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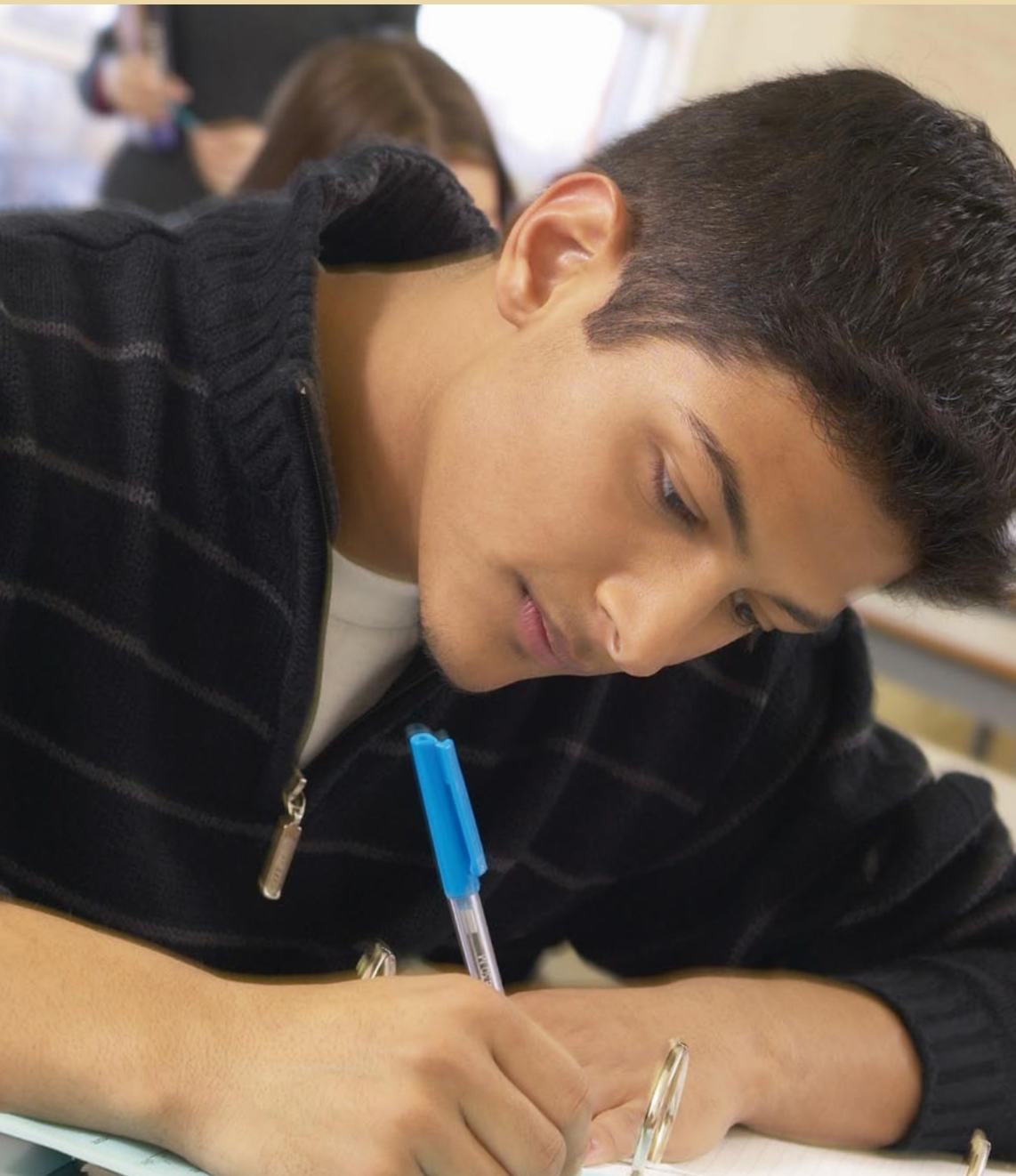
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Promoting Academic Literacy

Among Secondary English Language Learners:

A Synthesis of Research and Practice



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Promoting Academic Literacy Among Adolescent English Language Learners

Introduction

This report is a synthesis of research, challenges, and best practices in the education of secondary English Learners (ELs). It incorporates a summary of three days of presentations and discussions by key national experts in the spring of 2005, observations and findings from our own research, and key issues from the research literature. The report provides an overview of the most pressing issues facing schools in the instruction of secondary English Learners. It also includes the perspectives of people in the schools and in the classrooms who are attempting to meet these students' needs, as well as individuals who have been grappling with the challenges from the world of policy. The report concludes with our recommendations for California education policy informed by all of the above: the challenges that secondary EL students and teachers face, the needs and limitations of teachers and schools in the state, and the best practices cited by both researchers and practitioners. Many recommendations were suggested. We have, however, attempted to highlight just a few that we consider to be the most immediately actionable. A list of participants in the conferences is included in the Appendix.

Background

Secondary English Learners are the fastest growing segment of the limited English proficient student population. Contrary to the widely held perception that learning English is a challenge faced almost exclusively by the youngest students, approximately one-third of all EL students are found in

grades 7-12. Moreover, their teachers are the least prepared of all teachers to meet their needs. The rapid growth of ELs is a nationwide phenomenon. Between 1979 and 2003, the proportion of 5 to 17-year-olds who spoke a language other than English grew by 161% (from 8.5% to 18.7%), and the proportion of students who reported speaking English less than "very well" grew by 124% (from 2.8% to 5.5%¹).

Secondary level English Learners face unique educational challenges that are often overlooked, in part, because limited English is commonly thought of as an issue for only young children (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Older children have less time to acquire both English and the academic skills they need to get ready for high school graduation and to prepare for post-secondary options. Issues of identity development and adolescent transitions also complicate educational motivation and focus among this age group, and students in this age group are more likely to suffer embarrassment over their lack of competence in English (Gándara, Gutierrez, & O'Hara, 2001; Gibson, Gándara, & Koyama, 2004). In addition, secondary teachers often lack expertise in teaching basic skills such as reading: skills which may be necessary when working with older students who do not know how to read in English, or do not know how to read at all. Moreover, pedagogical strategies and educational materials used with younger children are not always appropriate for older students. Thus, with a growing secondary EL population and limited knowledge of how to serve them, there is a critical need for more information about effective practices in teaching adolescent English Learners.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2005. www.nces.ed.gov/

Secondary English Learners must master at least two basic bodies of knowledge: English, more specifically the academic English of the classroom and of texts, and disciplinary content material such as history, social studies, science, mathematics and literature. Also, because many are immigrants, they must learn the appropriate rules of conduct for adolescents in their new social environment. One impediment to the success of secondary English Learners has been the overly simplistic perspective that improving their limited English will automatically lead to educational success. This narrow perspective often obscures the importance of academic content knowledge, of motivation and social skills, and of developing the academic vocabulary, competent rhetorical skills, and in some cases, basic academic skills students need in order

Statewide measures of achievement indicate that EL students in California schools are not faring well.

to access school subjects and communicate understanding of content. In fact, there is evidence that a curriculum that is too narrowly focused on English

proficiency is counter productive. Callahan (2003) notes that in schools where teaching basic English is the major focus of the curriculum, secondary EL students tend to achieve poorly, lose hope, and often drop out. She also found that curriculum placement – assignment to regular college preparatory courses rather than remedial ESL and general track classes – was a better predictor of academic achievement than students’ level of English proficiency. Clearly English proficiency – especially proficiency in academic English – is very important for long term schooling outcomes, but it is no more



important than providing students the opportunity to take a rigorous academic curriculum, and helping them to integrate into the fabric of school and society. Unfortunately, there is evidence that few secondary ELs have access to the type of curriculum and instruction that fosters academic success and that little attention is paid to a range of other critical needs and concerns of these students.

