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up</li> <li>• To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development</li> </ul>

Guskey, T.R. (2000). *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

what impact they want to have on student learning. They begin planning by asking, “What improvements in student learning do we want to attain and what evidence best reflects those improvements?” Then they step back and ask, “If that’s the impact we want, what new policies or practices must be implemented to gain that impact?” Next, they consider what types of organizational support or change are needed to facilitate that implementation, and so forth. This planning process compels educators to plan not in terms of what they are going to do but in terms of what they want to accomplish with their students. All other decisions are then based on that fundamental premise.

I argue that most of the critical evaluation questions that need to be addressed in determining a professional development program’s effectiveness should be asked in the planning stage. Planning more carefully and more intentionally not only makes evaluation easier, it also leads to much more effective professional development. Increasingly, educators at all levels are coming to view professional development as a purposeful and intentional endeavor that should be designed with specific goals in mind.

**Q: What organizational support is useful when content area teachers need to learn about working successfully with English learners in collaboration with ESL or bilingual education teachers? And how do we also support the ESL or bilingual education teachers in this endeavor?**

A: It is extremely difficult, and in most cases impossible, to determine the kind of organizational support needed unless you engage in the “Backward Planning” process. In other words, you must first consider the specific student learning outcomes you want to impact and the evidence you believe best reflects that impact. Then you describe the practices, strategies, or activities you believe will yield that impact, considering carefully the research evidence that verifies such effects. Only at that point will you be able to determine the kind of organizational support needed to implement those practices, strategies, or activities with fidelity. With a clear idea about what high quality implementation looks like you will be able to develop specific prescriptions of the kind of leadership, collaboration, time, materials, and resources required from the organization to guarantee high quality implementation.

**Q: Why are levels four and five of your evaluation model—in which professional development is linked to student outcomes—so difficult to accomplish?**

A: The primary reason is that getting information at those levels must be delayed. Immediately following any professional development activity, I can gather information about levels one and two—finding out if people liked it and what they gained from that experience in terms of new knowledge and skills. But information on levels three, four, and five cannot be gathered at that time. Again, planning backward makes this clearer. If I know what I want to accomplish and what evidence best reflects those goals, it’s easier for me to decide how and when I’m going to gather that evidence and what I will do with it once I have it.

**Q: What are some of the other challenges in evaluating professional development, and how can these be addressed?**

A: Many professional development leaders avoid systematic evaluations for fear that the evaluation won’t yield “proof” that what they’re doing leads to improvements in student learning. And if this is the case, funding may be withdrawn. Recognizing the distinction between “evidence” and “proof,” however, can help resolve this dilemma.

To obtain proof—by which I mean to show that professional development uniquely and alone leads to improvements in student learning—is very difficult. It requires a level of experimental rigor that is hard and often impossible to attain in practical school settings. But most policymakers, legislators, and school leaders are not asking for ironclad proof. What they want is evidence that things are getting better. They want to see improvements in assessment results or test scores, increased attendance, fewer discipline problems, or decreased

dropout rates. Historically, professional development leaders haven't done a very good job of providing any such evidence.

A related challenge concerns the nature of that evidence, especially its credibility and its timing. I recently discovered, for example, that not all stakeholders in professional development trust the same evidence. I conducted a study in which groups of educators were asked to rank order 15 different indicators of student learning in terms of which they believed provided the most valid evidence. When I compared administrators' and teachers' rankings, I found they were almost exactly reversed! Administrators rated national and state tests highly, while teachers trusted their own, more immediate sources of evidence. From a policy perspective, that indicates to me that no single source of evidence is going to be adequate. Instead, we need to consider multiple indicators. We also need to involve multiple stakeholders in the planning process to identify the sources of evidence that they believe provide the best and most valid representation of success.

Some experts suggest that when educators engage in professional development endeavors, results might not be evident for two or three years. But when teachers are experimenting with new approaches to instruction or a new curriculum, they need to gain evidence rapidly to show that it's making a difference. If they don't see such evidence, they quite naturally revert back to the tried and true things they've done in the past. This isn't because they are afraid of change. Rather, it's because they are so committed to their students and fear that the new approach might lead to less positive results. So, in planning professional development, we must include some mechanism whereby those responsible for implementation can gain evidence of success from their students rather quickly—within the first month of implementation.

**Q: Can you comment on what we know and don't know about what makes professional development effective? How can we go about reaching some consensus about what is important?**

A: A couple of years ago, I identified 13 lists of characteristics of effective professional development that had been assembled by different professional organizations and research groups. In analyzing these lists, I found very little consensus. There wasn't even agreement on the criteria for effectiveness. Some lists were based on the concurrence opinions among researchers, others used teacher self-reports, and only a few looked at impact on student learning. My conclusion was that we may not have a true consensus on what makes professional development effective, and that moving toward one may be more complicated than most people think.

I helped to develop the Standards for Staff Development published by the National Staff Development Council. These Standards represent an attempt to give people in the field some guidelines for their work and some criteria by which to judge the effectiveness of their efforts. Because of their general nature, however, these Standards leave a lot of room for interpretation. For example, they describe the importance of extended time for professional development and the need to ensure that activities are ongoing and job-embedded. Researchers have shown, however, that simply adding more time for job-embedded activities is insufficient. Doing ineffective things longer doesn't make them any better. Instead, we must ensure that the extended time provided for professional development is structured carefully and used wisely, engaging educators in activities shown to yield improved results.

**Q: Many teachers come from cultural backgrounds which are quite different to those of their EL students, and find field experience very valuable in learning to work effectively with ELs. How can we best ensure that such experiences don't result in "doing ineffective things longer?"**

Again, the key is to describe, in some detail, what a high quality field experience looks like. This means being able to answer a series of tough questions, such as: What activities or interactions are involved in a high quality field experience? What is the nature of those activities and interactions? What makes them good or not so good? What

criteria distinguish “high quality” from “low quality?” Would we know it if we saw it? What would we look for? How can we make those experiences that are not so good become more like those that are exemplary?

It is not a case of simply doing more; it is doing the right things well. Our success will depend on our ability to determine what those “right things” are, to verify their validity based on solid research evidence rather than persuasively argued opinions, to work hard to ensure those right things are implemented well, and then to provide appropriate support in order to guarantee sustained, high quality implementation.

**Q: How do you think the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is impacting professional development and its evaluation?**

A: I believe that certain aspects of the No Child Left Behind Act are motivated by frustration on the part of the federal government in allocating funds to education and not seeing much come from it. Too often in the past, educators have planned professional development based on what’s new and what’s hot, rather than on what is known to work with students. In NCLB, the federal government imposes specific requirements that compel educators to consider only programs and innovations that are “scientifically based research.” Educators must now verify the research behind different programs and innovations. They must ensure that research comes from reliable sources, specifically peer-reviewed journals. They must show that the program has been applied in a wide variety of contexts and that its effects evaluated by third parties. They must demonstrate that the evidence of effects has been gathered over a significant period of time so that the program can be shown to be sustainable.

I agree with those who suggest that insistence on this definition of “scientifically based research” may be too restricting. A lot of valuable research does not meet the criteria of randomized designs, but can provide us with good, important evidence. Still, NCLB and other national efforts are moving us in the right direction.

This past year, I’ve met with leaders in the U.S. Department of Education and various philanthropic organizations, who are considering changing the request for proposal process to be more specific with regard to evaluation. In particular, they want people, within proposals, to outline specifically how they will gather evidence at each of the five levels in the evaluation model. Their hope is that this will lead to improved results from various funded programs. I share their hope.





## Quality Teacher Preparation for ELLs: Preliminary Findings from Florida

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University of Florida

***This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.***

Alice is a third-grade teacher in central Florida with four years of teaching experience. She begins the school day by greeting the students in her mainstream classroom in both English and Spanish, and then by writing the daily content learning objectives on the board. She also writes specific language learning objectives and asks for a volunteer to read them aloud to the group. Researchers observing her classroom note the way Alice engages her students, uses two languages informally, and draws special attention to language learning for the English Language Learners (ELLs) in her class.

Alice is one of ten case study teachers participating in *Project DELTA* (Developing English Language through Teacher Achievement), a five-year study funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition. *Project DELTA* investigates the relationship between teacher preparation and the achievement of ELLs in inclusive classroom settings. Despite nearly a decade of preparing elementary teachers through ESOL infusion programs, which entail the integration of the ESOL Performance Standards into the curricula of all teacher preparation programs, we know little about the impact of this model of teacher education on ELL student achievement. *Project DELTA* was designed to begin to fill this gap by looking at the impact of teachers who graduated from the University of Florida's elementary teacher preparation program, ProTeach.

Florida has a strong framework for ELL teacher preparation. Under a 1990 federal court order, all teachers in Florida must be prepared to work with ELLs. Teachers can earn their ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement through university coursework, in-service professional development, or a combination of these two methods. Like other institutions of higher education in the state, the University of Florida has been "infusing" ESOL content throughout the elementary teacher preparation program since 2000. The elementary ProTeach program includes two anchor ESOL courses that focus specifically on ELLs. The first anchor course provides a foundation for understanding issues of language and culture; the second anchor course addresses curriculum development, methods, and assessment of ELLs. ESOL teacher competencies are also reinforced in other coursework and field experiences.

Case study teachers like Alice comprise just one aspect of the overall study, which utilizes a mixed methods research design. That design includes not only case studies, in which teachers are observed in classroom settings with ELLs for a full academic year, but also quantitative student and teacher data obtained from the Florida Department of Education's Education Data Warehouse (EDW), telephone interviews with ProTeach graduates, and an extensive survey sent to all teacher graduates in the first two years of the study.

For the purpose of this paper, we report findings from the *Project DELTA* survey. Specifically, we address the following research questions: (1) In what instructional areas related to ELLs do ProTeach graduates feel most and least prepared?, (2) In what instructional areas related to ELLs do ProTeach graduates feel most and least effective?, (3) What program experiences do ProTeach graduates consider to have been most effective in helping them work with ELLs?, and (4) Are there significant associations of teacher responses related to preparedness or effectiveness with teacher background characteristics?

The survey was designed in three sections. Section one was a set of open-ended questions to elicit teacher background characteristics (e.g., number of years teaching, certification status, and teacher demographics); section two consisted of 49 statements of teacher knowledge and skills related to effective instruction of ELLs; and section three asked teachers to indicate which of the pre-service clinical or field experiences in their teacher education program coursework had been helpful in preparing them to work effectively with ELL students. The paper-and-pencil survey was administered to 1200 graduates, 70% of whom had Florida addresses. A total of 105 surveys were returned. Of the returned surveys, 85 were fully completed and viable for statistical analysis.

Responses to section one indicated that the background characteristics of teachers do matter in teachers' perceived ability to work with ELLs, as does their prior experience in working with this population of students. In particular, survey data show a difference in teachers' perception of their preparedness between those respondents who indicated they had proficiency in a language other than English (LOTE) and those who spoke only English. LOTE proficiency was associated with higher perception of preparedness for teaching ELLs.

Section two examined teachers' sense of effectiveness in applying specific strategies to teaching ELLs. ProTeach graduates felt most prepared to provide wait time for ELLs as an instructional strategy, and they also felt well-prepared to organize their classroom curriculum and instruction in ways that facilitate ELLs' learning. Teachers felt least prepared to use students' first language in classrooms and to communicate with families outside the classroom setting.

Finally, survey data indicate that direct experiences with ELLs provided during the ProTeach program were valued by teacher graduates as being the most helpful aspect of the teacher education program in preparing them to work with ELLs. The most highly rated experiences of the program for teacher graduates included direct instruction with ELLs and tutoring of ELLs.

In summary, although teacher preparation is important and positively associated with teachers' sense of effectiveness in teaching ELLs, teacher preparation programs may need to critically consider the extent to which they can prepare their candidates to meet all of the classroom demands of teaching ELLs. Language-related issues may be more challenging than general curricular or instructional issues to address in teacher preparation, and language-related issues may be less sensitive to increased practice in terms of years of teaching experience (Buck, Mast, Ehlers, & Franklin, 2005; de Jong, & Harper, 2007). While we continue to investigate what makes a quality teacher of ELLs (Darling-Hammond, 2006), we have much to learn about the specific characteristics, classroom practices, and experiences of teachers of ELLs. This study makes an initial contribution to understanding the ways in which pre-service mainstream teacher preparation programs specifically prepare their candidates for ELLs.

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## Increasing Accountability in the Preparation of Teachers to Work with English Learners: The Teacher Education English Learner Survey (TEELS)

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***This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.***

In recent years, increasing attention has been directed to teacher education as a means of improving English Learner (EL) achievement (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). Our teacher education program, the *California Bi-national Teacher Education Project (Bi-TEP)*, focuses on pre-service teacher development. It also emphasizes an aspect of teacher preparation that has been absent from much of the literature: program accountability for ensuring that graduates are prepared to work with EL students.

