Claiming Opportunities: A Handbook for Improving Education for English Language Learners Through Comprehensive School Reform

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Claiming Opportunities:
A Handbook for Improving Education for English Language Learners Through Comprehensive School Reform
The Education Alliance at Brown University
Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory (LAB)

The Education Alliance at Brown University is home to the Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory (LAB), one of ten educational laboratories funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences. Our goals are to improve teaching and learning, advance school improvement, build capacity for reform, and develop strategic alliances with key members of the region’s education and policymaking community.

The LAB develops educational products and services for school administrators, policymakers, teachers, and parents in New England, New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Central to our efforts is a commitment to equity and excellence.

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Completion of *Claiming Opportunities* was made possible by the leadership and coordination of Maria Pacheco, director of Equity and Diversity Programs for The Education Alliance at Brown University, who oversees the LAB’s national leadership area of teaching diverse learners. In addition to the authors, Francine Collignon, Julie Nora, and Sara Smith contributed to this synthesis.

Members of the LAB’s National Leadership Advisory Panel contributed to the review of this document. Their recommendations help assure that the LAB’s work concerning equity and diversity is appropriate, effective, and useful in the field, particularly in improving educational outcomes for students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

At the February 27-28, 2003 research symposium, “Improving High School Learning Opportunities for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: Learning from Evidence-Based Practices,” sponsored by The Education Alliance and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, researchers offered comments and observations about English language learners in comprehensive school reform. To capture highlights of their conversation, we present participants’ comments in gray-shaded dialogue boxes located throughout the text. We are grateful to the symposium participants for their discussion of the complexity and challenges of claiming opportunities for English language learners. Comments by the following participants are reproduced in the text: Adeline Becker, The Education Alliance at Brown University; Anthony Colon, National Council of La Raza; Kris Gutierréz, University of California, Los Angeles; Julia Lara, Council of Chief State School Officers; Tamara Lucas, Montclair State University; Nydia Mendez, Boston Public Schools; Pedro Pedraza, Hunter College; Ariana Quiñones, National Council of La Raza; Sharon Saez, Educational Testing Service; Deborah Wei, School District of Philadelphia; and Jerri Willet, University of Massachusetts.

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CLAIMING OPPORTUNITIES: A HANDBOOK FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

For the last decade, the national comprehensive school reform movement has been a focus of efforts to make public education accessible and effective for all students. Comprehensive reform strives to improve schooling for all children through integrated, well-aligned, school-wide changes in instruction, assessment, curriculum, classroom management, school governance, professional development, technical assistance, and community participation. As a sign of its continuing support for comprehensive school reform, Congress formally incorporated the Comprehensive School Reform program (CSR) into the Elementary and Secondary Act (No Child Left Behind, or NCLB) of 2001.

The last decade has also seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of students not fully proficient in English who are enrolled in U.S. elementary and secondary schools. These students are alternatively referred to as limited English proficient (LEP) or, more recently, English language learners (ELLs). While the general school-age population in the U.S. is only 12% greater than it was in 1991, there has been an increase of 105% in the number of students who are classified as limited English proficient (Kindler, 2002). It is estimated that during the 2000-2001 school year almost 10% of the total public school population was classified as LEP (Kindler, 2002). This figure does not include students who have not been formally identified as English language learners or students who may have met minimal English proficiency criteria and been reclassified but still require language support to meet grade-level academic standards.
Despite the concurrent growth of ELL populations and the CSR movement, research shows that strategies designed to improve education for all students through CSR have not adequately considered or responded to the needs of ELLs. The two reform efforts — comprehensive school reform and ELL educational reform — have been disconnected, with different educational approaches, knowledge bases, and accountability systems as well as separate staffs at the state, district, and school levels. Moreover, those in positions to choose and promote school reform measures may not always have been informed about or attentive to ELL issues. They may have been unaware of how ELLs were affected (or in some cases, not affected) by restructuring and other “improvements.”

This document seeks to address the problem by presenting the existing research on both CSR and ELL educational reform and suggesting how the two educational improvement efforts can be integrated. Claiming Opportunities provides information, strategies, and tools for using NCLB’s Comprehensive School Reform program as an opportunity to make schools more responsive to and responsible for ELLs by:

- Raising consciousness about ELL issues in comprehensive school reform among policymakers, school improvement team members, and administrators
- Helping educators and advocates of ELLs extend their influence from the classroom and the categorical program to the whole school and beyond
- Influencing schools to reform and restructure in ways that are beneficial to their populations of ELLs

Equity doesn’t imply that the instructional strategies that work best for one individual or group work for all. Students come to us with different backgrounds and different language proficiencies and with different educational histories. We need to differentiate instruction based upon students’ prior knowledge of language, literacy, and content. The specific needs and strengths of the ELLs in a particular school need to be taken into account in designing that school’s reforms.

--Adeline Becker, Executive Director, The Education Alliance at Brown University
Chapter one of *Claiming Opportunities* provides a brief overview of the issues: the growing school-aged population of ELLs, the comprehensive school reform movement, and the scarcity of school reform research that examines implementation and outcomes for ELLs.

Chapter two offers a brief history of legal and fiscal issues relevant to ELLs and school reform. It traces the separate and unequal histories of Title I funding for poorly performing students in schools with high concentrations of poverty, and Title VII funding for programs to help limited English proficient students achieve success in school. Chapter two also contends that the mere presence of ELLs in a reforming school does not in itself constitute access or equity for those students. In the words of the Lau decision:

> There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum: for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education. (Douglas, 1974)

Chapter three discusses various conceptualizations of school success, proposing that some prevalent definitions of school success ignore and discourage high levels of bilingualism and cross-cultural knowledge. In chapter three, we present nine research-based principles for educating ELLs. These principles are intended to guide educators in creating “ELL-responsive” school environments that support ELL success by explicitly considering the needs, strengths, and backgrounds of ELLs, their families, and communities.

Chapter four reviews the small body of existing research on CSR and ELLs. In an effort to maintain the focus of this document, there is no review of research on other types of reforms promoting ELL success (such as standards-based reform, newcomer centers, or changes in classroom practice) unless they take place within the context of school-wide, comprehensive reform. Moreover, given the scarcity of studies showing how ELLs fare across various nationally available reform models, this document does not attempt to review, compare, or evaluate research on particular school reform models.
Chapter five contains recommendations, strategies, and tools for ELL-responsive CSR efforts. These include school self-assessments, planning tools, and criteria for examining the ELL responsiveness of proposed reforms.

