# *A Resource Guide for Low Incidence ELL Districts*

**INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATOR SUPPORT
FAMILY, SCHOOL, & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

*Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners*

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This resource guide was developed by members of Connecticut
Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL)
with support from the New England Comprehensive Center (NECC).
It was developed to address the needs of districts that are just
beginning to see the emergence of an English Language Learner (ELL)
population in their district or who have very low numbers of ELLs.

The guide is an introduction that highlights key research- or evidence-based
practices and is not meant to provide detailed explanations.  It provides
beginning answers to frequently asked questions, many of which were
derived from a survey of CAPELL members from low incidence ELL
districts. For more detailed information, the guide includes the references
on which most of the answers are based.  Other suggestions come from
promising practices cited by CAPELL members.

*A Resource Guide for Low Incidence ELL Districts* consists of three major sections each focusing on a key topic:
- Instructional Practices
- Professional Development and Educator Support
- Family, School, and Community Involvement

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**Introduction**

Developed by members of the Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) with support from the New England Comprehensive Center (NECC), *A Resource Guide for Low Incidence ELL Districts* was created to provide guidance to districts that are just beginning to see an emerging English Language Learner (ELL) population or that have very low numbers of ELLs. It is designed to provide an introduction to key research- or evidence-based practices in three different areas; **Instructional Practices**; **Professional Development and Educator Support;** and **Family, School and Community Involvement**.

The document consists of three sections, each corresponding to one of the areas identified above. Each section is then organized according to themes.  Within each theme are questions that are frequently asked by administrators, teachers, and school committee or community members. These questions were derived from a survey completed by district level directors or coordinators of ELL services in which they were asked to identify the major challenges they faced, decisions they were frequently asked to make, and questions they had or were often asked.  Answers to the question introduce the reader to key research- or evidence-based practices and to promising practices cited by CAPELL members.  The answers are meant to provide an overview of what good practice is and then refer the reader to more detailed information through the references cited under the answers. Each section also contains a list of references and resources.  A glossary of terms is also available at the end of the document.

# SECTION I
# INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

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# INTRODUCTION

This resource guide addresses the instructional needs of low incidence ELL districts. The focus of this document is on programs, strategies and considerations that support the acquisition of English as a second language while making content instruction comprehensible. It does not incorporate strategies and resources for programs that formally integrate native language instruction into the program of study, recognizing that such districts do not have a large enough population of ELLs who speak the same language that they would be eligible to create a transitional or dual language bilingual program.

The following are general guiding principles for the development and implementation of educationally sound programs that result in the positive achievement of ELLs. These guiding principles form the foundation on which many of the answers to the questions posed are based.

- There is clear articulation of the linguistic and academic goals for English language learners.
- Programs are research- or evidence-based, while taking into consideration local resources and constraints.
- There is careful planning based on an assessment of the ELL student population's strengths and needs that results in program coherence while maintaining flexibility to meet individual needs.
- There is school wide support, affirmation, and incorporation of the ELL student population's linguistic and cultural heritages irrespective of the linguistic model/approach used.

The suggestions contained in this resource guide derive from the literature and research on the education of English Language Learners as well as from CAPELL members.

# GETTING STARTED

## Q 1: Who are English Language Learners?

The U.S. Department of Education defines English Language Learners (ELLs) as "national-origin-minority students who are limited-English proficient. The ELL term is generally preferred over limited-English proficient (LEP) since it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits (Francis, Rivera, et al., 2006, p. 3)

More generally, English Language Learners are students whose first language is a language other than English and who are in the process of learning English. Potential ELLs are identified at the time of registration when the Home/Dominant Language Survey is administered. See Q 3 for more information on the identification process.

*References:*
1. Francis, Rivera, et al., 2006a..

## Q 2: How can our district begin to build its capacity to better support and serve a newly emerging ELL population?

As you begin receiving or anticipate receiving ELL students, the first thing you should do is *formally identify an administrator to assume leadership responsibilities* for services to the ELL population. The role of this administrator will be to build the necessary infrastructure needed to respond to the educational needs of this population, such as:

- Setting up a system to gather important information about students' language and educational history

- Identifying instructional staff who may have appropriate or relevant training/certification or who are willing to learn how to work with ELL students

- Researching different English language development program designs and approaches

- Providing professional development to support school administrators and teachers understand how to respond to the educational needs of ELL students

- Undertaking outreach into the community to see what cultural/linguistic resources might be available

- Setting up an advisory council or steering committee that includes district and school representatives, students, parents, members of the community, and expert resources such as from technical assistance agencies and institutes of higher education to help guide your deliberations.

Some districts also *designate a teacher with relevant experience* and/or interest in English language learner instruction to coordinate and provide curricular and instructional support to schools receiving ELL students. While it is preferable to have a teacher with experience in teaching English-as-a second-language (ESL), this is not absolutely necessary as long as s/he is willing to learn.

*References:*
1. Zehler et al., 2008.
2. Connecticut RESC Alliance, How to Create High Quality Programs for ELLS, 2009.

*Q 3: I am the administrator assigned to the task of responding to the needs of our emerging ELL population. Where can I go for assistance?*

*Key sources of assistance* are the following:

- The Connecticut State Department of Education: For technical assistance and to help you identify other resources
- Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL)
- Districts that are similar to your own to learn from their experiences as they met this challenge
- Technical assistance resources such as the RESCs, the RESC Alliance, and the SERC

## ENROLLMENT & IDENTIFICATION

*Q 4: How should a district that is just beginning to receive students for whom English is not their home language handle the initial registration and their potential identification as ELL students?*

Three things to attend to at the point of registration for potential ELL students:

1. In Connecticut, the State Board of Education requires that schools administer a three question survey, called the Home/Dominant Language Survey to all parents at the time of enrollment within a district. Make sure that the staff who handles registration, whether it is done centrally at the district or locally at the school level, has been *trained to administer the Home/Dominant Language Survey properly*. This means that intake staff needs to understand the intent and importance of the Home/Dominant Language Survey as the first step in determining if a student may need English-as-a-second language services, knows what the next steps are, and contacts the appropriate people responsible to take the next steps.

   ➤ If the person conducting the intake can communicate with the parent/guardian, whether in English or in their home language, the registration procedure set up by the state for all students should be followed, including the administration of the Home/Dominant Language Survey to determine whether a further assessment needs to be made of the child's abilities in English.

   ➤ If the person conducting the intake cannot communicate with the parent/guardian, it is important to *find someone who can interpret for the family*, and then follow the registration and identification procedures.

2. Make sure that the person responsible for intake is aware of *differences in naming conventions* among cultures and that they take the time to confirm the accuracy of how they are entering the student's name in all record-keeping systems. For example, the order in which parts of a name are written differs across cultures. In the United States, the given or first name comes first (e.g., John), then comes the middle name (e.g., Patrick) and the last name appears at the end (Moore). In Latin countries, this order does not work because it is customary to include both the father's and mother's last name, with the mother's last name appearing at the end. Thus, in Latin cultures, the last name of a child named Juan Roberto Gonzalez Rodriguez would be Gonzalez, not Rodriguez. Other countries write the family name first and then the given name.

3. Make sure that *the date of birth is recorded accurately*.  In some countries, the day of the month comes before the month.  For example, a birth date written as 01.05.1994 could mean May 1, 1994 and not January 5, 1994.

*References:*
1. Marcus, Adger, & Arteagoitia, 2007.

## Q 5:  What English language initial screening instruments to measure English language proficiency other than the Language Assessment System (LAS Links) are being used by districts in Connecticut?

*Some districts in Connecticut use the following instruments* and tools for initial English language screening:

- Initial version of LAS Links,
- IPT Oral Language Proficiency Test (Ballard –Tighe) (especially useful for students with minimal English language proficiency)
- Depending on the age of the student, some districts also ask students to provide a writing sample by responding to a prompt such as "Write about the school or place you just came from."

## Q 6:  What are some key questions that we might want to include in a standard parent interview form (in addition to the Home/Dominant Language Survey) to help us understand who our students are and what their needs might be?

Key information you may want to gather through a standard parent interview form is the following:

- *Family history of movement to and in the United States* –Is this the family's initial move to the U.S. or are they coming from another point of entry?  Was the child born in the U.S.?

- *Language development history of the child* – Does the family speak more than one language? Does the child speak more than one language?  What language does the child use with whom and for what purpose?  Who else lives in the household and what language(s) do they use to speak with the child? Does the child interact with speakers of English and, if so, in what contexts (home, community, peers)? Has the child experienced any difficulties with his expressive or receptive language in his/her home language (L1)? How old was the child when first starting to learn/speak English as a second language (L2)? Is the child literate in L1? In L2?

- *Educational history* – What experience with formal schooling has the child had, including years of schooling? What level of formal schooling did the child complete? Are any of these experiences in the United States? If the child has been schooled in the U.S. was the child in an ELL program?  If the child was in an ELL program but is now exited, when did the child exit? How was the child doing in their previous school?

*References:*
1. Nguyen, pp. 92-94, "How do you decide what kind of program for English language learners is appropriate for your school?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007.
3. See Appendix A: Case History Form Sample.

## SERVICES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

### *Q 7: What are some key factors the district should consider when developing services for our ELL population?*

First of all, get a good sense of *who your students are and how they cluster*. Find out how homogeneous or heterogeneous your ELL population is on the following factors:

- Age of students
- Number of languages spoken
- Levels of proficiency in English in all four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Levels of proficiency in their first language for both oral and literacy skills
- Experience in formal education and continuity of schooling in their home country or in the U.S.
- Educational history, including history of retention and/or participation in special services such as ESL and special education
- Academic skills in their first language
- Recency of arrival in the U.S.

Understand the *sociopolitical context of your community*. As you investigate different program designs and approaches, think about the following:

- How well will the program design/approach meet the needs of your students?
- How well will the program design/approach be accepted by the sociolinguistic community of the students and the community-at-large?

Identify what *resources (human and material)* you will be able realistically to call on:
- Availability of teachers with the expertise needed for a particular program/approach
- Administrative support
- Availability of a variety of materials
- Evidence of effectiveness in districts/schools similar to your own

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 90-92; Nguyen, pp.92-94, "How do you decide what kind of program for English language learners is appropriate for your school?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 8: What kinds of things should we think about when deciding how to assign students to schools within the district?

Depending on the numbers and distribution across grade levels, consider the pros and cons of placing <u>all</u> ELL students within the same school or distributing them across a number of schools. Factors to consider:

- *Language proficiency levels:* Organizing services around language proficiency levels makes it easier for teachers to develop targeted lessons. At the same time there is a danger in grouping students from multiple grade levels since this raises challenges in meeting content learning objectives. In general, when grouping by proficiency levels across grade levels, keep the age gap narrow within a class.

- *Grade level placement:* In general, ELL students should not be placed in a lower grade level only because of her/his level of English proficiency. However, while it is important to place ELLs with students who are their academic and social peers, the district and schools also will have to consider the unique needs of overage students (older students whose academic and literacy skills are well below grade level) and see what resources are available to provide them with appropriate services.

- *Social isolation:* When making decisions about ELL student assignments consider the importance of providing systematic and frequent opportunities for ELL students to practice their English while interacting and communicating with native speakers. It is also important not to segregate ELL students from the rest of the student population in order to ensure access to the full range of academic and non-academic opportunities.

- *Economies of scale:* Clustering ELL students within a school and by a given grade level, allows for a more effective use of limited resources. With clustering, resources can be shared and collaboration and communication among teachers and specialists are easier to maintain. At the same time, it is important to keep track of the cumulative numbers in each school so that no one school is being asked to assume sole responsibility for ELL students in the district and overtaxing its capacity to integrate them into the life of the school.

- *Commitment of the school leadership* and the whole school to meet the needs of ELL students: Whatever grouping practices are used, it is important for the school leadership to monitor the program regularly and be ready to anticipate or counter any negative effectives that may arise.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 118-119; Commins, pp. 119-121; How should English language learners be grouped for instruction. In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Nguyen, pp.92-94, "How do you decide what kind of program for English language learners is appropriate for your school?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

Districts with small number of ELL students who come from many linguistic groups, by necessity, have to offer programs that use English as the medium of instruction.  However, it is important in these instances to affirm the value of the child's home/dominant language and to draw on their prior knowledge and skills as much as possible.

Program models that offer primarily English instruction:

- English as a second language (ESL): ESL programs offer direct instruction and focus on helping ELLs become proficient in English  - that is, acquire the vocabulary and structure of the language and develop the four domains of communicative linguistic  skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing.  This type of program is also sometimes referred to as an English language development program (ELD).

- Sheltered instruction: Core content, grade level courses are taught in English using instructional strategies and techniques designed to make the content comprehensible.  Often, these strategies and techniques are also effective for all students and therefore are appropriate in a general education classroom in which ELL students are included.

Teaching language through content is an effective way to encourage English language development in general and academic language in particular because 1) language acquisition occurs in a natural context, and 2) students are learning to use language for real purposes.

The use of both instructional strategies – ESL and sheltered instruction – can work effectively to reinforce learning of both language and content.  For example, ESL classes or small group work can be organized to support and reinforce the academic language that will be needed in the general education content classes.

