

# IF YOUR CHILD LEARNS IN TWO LANGUAGES

A parent's guide  
for improving  
educational  
opportunities  
for children  
acquiring English  
as a second  
language

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION



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Graduate School of Education and  
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# **If Your Child Learns in Two Languages**

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A parent's guide for improving educational  
opportunities for children acquiring English  
as a second language

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*All children in the  
United States have  
the right to an  
excellent education.*



## Introduction

All children in the United States have the right to a high quality education. While it is the responsibility of schools to provide that education, it is the right and the responsibility of parents to understand issues related to their child's education.

More than 10 million students currently enrolled in U.S. schools come from homes in which a language other than English is spoken. These students, often referred to as "language minority students," represent the fastest-growing segment of the school-age population. Language minority students may know only their native language, or they may be able to use both their native language and English. According to the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, close to four million language minority students do not yet have sufficient skills in English to be able to succeed in a traditional classroom in which English is the language of instruction. In many school districts the term "English Language Learner" (ELL) is used to identify these students. Federal legislation refers to these students as "limited English proficient" (LEP).

This pamphlet has been designed to inform parents of students who have acquired or are acquiring English as a second language about appropriate approaches for educating children, so that you can work with schools to ensure a high quality education for your child. The topics discussed in this pamphlet have been selected because they provide information on issues that impact your child's education. Specifically, laws, school procedures, and research related to the education of LEP students are discussed. The intent is to enable you to understand and participate in the education of your LEP child. Partnerships between quality schools and informed parents will ensure an excellent education for your child.



Each section, and the pamphlet as a whole, aim to provide you with information to make appropriate and informed decisions about your child's education. The following questions summarize the information that this pamphlet offers you.

- ◆ **What are the benefits of learning two languages?** This section explains the economic, social, cognitive and personal benefits of knowing how to read, write and think in more than one language. This information allows you to make appropriate decisions about your child's bilingualism and bilingual education.
- ◆ **What does research say about learning in two languages?** The way children acquire a language and learn skills such as reading and math is complex. This section highlights what you need to know about how your child learns both his or her first language and English, as well as how acquiring these languages impacts all other learning.
- ◆ **How can parents determine if a school is meeting the academic needs of their children?** This section provides six principles focusing on what schools that serve limited English proficient students can and should do to ensure a quality education for your child. You can read this section and think critically about whether or not your child's school complies with these principles.
- ◆ **What are the characteristics of effective schooling for students learning English as a second language?** Good schools provide an environment in which all students, including LEP students, can learn and achieve. This section offers characteristics of schools that support and include LEP students in achieving success.



- ◆ **How do schools determine if students need additional assistance in mastering English as a second language?** Just as school districts across the country use different programs to serve their LEP students, they also have different ways of determining how well students know English and into which programs they should be placed. It is important for you to understand how schools assess children's English language ability to ensure that your child is placed in the most appropriate educational program. This section explains how schools identify, assess and place students in programs.
  
- ◆ **What services do schools offer students who are acquiring English as a second language?** Your child's school should be implementing a program to serve the language and academic needs of students acquiring English as a second language. This section explains the characteristics of each program, as well as its linguistic and academic goals. This section also allows you to identify the program your school has selected to serve students learning English as a second language and to compare it to the characteristics and goals of other programs. If your child's school district offers more than one type of program, you have the right to choose which program you believe will best help your child succeed academically.
  
- ◆ **Are students learning English as a second language expected to meet the same academic requirements as native English-speaking students?** All students are expected to learn to high standards, including students acquiring English as a second language. Standards refer to what students should know and be able to do. Your child's school should have standards that guide what your child is taught and how he or she is



tested. This section explains standards, what you can do to help your child achieve these standards, as well as issues surrounding the testing of your child's mastery of these standards.

◆ **Are there federal policies that can assist parents in monitoring the quality of education that schools provide their children?** This section explains what schools are legally required to provide to LEP students to ensure that they are receiving an equal and quality education.

◆ **How does the educational system in the U. S. differ from educational systems in other countries?** This section highlights important differences between the U. S. educational system and the educational systems in other parts of the world. This information can help you better understand and interact with your child's school.