Statewide measures of achievement indicate that EL students in California schools are not faring well. While this is due, in part, to testing instruments that are not appropriate for ELs, the evidence is undeniable that these students are not thriving in our current secondary education system. Although almost 2/3 (64%) of 10th grade ELs in 2005 scored as proficient on the CELDT, the statewide assessment of EL students’ English language knowledge², only 4% were able to pass the 10th grade English Language Arts exam that is given by the state and is based on the state English language arts curriculum standards. Moreover, math scores based on California state

² California English Language Development Test.

curriculum standards, were far below those of EL students' English speaking peers (Figure 1) with almost twice as many English fluent students as EL students passing the high school exit exam math section, and almost three times as many English fluent students scoring at basic or above in Geometry³. Further hampering our ability to understand and respond to the educational needs of these students is the continued use of invalid tests to assess their academic progress because all tests *in* English are tests *of* English. Current testing technology does not allow us to know whether students fail to pass an item because their English is limited or because they do not know the material. The confounding of language proficiency with content knowledge yields invalid and unreliable test scores that do little to help us understand the needs of students, but can dampen students' enthusiasm for learning when they are unable to express what they know in English. The large and increasing number of EL students in our schools, the evidence that we are not providing them the skills and knowledge they need, and the extraordinarily high drop out rates of these students⁴ were the catalysts for this project.

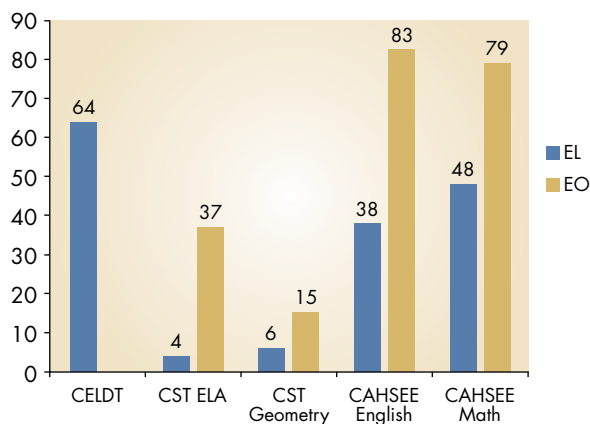
A survey study of teachers of English Learners at the secondary level

The lack of secondary teachers with even minimal expertise in EL instruction contributes significantly to the problem of underachievement of English Learner secondary students, as does the disproportionate placement of the least-prepared teachers in schools with the highest concentrations of EL students (Esch, & Shields, 2002; Shields et al., 2005). Exacerbating the problem, professional development with a specific focus on English Learners occupies a small part of the California professional development infrastructure and budget.

In a 2004 study we surveyed educators from districts across California, approximately 1,300 of whom were secondary teachers. The study participants worked in small, medium-sized and large districts, ranged in age and background, and generally reflected the average teacher demographics for the state of California. Survey questions address teachers' classroom challenges, the assistance that they have and need, the content and quality of the inservice in which they have participated, and their views regarding the kind of professional development they feel would most help them improve their skills for teaching English Language Learners.

The fundamental issue of communicating with students was paramount for teachers at the secondary level. They felt extremely challenged by their inability to convey the academic content of the class to their students and to communicate with them regarding the social and personal issues that influence students' lives. They also said that their inability to communicate with EL students

Figure 1: Percent Proficient or Above, or Passed CAHSEE for English Learners and English Only 10th Graders, 2006



³ We counted as proficient or passed, students who scored in the top two out of five levels of the CELDT (early advanced or advanced) or the CST (proficient or advanced).

⁴ Gándara (2005) reported on an analysis of cohort data for the class of 2004 in LAUSD. In this analysis of 9th grade EL students in 2000, only 27% were found to graduate with their class 4 years later; more recently, Rumberger has conducted an analysis of ELS data (Education Longitudinal Study of 2002) examining the drop out rate for U.S. English Learners between 10th grade in 2002 and 12th grade in 2004, finding that over the two year period, drop out rates for EL students were at least double those of any other group. [Gándara, remarks from the conference, Drop Outs in Los Angeles, held May 2005, CSULA; Rumberger, LMRI fact sheet Number 7, 2006.]

made encouraging and motivating these students difficult if not impossible. Other challenges that these teachers most frequently noted were the need for more time to teach English Learners and the extremely variable academic and English language needs of their students. The challenge of finding adequate and appropriate tools and materials and learning how to use these was significant as well. For example, most teachers said they use the same textbooks with their ELs as they do with English-speaking students, even though the English Learners often cannot understand the text.

In addition, the lack of appropriate assessment materials for determining EL students' grasp of academic subjects was particularly troublesome for teachers, many of whom said that the content assessments they currently use are ineffective when students cannot understand the test questions in English. Because California routinely tests its students only in English, and all ELs are tested, whether they understand the language of the test or not, it is often impossible to know if students' low scores are due to limited English or to lack of knowledge of the subject tested. Furthermore, according to many teachers, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) does not provide a great deal of useful information of a diagnostic nature.

We asked teachers to rate their own abilities to teach English Learners in a number of areas as poor, fair, good, or excellent, and converted these into a scale of 1-4. On average, secondary teachers rated their teaching ability lower than did elementary school teachers, in every area. Although the secondary teachers in our sample felt less secure about their abilities to provide quality instruction to EL students than their elementary counterparts, overall neither group reported feeling particularly well prepared.

As would be expected, the teachers with the certification requiring the longest and most rigorous preparation, BCLAD⁵, rated themselves as significantly more confident about their ability to teach English Learners in every subject area, than either CLAD⁶ teachers or those without any specialized training. The difference in self-rated ability between teachers with a BCLAD and no special credential (neither a CLAD nor a BCLAD) were highly statistically significant⁷ in every area in which teachers were questioned: general pedagogy, reading, English Language Development and primary language reading and writing (Table 1).

Taken together with the research on the relationship between self-efficacy and instructional effectiveness (Armour et al., 1976; Berman et al., 1995; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1984) and the

Table 1: Elementary and Secondary School Teachers' Self-rated Ability to Teach ELs by CLAD/BCLAD Credential⁸

	Elementary School Teachers			Secondary School Teachers		
	Neither	CLAD	BCLAD	Neither	CLAD	BCLAD
Pedagogy	2.66 ⁹	2.84	3.09	2.51	2.92	3.14
ELD	2.85	3.00	3.16	2.40	2.74	3.13
Read	2.89	3.03	3.15	2.49	2.81	3.14
Write	2.70	2.88	3.00	2.48	2.77	3.09
Primary language reading	1.84	1.84	3.16	1.74	1.71	3.06
Primary language writing	1.80	1.79	3.06	1.71	1.66	3.03

⁵ Bilingual crosscultural language and academic development certification

⁶ Crosscultural language and academic development certification

⁷ P < .001

⁸ Differences between "Neither and BCLAD and statistically significant in every area.