The final sections of *Claiming Opportunities* contain annotated resources, references, and information from The Education Alliance Web Site. It is our hope that this publication will provide information that, in turn, promotes action and support for ELL-responsive decisions about assessment, curriculum, teacher preparation and recruitment, staff development, and school restructuring in general.
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I. Introduction to English Language Learners, School Reform, and School Success

Guiding Questions

- Why is there national concern about the education of English language learners (ELLs)?
- What is the aim of comprehensive school reform?
- Are English language learners included in comprehensive school reform?
- In what ways has comprehensive school reform overlooked English language learners?
- What were Dentler and Hafner’s findings about personnel in districts where student scores improved amidst increasing diversity?
In recent years there have been many changes in the educational landscape of the United States. This document addresses two of those changes. The first of these is the tremendous rise in English language learner (ELL) school enrollments, accompanied by a national concern that schools are not well prepared to foster ELLs’ school achievement (August & Hakuta, 1997). The term English language learner, as used here, indicates a person who has a first language other than English and who is in the process of acquiring proficiency in oral, written, social, and academic English. While the general school-age population in the U.S. has grown only 12% since 1990-91, the population of students classified as limited English proficient (LEP) has increased by 105% (Kindler, 2002). Latinos, the nation’s largest minority group with 15% of the total population (US Census Bureau, 2000), had a high school completion rate of only 64% in 2000, compared to 91% for whites (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Additionally troubling is the 39% poverty rate among foreign-born children (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Of the 14.9 million students in the schools and districts that received Title I assistance last year, 31% are Hispanic, 3% are Asian or Pacific Islanders, 2% are American Indians or Alaskan natives, 29% are African Americans, and 35% are non-Hispanic whites. It is estimated that 2.5 of these 14.9 million students are classified as English language learners, though it is likely that the number of ELLs exceeds this figure. The Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) reported that, in the 2000-01 school year, over 3.9 million ELLs were enrolled in U.S. schools (data does not include Puerto Rico). Unfortunately, resources for and knowledge about ELL education have not kept pace with this rise in enrollment.

The other recent change in the education landscape, Comprehensive School Reform (CSR), is a strategy for improving schooling for all children through integrated, well-aligned, school-wide changes in instruction, assessment, curriculum, classroom management, school governance, professional development, community participation, external technical assistance, and budgeting. CSR calls for all staff members to be involved and all students to be included. It also requires all programs and practices to be research based. To this end, many schools adopt
externally developed school reform models that have been effective in other places. Other schools develop local reform programs of their own.

Despite the apparent congruence between efforts to redesign schools for all children and efforts to improve schooling for ELLs, Miramontes et al. (1997) pointed out that the educational policies and practices supporting these two efforts developed as separate streams.

As Stringfield et al. (1998) found, the research base for most school reform models does not include ELLs. In other words, in cases where an externally developed school reform model is to be implemented, those choosing the model may not know whether it is appropriate for ELLs. One cannot assume that whatever helps one population will automatically help another. LaCelle-Peterson and Rivera (1994) argued that “It is erroneous to assume that changes that affect monolingual English students favorably will automatically do the same for English language learners” (p. 55). Similarly, Foster (1999) cites Cazden’s (1998) warning about the limited applicability of educational research findings across groups and contexts.

Mainstream [education] research consistently investigates topics without regard to issues of race, class, and gender, and the results of this research are often used to argue the efficacy of particular approaches for all groups of students, irrespective of race, class, or gender. For instance...studies of learning in classrooms often gloss over student characteristics, making it difficult to ascertain what effect these changed classroom practices have on the achievement of students from different backgrounds.

Although little of the research on comprehensive school reform has focused on ELLs, there is now a small but growing body of promising case studies that describe school reform efforts
benefiting ELLs (e.g., Minicucci, 1996; Nelson, 1996; Wilde et al., 1999; Walqui, 2000; and Datnow et al., 2002). These include schools that created their own restructuring strategies as well as those that adopted (and sometimes substantially adapted and supplemented) externally developed models. Dentler and Hafner (1997) conducted a comparative study of 11 demographically changing districts. They found that in the three districts where student scores improved amidst increasing diversity, teachers and non-teaching personnel were knowledgeable about the learning needs and characteristics of English language learners. That is to say, systematic responsiveness to ELLs occurred only in locations where administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff shared an understanding of the assets and needs ELLs bring to school.

This document seeks to help concerned administrators, policymakers, teachers, and other stakeholders understand the types of changes that can help their states, districts, and schools do a better job educating ELLs. Similarly, the document seeks to help ELL educators extend their influence from the classroom and the categorical program to the whole school and beyond. School, district, and state policies on assessment, curriculum, teacher recruitment, staff development, and community involvement are all areas that affect the success of English language learners.

This document will also suggest areas for research on how comprehensive school reform might keep ELLs from being left behind, in the hope that Gándara’s complaint (below), voiced back in 1994, will no longer pertain.

As American schools continue to diversify, the nation can no longer ignore the enormous unmet needs of LEP students, nor can it ignore the innovative responses being developed locally to meet those needs, not as a part of the reform movement, but in spite of it. (p. 64)
II. A Brief History of Issues Relevant to English Language Learners and School Reform

Guiding Questions

- What was the central focus of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and what is the focus of the 2001 version?

- Under Titles I and VII what were the prevalent forms of assistance to economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient students?

- How do the Lau decision and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 define “equality of treatment” and “equal educational opportunity”?

- What could be the unintended consequences of having several programs, strategies, approaches, and initiatives in one school?

- What are some of the terms in discussing school reform? How do their meanings differ?
1965-1979

The passage of the first Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, one of President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society initiatives, was the signature moment of a massive educational reform movement that focused on helping disadvantaged students succeed at school. The fact that schools were inadequately serving certain students was a paramount concern; however, the fundamental structure and organization of schooling was not considered to be part of the problem. Rather, these reform measures emphasized bringing more resources and services to students who were struggling or were predicted to struggle.

The ESEA, like other laws, has several sections, known as titles. Each section (or title) of the ESEA focuses on a particular goal or population. Title I of the ESEA provided supplementary academic support to poorly performing students in schools with high concentrations of poverty. The legislation prohibited commingling Title I monies with other funding sources. ESEA also prohibited the use of Title I funds to finance regular services that states, districts, and schools were legally obligated to provide and prohibited providing Title I-funded services to ineligible students. Consequently, the most prevalent Title I practice was to pull the lowest performing students out of their classrooms for supplementary remedial instruction.

