



What Makes for Quality Education for English Learners in the 21st Century?

What Needs To Be Included and What Actions Can We Take:
Lessons Learned from the Past and New ideas for Today

Open Space Report: Los Angeles

As a convener, we would like you to put together a short report from your group describing the following:

1. **Names of group members**

Ava DeAlmeida Law
Tammi Wong
Shilpa Ram

2. **Issue/Topic/Activity**

EL Programs as a Civil Rights Issue

3. **Highlights of Discussion/Recommendations/Next Action Steps**

Charter schools are excluding or admitting particular types of students. This is a policy, practice and implementation concern in terms of admitting and providing services to EL students. Charter schools are public schools that receive federal education dollars so they are obligated to serve the EL population and cannot exclude students in admissions based on their EL status.

There are three prongs that OCR uses to evaluate the EL programs under the Casteñeda case. They are whether the EL program is research based, implementation of the EL program, and the evaluation of the success of the program. Generally speaking, schools must provide EL students an equal opportunity to access the curriculum. They must use the method that creates the least segregation.

Schools struggle the most with the implementation prong, particularly as it applies to long term English Learners. Some of the students are languishing as long term EL students and the schools don't provide them with the evaluations and new services/interventions to help them reclassify. OCR, where they have found a violation, has sometimes recommended hiring a consultant or expert to help the school determine new, effective, approaches to teaching these students.

Other issues raised include the counseling of EL students towards success and understanding the EL program steps; recognizing and supporting bilingualism as an asset; ensuring that EL and other staff are advocates for ELD in all departments (not just the EL department).

4. **Available Resources**

OCR “reading room” online

OCR can provide free technical assistance/presentations on EL programs and civil rights (415-486-5555 for California only; national hotline number is online)

OCR can receive and investigate civil rights complaints in the area of EL program and implementation, evaluation, and parent notice, and hostile environment.

5. Follow-up requests

Can Districts get technical assistance on what successful programs are?

Can Districts get clearly definitions of what an effective, research based program is?

Can Districts get resources on how to serve long term English Learners and English Learners in special education?

How can Districts motivate teachers to believe in the success of their students rather than writing them off?

6. Please type in this report in one of the laptops and hand in this sheet. Thanks!