*References:*
1. Christian, pp. 81-83, "What kinds of programs are available for English language learners?" Freeman & Freeman, pp.139- 140, "What are the best instructional approaches for English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Wright, pp. 87-88, "What is the difference between English as a second language (ESL) and sheltered instruction/SDAIE?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

*Q 10:  How can we provide effective English language instruction when our district has a small number of ELL students who speak different languages, have different levels of English proficiency, and are in multiple grade levels?*

There is no single answer to this question.  In order to decide how to differentiate your program options or services, you will need to know what the different needs of your subgroups are. You will need to be flexible in order to meet these differing needs.

- For example, students who come with formal schooling from their home country may need intensive English language development assistance but may have the content knowledge at their grade level. However, students who come with interrupted schooling will need intensive instruction in both English language development as well as content knowledge.

Think about scheduling a specified time for planned daily instruction in English-as-a-second language to provide ELL students with ample time to practice their oral language as well as literacy skills.

- For example, while your main approach may be an inclusive model in which all ELL students are taught in the general education classroom with a teacher who knows how to use sheltered English strategies, students who need intensive assistance in acquiring English should be assigned to work with a certified ESL teacher for a designated period of time, or with a tutor or paraprofessional trained in the use of effective language development strategies for ELLs.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 90-92, "How do you decide what kind of program for English language learners is appropriate for your school?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Wright, pp. 87-88, "What is the difference between English as a second language (ESL) and sheltered instruction/SDAIE?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 11: What is the best way of providing ESL instruction – the push-in method or the pull-out method?

The answer to this question should be based on the purpose for which you are using either method, and the amount of time the student will spend in each.

ESL instruction can be provided either within the general education classroom itself (push in) as well as in separate, ESL classes (pull-out). For example, students who need intensive ELD can be grouped during specific times of the day by English language proficiency level, either within the classroom through co-teaching and/or differentiated instruction (push-in), or in a substantially separate ESL class (pull-out) with students with similar language needs. In either case, it is important for general education teachers to receive professional development on the kinds of strategies they can use in their teaching to meet the needs of their ELL students. In the pull-out model, it is important for the "pull-out" ESL teacher to coordinate with the general education teacher so that the "pull-out" ESL sessions support and reinforce the language needed in the general education classroom.

In instances where ELL students are 'pulled out' for targeted language instruction by proficiency level, a couple of key caveats are important to mention: 1) avoid too large an age gap within one class – the material for one age group often is not appropriate for another age group; and 2) ELL students should not be segregated in separate classes for the whole day or large portions of the day; this limits their opportunities to interact with native speakers of English and restricts their full access to content/academic instruction. ELL students should receive the same core curricula as that of the general education student population.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 118-119; Commins, pp. 119-121; How should English language learners be grouped for instruction. In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 12: How much time in a day should an ELL student receive language instruction?

There is no definitive answer to this question. The best answer is "it depends" – it depends on the student's age, their current level of English language proficiency in both conversational fluency and academic proficiency, their literacy skills in their dominant language, their knowledge of the academic content, and other factors.

Instead of thinking about the amount of time an ELL student should receive language instruction during a given day, it is best for the district to research existing program models that have been shown to be effective in contexts and with students similar to your own and to provide an integrated program of instruction that offers both general language development and language development connected to content learning. This may mean implementing different program options for different subgroups rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

### References
1. Wright, pp. 87-88, "What is the difference between English as a second language (ESL) and sheltered instruction/SDAIE?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Nguyen, pp. 92-94, "How do you decide what kind of program for English language learners is appropriate for your school?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## RESEARCH & EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

### District

## Q 13: While co-teaching is a possible instructional practice, is it really effective if we lack adequate planning time and if it dilutes service for all students for the sake of a few ELLs in the class?

First of all, co-teaching or collaboration between general education teachers and ESL teachers can be an effective instructional practice that enhances instruction for all. For it to work, teachers need to be willing to put effort into the following: developing shared goals, creating equal status between them, sharing responsibility for key decisions and accountability for outcomes; sharing resources; and working towards developing a sense of trust. When this happens, all students are well served.

Secondly, school administrators need to model and support collaboration and a climate of open communication and problem-solving.

Finally, while time in general is an issue, schools have found different ways of finding times for teachers to collaborate.  Some examples of existing structures that can be used are:

- Common planning time
- Grade level meetings
- Monthly staff meetings
- School-based professional development days

*References:*
1. Echevarria, pp. 114-116; Diaz-Rico, 116-117, "How do you ensure that the mainstream teachers and English as a second language teachers collaborate with each other to effectively address the content and language needs of the English language learner?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Mosca, pp. 109-110, "How do you ensure that everyone in the school shares the responsibility for educating English language learners, not just those who are specialists in the field?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

**Classroom Teacher**

## Q 14:  I am a general education teacher and I just received an English language learner in my classroom for the first time.  How do I get started?

First of all, *get to know who your students are as individuals*. Find out as much as you can about the student or students you have received. Check the child's cumulative folder for the Home/Dominant Language survey, student scores on the English proficiency screening instrument, as well as on the LAS Links and content assessments if the child has taken them.  Check to see if a parent interview was done that asks about the child's history of language development in her/his home language(s) and in English and about educational experiences in this and the home country. If there is little available information from the district, try to communicate directly with the parents and the child through someone who speaks their language

*Identify resources in your school system.* Find out if your district has an ELL coordinator who can point you to resources within and outside the district.  Some coordinators have prepared information with helpful tips for teachers. If there is an ESL teacher in your school or district, ask if you can observe her/him and then discuss what strategies that teacher uses. Ask the district where you can receive professional development on working with ELL students.  For example, the CT SDE offers professional development modules on teaching ELLs.

*Help the student feel welcome in your class.* The following are examples provided by CT ELL directors and teachers.

- Assign the child a peer buddy to teach her/him the school and classroom routines; the peer buddy does not have to speak the child's language although that is preferable.
- If there is a student in another grade or adult at the school who speaks that child's language make sure you connect that child to them.
- Learn a few words in the student's language. Even just learning how to say "good morning" will show the student you are interested and care.
- Affirm the value of the student's language by asking him/her to teach the class a few words (e.g., how to count from one to ten).
- Help students in your class learn the new student's name and how to pronounce it properly; help the new student learn the names of his/her classmates and how to pronounce them properly.
- Look for and use true cognates from the student's language; especially with older students, this connection through shared words can help the student feel comfortable.

*References*
1. Freeman & Hamayan, pp. 41-43, "How do you create a positive school environment for English language learners and their parents/members of their household? In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

***Q 15: What are the stages of language acquisition that I should know in order to better understand my students' progress?***

| Stage | Characteristics | Approximate Time Frame | Teacher Prompts |
|---|---|---|---|
| Preproduction | The student<br>• Has minimal comprehension.<br>• Does not verbalize.<br>• Nods "Yes" and "No."<br>• Draws and points. | 0–6 months | • Show me …<br>• Circle the …<br>• Where is …?<br>• Who has …? |
| Early Production | The student<br>• Has limited comprehension<br>• Produces one- or two-word responses.<br>• Uses key words and familiar phrases.<br>• Uses present-tense verbs. | 6 months–1 year | • Yes/no questions<br>• Either/or questions<br>• Who …?<br>• What …?<br>• How many …? |
| Speech Emergence | The student<br>• Has good comprehension.<br>• Can produce simple sentences.<br>• Makes grammar and pronunciation errors.<br>• Frequently misunderstands jokes. | 1–3 years | • Why …?<br>• How …?<br>• Explain …<br>• Questions requiring phrase or short-sentence answers |
| Intermediate Fluency | The student<br>• Has excellent comprehension.<br>• Makes few grammatical errors. | 3–5 years | • What would happen if …?<br>• Why do you think …?<br>• Questions requiring more than a sentence response |
| Advanced Fluency | The student has a near-native level of speech. | 5–7 years | • Decide if …<br>• Retell … |

***References:***
1. Hill & Bjork, 2008

## Q 16:  How can I modify my instruction to meet the needs of my ELL students?

Instruction can be adapted for ELLs by using the following *modifications*

*Giving Instructions*:
- Use both oral and written instructions.  Model the instructions, check for understanding, and repeat and review instructions frequently.
- Have children demonstrate their understanding of the instructions before they begin their work

*Introducing Vocabulary*:
- Use gestures, hands-on activities, and visuals (photographs, pictures, clip art, videos, objects) to develop vocabulary both general as well as academic.
- Review vocabulary frequently.  Whenever possible use the first language of your English language learners to present new vocabulary, building on their first language and literacy proficiency.

*Instructional Design*:
- Provide additional time for completing assignments and reduce the length of assignments, e.g. assign ELL students 2 out of 4 questions.
- Use small groups for instruction.
- *Schedule regular peer-assisted learning opportunities* in which pairs of students at different ability levels or different English language proficiencies work together on academic tasks in a structured manner to practice and extend material already taught.  For this strategy to work, however, teachers need professional development on how to establish age appropriate routines.  This strategy is not a substitute for teacher-led instruction but is intended to replace some of the independent seat work that provides little or no feedback to the student.
- *Use wait time* to provide ELL students the opportunity to gather their thoughts and prepare an answer in English

*Developing Oral Language Proficiency*:
- Develop oral language proficiency including content vocabulary in an ongoing way.
- Provide English language learners with many opportunities to speak and work with fluent English speakers as well as the opportunity to use their first language to understand their lessons.
- Paraphrase student remarks during discussions and encourage them to expand on their ideas.

*Developing Comprehension:*
- Teach students to summarize texts; this helps them consolidate their learning after reading.
- Give students the opportunity during non-instructional time to practice the reading of words, sentences, stories, and academic texts as well as to practice their reading strategies.   When possible include books in the children's first language as well as in English.
- Provide and teach students who have reached adequate levels of language and literacy in English and their first language to use bilingual dictionaries.
- Help students create their own personalized dictionary.

*References:*
1. Adapted from: Chevalier, 2009
2. Gersten et al., 2007
3. Francis, et al., 2006 (a)
4. Freeman & Freeman, pp. 143-144, "How do you ensure that English language learners develop English language proficiency? In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
5. Connecticut RESC Alliance, ELL Strategies Desk Cards, 2009.

The following are research-based strategies that have been found to be effective.

- Focus on instruction that substantially addresses the *five core reading elements* as identified by the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) - phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. Developing a solid foundation in these components of reading has clear benefits for language-minority students and a positive influence on their literacy development, just as it does for native English speakers.

- Develop oral proficiency in English. The Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth (2006) points out that this is an area that is often overlooked in instruction. Developing oral proficiency in English is an equally necessary component as are the five core reading elements especially in supporting reading comprehension and writing skills.

- Provide intensive *small-group reading interventions* that include the five core reading elements. The primary mode of instructional delivery should be explicit and direct.

- *Teaching several of these components simultaneously* has been shown to successfully improve literacy for language-minority students.

- While approaches that are similar to those used with native English-speaking students are often effective, the research also suggests that *adjustments to these approaches are needed* to have maximum benefit with language-minority students. For example, ELL students benefit from focused work on those particular phonemes and combinations of phonemes in English that do not exist in their home language.

- Provide *extensive, explicit, and varied vocabulary instruction* that emphasizes both the meanings of everyday words as well as essential words in the content areas.

- Develop *formal, age-appropriate academic English instruction* integrated into the core curriculum beginning in the primary grades.

*References:*
1. August & Shanahan, 2008
2. August, & Shanahan, 2006
3. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000
4. Gersten, et al., 2007
5. Connecticut RESC Alliance, ELL Strategies Desk Cards, 2009.

*Q 18: What practices have been found to be most effect in improving literacy in ELL adolescent students?*

Research on classroom and intervention practices has shown that *the following strategies are effective in improving the literacy skills* of English speaking adolescent students as well as that of adolescent ELLs.

- *Integrate all four language skills* into instruction from the start (reading, writing, listening, speaking)

- *Teach the components and processes of reading and writing*; beginning with phonemic awareness and phonics and adding vocabulary, text comprehension and fluency

- Provide *explicit vocabulary instruction* as a regular part of classroom lessons, providing opportunities for exposure and use in multiple contexts and in different linguistic modes such as discussion, reading, and writing. For ELLs, teachers may also need to distinguish between content specific words, process words, and words related to English structure

- Provide *direct and explicit instruction in comprehension strategies* with opportunities for guided practice.

- Provide *opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation* by asking follow-up questions that provided continuity and extend the discussion; introduce and use a specific "discussion protocol."

- Increase *student motivation and engagement* in literacy learning by making literacy experiences relevant, connected to everyday life, and, for ELL students in particular, that connect to their prior experiences. For example, include folktales from the student's background when appropriate.

- Make available *intensive individualized interventions* for struggling readers (based on reliable screening assessments) provided by qualified teachers.

- Build and activate background knowledge.

- Teach language through content and themes, linking language to real-life experiences, including the content or themes being taught in other classes.

- Use native language strategically

- Pair technology with existing interventions.

- Motivate ELL's through choice: Most students tend to be more motivated and more successful in reading when they have meaningful opportunities to exercise choice, whether that means choice of text, choice of task, or choice of partner.

*References:*
1. Francis et al., 2006a.
2. Francis et al., 2006b.
3. Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007.
4. Kamil et al., 2008.
5. August & Shanahan, 2006.

## Q 19: What are some strategies that foster effective teaching and rapid learning for adolescent newcomers?

Some strategies that foster effective teaching and rapid learning for adolescent newcomers are the following:

- Group students heterogeneously. Effective programs recognize that students often learn language among their peers with different levels of oral language proficiency; these programs provide structured opportunities for newcomers to work collaboratively with more advanced ELLs and native speakers.