⁹ 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = excellent.



research on self-efficacy, optimism, and the will to create change (Bandura, 1993, 1995; Farber, 1991) the importance of having appropriate training and credentials before entering the classroom cannot be overstated. Unfortunately, relatively few teachers have this level of preparation, especially at the secondary level where more than half of all teachers have no specialized training at all. This suggests that providing more teachers with the requisite background skills and high-level in-service training should be a major policy thrust of the state. As we have noted elsewhere (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000), an efficient way to achieve this goal is to identify potential teachers who already possess the cultural and linguistic skills required and fast track them through teacher preparation programs.

Focused, high quality professional development contributed to teachers' feelings of professional competence: teachers – at both the elementary and secondary level – who had professional development related to the teaching of English Learners rated themselves significantly more able to teach these students across all categories of instruction than teachers without such training. However, the amount of such training

in which EL teachers participated was extremely small. More than 40% of the teachers whose students were mainly¹⁰ English Learners had received only one in-service workshop that focused on the instruction of ELs- or none at all- in the previous 5 years. Furthermore, only half of the new teachers in the sample, those required by law to participate in some EL focused inservice as part of their induction and progress toward a clear credential, did so. Given earlier work indicating that teachers in California, on average, received only about two hours of in-service training annually that was focused on English Learner issues (Gándara et al., 2003), this small amount of training is not surprising. It is, however, disconcerting. Teaching English Learners is a complicated challenge that requires significant skill. Even the best teacher pre-service programs cannot cover all the knowledge and skills that a competent teacher of EL students requires: teachers need appropriate professional development opportunities to hone the skills necessary for teaching EL students in a particular school and classroom context.

Teaching English Learners is a complicated challenge that requires significant skill.

The study also found that teaching experience overall, and experience teaching EL students in particular were both positively associated with secondary teachers' self-rated ability in all areas except primary language reading and writing. Based on this we could expect that the most effective teachers for English Learners at the secondary level would be those with more experience. However, according to the Center for the

¹⁰ More than 50%

Future of Teaching and Learning, this is contrary to actual teacher placement practice in California schools. That is, the least experienced teachers are placed disproportionately in schools that have the greatest number of racial and linguistic minority students (Esch & Shields, 2002; Esch, et al., 2005).

As a part of the study of teachers of EL students, we also conducted focus groups around the state. Participants in the focus groups raised a second problem regarding EL-focused professional development: poor quality. Several teachers in these groups discussed attending professional development in which the portion of the in-service

...teachers said that they would like the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers as a central feature of their professional development

that was ostensibly dedicated to English Learners did not in fact address the real needs of these students. Focus group participants felt that attention to how they could adapt what they were learning to EL instruction was an afterthought on the part of in-service developers and clearly not the area

of expertise of presenters. Teachers in our focus groups also noted that they are not the only ones in need of professional development with regard to EL students. Several talked about the need for school and district administrators to gain more insight and understanding of the challenges and solutions to working successfully with EL students, in part so that the school could work more efficiently as a team.

For over 70% of secondary teachers who had any EL focused in-service, the topic of this in-service was ELD or ESL. For 60% of secondary teachers the next most common area of profes-



sional development was topics related to culture. Teaching academic subject matter to EL students was the focus of in-service for less than 40% of secondary teachers, a troubling finding both because the research is increasingly calling attention to the huge deficit that many English Learners have in the area of academic English – the form of the language that is used in academic contexts and is necessary to comprehend academic work – and because content instruction is the primary focus of secondary education.

Teachers were also asked to critique the professional development in which they had participated. Both elementary and secondary teachers reported that a common problem was inattention to specific knowledge, techniques, and strategies for teaching English Learners. Secondary teachers wanted more professional development on strategies for conveying class content to English Language Learners. In addition, both elementary and secondary teachers wanted the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers as a central feature of their professional development and wanted the professional development to be ongoing rather than “one-shot.” They also cited a need for better materials, more time to teach their English Learners, and more paraprofessional assistance.

Finally, with respect to district level findings, teachers in small and rural districts felt the most challenged. This reminds us that these small and rural districts face the same challenges as urban districts but often don't have the same resources, such as access to universities that provide professional development and prospective teachers. It was clear that the teachers responding to the survey who were from small and/or rural districts felt they could count on fewer resources and felt more isolated. It is critical to take into account the special needs of small and rural districts as we frame the challenges of teaching English Learners as a largely big urban district issue. While size and density of EL populations in urban districts bring particular challenges, they also often bring resources and attention that may be lacking in these smaller, rural sites.

Meeting the Literacy Development Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners through Content Area Learning¹¹, Julie Meltzer & Edmund Hamann (2005)¹²

The first of the two conferences summarized in this report took place in April of 2005 and focused on critical elements with regard to the education of EL students in secondary schools. Based on an extensive review of this literature, Meltzer and Hamann found that motivation is key to the effective teaching of English Learners, especially at the secondary level. Given the limited curriculum offered to these students and the inadequate EL teaching skills of most secondary teachers, EL students often become discouraged and give up. The authors discussed key areas in which content teachers need preparation in order to engage and motivate EL students. Hamann and Meltzer

found that a pivotal problem in the schooling of secondary ELs is that although reading, writing, listening, speaking and thinking, are embedded in all subjects, most high school teachers don't consider teaching these literacy skills¹³ to be their responsibility. They also found that students with weak English skills are especially poorly served and are often placed in completely unsupported environments. Hamann and Meltzer concluded that teachers who have learned how to be effective promoters of adolescents' literacy development possess an important pedagogical tool and that training all secondary-school teachers to promote content-area literacy development should be part of a strategy to improve secondary-level EL education. The authors summarized three principles emphasized in the research as critical to effective instruction of EL students.

Students' first language can contribute to their advanced literacy in English

Making connections to students' lives:

- 1) Making connections to students' previous learning and experience, to what students already know, what they need to know, and what excites them, is critical to their academic success, but is often ignored. Therefore, teachers need to regularly assess students' interests as well as their subject matter knowledge.
- 2) Students' first language can contribute to their advanced literacy in English: second language learners can produce more sophisticated second language text by doing some of the planning in their native language.

¹¹ Full text available online at: <http://www.alliance.brown.edu/topics/curriculum.shtml#item1076a>

¹² Dr. Julie Meltzer is a researcher at Brown University with the Education Alliance, Dr. Edmund Hamann is an associate professor with the University of Nebraska.

¹³ For purposes of the conference, we adopted the definition of this academic literacy for ELs outlined in the paper presented by Edmund Hamann. "Adolescents who are literate can use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking to learn what they want/need to learn and can communicate/demonstrate that learning to others who need/want to know" (Meltzer, 2001).

- 3) While teachers need to scaffold new learning based on what students already know, they must avoid assuming that things are universal for all students from a particular group.
- 4) Students who have limited background knowledge in content and English have a double challenge, and professional development must focus on giving teachers the skills to help students meet this extra challenge.

Creating safe and responsive classrooms:

- 1) EL students need to feel safe and accepted in the classroom environment, particularly since many already feel marginal to U.S. society and adolescents are often anxious about doing or saying the wrong thing – especially in a new social environment for which they do not know the rules.
- 2) Teachers need to hold high expectations for their English Learner students. When teachers exhibit doubt about students’ abilities, students can easily lose confidence and motivation, and as a result are less likely to achieve their goals.
- 3) Many schools – including schools within schools models – have bilingual and ESL resources that are untapped; they need to design instruction to use all the resources of the campus.
- 4) Schools should not ask students to serve as interpreters other than in emergencies: it robs them of learning time. Students who served as interpreters said that this competed with other learning tasks.
- 5) For many students, having a relationship of trust with a teacher contributes to their success. Therefore, fostering such relationships is an important goal and schools need to provide the time for such relationships to flourish.

