

Regular Board Meeting – May 17, 2011

SUBJECT: LEARNING TEAM FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**Introduction**

The Learning Team for English Language Learners (LT for ELL) examined best practice provided in research articles, analyzed data for District 68 ELL learners in relation to national, Illinois, and local norm groups, reviewed standards which guide program development, learned about federal and state laws related to offering a Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) and a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program, and discussed recommendations from its sub-groups in developing guidelines to serve ESL and Bilingual students in our district. Team members were:

Samra Masood	Parent, Highland
Merilee Aguirre	ELL Teacher, OOJH
Chuck Blatt	Parent, Devonshire
Anzhela Bozhinova	Parent, Stenson
Fran Eres	ELL Tutor, Devonshire
Andrea Ghetzler	ELL Teacher, OOJH
Ana Hrvojevic	ELL-K Teacher, Stenson
Claudy Levin	LA Teacher, OOJH
Frances McTague	Superintendent
Lori Miller	ELL Teacher, OOJH
Sue O'Neil	Principal, Stenson
Barbara Phillips	Asst. Superintendent for Instruction
Grace Pigozzi	Spanish Teacher, OOJH
Melissa Roter	Teacher, Highland
Baqar Sayed	Parent, OOJH
Hank Schneider	President, Board of Education
Judy Solway	ELL Tutor, Highland
Megan Weinstein	Teacher, Stenson
Marcie Weinstein	ELL Tutor, Stenson
Nineveh Yacoub	Teacher, Devonshire

Barbara Marler, John Hilliard, and Tammy King from the Illinois Resource Center attended selected meetings as we utilized "The Perfect Match," an Illinois Resource Center model for program development, to guide our learning team and implementation efforts. The team met for five sessions between January, 2011 and April, 2011, and developed a belief statement and set of recommendations to guide curriculum, implementation, assessment, and professional development efforts.

Belief Statement

The LT for ELL believes that in order to meet the needs of our diverse English language learners, currently including thirty-three languages among 250 students receiving ELL services, the program must be varied and flexible. The following research findings and analysis of our current

data regarding growth in language proficiency and performance on state assessments after exiting ELL services have particularly guided our program recommendations:

- The ELL program should encourage and promote the use of dual languages in the home and school. Learning two languages does not delay the learning of English when students receive appropriate instruction in school.
- Parents of ELL students should be encouraged to support the native language of their children while they are learning English. Knowing two (or more) languages is beneficial. This information should be included in parent meetings by the regular classroom and ELL teachers.
- Instructional practices that have been found most effective for ELL learners include the direct and interactive approaches. These approaches are effective for regular education students, too, and should be utilized by both the general education and regular classroom teacher. Practical application makes learning easier for ELL students.
- Instruction in the primary language may not be feasible for all students when numerous languages are spoken by small numbers of students in a building or district. The TPI program is most appropriate in these cases; and support for the native language may be enhanced by including teacher assistants, parents, and community volunteers in the classroom curricular activities.
- The needs of students who do not speak a word of English or do not read and write in their own language are different from those who are literate in their native language and have mastered a great deal of content. Curriculum and programming for SIFE (Students with Interrupted, Formal Education) and at-risk populations may be different from those who come from rich, literate backgrounds.
- There will probably never be one formula for educating ELL's. Program models including ESL pull-out, Content-Based, ESL resource, Early Exit Bilingual, Late Exit Bilingual, Dual Language, and Sheltered Instruction have been found to be more effective than other programming models based on the population being served. District 68 should continue to offer a variety of program models.
- Data analysis from ACCESS and ISAT assessments indicated that our current curriculum and programming is strong: a) at every grade level on the ACCESS assessment, at least 75% and as many as 92% met or exceeded the average annual growth score when moving from one grade level to the next; b) ISAT data in both reading and mathematics one, two, and three years after exit from ELL indicated that students met or exceeded state standards at 70% or greater at each grade level.

Historical trends in the district have revealed that we have years of substantial growth followed by years of little to no growth in the number of students served. Similarly, we have seen a major shift in the top five language groups served in our district in the last fifteen years. TPI and TBE curriculum and programming must be able to shift to meet changing needs now and in the future.

A. Curriculum Recommendations

- The curriculum should be based on WIDA Standards and the Common Core State Standards

- Language proficiency levels should be the guiding factor in the development of curriculum based upon the WIDA Consortium English Language Proficiency Levels of Emerging, Beginning, Developing, Expanding, Bridging, and Reaching when developing curriculum and determining placement of students in programs
- The TPI curriculum should continue to focus on literacy in English based upon language proficiency levels while supporting the native language and cultural heritage of students and their families in the home and in school
- A TBE curriculum should be developed and added to program offerings in District 68 guided by current and updated federal and state of Illinois laws
- A TBE curriculum for Spanish, Assyrian, and Urdu should be developed this summer to be prepared for immediate implementation when thresholds are met in each language; as student numbers approach the federal and/or state thresholds in other languages in the future, additional curricula should be developed in those languages
- A SIFE program for students in math should be offered when student numbers reach six or more in grades 3-5 or 6-8 at each school when schedules can be arranged to cluster the students into one math period as budgeting permits

B. Program Structure Guidance

- Both TPI and TBE programs should be offered in District 68 as thresholds are met in each language as mandated by law
- Self contained, pull-out, and content based programming should be offered based upon the needs of the students; future programming might consider dual-language when we reach significant numbers in one or more language groups
- TBE students should be served in a full-time or part-time program based upon their language proficiency levels as mandated by federal and state law
- As ELL numbers increase in District 68, clustering of students by language proficiency levels and native language in the general education classroom should be considered to better meet the needs of students
- A strong articulation between the ELL teacher and the classroom teacher should be developed and fostered through allocated time in the schedule

C. Professional Development

- Professional development for ELL faculty and the regular classroom teacher should focus in the areas of technology, assessment, best practice, English and native language history and culture, native language arts, content area information, vocabulary, and working with ELL parents.
- As the number of ELL students increases and funding is available, the district should support regular education teachers obtaining ESL and Bilingual endorsements

D. Staffing and Resources

- Flexibility in staffing is paramount to delivering programs based on student needs
- Teachers with dual certification in ESL and Bilingual should be included in the staffing of ELL faculty at the K-8 level as the district transitions from tutors to teachers

- Consideration should be given to general education teacher candidates during the hiring process who possess certification in ESL and/or Bilingual education to enhance opportunities to better meet the needs of students
- Current research based programs and resources accessed through technology should be utilized by teachers and students

Implementation Planning

The attached flow chart for the delivery of TPI and TBE services was developed by the LT for ELL and will provide guidance for services to all ELL students. Staffing needs were identified and hiring has begun while interviews continue for a number of the TBE positions. Staff development will begin in July, 2011, which will focus on language assessment, the ELL and general education curriculum, K-5 and 6-8 programming, and ELL/WIDA and Common Core Standards. All new programming for ELL will begin in the fall of 2011. Monthly meetings for the ELL staff have been scheduled for horizontal and vertical articulation as the K-8 program is revised following the LT for ELL recommendations.

Planning continues with National Louis University and Loyola University related to offering the ESL endorsement and other administrative certification necessary for TPI and TBE program delivery when enrollment reaches 200 or more for four consecutive years.

DISTRICT 68 Programs and Service

TPI (Transitional Program of Instruction) AND **TBE** (Transitional Bilingual Program)

TPI programs (delivered in **English only**) AND TBE (delivered in primary native language, **L1**, and English, **L2**)

Note: Subject to ISBE final regulations regarding TBE programs