- Provide extended instructional time. A strong research base supports the notion that, provided instruction is deemed effective, greater time on task is essential to the success of students performing below grade level, ELL's in particular.
- Coordinate efforts around newcomer programs, programs for advanced ELLs and mainstream classes.
- Target resources to those areas most likely to have an impact on student achievement.

*References***:**

1. Francis et al., 2006 b.

## Q 20: What instructional practices have been found to be effective in developing the writing skills of ELL students?

Scarcella discusses six key aspects of instruction in developing the writing skills of ELL students.

1. *Expectations:* Set high expectations connected to specific linguistic goals. Develop writing assignments that challenge students to use their linguistic abilities with increasing complexity. For example, continuing to accept ELL student's use of simple or incomplete sentences will not help them develop writing proficiency.

2. *Instruction of features of the English language:* Teachers need to provide students with systematic and explicit instruction on the features of the English language related to writing, such as grammar, spelling and other conventions.

3. *Input:* Expose ELL students to a wide variety of reading material and forms of writing that introduce students to complex clauses, sentence variety, and low-frequency vocabulary, such as the kind of vocabulary that tends to be academic or infrequently used in spoken language. Examples of low frequency vocabulary are words such as "signify" and "acquire." While it is important to use comprehensible English input it is equally important to balance this with "comprehensive, authentic academic input" that pushes the student slightly above their current proficiency levels.

4. *Output:* Provide opportunities for ELLs to use their writing skills using different structural forms. Examples of writing structure are clauses such as "in comparison to" and "as a result." Challenge students to use their knowledge of academic language and different grammatical structures of increasing complexity in their writings.

5. *Instructional techniques and activities:* Use general strategies like encouraging students to use dictionaries to discover the meanings of words instead of just relying on context cues to guess at meanings and to use new words in their writings. Focus on accuracy building activities by providing feedback on grammar and other conventions of writing.

6. *Corrective feedback and assessment:* ELL students need to be provided with corrective feedback on their writing. At the same time "Direct correction of student errors must be balanced with other types of feedback such as modeling" of correct responses so as not to overwhelm or discourage them. While ELL students, as other students, go through a developmental stage of using ungrammatical forms of expression, without corrective feedback ELL students are never given the guidance they need to become proficient writers.

*References:*

1. Scarcella, 2003.

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### Q 21: How can I use students' literacy in their dominant language to their advantage?

*For ELL students who are literate in their own language*, knowing their level of proficiency and/or strengths in their native language can be used to advantage in transferring skills and knowledge into English.

- For example, students' oral proficiency and literacy skills in their first language can be used to facilitate literacy development in English.
- Take advantage of their higher order vocabulary skills (e.g., ability to provide formal definitions) when speaking a second language.
- Take advantage of cognate relationships between their first language and English; teach students how to identify the root in a family of words; often such a family of words cuts across different content areas. If planned well, such vocabulary development can be reinforced in the context of different content areas.

*References:*
1. August & Shanahan, 2008.
2. August, pp.71-71, "How does first language literacy development related to second language literacy development?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

### Q 22: How can we get students with strong academic skills and language proficiency at levels 4 or 5 to meet the requirements of CMT/CAPT?

Suggestions from CT ELL directors and teachers:

- First of all, find out what the problem is since the student seems to have both strong academic skills and a high level of English proficiency.
- Work with the student's tutor and review every CMT strand to look for weak scores that haven't been mastered by the child. Have the tutor focus on those specific strand questions in reading, writing, and math in which the student is weak. Since DRP counts as 50% of the reading component, incorporate a DRP lesson as part of a student's instructional interventions, grades 3-8.
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### Q 23: How can we assess whether an ELL student has a language issue or a learning disability?

A few tips to consider are:

- Complete a comprehensive assessment to examine skills in both languages.
- Make sure the student has had adequate time learning English to be able to access the curriculum.
- Make sure that the student has received appropriate and necessary instructional interventions.
- Consider sociolinguistic variables (e.g., age, differentiated instruction, opportunities for intervention) by examining the interaction among them and the bilingual child's language skills.
- Consider providing intervention in both languages in order to support the child's development of the two languages simultaneously.

*References:*
1. Rivera et al., 2008

**District and Classroom Teacher**

## Q 24:  How can we best select instructional materials for skills and content learning?

When reviewing materials, consider the following factors:

- *Are materials age-appropriate?* Look for materials that focus on themes of interest for a particular age group.

- *Do the materials support grade-level curriculum/concepts?  Do the materials take into account the students' levels of language proficiency in English?* Look for materials that support age- and grade-appropriate curriculum and that come in different readability levels; books at different readability levels and related to the same topic lend themselves to differentiated instruction.

- *Are the language demands of the material appropriate?* Look for materials that are highly visual, especially ones with realistic photography – these are appropriate for all grade levels.

- *Are there materials in the students' native language?* Look for native language materials, especially for students who have had prior schooling in their own language, to support what they have already learned and to support what they are currently learning. Also look for native language materials that parents can use at home to support their children

*References:*
1. Zehler, 2008
2. Morales, pp.151-153, "What materials are available for English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006

## Q 25:  How can we find instructional materials for skills and content learning?

Some sources where you can find information are the following:

- Use your colleagues for resources and recommendations.

- Check your school library for ELL resources about how language is acquired and recommended instructional and assessment strategies.

- Check the Doing What Works website, Teaching Literacy in English to K-5 Learners, sponsored by the U.S Department of Education, for multimedia information on five recommended practices: screen and monitor progress; provide reading interventions; teach vocabulary, develop academic English, and schedule peer learning. (http://dww.ed.gov/)

- Check the Internet. The Internet provides many multilingual resources some at no cost while others may require a reasonable membership fee; other sites feature materials that can be purchased but allow you to review them; identify ones that provide quality materials and share with teachers, parents, and students.

- Check the sample list of multilingual and curricular resources below:

  ➢ www.colorincolorado.org
  A Spanish-English bilingual site for families and educators of English language learners

  ➢ http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/languages
  World news headlines in over 30 languages

➢ http://icdlbooks.org
International Children's Digital Library: search for books in different languages

➢ http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/cat_tapestry.asp?CID=1585&DID=8732
The Tapestry is an extensive resource center that has been developed for teachers and administrators in grades preK - 12 who work with children who are English language learners.

➢ www.readwritethink.org
Practices and resources in English language arts for educators, students, and parents

➢ www.thinkfinity.org
Thousands of free lesson plans for grades k-12 in all subject areas.

*References:*
1. Doing What Works: research-based education practices online.
2. Morales, pp.151-153, "What materials are available for English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

# ASSESSMENT

The research on the development of English literacy strongly suggests that adequate assessments are essential for gauging the individual strengths and weaknesses of ELL students, making placement decisions, and tailoring instruction to meet student needs. Unfortunately, existing assessments are inadequate to the need in most respects. Much more research is needed in the area of assessment.

**District and Classroom Teacher**

*Q 26:  How can classroom assessments be used to inform instruction and monitor student progress?*

Some points to consider:

- Assessments of content should be done in the language of instruction.

- Teachers need to be aware that the child's level of proficiency in English can confound her/his demonstration of content knowledge.  Do not confuse what the student knows with how they express this knowledge through language; in other words, focus on the student's understanding of the question instead of language errors such as grammar mistakes or awkward phrasing.

- Classroom formative assessments provide valuable essential information about what the child has learned and still needs to learn to the teacher, the student, and their parents.

- Classroom formative assessments should be integrated with instruction to provide timely information and opportunities for "re-teaching" and focused learning.

*References:*
1. Gottlieb, pp. 123-125, "How should you access the academic achievement of English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 27:  What are some assessments that help predict performance in English reading?

Some things to consider are:

- There is some evidence that letter naming and tests of phonological awareness in English are good predictors of performance in English.

- For placement purposes, there is limited evidence about the effectiveness of teacher judgment in identifying ELL students who need intensive reading instruction or who might be at risk of dropping out of school.

- The reliability of teacher judgment can increase when they are given specific criteria to respond to rather than simply expressing their opinions spontaneously.

- While the research on determining the eligibility of ELLs for special education, language disorders, or learning disabilities services is still limited, it is recommended that students be assessed in both their first language and English, whenever possible

*References:*
1. Gottlieb, pp. 123-125, "How should you access the academic achievement of English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
2. Gottlieb, 2006.

## EXIT CRITERIA

**District**

## Q 28:  When should ELL students be exited from the ESL program and monitored?

Key considerations in setting exit policies/guidelines that reflect high expectations

- Policies should take into consideration the complex and non-linear nature of second language development by allowing for gradual transitioning to the general education classroom, basing decisions on actual English proficiency levels, and providing continued support for academic language development.

- Policies should reflect age-appropriate social and academic language proficiency levels (oral, literacy, and content-based language skills) and take into account the different linguistic demands of the grade level.

- Policies should include the use of both language and content assessments that provide information on the ELL student's preparedness to function in the general education classroom.

- Policies should take into account the preparedness of the general education staff to provide appropriate support to the ELL student.

- Policies should be developed collaboratively between the ESL and the general education staffs so that expectations for proficiency levels and academic preparedness are clear and consistent.

- Policies should be articulated clearly to all staff, students, and parents.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 125-127, "When should English language learners exit their bilingual/English as a second language program?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 29: What are commonly used cut-off scores for exiting students from the ESL program?

The Connecticut State Department of Education has mandated performance standards that must be met for an English Language Learner to exit from a program of English language instruction. Performance standards have been set for the following assessments: LAS Links for English language proficiency levels, the DRA for K-2 reading, and CMT and CAPT scores in mathematics, reading and writing.

Exit criteria are posted on the Connecticut State Department of Education website: www.sde.ct.gov.

## Q 30: What should happen after ELL students leave the ESL program?

The responsibility for educating ELL students should be assumed by the entire school.

- Even if an ELL student is no longer in an ESL program, their linguistic and cultural heritages are still a part of who they are and should continue to be affirmed and integrated into their education experience.

- After ELL students leave the ESL program, their continuing needs as English language learners should be met by everyone with whom they are in contact.

- While current federal requirements state that exited ELL students should be monitored for two years, the same standard for monitoring the progress of any child should apply throughout their education. Data from several states indicate that many former ELLs continue to underperform and their performance gaps grow as they move up the grades.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 127-129, "What should happen to English language learners after they leave the bilingual/English as a second language program designed for them?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

## Q 31: How do we find out how students who have been exited are doing?

Some strategies are:

- Continue to disaggregate academic achievement data by exited students.
- Assign exited students a specific code that will allow you to identify former ELL students within the last two years and another code to indicate whether the student was exited more than two years ago.
- Set up a data system that allows you to disaggregate exited students by different factors: e.g., grade at which student was exited, program type in which student participated, number of years in an ELL program.
- Administer follow-up surveys to students, parents, and teachers.

*References:*
1. de Jong, pp. 127-129, "What should happen to English language learners after they leave the bilingual/English as a second language program designed for them?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.

# APPENDIX A:
## Sample Case History Form

Children Acquiring English as a Second Language

Student Name:
Date:
School:
Completed by:

### Family History

1. Who lives with the child?
2. What languages do they speak?
3. Who else spends time with the child?
4. What languages do they speak?
5. What language does the child use most often at home?
6. What language does the child use most often with playmates?
7. What is the child's country of origin?
8. When did the student/family come to the U.S.?
9. Did the child/family spend time in other locations or other countries? How long?

### Language Development History

1. At what age did the child first begin to hear English?
2. Describe your child's speech/language when he first began hearing English.
3. Once English was introduced, did native language use decrease?
4. What language does your child understand better? (best?)
5. What language does your child speak better? (best?)
6. In which language does your child usually answer when you speak to him?
7. What language does your child prefer to speak? In what situations?
8. In what language does your child listen to the radio or watch television?
9. In what language does your child read for pleasure?
10. When did our child begin to use single words in her/his first/home language (L1)? Then sentences?
11. Did your child experience difficulty with her/his speech in L1?
12. Has your child experienced difficulty with receptive language in L1?
13. Has your child experienced difficulty with expressive language in L1?

### Educational History

1. Did your child attend day care? Head Start? Nursery School? In what language were these programs?
2. What age was your child when s/he first started school?
3. What language(s) was your child speaking at that time?
4. Was your child speaking one language better than another at that time
5. Did your child ever receive ESL or bilingual service? How long and how often?
6. What grades were completed in the native country?
7. What is the total number of months of instruction each year in the native country?
8. Trace school placement, curriculum, and language of instruction grade by grade.

### Parents' Background

1. What is the parents' educational level?
2. What is the parents/guardians' native language proficiency (speaking, reading, writing)?

3. What is the parents/guardians' English language proficiency (speaking, reading, writing)?

## Other Questions

1. How often do you visit your native country?
2. How long do you typically stay there?
3. What language does your child generally use with you and other family/friends during those visits?
4. When was your last visit? How long was your visit?
5. Does your child miss school to make those visits? How much?
6. Does your child hear English during those visits?
7. What were your child's English skills when you returned?

Courtesy of Linda Clock, 2010.