◆ **Where can I find additional information?** This section offers contact information for national organizations dedicated to assisting you and your child's school in providing your child with a high quality education.

## What are the benefits of learning two languages?

Throughout the world, knowing more than one language is the norm, not the exception. It is estimated that between half and two-thirds of the world's population is bilingual; the majority of people live in situations where they regularly use two or more languages.

Knowing more than one language, therefore, is a skill to be valued and encouraged. Research shows that continuing to develop your child's native language does not interfere with the acquisition of English – it facilitates the process!

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The child who knows more than one language has personal, social, cognitive, and economic advantages which will continue throughout his/her life. Some of the benefits of bilingualism are:

**Intellectual:** Students need uninterrupted intellectual development. When students who are not yet fluent in English switch to using only English, they are forced to function at an intellectual level below their age. The best way to ensure academic success and intellectual development is for parents and children to use the language they know best with each other.

Additionally, research shows that knowing more than one language increases a person's thinking abilities. Bilingual children have greater mental flexibility and use those skills to their advantage in figuring out math concepts as well as solving word problems.

**Educational:** Students who learn English and continue to develop their native language do better in school, and learn English better, than do students who learn English at the expense of their first language.



**B**enefits





**B**enefits



**Personal:** A child's first language is critical to his or her identity. Continuing to develop this language helps the child value his or her culture and heritage, contributing to a positive self-concept.

**Social:** When the native language is maintained, important links to family and other community members are preserved and enhanced. By encouraging native language use, you can prepare your child to interact with his/her extended family and the native language community, both in the U.S. and throughout the world.

**Economic:** The demand for bilingual employees throughout the world is increasing. The ability to speak, read, and write two or more languages is a great advantage in the job market.

## **What does research say about learning in two languages?**

Language, both written and oral, is the means by which knowledge is transmitted in homes, schools, and society. Therefore, language is a very important component of the instructional process in school. Research studies have provided the following results on the relationship between language and learning.

**There are different degrees of language ability — conversational and classroom.**

Conversational English = knowing enough English to have a conversation with friends on the playground, with neighbors, or the cashier in the grocery store. It is often referred to as “survival English.” Students usually can attain this type of proficiency in one to two years — from watching television, listening to older siblings, or playing with neighborhood friends.

Classroom English = the language skills necessary to understand the academic language used in classroom instruction and in textbooks, and the ability to use language to define terms and concepts. Classroom English is more complex and abstract than conversational English and is learned incrementally over time. There are few, if any, contextual clues such as pictures, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice or body language used to convey information. The language that teachers and textbooks use becomes more difficult at each grade level, which makes school even more challenging for older LEP students.

Research shows that it takes five to seven years to learn classroom English. Unfortunately, many students are moved into all-English classrooms too early based solely on their conversational English ability. However, without mastery of classroom English, they will have difficulty competing academically in an all-English setting.

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**R** e s e a r c h



**Students cannot learn if they cannot understand the language of instruction.**

The language students hear must be comprehensible. If a child doesn't understand what the teacher is saying, s/he is *not* going to learn content subjects such as math, science, or social studies. Similarly, students will not learn English just by being in a main-stream classroom where the teacher speaks only English. The native language and special instructional techniques should be used to provide background knowledge and to support concepts being presented in the new language.

**Skills and concepts acquired in the first language transfer to the second language.**

Once a child learns to read in one language, s/he can transfer that knowledge of how to make sense of a printed page to another language. It is best and easiest to learn to read in the language the student understands, because then s/he only needs to concentrate on one skill (reading) instead of two (reading and a learning a new language). Students do not need to re-learn how to read in English. Similarly, concepts learned in one language easily transfer to another. A child only has to learn that  $2 \times 3 = 6$  once; when transferring to the second language only the appropriate vocabulary needs to be learned.

## **How can parents determine if a school is meeting the academic needs of their children?**

The George Washington University Center for Equity & Excellence in Education recently developed the following six guiding principles to assist schools in providing an appropriate education for students who are learning or have learned English as a second language. These principles were developed with funding from the U. S. Department of Education. You can also use the following principles to evaluate how well a school is meeting your children's academic needs.

