

# OELA UPDATES

OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

## OELA DIRECTOR RETIRES

It is with sadness that we announce the retirement of our recent esteemed director, Rosalinda B. Barrera. She retired on Oct. 19, 2012 after almost four decades of work as an educator. Her tenure at the Department began in August 2010, when President Obama named her assistant deputy secretary and director of OELA. In her farewell letter, she thanked Secretary Duncan and Deputy Secretary Tony Miller for giving her the opportunity to contribute to the Department’s overall education mission and policies, and to support President Obama’s goals for education in the U.S.



Rosalinda B. Barrera served as assistant deputy secretary and director of OELA from Aug. 2010 until Oct. 19, 2012.

Until a new assistant deputy secretary is appointed, Secretary Duncan has asked Deputy Secretary Tony Miller to serve as the acting director of OELA. He will be working over the next several weeks with Joanne H. Urrutia, OELA’s deputy director, to make a smooth transition and ensure that OELA’s collaborative activities with internal and external partners, as well as its services and support to discretionary grantees, will continue seamlessly.

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**In this issue:**

OELA Director Retires	<b>1</b>
NPD Project Directors Meeting	<b>1</b>

Spring 2013 Conference Sessions	<b>2</b>
Webinars	<b>3</b>

## NPD PROJECT DIRECTORS MEETING

OELA will host the 2013 National Professional Development Directors Meeting on March 4–5 at the U.S. Department of Education’s headquarters auditorium. The day-and-a-half-long meeting will include panel presentations on best practices, a demonstration of STEM science kit experiments aimed at teaching English learners literacy and academic language, and small group interactive discussions related to professional development topics. Participants will have an opportunity to share best practices in professional development, effective uses of data, and ways to improve performance reporting and evaluation. The sessions are designed to enhance all aspects of professional development activities carried out by grantees in order to improve instructional strategies used by teachers of English learners. This meeting is limited to 2011 and 2012 NPD grantees. A total of 120 participants are expected to attend. If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact Samuel “Sam” Lopez at [Samuel.Lopez@ed.gov](mailto:Samuel.Lopez@ed.gov) or 202-401-1423.

## SPRING 2013 CONFERENCE SESSIONS

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

### **National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), Feb. 7, 2013, in Orlando, Fla.**

Session title: *Transitioning English Learners' instruction to college and career-ready standards: Challenges and Opportunities*

The focus of the panel discussion will be steps taken by states to include ELs and teachers of ELs in the transition to college and career-ready standards. Panelists will include representatives from RTT states who will share how they are addressing the needs of ELs in their professional development plans and with curriculum resources. The panelists will also share their progress in these areas in the hope that those in the field can learn from their experiences so far. Since 45 states have committed to implement career-ready standards and corresponding English language proficiency standards, OELA is positioned to be a conduit for sharing resources that address ELs.

### **NABE, Feb. 8, 2013, in Orlando, Fla.**

Session title: *National Education Leadership Forum: Preparing Every Learner to Compete Successfully in a Global Market*

The panel will be composed of key national leaders with expertise in different areas of education: early learning, common core standards, career readiness, accountability, assessment, and technology. The goal is to be able to define what is needed to prepare our students to compete successfully in a global market. Researchers will make presentations to the panel whose members will then provide a response to the issues discussed. This forum is critical because, in America's schools, the linkage between language and education has added importance given two dynamic factors---the increasing linguistic diversity of the American people and the internationalization of economic activity.

### **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), March 21, 2013, in Dallas, Texas**

Session title: *Improving English Language Learners Instruction for Academic Language and Literacy Development in Support of the Common Core State Standards*

The U.S. Department of Education is actively supporting projects that are building on the empirical evidence from recent research to develop instructional practices that support English Learners. This session will include presenters from Investing in Innovation (i3) and NPD projects who will share a set of high-leverage instructional practices for academic language and literacy development of English Learners; a model for preparing mentors to support teachers in enacting these practices; and a framework for building instructional resources to support English Learners.

### **National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), April 10, 2013, in San Antonio, Texas**

Session title: *Enhancing Science Instruction to Meet the Needs of English Learners in Grades 6–12*

This is the second annual pre-conference session to be held at NSTA. Organized by Crystal Martinez, an OELA policy specialist, this one-day session will bring together panelists representing research and practice to describe effective instructional practices that promote the science achievement of English Learners (ELs). This session is geared toward middle and high school science teachers seeking to learn techniques for teaching ELs, as well as colleges or schools of education faculty wishing to share this information with their teachers in training. The day's agenda will be led by Okhee Lee, professor of science education at New York University, and include presentations by other renowned researchers and educators, including Julio Lopez-Ferrao of the National Science Foundation. If you have any questions, please send an email to [Crystal.Martinez@ed.gov](mailto:Crystal.Martinez@ed.gov). Register at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/meetings/nsta2013>.



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## WEBINARS

In addition to conferences, OELA will be hosting a series of webinars this spring. Kicking off the season was a webinar on the Common Core state standards for ELs. Other webinar topics currently under development include refugee students, students with interrupted formal education (SIFEs), and teacher evaluation. We will announce dates and times as soon as they have been finalized. In the meantime, take a few minutes to watch the first webinar, aired on Jan. 18, at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/>. Below is a brief description of the webinar.

### Common Core for ELs

The Common Core State Standards mean greater rigor, higher expectations, and considerable greater language demands. Leadership and professional development are needed so that educators may act collectively to implement supportive policies, build educator capacity, and develop effective approaches for providing ELs with access to and opportunities for rigorous academic work. Watch three experts as they outline what needs to be done for this population. **Presenters:** Judy Elliot, former chief academic officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District; Lily Wong Fillmore, University of California, Berkeley; and Margarita Calderón, professor emerita, Johns Hopkins University.