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**RESOURCES:**

**Center on Instruction, ELL Strand**
The Center on Instruction provides materials and resources to improve instruction and intervention for **English Language Learners**, including exemplary delivery models and professional development for teachers in content and language areas.
http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=ell&subcategory=&grade_start=&grade_end=

**Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners**
The Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) is committed to enhancing the educational experiences of English Language Learners (ELLs) by promoting cross-cultural awareness, sensitivity, parity, inclusion, and the improvement of instruction and curricula. It advocates equal educational opportunities for English Language Learners (ELLs).
http://www.capellct.org

**Doing What Works**
Doing What Works (DWW) is a website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of DWW is to create an online library of resources that may help teachers, schools, districts, states and technical assistance providers implement research-based instructional practice. The website includes a section on teaching literacy to K-5 English learners.
http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T_ID=13

**RESC Alliance**
The RESC Alliance is a formal alliance of Connecticut's six RESCs: Education Connection, Cooperative Educational Services (CES), Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), East Conn; and LEARN. The RESCs are public education agencies whose main purpose is to "furnish programs and services" to Connecticut's public school districts.
http://www.rescalliance.org/index.html

**The State Education Resource Center (SERC)**
SERC is a nonprofit agency primarily funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education. SERC provides professional development and information dissemination in the latest research and best practices to educators, service providers, and families throughout the state, as well as job-embedded technical assistance and training within schools, programs, and districts.

# SECTION II
# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT &
# EDUCATOR SUPPORTS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INITIATING AND PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Q 1: How can low incidence districts effectively use resources to provide appropriate professional development focusing on the needs of English Language Learners?*

As districts begin to address the emergence of an English Language Learner population, they will need to consider how to allocate and use limited resources to provide appropriate professional development such as assigning various *personnel* who will take responsibility for leading the planning and delivery; freeing up *time* during the school day or outside the school day for participating in professional development; and providing *funding* for costs such as presenters, materials, technology, or location, as needed.

The following ideas were suggested by CAPELL members:

- Contact the CT State Department of Education for technical assistance.

- Identify key stakeholders in the district who belong in the dialogue to move the work forward.

- Determine who will be the person(s) in charge of overseeing the professional development initiatives at the district level.

- Initiate a meeting of appropriate parties from the state and district and including key stakeholders from the community to form a planning group.

- Collaborate with other programs affecting ELLs, such as Title I, in using funds from both programs for substitutes who can then free up teachers of ELLs to work together during school time. During such times, teachers can work together to discuss student work, design modifications for lessons, as well as generate and share ideas, strategies, and resources they have found effective in working with ELLs.

- Network with other district level administrators to see how others have leveraged resources to provide professional development opportunities in their districts and/or schools.

- Partner with another low incidence district to pool resources.

- Explore available resources such as funding sources, professional development agencies, federally-funded in-service teacher training programs, professional networks of educators working with ELLs, or high incidence districts who may have the capacity to provide services or are willing to collaborate.

An excellent resource to help your district develop initial professional development trainings is the publication from the Center on Instruction: *Language Development for English Language Learners Professional Development Module (K-12).* This professional development module, intended for state and district leaders, provides background information on language development, language assessment, and K-12 vocabulary and academic language instruction. It is designed to be used as a four-hour train-the-trainer session but materials in the Facilitator's Guide also can be used as a study group tool with other ELL professionals or as a self-study guide. It comes as a Facilitator's Guide and PowerPoint presentation.

*References:*

1. Rivera, et al. 2009.

## *Q 2: How can districts find time to provide <u>district-wide</u> professional development?*

Maximize opportunities by coordinating with already-scheduled district professional development days and other district-wide meetings. The following suggestions were provided by CAPELL members:

- Offer to host a segment of the agenda at a regularly scheduled professional development event. For example:

  - ➢ Organize a panel that includes a district administrator, an ESL teacher, a general education/content area teacher, and a special education teacher speaking about their respective roles, challenges, and successes in collaborating on the education of ELLs. By providing this array of perspectives, participants will be exposed to a comprehensive and integrated picture of the educational needs of ELLs.

  - ➢ Highlight frequently asked questions and answers to dispel the myths that many educators unfamiliar with the ELL population still have.

- Plan a focused presentation for a break-out session at a district conference, followed by table discussions facilitated by ELL teachers.

- Arrange for a forum at a regularly scheduled meeting of district administrators to familiarize them with the federal and state mandates involving the education of ELLs as a start to ongoing training. Invite CT State Department of Education staff responsible for ESL and Bilingual Education to present or help identify a presenter.

## *Q 3: How can schools find the time and resources to provide school-based professional development?*

In addition to using some of the same strategies mentioned in Q2, other ideas suggested by CAPELL members are the following:

- Use common planning times to bring together general education and special education teachers, as well as specialists who work with ELLs in their classrooms to share challenges and learn strategies that are working.

- Plan a break-out session at faculty meetings focusing on such topics as the profile of ELL students at the school, data on ELL performance, and evidence-based instructional practices.

- Use part of an early release day to align work among teachers who share the same ELL students.

- Partner with another low incidence school either within your district or in another district.

- Invite certified ESL teachers as well as general education teachers with experience working with ELLs from a high incidence district to offer workshops, demonstrate effective practices, and facilitate discussions.

- Ensure that teachers, ESL as well as general education teachers, who participate in out-of-school trainings on effective strategies for ELLs, commit to sharing what they have learned. This approach helps build capacity within the school and saves on the expense of repeat trainings with external presenters.

## *Q 4: How can districts and schools decide whether to send staff for training and which staff members need training?*

Although the responsibility for the education of ELLs belongs to *every* educator, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient resources to involve all staff in training that is offered outside the school or district.

- Prioritize the selection of your audience by urgency, beginning with ESL teachers and general education teachers requesting assistance with their current students.

- Consider the match between the professional development that is being offered and the needs of your student population as well as the needs of the prospective participants.

*References:*
1. Hamayan & Freeman, 2005, pp. 108-109.

## ENGAGING DISTRICT/SCHOOL PERSONNEL

## *Q5: How can we get the need for in-service training recognized and target audiences engaged?*

A challenge often faced by low incidence ELL districts is generating and maintaining support for professional development for administrators and teachers on the educational needs of ELLs. Below are suggestions from the literature and from CAPELL members on ways to engage different audiences.

- Survey your target audiences to determine what their respective priority needs are and use these responses to make the case for the need.

  - ➢ Use the information from the survey (needs assessment) to identify the topics that are uppermost in people's minds.

- Begin by offering sessions that focus on immediate needs that will also have the most impact on improving the education of ELLs (e.g., increasing general education/content area teachers' understanding of second language development and making the connection to "best practices' and "proven strategies" in the classroom).

- Make sure that professional development on the education of ELLs is connected to the goals and current professional development initiatives of the district/school. For example, if the professional development focus is formative assessment include information or a focused session on formative assessment strategies for ELL students.

- Convene a professional development team that includes the district ELL coordinator or ESL teacher, general education/content area teachers, special education teachers, specialists such as guidance personnel, and a representative of the CT State Department of Education, if possible, to discuss and clarify mutual expectations in using the CT ELL Framework and the TESOL standards.

- Build support for ongoing professional development by demonstrating that the professional development helps improve student learning. Disseminate results to teachers, administrators, parents, students, volunteers, and community stakeholders to gain their support.

- Call on existing expertise from trusted resources, such as administrators and ESL teachers from other districts similar to your own, or staff developers from your RESC or from higher education. Engage experienced teachers (perhaps from high incidence districts) to present or facilitate a session or to field questions.

- Invite experienced teachers to demonstrate the strategies they use in their classrooms or organize observational visits to classrooms taught by experienced teachers.

- Find ways to integrate classroom planning and teaching with professional development; get staff working in teams, creating a natural "lab" for teachers to learn from each other and support each other toward excellence.

*References:*

1. Hamayan & Freeman, 2006, pp.164-165.
2. Estrada & Hamilton, pp.180-182, "How can administrators sustain and extend teachers' professional development regarding English language learners?" In Hamayan & Freeman, 2006.
3. Hassell, 1999.

## *Q 6: How does one open the minds of students and staff who misunderstand ELLs?*

Develop cultural competency through training and activities with staff and students to open doors to new understandings and appreciation of the diverse backgrounds of the school community. Explore multiple perspectives to enhance understanding, appreciate struggles and successes, and find helpful new resources, Exposing staff to different perspectives can be an eye-opener for everyone and especially for those whose life experiences may have been limited primarily to a single language and culture.

- Invite a presenter or facilitator to provide a series of sessions on strategies that foster cultural responsiveness in the classroom. Focus on strategies that incorporate knowledge and information from the heritage of the various students and teachers at the school into the curriculum to increase understanding across cultures, validate the resources that different cultures bring, and affirm the value of students' backgrounds.

- Help your staff set up regular study groups to learn more about the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of your students and staff.

- Facilitate student "speak outs" (i.e., opportunities at which students can speak about their experiences) to discuss common topics from various cultural perspectives as a tool for understanding.

***Resources;***
1. Trumbull & Pacheco, 2005.
2. National Association for Multicultural Education

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

### *Q 7: What do general education/content area teachers who work with ELLs need to know?*

General education/content area teachers who work with ELLs need exposure and increasing skill development in the following areas:

- Understanding the process of second language development (in particular, the development of English-as-a-second-language) and its implications for effective instructional practice.

- Teaching students at different levels of English language proficiency by differentiating instruction.

- Exploring cultural understandings needed to match the needs of diverse learners.

- Using proven or promising instructional practices and appropriate assessment strategies for ELLs such as the use of sheltered instructional methodologies when teaching content.

- Learning how to elicit students' prior knowledge and build on it.

- Engaging in inquiry on who the students are and the implications of their unique experiences for placement into programs and for classroom instruction.

***Refrences:***
1. Coady, Hamann, et al., 2003.
2. Francis, Rivera, et al., 2006 a.
3. Francis, Rivera, et al., 2006 b

### *Q 8: What are some key strategies for content area instruction that should be the focus of professional development for content area teachers?*

Recommended strategies for content area teachers working with ELLs are the following:

- Create classroom opportunities for explicit and intensive development of sophisticated vocabulary and academic language.

- Focus on oral language development as well as social language communication skills.

- Use sheltered instruction strategies and techniques to make content more comprehensible to ELL students and promote academic English language development. One such program is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), a research based model that can be used effectively in a general education classroom with all students.

- Provide numerous opportunities that expose students to a variety of print materials and other resources.

- Teach strategies on how to analyze challenging text.

- Provide guided opportunities to engage in structured academic talk as well as in writing for academic purposes.

- Provide opportunities for independent reading with structure and purpose.

*References:*
1. Torgesen, et al. (2007)

## Q 9: What strategies can we use to encourage teachers to use the Connecticut State Department of Education ELL Framework in alignment with TESOL standards in designing curriculum?

Knowing the reality of the students – their educational history and cultural context – can help teachers discover the need to be attentive not only to the content of their instruction and to the CT ELL Framework and TESOL standards but also to how the curriculum needs to be modified to incorporate the learning demands of their ELL students.

- Review the CT ELL Framework and do a crosswalk with the TESOL standards to understand how the two complement and support each other and how the curriculum may need to be modified to include opportunities to meet these standards.

- Use student-focused scenarios to understand how the specifics of their educational histories and levels of language proficiency in both their home language and English impact the kinds of modifications that are needed; use these scenarios to practice developing modifications that will make the curriculum more accessible.

References:
1. CT ELL Framework
2. TESOL PreK-12 ESL Standards

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http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Academic%20Literacy.pdf

Trumbull, E. & Pacheco, M. (2005). Leading with Diversity: Cultural Competencies for Teacher Preparation and Professional Development. The Education Alliance, Brown University and Pacific Resources for Learning. Available online at: http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/leading_diversity/index.php

**Doing What Works, Teaching Literacy in English to K-5 English Learners**
http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T_ID=13
Doing What Works (DWW) is a website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of DWW is to create an online library of resources that may help teachers, schools, districts, states and technical assistance providers implement research-based instructional practice. The "Teaching Literacy in English to K-5 English Learners" provides multimedia presentations on the following recommended strategies: screen and monitor progress, provide reading interventions, teach vocabulary, develop academic English, and schedule peer learning.

**Center on Instruction, English Language Learning Strand**
http://www.centeroninstruction.org/resources.cfm?category=ell&subcategory=&grade_start=&grade_end
The Center on Instruction provides materials and resources to improve instruction and intervention for **English Language Learners**, including exemplary delivery models and professional development for teachers in content and language areas.

**National Association for Multicultural Education: Advocates for Educational Equity and Social Justice**
http://nameorg.org/

The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) is a volunteer organization that brings together individuals and groups with an interest in multicultural education from all levels of education, different academic disciplines and from diverse educational institutions and occupations. NAME hosts national and international conferences, provides leadership in national and state dialogues on equity, diversity and multicultural education and develops publications.

# SECTION III
# FAMILY, SCHOOL, & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SCHOOL, FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

## Why is it important?

*From the research and other literature:*

"Educators as well as noneducators often question the value of family involvement. Does it really make a difference? According to the research, the answer is yes. Sometimes, results come in more traditional measures—student achievement, attendance, or behavior. These measures tend to be based in schools and controlled by school staff. At other times, there are less traditional benefits, such as improved student or family self-efficacy about education, higher expectations for students…, more effective ways to support family engagement, greater understanding of the viewpoints of others, or student planning for the future. These measures may be driven by the school, the home, the community, families, or students.