The importance of student interaction with each other and with text:

- 1) EL students should be placed in curricular tracks with great caution because students in lower track classes have fewer chances to read, reflect on, ask questions about, and discuss a variety of text.
- 2) ELs need many opportunities to practice their English skills, and they are not likely to have these opportunities in most mainstream classrooms.
- 3) Writing and reading lend themselves to review while oral language disappears in the moment of utterance. When a task is unfamiliar this ability to review textual information is helpful to English Learners.
- 4) Teachers should not let every error go by without mention nor should they dwell on every error. Learning to strike this balance is a critical pedagogical skill.

Discussant, Professor Linda Harklau¹⁴ commented on the Meltzer and Hamann paper and observed that:

- 1) We need longitudinal research. “It is the cumulative results of decisions by teachers, by students, and by their parents that affect a student’s education. Moreover, educational interventions cannot be shown to be successful – or not – on a short time line. And, it often takes students 5-7 even 10 years to learn a language sufficiently to succeed in school. All of these factors indicate the need for longitudinal studies on English Learner education.” In addition, “Although there is enormous pressure at the federal level to conduct experimental studies, in certain instances qualitative research has the most to contribute.”

¹⁴Dr. Linda Harklau is an associate professor of Language Education at the University of Georgia.

- 2) The field of EL education needs to better understand the influence of peers on academic engagement and outcomes. Psychology, cultural studies, and social psychology show the tremendous importance of peer groups in adolescence. We need more work on this from the education perspective.
- 3) We need more studies of motivation from the perspective of ethno-linguistic identity that ask questions like: how do students identify themselves as readers and writers? What group does this make them affiliated with? and, How does this affect their motivation to learn?
- 4) We must identify the full range of literacy strategies that we want secondary EL students to learn and we must consider where, by whom, and how these can best be taught.
- 5) We need to acknowledge the pervasiveness of tracking and its impact on English Learners. In low track classes students can learn strategies to answer literal questions but are unlikely to learn more complex strategies such as how to compare the causes of historical events. We need to identify the literacy strategies that are important for students' academic success, and then ensure that these are part of the curriculum for English Learners.
- 6) The importance of personal and relevant instruction and of motivating students to find connections between the text and their own lives is undeniable, but personal relevance should not become an end in itself, a tendency that is too common in low track classes. "Adolescent students are capable of interpreting a wide range of texts and material based on their own backgrounds and perspectives.



Effective literacy programs allow them to do that by making connections between personally relevant content and demanding texts and literacy activities.”

Discussant Professor Mary Schleppegrell¹⁵ provided a response to the paper and focused her comments on teacher expertise:

- 1) Teachers need a deeper understanding of language to be able to scaffold EL students' abilities, develop their skills to deal with new genres and tasks, and build from oral language to written language. Adolescents require specific guidance with regard to language learning including kinds and uses of text. This is especially important, Schleppegrell noted, “because many EL students will only experience academic language in the classroom.”

¹⁵ Dr. Mary Schleppegrell is a professor of Education and Linguistics at the University of Michigan.



Classroom Teaching and Learning Strategies for Meeting the Literacy Development Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners Julie Meltzer & Edmund Hamann (2005)

Julie Meltzer and Edmund Hamann (2005) conducted a second review and synthesis of the research that focused on best practices in secondary education. In this review they found substantial overlap between the research on practices that promote adolescents' academic literacy development across the content areas, and the research on effective content area instruction for ELs in middle and high schools. *These practices include:*

- 2) Teachers also need the skills to develop units of instruction with clear purposes and goals for their students. They need to make students feel they own the language of the genre in which they are working which can only result from significant time and depth of instruction in different kinds of discourse rather than from the common approach of more superficial treatment of a greater number of topics.
- 3) Teachers need to focus more on writing across various genres. Teachers sometimes overlook possibilities for engaging students with academic English. "In history, students may participate in a discussion or in science they may conduct an experiment and discuss the results in a small group but very often there is no writing component. This constitutes an important missed opportunity for teachers to scaffold the knowledge students have gained on the topic, to produce a written piece." With regard to relevant instruction, "Many ESL classes focus on writing autobiographies in order to engage with students' lives and this approach is inappropriately extended to science and social studies. Teachers need strategies that help students learn the appropriate discourse features of different subject areas."

- 1) **Specific attention to improving reading comprehension** through teacher modeling, explicit strategy instruction in context, and use of formative assessment;
- 2) **More time for students to read and write** in class, and more reading and writing assignments accompanied by more explicit reading and writing instruction;
- 3) **More speaking, listening, and viewing** related to the discussion, creation, and understanding of texts;
- 4) **More attention to metacognitive skills** and to the development of critical thinking as key parts of academic literacy tasks; and
- 5) **Flexible grouping** and responsiveness to learner needs depending on the topic and students' English and content knowledge.

The authors' findings suggest that teachers' capacities to use these strategies consciously and well are fundamental elements of adolescent literacy learning in the content areas and that teachers who have learned how to deploy these strategies possess an important part of the toolkit they need to work effectively with ELs.

This supports the importance of preparing all secondary-school teachers to promote content-area literacy development as part of the plan for improving schools' capacity to respond to secondary-level ELs. The authors also note that teachers need preparation in issues specific to second language learning and learners and in the literacy features of each content area, and they need to be more explicit in teaching these to EL students. Finally, the authors concluded that adolescents with limited previous schooling or literacy development need more intensive support than what was discussed and covered in this review of the literature.

Discussant Dr. Laurie Olsen¹⁶ noted that, while there is much still to learn, we must not lose sight of the well-established knowledge we have from the research regarding how best to provide adolescent English Learners an appropriate education. We know that:

- 1) Students' primary language (L1) is a tool for academic literacy;
- 2) Joint development of literacy in L1 and L2 improves English literacy;
- 3) Strategies that work for students who have a certain threshold of English proficiency won't work for other students: for example, SDAIE strategies are beneficial for intermediate students but not for those with incipient English skills; and
- 4) Students' cultural and linguistic identity is key to their learning.

According to Olsen, among the issues that need further exploration with regard to the best approach to secondary EL education are:

- 1) Given that EL students are not a monolithic group, we need to determine which strategies work best with which students – for example newcomers and long-term ELs;
- 2) We need more and better research on program models. For example, “Does it matter when and for how long students are mixing English and their primary language? Connected to that is the matter of time. How much time in English and how much time in the home language is optimal?”¹⁷
- 3) We need to study pacing and breadth vs. depth of content. The pace of instruction is critical for students who are not yet fluent in English, and greater depth of treatment of subjects is necessary when students are struggling both to grasp the meaning of academic concepts and the language that conveys them;
- 4) We need to explore if currently used “reading interventions” and curriculum packages work in the same ways and equally effectively for ELs and English only students;
- 5) It is an important role of the research community to monitor trends in schools. For example, “How many EL students are being retained, how many are dropping out?”
- 6) It is essential to consider the appropriate level of proficiency for reclassification. This is a very high-stakes issue for students because once they are reclassified it is assumed that mainstream teaching strategies will result in their learning, and
- 7) EL students must function in at least two languages and cultures. We need to determine which skills must be taught to make this possible.

¹⁶ Dr. Laurie Olsen is the Executive Director and a researcher with California Tomorrow, a non-profit organization aimed at improving education experiences and outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

¹⁷ Genesse (2005) finds that the amount of time spent in English instruction is not as predictive of learning as the quality of the English instruction.