### **The California Bi-National Teacher Education Project**

*Bi-TEP* was established in 2007 through a National Professional Development grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). *Bi-TEP* collaborates with the California State University (CSU) Mexico BCLAD Program (*Bilingual Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development*, California's requirement for teachers to teach in dual language settings). To date, *Bi-TEP* and the CSU Mexico BCLAD Program have sent two cohorts of teacher candidates to study for five months in Mexico where they take Spanish language courses and courses required for the teaching credential, and participate in field experiences in Mexican schools. The teacher candidates return to California in mid-December, and prepare to enter their home CSU campuses for the spring semester of the credential programs. A sampling of the results from exit interviews with the graduates shows that they gained not only significant academic language proficiency in Spanish, but a deep understanding of the Mexican educational system that is useful in both instructing Mexican immigrant students and working with their parents. Further, graduates reported that they would apply the knowledge gained from taking classes in the academic register of their second or weaker language to design effective language and academic instruction for their future EL students.

In addition to the exit interviews, the evaluation of the *Bi-TEP* program includes the administration of the *Teacher Education English Learners Survey (TEELS)*. The *TEELS* is a four-part survey tool designed to be administered before and after candidates complete the program, covering candidate backgrounds, perceptions of opportunities to learn about ELLs, attitudes toward teaching ELLs, and ability to use strategies to work effectively with ELLs.

### **The Teacher Education English Learners Survey (TEELS)**

In 2005, Stanford professors Nadeen Ruiz and Rachel Lotan created a pilot version of the *TEELS* (Ruiz, Lotan, Lozano, Berta-Avila, & Arellano, in prep). The *TEELS* is designed to assist teacher preparation programs in examining their impact on teacher candidates' readiness to work with ELL students at the end of their credential program. Ruiz, now at CSU Sacramento and Director of *Bi-TEP*, has implemented *TEELS* as a pre- and post- measure of *Bi-TEP*/CSU Mexico teacher candidates' knowledge and preferences related to the instruction of EL students.

### **Research Base for TEELS**

In their development of the initial version of the *TEELS*, Ruiz and Lotan undertook an extensive review of the data-based studies on teacher preparation for working with EL students (2007). They found that the research base on teacher knowledge and dispositions for working with EL students is particularly limited in the pre-service context (where the biggest impact may reside, according to Gándara et al., 2005). They also found that a dearth of studies explored in any detail the sophisticated knowledge base that teachers need to reverse the pattern of underachievement among EL students. In response to these findings, the *TEELS* development team designed a research-based survey that takes advantage of the robust literature in second language instruction.

## Description of the TEELS

The *TEELS* contains four sections. The first section (Part A) asks about candidate backgrounds. The second section (Part B) questions candidates about their perceptions of opportunity through their program, while the third section (Part C) questions candidates' preferences for work with EL student. The fourth section (Part D) presents vignettes to candidates, and asks them to structure a response. The following provides additional information about each section.

*Part A* contains nine questions asking for candidates' background information. Background items were generated both from previous studies on this topic and the development teams' extensive experience working to prepare teachers in effective instruction for EL students.

*Part B* includes 19 questions asking candidates for their perceptions of opportunities in their teacher education program to develop knowledge about specific aspects of teaching English learners. The following stem precedes all questions in Part B: How much opportunity have you had in your program so far to...?" We chose this format over the more typical question stem, "How prepared do you feel to...?" because we think the latter can be ambiguous for even relatively well-prepared teacher candidates or graduates. For example, knowledge about the complexity of an enterprise such as teaching a newly-arrived immigrant high school student both conversational and academic English, as well as academic content, may cause more well-prepared candidates to rate their preparedness lower than candidates with a less sophisticated knowledge base, who may believe the task is simple.

An important attribute of Part B is the extensive knowledge base on effective instruction of EL students that was incorporated. Members of the development team used their own expertise as teachers and scholars in this area, and reviewed current research on EL instruction. We also compared *TEELS* pilot items to a review of standards to teach EL students undertaken by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The development team ensured that the *TEELS* included the constructs identified.

*Part C* of the survey consists of eight questions asking about candidates' preferences regarding teaching in schools and classrooms that include English learners. An example of an item in this section is: As a beginning teacher, I would prefer to teach in a specialized setting, such as a Sheltered English Immersion classroom or a bilingual classroom with all or nearly all English Learners.

In *Part D* of the survey, candidates are presented with two vignettes (out of a total of ten possible vignettes) where it is necessary to generate an instructional or assessment strategy to meet the language or academic needs of EL students. The *TEELS* provides rubrics to score the open-ended items.

## Prospects

Initial analyses of the administrations of the *TEELS* to the *Bi-TEP*/CSU Mexico BCLAD teacher candidates indicate that it has strong potential to capture their growth over time in terms of knowledge and preferences related to working with EL students. Based on the relevance of the *TEELS* for pre-service teachers, *Bi-TEP* personnel have developed and piloted an equivalent survey for in-service teachers, the *Professional Development English Learner Survey* (PDELS) (Ruiz & Baird, 2009).

To date there are few evaluation instruments for teacher credential programs that explore the existing knowledge base of effective EL instruction in as much depth as the *TEELS*. Our work thus far clearly indicates that *TEELS* provides valuable knowledge to teacher education programs that prepare beginning teachers to effectively promote the language and academic achievement of EL students.

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## Project EXCELL

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***This project is supported by a National Professional Development grant from OELA.***

Best practices in teacher professional development include thorough evaluation of the effects of the professional development (PD) both on teacher learning and on student outcomes—this kind of evaluation is often difficult to carry out effectively. As well as evaluating the outcomes at the end of a professional development program, evaluation can also be carried out prior to the implementation of PD. Such evaluation was a critical part of the creation of *Project EXCELL* (Excellence for Connecticut's English Language Learners).

*Project EXCELL* is a departure from programs that work with a limited number of teachers and result in ESL endorsement or certification. *Project EXCELL* provides teachers in mainstream classrooms with techniques for addressing the needs of ELL students, and fosters collaboration among teachers and administrators. The project, currently in its third year, is funded by a U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) National Professional Development Program grant, and represents a collaborative effort between the UCLA School Management Program and four Connecticut public school districts: Montville, New London, Norwich, and Stratford.

### **Background**

ELL students spend the majority of their school day in the mainstream classroom. This is sometimes by design, and intended to complement high-quality ESL services offered on a pullout basis. At other times this is by default, acknowledging the very real shortage of personnel qualified to offer intensive ESL instruction in school districts. In the four Connecticut districts participating in this project, it is highly likely that *all* classroom teachers will work with students with limited English proficiency at some point in their careers.

Low achievement and a persistent achievement gap have been widely documented for ELLs—most would agree that students learning English as a second language in our schools are not achieving at the levels we would hope to see. When tests of academic content are administered in a language that students do not fully understand, it is difficult to tease out whether low test scores are due to lack of proficiency in the content area or difficulty with language. We do know, however, that thoughtfully applying instructional strategies in the mainstream classroom can help ELLs access and make sense of academic content knowledge, particularly when it is delivered in English.

### **Survey of Teachers and Administrators**

To better understand the professional development needs of these four districts, a survey of teachers and administrators helped identify gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunity. Nearly 500 responses were collected, with 86% of all respondents indicating they were interested in participating in workshops and collaborative, on-site work groups to help them increase their skill in working with ELL students.

Of the 356 *classroom teachers working with ELL students in a mainstream classroom* that responded:

- 72% did NOT feel adequately prepared to work with ELLs;
- 64% had not received any special training (only 1% reported receiving more than 22 hours of training); and
- 81% felt a strong need to increase their knowledge and skill with ELL students.

The 100 administrators and instructional support personnel responding also indicated an urgent need for training and support:

- 73% did NOT feel prepared for their responsibility to support teachers of ELLs;
- 82% have received fewer than five hours of professional development designed to build their capacity to support teachers of ELLs; and
- 85% felt a strong need to increase their knowledge and skills in this area.

### **Structure of Project EXCELL**

A thorough review of the existing literature, coupled with professional knowledge and experience, helped us design a well-crafted program of professional development for mainstream classroom teachers, based on three interwoven strands.

*First Strand: Teacher workshops.* The first strand is the design and delivery of a workshop focused on building knowledge of effective classroom instructional strategies for ELLs. Classroom teachers receive comprehensive training in techniques to scaffold the delivery of academic content for ELLs. Scaffolding helps ELLs move toward new skills, concepts, or levels of understanding by providing temporary assistance for learners in a way that allows them to eventually complete a similar task independently. Scaffolding makes it possible for students to understand and work with age appropriate content while they are developing language fluency and literacy in English.

*Second Strand: Collaborative Learning Communities.* The second strand is the establishment and facilitation of school site collaborative learning communities (CLCs) focused on building the skills of participating teachers. Classroom teachers who have completed the training (as a team) work together at their school site over the course of one year, focusing on implementation and building their own skills. Teachers choose one or two strategies to implement in their classroom, guided by the current needs of their school and students. Teachers are required to complete reflective journals capturing the details of how and when the strategy was implemented, as well as the outcomes (supported by student work). All these materials serve as jumping-off discussion points for CLC meetings, where instructional choices and outcomes are shared in a manner that elicits useful feedback designed to improve future instruction.

*Third Strand: Administrator workshops.* The third process strand is the design and delivery of workshops for administrators focused on coaching classroom teachers towards improving instructional practices with ELLs. Administrators receive the comprehensive training needed to develop their capacity to support classroom teachers of ELLs, including the ability to recognize and evaluate quality instruction in the classroom.

As we begin the third year of this project, district administrators are seeing measurable improvements in scores for their ELL students, even as their relative percentages continue to grow. *Project EXCELL* is making a difference.



# Implementing an English as a Second Language Institute in Higher Education

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During the last decade, our nation has experienced a significant increase in the number of school-aged children enrolled in public school who speak languages other than English at home. The ever-increasing number of non-native speakers of English in U.S. public schools has caused tremendous challenges for universities and colleges as they strive to better prepare teacher candidates for an increasingly diverse public school population. The College of Education at Texas State University-San Marcos (TxState) stepped up to the challenge by changing the elementary teacher certification programs at the university. Starting in fall 2009, TxState offered two options for elementary teacher certification: Early Childhood to 6th Grade certification (EC-6) and Early Childhood to 6th Grade Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) certification, or EC-6/ESL. To offer bilingual/ESL certification at TxState, teacher preparation courses needed to be redesigned and existing curricula infused with ESL philosophy and methodology. In addition, faculty within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) required support in the form of professional development to increase their awareness of second language acquisition and ESL philosophies and methodologies. This paper describes how the authors developed and piloted an ESL Institute for the C&I faculty to support the redesign and infusion of the curriculum with ESL-specific content and to increase Institute participants' awareness of ESL philosophies and methods. The authors also conducted a qualitative study to determine the Institute's effectiveness in helping faculty increase their knowledge. Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What pre-existing knowledge do the participants possess about ESL theories and methods?  
and
2. What knowledge do the participants possess about ESL theories and methods after having completed the four ESL Institute modules?

## Theoretical Framework

Research has shown that effective teachers need to understand established principles of second language learning and the pedagogical practices that stem from them (Harper & de Jong, 2004; Samway & McKeon, 2007). According to Cummins (2000), teachers must first comprehend second language learning as a process. They must also understand the similarities and differences between first and second language learning and its implications for students. Furthermore, teachers must be cognizant of the process of second language development, the role and interactions of learner variables, and the complex ways in which they can influence the process of learning a second language (Harper & de Jong, 2004). Effective teachers also need a wide range of knowledge and skills, including deep content knowledge of how ELLs learn (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Without professional development support for teachers lacking the expertise in ELL teaching and learning, issues of second language acquisition are likely to get lost within diversity courses in the larger framework of culturally responsive teaching (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008).

## Method

The ESL Institute consisted of four distinct modules, which were piloted in spring 2009. Each module offered participants opportunities to (1) enhance their knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and instructional practices about principles of first and second language learning, including English as a second language education, and (2) modify their course syllabi, assignments, and materials by integrating the theories, methods, and learning strategies learned during the module to enhance students' knowledge and skills, in order to teach ELLs.

To determine the impact of this pilot project on faculty knowledge and understanding of ESL philosophies and methodologies, quantitative data were collected throughout the ESL Institute.

## Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected using several qualitative methods. First, participants completed a 10-item open-ended pre-instruction questionnaire to assess participants' pre-existing knowledge of ESL theory and methods. Then, at the end of the final session, participants completed the questionnaire a second time to demonstrate what they had learned. The pre- and post-questionnaires were then compared using frequency counts and percentages.

Data were also collected through written journal reflections. While journal prompts were provided, participants were free to write whatever they wanted. The journal reflections were analyzed using the constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

## Results

Results of the qualitative analysis indicated positive outcomes from the ESL Institute. A comparison of the pre- and post-questionnaires revealed an increase in the participants' knowledge about ESL theory and methodology on 90% of the items. Several themes related to the Texas ESL learning standards emerged from the inductive analysis of the journal responses. These included increased knowledge and a deeper understanding of the foundations of ESL education, second language acquisition, ESL teaching methods, and factors that affect ESL students' learning. Moreover, positive themes related to the ESL Institute itself, such as increased collaboration among faculty and opportunities to refresh previous learning, emerged from the data. Finally, results of a Likert-scale evaluation suggested participants perceived the ESL Institute to be a positive experience that helped them develop and increase their knowledge of ESL teaching theories and methodologies.

## Significance of the Study

The present study adds to the emerging body of literature on this issue by describing one university's attempt to meet this challenge through faculty development. The ESL Institute outlined in this study can serve as a starting point for other universities to develop their own professional development in this area.

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# **Abstracts from 2007 National Professional Development Grantees**





Great teaching is about so much more than education; it is a daily fight for social justice.

**Secretary of Education Arne Duncan**  
May 19, 2010, *The Lasting Impact of Teachers: Commencement Remarks*  
of Secretary Arne Duncan at Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts



In 2007, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition funded 139 National Professional Development grant projects. Each project was invited to submit a short description of its work for publication in this monograph. The program descriptions follow, arranged alphabetically by state.

It is our hope that these descriptions will prove useful to schools and districts considering implementing professional development for teachers of ELLs, and particularly useful to institutions considering applying for NPD funding. For more information on these projects and to reach project managers, contact the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. The Federal program manager for the National Professional Development Program is Ana Garcia. She can be reached at [ana.garcia@ed.gov](mailto:ana.garcia@ed.gov).

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For information specific to OELA's National Professional Development program, visit the OELA website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/funding.html>, or NCELA's NPD page at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/grants/npdp/>.

New grant competitions are announced in the Federal Register, and NCELA disseminates these announcements via the NCELA List. To sign up for the NCELA List, visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/listserv/>.



### Alabama

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**Grantee: University of Alabama at Birmingham**  
**Project Names: Shelby STARS and Project HEART**  
**Location: Birmingham**

National professional development (NPD) grants have been instrumental in promoting the effective instruction of English language learners (ELLs) in Alabama over the past decade. With support from NPD grants, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) provides standards-based training to teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and counselors as well as to education faculty at institutions of higher education (IHEs). A hallmark of the UAB approach is to deliver courses in the context of professional learning communities.

Beginning with projects funded in 2001, UAB's NPD projects have been evaluated with a continuous improvement model. Earlier NPD projects laid the groundwork for two NPD grants awarded in 2007. *Shelby STARS* enhances the existing UAB partnership with a large county school district and has extended this partnership to a large city district. Through *Project HEART*, new partnerships have been established with small school districts—one suburban and another rural. Operating within their respective partnerships, both projects support mainstream teachers, mainly secondary, in providing sheltered instruction to ELLs while also providing ESL certification to paraprofessionals and pre-service and inservice teachers. These efforts have led to model programs that range from high school summer book clubs in a small school district to a six-site K–12 summer program in a large school district. Because these model ELL programs are easily transportable to other school districts, as well as being used by UAB for field experiences and internship placements of pre-service and in-service teachers, they have created a powerful multiplying effect.

### Arkansas

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**Grantee: University of Arkansas, Fayetteville**  
**Project Name: Project Teach Them All**  
**Location: Fayetteville**

From 1995–2000 seven states, including Arkansas, increased the number of English language learners (ELLs) in their student population by more than 100%. Often teachers have not had adequate professional development to provide high-quality instruction to this population of students. *Project Teach Them All* incorporates the following four critical elements of effective professional development:

- Teacher professional learning communities (PLCs);
- Teacher critical reflection on practice;
- Active or inquiry-oriented learning and; and
- Coaching support to facilitate transfer of learning to practice.

*Project Teach Them All* engages in-service teachers in site-specific learning teams for four semesters. Teams engage in learning activities using textbooks, notebooks, and DVDs, discussing theory and practice for the education of ELL students. Each week one member of the team “Tries It Out” with a new strategy for ELL students and reports back to the group. The team consults and elaborates on the strategy. Individually, teachers complete a critical reflection wheel journal. An experienced ELL educator coaches teachers. She pre-conferences, observes, and conducts a post-reflection conference with each teacher. The coach brings to consciousness the teacher’s current practices that are especially effective for ELL students, connects instructional practices to theories, and scaffolds instruction using teacher strengths to reach and engage ELL learners. Preliminary research shows increased teacher implementation of strategies. Survey results indicate that teachers perceive Professional Learning Communities, Try It Outs, and Coaching as the most helpful components of professional development in learning how to work more effectively with ELL students.

## California

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**Grantee: San Diego State University**

**Project Name: Acquisition of Language and Academic Skills (ALAS)**

**Location: San Diego**

The *Acquisition of Language and Academic Skills (ALAS)* program addresses the need for qualified bilingual (English-Spanish) special education teachers in California who are trained to teach K–12 English learners (ELs) with special needs. In California, fewer than 2% of the 30,575 special education teachers are bilingual, while the state has over 1.5 million ELs. ALAS is an intensive two-year dual credential program. Three goals guide the program:

- Improving SDSU's capacity to provide a dual-certification teacher preparation program for candidates to become bilingual and special education teachers, with the skills to teach ELs with mild/moderate disabilities;
- Incorporating research-based special education and bilingual instructional curriculum and methods for pre-service teacher candidates; and
- Graduating candidates who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to modify and adapt instruction and curriculum for bilingual and mild/moderate students.

ALAS partners with local school districts with large populations of ELs and two higher-education departments at SDSU specializing in bilingual and special education. Using research-based practices, pre-service teachers are prepared to teach ELs with special needs, and are trained in the use of curricula aligned with California Standards for the Teaching Profession, California Content Standards. The program also covers instruction that accelerates the acquisition of literacy, academic language, and content knowledge in Spanish and English. In the first year, bilingual teaching methodology is emphasized, while in the second year, the focus is on diagnostic assessment and adapting bilingual methods for EL students with mild/moderate disabilities. Multidimensional evaluation measures are used to assess program effectiveness.

## Colorado

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**Grantee: Mesa State College**

**Project Name: English for Speakers of Other Languages MA and Endorsement**

**Location: Grand Junction**

Mesa State College offers a comprehensive, full-time Masters in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) with endorsement options. The Graduate Masters in English for Speakers of Other Languages Endorsement K–12 is designed to prepare certified teachers with specialized knowledge and training in applied linguistics, curriculum, teaching, testing, methodology and cross-cultural awareness. The objective of the program is to provide certified teachers with the language skills to effectively teach in a classroom with ELL learners.

Courses that support the TESOL goals are offered over the three-semester program. A unique year-long Internship stresses teacher leadership in ESOL. In July 2007 Mesa State College was awarded by the US Department of Education an OELA Grant to support the continued education of teachers through the MA Program in ESOL. This grant enables an increased number of teachers to participate in ESOL content, assessments, and pedagogy classes in the MA Program. This program is offered to teachers in western Colorado in identified high-needs areas. The initiative to provide an ESOL-MA Program in the high needs areas of western Colorado directly addresses the underperformance of ELL students in academics, grade retention, and their increased performance on the state CSAP assessment. Longitudinal data collection on each candidate indicates that trained teachers do impact the success of students in the ELL classrooms.

**Grantee: Regis University****Project Name: PREVAIL (Preparing Responsive Educators Valuing All Individual Learners)****Location: Denver**

Regis University currently partners with three Denver metro-area school districts that, combined, serve nearly one quarter of all English learners in the state of Colorado.

The grant provides professional development for 140 teachers. Two cohorts earn academic coursework to qualify them for a Linguistically Diverse Education (LDE) Endorsement. Five cohorts earn an LDE Academic Certificate comprised of graduate level courses in teaching strategies, linguistics, assessment, and foundational theories of language acquisition. Federal and state policies regarding the needs and rights of English learners (ELs) are included, as are justice issues and advocacy for ELs and their families. These four courses were selected in conjunction with the school districts as most relevant to the needs of the content teachers and English learners they serve.

The Teacher Collaboration Workshops pair a teacher trained in English language acquisition with a content-area teacher to form a cohesive partnership that will best serve both the academic and linguistic needs of all learners in their classrooms. This series of six workshops throughout the year provides time for planning, dialogue, and practice so the team is prepared to model effective collaboration for their colleagues.

The LDE Culminating Academic Review involves teachers in synthesizing and demonstrating the application of their learning. Many teachers who complete the LDE certificate become fully endorsed and pursue their master's degrees with a specialization in teaching linguistically diverse students. Many of the graduates are recruited to coach and train other teachers around effective practices for equity, language development, and the teaching/learning cycle.

**Grantee: University of Colorado at Boulder****Project Name: 2 + 2 Career Ladder Program****Location: Boulder**

The *2 + 2 Career Ladder* project was developed through a collaborative effort among three institutions: Aims Community College, Fort Lupton; the University of Colorado at Boulder; and the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley. A total of 25 paraprofessionals from two local educational agencies currently participate in this program. The University of Colorado serves as the fiscal agent for this project. Aims Community College offers students the Associate of Arts degree and the University of Colorado offers students the Bachelor of Arts degree. In the fall of 2009, 25 paraprofessionals in this project earned the Associate of Arts degree with an emphasis in Elementary Education/ESL Education. Upon completion of their Associate of Arts degree, students transferred to the University of Northern Colorado's Professional Teacher Education program, where they are presently earning credits toward the Bachelor of Arts degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. Paraprofessionals who complete the program will also earn a K–6 teaching license and an endorsement in English as a second language (ESL). The project has been recognized as one of Colorado's most innovative approaches to preparing teachers for their role as elementary teachers for the linguistically diverse student. Those who complete the program will be highly qualified to meet the academic and linguistic needs of Colorado's growing linguistically diverse student population.

**Grantee: University of Colorado at Boulder****Project Name: Secondary Master of Arts Degree Program****Location: Boulder**

The University of Colorado BUENO Center for Multicultural Education received funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition to develop and implement one of the nation's first Master of Arts degree and ESL endorsement programs to focus on preparing secondary teachers for work with linguistically diverse students. The program was developed by faculty of the University of Colorado at Boulder, in partnership with two local school districts. Secondary teachers in this program continue in their teaching assignment while completing their Master of Arts degree in Education, Equity, and Cultural Diversity. A unique feature of the 31-hour Master of Arts degree program is the supervised practicum that is embedded in all graduate level courses. As

a result of this program, 60 secondary teachers, over a five-year period, will earn a Master of Arts degree and a state-recognized endorsement in English as a second language.

**Grantee: University of Colorado at Boulder**

**Project Name: Teacher Endorsement and Evaluation Project (TEEP)**

**Location: Denver**

The *Teacher Endorsement and Evaluation Project (TEEP)* is a five-year training project designed to meet the educational needs of linguistically diverse and special education students and their teachers in Denver metro area elementary and secondary schools. The project has three primary outcomes for participants: (1) endorsement and Master's degree in Linguistically Diverse Education and Special Education, (2) preparation and experience in training other teachers, and (3) placement and follow-up support for participants once they complete their endorsements and degrees. This project provides an opportunity for 40 practicing teachers to become Colorado state-endorsed in both linguistically diverse education and special education. This will occur through completion of a state- and university-approved master's degree program in special education and linguistically diverse education, along with training that includes the following components:

- 200 hours of field work in addition to 200 hours of practicum;
- Specific training in collaboration and training of colleagues/parents (trainer of trainers); and
- Placement with follow-up support in the classroom upon completion of the endorsement.

The project has three interrelated goals. The immediate goal is to select project participants. The intermediate goal is training in linguistically diverse and special education endorsements. The intermediate goal is course work leading to linguistically diverse and special education endorsements. Twelve objectives are addressed in the project to prepare the more than 40 educators for teaching in the areas of linguistically diverse and special education.