The key is not that the source of additional student support comes from a specific entity, but that students benefit significantly when there is an individual encouraging and expecting the child to be academically successful. In fact, there is evidence that it is not 'the parent' that makes the difference, but instead it is adults who take the time to talk to students, express an interest in their education, and hold them accountable for learning. Students of all ages benefit academically, emotionally, and physically when an adult is actively involved in the day-to-day events of their lives, including school activities."

*(The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture - A Review of Current Literature; p.2; [http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf](http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf))*

## What does this mean for parents of ELLs?

"To say that parental involvement is critical to the success of any program has become an adage; so much so that we often say it without paying proper heed to what it actually means. For programs that serve students who have special characteristics, such as English language learners (ELLs), it is particularly important to think about the why and the how of parental involvement. Given the right kind of environment, parents of ELLs can be involved in the school, and they can become an administrator's and teacher's best allies in providing the support that ELLs need at home. …

Parents of ELLs are often farther away from the community of the school than any other parents within that community. However, their physical absence from the school does not mean they do not support their children's education. It may simply be a sign that the parents are reluctant or unable to come to school and to participate in their children's education in this way. Notions of parental involvement and how necessary parental involvement is vary significantly among families and across cultures. For some families, participation in a child's schooling may mean coming to the school building at least once a week. For others, it may mean making sure that the child has a quiet place in the home to complete homework….

Being a partner in the educational process is a concept that is completely foreign to many ELL parents. It is simply not what 'good parents' do in other countries. In most other countries, the school and the parents are not expected to work together as we do in the United States…. In order for parents to become involved in and supportive of their children's education, they must understand the educational policies, programs, and practices available to their

children at school, and they must feel welcome in the school." *Book: English Language Learners at School: A Guide for Administrators; Chapter Two, p. 35-36 & p. 40*

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| What does the law say? |
| :---: |

According to the U.S. Department of Education's *Non-Regulatory Guidance document on Parental Involvement (Title I, Part A)*:

**A-1.    What is parental involvement?**

"Parental involvement always has been a centerpiece of Title I.  However, for the first time in the history of the ESEA, it has a specific statutory definition. The statute defines parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

- that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;

- that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and

- that other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (Parental Involvement). [Section 9101(32), ESEA.]"

*(Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A; p. 3;* http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc*)*

The framework for this resource guide is based on the work of Joyce Epstein and a team of researchers at Johns Hopkins University. These researchers have worked with educators, parents, students, community partners, and other researchers for over 20 years to learn how elementary, middle, and high schools develop and maintain programs of school, family and community partnerships.

The framework is described in the guide *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (see reference in the Bibliography section of this guide).

The Connecticut State Board of Education indicated the importance of this framework in a Position Statement adopted November 5, 2003. This statement recommended that schools develop programs related to the six standards excerpted below, standards that parallel Epstein's. The following sections of this resource guide follow these six standards. *[Editor's Note: Although the wording for each standard is exactly as it appears in the position statement, the order of the standards has been changed to reflect the order in which they are addressed in this resource document.]*

- **Communicating** – promote clear two-way communication between the school and families about school programs and children's progress.
- **Parenting** – promote and support parenting skills and the family's primary role in encouraging children's learning at each age and grade level.
- **Learning at home** – involve families in learning activities at home, including interactive homework and other curriculum-linked or enrichment activities.
- **Collaborating with the community** – provide coordinated access to community resources for children and families, and serve as a resource to the community.
- **Volunteering** – provide appropriate training and involve families in instructional and support areas both in and out of the school.
- **Decision making** – provide opportunities for all families to develop and strengthen their leadership role in school decisions.

*(Position Statement on School–Family–Community Partnerships, p. 1-2, http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Family/SFCP/pos.pdf)*

The Connecticut State Board of Education subsequently adopted a revised set of these standards in a position statement dated November, 2009, adding clarification and expanding upon the definitions, as excerpted below. In addition, the Board included policy guidance for the position statement, which can be accessed here: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCPPolicyGuidance.pdf.

"The Connecticut State Board of Education believes education is a shared responsibility throughout a student's life from birth to adulthood. Family, school staff and community members make important contributions to student success and the best results come when all three work together as equal partners. …The State Board of Education endorses a research-based definition of school-family-community partnerships that can be applied to policies and practices across the state that result in student success. School-family-community partnerships are: a shared responsibility with schools and other community organizations committed to engaging families in meaningful, culturally respectful ways …continuous across a student's life …and carried out everywhere that children learn.

A Comprehensive Approach: In order to encourage comprehensive school-family-community partnerships, the Board recommends that school districts develop programs addressing each of the following six standards:

*[Editor's Note: Again, the wording used below is exactly from the excerpt but the order has been changed to reflect the order the standards are addressed in this resource document.]*

- **Communicating and creating a welcoming climate –** Promote ongoing, clear, meaningful, and two-way communication about school programs and student learning, and develop personal relationships among school staff, families, students and community members.

- **Parent Education –** Identify and prioritize as needed, secondary school completion options and English language learning services for parents of school age children. Support the family's essential role in encouraging children's learning at every age and in developing positive parent-child relationships.

- **Supporting learning at home –** Involve families in learning and enrichment activities at home and in the community that are linked to academic standards.

- **Collaborating with community –** Provide coordinated access to community resources, serve as a resource to the community and offer opportunities for community service.

- **Volunteering –** Involve families in instruction and support, both in and out of school, and in creating a family-friendly atmosphere at school.

- **Decision-making and advocacy –** Provide opportunities for families to develop and strengthen their leadership roles in school decisions, especially those related to student performance and school improvement."

*(Position statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships for Student Success; p. 1-2;*

*http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCP.pdf)*

# COMMUNICATING

***Q 1: How can our district design effective forms of direct school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and students' progress?***

*From the research:*

**Learn about the context of students' homes:**

"There is no doubt that contextual factors in the home can either facilitate or stifle home-based support for student learning. There are families who are more comfortable in reaching out to school staff; others are reluctant to do so. When school staff [members] have a better understanding of their students' home cultures, families' parenting practices, home contexts, home crises, or significant family and community events, they can develop processes and strategies to bridge school-based and home-based activities and increase support for student learning."
*(The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture - A Review of Current Literature; p.14; http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf)*

**Help parents open the lines of communication:**

"Help all families navigate the educational system. Educators are very skilled at negotiating school environments; however, at times, they forget how foreign and difficult this system can be for new families. Providing parents with key questions to probe student understanding, information on school structures and policies, and other educational issues will help them to successfully work with the system to help meet the needs of their children."
*(Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections? p.5; http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf)*

*Additional suggestions and comments from CAPELL members' experiences gathered during meetings, one-on-one exchanges, and received via email:*

- The two strategies below aim to open the lines of communication from the parent to the school and district as well as build parents' knowledge of school staff:

  - Parents should be provided with a list of the names of the school and district staff and their contact information such as telephone numbers, email addresses, etc. The list should also indicate the areas of responsibility of the school and district staff so the parent can contact the correct person. Where appropriate, the information sheet should be in multiple languages.

  - Have a message center at the high school that is in Spanish. After parents leave a message, a person who will be hired by the district will respond to their message and thus make it easier for parents to meet with someone at school and ask questions.

- Several strategies in place in Connecticut center on interpreters for parents when the communications are in English. (Note that in general, the use of students to do the interpreting was not condoned by CAPELL members. The student may not understand what is being asked of them or might be biased when it is a question pertaining to their or their siblings' behavior or academic progress. "Most importantly," it places the parent as a second class citizen in the process.)

- In some districts, professionals are paid to do the interpreting for parent meetings.

- In others, ESL teachers find and interview potential interpreters through civic organizations, churches, and colleges.

- In another district, advanced ESL students in the adult education classes are recruited as interpreters. This program has been regionalized and a statewide interpreter list has been created for schools.

- One district takes advantage of the interpretation services offered by the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC).

- Two suggestions focus on getting parents involved in their children's education early:
  - One strategy has been to connect with the parents of ELL preschool students.
  - Another suggestion is to meet with kindergarten parents at the beginning of the school year and continue with monthly meetings.

- Three other suggestions focus on providing easy access to school resources both within the school and where the students live:
  - Parent Resource Centers in schools provide a place for parents to meet with other parents during the school day, including those in the same cultural/language group, to collect printed information, to view educational videos, and to ask questions and get advice. Materials provided by the U.S. Dept. of Education (USED) are often printed in multiple languages and can be distributed here. And if the school remains open into the evening, then parents who work during the day can also have access to these resources.

  - The school environment can be unfamiliar and unwelcoming, and caregivers' own school-related experiences are varied and even can be negative. Thus, to help break down barriers, at least one district has been trying to have more family meetings outside of the home, such as at a community room of apartment complexes where students live, so that parents don't have to travel. (Many parents don't have transportation.) Schools can provide supervised childcare at the facility, or parents can bring their children with them to the meetings.

  - To encourage parents to develop good literacy practices with their children, teachers and a social worker from one elementary school bring books to community rooms of apartment complexes where students live, and then model to parents how to read to and with their children.

- One district believes that a major obstacle preventing immigrant parents from communicating with the school frequently or even when needs arise is the issue of legal and illegal immigration. Districts need to be sensitive to the fact that some parents are fearful of dealing with "authority figures" for fear of consequences if their status is illegal or undocumented.

*Suggested Resource:*

**Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)**
http://www.crec.org/

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From the "About" CREC webpage: "Since 1966, the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), working with and for its member districts, has developed a wide array of cost-effective and high-quality programs and services to meet the educational needs of children and adults in the Capitol Region."

## PARENTING SUPPORT & EDUCATION

### *Q 2: How can we help all families establish home environments to support children as students?*

*From the research:*

"Help families learn strategies to support students' academic needs. School staff [members] commonly assume that their directions are clear and that family members have the skill and knowledge to perform the tasks they suggest. In reality, families often have limited experience with or skill for the tasks they are asked to perform. However, families can provide effective support for classroom instruction when school staff work with families to help them learn strategies that reinforce classroom learning.

Encourage the development of the total child as this greatly impacts academics. School staff often state that it is not only the academic development of the child that is important to student success, but also the developmental readiness of the child to participate as an active learner. Sleep, food, health, and mental status are just a few of the important issues in this area."
*(The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture - A Review of Current Literature; p.5;*
*http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf)*

*Additional suggestions and comments* from CAPELL members' experiences gathered during meetings, one-on-one exchanges, and received via email:

- One member noted that successful parent involvement programs should be comprehensive in that they focus not only on school priorities but also respond to parent needs and expertise, and consider their work life. Outreach to social services can assist district and school staff in addressing student needs for housing and other support such as healthcare.

- These strategies focus on programs available in some districts:

    - In more than one district, schools are having success notifying new and limited English speaking parents about PAT (Parents as Teachers).

    - One practitioner believes that the literacy level of the parents is crucial in getting them involved in the schools. Professional developers from one "very successful" free literacy program, Motheread, came and taught parents how to read in English to their children.

    - PEP (Parents as Educational Partners), provides parents and grandparents of ELL students with ESOL instruction that is linked to their (grand) child's education. The program has seven main units: The U.S. school system; School personnel and the school day; School procedures; Parent-Teacher Conferences; Report cards and curriculum; Study skills and homework; and School health procedures.

*Suggested Resources:*

- **Motheread, Inc.**
  http://www.motheread.org/

  "Motheread is a nationally acclaimed private, non-profit organization that combines the teaching of literacy skills with child development and family empowerment issues. ... Motheread offers classes for both adults and children. In adult classes, participants learn to be story readers, writers, and tellers in a group structure that supports their own sense of worth and ability. These classes are appropriate for all adults, regardless of reading ability or prior educational experience. By teaching the 'why' of reading rather than just emphasizing the 'how,' classes encourage parents to be reading role models for their children. For children, Story Exploring provides a structured environment for learning reading, critical-thinking, and problem solving skills."

- **The Parents as Educational Partners (PEP): School-Related Curriculum for Language Minority Parents**
  http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/family-pep.html

  "The PEP Curriculum addresses the need to provide limited English proficient (LEP) parents support to feel comfortable participating in their children's education. Based on a needs assessment of parents and teachers, the Parents as Educational Partners Curriculum provides adult ESL instruction, information about the U.S. school system, and strategies for school involvement. The curriculum also assists LEP parents in overcoming the language and cultural barriers that make them particularly vulnerable to being left out of their children's educational experiences." PEP is part of the Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC): http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/esl.html.

- **Parents as Teachers (PAT)**
  http://www.parentsasteachers.org
  From the About Us page: "Parents as Teachers is the overarching program philosophy of providing parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. The organizational vehicle for delivering that knowledge and support is Parents as Teachers National Center." There are several dozen PAT programs throughout Connecticut.

## LEARNING AT HOME

*Q 3: What information and ideas can districts provide to families about how they can help children, of all grades, at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning?*

*From the research:*

"When schools create take home learning kits, families are not limited in helping students by their lack of supplies."

*(Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections? p.4; http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf)*

***Additional suggestions and comments** from CAPELL members' experiences gathered during meetings, one-on-one exchanges, and received via email:*

- These suggestions focus on guidance schools can give parents on creating a supportive environment to help children, of all ages, succeed with school work. According to CAPELL members, schools can encourage parents to:

  ➢ Provide a quiet place for the child to study, and uninterrupted study time each day at home.