Summary Discussion Themes

Participant discussion in response to each of the presentations and discussants' comments focused on three principal areas: the need to improve teacher quality for ELs, the importance of differentiating among EL students with regard to their academic needs, and current inadequacies in secondary EL program content and quality. Following is a summary of participant comments.

Teachers

1) Policy discussion with regard to teachers and English Learners is particularly important right now because of policy changes on the horizon related to teacher preparation, due to California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) review of the bilingual credential and federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements. As these discussions proceed we need to provide reliable, quality research to inform policies that support effective EL teaching.

Teachers need to learn about the best ways to convey academic content to their students

2) In general, neither current teachers nor those coming out of credential programs are well prepared for working with English Learners. Although we know that teachers with greater language and culture

knowledge such as those with a BCLAD¹⁸ can help EL students improve their achievement, we need to learn more about the specific competencies of these and other teachers that can contribute to academic growth among EL students. We need to build an adequate empirical base regarding what teachers need to know about: language, the instruction of

language, how to appropriately include and value the language and culture of EL students, how to motivate these students when the challenges seem insurmountable, and how to diagnose and assess the learning of EL students in ways that contribute to student success. Moreover, to do this effectively we need to conduct longitudinal research that allows us to see the impact of teachers on students over time.

- 3) Teachers need and want to see what good EL instruction looks like. In order to facilitate this we need to create lab schools in California and develop digital materials that demonstrate good content instruction that really attends to language. Teachers need to learn about the best ways to convey academic content to their students, and what teachers need to learn will differ with different kinds of teachers: those who are already in the classroom, those new to teaching, and those with years of experience. Furthermore, we must find the ways to ensure that local schools and schools of education actually incorporate these best methods. Research shows us that the strongest form of professional development – and the one that teachers prefer – is via classroom experience. Yet few professional development programs provide this. In addition, teachers want professional development provided by their peers who are working in the same context.
- 4) We need to find the arguments, the content, and the methods of delivery that will convince teachers who feel that teaching EL literacy is not their job – *that it is their job*. Many secondary teachers want to improve their EL instructional skills and would welcome any assistance from their districts in this regard. In fact, this lack of preparation for working

¹⁸ See Hayes, K. and Salazar, J.J. (2001). *Evaluation of the Structured English Immersion program. Final report: Year 1*. Program Evaluation Branch, Los Angeles City Schools and Hayes, K. and Salazar, J. & Vukovic, E. (2002). *Evaluation of the Structured English Immersion program. Final report: Year 2*. Program Evaluation Branch, Los Angeles City Schools

with the students in their classrooms may be among the reasons that some teachers leave the field. Unfortunately, there are others who feel that teaching academic literacy to ELs is “not their job.” Moreover, the culture of privacy and autonomy of high school teachers does not lend itself to the kind of coaching and collaboration that can most effectively improve teaching. Finally, this is an issue of quantity as well as quality. We are over-taxing the 9-12% of teachers who are fully credentialed for working with ELs (those with BCLAD certification) by calling on them for everything from informal assessment of students to home visits, in addition to their own teaching responsibilities. Their role needs to be rewarded, not punished with an unmanageable workload.



Differentiation among English Learners

- 1) It is critical that we differentiate among EL students and their needs. Immigrant students have widely varied backgrounds, experiences, and education needs, as do U.S. born EL students. For all English Learner populations we must broaden the definition of student success to include short-term goals, such as passing tests, as well as long-term objectives and we should include ways to insure that EL students have the *depth* of understanding they need for academic success. We must also determine the particular needs and most appropriate goals for each student. For example, what are reasonable goals for students who come into the country in 10th grade and will have only 2 or 3 years in a U.S. high school?
- 2) In order to determine the needs of different EL students we must get much better at assessing what these are. Currently we lack informal

language assessments, including a reading inventory that can be used in the classroom. Moreover, most teachers lack the ability to informally assess EL students' background knowledge and need to develop their skills for dynamic assessment of language. The legislature has taken the first step by requiring the development of standards based tests in Spanish by the California Department of Education, which are projected to be in use by spring, 2008¹⁹.

EL programs and instruction

- 1) We need to determine the appropriate components of secondary EL education programs and the best ways of delivering these. We also need to put an end to current practices that are detrimental to student learning, such as the widely used practice of calling on other children to translate for EL students. This practice is often abused and impinges upon the learning time of these children.
- 2) With regard to the content of programs, we must define what we mean by advanced literacy. Is it strictly academic or does it include elements of the Carnegie definition – skills for being an informed citizen – and that support a work force that is able to continue learning?

¹⁹ Deb Sigman, California Department of Education Assessment Director, Bilingual Coordinator's Network Meeting, September 14, 2006.

3) We need research on various performance objectives for EL students including such things as appropriate class presentation standards for students at different levels of English proficiency and the skills and tasks that are involved with this. We also need to determine how best to assist secondary students who have academic literacy in their home language to use this L1 literacy to promote their learning in U.S. schools.

5) We need strategies to counter the language segregation that so many EL students experience. This is a significant problem in California for Spanish speaking EL students. These students tend to be clustered in schools where many or most of their fellow students are from Spanish speaking backgrounds and they therefore hear primarily Spanish both at home and at school.

Policies to Promote Effective Programs and Practices to Support Academic Literacy Among EL Secondary Students: The High Schools We Need For English Learners Norm Gold, Ph.D.



4) We need more study of questions relating to instructional delivery and organization of instruction. Some research supports grouping by English proficiency level so instruction can be geared to students' language needs, other studies claim that heterogeneous grouping is more effective, and still others note the importance of interaction with English fluent students as a key element for English Learners to develop English. The answer almost certainly lies in some combination of these strategies, but we do not know the appropriate balance for different types of students.

The paper presented by Dr. Norm Gold²⁰ argued that the U.S. high school system places English Learners at particular risk because its structure excessively limits their options. A basic premise of his paper is a firm commitment to the notion that ELs should be supported by a redesigned high school that will optimize their levels of college attendance and entry into high paying and high status careers, and broaden rather than limit their opportunities. The elements of such a redesign would include year-round schedules and additional time – perhaps up to one or two years – to complete studies. It would also incorporate coursework that more realistically reflects students' circumstances. This would include the option, for students who choose, of high quality vocational courses and internships. Dr. Gold proposes that fixing high school for EL students will require significant commitment, resources, and a willingness to think and act creatively in order to counteract some of the following myths that dominate current thinking.

²⁰ Dr. Gold spent 30 years with the California Department of Education working in various capacities related to the education of EL students, and has for the last five years consulted with a number of California districts helping them to strengthen their EL programs.

MYTH #1: *English Learners bring nothing to the table except need.* Rather, English Learners come to secondary schools with many assets on which we can build, including prior schooling, skills in non-English languages, life experiences, and family and cultural heritage.

MYTH #2: *English language development (ELD) is all they need.* ELs need diagnosis of their language and academic skills – and instruction to meet these diagnosed education needs. Current curriculum rarely differentiates among varying student needs, in large part because assessment is inadequate and teachers do not know what these students do and do not know. English Learners also need: ongoing relationships with adults at the school who are aware of and understand key elements of their lives, integration with other students, and teachers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to promote their academic success.

