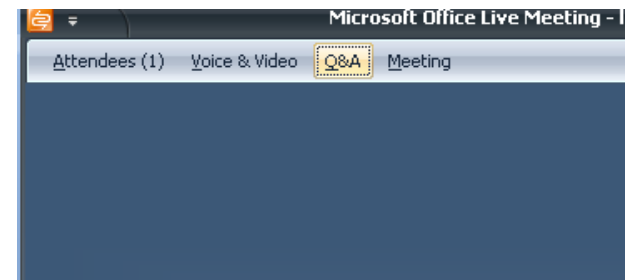


Effectively Educating English Language Learners at the High School Level: What Research and Practice Tell Us

May 14, 2009

Have a Question?

- During the Webinar, participants can submit written questions by clicking the “Questions and Answers” (Q&A) button at the top left of your screen, typing your question in the box, and then pressing “Enter” to submit your question.
- If you are viewing a hard copy of the PowerPoint presentation: email your questions to helpfor@betterhighschools.org.



Guest Presenters

- **Libia S. Gil**
Senior Advisor, National High School Center
Senior Fellow, American Institutes for Research
Former Superintendent, Chula Vista Elementary School District, CA
- **Neal Finkelstein**
Senior Research Scientist, WestEd
- **Ana Díaz-Booz**
Principal, School of International Business (San Diego, CA)
2009 California Distinguished High School

Why Focus on ELLs?

- Rapid growth*
 - 60+ percent between 1996-2006
 - 6.8 percent of total K-12 in 1995-1996
 - 10.3 percent of total K-12 in 2005-2006
- Continuing achievement gap

* Batalova, Fix & Murray, 2006

“Missing Out: Latino Students in America’s Schools”*

- Findings from 2007 NAEP:
 - 29 percent and 30 percent of ELL eighth graders scored at or above the basic achievement level in reading and math respectively.
 - 75 percent and 73 percent of non-ELL eighth graders scored at that level in reading and math respectively.

*National Council of La Raza report, May 2009

“Left Behind in America: The Nation’s Dropout Crisis”*

- Findings:
 - Nearly one in five U.S. men between the ages of 16-24 (18.9 percent) were dropouts in 2007.
 - Nearly three in 10 Latinos, including recent immigrants, were dropouts (27.5 percent).
 - More than one in five blacks dropped out of school (21 percent).
 - The dropout rate for whites was 12.2 percent.

*Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University in Boston
and the Alternative Schools Network in Chicago, May 2009

Perspectives on Linking Research to Practice for English Language Learners

Neal Finkelstein
Senior Research Scientist, WestEd

Linking Research and Practice: An Overview

- The research base on instructional strategies to support ELLs is strong and continues to develop rapidly – exemplars of evidence-based practice are increasingly available.
- Performance gaps between ELLs and non-ELLs are significant and a major focus at all levels of policy and practice.
- The implications of ELLs not meeting proficiency in English and mathematics are substantial.
- The promise of educational opportunity, through high school and beyond, is predicated on the development of a strong academic language base.

Recommended Research Publication Linking ELL Research to Practice:

“Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners: Research-based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions”

Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, Rivera (2006). Center on Instruction

www.centeroninstruction.org

Support for High School English Language Learners

- Developing and refining academic language is the most important determinant of ongoing academic success for students.
- Fluency in academic language includes:
 - vocabulary knowledge;
 - the ability to handle word complexity; and
 - the ability to understand and decode increasingly complicated sentence structures.

Reading Instruction for ELLs

- 1) ELLs need early, explicit and intensive instruction in phonological awareness and phonics in order to build decoding skills.
- 2) K-12 classrooms across the nation must increase opportunities for ELLs to develop sophisticated vocabulary knowledge.
- 3) Reading instruction in K-12 classrooms must equip ELLs with strategies and knowledge to comprehend and analyze challenging narrative and expository texts.
- 4) Instruction and intervention to promote ELLs' reading fluency must focus on vocabulary and increased exposure to print.
- 5) In all K-12 classrooms across the U.S., ELLs need significant opportunities to engage in structured, academic talk.
- 6) Independent reading is only beneficial when it is structured and purposeful, and there is a good reader-text match.