  ➢ Provide materials and supplies needed to complete school assignments, e.g. scissors, tape, markers, rulers, a dictionary, a thesaurus, pens and pencils.

  ➢ Help the child set goals for each grading period or school year and identify what they would like to accomplish during that time. Then at regular intervals, help them monitor their own progress and make adjustments as needed letting them judge for themselves how well they are sticking to their goals.

  ➢ Develop a relationship with the child's teacher to be aware of the general assignments for the day, week or semester.

- Other suggestions focus on guidance schools can give parents on literacy activities. According to CAPELL members, schools can encourage parents to:

  ➢ Ask schools to record class reading assignments or make tapes of stories, for bilingual homes or homes where grandparents or even parents are not comfortable reading with their children.

  ➢ Read to students in their native language to provide a good model of literacy. This is even possible for parents who aren't literate themselves; parents can do activities such as talking about pictures in the children's books with the children.

  ➢ Give the children a chance to read to family members.

  ➢ Take the children to the local library and have them secure a library card.

  ➢ Write, e.g. notes, letters, a diary, forms, etc.

- Additional strategies focus on guidance schools can give parents about activities they can do to impart parental guidance while developing children's communication skills:

  ➢ Have "school talk" each night around the dinner table or when children get home from school, with children talking about their activities at school that day.

  ➢ Make a display of children's schoolwork in the home. Have children explain to the family what the work is all about.

  ➢ Discuss with children what the family watches on TV.

  ➢ Discuss why some movies are better than others.

*Suggested Resource:*

- Colorin Colorado!
  http://www.colorincolorado.org

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This is a bilingual site for families and educators of English language learners, including a section created "just for parents and families to provide you with the information you need to help your child become a good reader and a successful student." (http://www.colorincolorado.org/families)

## COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

*Q 4: What are some resources and services from the community that districts can use to strengthen school programs, communications, family practices, and student learning and development? What are some strategies for working with these resources and services once they have been identified?*

*Strategies and resources suggested by research and other literature on parent involvement:*

- **Know your community:**

    ➢ "Identify the religious, cultural, political, civic and social organizations in your community that work with minority and low-income parents and residents;
    ➢ Identify parents, community advocates and business leaders who are well respected and have credibility with culturally and linguistically diverse populations;
    ➢ Create a contact list that has the most up-to date information about leaders and organizations and what issues matter to them most;
    ➢ Meet regularly with as many community leaders and groups as possible to discuss ways you can work together; and
    ➢ Follow-through regularly with community groups on next steps: share information."

    *(Family and Community Involvement: Reaching out to Diverse Communities;* on the *Strategy 1: Know your Community* page*; http://www.sedl.org/pubs/family29/)*

- **Involve the community:**

    The Florida Parental Information and Resource Center at the University of South Florida (http://www.floridapartnership.usf.edu/) developed a kit called "Six Sundays for School Success," whereby community churches are called on to assist schools in communicating messages to parents and families.  As part of this program, religious figures in the community allot a certain amount of the time during the homily to making announcements about the schools that their parishioners attend.  The Hawaii Parent Information Resource Center has tailored this program to its own communities, the Sundays Project (http://www.hawaiipirc.org/sundays/english).  Programs like these make another connection between the schools and the community and the messages can be delivered in the language of the parishioners.

- **Make maximum use of community resources:**

    One descriptive research study found that the strategies some schools and districts use include assisting parents with English and GED instruction.  These learning opportunities can also be used to incorporate guidance on the benefits of parent involvement.  Depending upon the community, schools and districts can notify parents of these resources or offer them within the school or district:

- ➤ "English as a second language, GED, adult basic education, and work-readiness programs are aired on cable television. These programs help meet the needs of parents who are on waiting lists in the district's adult education program.
- ➤ GED courses are offered in both Spanish and English. Parents in English as a second language classes are invited to take computer technology courses to be able to help them facilitate home-school learning.
- ➤ Parents who attend the English language learner classes agree to attend three to five family-involvement activities at the child's school and report back to the center about their experiences.
- ➤ Intensive language instruction is offered to parents who are new immigrants.

- English language learner program develops a video that focuses on the importance of attendance, family involvement, and extracurricular activities for high school students. The video also provides information on alternative paths to high school graduation."

*(Parent Involvement Strategies in Urban Middle and High Schools in the Northeast and Islands Region; p. 15-16; http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=117)*

***Additional suggestions and comments*** *from CAPELL members' experiences gathered during meetings, one-on-one exchanges, and received via email:*

- One way of communicating with parents who have a limited command of the English language is by establishing working relationships with community organizations that provide services to the parents' specific ethnic or language groups. Once these relationships are established, schools can potentially distribute materials through these agencies and/or have school meetings in the offices of these organizations.

- Schools and districts can also look to the YMCA, Parks and Recreation, and churches as venues for meetings.

- Libraries can act as community resource centers. They not only can provide books in multiple languages that parents can use to read to their children and that older students can access, they often also provide the space to read these books as well as host literacy classes. In addition, libraries often house videos in many languages whose aim is to teach English to adults.

- As an example of a program, the Susan B. Anthony organization brought ELL girls in one district together for six sessions in the summer to discuss self-esteem issues. The counselor who facilitated this program is now helping to develop an informal literacy program in Spanish after school during the school year. In this program, the mothers will also have a chance to interact with the girls, such as by reading together.

***Suggested Resources***

- **International Institute of Connecticut (IIC)**
  http://www.iiconn.org/

  The IIC "is a non-profit, non-sectarian social service agency dedicated to the needs of immigrants, refugees and their families. Support is provided through direct professional services, counseling, advocacy and the advancement of fair and humane public policy." According to CAPELL members, IIC provides social services for any immigrant, legal or not, in terms of filling out papers, forms, translations, providing interpreters and English as a Second Language services, and more.

- **Florida Parental Information and Resource Center** at the University of South Florida
  http://www.floridapartnership.usf.edu/

  "The Florida PIRC at USF provides training and technical assistance to schools and districts on ways to effectively involve parents in their children's education in order for all students to achieve at the highest academic level. The Florida PIRC at USF also helps schools and districts meet the requirements for parent involvement of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Title I legislation."

- **Hawaii Parent Information Resource Center**
  (*http://www.hawaiipirc.org/*)

  From the "About" HPIRC webpage: "HPIRC, or the Hawaii Parent Information Resource Center is a partnership of not-for-profit family centers, the Hawaii Department of Education (HDOE), and targeted schools on the islands of Oahu, Hawaii, Kauai, and Molokai. We aim to enrich the education of our children by strengthening the relationship between the school and family."

- **Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)**
  http://www2.ed.gov/programs/pirc)

  From the USDOE website: "A part of the office of Innovation and Improvement of the U.S Department of Education, PIRCs help implement successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and that strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children.
  (Information about the activities of the **Connecticut Parent Information Resource Center** (CTPIRC) can be found at: http://www.ctpirg.org)

## VOLUNTEERING

### Q 5: How can my district recruit and organize parent help and support?

*From the research:*

- "Middle and high schools can enrich, extend, and support their curricular and extracurricular programs by organizing volunteers in new ways. Among many activities, middle and high schools may collect information on family members' talents, occupations, interests, and availability to serve as volunteers. Parents, family members, and other volunteers may help to enrich students' subject classes; improve career explorations; serve as language translators; monitor attendance and call parents of absent students… Schools may organize volunteers to serve as homeroom parents, neighborhood representatives, or sports and club contacts and establish telephone trees to help parents communicate with each other about school programs and events." (*School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action; p. 223-224 2nd Edition; New edition available at: http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/publications/manual.htm*)

- "Generally speaking, in addition to having practices that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, developing ELL parental involvement includes supporting families, promoting communication, and advocacy for empowerment."
  *(Promoting ELL Parental Involvement: Challenges in Contested Times; p. 11;*
  *http://epsl.asu.edu/epru/documents/EPSL-0801-250-EPRU.pdf)*

- "Broaden opportunities for interacting with parents: [P.] Wrigley (2000) emphasizes the need to cultivate links between home and school by going beyond translating documents into the families' native languages. She describes a school in rural Virginia whose principal greatly increased the participation of Hispanic parents through a series of parent meetings, conducted in Spanish, on the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education."
  *(Preparing to serve English language learner students; p.25;*
  *http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=151)*

- "When childcare is provided, parents don't have to worry about students' siblings disturbing meetings or other gatherings. When staff help to arrange carpools, those families who don't have adequate transportation can attend meetings and activities at the school or other community locations. When families are told that it doesn't have to be a mother or father who attends activities, then all of those involved in rearing the child [also] feel welcomed to participate."
  *(Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?; p.4;*
  *http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf)*

- Districts should focus on creating a welcoming environment: "…the sense of welcome families feel has a direct effect on their involvement in their children's education.… Typically, the level or value of this involvement is determined by the following factors:
  - ➢ The adults' personal educational experience and knowledge
  - ➢ Previous levels of involvement
  - ➢ Beliefs about their children's ability and knowledge
  - ➢ **Invitations, not just from the school, but from the child as well**" [Bold added for emphasis]

*(The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture - A Review of Current Literature; p.10;*
*http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf)*

*Additional suggestions and comments* from CAPELL members' experiences gathered during meetings, one-on-one exchanges, and received via email:

- Four suggestions on volunteering focus on practical ways of first making the parents feel welcomed by the school and school-oriented organizations. Schools can:
  - ➢ Work with the local PTO or PTA, especially in elementary schools, and gradually lead them into parent organizations.
  - ➢ Provide an English speaking mentor for the parent.
  - ➢ Have refreshments and make the first meeting a positive experience. Have a social "getting-to-know-you" event .
  - ➢ Organize the parents by language groups, finding an interpreter in their language, to break the ice.

- One suggestion echoes others by focusing on the meeting place:

  - ➢ The physical plant – the school building – can limit participation. Having the meetings in a smaller, less intimidating facility, such as a smaller building on the school campus or in another location such as a church, could help.

- Two additional suggestions take into consideration childcare during parent/school meetings:

  - ➢ In one Connecticut district, for the bilingual parent meeting at night, there is an aide that is hired to babysit while the parents attend the meeting.

> ➢ When parents bring their children to school parent meetings, another district enlists bi-lingual high school age students to help an adult watch them as part of their community service activities.

*Suggested Resources: Note: these resources, although geared toward parent groups in general, offer ideas schools and districts can use to encourage parent involvement in their children's education.*

- **National PTA**
  http://www.pta.org/

  The National PTA offers a variety of programs to help parents, students, and communities. The page "Family-School Partnerships" includes links to resources to build involvement. (http://www.pta.org/family_school_partnerships.asp)

- **PTO Today.com**
  http://ptotoday.com/multicultural
  PTO Today provides products, programs and services as well as hundreds of articles to the K-8 school parent groups regardless of affiliation. The multicultural section accessed by the link above contains articles and insights on reaching out to all parents and creating an inclusive PTO. Articles such as *Multicultural Outreach: No Barriers to Involvement* and *Connect with Immigrant Parents* contain tips that schools, as well as parent groups, can use to engage parents.

## DECISION MAKING

*Q 6: How can my district include parents in school decisions and help to develop parent leaders and representatives? How can my district teach staff how to include parents in decision-making?*

**From the research:**

- "Decision making activities enable families to participate in decisions about school programs that affect their own and other children. Family representatives on School Councils, school improvement teams, and various committees and in PTA, PTO, or other parent organizations ensure that parents' voices are heard on important school decisions… However, all families need good information about school policies and opportunities to offer ideas and reactions to improve their schools." (*School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action; p. 59 2nd Edition; New edition available at: http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/publications/manual.htm*)

- "[Districts] and schools may offer parents and teachers training in leadership, decision making, policy advocacy, and collaboration. [These] activities help to identify and provide information desired by families about school policies, course offerings, student placements and groups, special services, tests and assessments, annual test results for students, and evaluations of school programs." (*School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action; p. 226 2nd Edition; New edition available at: http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/publications/manual.htm*)

- "Some schools offer teachers, principals, and school staff information and strategies on how to reach out to parents and work with them as partners. This can be especially beneficial to school staff who typically received little or no pre-service training in these skills… Professional development activities may include sessions on making telephone calls, home visits, and other contact strategies, students' home culture and

appreciating diversity, communication skills for parent-teacher conferences, and involving parents as leaders and decision makers in the schools." *(Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches;* from the chapter: *Providing Information and Training to Parents and School Staff*; http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FamInvolve/index.html)

- "Practice outreach rather than traditional approaches to involvement… When school staff reach out to parents and invite them into the school to participate in collaborative efforts, and assist families in supporting their hopes and dreams for their children, a stronger family involvement program can result." *(Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?; p.5; http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf )*

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**Background research and literature:**

**A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement**
*2002; Henderson, Anne & Mapp, Karen; SEDL (formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools; 234 pages.*
http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf

> From page 9: "The purpose of this publication, A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement, is to examine [a characteristic] of high-performing schools: parent and community involvement and its role in impacting on student achievement. This publication is the fourth in the series of Evidence publications authored or co-authored by Anne Henderson. It is also the second in the series of publications by SEDL's National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools."

**Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family/School Partnerships**
*2006; Henderson, Anne, Mapp, Karen, Johnson, Vivian, & Davies, Don; New Press; 352 pages. (Book available for purchase at online booksellers.)*
http://www.thenewpress.com/bakesale

> "Packed with tips from principals and teachers, checklists, and an invaluable resource section, Beyond the Bake Sale reveals how to build strong collaborative relationships and offers practical advice for improving interactions between parents and teachers, from insuring that PTA groups are constructive and inclusive to navigating the complex issues surrounding diversity in the classroom."

**Building Support for Better Schools: Seven Steps to Engaging Hard-to-Reach Communities**
*2000; SEDL (formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools; 36 pages.*

http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam27.html

> "This practical guide is designed for educators, civic leaders, community organizers or anyone else interested in involving traditionally hard-to-reach communities. It offers advice on getting to know your community, identifying issues important to the community, and designating and training facilitators. This publication is also available in Spanish."

**CAPELL Guidelines for ELL Program Design**

*In process*

The Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners is creating The CAPELL Guidelines for ELL Program Design to serve a variety of purposes:

1. to help districts with ELLs align their program goals with those of other successful programs in Connecticut
2. to assist school or district administrators in developing, improving, or gauging the quality of their ELL programs
3. to serve as a blueprint for Boards of Education to put their districts in compliance with state and federal mandates regarding the education of language minority students, also known as English Language Learners (ELLs)

4. to provide access to information and resources regarding the education of ELLs

**Diversity: School, Family and Community Connections**

*2003; Boethel, Martha, Averett, Amy (contributor), Buttram, Joan (contributor), Donnelly, Deborah (contributor), Jordan, Catherine (contributor), Myers, Margaret (contributor), Orozco, Evangalina (contributor), Wood, Lacy (contributor); SEDL (formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools; 93 pages*
http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam35.html

> From the SEDL abstract: "this is SEDL's third research synthesis in a series focusing on family and community connections with schools. This synthesis focuses specifically on three categories: race or ethnicity, culture (including language), and socioeconomic status. The report also explores barriers to involvement for minority and low-income families, strategies that have been used to address those barriers, and recommendations that local educational leaders can adapt to address their specific needs. It is based on a review of over 64 studies."

**Engaging Latino Families for Student Success: How Parent Education Can Reshape Parents' Sense of Place in the Education of Their Children**

*2001; Chrispeels, Janet & Rivero, Elvia; Peabody Journal of Education, 1532-7930, 76(2); Pages 119 – 169*

Available for purchase from Routledge: http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a785830383&db=all

> ERIC abstract: This study "Investigated how Latino parents defined their roles in their children's education and their relationships with schools, examining how they perceived their sense of place before and after attending the Parent Institute for Quality Education. Survey, interview, and observation data indicated that after attending the Institute, parents had expanded concepts of involvement in their children's education at home and at school." http://eric.ed.gov (ERIC ID# EJ654790)

**English Language Learner Resource Guide: A Guide for Rural Districts with a Low Incidence of ELLs**

*2004; Hill, Jane Donnelly & Flynn, Kathleen; Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL); 29 pages.*

http://www.mcrel.org/topics/products/203/

> From the McREL abstract: "This guide is designed help rural school districts with a low incidence of ELLs to develop the capacity to build and implement a comprehensive program that meets both the academic and language proficiency needs of ELLs." It has three sections: Building Leadership Capacity, Building Instructional Staff Capacity, and Building Capacity for Parent and Family Involvement.

**English Language Learners at School: A Guide for Administrators: "Over Fifty Experts Answer Your Questions"**

*2006; Hamayan, Else & Freeman, Rebecca; Caslon Publishing and Consulting for Language Educators; 259 pages. (Book available for purchase at online booksellers)*

http://caslonpublishing.com/publication/english-language-learners-school/

> From the Caslon abstract: "Accountability for English language learners (ELLs) is a critical issue for schools today. The number of identified ELLs in public schools (K-12) grew 95% over the last decade,

with more than 5 million school age ELLS identified. Administrators are demanding information about how they can ensure that the ELLs in their schools achieve. English Language Learners at School is a practical guide for administrators who must address this challenge now!"

**Examining American Indian Perspectives in the Central Region on Parent Involvement in Children's Education**
*2008; Mackety, Dawn & Linder-VanBerschot, Jennifer; (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2008–No. 059) U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance; 43 pages.*
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=159

> Although this report is on American Indian parents, it is included in this guide because many of the issues described here are similar to those schools face with ELLs. From the report's Summary: "This study examines American Indian parents' perceptions of parent involvement in their children's education and factors that may encourage or discourage involvement. … To begin to address the regional need to close the achievement gap for American Indian students and specifically to effectively engage American Indian parents in their children's education, parent perceptions about involvement are needed. … The purposes of the study were to examine how Central Region American Indian parents perceived parent involvement and to understand what encourages or discourages their involvement." (p. i-ii)

**Family and Community Involvement: Reaching Out to Diverse Populations**
*2000; SEDL (Formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools; 26 pages.*

http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam29.html

> *From the SEDL Abstract: This pu*blication "is geared toward teachers, principals, and superintendents who want to develop meaningful parent and community involvement [for] culturally and linguistically diverse community members.  t provides tips on how to communicate effectively with parents and how to make parents comfortable in your school."

**Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches (An Idea Book)**
*1997; Funkhouser, Janie & Gonzales, Miriam; U.S. Department of Education, Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.*

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FamInvolve/index.html

> From the Executive Summary: "This Idea Book is intended to assist educators, parents, and policy makers as they develop and nurture school-family partnerships. [It] identifies and describes successful strategies used by 20 local Title I programs that have overcome barriers to parent involvement …. These district and school programs enhance parent-school communications and help parents support their children's academic work at school and at home. Some of the programs involve parents in school planning and governance activities and as volunteers. … Telephone interviews with staff and parents at these programs as well as focus group interviews with parents provided the detailed illustrations of specific strategies for overcoming barriers to parent involvement…"

**La Ley Para No Dejar Atras a Ningun Nino: Lo que Implica Para Los Padres**

*2003; Henderson, Anne; Parent Leadership Associates; 42 pages.*
http://ctpirc.org/pdf/NCLBWhatsinitforParentsSpanishversion.pdf

This guide, in Spanish, looks at what NCLB requires of schools and districts to involve parents in the work of school improvement and suggests leverage points that families can use to ensure a quality education for all children.

**No Child Left Behind: What's in it for Parents**

*2002; Henderson, Anne; Parent Leadership Associates; 30 pages.*
http://ctpirc.org/s/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=53:nclb-whats-in-it-for-parents&catid=31:nclb&Itemid=134

This guide, in English, looks at what NCLB requires of schools and districts to involve parents in the work of school improvement and suggests leverage points that families can use to ensure a quality education for all children.

**Parent Involvement Strategies in Urban Middle and High Schools in the Northeast and Islands Region**

*2009; Agronick, G., Clark, A., O'Donnell, L., Inc., Stueve, A.; (Issues and Answers Report, REL 2009–No. 069); U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands; 59 pages.*
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=117)

From the Summary, page i: "The study reviewed the literature on parent involvement practices and programs to inform development of a protocol for collecting and organizing data on practices and programs. The review included studies that met screening criteria for the timeframe (1997–2008), intervention strategy (parent involvement policies, practices, and programs), sample …, and outcome. Practices and programs encompassed efforts to encourage parent involvement with students at home and school. Relevant outcomes included parent involvement, with or without linkages to student outcomes."

**Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A: Non-Regulatory Guidance**

*2004; U.S. Department of Education; 55 pages.*
http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc

From Page 2: "This guidance is divided into five major sections. The first deals with general issues related to parental involvement, the second addresses the parental involvement responsibilities of State educational agencies (SEAs), the third describes responsibilities of local educational agencies (LEAs), the fourth describes the responsibilities of schools, and the fifth describes the responsibilities of LEAs and schools to build parents' capacity for becoming involved in improving their child's academic achievement. Included in the appendices are relevant definitions (Appendix A), key Title I, Part A parental notice requirements (Appendix B), a list of research-based resources for improving teaching and learning (Appendix C), a sample template that might be used for the development of a district-wide parental involvement policy (Appendix D), and a sample template for a school-parent compact (Appendix E)."

**Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships for Student Success**
*Adopted November 4, 2009; Connecticut State Board of Education; 3 pages.*
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCP.pdf

**Policy Guidance for Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships for Student Success**
*November 2009; Connecticut State Board of Education; 4 pages.*
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCPPolicyGuidance.pdf

> The State Board of Education's positions on school, family, and community partnerships, as adopted November 4, 2009, and additional guidance to the position statement.

**Preparing to Serve English Language Learner Students with Emerging English**
*2008; Zehler, A., Adger, C., Coburn, C., Arteagoitia, I., Williams, K., Jacobson, L.; (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2008–No. 049); U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia; 32 pages.*

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=151

> "This report aims to help school districts deal with the challenges of newly enrolling or rapidly increasing numbers of English language learner students by offering background information and sharing the experiences of districts that have addressed similar challenges in providing services and infrastructure to support the success of English language learner students."

**Promoting ELL Parental Involvement: Challenges in Contested Times**
*2008, Arias, M. Beatriz & Morillo-Campbell, Milagros; The Great Lakes Center for Education Research & Practice, Arizona State University; 22 pages.*

http://epsl.asu.edu/epru/documents/EPSL-0801-250-EPRU.pdf

> From the Executive Summary, page 1: "This policy brief analyzes factors related to the implementation of effective parental involvement with English Language Learners (ELLs). … This brief analyzes characteristics of the ELL student and parent population; barriers to ELL family engagement with schools; and characteristics of traditional and non-traditional parental involvement models."

**Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections?**

*2005; Ferguson, Chris; A Strategy Brief of the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools; SEDL (Formerly Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools;12 pages.*

http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf

> This Brief draws upon the research and syntheses of SEDS as well as other research to provide educators with a quick reference and resources for reaching out to diverse learners.

**School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action**

*2009; Epstein, Joyce, Sanders,  Mavis, Sheldon, Steven, Simon, Beth, Clark Salinas, Karen,  Rodriguez Jansorn, Natalie, Van Voorhis, Frances, Martin, Cecelia, Thomas, Brenda, Greenfeld, Marsha, Hutchins, Darcy, Williams, Kenyatta; National Network of Partnership Schools; Corwin Press;376 pages.*

http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/publications/handbook-for-action.htm

> "When schools, families, and communities collaborate and share responsibility for students' education, they can make a positive impact on student achievement.  Based on 25 years of research, this updated

edition of a bestseller details a framework that enables school, district, and state leaders to develop more effective programs for family and community involvement. Educational leaders also learn how teams can mobilize community resources, resolve challenges to reach all families, evaluate program results, and continue to improve plans and practices over time."

More information from http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/publications/manual.htm: "The Third Edition includes research summaries and useful tools for developing and evaluating programs of family and community involvement. A CD comes with the Third Edition. It provides a PowerPoint presentation to conduct the NNPS [National Network of Partnership Schools] One-Day Team Training Workshop, copies of workshop handouts, activities, planning and evaluation forms, and selected Spanish translations of workshop materials…. It is designed to guide the work of Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) consisting of teachers, parents, administrators, and others… Ten chapters offer step-by-step strategies to improve leadership and programs of school, family, and community connections."

On NNPS: "Established at Johns Hopkins University in 1996, NNPS invites schools, districts, states, and organizations to join together and use research-based approaches to organize and sustain excellent programs of family and community involvement that will increase student success in school." (http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/index.htm)

**School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture, a Review of Current Literature (The)**

*2008; Prepared by Ferguson, Chris, with contributions from Ramos, Manica, Rudo, Zena and Wood, Lacy; National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools at SEDL; 102 pages.*

http://www.sedl.org/connections/research-syntheses.html

This review of family involvement literature "surveys thirty research reports and meta-analyses published between 2005 and 2008. These studies explore a wide range of family involvement programs, challenges, needs, strategies, and contexts… The document contains 1) an overview of new literature, 2) a matrix of the trends across the studies, 3) an explanation of the types of research studies included in the review, and 4) detailed descriptions of each of the included reports. "

**Supporting Parent, Family and Community Involvement in Your School.**

*2000; Davis, Debra; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement under contract # RJ96006501, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory; 39 pages.*

http://www.pacer.org/mpc/pdf/titleipip/SupportingInvolvement_article.pdf

"This guide provides ideas and suggestions taken from research on family and community involvement in schools and can help school staff and others design a long-term approach to garnering the positive involvement of all concerned."

# RESOURCES

**Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC)**
http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/

"For over 35 years the Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC) has provided…professional development for adult and family educators. Whether providing training for instructional or program development, the ALRC utilizes content expertise and current research to deliver high quality services to individuals, programs, and state networks. Services are practitioner-based and user-friendly, responding to the current and changing needs of the field of adult education." Services include Parents as Educational Partners (PEP), described below.

**Center for Innovation & Improvement - Families and Schools**
http://www.families-schools.org/

This site contains resources for parents, schools, community, with information on a 3-phase program and links to other resources.

