



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

December 1, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

Greetings to all of you! I want to take this opportunity to update you on OELA activities since the last newsletter I sent you in October.

❖ The current grantees in OELA's Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAANCS) program now have an online forum in which they can network, share promising practices, exchange other professional ideas, and interact with OELA staff and experts. It is called *The Talking Stick* in honor of the Native American tradition of the talking stick, which gives voice to all members, promotes respectful listening, and encourages collaboration in working toward goals.

The NAANCS project directors, representing 8 continuing projects and 13 newly funded ones, met at ED headquarters in Washington, DC, on Sept. 30 for a 1.5-day technical assistance meeting that also included a personalized tour of the National Museum of the American Indian followed by a reception. To view a list of the new FY2011 grantees, please visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/grants/nam/>.

❖ OELA collaborated with the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development (OPEPD) and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) to host an hour-long Guidance Session on ESEA Flexibility at ED Headquarters Oct. 31. The session brought together various EL-related advocacy organizations/ stakeholder groups to be briefed on ESEA Flexibility requirements and invited to advocate for the inclusion of ELs in state plans/requests for Flexibility.

❖ Title III State Directors met at ED headquarters Nov. 3-4 for a two-day meeting that included a technical assistance workshop for new directors, roundtable discussions with key leaders from ED programs serving ELs, and networking opportunities. The event was co-sponsored by OELA and OESE. Secretary Arne Duncan shared the Administration's goals for English Learners, Acting Assistant Secretary Michael Yudin shared OESE's strategic plan, and I shared OELA's strategic plan.

❖ This director made presentations at two education events in October and two in November: Oct. 7 - served on a panel at the U.S.-Japan Council's annual conference in Washington, D.C.; Oct. 26 - served on two panels of ED senior officers at New Mexico's Federal Technical Assistance Workshop Day in Albuquerque, where I also visited dual language program classrooms at Dolores Gonzales Elementary School; Nov. 2 - presented to ED Comprehensive Center Directors at their Annual Fall Meeting in Chicago; and Nov. 16 - delivered keynote address at the La Cosecha 2011 Dual Language Conference in Albuquerque.

Upcoming Events

- On Dec. 9, OELA will welcome Laurie Olsen, researcher and author from California, and Julian Vasquez-Heilig, professor at the University of Texas at Austin, to the Department to discuss their ongoing research and work on English Learners. The event will be Ustreamed live to the public at 1p.m. EST. To view the event, please go to www.ustream.tv/channel/education-department. There is no required registration and no fee.
- During the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) 41st Annual Conference set for Feb. 15-17, 2012, OELA will host a National Professional Development (NPD) program Project Directors Meeting Feb. 16. The meeting will include presentations by project directors and OELA staff, and provide opportunities for project directors to network with each other and with OELA staff. For a list of the newly funded FY2011 NPD grantees, please visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/grants/npd/>.
- Also at NABE, OELA staff will lead the Special Interest Group (SIG) sessions for participants that work with Native American programs. The Feb. 16 sessions will focus on funded projects from early learning to post-secondary success for Native American and Alaska Native EL students.

I look forward to keeping you informed about OELA activities on a monthly basis. Until our next newsletter, here's wishing you the very best.

Sincerely,



Rosalinda B. Barrera, Ph.D.
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Director, Office of English Language Acquisition