Math Instruction for ELLs

- 1) ELLs need early explicit and intensive instruction and intervention in basic mathematics concepts and skills.
- 2) Academic language is as central to mathematics as it is to other academic areas. It is a significant source of difficulty for many ELLs who struggle with mathematics.
- 3) ELLs need academic language support to understand and solve the word problems that are often used for mathematics assessment and instruction.

A Case Study on High School Course-Taking Patterns for ELLs in California

Our ELL Study Goals

- Investigate the patterns by which ELLs complete 9th grade in English and mathematics and how that links to a comprehensive sequence of rigorous courses by the time the ELLs are high school seniors.
- Examine whether ELL students had started high school (9th grade) enrolled in ELL courses or were enrolled later (after 9th grade).
- Determine the consequences, if any, of the timing of ELLs' course enrollments.

Methodology

- Identify ELL students by the courses that were designed for ELLs and labeled as “EL,” “ELL,” “ELD,” “ESL,” “Sheltered,” and “SDAIE”
- Differentiate the consequences by the designation of ELL
- Descriptive analysis

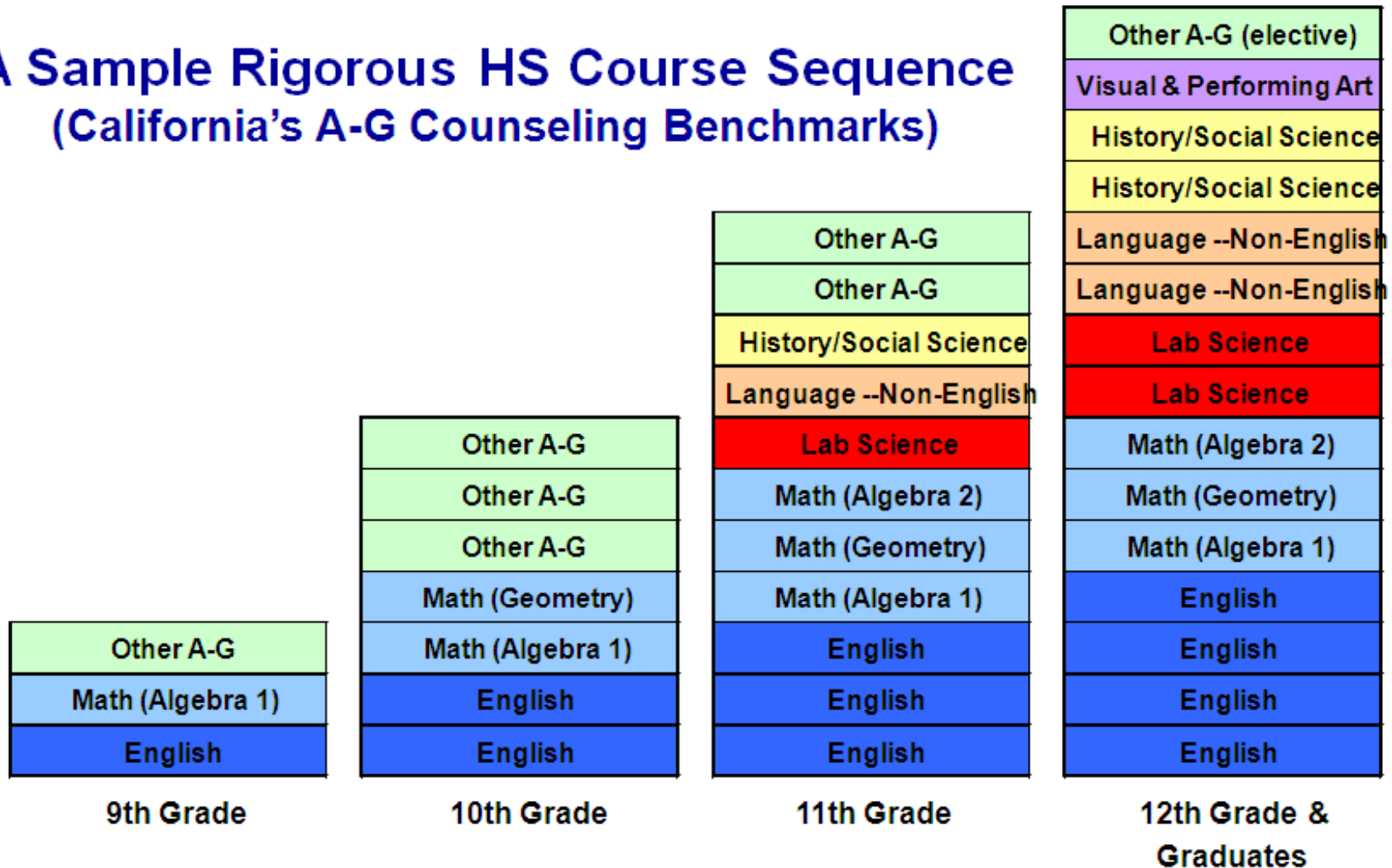
Data Sources

- Course-level data: full high school coursework of high school seniors from 54 high schools in spring 2006 (44,813 transcripts)
- Student-level data: student demographics and qualifications for university entrance
- School-level data