**Connecticut Parent Information Resource Center**
http://www.ctpirc.org

From About CT PIRC: "The work of the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC) is guided by the overarching principle that all families have strengths and all families play a critical role in their children's educational success. The project works through faith-based and community organizations. It is school-based and school-linked. It makes explicit connections between statewide dissemination and outreach activities, professional development events, and direct work with selected high priority schools… The CT PIRC is coordinated by the Connecticut State Education Resource Center (SERC), a nonprofit agency… Together with its primary partners, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and Connecticut Parents as Teachers (ConnPAT), CT PIRC builds on a history of well-documented success, evidenced by national recognition from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) as a Partnership State Award winner in 2000 and 2005, and on the statewide leadership and infrastructure in school-family-community partnerships developed under the two previous PIRC grants and SERC/CSDE collaborative programs."
(Connecticut State Education Resource Center (SERC): http://ctserc.org)

**Colorin Colorado!**
http://www.colorincolorado.org

This bilingual site is for families and educators of English language learners. It has a bilingual section created just for parents and families to provide them with the information needed to help their children become good readers and successful students

**Florida Parental Information and Resource Center** at the University of South Florida
http://www.floridapartnership.usf.edu/

"The Florida PIRC at USF provides training and technical assistance to schools and districts on ways to effectively involve parents in their children's education in order for all students to achieve at the highest academic level. The Florida PIRC at USF also helps schools and districts meet the requirements for parent involvement of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Title I legislation."

**International Institute of Connecticut**
http://www.iiconn.org/

> Social services for any immigrant, legal or not, in terms of filling out papers, forms, translations, lots of resources. Provides interpreters and English as a Second Language services.

**Motheread, Inc.**
http://www.motheread.org/

> Motheread, Inc. is a "private, non-profit organization that combines the teaching of literacy skills with child development and family empowerment issues. Parents and children learn to use the power of language to discover more about themselves, their families, and their communities… In adult classes, participants learn to be story readers, writers, and tellers in a group structure that supports their own sense of worth and ability. … For children, Story Exploring provides a structured environment for learning reading, critical-thinking, and problem solving skills."

**National PTA**
http://www.pta.org/

The National PTA offers a variety of programs to help parents, students, and communities. The page "Family-School Partnerships" includes links to resources to build involvement.
(http://www.pta.org/family_school_partnerships.asp)

National PTA documents include:

**National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs**

*1997; National PTA, Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service*

http://www.ptasonline.org/kspta/national_standards.pdf

From the Standards introduction: "The National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs and their quality indicators are research-based and grounded in both sound philosophy and practical experience. The purpose for the standards is threefold:

1. To promote meaningful parent and family participation;
2. To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs;
3. To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs."

**Parents As Educational Partners**
http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/family-pep.html

> "The Parents as Educational Partners (PEP): School-Related Curriculum for Language Minority Parents fills this gap. The PEP Curriculum addresses the need to provide limited English proficient (LEP) parents support to feel comfortable participating in their children's education. Based on a needs assessment of parents and teachers, the Parents as Educational Partners Curriculum provides adult ESL instruction, information about the U.S. school system, and strategies for school involvement. The curriculum also assists LEP parents in overcoming the language and cultural barriers that make them particularly vulnerable to being left out of their children's educational experiences."

**Parents as Teachers (PAT)**
http://www.parentsasteachers.org

> From About Us: "Parents as Teachers is the overarching program philosophy of providing parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. The organizational vehicle for delivering that knowledge and support is Parents as Teachers National Center. The National Center drives that philosophy, or mission, through four program areas: Born to Learn, Professional Development, Meld and Advocacy. All of these program areas work through a strong network of state leaders and partners."

**Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)**
http://www2.ed.gov/programs/pirc)

> From the USDOE website: "A part of the office of Innovation and Improvement of the U.S Department of Education, PIRCs help implement successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and that strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children.

**PTO Today.com**
http://ptotoday.com

> PTO Today provides products, programs and services as well as hundreds of articles to the K-8 school parent groups regardless of affiliation. This multicultural section contains articles and insights on reaching out to all parents and creating an inclusive PTO. However, articles such as Multicultural Outreach: No Barriers to Involvement and Connect with Immigrant Parents contain tips that schools as well as parent groups could use to engage parents.

**Taking a Closer Look: A Guide to Online Resources on Family Involvement**

*2005; Weiss, Heather, Faughnan, Kelly, Caspe, Margaret, Wolos, Cassandra, Lopez, M. Elena, Kreider, Holly ; Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE); 47 pages*

http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/taking-a-closer-look-a-guide-to-online-resources-on-family-involvement

> From the Harvard Family Research Project abstract: "This comprehensive resource guide compiles a wealth of information about family involvement from over 100 national organizations. It contains Web links to recent (published in and after 2000) research, information, and tools. Compiled in 2004–2005 the guide contains resources about family involvement in early childhood education, elementary, middle school, and high school. It includes family involvement in several contexts: including home, school, and out-of-school time programs."

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Academic language (Academic talk):** Language used in the learning of academic subject matter in a formal schooling context; aspects of language strongly associated with literacy and academic achievement, including specific academic terms or technical language, and speech registers related to each field of study.  (**http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/seccss.asp?CID=95&DID=1565**)

**Adolescent newcomers:** A subset of ELLs who are currently enrolled in grades 6 through 12 who have attended an English-speaking school for fewer than two years. They are a diverse group of learners who differ on key aspects  related to academic achievement, including amount and degree of formal schooling, level of literacy in their native language, and age of arrival in U.S. schools. (**http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL2-Newcomers.pdf**)

**CAPELL**: *Mission Statement*: The Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL) is committed to enhancing the educational experiences of English Language Learners (ELLs) by promoting cross-cultural awareness, sensitivity, parity, inclusion, and the improvement of instruction and curricula.  It advocates equal educational opportunities for English Language Learners (ELLs). (**http://www.capellct.org/**)

**Cognates**: Words in different languages related to the same root, e.g. *education* (English) and *educación* (Spanish). (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu** )

**Connecticut ELL Framework**: The Framework for English Language Learners (ELL) is inherently different from other content areas, in that grade-level performance is based upon degree of English language proficiency.  Students enter programs at every grade level and there is no necessary connection between their grade level and their English proficiency.  Furthermore, an individual student's proficiency level may vary among the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.  It should be understood, therefore, that although the structure of this document is based upon that of other curriculum frameworks with grade-level divisions, performance standards from lower grades will need to be addressed for ELL students in upper grades.   In other words, the document is structured so that, vertically, you can clearly see the progression from a beginning, intermediate and advanced level.  The progression horizontally includes indicators that may appear to be repeated from one grade level to the next.   This emphasizes that ELL students must master these indicators, regardless of the grade at which they begin their education as an ELL, so that they can move from beginning to advanced levels of proficiency. (**http://www.capellct.org/**)

**Co-teaching**: A service delivery model in which two (or more) educators or other certified staff, contract to share instructional responsibility, for a single group of students, primarily in a single classroom workspace, for specific content (objectives), with mutual ownership, pooled resources, and joint accountability. (**http://www.marilynfriend.com/basics.htm**)

**Cultural responsiveness**: Use of the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students. (**http://www.intime.uni.edu/multiculture/curriculum/culture/teaching.htm**)

**Dominant language**: The language with which a bilingual or multilingual speaker has greatest proficiency and/or uses more often. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**Dual Language Program:** Refers to any program that provides literacy and content instruction to all students through the use of two languages; promotes bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and multicultural competence. The student populations in dual language programs may vary, resulting in at least two types of models; 1) developmental bilingual programs in which all students are native speakers of the partner language such as Spanish; and 2) two-way immersion programs in which approximately half of the students are native speakers of the partner language and the other half are native English speakers. (**www.cal.org**)

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):**  A **United States federal statute** enacted April 11, 1965. The Act is an extensive statute which funds primary and secondary education, while explicitly forbidding the establishment of a **national curriculum**.   As mandated in the Act, the funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs, and parental involvement promotion. The Act was originally authorized through 1970; however the government has reauthorized the Act every five years since its enactment. (**http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html**)

**English Language Development Program (ELD):**  A program of instruction designed specifically for English language learners to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. This type of instruction is also known as "English as a second language" (**ESL**), "teaching English to speakers of other languages" (**TESOL**), or "English for speakers of other languages" (**ESOL**). ELD, ESL, TESOL or ESOL are versions of English language arts standards that have been crafted to address the specific developmental stages of students learning English. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**English Language Learners (ELL)**: National-origin-minority students who are limited-English proficient (US Department of Education).  Students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)  The term English language learner (ELL) has generally replaced the term Limited English Proficient (LEP) used by the federal government to identify those students who have insufficient English to succeed in English-only classrooms.

**English as a Second Language (ESL); English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**: An educational approach in which English language learners are instructed in the use of the English language. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content) and is usually taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual education program. Every bilingual education program has an ESL component. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**Exit Criteria**: A set of guidelines for ending special services for English language learners and placing them in mainstream, English-only classes as fluent English speakers. This is usually based on a combination of performance on an English language proficiency test, grades, standardized test scores, and teacher recommendations. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**Formative assessment**: Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. (**www.CCSSO.org**)

**Home language**: The language student speaks at home, with family. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**Home language survey**: A survey usually given to parents at the time of registration.  The following three questions are usually asked: What was the first language spoken by the student? What is the primary language spoken by the parents? What is the primary language spoken at home by the student?

([http://www.ctkidslink.org/publications/edu10englishlanguage.pdf](http://www.ctkidslink.org/publications/edu10englishlanguage.pdf))  Answers to the survey are used to help determine if the student is a language minority student.  An answer indicating that a language other than English is spoken in the home triggers the administration of an English language proficiency test to determine what educational services the student may need to help them acquire English as a second language.

**Intensive interventions**: Interventions, including academic and behavioral, characterized by their increased focus for students who fail to respond to less intensive forms of instruction.  Intensity can be increased through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation. Within the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework, intensive is sometimes referred to as tertiary intervention. ([http://www.rti4success.org](http://www.rti4success.org))

**IPT Oral Language Proficiency Test**: A series of norm-referenced, standardized assessment instruments for testing oral language, reading, and writing in English; includes a separate series in Spanish. ([http://www.ballard-tighe.com/](http://www.ballard-tighe.com/))

**Language acquisition**: The process of acquiring a first or second language. Some linguists refer to acquisition as the informal development of a person's second language and learning as the process of formal study of a second language. Other linguists do not distinguish between informal acquisition and formal learning. The process of acquiring a second language is different from acquiring the first. ([http://www.ncela.gwu.edu](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu)/)

**Language proficiency**: Refers to the ability to communicate or understand thoughts or ideas effectively through a language's grammatical system and vocabulary, using its sounds or written symbols. Language proficiency is composed of oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) components as well as academic and non-academic language. ([http://www.ncela.gwu.edu](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu)/)

**LAS Links (Language Assessment Scales)**: A commercially produced integrated suite of English proficiency assessments used in Connecticut to assess incoming students for appropriate placement into educational programs and to assess all students K-12 for their levels of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and determining whether a student is ready to exit her/his ELL program. ([www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/home/products/laslinks](www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/home/products/laslinks))
**Native Language**: The first language a person acquires in life, or identifies with as a member of an ethnic group. ([http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/))

**Oral Language Proficiency:** Refers to the ability to communicate verbally in a *functional* and *accurate* way in a [specific language]. A high degree of oral proficiency implies having the ability to apply the linguistic knowledge to *new contexts (topics) and situations.* ([http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol2/Bridge2.3.pdf](http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol2/Bridge2.3.pdf))

**Pull-out ESL**: An instructional approach  in which ELLs are "pulled out" of regular, mainstream classrooms for special instruction in English as a second language by a certified ESL teacher. ([http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/))

**Push-in ESL**: In contrast with pull-out ESL instruction, a certified ESL teacher provides ELLs with instruction in a mainstream or content-area classroom. ([http://www.ncela.gwu.edu](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu)/)

**Sheltered Instruction:** An instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to English language learners to help them acquire proficiency in English while at the same time learning in the content areas. Sheltered English instruction differs from ESL in that English is not taught as a language with a focus on learning the language. Rather, content knowledge and skills are the

goals. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use simplified language, physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies and other subjects. (**http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/**)

**The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP):** A research-based and validated instructional model developed by researchers Jana Echevarria, Mary Ellen Vogt, and Deborah Short. It provides a framework for planning and delivering instruction in content areas such as science, history, and mathematics to limited-English proficient students. The goal of *SIOP* is to help teachers integrate academic language development into their lessons, allowing students to learn and practice English as it is used in the context of school, including the vocabulary used in textbooks and lectures in each academic discipline. Using this planning framework, teachers modify the way they teach so that the language they use to explain concepts and information is comprehensible to these students. The *SIOP* planning and observation framework covers eight areas of instruction: preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice and application, lesson delivery, review and assessment. In most cases, teachers receive professional development on the *SIOP Model* before using it to modify their lessons. (**http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english_lang/siop/index.asp**)

**Sociolinguistics:** The study of language and linguistic behavior as influenced by social and cultural factors. (**http://www.thefreedictionary.com/sociolinguistics**)

**TESOL Standards:** *PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards*, published in 2006, that provide a starting point for developing effective and equitable education for ESOL students. These standards were developed to complement the discipline-specific standards created by other professional associations and groups. The TESOL standards stand apart because they acknowledge the central role of language in the achievement of content and highlight the learning styles and particular instructional and assessment needs of learners who are still developing proficiency in English.
(**http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/seccss.asp?CID=95&DID=1565**)

**Wait time**: Length of time a teacher waits for students' responses after asking a question. Research shows that increasing wait time from the typical 1.5 seconds after a question to at least 3 seconds increases the likelihood of student participation. (**http://www.learnnc.org/reference/wait+time**)