1. The school has the same high standards for all students.
2. The school encourages your child to develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing English. The school also encourages your child to learn English to the level of native speakers and to develop his or her native language.
3. The school offers the same challenging subjects to your child that it offers other students.
4. The school offers instruction that builds on your child's educational background, thinking skills, native language literacy, and knowledge of English.
5. The school uses tests that are based on standards for all students and that take into account your child's language and cultural background.

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6. The academic success of your child is a responsibility that is shared by the parent, by the child, by the school staff, and by the community.

These guiding principles can help you think about your child's school and the instructional programs it offers. They can also assist you in recommending to school officials how they can further improve their services to your child.

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## **What are the characteristics of effective schooling for students learning English as a second language?**

Research on effective schooling has identified several characteristics that are important in providing an environment in which all children can learn and succeed, including students learning English as a second language. Students learning English as a second language, like students whose first language is English, succeed academically when they are supported and included, and are able to actively participate in all school activities.

### **Effective schools value students' language and culture.**

Staff in effective schools convey the message that students' languages and cultures are valued and respected. Staff members learn about students' experiences in their native countries and in their communities in the United States, learn students' languages, encourage and support the development of native languages, offer content courses in students' native languages, and share the students' cultural backgrounds. These acts and attitudes communicate to students that they are valued and respected.

### **Effective schools encourage families to become involved in their children's schooling.**

Family involvement is recognized as an important component of schooling for all students. Often, LEP parents are left out of school activities for a number of reasons. Schools that work effectively with LEP students make it a priority to overcome obstacles to the participation of parents and actively encourage and facilitate parents' involvement in their children's schooling.

### **Effective schools have high expectations of all students, including LEP students.**

The importance of having high expectations of students has been recognized for some time, yet often LEP students are given the

message that less is expected of them than of “mainstream” students. In effective schools, LEP students are expected to learn, and steps are taken to challenge them and to support their learning. These schools hire staff who are role models, elicit parental support, and recognize students for doing well.

**Effective schools support the use and development of students’ native language both inside and outside the classroom.**

Effective schools demonstrate the value they place on students’ native language. Schools may provide native language development through formal classes, such as Spanish for Spanish-speakers and/or through the use of instructional aides, peer tutoring, or community resources. Staff in effective schools find some means of supporting and promoting native language use and development.

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**Effective schools design services and extracurricular activities to serve and include LEP students.**

Many LEP students need special support in developing linguistic and academic skills, understanding the expectations of the school system, and developing a sense of belonging and inclusion within the school and the community. Effective schools offer special programs to promote LEP students’ academic and social growth and adjustment. Academic support programs include peer tutoring, multicultural awareness, and college preparation activities. Examples of extracurricular activities that involve LEP students include cultural groups whose members learn about and perform arts and ceremonies from different cultures, and bilingual student newspapers.

**Effective schools use developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials.**

Because students cannot learn if they cannot understand the language of instruction, it is very important for schools to provide textbooks, reading materials, activities, and homework that are appropriate to students’ linguistic and academic abilities. Effective schools have these materials or work to adapt their current materials to meet the specific needs of LEP students.



## **How do schools determine if students need additional assistance in mastering English as a second language?**

All districts must make two basic decisions: 1) how to identify which students to assess, and 2) how to assess these students' language proficiency to determine if they are limited English proficient. Identification and assessment methods are used to make placement decisions and can vary greatly from state to state and from school to school. Parents can and should participate and assist schools during this process.

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### **Identification**

Some districts automatically assess the language skills of all new students, while others place students in classes and wait for the teacher or someone else to identify a child as limited English proficient. Many districts conduct a Home Language Survey when a child registers for school.

### **Home Language Surveys usually ask these four questions:**

- ◆ What language did your child learn when he or she first began to talk?
- ◆ What language does your child usually use at home?
- ◆ What language do you usually use when speaking to your child?
- ◆ What language is most often spoken by the adults at home?