**Grantee: University of Colorado/Regents**

**Project Name: Alignment, Achievement, and Acceleration Program**

**Location: Boulder, Denver, Jefferson County, and St. Vrain**

The *Alignment, Achievement, and Acceleration Program* is based on two goals and six project objectives. The first goal is to offer 40 teachers (20 per cohort group) an opportunity to earn a Colorado state endorsement as a linguistically diverse educator. Further, this goal enhances and expands the existing emphasis in Linguistically Diverse Education (LDE) presently offered at the University of Colorado in two ways. Before the work funded by this grant, all courses in the program included national TESOL standards and state LDE standards, but they did not include Colorado K–12 content standards. Courses were revised to include K–12 standards along with TESOL and Colorado Department of Education (CDE) standards. In addition, the delivery of the Linguistically Diverse Education emphasis has been revised to include supervised practicum within methods courses in the program. This teacher-preparation model provides opportunities for teachers to earn an LDE endorsement while continuing to be classroom teachers. Further, the model provides them opportunities to practice skills in real classroom settings, ultimately having a positive effect on the academic achievement of LEP students.

The second goal speaks to the development of professional development opportunities for school and district-level administrators. In order to accomplish this goal and its two project objectives, the program has combined resources with the Colorado Department of Education to offer a yearly Language, Culture, and Equity Academy. This professional development event is organized for District ELA Director/Coordinators, principals, and literacy coaches. The leadership institute provides district leaders the opportunity to gain insight into effective teaching strategies for LEP students, in addition to sharing strategies for creating positive change in schools and districts.

## Connecticut

**Grantee: Fairfield University**

**Project Name: Project SETTELL (Special Education Training for Teachers of English Language Learners)**

**Location: Fairfield**

*Project SETTELL (Special Education Training for Teachers of English Language Learners)* is a five-year federally sponsored U.S. Department of Education grant created to train 25 graduate student candidates to become Bilingual and English Language Learner Special Education Educators to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Candidates will complete a program of certification in Special Education, Bilingual Education, and/or TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), either as initial certification candidates or as cross-endorsement candidates for those who are already certified teachers. Coursework began in the fall of 2007. Initial certification candidates will complete their program in the spring of 2012. Candidates already certified as Connecticut teachers will complete the cross-endorsement program earlier.

A primary goal of *Project SETTELL* is the reduction of the critical need for special education and bilingual/TESOL teachers in Connecticut (especially in Fairfield county priority cities). Coursework provides candidates with knowledge and skills in the areas of psychoeducational theory and development, diagnosis, program planning, collaboration and consultation, and curriculum and methods of teaching ELL students and children with special needs. This core curriculum will assist administrators, regular educators, and support staff personnel in developing appropriate programs for ELL and students with special needs. While in the *SETTELL* program, candidates will also gain increased understanding of technological interventions for persons with LEP (limited English proficiency) and/or special education needs. Fairfield University will help facilitate the entry of these multi-trained professionals into school systems that serve LEP children and students who have special needs.

**Grantee: University of California, Los Angeles School Management Program**

**Project Name: Project EXCELL: Excellence for Connecticut's English Language Learners**

**Location: Connecticut public school districts of Montville, New London, Norwich, and Stratford**

*Excellence for Connecticut's English Language Learners* is a departure from programs that work with a limited number of teachers and result in ESL endorsement or certification. Project planning began with a survey of teachers and administrators to identify gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunity. The survey was administered early in 2007, and project staff gathered nearly 500 responses; 86% percent of respondents indicated they were interested in participating in workshops and collaborative, on-site work groups to help them increase their skill in working with ELL students.

This information influenced the design of a well-crafted program of professional development for mainstream classroom teachers, based on three interwoven strands. The first strand is the design and delivery of a workshop focused on building knowledge of effective classroom instructional strategies for ELLs. The second strand is the establishment and facilitation of school-site collaborative learning communities (CLCs) focused on building the skills of participating teachers. The third process strand is the design and delivery of workshops for administrators focused on coaching classroom teachers towards improving instructional practices with ELLs.

Project success is evidenced by the increasing number of teachers who volunteer for participation and by the numerous examples of individual student growth and achievement that have been documented. District administrators credit this work with improvements in state academic scores among the ELL population. Participants plan to continue meeting and working together, and sharing knowledge with colleagues in their own buildings, after the grant year is complete.

**Grantee: University of Connecticut**

**Project Name: Raising Expectations for English Language Learners (REALL)**

**Location: Storrs**

Connecticut public schools enroll a growing number of English language learners (ELLs), yet the state requires no coursework for pre-service teachers in the field of second language learning. All of Priority Schools—designated

because of low test scores on the mandated Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMT)—have significant numbers of ELLs in their classrooms. The need for in-service teachers to learn techniques and strategies for reaching these children is real.

To ensure that all Connecticut teachers are highly qualified, an M.A. degree is required for permanent certification. The program offered by REALL provides both a vehicle for obtaining the M.A. degree and knowledge necessary to raise expectations for second language learners.

REALL's 21 courses cover topics such as the history of ELL education, curriculum, second language acquisition, assessment, language, linguistics, and sheltered instruction. Additionally, courses reach across departments to provide in-depth examination of multicultural concerns in public school classrooms and their effect on learning.

Although the program has the ability to reach all teachers of ELLs, the specific focus is on the assessment, strategies, and techniques of teaching mathematics to newcomers. Math has been called the "equalizer" in education, yet the placement and instruction of ELLs in public schools is not a progressive approach. Awareness of the effect of culture and previous curricula is a goal.

The program is designed to require research, dissemination, and mentoring by all its participants, reaching peers individually and by grades and schools as appropriate to the graduate researcher. This has expanded the audience in the sending districts.

## **District of Columbia**

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**Grantee: The George Washington University**  
**Project Name: Bridges to Curriculum Access**  
**Location: Washington, DC**

The *Bridges to Curriculum Access* (BCA) program, offered through a partnership between The George Washington University (GWU) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in Montgomery County, MD, is funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition to provide training to content-area teachers in order to better equip them to meet the needs of their English language learner (ELL) students, both with and without special education needs. Coursework for an 18-credit graduate certificate in bilingual special education is funded annually for 25 content-area teachers from highly diverse Montgomery County schools. Over five years, the program will fund 125 teachers to complete training and subsequently provide service to their school communities as Content-Language Resource Specialists, who are trained to provide support to colleagues in the form of consultation and professional development assistance in order to increase each school's capacity to serve ELL students. GWU staff work with up to three designated partner schools each year to facilitate professional development and integration of coursework with instructional practice. At the end of the program, all participants complete the Praxis II examination in ESOL in order to meet requirements for Maryland teacher endorsement in ESOL and to demonstrate the competencies needed to effectively serve ELL students. Each year, participants complete action-research projects focused on improvement of instructional outcomes for ELL students. Participants also collaborate with their school administration to design and implement school-wide professional development geared toward issues of cultural and linguistic diversity.

**Grantee: The George Washington University**  
**Project Name: Communities of Practice: Supporting English Language Learners (COPSELL)**  
**Location: Washington, DC**

*Communities of Practice: Supporting English Language Learners* (COPSELL), funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition, is a partnership program between the George Washington University and Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) in Prince George's County, MD. COPSELL is designed to provide training to in-service content-area teachers to enhance their skills in meeting the needs of their English language learner (ELL) students, including those with special education needs. Over five years, the program will fund three cohorts of 18 content-area teachers. Participants complete 45-credit hours of coursework and earn a Master of Arts degree in bilingual special education. By selecting three partner schools for each cohort, one each at the elementary,

middle, and high school levels, the project also addresses the need for continuity of instruction across all grades, and enables teachers to collaboratively address the needs of ELL students. The graduates of the program sit for the ESOL and Special Education Praxis II examinations in order to meet highly qualified teacher requirements in the state of Maryland for both ESOL and special education, and participants make a commitment to continue serving culturally and linguistically diverse students for a period following training. During their final semester of coursework, students complete an internship experience in which they conduct independent action research, develop a digital teaching portfolio, and receive increased field-based supervision from university supervisors. In addition, the cohort collaboratively identifies a need related to the instruction of ELL students, and creates a resource to be shared with the greater educational community.

## Florida

**Grantee: Florida Atlantic University**

**Project Name: TESOL Professional Development Program**

**Location: Boca Raton and Jupiter**

Florida, ranked third among states with the largest English learner populations, has English learners with low AYP and high dropout rates due largely to the lack of quality research-based training. FAU's *TESOL Professional Development Program (PDP)* is a five-year project aimed at improving English learners' academic performance by improving the training of teachers, administrators, and teacher educators. FAU's TESOL PDP developed a comprehensive approach providing four specific training opportunities.

- A Master of Arts in TESOL/Bilingual Education, with a unique focus on K–12 ESOL and Bilingual programs and content-based language instruction, which also addresses the ESL/EFL needs of adults. The project supported the development of the MATESOL/BE and provides stipends for 12 teachers.
- A five-course ESOL endorsement program for teachers in six school districts. The PDP provides stipends for 70 teachers to complete their ESOL Endorsements—currently 30 have completed. Both the M.A. and Endorsement programs have enabled certified teachers to take the State ESOL certification exam, thus helping to address the severe shortage of certified ESOL teachers in Florida.
- A three-credit graduate course in language policy in education for administrators and counselors. The PDP provides stipends for 6 administrators and counselors, three of whom have completed the course.
- An in-service training program for university faculty to infuse ESOL content into other teacher education courses. The curriculum has been developed and field-tested with three faculty members and is being converted to an online format to appeal to more faculty at FAU and other Florida universities.

**Grantee: St. Thomas University**

**Project Name: Project SUCCESS**

**Location: Miami Gardens**

Project SUCCESS seeks to address the academic needs of the Miami-Dade and Palm Beach County schools in improving the conditions of learning and instruction of English language learners. The goals are:

- to provide capacity building in schools with large ELL populations established through continuous university-school activities;
- to provide a series of online graduate university courses for secondary school teachers, guidance counselors, and school administrators in order to meet state ESOL requirements; and
- to provide a training program for university faculties who are involved for the education of preservice teachers. Revised syllabi are reviewed by the Project staff using a modified Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) method.

Assessment instruments and staff observations indicate clearly that all three objectives have been successfully met during the three-year grant period. The six pilot schools reported generally improved performance of the students in classes that were taught by the teacher-completers. The school classroom visits and the administration of the SLOP protocol also indicated successful performance of teachers in their classes. The performance of the university-trained professors has also met the project goals as shown by an analysis of the revised syllabi and the participation of these professionals in schools where subjects such as mathematics, sciences, social studies, and language arts were taught. The unique feature of this project is that it has a tripartite goal in which university personnel, school teachers, and administrative staff join together to offer research-based best practices in their respective fields, which maximizes the learning of ELLs.

**Grantee: University of Florida**  
**Project Name: Project DELTA**  
**Location: Gainesville**

*Project DELTA* (Developing English Language & Literacy through Teacher Achievement) is a post-training assessment project that uses a mixed method design for data collection. The goal of *Project DELTA* is to investigate the relationship between teacher preparation and the academic achievement of English Language Learners (ELLs) in Florida. Findings from the study will be used to inform coursework in the University of Florida elementary teacher preparation program (ProTeach) and nationally through dissemination of detailed reports. *Project DELTA* consists of three phases. Phase I uses a large dataset (Educational Database Warehouse) housed at the Florida Department of Education to gain insight into the relationship between teachers working with English Language Learners (ELLs) and the academic achievement of those students in the State. In Phase II, *Project DELTA* will collect detailed qualitative data (including extensive observational and interview data) in collaboration with six teachers in five different LEAs. The focus of Phase II is to identify factors and variables that affect the achievement of ELLs at the local level. During Phase III, findings from *Project DELTA* will be infused into the ProTeach program with six faculty members who instruct and/or supervise coursework in the program. Findings will also be disseminated to LEAs and nationally through papers, presentations, and policy briefs. Ultimately, *Project DELTA* will directly affect the training of approximately 130 students enrolled annually in the five-year teacher preparation program.

## Hawai'i

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**Grantee: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education, Center on Disability Studies**  
**Project Name: ELL-ACE Project**  
**Location: Honolulu**

The *ELL-ACE Project* provides Professional Development (PD) opportunities to teachers of K–12 ELL students via 15-week literacy-improvement courses delivered through the project's partners (educational departments in Hawai'i, American Sāmoa, and the Marshall Islands) and the University of Hawai'i. High ELL numbers and a lack of teacher training are problematic in the partnering schools.

PD participants spend approximately 100 hours fulfilling the course requirements: (1) reading reference materials and participating in online discussions on weekly learning topics; (2) implementing a case study literacy-development program employing research-based, innovative practices with 1–3 ELL students, including a pre-post assessment report to reinforce participants' learning; (3) writing weekly reflections on professional growth and case-study students' progress; and (4) compiling and reflecting on a comprehensive learning portfolio. Training manuals/videos, reading materials, and participant interactions are accessible via the secure course website to participants in all island communities.