Relatively few limited English proficient (LEP) students received services under Title I. Although many ELLs met Title I eligibility criteria for poverty and poor academic achievement, eligibility was legally restricted to those whose needs resulted from educational deprivation or disadvantage, rather than from limited English proficiency. In the many settings where educational deprivation or disadvantage co-existed with limited English proficiency, this was a tough call. Local administrators often perceived the safest course to be a strict dichotomization of poverty and limited English proficiency, fearing that they would be censured if LEP students, however poor, received any assistance from Title I funds. In 1966 Title I was amended to
provide support in overcoming “cultural and language barriers,” but only to the children of migrant agricultural workers, who constituted a small fraction of ELLs in schools.

In 1968 Title VII of the ESEA was enacted to provide funds for the establishment of programs to help LEP students succeed in school. Such programs provided education in the students’ home languages and taught English as a second language (ESL) classes. While Title I was an entitlement program, with states receiving monies automatically based upon numbers of eligible students, Title VII funding was competitive. This meant that the only LEP students who benefited from the funding were those whose school or district wrote a successful proposal. Other equally deserving LEP students continued to be disadvantaged.

While those programs funded by Title VII provided some ELLs with ESL instruction and access to the curriculum through their home languages, the vast majority of LEP students in U.S. schools did not receive these services. In the 1969 *Lau v. Nichols* case, plaintiffs representing 1,800 LEP students sued the San Francisco School District for denial of the rights to equal educational opportunity guaranteed them under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1974 the Supreme Court ruled against the district under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act for failing to provide appropriate language instruction that would enable LEP students to participate and benefit from the educational program. In the Lau decision Justice Douglas wrote:

> There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum: for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education. Basic skills are at the very core of what these public schools teach. Imposition of a requirement that before a child can effectively participate in the educational program he must already have acquired those basic skills is to make a mockery of public education. We know that those who do not understand English are certain to find their classroom experiences wholly incomprehensible and in no way meaningful.
Also in 1974 Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), which stated:

No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin by the failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.

Both the Lau decision and the EEOA required schools to overcome language barriers and to provide LEP children with meaningful access to programs and curriculum. In the years following these decisions, a great many states passed laws mandating at least transitional, native-language academic support (transitional bilingual education) while children were learning English. In the mid-1980s there were such laws in 20 states (Lessow-Hurley, 2000).

In addition to these legal milestones, the Effective Schools movement (Edmonds, 1979) is the source of several assumptions that are fundamental to contemporary comprehensive school reform. Edmonds’ research emerged out of his strong philosophical differences with Coleman (1966) and Jensen (1969), whom he characterized as “…..researchers who had satisfied themselves that low achievement by poor children derived principally from inherent disabilities characterizing the poor” (p.16). Edmonds countered their perspective with the view that schools don’t really try to educate poor children. “Schools teach those they think they must and when they think they needn’t they don’t” (p.16). Edmonds investigated schools where poor children demonstrated greater-than-expected achievement. Based upon his findings, he asserted that all children can learn if there is the will to teach them. Cuban (1998) noted that four values defined the Effective Schools movement: (1) all children can learn and achieve according to their ability, not according to their socioeconomic status; (2) top-down decisions wedded to scientifically derived expertise can improve individual schools; (3) measurable results matter; and (4) the school should be the basic unit of reform.
II. A Brief History of Issues Relevant to English Language Learners and School Reform

The 1980s

Another source of the contemporary emphasis on comprehensive school reform is the now 20-year-old report A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983). A Nation at Risk—with its subtitle, “The Imperative for Educational Reform” and phrases like “a rising tide of mediocrity”—led to substantial and ongoing scrutiny of public schools. It emphasized that the performance of schools influenced the performance of the economy, suggesting that educational policy needed to primarily emphasize creating excellence.

Shortly after A Nation at Risk was released, Horace’s Compromise (Sizer, 1984) and The Shopping Mall High School (Powell et al., 1985) were published as part of “A Study of High Schools,” co-sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools. These books remain strongly relevant to a contemporary discussion of comprehensive school reform. They echoed the Effective Schools movement’s emphasis on schools as the basic unit of reform as well as its belief that all children can learn. Each book made complementary arguments about the importance of fundamentally restructuring high schools. In particular The Shopping Mall High School noted that the aggregation of new programs and small realignments intended to respond to particular problems had ended up producing schools that were unwieldy and internally incoherent; small changes not aligned with a larger and encompassing vision create new problems even as they solve old ones. Horace’s Compromise described a common dilemma for teachers: namely, that they know what they should do but feel unable to do it all because of factors like time constraints and lack of resources. It also posited that only substantial school restructuring and site-based management could eliminate the frustration and cynicism that top-down management promotes.

Thus, the early and mid-1980s saw the emergence of broad concern for public schooling (stimulated by A Nation at Risk), the emergence of critiques of piecemeal reform and structures that inhibited appropriate practice, and the origin of some of the oldest (and still widely used) comprehensive school reform models. A comprehensive school reform model refers to an externally developed school change design that a school imports and tries to implement.

In 1989, as the immediate momentum of A Nation at Risk was waning, President Bush reinvigorated the school reform movement by convening all 50 governors for an education
summit. From that summit came America 2000, a collection of benchmarks defining what improved schools needed to accomplish. The first Bush administration was responsible for one other relevant initiative: the creation and fostering of the New American School Development Corporation. Using large sums of private and public money, this initiative fostered the development of seven comprehensive New American Schools (NAS) reform models (e.g., Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound and the ATLAS Project) and supported their piloting in several sites. The premise of school improvement through whole-school reform of “research-based” practices had become bigger and broader.

The 1990s

By the 1990s, Title VII language policies shifted, resulting in a reduced instructional role for children’s home languages. Recently at the state level, “English Only” political groups have waged successful campaigns to terminate or greatly reduce native-language instructional support to children in Arizona, California, Massachusetts, and many other states. Other approaches used to make English language content instruction accessible to LEPs employed linguistic simplification, scaffolding, rich contextual support, and language experience techniques. Some formalized strategies included: Structured Immersion, Sheltered English, CALLA, and Language Content Integration. Dual-immersion schools (also known as two-way bilingual schools) offer the promise that educating ELLs and monolingual English speakers together in two languages can result in bilingual proficiency for both groups.

