Reparable Harm:

Fulfilling the unkept promise of educational opportunity for California’s Long Term English Learners

20th Annual Administrator EL Conference
Sonoma County Office of Education

Laurie Olsen, Ph.D.
Californians Together

English Learners

“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...”

Lau v. Nichols, Supreme Court
An English Learner is not an English Learner.....

The concept of the “Long Term English Learner”

California English Learners
Long Term English Learner

The 1.5 Generation

Protracted English Learners

The 5 Plusers

Struggling Readers

ESL LIFERS

III's Forever

Turning the Tides of Exclusion: a guide for Educators and Advocates for Immigrant Students

Olsen and Jaramillo, 1999
Secondary EL Typologies

- Newly arrived with adequate schooling (including literacy in L1)
- Newly arrived with interrupted formal schooling - “Underschooled” - “SIFE”
- English Learners developing normatively (1-5 years)
- Long Term English Learners
- Overage

Long Term English Learners are created........
GAP has increased 2002-2010
CST ELA % Proficient and above
English Only: English Learners

33.4% gap —— 37.2% gap

“There is no clear, easy reason revealed by data why students are remaining in the LEP category for 10+ years.”
Colorado Department of Education 2009

“While districts were unanimous in voicing their concern for such students (“Long Term English Learners”), finding effective interventions to move these long term students along the proficiency continuum remains a challenge.”
Council of Great City Schools, 2009
The Californians Together Survey

The sample:

• Data from 40 school districts
• Data on 175,734 English Learners in grades 6 - 12
• This is 31% of California’s English Learners in grades 6 - 12
**The Districts**

- Vary in size from 1,300 students to more than 680,000
- Vary in English Learner enrollment from 9% to 81% of total enrollment
- 13 are urban, 13 are suburban, 14 are rural

**Data collected on English Learners 6 - 12**

- # of years since date of entry
- Secondary ELs who enrolled in K/1
- 6+ by CELDT level
- 6+ by academic failure (Ds, Fs)
- Definition
- Placement
Across all districts
59% of secondary school ELs are long term
(103,635 in sample)

Concentration of LTEls in districts vary
Definitions vary

• Nine of 40 have a formal definition
• Length of time (years) is part of every definition
• The number of years used in the definitions vary from 5 years to 7+
• Six districts include “lack of progress” or evidence of academic failure along with the number of years

Legal framework

• English Learners cannot be permitted to incur irreparable academic deficits during the time they are mastering English
• School districts are obligated to address deficits as soon as possible, and to ensure that their schooling does not become a permanent deadend.
How long should it take?

- NCLB AMAO #1 (1 CELDT level per year – 4 year model)
- The Five year Model: (1 CELDT level per year plus allowance for 2 years at level III)
- The ELSSA data by length of time in US schools uses 3 years or less, 4 years, 5 years, 6 or more years
- Linguistic research (individual differences, but generally 5 - 7 years)
- Education program effectiveness (5-7 years in a well-implemented program; 7-10 in weak program if at all)

A continuum of academic success......

Losing ground on CELDT and Academic Failure

No progress on CELDT, academically struggling

Very slow progress towards English Proficiency, doing okay (C’s)

Doing well academically, but still not reclassified

Reclassified but struggling
Proposed definition:

An English Learner in secondary schools who.....

Has been enrolled in US schools for more than 6 years

Is making inadequate progress in English language development (e.g., CELDT III or below, has remained at CELDT level for 2+ years, or has lost ground on CELDT)

Is struggling academically (e.g., GPA below a 2.0 or grades of D or F in two or more core classes; behind on credit accrual)

Step #1:
Know the extent and magnitude of the LTEL issue in your schools
### Designate indicators/expectations