The outcomes and evidence of effectiveness are measured by the participants' anonymous course evaluation data and the comparative analysis of pre-post testing of their case-study students' achievements. For the past two semesters, the course satisfaction was above average (on a 5-point scale, 100% of the respondents chose 4 or 5 points). Common ELL student outcomes include increased reading and writing fluency; comprehension skills; self-efficacy; self-esteem; motivation; and enjoyment of learning, school, and peers. Skills learned are generalized to the content areas and interactions at home. A quote from a participant summarizes the course's impact: "Excellent course! Myself and my students truly benefited from this."

## Illinois

**Grantee: Loyola University Chicago**

**Project Name: Chicagoland Partners for English Language Learners (CPELL)**

**Location: Chicago**

*Chicagoland Partners for English Language Learners*, a university-community collaboration, focuses on improving school and parental leadership for ELL students in four large highly diverse school districts in the Chicagoland area. CPELL's components include: (1) a university-based M.Ed. degree program for partnership school teachers (21 in total) graduating as transformational leaders creating systemic change; (2) professional development programs for partnership faculty; and (3) a parent psycho-education program aimed at enhancing the advocacy and support of parents of ELL students. These components are based upon student outcome data, needs assessment data, and feedback from the four partner school district stakeholders.

Teachers enrolled in the Loyola University Chicago graduate program (CPELL Scholars) have become mentor-teacher-ELL advocates and co-teach these professional development workshops with Loyola faculty. Interactive workshops are held on-site for parents of ELLs. These sessions better equip parents to support and advocate for the academic achievement of their children. The CPELL Governing Board's purpose is to ensure the creation of institutional capacity for ELL leaders, faculty, parents, and students in each of the four partner districts.

Current process data indicate a model of effective university-community collaboration through shared ownership and continued program enhancement. A data-driven iterative model between and among stakeholders allows for continual customization of professional development opportunities. Sustainable capacity is being built through the first set of completers (10 CPELL Scholars) who are now assuming leadership roles within the partnership districts. Current project outcomes seen in the 10 completers include strengthened professional practice and improved ELL student advocacy and ELL teaching strategies.

**Grantee: Northeastern Illinois University/Chicago Teachers' Center**

**Project Name: Reading Enhances Academic Development of English Language Learners (READwELL)**

**Location: Chicago**

Few Chicago public school teachers are prepared for teaching large numbers of English language learners, particularly at the secondary level. Fewer than 18% of teachers in two target schools have the training and experience for working successfully with a student population that is 75% LEP. The district-provided professional development rarely offers instruction in ELL services to the content-area teachers, though they teach the majority of ELLs in a school. *READwELL* provides teachers with formal and informal assistance for learning about language acquisition and integrating that knowledge with their teaching for the development of academic literacy skills and content-area knowledge.

Through its various initiatives, *READwELL* offers professional development, including graduate courses in reading/linguistics, to teachers, staff developers, and other school personnel, to better meet the academic and linguistic needs of ELL students. Using the arts, culturally relevant pedagogy, and instructional technology engenders cognitively complex and personally meaningful learning opportunities, promoting a model that meets teachers' and students' needs.

*READwELL* embeds ELL literacy in other school-improvement initiatives. Through in-classroom projects, *READwELL* addresses the need for resources, materials, and curricula for use with ELLs in general education classrooms; increased parental involvement and student engagement in school; and increased use of technology for the integrated teaching and accelerated learning of literacy, language, and content knowledge within a culture of high expectations for all students.

To date, more than 200 teachers have participated in professional development seminars, conferences, workshops, and in-classroom and after-school projects that provide continuing education credits, graduate degrees, or certification.

**Grantee: Northern Illinois University**  
**Project Name: Project Success**  
**Location: DeKalb**

*Project Success* is designed to meet three important objectives. In order to prepare mainstream classroom teachers in K–12 schools to work more effectively with English language learners, participants complete 18 hours of graduate-level coursework, earning either an ESL or bilingual endorsement. One cohort of 25 teachers takes traditional face-to-face classes. The other cohort, recruited from rural school districts with limited access to professional development of this scope, takes these classes in an online/hybrid format with limited face-to-face meetings. In both cohorts, teachers are taught to use research-based methods of teaching and assessment.

A second objective of *Project Success* is to build capacity in teacher certification programs, both at NIU and partner institutions of higher education in the Northern Illinois region. This is done through a one-week teacher-educator academy in which faculty in teacher certification programs are exposed to knowledge of the issues facing English language learners in schools, and the challenges facing teachers who are receiving greater numbers of English language learners in their classrooms but who are not prepared for this new demographic.

A final objective of *Project Success* is to offer training to school principals and other administrators in districts with increasing numbers of English language learners. Many of these principals and other administrators have not received prior training in the needs and special characteristics of English language learners. Their participation in *Project Success* enables them to work more effectively with teachers who are facing the challenges of this increasing demographic.

**Grantee: University of Illinois**  
**Project Name: Improving Bilingual and ESL Education (IBEE)<sup>1</sup>**  
**Location: Champaign**

The *IBEE* grant's primary objective is to improve the preparation of pre-service teachers enrolled in the elementary teacher education program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) for teaching English language learners (ELLs) in the regular classroom. Two other objectives are to improve the preparation of local teachers who work in schools that serve ELLs and to increase the number of in-service teachers who obtain their state bilingual and/or ESL teaching approvals or endorsements. These objectives address severe local, state, and national needs for teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs. In a survey of teacher graduates from UIUC, only 14 percent said they were prepared to work with ELLs.

To address the objectives, *IBEE* created a new required course on linguistic and cultural diversity and is working with higher-education staff in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to revise their teacher education curricula and instruction so that students are taught how to work with ELLs in each of the domains. The program is also providing year long professional staff development at four local schools and providing teachers with stipends to complete coursework in bilingual/ESL education.

Findings from a pre-post survey completed by 129 of the pre-service teachers who completed the new required course revealed that students gained knowledge about the difference between BICS and CALP, and learned how to shelter the instruction of ELLs and provide comprehensible input. Evaluation data regarding the effectiveness of the professional staff development and the number of teachers who are acquiring their bilingual/ESL approvals continue to be collected.

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<sup>1</sup> The formal title of this grant is *A Comprehensive Approach to Improve the Preparation of University Faculty, Pre-service, and In-service Teachers to Effectively Teach Limited English Proficient Students*.

**Grantee: University of Illinois at Chicago**  
**Project Name: Project ATTACH (All Teachers Teaching All Children)**  
**Location: Chicago**

The large population of second language learners attending school in Illinois, and particularly in Chicago, makes it necessary for all teachers to learn how to better serve the needs of second language learners in their classrooms.

*Project ATTACH* provides teams of at least 10 bilingual/ESL and “mainstream” teachers at each of six CPS schools with opportunities to develop collaboration and teaching strategies to change their schools in ways that will enhance the educational opportunities of English language learners (ELLs) in their educational settings.

*Project ATTACH* also provides opportunities for “mainstream” teachers (five teachers each year) to complete their ESL endorsement or approval. This builds capacity in the schools to better serve the needs of English language learners in Illinois.

At the university level, the project develops activities for teacher education faculty to learn about the education of second language learners. Faculty members are invited to participate in colloquia and teachers' presentations in order to enhance their knowledge about second language learners' needs in the classrooms. These activities create the potential for infusion of content about ELLs into all teacher training courses across the college.

**Grantee: University of Illinois at Chicago**  
**Project Name: Project LSciMAct**  
**Location: Chicago**

This 5-year project provides professional development to 30 K–8 teachers, from both bilingual and mainstream classrooms situated in low-income settings, to improve the teaching and learning of language minority students (LMS) in the more advanced areas of literacy, science, and math. The target student population has a persistent history of underachievement in these areas.

The project integrates principles of effective instruction of LMS with standards of reformed mathematics, science, and language arts. Reforms in mathematics and science education have not always included teachers in bilingual/ESL programs. Mathematics and science teaching now emphasize problem solving, construction of knowledge, oral and written communication, and higher-order thinking, even in lower grades. This provides an excellent context for developing literacy and second-language skills. Moreover, standardized tests reflect these new emphases. Consequently, it is critical that all teachers of this potentially high-risk student population be better prepared to implement this type of instruction.

*Project LSciMAct* recruits cohorts of teachers from the same school and targets schools in the same neighborhoods to create a learning community. The project centers around an innovative model of professional development that emphasizes long-term active teacher learning, classroom-based inquiries, teachers collaborating to plan and assess activities, and development of practices and mechanisms for teachers carrying on their own professional development after the proposed project has ended. The teachers apply cutting-edge principles of learning and development to collaboratively design and implement curricular activities based on the students' funds of knowledge and national mathematics, science, and literacy standards.

**Grantee: University of Illinois at Chicago**  
**Project Name: Project STELL (Secondary Teachers for English Language Learners)**  
**Location: Chicago**

There is a nationwide shortage of secondary teachers trained in English as a second language and bilingual education. That shortage is particularly acute in Chicago, where *Project STELL* (Secondary Teachers for English Language Learners) is located. *Project STELL* uses a “grow your own” strategy to produce a pool of highly trained and qualified secondary and upper elementary teachers to work with English language learners in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The project is targeted toward teacher education students in secondary education, but may also include some pre-service teachers in elementary education. In-service strategies are aimed at secondary content teachers and administrators.

Program objectives by the end of five years include producing ten graduates from the undergraduate program and fifteen from the master's programs, with full certification and ESL/bilingual endorsement/approval. Additionally, the project will have provided ESL/bilingual certification (approval/endorsement) to at least 30 currently practicing secondary teachers. Ten of these teachers will have master's degrees by the end of the program. *Project STELL* will also produce two workshops per year in conjunction with CPS, providing in-service training concerning the educational needs of English language learners. Finally, *Project STELL* will support existing mentoring/induction programs run by the Chicago Public Schools for first- and second-year secondary teachers.

*Project STELL* provides its teacher-education students with access to a premier teacher-training program located in the city of Chicago, and geared towards urban issues. The program offers urban field experiences to teacher-education students, and is designed around Illinois State Board of Education professional teaching standards.

## Indiana

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**Grantee: Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis**

**Project Name: Comprehensive Teacher Education Reform for English Language Learners**

**Location: Indianapolis**

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, in collaboration with Indianapolis Public Schools, developed a model of teacher education that simultaneously prepares urban in-service and pre-service teachers to work effectively with multilingual students using innovative strategies. First, the university-public school partnership created a shared vision and responsibility for quality teacher preparation. Second, the partners institutionalized use of a research-based instructional model known for increasing ELLs' academic achievement—called the Standards for Effective Pedagogy—at every level of teacher preparation (<http://crede.berkeley.edu/>). This instructional model uses a set of enduring pedagogical principles to design learning tasks and calls for teachers to use small group configurations to improve differentiation.

A new model of ESL instructional coaching, promoting a critical sociocultural perspective, has resulted from this collaborative initiative. University faculty and public school teachers participated in ESL Effective Pedagogy (EEP) instructional coaching. The EEP coaching model is target-based, observable, and learning-centered. The coaching process for public school teachers begins with an intensive 30-hour workshop focused on effective pedagogy, and continues with seven individual, classroom-based coaching sessions held throughout the school year. Quasi-experimental research investigating the effectiveness of EEP coaching demonstrates statistically significant changes in mainstream teacher pedagogy. Coached teachers significantly (1) improved use of effective pedagogy, including improved focus on critical stance, (2) increased use of simultaneous activity centers, and (3) increased the level of cognitive challenge required for learning. This professional development model, designed especially for coaching mainstream teachers, holds promise for helping all teachers to meet the needs of mainstreamed ELLs.

**Grantee: Indiana University Southeast**

**Project Name: New Neighbors Network Capacity Building**

**Location: New Albany**

The program is designed to facilitate the educational success of English language learners following state and ESL/ENL academic standards. It is a five-year, multi-layered professional development program responding to the needs of K–12 students and families.

The need for this program arises out of the statistics indicating the sharp increase in English language learners in local schools as well as the low number of classroom teachers with training in ENL best practices.

The unique program features research-based practices, several of which are listed below.