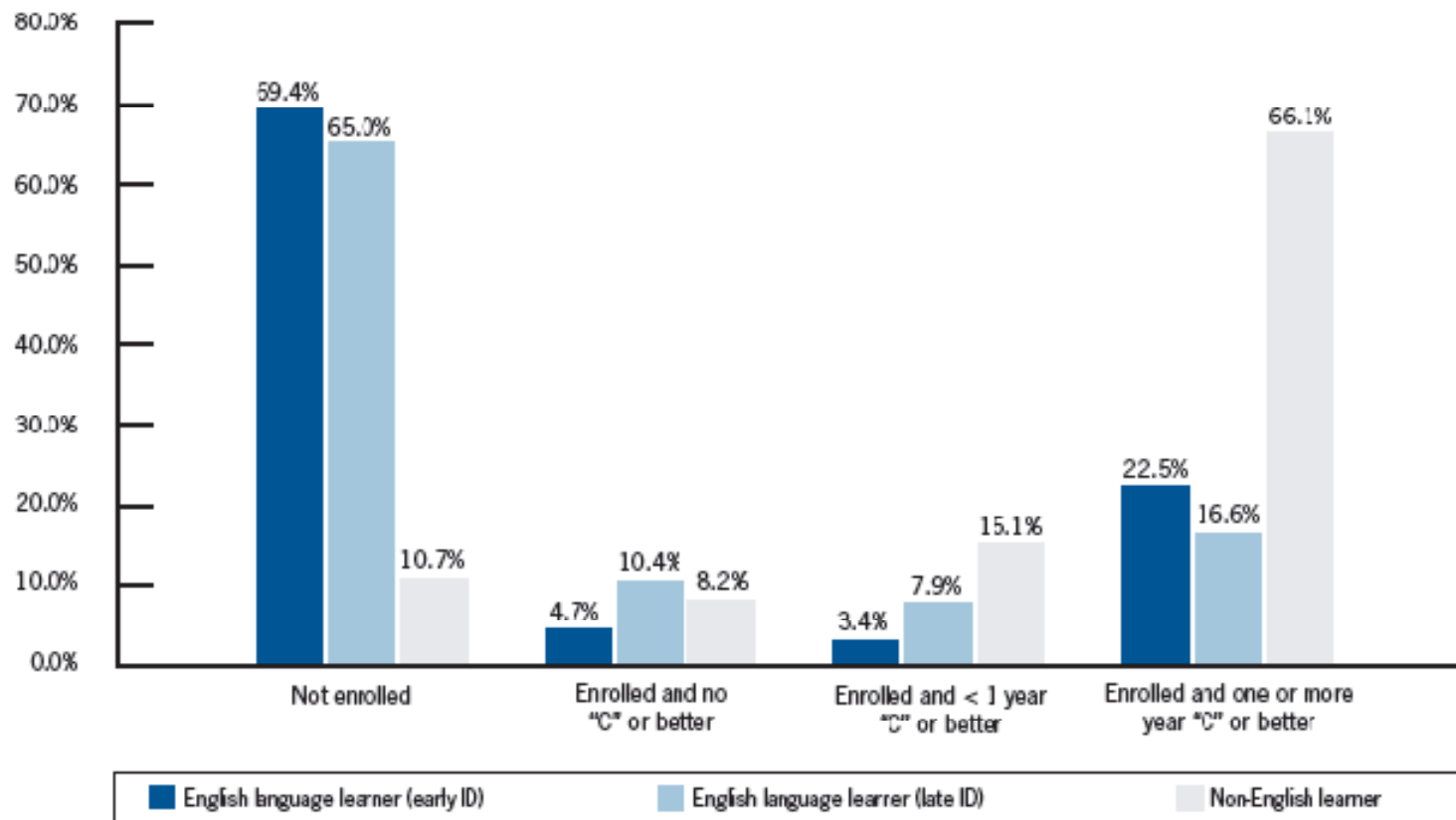
ELL Study Definitions

- ***Non-English learner:*** A student who did not take any ELL courses during grades 9–12.
- ***English language learner:*** A student who took at least one ELL course during grades 9–12.
- ***ELL Early Enrollee (Early ID):*** A student who took at least one ELL course in grade 9.
- ***ELL Late Enrollee (Late ID):*** A student who did not take an ELL course in grade 9 but took at least one ELL course in grades 10–12.

A Sample Rigorous HS Course Sequence (California's A-G Counseling Benchmarks)