In a report on the National Title VII Benchmark Study, the Institute for Policy Analysis and Research and CAL, the Center for Applied Linguistics, (2000) recounted the history of Title I and Title VII:

Until 1994, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provided funding for improving the education of underachieving students in schools with
high concentrations of students from low-income families. ESEA addressed the needs of both economically disadvantaged and language-minority students, but did so separately under Title I and Title VII of the act respectively. In practice these two federal programs were not coordinated and became independent funding streams with different accountability mechanisms, different staff at the state, district, and school levels, and different educational approaches within schools and classrooms. Moreover, many schools seemed to develop educational programs for these “categories” of students (economically disadvantaged and language-minority students) that were apart from and less demanding than the education for other students at the same school. (p.vii)

By 1994 the national discourse proposing comprehensive school reform as the best route to school improvement had been unfolding for a decade, co-existing with the older emphasis on equity that supported supplementary programs and targeted interventions for certain kinds of students. That year the reauthorization of ESEA formally connected these two impulses. Since the origin of ESEA in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, its different iterations had all focused on bringing federal resources to the related challenges of helping “at-risk” students and making sure that all students came to school prepared to succeed. Several national evaluations of the federal Title I program, however, found that targeted assistance programs had limited effectiveness at best. As a partial response to these findings, the 1994 reauthorization allowed schools with 50% or more of their enrollments eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (a common measure of low-income students) to apply for “schoolwide” status. This designation allowed schools to combine Title I funds (previously used solely on eligible students) with other federal and local funds to implement programs supporting all students in the schools, including low-income students. The reauthorization also required Title I “schoolwide” schools to develop comprehensive school improvement
plans. Federal policy now deeply linked the support of students at risk of failure with the emphasis on school-wide, or whole-school, change. Though a substantially smaller program than Title I, the federal Title VII program that was reauthorized as part of the same ESEA reauthorization mentioned above also made provision for a “schoolwide” component for schools with high ELL enrollments.

The ESEA reauthorization, along with that of the Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA, 1994) and The Goals 2000: Educate America Act (1994), responded to criticisms that federally funded categorical programs promoted fragmentation, marginalization, and low expectations (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). Title I began funding school-wide improvement projects that would enrich the education of all children in high-poverty schools by reducing class size, strengthening existing programs (rather than simply pulling children out of them), involving families, and aligning curriculum with challenging state and national standards.

Similarly, Title VII also began funding comprehensive school-wide projects. Schools eligible to compete for Title VII school-wide grants were those “serving at least 25% limited English proficient students...in order to create a comprehensive vision for improving the education of all children and to ensure that the needs and strengths of LEP students are addressed as part of the vision” (IPAR, CAL, p. 2). The grants were “intended to support [whole] schools as they implement(ed) programs to reform, restructure, and upgrade services for limited English proficient (LEP) students in the context of a school-wide agenda for educational improvement” (p. ii).

Goals 2000, President Clinton’s education reform act, provided the direction and financial support for the standards movement (now a core operating framework in 49 of our 50 states) and built upon America 2000 by asking states to define what schools should do—or more specifically, what students should know and be able to do at grades 4, 8, and 12. Specification of and accountability for what children should learn in both rich and poor urban, suburban, and rural schools was intended to provide equal access to uniformly challenging curriculum and effective teaching for students with diverse socioeconomic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds.

However, researchers such as Woodworth (2000), Murphy (1991), and Massell, Krist, and Hoppe (1997) have pointed out that a shift to a common curriculum should not imply
uniformity of instructional strategy. “This shift necessitates that instructional practices vary to make this common curricula accessible to the full range of students” (Woodworth, 2000). Often, differentiated instruction provides true equal access.

In 1998, with lots of data emerging from the New American Schools initiative and varied performance results at the thousands of Title I “schoolwide” schools, Congressmen David Obey and James Porter successfully sponsored legislation for their Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program, which would build on and complement the changes started by the 1994 ESEA. Specifically, the $145 million program (which rapidly became twice as big) supported the distribution of $50,000 grants (renewable for two additional years) to support a school’s initial implementation of comprehensive reform. The CSRD program targeted schools that needed to substantially raise student achievement. There were nine required components, which were based upon the findings of school reform and effective schools research:

- Effective, research-based methods and strategies
- Comprehensive design with aligned components
- Professional development
- Measurable goals and benchmarks
- Support within the school
- Parental and community involvement
- External technical support and assistance
- Evaluation strategies
- Coordination of resources

The emphasis of the CSRD program was on schools using their funds to pay for a New American Schools model or another externally developed, research-based school reform model. But the law did permit grantee schools to design their own local models. It is hard to have a historical perspective on what has happened in the last four years; however, it is reasonable to consider the Obey-Porter law the high water mark for the belief that importing externally developed school change models was the most effective way to transform schools. Over 2,000 schools nationally began implementing comprehensive school reform programs through CSRD.
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

When the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law by President George W. Bush in January of 2002, he described the new law as the “cornerstone” of his administration. Education Secretary Rod Paige stated, “For too long our schools did a good job educating some of our children. With this new law we’ll make sure we’re providing all of our children with access to high-quality education” (U.S. Department of Education, NCLB Desktop Reference, 2002, p. 9). NCLB emphasizes:

• School accountability for student test scores
• Scientifically based instruction methods
• Parental choices
• Flexibility for state and local educational agencies to consolidate and reallocate funds received under various grants and programs

Targeting ELLs and replacing Title VII of the previous law, Title III of NCLB provides $650 million to fund language instruction for English language learners. Funds are allocated to states by a formula based upon a state’s share of limited English proficient (LEP) and recently immigrated students. Title III monies are allocated by states to districts on the same basis. Title III funds must be used to provide “high-quality language instruction...based on scientifically based research...effective in increasing English proficiency and student achievement…” (NCLB Desktop Reference, p. 93).

Targeting poverty, Title I of NCLB responds to the schools’ continued lack of success in helping poor children reach high academic standards, as shown by scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). On the NAEP fourth-grade reading achievement tests (2000), only 32% of all fourth graders scored at or above the proficient level. Among low-income students, only 14% scored at or above the proficient level.

Title I is the largest federal program supporting elementary education, supplying resources ($10.4 billion in fiscal year 2002) to high-poverty districts and schools. Because of this focus on early education, 77% of Title I participants are in preschool through grade 6. Under NCLB, Title I funding focuses on promoting school-wide reform to improve reading and math instruction. The funds may be used in a variety of ways. For example, they could be used to increase learning time with extended-day and summer programs. Moreover, schools can
merge various types of Title I funds and combine them with other monies such as Title II (staff development and technology), Title III (English language acquisition), and state and local funds to support well-integrated programs.

As a sign of Congress’ ongoing support for comprehensive school reform, in 2001 the CSRD program was formally made part of the No Child Left Behind Act and renamed the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program. NCLB incorporated the CSR program into Title I, Part F of the law and made two significant shifts. The first shift was the addition of two new components, stressing the importance of support for teachers and principals and emphasizing the role of scientifically based research in guiding the selection of appropriate strategies (see the Appendix for all 11 components of CSR). The second shift was the removal of most references to “whole-school reform models” from the law in favor of the selection of scientifically based strategies that address the 11 components.