- Opportunities for teachers to acquire an ESL/ENL teaching license
- An active eight-school network focused on ELLs' achievement

- Systematic professional development and coaching for regular classroom teachers on ENL/ESL best practices in network schools
- Professional development for administrators, counselors, language and hearing specialists, paraprofessionals, school office personnel, nurses, and bus drivers in addressing issues of ELLs
- Assistance to ELL parents and families through parenting and family literacy workshops
- Enhancement of teacher education programs through college course revisions
- The acquisition and distribution of content-specific resource collections

The outcomes of the program and the evidence of effectiveness are being measured by: pre- and post-surveys of training participants; standardized test scores of students; number of teachers receiving the ENL license; number of teachers receiving targeted training; number of parents participating in parenting and family literacy sessions; and the number of School of Education faculty members participating in training and making course syllabi changes reflecting ENL best practices.

## Iowa

**Grantee: Morningside College**  
**Project Name: Project Unlimited Proficiency**  
**Location: Sioux City**

The number of English language learners has increased dramatically in the Midwest during the last two decades. Since 1999 there has been a severe shortage in teachers trained to address the needs of second language learners.

*Project Unlimited Proficiency* is a Title III, federally funded opportunity for the professional development of educators from Northwest Iowa. Certified educators who complete the 18 hours of coursework qualify for the ESL Endorsement in Iowa. The curriculum is specific to the needs of educators who teach culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students and was developed by the CIMA Center at Kansas State University.

All teachers participating in the program are teaching full time in area schools. They meet on campus for the first and last sessions of the class, completing weekly assignments in learning communities at local schools. Courses in the program are based on methods, assessment, second language acquisition, linguistics, language, and culture. *Project Unlimited Proficiency* staff members support students in their classrooms as they implement the various ESL strategies. GPRA measures are used to assess program effectiveness. Program members also gather evidence of implementation of course learning in their classrooms. Program completers serve as resources and advocates in their individual schools and district.

## Kansas

**Grantee: Emporia State University**  
**Project Name: Project ESTRELLAS**  
**Location: Emporia**

Kansas is in dire need of ESL training for teachers. At least 41,606 English language learners attend Kansas schools, an increase of 2,872% since 1996. Currently 2,477 teachers, out of 42,407, hold an ESL license. *Project ESTRELLAS* has served 60 in-service teachers in eight Kansas school districts. The project goals are as follows:

- A professional development program to improve teaching efficiency;
- Appropriate scientifically-proven curricula and materials specific to ELs documenting the impact of teaching on students' learning;
- A professional plan that uses appropriate assessment methods, techniques, and procedures; and
- An effective professional development plan for cross-cultural understanding to serve ELs students effectively.

Project participants successfully completed five ESOL licensure courses. ETS PRAXIS institutional report indicates ESU's candidate scores outranked statewide scores in all categories and national scores in three categories. (Outcome #1).

Participants met the TESOL Teacher Work Sample (TWS) requirement of 95% or higher. The project uses scientifically proven research-based instructional materials and methodologies aligned with state TESOL Teacher Education standards. The TESOL-TWS is used as a direct measure to assess impact of instruction on student learning. TESOL-TWS provides participants with the information needed to best assess their effectiveness. (Outcome #2).

Ninety-seven percent of all participants showed evidence of evaluating ELs' progress through formal and informal assessment techniques, including appropriate adaptations with 80% (Outcome #3).

Data indicated high satisfaction from participants regarding quality of program instruction with an average of 4.8 (5.0 scale). Qualitative data sources indicated participants' growth in understanding the instructional needs of ELs and their increasing awareness of the cultural impact on learning (Outcome #4).

**Grantee: University of Kansas**

**Project Name: KANTELL: Kansas Teachers for English Language Learners**

**Location: Lawrence**

KANTELL responds to the need for ESOL-endorsed teachers to serve the increasing numbers of Hispanic students in Southwest Kansas (SWKS). More than 8,000 English language learners attend SWKS schools, where only 34% of teachers are currently ESOL endorsed.

KANTELL delivers ESOL endorsement courses to pre-service, secondary-content area students at KU, and to in-service teachers in SWKS via a redesigned, six-course ESOL-endorsement curriculum in interactive, synchronous, distance-learning mode delivered by KU TESOL faculty. Participant support includes full tuition, licensure exam reimbursement, regular in-class coaching, and district-supported text fees. The program involves three professional development strategies, firmly based in scientific research: effective models of TESOL pedagogies, notably SIOP, combined with linguistics and intercultural awareness; best-practices instruction delivered by distance learning; and in-class coaching/modeling/observation.

KANTELL's goal is to increase the number and effectiveness of in-service and pre-service teachers who have earned the Kansas ESOL endorsement. Its objectives are: to redesign the School of Education (SOE) TESOL endorsement curriculum into appropriate distance-learning formats; to deliver of the SOE TESOL curriculum via distance-learning to in-service teachers in SWKS; to increase the number of KU pre-service secondary-content graduates who complete ESOL endorsement; and evaluate the program's impact on program completion effectiveness in the instructional setting.

In year three, the KANTELL KU ESOL endorsement curriculum exists in an interactive, distance-learning format. Courses have been delivered via IT infrastructure provided by SWPRSC and KU. KANTELL has served 33 in-service teachers in SWKS and 20 KU pre-service secondary-content graduates. Program evaluation includes enrollment/grade data; Kansas TESL Teacher Survey data; and lesson preparation and delivery rubrics.

**Grantee: Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), Kansas State University**

**Project Name: Project ADVOCATE**

**Location: Manhattan**

The State of Kansas has experienced a more-than 143% increase in the number of English language learners (ELL), also known as LEP children, in the last ten years. Yet fewer than 6% of Kansas teachers have an ESL endorsement. The Salina, Emporia, and Junction City communities have experienced increases of between 116% and 318% in the number of identified ELL students in the last ten years. Furthermore, each of these districts has also experienced more than a 75% increase in the number of languages spoken by their ELL student population.

Project ADVOCATE is designed to: 1) recruit bilingual and culturally diverse participants who speak the low incidence languages of the ELL student populations from the target districts; 2) provide financial means for 20

pre-service participants to complete a four-year bachelors degree with ESL certification and bilingual training; 3) provide academic mentoring and tutoring throughout their college experience; 4) and create living-learning communities that foster social support and will increase the numbers of highly qualified teachers in these districts of high need. Recruiting, training, and retaining ethnically diverse teachers will assist school districts in the State of Kansas to remove the cultural and linguistic barriers that hinder understanding, effective communication, and academic achievement.

Since the beginning of this project in July 2007, 3 participants have graduated, 4 will graduate in the Fall 2011 semester and 13 will graduate in the Spring 2012 semester.

**Grantee: Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), Kansas State University**

**Project Name: Project PEER**

**Location: Manhattan**

*Project PEER* is designed to provide professional development according to the CLASSIC© model to 100 educators from Liberal, Kansas, located in the Southwest region of the state. The school systems in this region have seen a dramatic increase in the number of English language learning (ELL) students, as the beef industry has prompted a growing and large-scale migration of agri-business workers/families. The project facilitates participants' completion of 15 hours of distance education coursework, through Kansas State University, toward their ESL endorsement.

Site-specific activities guide project participants to implement theory and research relevant to serving the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The CLD student biography serves as a guiding lens in each of the courses for helping teachers understand and address students' multifaceted needs. Participants also receive guidance on implementation of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). As teachers continually reflect on both their individual and collective levels of preparedness to accommodate CLD students, they strengthen ties with fellow participants and begin to see one another as critical allies in their professional learning communities.

Observational studies evaluating the effectiveness of the project in re-shaping teachers' instructional practices, and the impact these changes have on students' classroom participation, have yielded preliminary results indicating teachers' increased capability to incorporate program standards into practice, and suggest that such practices are associated with higher levels of student engagement. Student achievement gains on state assessments are being analyzed as broader evidence of program effectiveness.

**Grantee: Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), Kansas State University**

**Project Name: Project PULSE**

**Location: Manhattan**

Kansas public schools have experienced a 325.8% increase in the enrollment of identified English language learners (ELLs) since 1995. Amidst this explosive growth, two Kansas school districts, Geary County (which educates children from the Fort Riley military installation) and Salina (due to the arrival of some of the largest manufacturing firms in the USA), have served triple the number of cultures and ELLs in grade-level classrooms.

Kansas State University, along with the Geary County and Salina school districts, collaborated to develop Project PULSE, a research-based project specifically designed to provide 100 school educators with 15 credit hours of graduate-level coursework leading to an English as a second language (ESL) endorsement in the state of Kansas.

Unique program features of *Project PULSE* include: (a) ongoing feedback with project participants in person and online, (b) site-based mentoring/application of learning in practice, (c) completion of over 200 classroom observations using the CLASSIC© Continuum of Best Practice (adapted from the CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy), and (d) completion of over 150 observations using ESCRIBE (computer-based documentation of teacher/student behaviors).

Outcomes and evidence of effectiveness of *Project PULSE* can be documented in (a) new participant capacities for standards-based teaching, (b) participant competencies in engaging in critically reflective practice, (c) high-

quality sheltered instruction in target-school classrooms, (d) increased academic scores on formative measures within the classroom as well as summative measures across the school/district, and (e) the formation of a nucleus for school restructuring to address the needs of ELL students.

**Grantee: Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), Kansas State University**

**Project Name: Project SOAR**

**Location: Manhattan**

*Project SOAR* is an NPD project that aims at building educators' capacities for effectively meeting the academic and linguistic needs of English language learning (ELL) students in the Kansas school districts of Olathe and Shawnee Mission. From 2000–2007, the ELL populations in these districts grew by 177% and 419%, respectively. In comparison, only 3.2% of Olathe teachers and only 4.8% of Shawnee Mission teachers hold an English as a second language (ESL) endorsement. This increasing disparity prompted the school districts, in conjunction with Kansas State University, to focus on providing professional development through the CLASSIC© model, which is grounded in site-specific needs and the latest theory/research related to best practices with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students and families. A unique feature of the model is self-directed learning, supported by professional learning communities and critical reflection on the biographies of both students and self.

Research on the effectiveness of the CLASSIC© program to address the needs of *Project Soar* participants has primarily focused on changes in teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy. Classroom observations utilizing the CLASSIC© Continuum of Best Practice (adapted from the CREDE Standards for Effective Pedagogy and associated Standards Performance Continuum) and ESCRIBE (The Eco-behavioral System for the Contextual Recording of Interactional Bilingual Environments) also serve to inform project staff of participant efforts to implement accommodative instructional practices designed to enhance CLD students' classroom participation. Preliminary results indicate teachers' increased capability to incorporate program standards into practice, and that these practices are associated with higher levels of student engagement.

**Grantee: Center for Intercultural & Multilingual Advocacy (CIMA), Kansas State University**

**Project Name: Project TEACH**

**Location: Manhattan**

*Project TEACH* is designed to recruit, enroll, and orient 20 local high school graduates to begin coursework at Donnelly College and complete a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Kansas State University. Pre-service candidates will graduate as highly qualified teachers with a specialized endorsement in the area of teaching English language learners. In order to retain participants in the program, *Project TEACH* will monitor their work, provide tutoring, study groups and counseling support, conduct summer orientation/transition sessions, and organize cohort groups for course enrollment. Because participants will likely reflect the demographics of the area in which they live, they will receive tuition and stipends for books and living expenses. Once they graduate, the participants will return to Kansas City to begin their teaching careers, becoming leaders, strong student advocates, and role models for other students.

Since the beginning of this project in July 2007, 3 participants have graduated, 2 will graduate in the Spring 2011 semester and 15 will graduate in the Spring 2012 semester.

## Kentucky

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**Grantee: Georgetown College**

**Project Name: Center for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy**

**Location: Georgetown**

The *Center for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy* at Georgetown College was established to instruct regular classroom teachers in best practices for teaching English language learners. Because instruction occurs within a social and cultural context, center staff chose to develop and implement a comprehensive framework that addresses the social and emotional needs of students in addition to their academic needs.

Participants are in-service elementary and middle school teachers from three different school districts and 10 schools. The primary goal of the project is to prepare “master teachers” of ELLs who can serve as resources in their schools and districts. To guide their professional development and measure growth, project staff developed a research-based observation instrument for culturally responsive instruction. Called the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP), the instrument encompasses eight domains: teacher dispositions, classroom environment, family collaboration, curriculum, instruction/pedagogy, assessment, classroom discourse, and sociopolitical consciousness.

A new cohort group has been added each year. Participants from the first and second cohorts have remained with the project and have served as mentors to each successive cohort group. Participants are observed in their classrooms and are provided with regular feedback using the CRIOP framework. Culturally responsive practices in the eight components of the CRIOP are examined at regular monthly sessions and during the summer institute.

Pre- and post-assessment data are currently being gathered through observations using the CRIOP instrument. Preliminary results show that teachers have grown in some areas and not others. Teacher self-assessments, however, indicate growth in all components of the CRIOP.

