Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches & Professional Learning Communities

Sonoma County Office of Education
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Purpose of Today’s Session

• Introduce a research-based publication by the California Department of Education
• Provide an overview of selected chapter highlights
• Sample Activities to Guide your Professional Learning Community
1986 ............. 2010

• **Title**: Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches

• **Purpose**: to meet a need for practical guidance on research-supported best practices for ensuring language, academic, and socio-cultural proficiency for English learners.
State Schools Chief Jack O’Connell Announces New Publication to Help Improve Instruction for English Learners and Close the Achievement Gap

SACRAMENTO — State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell today announced the release of a new publication aimed at helping to improve instruction for English-learner students. The publication, Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches, was developed by an invited group of prominent scholars.

“Closing the achievement gap is the top priority of my administration, and I am proud that my department is making available a publication that will help address this challenge,” O’Connell said. “The academic achievement gap between students who speak a language other than English at home and other students, as represented by test scores, dropout rates, and college admissions and completion rates, is among the most persistent and pressing challenges facing public schools nationwide. Although the achievement gap exists everywhere in the United States, in California it affects a significantly large population of students.

“I have asked educators across the state and colleagues across the country to work with us to better understand and address the achievement gap. I am pleased that nationally recognized scholars have synthesized the best available research for improving educational outcomes for English learners.”

Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches offers a comprehensive, user-friendly, review, and analysis of recent research to inform and improve instructional practices in order to help English learners, who currently constitute one in four of California’s K-12 public school students.

The publication is available for purchase from the California Department of Education (CDE) through the CDE Press Sales Department, by phone at 800-995-4999, by e-mail at sales@cde.ca.gov, or through our online Catalog Listings of Publications - Educational Resources Catalog, keywords “English Learners.”
California’s Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O’Connell has suggested that the academic achievement gap between ethno-linguistic minority students and other students, as represented by test scores, drop out rates, and college admissions and completions, is the most persistent and pressing challenge facing public schools… (O’Connell, 2008).

This volume represents an anchor publication to assist school districts in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs for English learners over the coming years.
Value of Volume

- Most up to date information research on English Learners
- Research-Based Scholarly Papers each written by teams of two well-known and respected experts in the field
- Practical – Response to Common Questions from the Field
- Content and Presentation Mediated by Group
Contents of Volume

- Foreword by Kenji Hakuta

- Introduction - Schooling English Learners: Contexts and Challenges, Veronica Aguila

- Chapter 1: Research to Guide English Language Development Instruction, William Saunders and Claude Goldenberg

- Chapter 2: English Language Development: Foundations and Implementation in Kindergarten through Grade 5, Ann Snow and Anne Katz
Contents of Volume

• Chapter 3: English Language Development: Issues and Implementation at Grades Six Through Twelve, Susana Dutro and Kate Kinsella

• Chapter 4: Effective Literacy Instruction for English Learners, Diane August and Timothy Shanahan

• Chapter 5: Programs and Practices for Effective Sheltered Content Instruction, Jana Echevarria and Deborah Short

• Chapter 6: Alternative Educational Programs for English Learners, Kathryn Lindholm-Leary and Fred Genesee
Strengthening Instruction for English Learners

- Ensuring Acquisition of English
- Enhancing Academic Performance
- Closing the Achievement Gap
- Connecting to RTI
- Transitioning to the Common Core
Developing a Comprehensive Program

- State and Federal Legal framework
- Research
- Key Components: ELD, Sheltered Content, L₁, and Mainstream
- Program Enhancements- Two Way Programs
- Nested in Effective Schools Research
Legal Framework

Federal
- United States Constitution
- Federal Statutes
- Federal Regulations
- Federal Court Decisions
- Federal Administrative Actions: Policy Memoranda, letters to the field, etc.

State
- California Constitution
- California Statutes: Ed. Code
- California Regulations
- California Court Decisions
- CDE Administrative Actions/ LEA Policies
Program Differentiation

- Language Proficiency
- English Learner Distribution
- Language Groups
- Student Characteristics
Attributes of Professional Learning Communities

• supportive and shared leadership,
• collective creativity,
• shared values and vision,
• supportive conditions, and
• shared personal practice.
PLCs – Establish Purpose

“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
Impact On Our Work

• Why is it important to have PLC meetings to discuss the content of this publication?

• What three questions about education for English learners would you like to have answered in a book such as this one?

Share your thoughts with someone sitting near you.
California’s Interest in English Learners

Table A. English Learner Enrollments in the U.S., 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>English learner enrollment</th>
<th>Total enrollment</th>
<th>Percentage of English learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>1,553,091</td>
<td>6,275,469</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>693,031</td>
<td>4,674,832</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>231,403</td>
<td>2,666,811</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>210,359</td>
<td>2,765,435</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>189,926</td>
<td>2,112,805</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>149,721</td>
<td>1,087,447</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>85,323</td>
<td>801,867</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# California’s English Learners
## Language Groups over 1% of Total
2007-08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1,320,981</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>34,712</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilipino</td>
<td>22,389</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>21,551</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>19,715</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>16,799</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>92.5%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2008 R-30 Language Census
Realities

- 1 in 4 California students are ELs
- 60-80% are Long Term English Learners
- Most born in U.S. and have been in CA schools since kindergarten
Transnational Inconsistent Schooling

- 12 of 29 students attended schools outside the U.S. in a language other than English for a few months up to 8 years altogether
- International moves often occur repeatedly creating a cycle of readjustment (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 L2 literacy
Chapter 1: Research to Guide
English Language Development Instruction
Saunders and Goldenberg

• The purpose is to synthesize existing research that provides direction for English language development (ELD) instruction.