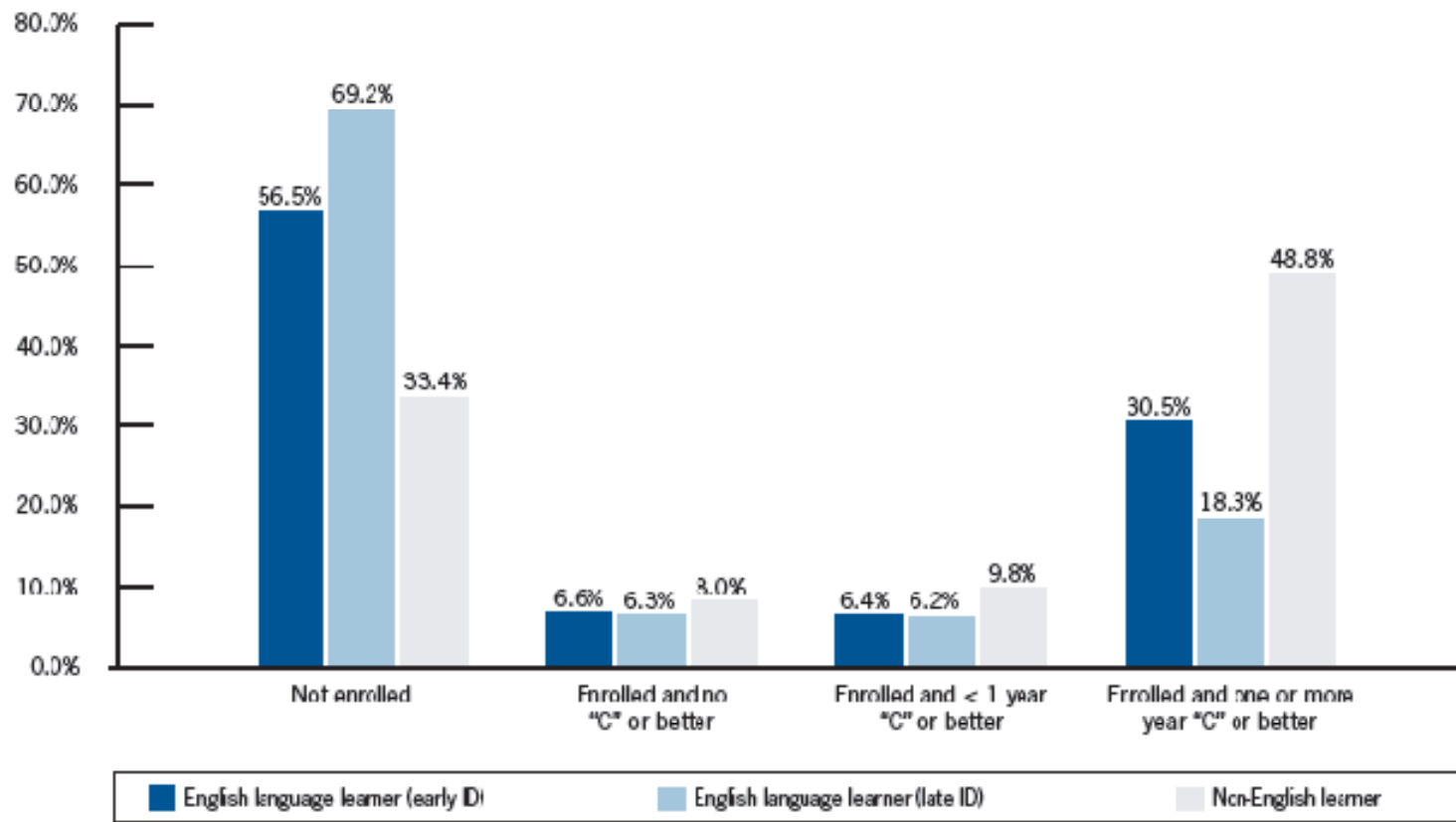


Enrollment in **English** Courses by the End of 9th Grade (by Earned Grades)