If the answer to any of these questions is a language other than English, typically the student is given an English language proficiency test. Depending on the child's age, the proficiency test may be given only orally, or in writing as well.



Additional assistance





### Assessment

Most districts get information about a student's language and academic skills from one or more of the following:

- ◆ parents, often in the form of a Home Language Survey when the child is enrolled;
- ◆ teachers;
- ◆ records from previous schools;
- ◆ evaluations of the student's total academic level; and
- ◆ language proficiency tests.

Many different tests exist that can be used to determine the English language proficiency of students whose first language is not English. To be as accurate as possible, these tests should measure *all* the ways a student can use English including understanding, reading, speaking, and writing. The determination should not be made solely on the basis of your child's ability to *speak* English. Nor should a determination be made solely on the basis of only one type of English proficiency assessment.

### Your role

The school should inform you of the results of any test, and tell you in which program the school is placing your child. If you believe that your child should be in a program other than the one in which he or she has been placed, you have the right to request a transfer and to discuss a more appropriate placement for your child. Procedures vary across the country, but many states use "waivers" as a means for parents to decline the school's standard services or programs. The child can then be placed in a different program. What is important is that your child be placed in a program which ensures that both academic content material *and* English will be learned and that your child's progress will be monitored on a continuous basis.

## **What services do schools offer students who are acquiring English as a second language?**

School districts across the country adopt different approaches, or programs for teaching limited English proficient students, depending upon factors such as:

- ◆ state regulations and guidelines,
- ◆ the wishes of the community,
- ◆ the number of students who speak the same language,
- ◆ the number of qualified teachers available who can teach in the language of the students, and
- ◆ the availability of appropriate materials.

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Because it takes time to learn classroom English, the best programs for promoting the academic achievement of LEP students are those that enable students to continue to develop academic skills while they are learning their new language. These programs build upon the skills and knowledge that children bring to school, and incorporate their linguistic and cultural needs. As a result, children do not fall behind while they are learning English.

Programs for limited English proficient students can be distinguished by: 1) the native languages of students in the classroom, 2) the language used to teach content material, 3) language arts instruction, and 4) the goals of the program. Please keep in mind that each approach must be adapted for the specific needs of the LEP population in a local school district and, consequently, no one program works best all the time or in every situation. The chart below lists programs by their most common names and provides a comparison of the characteristics of the programs.

Knowing both the characteristics of effective schooling for LEP students and the characteristic of each program can help you choose the best educational program for your child. You should ask which programs your child's school offers. If the district offers more than one type of program, the school should provide you with information about the different program choices. The ultimate decision is yours.



## Characteristics of Programs for LEP Students

Language(s) of Instruction	Typical Program Names	Native Language of LEP Students
English and the native language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two-way Bilingual Education,</li> <li>• Bilingual Immersion, or</li> <li>• Dual Language Immersion</li>   <li>• Late-exit or</li> <li>• Developmental Bilingual Education</li>   <li>• Early-exit or</li> <li>• Transitional Bilingual Education</li> </ul>	<p>Ideally, 50% English-speaking and 50% LEP students sharing same native language</p> <p>All students speak the same native language</p> <p>All students speak the same native language</p>
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheltered English,</li> <li>• Structured Immersion, or</li> <li>• Content-based ESL</li>   <li>• Pull-out ESL</li> </ul>	<p>Students can share the same native language or be from different language backgrounds</p> <p>Students can share the same native language or be from different language backgrounds; students may be grouped with all ages and grade levels</p>

Language of Content Instruction	Language Arts Instruction	Linguistic Goal of Program
<p>Both English and the native language</p> <p>Both; at first, mostly the native language is used. Instruction through English increases as students gain proficiency</p> <p>Both at the beginning, with quick progression to all or most instruction through English</p>	<p>English and the native language</p> <p>English and the native language</p> <p>English; native language skills are developed only to assist transition to English</p>	<p>Bilingualism</p> <p>Bilingualism</p> <p>English acquisition; rapid transfer into English-only classroom</p>
<p>English adapted to the students' proficiency level, and supplemented by gestures and visual aids.</p> <p>English adapted to the students' proficiency level, and supplemented by gestures and visual aids.</p>	<p>English</p> <p>English; students leave their English-only classroom to spend part of their day receiving ESL instruction</p>	<p>English acquisition</p> <p>English acquisition</p>