As part of Title I, schools receiving CSR program funds now have to use this money to implement educational practices that have had a positive effect on student achievement as proven by scientifically based research. At the same time, the law reduces the expectation that schools will use an externally developed model as their comprehensive school reform program. The CSR program reminds schools that they are responsible for assuring a comprehensive reform program within their school, perhaps with models incorporated to support large portions of such an effort. The idea that all students would succeed to high standards only if their schools were substantially restructured remained intact.

The distinction between whole-school reform models and a comprehensive school reform program is an important one. The emphasis on school reform models stemmed from the New American Schools support for whole-school “designs” as well as from the emphasis placed on models listed in the original CSRD program legislation (Committee Report—House Rpt. 105-390). Many districts and schools during the late 1990s associated comprehensive school reform solely with the adoption of an externally developed school reform model. On the other hand, there were thousands of schools (mainly Title I “schoolwide” schools) that, since 1994, had engaged in a type of comprehensive school reform that was based on their school-wide plan. These sometimes incorporated a particular school reform model, but as part of a larger program. In this scenario, schools are responsible for integrating externally developed
model elements with other components. The recent changes to the program return to the latter operating assumption, ensuring that the program is always bigger than the model. Akin to subcontractors, model developers can share responsibility for the implementation of a model, but the school and district have governing responsibility over the larger program.

Discussion of school reform can be confusing because the more widespread an educational term becomes, the less certain its meaning is. The term “comprehensive school reform” has been used a number of ways over the past 10 years, describing a broad array of education reform initiatives. To avoid adding to the confusion around comprehensive school reform, we have clarified, below, how we understand and use certain terms.

“Accountability is here to stay. We need to do it right. If we do it right, it’s a leverage for school reform and for changing the conditions in low-performing schools. Schools that heretofore were never really focusing on ELLs because they didn’t have to be accountable for them are now saying, ‘We’re going to have to do something.’ Now, ELLs are gaining the system.”

--Julia Lara, Council of Chief State School Officers

Defining the terms

This section provides our working definitions of school reform terms that can project different meanings depending upon the context in which they are used. The following definitions explain the ways in which they are used throughout this document.

**Comprehensive school reform:** This term refers to a research-based school reform process that involves all or nearly all students and faculty. Comprehensive school reform changes teaching and learning and restructures time, resources, organizational and decision-making processes, and/or curriculum and assessment. The remedial or supplementary efforts that focus only on certain students (e.g., a migrant education program) are not comprehensive school reforms, though a comprehensive school reform that failed to include such programs and to articulate their relation to the larger school change effort would be incomplete.
**The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program (CSRD):** This is the specific federal program (with nine required components) initiated by Congressmen David Obey and John Porter in 1998 that allocated $50,000 grants to schools (renewable twice) to support comprehensive school reform. The CSRD program was incorporated into Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and renamed the Comprehensive School Reform program (CSR), at which time two components were added. In this document, CSRD specifically references the older federal program, while CSR refers to the newer NCLB, Title I-funded program.

**School reform models:** These are whole-school models, such as those created by the New American Schools Corporation, that are research-based, developed outside the school, and brought into a school as a package. Initially, most CSRD-implementing jurisdictions broadly interpreted the requirement that funded schools receive “external technical support and assistance” as an expectation that CSRD schools would import school change models. Success for All, Roots and Wings, Accelerated Schools, Core Knowledge, Paideia, and the Coalition of Essential Schools are examples of widely used reform models.

**Systemic reform:** This refers to change efforts that occur beyond the level of an individual school—at a district, in a state, or at the federal level. District-wide comprehensive reform refers to district-level reform efforts aimed at cultivating and supporting comprehensive school reform throughout the district. Changes at these levels shift the context in which a school’s comprehensive school reform effort takes place, affecting its speed, reach, and viability.

A final point of clarification relates to the relationship between district comprehensive reform, or systemic reform, and school-level comprehensive reform. An emerging body of literature in the 1990s drew attention to the fact that, although many high-poverty schools had figured out how to meet the needs of their students, these same schools typically struggled to sustain their level of success. That is to say, schools with excellent records often fell back into the pack over time, perhaps because of the
departure of an excellent principal, a supportive superintendent, or some other key figure. Books like Fink’s (2000) *Good Schools/Real Schools: Why School Reform Doesn’t Last* and Lusi’s (1997) *The Role of State Departments of Education in Complex School Reform* argued that districts needed to pay attention to the administrative, institutional, and cultural contexts within which a given school’s change effort occurred in order to adequately support that effort over the long term. At the same time, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform announced that it would focus on studying and supporting school district involvement in school improvement. It argued that district-wide systemic reform was needed to support and cultivate the efforts of high-performing schools serving traditionally underserved student populations.

To distinguish these larger reform-supporting frameworks from those efforts undertaken at the school level, we differentiate here between systemic reform and comprehensive school reform, though the two types of reform clearly intertwine. As we consider the fate of ELLs in relation to school reform, we want to retain both ideas, to keep in mind how change efforts at the school level consider ELLs as well as the ways in which district, state, and federal initiatives consider ELLs. Decisions made in spheres separate from any one school ultimately affect what happens in the classroom.

It is our hope that we have offered enough of a sense of comprehensive school reform, the CSRD and CSR programs, reform models, and systemic reform to position readers to consider how these reforms and responsiveness to ELLs can be integrated well. We hope to see schools that are truly inclusive, where the reforms selected and crafted are reforms that make the curriculum accessible to the full range of students at the school (Woodworth, 2000). We ask those engaged in comprehensive school reform to remember that often it is differentiated instruction that provides equal access and leads to success. In the next chapter we examine what constitutes success for ELLs.

“Language has become the proxy for race; when we talk about ELLs, we’re really talking about race. If we don’t address issues of race, we’re never going to get anywhere.”

--Kris Gutierréz, University of California, Los Angeles
III. Successful Schooling for ELLs: Principles for Building Responsive Learning Environments

Guiding Questions

- What are the goals of schooling in general and for ELLs in particular?
- What roles do language and culture play in teaching, in learning, and in the assessment of learning?
- How do we measure the successfulness of schooling for ELLs?
- What factors besides the quality of classroom instruction impact the education of ELLs? How?
- In addition to research-based, age-appropriate literacy instruction, what more do ELLs need in order to develop good literacy skills?
- What is the importance of parental and community involvement in the education of ELLs?
While measurable academic gains in reading and mathematics are certainly central to the notion of successful schooling, we must not conceptualize success too narrowly. The famous educator John Dewey (1916) considered education a tool that would enable the citizen to “integrate culture and vocation effectively and usefully.” Dewey cautioned that assessing the success of such an education is not simple or one-dimensional.