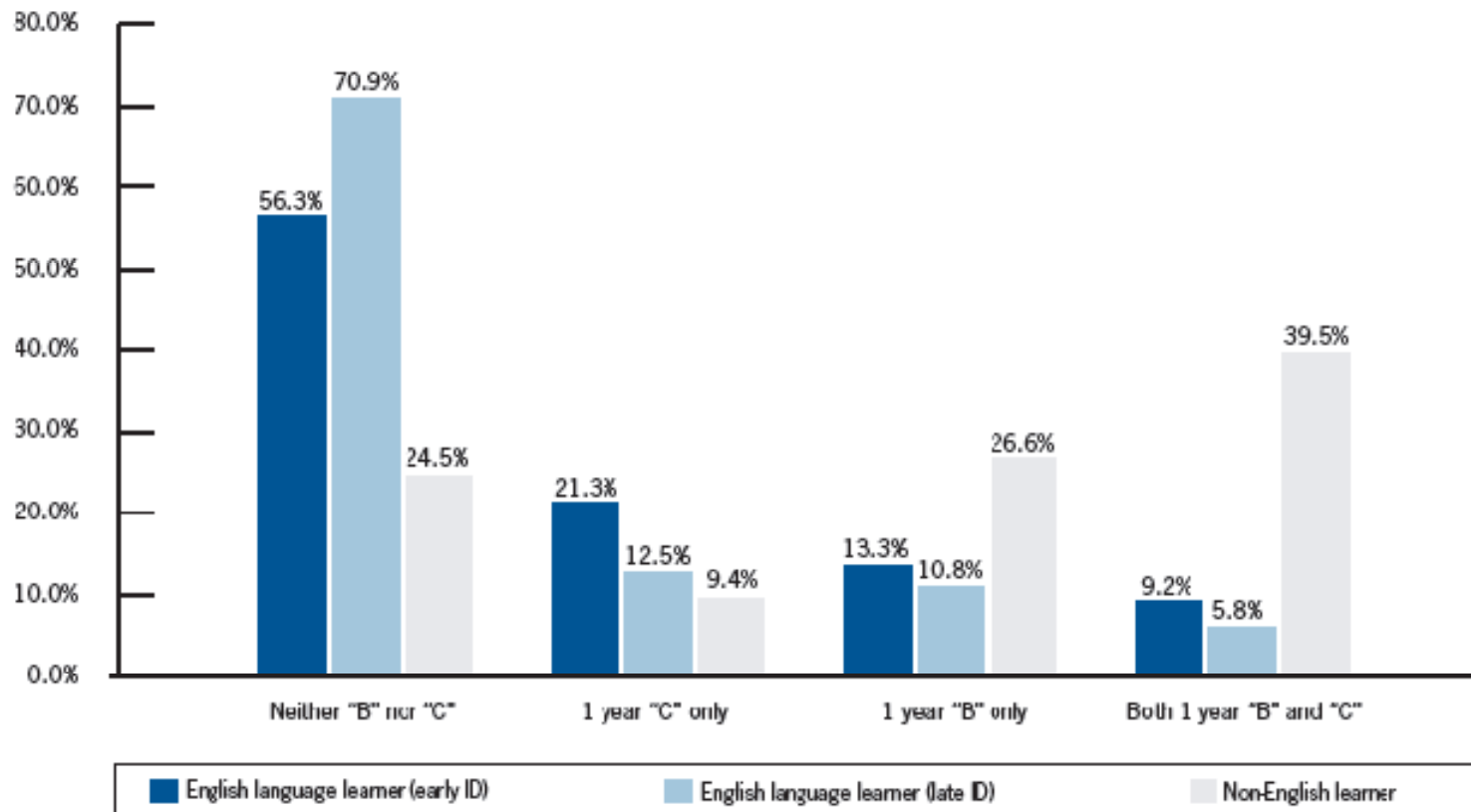
A Case Study on High School Course-Taking Patterns for ELLs in California