## Maryland

**Grantee: Salisbury University**

**Project Name: Training and Retraining Grades K–12 Eastern-Shore Teachers (TARGET)**

**Location: Salisbury**

TARGET is a high-incentive, long-term, NPD program targeted at the needs of rural teachers. Operating on the premise that ESOL expertise cannot justifiably be achieved via workshop models which give a peppering of “best practices” to classroom teachers with no formal linguistic training, we provide a high-quality program of study specifically designed to offer 1) range, 2) breadth, and 3) depth of expertise in TESOL. The research-based TARGET project accommodates dual needs: educators who could potentially seek a post-baccalaureate certificate in TESOL for whom we have developed a spring session: Academic Career Choices Ensuring Student Success (ACCESS)—a conflation of 5 graduate courses designed to ensure expedient access to this certificate program; and content-area teachers desiring targeted academic skills training for whom we specifically designed a summer program: Enhancing Newcomer Competencies On Required Education (ENCORE)—a compendium of 5 graduate courses on enhancing LEP academic performance in productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (reading and listening) in multiple content areas. TARGET operates on a Copernican model in which course training is delivered in longer blocks of time than conventionally sequenced semester classes. The SEA partners consist of 8 independent, high-need, school districts on Maryland’s Eastern Shore serving over 1,000 LEP students. The TARGET model is not a replacement model, but rather an expansionist model of professional development by which career-ladder incentives instigate district self-sufficiency rather than dependency, and consequently, exploits the talent and promotes the retention of existing classroom teachers.

## Minnesota

**Grantee: The College of St. Scholastica**

**Project Name: Preparing Teachers for Effective Instruction to LEP American Indian Students**

**Location: Duluth**

The five-year Ojibwe Language and Culture Education (OLCE) project *Preparing Teachers to Provide Effective Instruction to LEP American Indian Students* collaborates with the Gigashki'ewizimin ji gikenjigeyang (We Are Powerful When We Have Knowledge) Consortium, dedicated to promoting American Indian educational access, achievement, and success. Consortium members meet regularly and help with field placements, cultural components, recruitment, and evaluation.

This project addresses the severe shortage of licensed Minnesota teachers who have expertise working with

Limited English Proficient (LEP) American Indian youth. There are four goals for this project.

- Increasing numbers of fully licensed teachers available to serve Minnesota LEP Ojibwe youth in tribal schools and public schools with high Native enrollments
- Enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of pre-service teachers, so that they can provide high quality education to LEP Ojibwe youth
- Increasing the number of graduates from the OLCE Program employed in tribal schools and public schools with high American Indian/LEP student enrollments
- Providing in-service training to teachers serving LEP youth and to college faculty

The St. Scholastica OLCE Program has graduated more than 34 teachers since 1984. Innovative program features include: a focus on American Indian and multicultural education; a teacher education program infused with American Indian/LEP Best Practices; resources supporting the integration of American Indian culture, history, and language into the K–12 curriculum; and field placements and student-teaching in schools with large LEP enrollments. Support for candidates includes: financial support; tutoring, mentoring, and role modeling, a Family Education Model, and networking. A comprehensive evaluation design assesses the project's effectiveness.

## Missouri

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**Grantee: Missouri Southern State University**

**Project Name: Project S.P.E.A.K.**

**Location: Joplin**

*Project S.P.E.A.K.* (Speaking Proficiently Enables All Kids) is designed to significantly improve the academic achievement of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who are at risk of educational failure. It is changing the way teachers are prepared and LEP students are taught in rural school districts of Southwest Missouri. The purpose of this NPD grant program is to provide ESOL endorsement courses and professional development to improve classroom instruction for at-risk, specifically LEP, students, and to assist their teachers in meeting high professional standards. MSSU, seven high-need rural school districts, and the Southwest Center work together to make the program successful.

S.P.E.A.K. courses are offered in a variety of formats to meet the needs of all participants; these include traditional workshops, online courses, and hybrid courses with 4–7 face-to-face sessions and online interaction and projects between class meetings. Collaboration, problem solving, and task-based learning characterize the instructional approach. Participants are also encouraged to complete action-research projects. During the 96-hour practicum, participants are coached in K–12 classes. The primary methodology embedded throughout the coursework is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol. The assessment course provides training in the TESOL/WIDA Pre-K–12 English Language Proficiency standards and WIDA's aligned system of assessments. Course materials include webinars and webcasts with leading experts. Participants compile a portfolio to evidence that they have met or exceeded the state standards for ESOL teachers. The portfolio contains student artifacts from TESOL courses. Other program evaluations include participant surveys, course evaluations, student achievement data, the annual GPRA report, and extensive documentation.

**Grantee: University of Missouri**

**Project Name: Project ELL-MO: English Language Learning in Missouri**

**Location: Columbia**

*English Language Learning in Missouri* (ELL-MO) is a five-year project to improve the instructional quality of central Missouri teachers who serve English language learners by offering ESOL certification courses to 100 Central Missouri teachers (20 teachers each year over five years). The project is a collaborative effort involving the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) and five central Missouri school districts highly impacted by increasing ELL populations. However, every LEA in central Missouri that serves an ELL population is invited to participate in *Project ELL-MO*.

The University of Missouri's state-approved ESOL certification program consists of 21 rigorous and research-based graduate hours, including a supervised semester-long field-based practicum. The core coursework consists of: Second Language Acquisition; Linguistics for Educators; Language and Culture for Educators; Materials for and Assessment of English Language Learners; Methods of Teaching English Language Learners, and an elective. All courses have been designed with TESOL's ESL Teacher Education Program Standards and Missouri's Language Proficiency Standards as guides.

Selected participants attend an orientation on program expectations and complete a pre-test to measure initial ESOL background knowledge. Classes are delivered on site at MU over weekends; summer courses are sometimes Web-based. During the practicum semester, the instructor conducts a formal observation in each participant's classroom and mentors participants through email, video-conferencing, etc. The final project portfolio includes a series of lessons, with pre-test, post-test and reflective evaluation components based on The SIOP Model. Near the end of the program, participants take part in focus-group discussions led by the project evaluator and complete a post-test.

## New Mexico

**Grantee: The University of New Mexico**

**Project Name: Academic Literacy for All Project**

**Location: Albuquerque**

One of greatest challenges facing secondary teachers of English language learners (ELLs) is that many of these students enter secondary school as struggling readers and writers. Additionally, their teachers may see the facilitation of their language and literacy development as outside their area of expertise and content area. The *Academic Literacy for All* (ALA) project is a research-based professional development initiative that addresses the challenge of educating content-area teachers in ways to make content concepts accessible to ELLs and to help them learn the academic language and academic literacy needed to succeed in school. Although many ELLs at the secondary level have oral proficiency in English, they lack the academic English and academic literacy necessary to access texts and produce the required written texts. The ALA project has developed a protocol, designed as an introduction to a unit based on the principles and theory guiding the ALA project, which helps students draw on their experiences and use writing as a way to think and learn, and serves as a bridge from students' concepts to the central concepts of the unit. ALA helps teachers deepen their understanding of how to facilitate ELLs' language and literacy development by engaging them in academic/conceptual thinking. Teacher-participants in the ALA project report that their ELLs and other students respond positively to the ALA Protocol, move to higher levels of conceptual thinking, and show higher levels of classroom engagement and understanding.

## North Carolina

**Grantee: East Carolina University**

**Project Name: Project LEAP Leading Exceptional Annual Progress**

**Location: Greenville**

North Carolina teachers serving increasing numbers of ELLs perceive the need for significant PD to appropriately serve ELLs in their classrooms. The purpose of *Project ECU LEAP* (East Carolina University: Leading Exceptional Annual Progress) is to meet this need and to prepare highly qualified teachers to work with ELLs in integrated settings for five urgent-need and rural school districts in eastern North Carolina. Kansas State University (KSU) has agreed to help ECU adapt their model distance-learning program—the CLASSIC© ESL/Dual Language Program. CLASSIC© is a copyrighted acronym for *Critically reflective Lifelong Advocacy for Second language learners, Site-specific Innovation, and Cross-cultural competency*.

Eighty educators from five school districts in eastern North Carolina are participating in the project. These courses are offered online and include face-to-face opening and closing sessions as well as the opportunity to meet with

other site-based participants in collegial learning communities on an as-needed basis. The objective is to enrich the interaction between the learners, the course content, and the professor facilitating the development of critically informed understandings about the topic.

Teachers reported that instructional strategies that support the way they already teach were important to them. This is a key finding, because it suggests that these professionals were not simply interested in learning and using strategies by rote or as automatons. Rather, they rather recognized the central issue of conjoining new ways of presenting material that enhanced, in a highly personal way, but did not replace, their own professional practice.

## Ohio

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**Grantee: Miami University**

**Project Name: English for Speakers of Other Languages Mentoring Initiative for Academics and Methods Infusion (ESOL MIAMI)**

**Location: Oxford**

Miami University's *English for Speakers of Other Languages Mentoring Initiative for Academics and Methods Infusion (ESOL MIAMI)* Project is engaged in a five-year curriculum development project aimed at significantly enhancing the preparation of all teachers who work with English language learners (ELLs) in the mainstream classroom. The overall vision of the ESOL MIAMI Project is to challenge the dominant paradigm of teacher preparation and reconceptualize the curriculum to enable all school personnel to address the language and academic needs of ELLs in all classrooms.

In order to attain the above goals, the ESOL MIAMI Project adapted an infusion framework to integrate existing teacher candidate preparation courses across all licensure areas with ELL language and content instruction. In addition to ELL-infused coursework, teacher candidates have opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills by taking elective ELL language and content specific courses, and by participating in specially designed field and student teaching experiences working directly with ELLs in real-world classrooms.

In addition to publications by project team members, knowledge about ESOL infusion is shared via *TAPESTRY*, a new international journal dedicated to the advancement of research and instruction for English language learners in mainstream classrooms (<http://tapestry.usf.edu/index.html>). Plans are underway to share lessons learned with higher education institutions statewide and nationally so others will have an opportunity to adapt the ESOL MIAMI infusion framework to their teacher education contexts, with the goal of enabling all teachers to address the needs of ELLs in their classrooms.

## Pennsylvania

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**Grantee: Penn State University**

**Project Name: Modular Design for English Language Learners (MODELL) Instruction**

**Location: Lehigh Valley**

The *MODELL Instruction* offers a high-quality, credit-based professional development program to 175 teachers (150 in-service and 25 pre-service) over a five-year period. This program will build two previous OELA grants (1998 and 2002) which have resulted in increased capacity to support the development of classroom teachers.

The goals of this educational program are (1) to provide a solid foundation in understanding second language acquisition, cultural awareness and its impact on language learning; (2) to share effective teaching strategies aligned with state standards and assessment, and (3) to provide support through school-based learning communities organized to design, implement, and evaluate classroom practices and teacher-research inquiry projects.

Select participants will enroll in a two-course, six-credit series over two semesters. The courses, divided into a three-module sequence, combine Web-based and face-to-face interactions.

Module 1: Teachers read, discuss, and analyze conceptual frameworks for second language acquisition and assessment. Module 2: Participants, led by grade-level/content area specialists, interact in small, online communities grouped by level/subject and conduct extensive literature reviews, create and implement lesson plans/units, and participate in self- and peer-assessment activities. Module 3: participants, grouped by schools, work with Fellows and design action research projects based on individual classroom needs. Students disseminate their findings at the annual Diverse Literacies Conference.

Evaluative measures include teachers' self-assessment and peer evaluations, review of inquiry projects/course assignments, and LEP student progress on standardized tests.

**Grantee: The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State Harrisburg–The Capital College)**

**Project Name: Secondary Content Online Preparation in ESL (SCOPE)**

**Location: Harrisburg**

The overall goal of the *SCOPE (Secondary Content Online Preparation for ESL) Program* is to provide in-service content teachers across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with access to a high-quality blended model of online ESL programming and field-based coaching and mentoring. The expected outcome is that the SCOPE program completers' improved professional practices will result in a measurable impact on student learning as reflected by both quantitative and qualitative measures, using both formative and summative assessment practices. The program targets Pre-K–12 content teachers from low-performing LEAs based upon Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and Annual Measurement Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) as identified through PDE, and/or teachers working in remote areas of the state. The program has now expanded from secondary-only teachers and now markets and recruits all Pre-K–12 teachers in Pennsylvania, because of the changes in Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) guidelines that now require all teachers to have training in ESL and Special Education.

To complete the entire ESL SCOPE program, teachers enroll sequentially in five core ESL courses. The first courses in the program cover: Foundations of ESL; English Language Structure for ESL Teachers; and Language Acquisition for ESL Teachers. The fourth course, Teaching ESL Methods and Assessment, requires teachers to develop an action research proposal. For the final class, ESL Leadership, Research, and Advocacy, participants implement their action research projects in their classrooms, schools, or districts.