## **Are students learning English as a second language expected to meet the same academic requirements as native English-speaking students?**

All students, including students who are learning English as a second language, are expected to learn to the same high academic standards. The term “standards” refers to what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in all academic subjects (such as math, science, English, social studies, arts and second languages). Standards are set by local school districts and by states. Whether mandated by the state, the district, or the school, standards guide what your child is taught throughout the year. Here are important things to know about standards:

- ◆ You have the right to a full explanation of the standards your child is expected to meet and how your child will be expected to demonstrate that he or she has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills.
- ◆ Standards mean that you can make sure that schools work for your child. With standards, teachers know what they should be teaching, while students and parents know what students should be learning.
- ◆ At each grade level, there is a set of standards which every child in that grade level is expected to meet. Your child’s teacher is responsible for ensuring that your child is able to demonstrate skills showing his or her knowledge of these standards.

Your child’s teacher should talk about standards during open house and parent-teacher conferences. If the teacher does not mention

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standards or discuss with you the specific skills your child should be able to demonstrate, ask the teacher for a list of the standards that your child will be expected to master during the school year. By understanding these standards, you can help your child achieve in school. You can monitor your child's homework and classwork to see that he or she is mastering the standards, and you can practice skills with him or her at home. For example, for the standard, "Students will recognize and write the letters of the alphabet," you can help your child achieve this standard by practicing the alphabet song together, pointing out letters in signs, in names, or at the grocery store, and by helping your child write and recognize letters.

### Assessment

Your child will be assessed throughout the year to determine if he or she has achieved the standards. The school may use tests, alternative assessment methods, or student portfolios to assess mastery of the standards. As with standards, you can and should know about the assessments given to your child. You can discuss with your child's teacher how standards-based knowledge and skills will be assessed and monitor graded work sent home.

**Amanda has five daisies and each flower has six petals. How many petals are there in all?**  
Does this third grade math problem really assess a student's mastery of multiplication? For a student unfamiliar with the English words "petals" and "daisies" and who doesn't know that a "daisy" is a "flower", this question measures the student's ability to read and comprehend English.

Many states require that students pass a test in order to graduate from high school or to move from one grade to the next. These tests are often referred to as “high-stakes” because of their important penalties. Requirements and consequences differ in every state, but often, students cannot receive a high school diploma or may have to repeat a grade in school if they do not achieve a passing score. Some states allow LEP students or students who have not attended school in the United States for a certain number of years to be exempted from or to postpone the tests. Other states allow accommodations such as the use of bilingual dictionaries, having teachers read questions to students, or extra time for LEP students. Your child’s school should provide you with the content and the consequences of these tests, as well as any accommodations that will be provided to your child.

All students in the United States, including children who are limited English proficient, are expected to achieve high standards. However, it is difficult to assess the knowledge or mastery of skills of a LEP student by giving that student a test in English. Educators at the federal, state, and local level understand this problem and are working to develop tests and other assessment instruments that fairly measure students’ abilities, in light of the fact that they are learning English.



**R** e q u i r e m e n t s





## **Are there federal policies that can assist parents in monitoring the quality of education that schools provide their children?**

In the United States, *all* children have the right to attend school and to receive a quality education. It is the responsibility of the schools to provide an equal opportunity to that quality education to *all* students, including students who are learning English as a second language. The federal government does not mandate any single approach to teaching limited English proficient students. However, various civil rights laws and court decisions establish that schools *must* provide *some* type of assistance to enable limited English proficient students to progress academically while they are learning English.

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In 1970, the federal Office of Civil Rights issued a memorandum regarding school districts' responsibilities under civil rights law to provide an equal educational opportunity to limited English proficient students. This memorandum stated:

Where the inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students.