…it is easy to ignore…the effect of our acts upon their disposition, or to subordinate that educative effect to some external and tangible result. (p. 7)

Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren’s 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education emphasized that test scores are only benchmarks, not ends in themselves. He asserted that our educational system should prepare students for “public responsibilities, awakening the child to cultural values…and…helping him to adjust normally to his environment.” More recently, Williams (1999) described the scope of the challenge that we face in successfully educating English language learners for the world of tomorrow:

[It is] an awesome challenge for society and educational institutions…to adequately prepare the diverse population of students we are not successfully educating with recognition and respect for their individual human rights…and to enable all students to participate in and contribute to the growth of the nation and the world community in a future that demands cross-cultural interdependence and new social interactions—global human opportunities. (pp. 89-90)

Mindful of these broader definitions of success, this section outlines several major principles of successful ELL education. Successful education for ELLs means that the academic and social development of each student is supported in culturally and linguistically responsive ways. A standardized test score may not fully or accurately represent school success. Other quantitative data, such as reduced dropout rates, improved attendance, continuation on to higher education, and rubric-scored portfolios and performance assessments, also offer direct and indirect evidence of success (Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).
More fundamentally, however, the success of ELLs must be thought of in broader terms than their success at mastering the language, customs, and knowledge of the dominant culture (Miramontes et al., 1997; Halcón, 2001; Hamann, 2001). As Gibson (1997) wrote, “We must measure school success in terms of the ability of students to move successfully between their multiple cultural worlds” (p. 446). In a similar vein, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) argued that it is in the best interest of society and the individual ELL to allow students to acquire new knowledge without ignoring, displacing, deprecating, or diminishing existing linguistic and cultural knowledge. Portes and Rumbaut wrote:

In this new world order where multiple economic, political, and cultural ties bind nations more closely to one another, it is not clear that the rapid extinction of foreign languages is in the interest of individual citizens or of the society as a whole. In an increasingly interdependent global system, the presence of pools of citizens able to communicate fluently in English plus another language and bridge the cultural gaps among nations represents an important collective resource. (p. 273)

As Miramontes et al. (1997) pointed out, a student who becomes bilingual and biliterate is more accomplished than one who masters only one language.

Moreover, García (1998) wrote: “There is some evidence that assimilation may actually inhibit academic success. Studies of Mexican immigrants suggest that those who maintain a strong identification with their native language and culture are more likely to succeed in schools than those who readily adapt to U.S. ways” (p. viii). Trueba (1999) echoed that sentiment, saying, “If children manage to retain a strong cultural self-identity and maintain a sense of belonging to their sociocultural community, they seem to achieve well in school” (p. 260). Both of these scholars are aware of troubling data that
suggests second-generation students (i.e., children of immigrants) often do not fare as well in school as the immigrant generation did, despite their greater familiarity with “American” ways (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Maintaining a sense of pride in self aids the acquisition of new competencies and new cultural ways; thus, a definition of ELL success could incorporate maintenance of first language and culture for practical as well as pluralist reasons.

In her book *White Teacher* (1979), Vivian Gussin Paley discussed her realization that shared language and cultural knowledge make it easier to recognize intelligence in young children of one’s own cultural group and language community. Moreover, intelligence, learning, and good behavior are all conceptualized somewhat differently across cultures. Cultural assumptions determine whether a “good” student is expected to be talkative, inquisitive, and independent or, on the other hand, observant, cooperative, and a good listener. The Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory (2002) has identified the following cross-cultural differences as significant for schooling:

(1) How children are expected to interact with each other and adults

(2) How language is used by adults and children

(3) How knowledge is acquired and displayed

(4) What counts as knowledge (pp. 51-52)

“The small schools movement isn’t just about getting students from all backgrounds up to par in academic achievement. It’s also about collaboration, holistic human development, paying attention to the social, emotional qualities of development—what they call the ‘soul standards.’ These standards encompass community values. If we develop them, how do we measure them, and how does this factor into graduation?”

--Pedro Pedraza, Hunter College
School practices that disregard these cross-cultural differences or discount ELLs’ first language, literacy, cultural identity, or self-esteem are not likely to create effective learning environments. First-language vocabulary, oral language, and literacy skills all support successful English literacy development (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Moll, 1996). At the same time, Delpit (1988) and Bartolomé (1998) caution educators that not teaching minority students mainstream ways or academic forms of discourse is doing them a disservice. ELLs’ prior knowledge and first-language proficiency provide the foundations for achievement in U.S. schools. Success for ELLs means being able to function well in mainstream academic settings and in their home communities.

Given multiple criteria for ELL success, multiple measures may be needed to evaluate it. It is widely agreed that ELLs’ scores on standardized tests of subject knowledge are often not valid (August & Hakuta, 1997; García, 2001; Hurley & Tinajero, 2001; LaCelle-Peterson & Rivera, 1994; Stefanakis, 1998). The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education, 1985) state:

Every assessment is an assessment of language….This is even more so given the advent of performance assessments requiring extensive comprehension and production of language. For example, ‘mathematical communication,’ one of seven subtests,…requires the student to use appropriate mathematical terms, vocabulary, and language based on prior conceptual work. (p. 120)

This seldom-recognized linguistic dimension of (even math) tests often limits the ability of ELLs to fully demonstrate their content knowledge and understandings (García, 2001). Moreover, tests designed for native English speakers may lack the sensitivity to represent initial gains or incremental growth in English language acquisition.
August and Hakuta (1997) found that although ELLs can and should reach the same high standards as other students, they may need more time:

According to the law, the same high performance standards that are established for all students are the ultimate goal for English language learners as well. On average, however, English language learners (especially those with limited prior schooling) may take more time to meet these standards. Therefore additional benchmarks might be developed for assessing the progress of these students toward meeting the standards. Moreover, because English language learners are acquiring English language skills and knowledge already possessed by students who arrive at school already speaking English, additional content and performance standards in English language arts may be appropriate. (p.127)

It is important to understand that the label “ELL” encompasses diverse individuals and groups in a variety of school settings. A Chinese-speaking kindergartener born in a U.S. city has different needs, abilities, and attributes than a 17-year-old from a Central American preparatory school attending high school in a rural U.S. community. Clearly, recommended practices and educational challenges vary according to student characteristics and school/community settings. Despite this diversity, educators and researchers have identified some practices common to most contexts where ELLs experience effective schooling. From these research-based practices we have derived a set of principles for building responsive learning environments that support ELLs. The principles serve as guides for the development of teaching strategies, reform models, programs, and research questions in settings where ELLs are part of the school population.