Enrollment in **Mathematics** Courses by the End of 9th Grade (by Earned Grades)



A Case Study on High School Course-Taking Patterns for ELLs in California

Completion of English and Math Courses by the End of 9th Grade



* 'B' and 'C' in Figure 4 refer to accredited English and mathematics courses, respectively, that meet "A-G" requirements.

Study Conclusions

- ELLs show considerable difficulty fulfilling university entrance requirements when compared to non-ELLs.
- Getting students on track early in high school by ensuring access to college preparatory coursework in English and mathematics is critical to keeping them on track to fulfill college entrance requirements.
- English language learners have a better chance of completing the university entrance requirements if they are enrolled early in classes designed for them.

Effective Practices that Support the Achievement of English Learner Students

Ana Díaz-Booz

Principal, School of International Business (SIB)
Kearny High Educational Complex, San Diego, CA
2009 California Distinguished High School

Relevant School Information

- 460 students
- 75% qualify for free or reduced lunch
- 45% Latino, 17% African American, 14% Vietnamese, 14% Caucasian
- 34% English Language Learners (ELL)
- 80% of ELL test at the “intermediate” or below level on the CA English Language Development Test (CELDT)

Results of ELL Program

| CAHSEE 10th Grade Census 2008 | All Students SIB | ELL Students SIB | ELL Students District |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| English | 89% | 79% | 34% |
| Math | 95% | 92% | 44% |

- Highest Academic Performance Index for ELLs in the district – 50 points higher than the average
- 94% overall graduation rate

School Structures That Support English Learners

- Personalized, small school environment – all students are known as individuals.
- One-on-one scheduling and assessment.
- Thoughtful heterogeneous placement of ELL students with peer supports.
- Special education students mainstreamed into general education classes with an RSP co-teacher. Grade level teams track individual student progress and ensure that IEP is used as a guide.

School Structures That Support English Learners

- Family meetings (in primary language) are mandatory prior to enrollment. School programs, supports, and expectations are detailed. If necessary, home visits are conducted.
- Extended-day support programs, such as one-on-one peer tutoring, a before/after school computer lab, and a teacher run “Literacy Lounge.”
- Allocation of school resources to the students with the highest need. “Fast Track Program” redirects money.

Dropout Prevention Strategies

- Dedicated counselor funded through categorical money to monitor ELL students
- Continual monitoring on the 4X4 schedule (progress reports every 4.5 weeks). Immediate remediation if necessary
- Regular communication with families
- Home visits and/or after-hours meetings

Instructional Structures That Support English Learners

- “Strategies for Success” Class – Strategies for Literacy Independence Across the Curriculum (SLIC)
- Grade-level text support/strategies in core-content classes
- Full year math and English on the 4X4
- Math sequencing that better matches literacy needs and standardized testing – 9th grade students take integrated geometry/algebra I

Staff Selection and Training

- Purposeful staffing – the most skilled teachers are assigned the ELL sections at 9th and 10th grade.
- All teachers plan collaboratively as members of student cohort teams.
- Staff development focuses on:
 - Extensive use of data to inform instruction.
 - Effective teaching strategies with an emphasis on student interaction.