MYTH #3: *The quicker we can get students through school the better.* There is some basis for concern about students taking too long to complete their schooling. A large number of studies have shown that the more over-age students are, compared to their peers, the greater likelihood they will drop out of school. However, research has never been conducted on this issue with English Learners. Moreover, one major reason that attrition is high in this group is because relevant, credit-bearing courses are often not provided for them, making drop out a reasonable response to a dead end curriculum. A longer time allowed for high school with intense initial diagnostic assessment, individual counseling and monitoring, and opportunities for internships and career and community engagement, may be exactly what many long-term ELs need. Furthermore, there is no statutory basis

for removing a student (up to age 22) from high school, as long as s/he is making progress toward graduation.²¹

MYTH #4: *Small schools are always better for all students.* Small school reform has many positive aspects such as personalization and more careful monitoring of students than could be achieved within larger schools. An example is the academy or school-within-a-school model. On the other hand, larger schools have the advantages of a wider array of resources and the potential for students to move from one type of instructional setting to another as appropriate.

MYTH #5: *All students must be college bound or they are failures.* The opportunity for college should be made more available to all. However, the school should always accord learning experiences and coursework that lead to competence in the fields needed for productive roles as citizen, worker, and life-long learner, and provide multiple pathways and options for students who choose non-college options as well as for those bound for higher degrees. Schools also need to acknowledge that many students feel pressured to work and help their families. In these cases schools that offer opportunities for students to enhance their job options (that may also be part of a longer term plan for postsecondary education) are more likely to hold students.

Myth #6: *High school must take place within a building called high school.* In fact, high schools could take advantage of distance learning and other technologies, relationships with the community colleges, and other learning environments such as student internships or apprenticeships in business and in the public sector.

²¹ Mandatory attendance stops at age 18, but if you have not graduated by 18, you are not automatically dismissed [Ed. Code Sec. 48200]. Under special education law, a student who was eligible up to age 19 can continue to receive services until age 22, if he or she does not graduate. (Sec. 56026(c)(4).) SOURCE: Personal communication, Deputy General Counsel, CDE, 11/18/2003.



Commenting on the paper, Dr. Laurie Olsen noted that while we should be open to structural change in high schools, we could do much within the current structure. However, in order for high schools as they are currently configured, to work better for ELs, schools must, “Create educational content appropriate to the students’ worlds and that addresses fundamental adolescent identity issues.” In order to do this she suggested that we must:

- 1) Develop an understanding of the dynamics of students who are caught between two cultures and language communities;
- 2) Define the skills and knowledge needed by students who have a cultural, language and national reality different from the “mainstream” U.S.;

- 3) Determine how to support the development and maintenance of bi-literacy and cultural competence for all children and youth;
- 4) Adopt hiring practices that place people from the same backgrounds as students, who can communicate across cultures and languages, in roles of authority; the degree to which students see themselves in the curriculum and how welcome they feel in school are critical;
- 5) Recognize the skills that these students have and teach them to use these skills to their advantage through leadership programs and practices to realize the power of young people to be leaders and contributors to their communities. In particular, their pivotal role as a bridge between immigrant parents and a younger English speaking generation;
- 6) Stop practices that detract from EL student learning such as the increasing tendency to place all English Learners (regardless of CELDT level) into sheltered SDAIE classes even though students at lower CELDT levels cannot access curriculum taught in English. And address attitudes such as the chronic lack of ownership across high school faculty and administration of the needs of ELs;
- 7) Provide professional development that puts the research and knowledge into the parlance of those in schools and districts and includes: second language acquisition, program models, how to understand data on ELs, instructional strategies, and understanding of the complexity and diversity of EL experiences – from long term ELs to newcomers. And, find ways to ensure that this knowledge base is implemented (monitoring, incentives, resources to do so, etc.).

Dr. Olsen also noted that our current approach to time in the system is inadequate both with regard to the school day and year, as well as to the length of time we allow for a high school career – suggesting that we need more time in all cases. As we pursue solutions to the problems in the current system of secondary education she suggested that we look to the California community colleges (CCCs), both for the role they can play in educating these students and as a model of a system with open access and a broad mission. CCCs are especially important with regard to vocational pathways – with which they have had success. To create partnerships between high schools and CCCs we must develop a stronger data system and better connections between the two systems, and find a way to address the capacity of CCCs (they are the least well funded of all levels of public education – ¼ of what UC receives per pupil, ½ of CSU’s per pupil allotment, and less per student than K-12).

California Tomorrow²² (CT), the organization that Olsen heads, has found that time for teachers/administrators to look at data, collect student voice, engage in professional development, and reflect collaboratively, lead to improvement in secondary schools with large numbers of English Learners. In addition, access to meaningful data, system capacity to query the data in a timely way, and an external partner with expertise on the issue and a lens on what is happening internally in the school, is critical.

They also found that positive changes are eroded for several reasons. For example, in districts where CT worked on reform, block scheduling, a major feature of the changes, was eliminated due

to the new state accountability system. Olsen said, “Under pressure of annual tests, schools did not feel they could risk students’ completing a full year of content in one semester and then not being tested on it until the end of the next semester.” They found that the changing atmosphere regarding home language instruction and support, and attention to immigrants at all – had a damaging effect as well. Although Dr. Olsen noted that it is absolutely consistent in almost all research on high school ELs that home language instruction is important – the policy environment is moving almost wholly towards English only. Finally they found that when reforms are primarily among teachers and without external and administrative support, teachers can’t maintain the strategic collaborative advocacy efforts that are at the heart of the reform.

Dr. Olsen concluded, “We already have some good policies – never implemented, never enforced and others passed but vetoed by the Governor. Moreover, any serious policy agenda right now has to support advocacy – of multiple kinds – lawsuits/legal advocacy, parent organizing and parent rights, statewide coalitions, student organizing, and communications efforts. And, any serious policy agenda right now has to support the development of responses to dangerous lies and misinformation. An ability to rapidly produce analysis of data, “white papers,” backgrounders for the press, and other media tools must be a critical part of the agenda.”

²² California Tomorrow is an Oakland-based non-profit organization dedicated to research and advocacy on behalf of the emerging majority of the state.

Panel Presentation of District Representatives

A panel of representatives from school districts discussed their approaches to and/or ideas about the changes needed in order for California secondary schools to improve EL education.

Jan Gustafson is the Director of the PROMISE Initiative, a collaborative effort among 5 Southern California County Offices of Education that seeks to increase the achievement of secondary English Learners by supporting bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism. While 65% of all ELs in California go to school in 1 of these 5 counties, only 8% have access to a full academic curriculum. “Our goal is to build a foundation and infrastructure in 5 counties and to have 15 pilot schools in 5 districts.” The core vision and principles of the PROMISE Initiative on which these pilots will be designed are: enriched and affirming learning environments, an empowering pedagogy, challenging and relevant curriculum, high quality instructional resources, valid and comprehensive assessment, high quality professional preparation and support, powerful family and community engagement, and advocacy-oriented administrative and leadership systems.

Dr. Dale Vigil, Superintendent of the Hayward Unified School District, expressed concern regarding the lack of progress for those he called EL “lifers,” which led him to shadow students to see for himself and to show district teachers, how much and what kind of language students were producing in class. The shadowing process involves following students throughout their school day to record how many times a student uses academic language. He was surprised to find, “Even the good teachers were not letting the students speak.” In fact, “90% of teachers we observed were using didactic teaching methods rather than mini-lessons where students had the chance to work together.”