“When a visitor asks, ‘How does lion dancing, drumming, and arts stuff improve the test scores?’ I want to answer, ‘They’ll be happy, they’ll be engaged, they’ll feel like humans....nah, that’s not what we want for our children!’”

--Deborah Wei, School District of Philadelphia
1. **ELLs are most successful when**......

School leaders, administrators, and educators recognize that educating ELLs is the responsibility of the entire school staff.

- School leadership’s support of the education of ELLs can be seen in the explicit inclusion of ELLs in a school’s vision, goals, and reform strategies as well as in its promised accountability regarding retention and dropout rates, test exemption rates, and enrollment in special programs.

- ELLs are neither programmatically nor physically isolated; rather they are an integral part of the school and they receive appropriate targeted services such as ESL and/or literacy instruction.

- ESL and bilingual teachers have equitable access to all staff development resources and materials.

- All staff have access to appropriate professional development in educating ELLs.

- Linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs are included in decisions regarding comprehensive school reform. School reform teams include members who are knowledgeable about ELLs.

(Brisk, 1998; Dentler & Hafner, 1997; Grey, 1991; Hamann, Zuliani, & Hudak, 2001; IDRA, 2002; Lucas, 1997; Miramontes et al., 1997; Olsen et al., 1994; Stringfield et al., 1998)
Principles for Building an ELL-Responsive Learning Environment

2. ELLs are most successful when……

Educators recognize the heterogeneity of the student population that is collectively labeled as “ELL” and are able to vary their responses to the needs of different learners.

ELLs differ greatly in terms of:

- Language background
- Place of origin
- Rural or urban background
- Previous school experience
- Home language literacy skills
- Proficiency in conversational English
- Proficiency in academic and written English
- Age
- Age on arrival
- Family circumstances and responsibilities
- Living situation
- History of mobility
- Employment and work schedule
- Immigration or refugee experience
- Trauma and resiliency
- Family legal status
- Family educational history
- Family social organization
- Birth order in the family
- Size and resources of the local ethnic enclave
- Identification with local ethnic enclave
- Religious beliefs and practices
- Continued contact with place of origin and language
- Gender roles and assumptions
- Aspirations and expectations
- Interests, talents, skills
- Funds of knowledge and community support

(Lucas, 1997; Tabors, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995, 2002; Miramontes et al., 1997; Olsen, 1997; Yedlin, 2003)
Principles for Building an ELL-Responsive Learning Environment

3. ELLs are most successful when......

The school climate and general practice reinforce the principle that students’ languages and cultures are resources for further learning.

- Hallway conversations, displays of student work, and school activities are multicultural and multilingual.

- Adults from students’ heritage communities play important roles in the life of the school.

- Teachers integrate students’ first language and literacy and other “funds of knowledge,” including their individual areas of interest and curiosity, into the learning process, helping them make connections between their prior and new knowledge.


“A key resource is people. Doing a resource assessment, as opposed to a needs assessment, could be a first step. Identify people who have knowledge, sensitivity, interest in working with ELLs and in building on these levels. Consider the human resources—teachers are the main resources.”

--Tamara Lucas, Montclair State University
4. **ELLs are most successful when…….**

There are strong and seamless links connecting home, school, and community.

- Educators foster family participation in ways that truly value parents’ knowledge and priorities.

- Educators communicate regularly with families, exchanging information and points of view through newsletters, calls, interpreters, and presentations at ethnic, community-based organizations and houses of worship. Meetings are conducted multilingually.

- The school staff includes adults from students’ heritage communities and speakers of their languages.

- Educators recognize the importance of family participation in education and, through family and community activities, reinforce connections among students’ home, school, and the broader community in which the school operates.

- Educators understand that across different cultures and settings the roles of parents in their children’s education vary. In some cultures parents’ responsibilities center around the provision of necessities, protection, discipline, and moral guidance in the home and community. They may view schooling as the responsibility solely of professional educators.

- Educators have some familiarity with and show interest in learning about the cultures, languages, places of origin, demographic patterns, reasons for immigration or migration, naming patterns, and interactional styles of the communities they serve.

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III. Successful Schooling for ELLs: Principles for Building Responsive Learning Environments

Principles for Building an ELL-Responsive Learning Environment

- Educators make explicit to ELLs’ parents the new opportunities and expectations that exist for parental involvement.

- Educators are aware of potential linguistic, cultural, economic, and logistical obstacles to the participation of ELL families in school-based programs and events.

- Educators try to address obstacles energetically, creatively, and in culturally sensitive ways. They provide ethnic community liaisons, interpreters, child care, and transportation.

- Educators understand that in some families the provision of necessities, protection, and moral guidance consumes all of the parents’ time and resources.

- Educators do not disparage parents whose support of their children may not be evident because of its lack of alignment with local expectations.

5. **ELLs are most successful when**......

**ELLs have equitable access to all school resources and programs.**

- ELLs have access to all programs and levels of instruction, including special education, gifted and talented education, or high-level courses such as calculus.

- Curricula, teaching strategies, grouping strategies, and other reforms are implemented in ways that increase their accessibility, comprehensibility, and meaning to ELLs.

- ELLs have access to prerequisites for acceptance into higher education.

- ELLs have access to all enrichment and extracurricular activities.

- ELLs have equal treatment from guidance counselors and equitable access to the full range of services they provide, such as planning for postsecondary education.

(Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University, 2000; Olsen & Jaramillo 1999)
6. ELLs are most successful when……

Teachers have high expectations for ELLs.

- Particularly for ELLs with previous school experience, this principle means educators need a clear sense of what students have already mastered in a different language or in a different country.

- The need to adapt curriculum to match achieved language proficiency cannot be an excuse for denying ELLs access to challenging academic content.

(García, 1997; Stoops-Verplaetse, 1998; Valdés, 2001)

“I don’t think people really understand how critical that is [being taught in their native language]—that when you miss an opportunity for a child, and you’re not conscious of what you’re doing, the consequences stay with that child forever.”

--Anthony Colon, National Council of La Raza
Principles for Building an ELL-Responsive Learning Environment

7. ELLs are most successful when…….

Teachers are properly prepared and willing to teach ELLs.