Specific Examples of Staff Development

- Analysis of individual student work and formal assessment. Modifying instruction based on student needs.
- Alignment of CAHSEE and CST blueprints to curriculum and assessment.
- Strategies for teaching access to grade-level text books.
- Ways to engage students in conversation, including systems of accountability for engagement.
- Demo lessons and team teaching.

Essential Components of a Strong Program

- Distributive leadership with shared decision making and teacher-/counselor-led collaboration teams
- Shared belief that meeting the needs of students is our responsibility

Connecting ELL Research & Practice to Policy Implications

Libia S. Gil

Senior Advisor, National High School Center
Senior Fellow, American Institutes for Research
Former Superintendent, Chula Vista Elementary School District, CA

Challenges of ELLs at the Secondary Level

- Acquiring English Language proficiency and academic content area knowledge simultaneously
- Appropriate placement with valid and reliable assessments
- Access to rigorous course content and high expectations
- Academic Language development
- New immigrant transitions

State and National Policy Implications

Common Definitions

- Clearly defined categories of English Language Learners including process for designation and reclassifications
- Clearly defined continuum of program/services available in alignment with student language development needs
- English Language Development standards

Local, State and National Policy Implications

Early Tracking/Monitoring Data System

- Designation of student language development status
 - Time in country
 - Prior education
 - Time in school system
- Language assessment results
- Sequence and designation of courses
- Course completion, credits, GPA, etc.

Local, State and National Policy Implications

Human Resources

- Maximum flexibility to identify, select and assign appropriately certified and demonstrated effective teachers with ELLs
 - Incentives to promote value of additional skills
 - Recognition for successful student results
- Ongoing professional development for all teachers and administrators to acquire specific skills to address ELL needs

Local, State and National Policy Implications

Systemic Approach to Addressing ELL Needs

- Whole school/district vision and planning
- Recognition of value of diverse linguistic resources
 - Use of heritage language to acquire English literacy
 - Utilization of ELLs as a resource for developing multilingual/multicultural skills for global economy
- Weighted student funding allocations
- Parent/Community Engagement

Local, State and National Policy Implications

Personalized Learning Environment

- Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs)
- Advisory Programs
- Three R's:
 - Relevance
 - Rigor
 - Relationships

Local Policy Implications

Sequencing and Access to Rigorous Courses

- Core subjects/multiple pathways
- Scheduling/choice
- Regular and frequent assessments

Other Supports

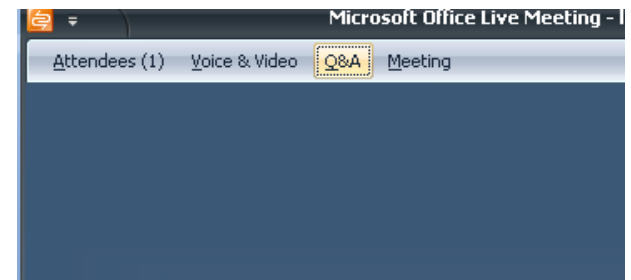
- Social and emotional learning
- Extended time
- Community partnerships

Other Policy References

- Hakuta, K., August, D. & O'Day J. (March 2009). The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Recommendations for Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners. ELL Working Group on ELL Policy. Available online at: <http://www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/ARRA/ELL%20Stimulus%20Recommendations.pdf>
- O'Day, J. (January 2009). Good Instruction is Good for Everyone—Or is it? English Language Learners in a Balanced Literacy Approach. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 14 (1), 97-119.

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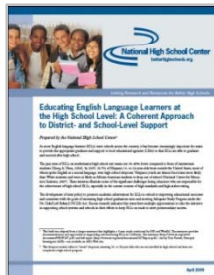
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National High School Center Products for English Language Learners



High School Course-Taking Patterns for English Language Learners: A Case Study From California



Educating English Language Learners at the High School Level: A Coherent Approach to District- and School-Level Support



Selected States' Responses to Supporting High School English Language Learners

Thank you for joining us today!

For more information on the National High School Center please visit us online at www.betterhighschools.org or email us at helpfor@betterhighschools.org