In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled in *Lau v. Nichols*, a class-action suit that was brought on behalf of 1,700 Chinese students in the San Francisco schools. The basis for the case was the claim that the students couldn't understand the language in which they were being taught; therefore, they were not being provided with an equal education. The United States Supreme Court agreed, saying:

There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers,



and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.

This case reaffirmed that in the United States, all students, regardless of the language that they speak, have the right to receive a quality education. When the courts talk about providing an equal education, they do not mean that all students need the same education, but the same opportunity to receive an education. Students can only receive an education if they can understand the language of instruction.

The United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights recommends ways that school districts can be sure that all students are provided an equal and quality education.

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1. School districts must know how many limited English proficient children are in their schools. Your children's school district must have a system to determine which children are LEP. Once it has decided how many students are LEP and how many different languages are spoken, the district must decide which programs to implement.
2. School districts must ensure that all LEP children are being taught to read, write, speak and understand English.
3. If students are not proficient in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding English, testing them in English may not accurately show their abilities or what they have learned. Furthermore, districts must make sure that LEP students are not assigned to classes for the mentally disabled just because they are not proficient in English. In order for a school district to make sure that this does not happen, it should assess the student's knowledge in his or her own language to determine whether there is a disability.
4. School districts have the obligation to notify all parents of school activities. In order for limited English proficient parents to be included, notices should be in a language they understand.



## **How does the educational system in the U. S. differ from educational systems in other countries?**

In many countries, the central government establishes a national educational system and sets all educational policy and curriculum. However, in the United States each state, in partnership with local communities, establishes and implements policies for educating its own population. What this means for parents in the U. S. is that they have a more important role in determining how schools educate their children. It also means that parents must be very active in the education of their children. At the community level, schools are governed by a school board whose members are elected by local citizens or appointed by the local city government. The school board chooses the curriculum and textbooks, while the district office or the local school is responsible for hiring teachers and staff. Each school district, in turn, is responsible to the state department of education.

The role of the federal government in education is to provide guidance and resources, not policy or curriculum. The federal government provides an average of only seven percent of a school's funding. The rest of the funding and all decisions come from the state and/or local level. This means that everyone can shape the educational system in his or her community. Your questions and concerns should be addressed and dealt with by your school district or school because it is at the local level that decisions about your child's education are made. It is important to understand the school system because you have the opportunity to influence and the obligation to participate in your child's education.

In the United States, parents and schools are considered partners in the education of children, and it is expected that parents will participate in

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school activities, and that schools will work with and involve parents in their children's education. You have the right — in fact, the responsibility — to be involved in your children's education. Specifically, you have the right and the responsibility to:

- ◆ Know how the school works;
- ◆ Know how the school is serving your child; and
- ◆ Make sure the school responds appropriately to the educational needs of your child.

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**S**ystems



## Where can I find additional resources?

### America Reads

(202) 401-8888 (phone)

(202) 260-8114 (fax)

<http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/readnow.html>

As part of the U.S. Department of Education's *America Reads Challenge*, this website offers many literacy activities that families can do together.

### Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)

4646 40th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20016-1859

(202) 362-0700 (phone)

(202) 362-3740 (fax)

<http://www.cal.org>

CAL aims to promote and improve the teaching and learning of languages, identify and solve problems related to language and culture, and serve as a resource for information about language and culture. CAL carries out a wide range of activities including research, teacher education, analysis and dissemination of information, design and development of instructional materials, technical assistance, conference planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

### The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

<http://www.accesseric.org/resources/parent/parent.html>

ERIC has numerous brochures for parents on topics ranging from planning for college to charter schools to standardized tests. All publications can be accessed through the website or by calling 1-800-LET-ERIC (538-3742).





**Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)**

5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350

San Antonio, Texas 78228-1190

(210) 444-1710 (phone)

(210) 444-1714 (fax)

<http://www.idra.org>

IDRA is a vocal advocate for the right of every student to equality of educational opportunity. IDRA fulfills its mission through professional development, research and evaluation, policy and leadership development, and programs and materials development. IDRA provides schools with tools to meet the instructional needs of LEP children through effective training and technical assistance to schools in program design, instructional strategies, materials acquisition and assessment methods.