He was critical of districts’ over-reliance on textbooks to set curriculum rather than on the standards that educators have developed over the last few years saying, “We are textbook based not standards based, and, he noted the importance of high standards for ELs that are held by everyone:

We don’t need to dilute the curriculum for ELs, we need to scaffold it up. We used Model UN curriculum for Saturday School kids – which is a GATE (gifted and talented education) curriculum and used both English and Spanish to debate issues. We learned through this process that kids will make an effort if you give them a curriculum that matters. Everyone in a school district needs to be actively concerned about EL education in order to make improvements.”

Karen Kendall, Director of EL programs, Newport Mesa USD, said that improvements in her district were precipitated by an “out of compliance” California Department of Education (CDE) Coordinated Compliance Review. Current program improvements evolved over several years with a goal not only to make the program compliant with state regulations, but also to make it more responsive to the actual needs of students. A centerpiece of their plan for improvement is a rigorous accountability system including a team of teachers who monitor 1/3 of the districts’ schools every year and EL work groups to create shared responsibility that include everyone from administrators to cafeteria workers. In addition they are interviewing all 100 long-term EL students at one high school in order to learn more about their needs and experiences, and they have created data tools to track individual student progress and identify those who need attention. Finally, the district has created a 5-year course of study for EL high school students and has ensured that counselors are familiar with this plan.

Bobbi Houtchens, a teacher and administrator in San Bernardino, noted that she and her

colleagues at other schools who have similar expertise with EL students are called upon to do more than they are able. In her words, “I am the resident expert at my school, which takes away from my teaching time.” As both a teacher and administrator in EL programs she expressed the following concerns:

- Schools too often take a homogeneous approach to educating EL students who have decidedly heterogeneous needs.
- Other staff, not just teachers, need to know about EL students and how best to meet their needs. “Teachers are always blamed for failing to teach ELs but this is also a counseling and administration problem.”
- Improving EL education must become a more important and district-wide focus of attention and effort. These students are often left behind because, “No one takes responsibility for ELs’ academic success. They too often fall through the cracks and no one notices.”

Panel Presentation of State Education Policy Experts

Another critical perspective on improving education programs for EL secondary students comes from policymakers. Based on a variety of factors including concerns of their constituents, information they gain from the media and research, and the prevailing political climate, policymakers enact new policy and amend existing policy to make the changes that they believe will address a given problem. Thus, the voice of policymakers is critical with regard to the consideration of how educators might go about achieving desired changes. The individuals on a panel at the second of these two conferences are among the most experienced and well-respected policy experts in California education. Following are the central points of their comments:



Paul Warren, principal consultant with the Legislative Analyst’s office (LAO):

- 1) “Add-ons don’t work”... “Reform has to be built into the mainstream”: the approach we take to improving education for EL secondary students must be comprehensive.
- 2) The state can help fund evaluation, and this may, in fact, be the best way that the state can help.
- 3) A critical task of the education and research communities is to establish viable models that can be evaluated.

Kimberley Rodriguez, senior consultant to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) There have been some recent policy gains for EL students: 30 million dollars for additional instructional materials and an elementary level primary language test that is under development.
- 2) However, these are piecemeal efforts and this is a problem with regard to making substantive improvements in EL education programs. “We don’t have a long-term policy vision and we need to have one.”

- 3) A part of this vision should be a reliable way to collect longitudinal data in order to assess the success of various efforts and programs.

Samantha Tran, senior research and policy consultant with the California School Boards Association (CSBA):

- 1) “The state’s role is to demand accountability without discouraging innovation.”
- 2) Organizations like CSBA, “Can help push reform agendas forward. School Boards and districts need to have conversations about what needs to be done and as they do this CSBA can help districts align their priorities with their budgets.”
- 3) “Coherent professional development has to be done at the local level to meet local needs.”

Rick Simpson, deputy Chief of Staff in the Assembly Speaker’s Office:

- 1) “The current political climate for these issues is discouraging.”
- 2) We need to raise the issues of English Learners with the California Business Roundtable – those who think the “market” will fix everything and who will need educated employees.
- 3) Another stumbling block is that a 2/3 vote is needed for budget issues in California, and those who are likely to support increased resources for these issues do not yet have that margin.

Summary of Discussion Themes

Comments made by conference participants after these presentations focused on 4 principal areas: student identification and information, EL program content and delivery, teacher and administrator infrastructure, and the importance of advocacy on behalf of secondary English Learner students. In addition, participants had many suggestions for policy changes to improve secondary EL education. Following is a summary of the themes of participants’ comments.

The need for better student identification and information

- 1) We need a greater understanding of who our EL students are and of their education needs. Currently our knowledge in this area is very limited. For example, few districts know that 50-70% of these students have been in Califor-

nia schools since 1st grade. ELs have the widest distribution of abilities, encompassing their content and language knowledge in two languages, so it is difficult for us to determine who needs what kinds of help. Moreover, teachers often ignore English Learners because of their inability to communicate with these students, and their lack of skills for diagnosing and meeting EL students’ education needs. The lack of articulation in the data systems of school districts contributes to the problem.

Inadequate programs and school structure for EL secondary students

- 1) We must address the issues of EL education throughout the education system. We currently have significant problems with the structure, implementation, and content of secondary

level programs for EL students. With regard to school structure and organization, we must remember that this is a K-12 problem. How we organize time is a problem for these students as well. For example, due to required remedial classes triggered by failure of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), EL high school students have fewer opportunities to take the full range of content classes they need.

- 2) We need to define high quality literacy development for EL students including the English language development (ELD) state standards which have significant gaps. The content of secondary classes for EL students is problematic. To put adolescents in 3 periods a day of remedial reading instruction designed for K-3 is not using what research tells us works for secondary students. Moreover, ELD classes can be boring and frustrating for students when districts depend inappropriately on packaged curricula, erroneously assuming that everything students need is in these packaged approaches. We must also avoid setting our standards lower for these students. ELs are a vulnerable group that needs access to A-G content classes. They need the cultural capital that these classes bring with them in addition to the content knowledge they provide.
- 3) EL students need to be everyone's responsibility and concern, and they also need personnel who are specifically assigned to work with them and facilitate their success in school. EL students often fall through the cracks because no one is taking responsibility for their education.

The need to build the infrastructure of EL knowledgeable teachers and administrators

- 1) We need to build our infrastructure of EL teachers and administrators: our current lack of expertise among key personnel poses a significant problem. Since the passage of Proposition 227 there are fewer and fewer teachers in the classroom with bilingual teaching credentials. Moreover, many if not most Central Valley schools where a large number of the state's EL students attend are small schools, not by choice, and these small schools are struggling because they don't have adequate EL expertise. This is critical not only for purposes of instruction but also because many long-term ELs are marginalized because they don't have counselors or other adults at the school who understand their language(s). Often there are only one or two teachers at a school who have both training and experience specific to EL instruction and they are being burned out by the overly heavy workload they carry as the "resident EL experts."
- 2) We need to provide schools with comprehensive and comprehensible information on current policy requirements. Many administrators have very little knowledge of the law governing the instruction of English Learners, and feel that they are more limited than they actually are regarding the instructional options they can extend to these students. For example, many administrators have "over-implemented" Proposition 227, even though it places no restrictions on how English Learners over 10 years of age should be taught. Administrators have very limited understanding of the research base about teaching EL students, and as such make decisions not based on sound practice.

- 3) We must also build the infrastructure of administrators who have interest in and knowledge about EL students. Lack of administrators with the interest, the will, and the knowledge for addressing the particular needs of EL students impedes their learning. A good administrator can be a critical asset to EL students, supporting strategies including the use of students' primary language, that are perfectly legal but run contrary to current trends.

