

Dear Colleagues:

Greetings to all of you! Below we report on new, recent, and updated developments and events since our last newsletter. As you will see, this spring OELA staff members have undertaken a variety of outreach and technical assistance activities, among other endeavors.

### **Revamped NCELA Website**

We are pleased to invite you to visit our National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) website which has a new look and a number of new features, including a more user-friendly resource library search tool, an area to promote promising practices, and a data section that highlights the 10 districts in each state with the highest number of English Learners (ELs). Comments about the website's new look can be sent to Melissa Escalante, OELA's Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for the NCELA, at [melissa.escalante@ed.gov](mailto:melissa.escalante@ed.gov). Enjoy browsing the website at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/>.

### **New NPD Grant Awards**

Congratulations to the latest recipients of OELA's National Professional Development (NPD) program grants announced earlier this month! The Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 cohort consists of 73 projects nationwide funded with nearly \$24.4 million to improve the preparation of teachers of ELs.

The new grantees come from a rank order list of unfunded applications originally submitted in the FY2011 competition, which yielded a sizable pool of applications with a good number of highly-ranked proposals, of which only the highest-scoring could be funded in 2011. In order to take advantage of this quality pool of applications in a cost-efficient manner, OELA decided to fund down the slate for the 73 new grant awards. These newest of NPD projects are posted on the NCELA website: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/6/2012NPDawardees.pdf>.

### **Utilization of the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)**

OELA will release an electronic data-based brief on EL educational participation and achievement, with a focus on science and mathematics coursework at the secondary level, this coming summer. The brief will be based on selected results from the School Year (SY) 2009-2010 CRDC survey conducted by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Education.

Reform of education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is a priority for President Barack Obama, and was reflected as a competitive priority in OELA's 2011 NPD competition. The majority of NPD grantees are pursuing STEM-related goals and objectives.

OELA also will utilize results from the CRDC to identify and plan for future evaluation studies of ELs along the educational pipeline, from prekindergarten to graduation, in collaboration with OCR and the Department's Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS) unit. OELA recently enlisted three specialists in EL Education to assist with this evaluation planning process: Okhee Lee, New York University; Guillermo Solano-Flores, University of Arizona; and Cory Buxton, University of Georgia. All three were part of an EL-STEM invitational forum held by OELA July 2011 in Washington, DC. OELA appreciates their services and support.

To read more about the CRDC and access the data from the 2009-10 survey, please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2009-10-factsheet.html>.

### **NPD Personal Success Story**

From time to time, OELA will extend special recognition to a project or personal success story that highlights achieved results of OELA programs. Recently we featured the story of José Grimaldo who achieved personal success through participation in a teacher preparation program funded by OELA's NPD program. To read more about José and his journey towards becoming a teacher of English Learners with special needs, please go to <http://www.ed.gov/blog/2012/05/ed-funded-training-helps-displaced-welder-find-calling-as-bilingual-teacher/>. OELA communications specialist Anthony Sepulveda will produce these special stories.

### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility**

Additional states across the nation are expected to be granted waivers from key provisions of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) out of the second round of applications currently undergoing review by Department officials. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia requested flexibility earlier this spring. To date, 11 states have been approved for ESEA flexibility. Several more states are expected to apply during the third round in September. For more Flexibility updates, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

### **Other Events**

#### **Meetings**

- OELA organized a March meeting between Education Secretary Arne Duncan and 30 public school superintendents from two intermediate education regions, Education Service Center (ESC) Regions 1 & 2, from the Deep South Texas area, including a number of school districts adjacent to the Texas-Mexico border. Held in San Antonio concurrent with a White House Hispanic Community Action Summit, the meeting provided a forum for discussing issues affecting schools in these districts.
- OELA facilitated a May meeting between executive board members of the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), Education Deputy Secretary Tony Miller, and

representatives from several Department offices. Board members identified and spoke individually to a series of critical educational matters that impact the lives of ELs, their parents, and teachers.

### **Webinars**

- Two OELA-sponsored webinars focused on educational services for Native American English Learners have occurred this spring, facilitated by Trinidad Torres-Carrion, program manager for OELA's Native American and Alaska Native Children in School program. The first webinar surveyed reading strategies and best practices for Native American English Learners; the second presented an overview of current education developments in teaching Native American languages and cultures. Find the webinars at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/webinars/>.

### **Conference Sessions**

OELA staff members were presenters and/or organizers of several sessions at different professional education conferences in recent months. We wish to thank the following organizations for allowing us to be part of their conference programs:

- Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) -- Joanne H. Urrutia, OELA Deputy Director, attended this year's Bilingual Directors Meeting sponsored by CGCS on May 17 in Seattle, WA. During a joint session with Council staff, she presented selected findings from EL-focused evaluation studies sponsored by OELA.
- National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) -- OELA hosted a pre-conference professional development workshop that featured classroom practitioners sharing effective science instructional practices for ELs. Organized by Crystal Martinez, OELA policy specialist, the event was geared toward middle- and high school science teachers as well as administrators wishing to share this information with their teachers.
- American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) – OELA Discretionary Grants supervisor Cynthia Ryan moderated a session featuring panel presentations by three NPD projects showing promise of successful results.
- Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) -- A special session for NPD project directors was held to discuss K-12 professional development standards.
- National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)– OELA hosted an Indigenous Bilingual Education Pre-Conference Institute during the NABE Conference in Dallas, as well as a full-day meeting for NPD project directors.

Until our next newsletter, here's wishing you the very best.

Sincerely,  
Rosalinda B. Barrera, Ph.D.  
Assistant Deputy Secretary  
Director, Office of English Language Acquisition

*Our mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*