• The complex research led to categories based on the nature of the evidence we currently have:
  – Guidelines for which there is a relatively strong supporting evidence directly applicable to ELD instruction (1-2)
  – Guidelines that are hypotheses emerging from recent research on ELD instruction (3-11)
  – Guidelines we think are applicable to ELD instruction but grounded in non-English learner research (12-14)
Chapter 2: English Language Development: Foundations and Implementation in Kindergarten through Grade 5
Snow and Katz

- Foundations of ELD for Young Learners
  - Primary language, sociocultural background, second language acquisition process
- Designing ELD Instruction and Assessment
  - Standards-based instruction
  - Using standards to plan ELD
  - The role of academic language
  - Strategies for ELD instruction
- Examples of Effective ELD Instruction
- Professional Development
Chapter 3: English Language Development: Issues and Implementation at Grades 6-12
Dutro and Kinsella

- Linguistic Challenges for Adolescent English Learners
- Description of Instructed ELD
  - A Model for Explicit Language Instruction
  - Defining Elements of Explicit ELD Instruction
- Teaching Instructed ELD
  - “Bricks”
  - “Mortar”
  - Building language
- Instructed ELD in Action
  - Explicit vocabulary development
  - Oral language development
Chapter 4: Effective Literacy Instruction for English Learners
August and Shanahan

- The English Learner Research Base
- Background
- Guidelines for Teaching Literacy to English Learners
- Conclusion

- ….we believe the research provides a number of generalizations that can constitute a broad basis for evidence-based practice. We have expressed these in terms of eight guidelines for developing literacy in English-language learners that we hope will be useful to practitioners as they grapple with the everyday challenge of educating these students, to policymakers as they endeavor to create contexts in which effective instruction can occur, and to researchers attempting to move the field forward with well-designed studies that build on previous research.
Chapter 5: Programs and Practices for Effective Sheltered Content Instruction
Echevarria and Short

- Pedagogical Models of Sheltered Content Instruction
- The SIOP Model in Action
- Research on Language Development and Academic Achievement of English Learners
- Sheltered Instruction Programs and Contexts
- Professional Development
Chapter 6: Alternative Educational Programs for English Learners
Lindholm-Leary and Genesee

• Rationale for and Advantages of Dual Language Education
• Program Characteristics
• Student Achievement and Program Outcomes
• Characteristics of Effective Dual Language Programs
• Issues in Learner Needs
• Summary and Conclusions
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%)

Source: Laurie Olson – Research
Effective Schools Research

• Strong, Proactive Leadership
• Shared vision by a highly qualified staff
• Implement standards aligned curriculum, and instruction
• Monitor progress – Differentiate Instruction
Your Reflections

• Write down two ways you think you can use this book in your school. Share with an elbow partner.
• Some “volunteers” will be asked to share with the group.
Professional Development Opportunities

Source: http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/view/e/4603
CDE on iTunes U

Source: http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/mm/it/

CDE on iTunes U page on Apple's iTunes Web site.
Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English-language arts and mathematics were adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) on August 2, 2010.

The CCSS were developed through a state-led initiative to establish consistent and clear education standards for English-language arts and mathematics that would better prepare students for success in the competitive global economy.

Senate Bill 1 from the 11th Extraordinary Session (SB #1) created the Academic Content Standards Commission (ACSC). The duty of the ACSC was to develop and recommend academic content standards to the SBE.

- [California State Board of Education](#) Agenda item 3 to consider the ACSC to adopt the Common Core State Standards, including California specific standards on August 2, 2010.
- [Common Core State Standards for English-Language Arts, Adopted August 2010](#) (Outside Source)
- [Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, Adopted August 2010](#) (Outside Source)
- [Academic Content Standards Commission](#) (Outside Source)
  Agendas and materials of the ACSC.
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Common Core State Standards](#) (DOC, 456KB, 2pp.)
    An informational flyer that provides a brief overview of the new standards.
  - [Highlights of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics](#) (DOC, 453KB, 2pp.)
    An informational flyer that provides a brief overview of the new standards in mathematics.
  - [Highlights of the Common Core State Standards for English-Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects](#) (DOC, 443KB, 2pp.)
    An informational flyer that provides a brief overview of the new standards in English-language arts.
  - [Common Core State Standards for Mathematics: Preparing Students for Success in Algebra](#) (DOC, 421KB, 2pp.)
    An informational flyer that provides a brief overview of how the new standards address preparing students for success in algebra.
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