The importance of advocacy

- 1) It is critical that we find the ways to make a rational and compelling argument against the attitudes and practices that support the status quo of inferior education programs for ELs that create an underclass in our society. How we present our ideas for change is critical; for example, if we are going to explore non-college pathways for EL students, we need to be careful how we present these choices so that they are not perceived or used to justify providing a lesser education for these students.
- 2) We can find allies for advocacy among African Americans and other students who face many of the same schooling issues, and we must find ways to partner with those who have successfully advocated for change in order to make greater gains for EL school reform.
- 3) Students and parents also need to be included in these conversations about education. Young people need to be making choices about school in collaboration with adults who are caring and knowledgeable about the options and about the circumstances these students face.

The need for specific changes

- 1) We need to begin to address these problems with a vision of what we hope to achieve and when we hope to achieve it on behalf of these students. It is difficult to measure progress without a clear idea of the goals. We need to set explicit objectives and then lay out the pathways for achieving them. To do this we must:
 - a. Document the consequences of current practice using good data, including longitudinal studies, that show in stark terms how far these students are being left behind.
 - b. Identify realistic policy options for changing the status quo.
 - c. Evaluate some demonstration projects that are research-based and represent solid alternatives to current approaches.
 - d. Document successes in real places with real students that can aid policymakers in making the case for change.

Finally, it is clear that we need a message overhaul. We have been struggling for years to gain the public's trust on these issues, and still have far to go. Currently, people see education as important but inefficient. The public wants more services but they don't want to pay for them. We need to find the ways to convince them that providing an appropriate education for this $\frac{1}{5}$ of our high school population is in everyone's interest.

Conference Outcomes: Research and Policy Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, we conclude that the California Department of Education, in conjunction with key policymakers should:

- (1) **Convene a panel of experts** – to include academics and practitioners – to determine the critical competencies that teachers of English Learners should have at the point of entry into the profession, as well as those competencies that can and must be included in induction and other professional development endeavors. These competencies, and strategies for training teachers to use them, should be specific to elementary and secondary teachers. For example, elementary teachers need more assistance in understanding how to work with parents of EL students; and secondary teachers need more assistance in supporting the socio-emotional development of adolescents. The panel of experts, in conjunction with the CCTC, should consider how these competencies can be addressed in the context of the current approach of embedding skills for working with EL students in single and multiple subject credential coursework. It should also recommend strategies for ensuring that all teachers have the most critical of these competencies upon completion of their credentials.
- (2) **Include, as part of AB 2117²³**, pilot programs at the secondary level, and incorporate features specific to understanding successful practices for secondary English Learners in the evaluation of these pilots.
- (3) **Develop an assessment system** that meets the needs of secondary English Learners so that we can access core curriculum as efficiently as possible. This system should include (1) assessment of students' existing knowledge through individual student assessments in students' primary language whenever possible, (2) review of student academic histories so that they can receive credit for courses taken outside the California schools; (3) separation of assessment of academic skills from English language proficiency skills; and (4) embedded diagnostic assessments of *academic* English skills, separate from the CELDT and ELA tests, that teachers can use in the classroom.
- (4) **Establish an Ad Hoc Committee** of the legislature on the recruitment and retention of highly skilled teachers of EL students. The Committee should study strategies for recruiting more qualified teachers, training them to high levels, and retaining them, and it should examine the issue for both elementary and secondary schools. The committee should consider how to recruit, prepare and retain bilingual teachers in an anti-bilingual climate, given that practitioners consistently cite the need for more bilingual teachers in their schools.
- (5) **Organize a major “Educating Secondary English Learners Summit”** to call attention to the specific needs of these students, disseminate existing knowledge of best practices, and augment the knowledge base by including a range of successful educators and researchers in the field. This should be convened as soon as possible and be followed by another summit at the termination of the pilot studies called for by AB 2117.

²³ Coto (2006). Full text of bill available at <http://info.sen.ca.gov>

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List of Attendees: Conference 1

Name	Affiliation
Jorge Ayala	Superintendent, Yolo County Office of Education
Peter Bloch Garcia	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Linda Carstens	Los Angeles Unified School District
Jacqui Cottingim	Superintendent, Woodland Unified School District
Ludo Deschuytter	Los Angeles Unified School District
Patricia Gándara	Professor of Education UCLA, Co-Director Linguistic Minority Research Institute
Suanna Gilman Ponce	Oakland Unified School District
Ted Hamann	University of Nebraska
Linda Harklau	University of Georgia
Claudia Lockwood	Director, Multilingual Education San Joaquin County Office of Ed
Patricia Loera	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Julie Maxwell-Jolly	Senior Researcher, UC Davis School of Education
Lina Méndez-Benavídez	Graduate Student, UC Davis
Laurie Olsen	Executive Director, California Tomorrow
Heidi Ramírez	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Jorge Ruiz de Velasco	Senior Program Officer for Youth, James Irvine Foundation
Robin Scarcella	Professor and Director of ESL, UC Irvine
Mary Schleppegrell	University of Michigan
Mike Smith	Program Director for Education, William & Flora Hewlett Fnd.
Guadalupe Valdés	Stanford University
Phoenix Wang	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Aida Walqui	WestEd

List of Attendees: Conference 2

Name	Affiliation
Jamal Abedi	Professor of Education, UC Davis

Rebecca Callahan	Post Graduate Fellow, University of Texas, Austin
Leticia Carrillo	Graduate Student, UC Davis
Linda Carstens	Los Angeles Unified School District
Kathleen Chavira	Legislative Consultant
Patricia De Cos	California Research Bureau
Francisco Estrada	State Library
Patricia Gándara	Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF)
Norm Gold	Professor of Education UCLA, Co-Director, Linguistic Minority Research Institute
Jan Gustafson	Independent Consultant, Gold Associates
Ted Hamann	Director, PROMISE Initiative
Bobbi Houtchens	University of Nebraska
Karen Kendall	Teacher, EL Coordinator, San Bernardino Unified School District
Kristi Kimball	Director of EL Programs, Newport Mesa School District
Sandra Licón	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Robert Linquanti	Gates Foundation
Claudia Lockwood	WestEd
Julie Maxwell-Jolly	Director, Multilingual Education San Joaquin County Office of Education
Anysia Mayer	Senior Researcher, UC Davis
Lina Méndez-Benavídez	Ph.D. candidate, UC Davis
Nichole Munoz Murillo	Graduate Student, UC Davis
Laurie Olsen	Education Consultant, Senator Escutia’s Office
Susan Porter	Executive Director, California Tomorrow
Josefina Ramirez	California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Kimberly Rodriguez	Consultant, Senate Education Committee
Russell Rumberger	Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Robin Scarcella	Professor of Education, UCSB, Director, Linguistic Minority Research Institute
Mary Schmida	Professor of Linguistics and Education, UC Riverside
Rick Simpson	WestEd
Shelly Speigel Coleman	Principal Consultant for Speaker of the House, Fabian Nunez
Shonté Stephenson	Los Angeles County Office of Education
Samantha Tran	Graduate Student, UC Davis
Lorraine Vara	Senior Research & Policy Consultant, California School Boards Association
Dale Vigil	Teacher, Orange County Superintendent, Hayward Unified School District
Phoenix Wang	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Paul Warren	Principal Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst’s Office
Helen Ying	Hayward Unified School District

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