
Introduction

Travel to Prairietown School, a small elementary school in a rural region of our country. Until recently, its population consisted of English-speaking administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. While its educators have not changed, they have begun to notice a small number of English learners (ELs) enrolling in the school. Continue traveling to Oceanside School, a suburban coastal community that has about 50 Spanish-speaking ELs in its district. Educators there also are noticing a difference; the number of students who are ELs is increasing rapidly, as is the number of languages that they speak. Finally, travel to Bustle City, an urban high school. English-speaking students used to be its dominant population. Now, English learners are the majority, and a growing number have had significant interruptions to their education. These realities are greatly transforming schools in the United States (August, 2008; Calderón & Minaya-Rowe, 2010; Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Zehr, 2009).

School leaders and educators of preservice and inservice administrators and teachers are asking themselves and others how to create and implement or strengthen policies, decisions, and day-to-day operations for the benefit of this growing population. Sadly, many are learning that whether achievement is measured by the assessments that are required according to the No Child Left Behind Act or the National Report Card known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the outcome is not positive. Many students are failing, and the achievement gap between ELs and the total student population is significant and growing (Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010; Zehr, 2009).

Transforming Schools for English Learners focuses on the ways in which school leaders—including superintendents, principals, curriculum supervisors, teacher-leaders, teacher educators, and others—can create effective school policies, practices, and structures for ELs in their particular contexts. The goal of this book is to help administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders who are just beginning to work with ELs or are veterans to build a school environment where ELs can flourish. Each chapter opens with a scenario and focuses on a key element of English language education programming.

2 Transforming Schools for English Learners

Chapter 1: Administering Schools With English Learners provides a description of this ever-expanding population of students, their educational programming, and their teachers. It presents an analysis about what the demographics tell us and a rationale for developing English language education programming that is targeted to the needs of individual districts.

Chapter 2: Developing a Rationale for Programming by Understanding Key Historical Events, Principles, and Program Model Types presents the major historical events that led to the current laws and regulations governing the education of ELs, key principles of second language acquisition, and a description of the various types of program models for teaching ELs.

Chapter 3: Selecting Effective Program Models discusses the process and protocols for identifying ELs, selecting a program model, staffing the model, and evaluating its effectiveness. Included in this chapter are forms and protocols associated with the various processes involved in the identification, program selection, and ongoing evaluation tasks and procedures.

Chapter 4: Designing, Implementing, and/or Strengthening the English as a Second Language Component describes the English language development component of an English language education program. It details the organizational structures, such as time allocation and staffing considerations, that should be included to effectively implement this critical component.

Chapter 5: Addressing the Subject Matter Component of an English Language Education Program highlights the fact that, as schools build, strengthen, and maintain programs for ELs, it is important to define what constitutes a high-quality content lesson and learning environment. This chapter provides eight guiding principles for providing such lessons for English language development and content learning and a checklist for teachers, peers, supervisors, and others to use in assessing the overall success of content planning and delivery.

Chapter 6: Emphasizing the Importance of Parent Engagement acknowledges that establishing relationships with parents and extended family members is an important objective for school leaders at all grade levels. Many teachers and administrators are not familiar with the various cultural norms of ELs and their families, and many parents of ELs are not familiar with American school practices. This chapter provides a four-pronged framework for creating strong parent-school partnerships.

Chapter 7: Identifying and Working With English Learners With Learning Differences and Learning Disabilities describes the nation's special education trends and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as it

relates to ELs. It also delves into Response to Intervention and the factors that should be considered to use this framework effectively with ELs. The chapter offers a team approach for evaluating and improving the learning environment and outcomes for ELs and a protocol for engaging in this process.

Chapter 8: Making Data-Driven Decisions Based on Effective Measures of Student Performance discusses the complexities of fair and equitable assessment and evaluation of ELs and their programming. It provides a rationale for a four-pronged approach for addressing the particular socio-cultural, developmental, academic, and cognitive needs of students. It also offers a rationale for selecting and using a collaborative process for understanding ELs' academic performance and needs. Included in this chapter are protocols for examining the effectiveness of the classroom as well as school-parent engagement and community building.

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