



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

October 2012 Newsletter

Dear Colleagues:

Greetings to all of you! I hope you are enjoying the cooler autumn days and having a fruitful year in your education-related endeavors. Below we report on a number of English Learner Education developments and events since our last newsletter, some of them at the state level, others at the project level, and some with a national reach. At the same time, we encourage you to check out our National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) website for additional information and news. Enjoy!

California's ELD Standards Move Closer to Final Adoption

The California Department of Education (CDE) and its English Learner Support Division are moving steadily toward final adoption of the revised English Language Development (ELD) Standards for California's public schools, K-12. The draft standards, developed in a months-long project involving many statewide activities and stakeholders, were reviewed by the State Board of Education (SBE) at its regular meeting Sept. 13, 2012, in Sacramento. California enrolls about one-third of the nation's English Learners (ELs), approximately 1.7 million students.

According to the CDE, "ELD standards help guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment, for English Learners who are developing the English language skills needed to engage successfully with state subject matter standards for college and career-readiness," or California's new common core state standards in English Language Arts (ELA). Presenting to the board were Karen Cadiero-Kaplan, Director of the English Learner Support Division, and Robert Linqunti, Project Director and Senior Researcher with the California Comprehensive Assistance Center operated by WestEd, which played a technical role in the project. The SBE commended Director Cadiero-Kaplan for her leadership of the ELD standards revision, and noted that implementation of new standards will be an even larger undertaking.

This multifaceted project began in mid-December 2011 with recruitment of participants for four focus groups that provided initial input in spring 2012 on the revision of the standards. A panel of experts also was convened in the spring, and public review and comment followed in the summer. The Assessment and Standards Development Services Program at WestEd and Linqunti specifically worked in concert with CDE to analyze, revise, and align the draft standards and to analyze public and expert input on revision parameters.

An array of information and resources associated with this project can be accessed at www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp. Attending the September SBE meeting were this Director and OELA staff member Fengju Zhang who were in California Sept. 11-13 for a series of activities related to this year's Bus Tour by Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

NAM Project Directors Meeting

The second annual Title III Native American and Alaska Native Children in School (NAM) Project Directors Meeting was held October 9-10 at the Department of Education in Washington DC. The meeting featured presentations on heritage language programs by Native American and Alaska Native American educators Richard Grounds, University of Tulsa, and Ray Barnhardt, University of Fairbanks; interactive presentations by project directors and evaluators on performance reporting; and roundtable discussions on parent and family involvement. Federal representatives for the Department of Health and Human Services, the Bureau of Indian Education and the Department of Education provided updates on programs and initiatives for Indian students and their families. All NAM participants, representing 20 projects nationwide, shared information on challenges and successes in implementing their respective projects.

Federal TA Day

OELA will be participating in this year's Federal Technical Assistance Day, October 17, 2012. Hosted by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Indian Education, Federal TA Day will precede the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Conference to be held at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City. In keeping with this year's NIEA convention theme, Cynthia Ryan, OELA discretionary program supervisor, will be presenting via video teleconferencing. To register online click here: [TA Day Registration](#). If this link did not connect you to the Federal TA Day online registration form, please cut and paste the following address to your browser address line: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oie/index.html>.

Program Success Stories on NCELA's Website

From time to time, OELA will extend special recognition to a project, school, or personal success story that highlights achieved results of OELA programs. This month we share with you a second personal success story featuring Julio Bush, who achieved personal success through participation in a teacher preparation program funded by OELA's National Professional Development (NPD) program. To read Julio's success story, please visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/successstories/projectprise.pdf>.

OELA Deputy Director Speaks at Two Recent Events

OELA's deputy director, Joanne H. Urrutia, was a keynote speaker at the 9th Annual Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) Summit on Hispanic Education on Oct. 12, in Miami, Florida. Dr. Urrutia shared the Department's continued commitment to high-quality instruction for Latino students, many of whom are English learners, and how OELA's work supports this goal.

On Oct. 15, in Washington D.C., she presented at the annual meeting of the National Council of State Title III Directors, a non-profit organization comprised of educators and others concerned about the educational needs of English learners. The council, whose leadership is made up of state Title III directors and EL coordinators, acts as a resource for SEA and LEA personnel and advocates on the national level regarding issues in EL education. Dr. Urrutia provided an update on the Department's ESEA Flexibility program and discussed issues that have an impact on English learners. She reported on OELA's initiatives in support of high-quality instruction for English learners in the context of ED's reform initiatives.

In Spring 2013 in Washington, D.C., the Department will hold its official annual meeting of State Title III Directors, co-sponsored by the Title III Formula Group within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and by OELA. This meeting was last held in Fall 2011. At this week's Council-sponsored meeting, several OESE personnel also addressed members of the professional group.

English Learners in Adult Education Programs

We'd like to call your attention to the recent book *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Options for Practice and Research*, published by the National Research Council of the National Academies with funding from the Department's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). According to the book's chapter titled "Language and Literacy Development of English Language Learners," English learners are the largest group enrolled in adult education programs, with 43 percent or one million of adult learners enrolled in English as a second language (ESL) programs. It is noted that despite the need for English language and literacy instruction, adult ESL programs have had limited success historically. The chapter examines the various factors that influence the development of literacy in a second language in adult learners and concludes with a discussion of priorities for research to develop effective approaches to instruction for this population.

Sincerely,



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