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>3rd grade</th>
<th>4th - 5th grades</th>
<th>6 - 8 grades</th>
<th>9 – 12 grades</th>
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<td># years in U.S. schools</td>
<td>3+ years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficiency in English</td>
<td>Growth of 1 level per year; At level III+</td>
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<td>Academic Success</td>
<td>Basic or above on CSTs in Math, ELA</td>
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<td>Other (e.g., socio-emotional)</td>
<td>Active engagement in class</td>
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### VUSD EL Master Plan

#### Annual Expectations for English Learners

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<th>Years in US</th>
<th>1 year</th>
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</table>
Example: Modesto City Schools

- ELs that have been in U. S. School 5 years or more
  - Still not reclassified, most are Intermediate and above on CELDT but not progressing
  - Struggling academically (at least one D or F grade) and Below Basic or Low Basic CST/ELA
  - Characteristics include: socially isolated, academically disengaged and unmotivated, poor attendance, discouraged learners, book aversion, and neither they nor their families are familiar with school expectations or the implications of school program on options for the future

District Action Steps

- A formal definition
- Designated annual benchmark indicators/expectations
- A data system that can disaggregate achievement data by # of years in U.S. schools and by English proficiency levels
- A calendar of regular reviews of LTEI data to inform and trigger planning AND to trigger supports for students
Reflection:
Are Long Term English Learners an issue in your school or district?

Any sense of the magnitude?

When do you begin to see ELs becoming LTELs? What are the indications?

What do you consider “too long” to reach English proficiency?

Step #2:
Investigate how English Learners became Long Term
Dallas Public Schools (2001)

• Estimate that 70% of secondary school ELs are U.S. born
• Overall academic performance of LTEs does not continue to improve - there is a ceiling in their levels of academic English attainment over time.

Freeman and Freeman (2002)

• Educated in the U.S., 7+ years
• See selves as bilingual, but only have academic preparation in English - few read/write in L1
• Do not feel they have complete command of English
• Social skills in English - conversationally like native speakers
• Academic skills not as developed as oral skills
“The Long Term Impact of Subtractive Schooling in the Educational Experiences of Secondary English Language Learners”

Kate Menken & Tatyana Kleyn
New York City Dept. of Education

forthcoming in International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism

NYC/LTEL - definition

• Attended U.S. schools 7+ years and still designated English Learners
• Comprise one in three ELs in NYC
The research methodology

• Indepth interviews with 29 LTEls grades 9 - 12 and in U.S. an average of 10 years. (mostly Spanish speakers)
• Interviews with school administrators and teachers of LTEls
• Examination of academic records

District and site inquiries
(2004-2010)

• Student interviews retrieving schooling histories
• Studies of cumulative records
• Interviews and focus groups with teachers
• Student voice on the experience of being LTEL
• Surveys
**No services - mainstream**

- (58 cum record studies) Three out of four spent at least two years in “no services” or mainstream
- What may appear on paper to be “EL services” may not be actually designed for English Learners

**Trends in California schools 2000-2010**

- Large increase of students in mainstream placement (no services)
- Large reduction in primary language instruction (from 12% to 5%)
- Approximately one in ten with ELD only
- The majority in Structured English Immersion/ELD plus SDAIE – large increase (from 35% to 55%)
NYC study

*In U.S. - inconsistent schooling*

- 21 of 29 students received a combination of ESL and bilingual programs over the years
- 7 students received only English instruction
- School hoppers, program shifters, temporary absence of programs
- Vast majority moved in and out of different programs - without systemic consistency
- Half had a complete gap in EL services at some point in the US and were in mainstream for 1-3 years
NYC Study
Subtractive schooling

- Vast majority receive English-only instruction resulting in limited or no literacy skills in L1 OR
- Weak forms of bilingual education (early exit, transitional) resulting in limited oral and/or written proficiency in L1
- L1 skills are weakened over time and eventually replaced with English
- Students report programs emphasized English reading and writing (even the bilingual programs)

Other contributing factors

- Weak language development models
- Histories of inconsistent program placements
- Likelihood of inconsistency in implementation within programs
- Narrowed curriculum - partial access
- Social segregation – linguistic isolation – low expectations
- Transnational moves – transnational schooling
NYC study
Three categories of LTELs

• Transnational students - mainly U.S. educated, but move back and forth
• ELs who had inconsistent EL programs (e.g., bilingual, ELD/SDAIE, mainstream)
• LTELs on the cusp of exiting EL status (4 of 29) - steady progress, just took a bit longer - around 7 years.