## Rhode Island

**Grantee: The Education Alliance, Brown University**

**Project Name: Project BRITE (Brown's Response to Improving Teacher Education)**

**Location: Providence**

*Project BRITE (Brown's Response to Improving Teacher Education)* provides professional development to 24 teacher education faculty at the University of New Hampshire, the University of Vermont, Westfield State College, and Syracuse University. The deans and department chairs at these four institutions serve as program coordinators with responsibilities for convening and facilitating strategic training sessions. BRITE is specifically designed to increase the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs so that faculty learn to address the needs of linguistically diverse students in the syllabi of their teacher preparation courses. Through cross-disciplinary study groups, action research activities, and site visits, the faculty jointly explore research on English language learners (ELLs), modify their own teaching, and document the effects of their revised curricula on their teacher candidates. As a result, faculty develop greater understanding of what ELLs need to achieve academic success, the complexities of second language development, and the importance of culturally competent teaching. Among the statistically significant findings of Project BRITE were that 100% of the pre-service teachers enrolled in the targeted faculty courses

- developed an enhanced awareness of ELL student needs, along with strategies and resources to address those needs;
- were able to translate research into classroom practices;

- created and implemented lesson plans that were informed by research and adapted to specific classroom demographics.

Before participation in BRITE, none of the faculty had employed any of the materials or methodologies that they acquired through the project. Therefore, pre- and post-evaluation data documented both the faculty and their students' growth.

**Grantee: The Education Alliance, Brown University**

**Project Name: Call to Lead, High School, and Project Call to Lead, Middle School**

**Location: Providence**

While the Rhode Island public school enrollment declined between 1994 and 2005, the ELL enrollment increased by 20.1%, clustered primarily in three urban districts. The Rhode Island DOE estimates that they will need to double the number of teachers qualified to teach ELL students to meet this continuously growing need.

The goal of *Project Call to Lead* is to increase the capacity of Rhode Island's grade 7 through 12 content-area teachers to deliver high quality instruction to high school English language learners (ELLs).

*Call to Lead* project staff recruit 20 middle and 20 high school teachers from high-incidence districts, in 2 consecutive cohorts over a 5 year period. Participants complete a Master's Degree in ESL and Cross Cultural Studies at Brown University, focusing on current research-based practices in second language learning as well as reading and writing in the content areas, leading to an ESL endorsement credential.

Teachers complete 8 required courses. Call to Lead specialists provide additional professional development sessions on ELLs and specific content areas, as well as 10 days of individual classroom consultations and observations each semester. Teachers then complete a final leadership project, the design and implementation of a 5-standards-based lesson unit on a topic in their content area for implementation and demonstration.

Nine high school and nine middle school teachers are expected to complete the program in June 2010. Utilizing pre/post surveys, classroom observations, review of reflective journals, and review of student portfolios, teachers provided evidence of specific knowledge acquired and active engagement with the course materials in their classrooms.

**Grantee: The Education Alliance, Brown University**

**Project Name: Project Enhancing Content Area Learning (ECAL)**

**Location: Providence**

As a result of the 2002 Massachusetts ballot initiative Question 2 and the dismantling of bilingual education programs, the restructure of ELL programming in Massachusetts has created a rapid increase in the number of English language learners in mainstream classrooms. The Massachusetts Department of Education, in collaboration with specialists from the Education Alliance at Brown University, has developed professional development units for teachers to become qualified to teach ELLs in their classrooms.

The goal of *Project Enhancing Content Area Learning (ECAL)* is to improve 300 secondary content-area teachers' knowledge of and strategies in language and literacy development so that their English language learners (ELLs) can meet rigorous curriculum requirements and assessments.

Project ECAL staff recruit 60 secondary content-area teachers annually from 3 urban, high-incidence districts in Massachusetts. Teachers complete training programs on Second Language Learning and Teaching (10 hours) and Sheltering Content Instruction and Reading and Writing in the Content Areas (15 hours). ECAL specialists conduct classroom consultations/observations following completion of each program, and teachers develop a lesson plan for implementation and demonstration.

In Project Years 1 and 2, there have been 87 teacher completers, all of whom have ELLs in their classes. Analysis of pre- and post-survey responses and observation protocols indicate that all teachers have acquired new knowledge of ELL-related issues and are implementing instructional strategies from the trainings. Internet-based surveys were administered 1–2 years following training with 49% of teachers responding. Ninety-one percent of

respondents reported that they had changed their classroom instruction and planning as a result of the ECAL training.

## Texas

### **Grantee: Texas Wesleyan University**

#### **Project Name: Wesleyan-Tarrant County National Professional Development Project**

#### **Location: Fort Worth**

The *Wesleyan-Tarrant County National Professional Development Project* provides training to prepare 175 pre-service and paraprofessionals in order to increase the number of certified teachers meeting the linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of ELL students in 13 partner school districts in Tarrant County. The project includes a partnership with Tarrant County College and Hill College, who provide the 45-hour general studies core, thus saving pre-service teacher candidates approximately \$21,000. This three-way partnership makes obtaining a teaching certificate and an undergraduate degree a reality for first generation college-bound, economically disadvantaged candidates.

Based on a needs assessment conducted with the 13 districts, the project includes three involvement levels: (1) candidates are employed part-time as trainees by districts while attending classes at TCC, Hill, and Wesleyan and during their internship; (2) districts identify junior- and senior-level high school students interested in becoming teachers who attend classes at TCC or Hill, then Wesleyan, and finally return to their home districts as teachers, and (3) the placement of highly qualified teachers in partner districts to serve the increasing LEP population.

The project also provides 10 professional development sessions to at least 300 teachers, principals, and other administrators. Presenters include university faculty, local, and state experts, speaking about topics previously identified by the districts. Professional development modules in effective teaching of ELLs are also offered for university faculty in the schools where many secondary teachers receive content area knowledge.

The evaluation component includes a comprehensive evaluation strategy that incorporates formative and summative data from participants, supervising principals, and project partners.

### **Grantee: University of Houston Clear Lake**

#### **Project Name: Collaborative Bilingual Counselor Training Project III**

#### **Location: Houston**

The *Collaborative Bilingual Counselor Training (CBCT) Project III* is a collaborative effort between the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) and fourteen Texas school districts. There are several objectives for this project.

- Recruit and prepare a total of 35 bilingual counselors and bilingual counselor supervisors to work with English language learners (ELLs)
- Provide an intensive support system and mentoring for bilingual counselors-in-training and practicing school counselors who currently work with ELLs
- Provide professional development regarding specialized knowledge and skills in working with bilingual populations to practicing counselors in the 23 school districts encompassed in the UHCL service area
- Provide free counseling and support services to ELL public school students and families as part of the counselor training process
- Evaluate existing programs in collaborating districts and recommend modifications to enhance the delivery of counseling services to ELLs
- Facilitate employment placement assistance for all project-trained bilingual counselors and supervisors, and monitor post-training performance of trainees for one year

Integration of these components increases the likelihood that project participants will continue in the profession and assures that counselors are prepared to meet the needs of ELLs. Implementation of the project involves

increased collaboration with participating school districts in order to recruit, advise, select, train, and mentor CBCT participants as well as provide support services for the community. CBCT Projects I, II, and III follow the same pattern and are proven to prepare counselors so that ELL students can achieve high levels of academic success and increased access to post-secondary education.

**Grantee: University of Houston-Clear Lake**

**Project Name: Collaborative Teaching of English Language Learners (CTELL)**

**Location: Houston**

The *Collaborative Teaching of English Language Learners* (CTELL) Project consists of a partnership between the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) and five independent school districts (ISDs) in the Houston metropolitan area. The partner districts reported that only 5% of their secondary teachers were ESL certified, indicating that ELLs were spending most of their academic time with teachers who did not have certification or training for working with ELLs. CTELL's goals are twofold: (1) to improve the UHCL teacher education program so that it better prepares teachers to provide effective instruction to ELLs; and 2) to provide high-quality professional development for secondary content teachers in order to help these teachers improve ELLs' academic achievement, literacy, and language development.

To meet goal number one, 20 faculty members have participated in two years of professional development focusing on sheltered instruction. In addition, faculty members have visited secondary classrooms in one of the partnership districts and met with secondary teacher participants for a sharing session. The next two-year cohort of faculty will be selected in the fall of 2010.

To meet goal number two, each year a group of secondary teachers is selected to enroll in two classes (one per semester). These Web-enhanced classes focus on sheltered instruction in the first semester and on coaching in the second semester. Web-enhancing the classes has enabled participants to attend class one week, then implement and reflect upon what was learned during the following week. Data collected include pre- and post-surveys from all participants and secondary student achievement scores from students in the participating districts.

## Virginia

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**Grantee: Virginia Commonwealth University**

**Project Name: Assisting, Collaborating, Training ESL Secondary Content-area Teachers (ACT-ESL)**

**Location: Richmond**

The ACT-ESL project was designed to train secondary (grades 6–12) content-area teachers of math, science, social studies, and English in Central Virginia. The partner school district, Chesterfield County Public School System (CCPS) has experienced a large increase of English learners in recent years (650% in the past 10 years) in the metropolitan Richmond area, which has the second largest ESL population in Virginia. The CCPS has a high incidence of both ELLs and students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Based on best practices for in-service teachers, the ACT-ESL project adopted an intensive, sustained, and job-embedded coaching and training program. The project consists of three major phases: (1) intensive summer training with ESL instructional strategies, (2) follow-ups of classroom application and one-on-one coaching and a post-seminar, and (3) building professional learning communities through a Teaching Demonstration Fair, action research implementation, teacher presentations at local, state, and national-level conferences, and workshops at schools.

In the past two years, more than 110 secondary content-area teachers have completed the yearlong training cycle. Over the next two and a half years, project staff anticipate that a further 120 teachers will complete the training. Performance of ELL students on standardized tests has increased for 2009, and there is a positive correlation between ACT-ESL teacher training and student standardized test scores. Recent recognition from the Virginia Department of Education regarding English learners' excellent academic progress in CCPS also confirms the impact of the ACT-ESL grant on English learners' academic progress in the community.

## Wisconsin

**Grantee: Edgewood College**

**Project Name: Connecting Teachers of English Language Learners (CTELL)**

**Location: Madison**

Despite the growing ELL population, most general education teachers in the Madison area lack training in research-based ELL instructional practices, as well as opportunities to obtain ESL/Bilingual certification. Additionally, there has been a lack of coordinated efforts amongst diverse institutions for maximizing academic achievement of ELLs. The CTELL project has sought to address these concerns.

To address the main goal of the grant, CTELL has provided face-to-face and online professional development courses to teams of educators. Participating teachers learn research-based effective practices for teaching ELLs in secondary content areas. Eight of the CTELL completers have finished coursework for licensure and an additional seventeen are now taking licensure courses. The CTELL program has almost doubled the number of participants from last year to this, and plans to increase online offerings in response to requests from teachers in rural districts.

The grant funded the development of a consortium of leaders in the field of ESL/bilingual education. Members include district level ESL/bilingual directors, members of the WIDA Consortium, and representation from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The consortium meets regularly to share initiatives and program structures, identify professional development needs, offer professional development workshops in participating schools, and to develop recommendations for improvement of district programs.

**Grantee: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, World Class Design and Instruction (WIDA) Program**

**Project Name: Literacy in Assessment and Data Designed for Effective Results for English Language Learners (LADDER)**

**Location: Madison**

*Literacy in Assessment and Data Designed for Effective Results (LADDER)* for English language learners (ELLs) is a twelve-month professional development offering that enhances data and assessment literacy. Phase 1: The LADDER Leadership Team (LLT) members are oriented to the program through online tutorials that introduce participants to the academic needs of English language learners, appropriate assessment practices, and current research on second language acquisition and academic language. Phase 2: LLT members collect summative as well as formative (classroom) data. WIDA Professional Development staff members facilitate the data retreat process. LLT members suggest hypotheses of practice and select a target area for improvement. Action planning to create specific actionable steps to meet this goal occurs with the guidance of WIDA PD staff in a separate professional development session. Phase 3: Focused implementation of the action plan occurs as LLT members continue the data analysis process by collecting and reviewing data as evidence of the progress towards meeting the goal of the action plan. The WIDA LADDER coach provides technical assistance as needed. Phase 4: In the concluding phase, LLT members reflect on the successful implementation of their action plan and set goals for future investigations during a multi-day PD retreat. Schools receive a site-specific program evaluation to inform this process. LLT members consider a variety of issues including sustainability, rollout, and next steps when considering the needs of the school's/district's English language learners.