**National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)**

1030 15th Street, NW, Suite 470

Washington, DC 20005-1503

(202) 898-1829 (phone)

(202) 789-2866 (fax)

<http://www.nabe.org>

This is the national organization concerned exclusively with the policy and practice of the education of language minority students. Its members include educators, parents, community members and leaders of community, governmental, and business organizations. Additionally, NABE advocates at the national, state, and local level for bilingual education.

**National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE)**

2011 Eye Street, NW, Suite 200

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 467-0867 (phone)

(202) 467-4283 (fax)

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu>



Funded by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs of the U.S. Department of Education, this organization collects information relating to the effective education of linguistically and culturally diverse learners in the United States. Their website has an electronic discussion group, a bi-weekly newsletter, a list of frequently asked questions, and links to educational resources in many languages spoken in the U.S. Additionally, NCBE's website has links to each state's Department of Education.

**The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

330 N. Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100

Chicago, IL 60611

(800) 307-4PTA (phone)

(312) 670-6783 (fax)

<http://www.pta.org>

This organization works to form partnerships between parents and teachers to support and speak on behalf of children in schools, in communities, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. The PTA also assists parents in developing the skills necessary to raise and protect children and to promote involvement in the public schools of this nation.

**Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (OCR)**

(202) 205-5557 (phone)

(202) 205-9862 (fax)

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR>

The mission of OCR is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. A primary responsibility is resolving complaints of discrimination. OCR offers assistance, guidance and information to students, parents and educators. A complaint of discrimination can be filed by anyone who believes that an individual has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.



**Partnership for Family Involvement in Education,  
U.S. Department of Education (PFIE)**

(202) 401-0056 (phone)

(202) 205-9133 (fax)

<http://www.pfie.ed.gov>

As part of the U.S. Department of Education, PFIE's mission is to increase opportunities for families to be more involved in their children's learning at school and at home, and to use family - school - community partnerships to strengthen schools and improve student achievement.

**The Public Education Network (PEN)**

601 13th Street, NW, Suite 900 North

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 628-7460 (phone)

(202) 628-1893 (fax)

<http://www.publiceducation.org>

PEN is the nation's largest network of independent community-based school reform organizations that work through local education funds. They provide a list of resources about issues affecting student achievement in schools.

**The Southeast Asian Culture and Education Foundation (SEACAEF)**

17212 Blue Fox Circle

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

(714) 842-7589 (phone)

(714) 847-4009 (fax)

<http://www.seacaef.org>

The goal of SEACAEF is to promote understanding between Southeast Asian Americans and Americans of other heritages. The organization produces education materials related to Southeast Asian



languages and culture, including materials written in Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, and Lao. It provides assistance to new Southeast Asian immigrants in becoming acculturated, responsible, and productive citizens.

### **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)**

700 S. Washington Street, Suite 200

Alexandria, VA 22314

(703) 836-0774

(703) 836-7864 or (703) 836-6447 (fax)

<http://www.tesol.org>

The mission of TESOL is to develop the expertise of its more than 16,000 members and others involved in teaching English to speakers of other languages to help them foster effective communication in diverse settings while respecting individuals' language rights. TESOL articulates and advances standards for professional preparation and employment, continuing education, and student programs. Additionally, TESOL promotes advocacy to further the profession of teaching English to speakers of other languages.

### **United States Department of Education**

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202

1-800-USA-LEARN (phone)

(202) 401-0689 (fax)

<http://www.ed.gov>

The U.S. Department of Education offer numerous publications for parents, including *Building Your Baby's Brain: A Parent's Guide to the First Five Years*, *Parent's Guide to the Internet*, *Learning Partners: Let's Do Homework*, *How to Raise Drug-Free Kids*, *Helping your Child Become a Reader*, *Helping Your Child Succeed in School*, and *Helping Your Child Learn Math*. Many of these are available in Spanish, most are free and can be ordered through the website or by calling 1-877-4-ED-PUBS.



The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs to collect, synthesize and disseminate information relating to the effective education of linguistically and culturally diverse learners in the United States.



National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education  
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