Transnational inconsistent schooling

• 12 of 29 students attended school outside the U.S. in a language other than English for a few months and up to 8 years altogether
• International moves often occur repeatedly creating a cycle of adjustment and readjustment \(\textit{and new decisions about placement and program}\)
• The schooling outside U.S. tended to be for short durations and inconsistent and did not result in L1 literacy
For you to do.....

• Take a sample of your LTELs and review their histories
• In YOUR district and school – are there patterns of transnational movement? Are there patterns of “no services”? Are there patterns in the kind of programs they received?

Step #3:

Understand the needs and characteristics of “Long Term English Learners”
They have distinct language issues

- High functioning in social situations in both languages – but limited vocabulary in both
- Prefer English – are increasingly weak in their home language
- Weak academic language – with gaps in reading and writing skills
NYC Study
Language proficiency and preferences

- Majority use both languages equally in conversation
  - context is the factor in choice
- Frequent codeswitching
- When speaking, LTELs often sound like native English speakers - strong oral proficiency for social purposes
- Students overwhelmingly favor and report being more comfortable reading and writing in English

- Most are “stuck” in progressing towards English proficiency
- Some are losing ground in English
Down the rabbit hole......

- **Basic** on CST - ELA
- **Reasonable fluency** in English
- CELDT **Proficient**
- **Proficient** on CST in ELA
- **Advanced** level on CELDT

Big discrepancy between CELDT Proficiency and Basic on CST/ELA

*Percent English Learners attaining these benchmarks statewide*
**Academic Performance**

- Several grade levels below actual grade level in both English and L1
- Cumulative high school GPA is very low (D+ average)
- More than one in five have F averages
- Grade retention frequent
- Learned passivity and non-participation

- Mismatch in perception of how doing, their actual academic skills, and their goals
- Significant – but spotty- gaps in academic background knowledge
- Some are discouraged, tuned out, dropping out
For you to do…..

- Be sure there is understanding about what constitutes sufficient English proficiency for academic access – clarify the terms
- Analyze grades and GPAs
- Analyze CELDT levels and growth/stagnation/loss – where are they stuck?
- Shadow – check for engagement and participation

Step # 4:

Check how LTELs are currently being served in secondary school
NYC Study

Lack of appropriate services in high school

- LTELs take same ESL classes as other ELs (*designed for new arrivals*) with nothing specifically targeted to their needs LTELs are in “mainstream” for other academic classes
- Many LTELs attend foreign language classes taught in their L1 and designed for non-speakers of the language (*mixed with non-native speakers and focusing on basic grammar and vocabulary*).

From the Californians Together survey

- One out of four districts have some specific approach to serving Long Term English Learners
- The majority of districts place their Long Term English Learners into mainstream (CLAD, SDAIE?)
- Three districts place Long Term English Learners by CELDT level with other English Learners
Placements NOT designed for them.....

- Placed/kept in classes with newcomer and normatively developing English Learners – by CELDT level
- Unprepared teachers
- No electives – and limited access to the full curriculum
- Over-assigned and inadequately served in intervention and reading support classes

The National Literacy Panel

“Instructional strategies effective with native English speakers do not have as positive a learning impact on language minority students..... Instruction in the key components of reading is necessary but not sufficient for teaching language minority students to read and write proficiently in English.”
On the issue of interventions

• CAL (“Double the Work”) - reading interventions designed for native speakers aren’t appropriate for ELs
• National Literacy Panel - good literacy and reading interventions work for both EL and proficient students - but they work BETTER for English proficient students (gap grows)
• From the 1.5 generation research on college students, and linguistics research - appears that WRITING may be a more powerful emphasis than READING strategies for LTELs

Things to ask........

• Where are they placed for English? ELD?
• Where are they placed for academic content?
• What interventions and support classes do they receive?
• Are they getting access to electives?
• Are they in A-G courses?
• Are any of those placements designed for LTELs? Do they have appropriate support for EL success?
Step #5:

Know the research and undo misconceptions that lead to harmful practices

Misconception # 1:
“We should just focus on English – the sooner and more fully immersed in English, the better.”
But......

Development of the home language in school along with English benefits English proficiency and long-term academic success. Students receiving bilingual instruction perform at least as well, and often better ON MEASURES OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY than students instructed monolingually.

Misconception # 2:
“English Learners don’t really need special services or instruction. Just good teaching and a standards-based curriculum is enough for all students. And, its equitable because everyone gets the same curriculum.”
Just good teaching IS good for all students but not sufficient for English Learners. They need instructional strategies and materials that are adapted to help them access the curriculum; they need ELD; and they need rich oral language development.

Misconception # 3:
English is more important than other subjects. If they aren’t doing well in English, we should spend more hours of the day dedicated to English language arts. Things like science, the arts, social studies can wait.
Academic language is best learned in the **context** of learning academic content. And, without opportunities to learn science, social studies (etc.), academic gaps are created and school is more boring.

Misconception # 4:
“If we let them use their home language, they won’t learn English or assimilate. Parents who speak to children in the home language are holding them back.”
Motivation, opportunity and encouragement to use a new language is important, but preventing a child from using their strongest language has a detrimental impact. Parents need to use their strongest language to enhance communication and connection, and to foster rich language development overall.

REFLECTION

• Do you hear or see evidence of any of these beliefs?
• Do any of these seem to create challenges to strengthening your programs for English Learners?
• What is the research that is most needed to be understood?
• What practices do you see going on that seem most fly in the face of research?
Step 6:

Design programs to meet LTEL needs

Basic Principles!

- Focus upon distinct needs
- Language development is more than literacy development – LTELs need both
- Language development + Academic gaps
- Crucial role of home language
- Invite, support, insist that LTELs become active participants in their own education
• Maximum integration without sacrificing access
• Rigor, relevance, active engagement and empowering pedagogy
• Relationships matter
• An affirming, inclusive environment
• Urgency!

Step #7

Prevent the creation of LTEls
• Start with an early foundation of rich language development (PreK-3) in both English and the home language (where possible)
• Attention to the alignment, articulation and transition between preschool and elementary grades
• Make room for and provide professional development related to building a powerful ORAL language foundation for literacy
• Full curriculum – with language development across all content areas

Urgency and opportunity

• Urgency to address the underachievement and miseducation of English Learners
• Opportunity in the release of powerful research specifically addressing English Learner needs
• Examples from districts that are piloting new approaches for LTEls with impact
Step #8:

Address the systems issues

These are “systems” issues:

• Data systems that do not/can not identify and monitor progress
• Unprepared teachers
• Lack of appropriate curriculum and materials
• Confusion about what schools are “supposed” to do
• Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of the research
• Lack of clarity about what constitutes “English Proficiency”
• A belief that “we can’t do that”
**Proactive District Policies and Support**

- A definition and system for monitoring
- Designated annual benchmark expectations by number of years and English proficiency
- Inquiry
- Research based programs –including specific responses for LTEls
- Disaggregate data
- Target professional development for teachers
- Create needed courses
- Student and parent information

**State level recommendations**

- A standard state definition
- State mechanisms to require and collect data for identification, monitoring, planning and response
- Real ELD materials!
- Research-based, consistent messages as the foundation for accountability
• Build capacity among teachers and administrators
• Ensure full access
• Provide parents with information
• Invest in research and innovation

Step #9:
Leadership and Advocacy
Reparable Harm.....

Because without the power of language, they do not have a voice!
THANK YOU!  lolaurieo@gmail.com