- Teachers should have high-quality professional development experiences in topics pertinent to working with ELLs, including:
  - First and second language acquisition
  - Reading and writing in a second language
  - Methods for teaching content subjects to ELLs
  - Alternative assessment
  - Sociocultural issues in education

- Staff development is long term and job embedded.

- Teachers can differentiate among developmental issues in language acquisition, gaps in prior schooling, and learning disabilities.

- Teachers are culturally responsive, building on students’ linguistic and cultural knowledge both for purposes of scaffolding new knowledge onto students’ existing knowledge and earning learners’ assent.

- Teachers foster meaningful relationships with students.

- Teachers understand and incorporate standards for ELLs.

(Cummins, 2001; Erickson, 1987; García, 2001; Gay, 2001; González et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Miramontes et al., 1997; Moll et al., 1992; Nieto, 1999; TESOL, n.d.; Wong Fillmore & Snow, 1999; Yedlin, 2003)
8. ELLs are most successful when……

Language and literacy are infused throughout the educational process, including curriculum and instruction.

- Teachers explicitly teach and model the academic skills and the thinking, learning, reading, writing, and studying strategies that ELLs need to know in order to function effectively in academic environments.

- Teachers act as “educational linguists” and pay attention to uses and functions of language in their own classrooms and disciplines.

- Students are taught which styles of speaking, writing, reading, and participating apply in a given setting, genre, or subject area, including textbooks and story books, friendly letters and essays, personal narratives, and persuasive essays.

- Children are enabled to make overt comparisons of linguistic meanings and uses in one environment versus another, such as the playground and the reading group, or in English and their home languages.

- ELL students have opportunities to hear comprehensible language and to read comprehensible texts. Texts are reader friendly and make links to students’ prior knowledge and experiences.

- Teachers employ a variety of strategies to help students understand challenging language, texts, and concepts. These may include linguistic simplification, demonstrations, hands-on activities, mime and gestures, native language support, use of graphic organizers, and learning logs.

- Students have opportunities to interact with teachers, classmates (both ELL and English proficient), and with age-appropriate subject matter through instructional conversation, cooperative group work, jigsaw reading, writing conferences, peer and cross-age tutoring, and college “buddies.”

(Brumfit, 1997; Cummins, 2000; Kohl 2002; Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Yedlin, 2003)
9. **ELLs are most successful when**

Assessment is authentic, credible to learners and instructors, and takes into account first- and second-language literacy development.

- Multiple forms of assessment measure not only students’ academic achievement but also their progress, effort, engagement, perseverance, motivation, and attitudes in the school and classroom setting.

- Because first-language development positively impacts English language literacy (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), tests assess literacy in the first language along with students’ English language proficiency and content area knowledge.

- Assessment is used frequently and formatively, with results allowing the instructor—perhaps in direct consultation with the learner—to refine subsequent teaching strategies.

- Teachers include first-language competence in assessment of an ELL’s overall academic accomplishment.

The principles presented in this chapter are based upon practices identified in ELL-responsive learning environments. We suggest that you keep these principles and practices in mind as you read the review of research on school reform and ELLs in the next chapter (Chapter IV). You will find examples of their presence as well as of their absence. To help you design or strengthen your own reform program so that it is more responsive to ELLs, we have included Tools for ELL-Responsive Comprehensive School Reform (Chapter V), Resources (VI) and References (VII).
IV. Review of the Research on Comprehensive School Reform and ELLs

Guiding Questions

- To what extent do comprehensive school reform and the research about comprehensive school reform expressly consider ELLs?

- To what extent do various schools and model designers expressly consider the needs and unique learning characteristics of ELLs when implementing or approving comprehensive school reform plans and designs?

- How do districts support equal educational access for ELLs within comprehensive and systemic reform?

Our searches through educational research literature revealed few studies focusing on English language learners and comprehensive school reform. Although there is a body of research on effective education for ELLs and a body of research on comprehensive school reform, only a handful of studies consider them in combination. Historically separate funding sources, policies, accountability systems, proponents, and knowledge bases have generated research that looks either at English language learners or at CSR. There is not much of an empirical record of their combination. Much of the work of combining them requires making inferences and suppositions from the research on one or the other.
Cognizant of a disconnect between prevalent CSR models and the demographics of many CSR eligible schools, in 1999 the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP) at New Mexico Highlands University identified the “critical need for comprehensive reform strategies to meet the needs of ELL students…” (Wilde, Thompson, & Herrera, 1999, p. 2). CESDP also found that “…there is little information readily available with regard to which models are most appropriate for… ELLs… Thus far most do not address directly the learning needs of this population…” (Wilde, Thompson, & Herrera, 1999, p. 2). To generate information on the topic, CESDP conducted a survey, collecting self-reported information from CSR schools with ELL populations that could report “demonstrated (i.e., data-based) improvements in ELL students’ academic achievement” (p. i). Based upon this survey, CESDP published *A Guide to Comprehensive School Reform Models Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners*. The guide reviews information provided by 18 CSR schools using externally provided models and 10 CSR schools using locally developed models. The CESDP guide revealed that among the schools surveyed, schools with smaller numbers of ELL students tended to use externally developed models and those with larger ELL populations tended to use locally developed models. The schools that used externally provided models reported that ELL students receiving language services constituted between 7% and 52% of their school populations. The schools that used locally developed models reported that ELL students receiving language services constituted between 17% and 95% of their school populations.

The CESDP guide, relying on school and model developers’ self reports, did not claim to provide either verification of data on achievement or detailed description of model implementation with ELLs; however, the identification of schools where ELL pedagogy and language services models either co-existed or were integrated with comprehensive school reform has provided the field with a good starting point for continued research. Before examining such research, it is worthwhile to consider a question posed in the CESDP
guide. The authors described the characteristics of schools recognized for their “academic excellence” by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) under Title VII: “These [academically excellent] programs [for ELLs] have been shown to consist of unique, individualized, and inclusive educational settings. Do reform models that will be used by schools as part of their CSR programs for their ELL students allow for similar efforts?” (p. 2).

Research Contexts

Much of the current literature on comprehensive school reform reports on implementation and evaluation of either locally created or externally developed CSR program models in particular schools. There is little empirical study of district-wide initiatives or of the district’s role in school-wide comprehensive reform. There is even less research on how districts support ELLs within a comprehensive school reform model. In order to get a better understanding of this dynamic within CSR programs, studies reviewed for this synthesis include: (1) research on externally developed or locally created reform models implemented in schools with high populations of ELLs, (2) research on schools deemed successful in educating ELLs, and (3) district- and system-wide initiatives in districts with high populations of ELLs.

Comprehensive School Reform at the School Level

Externally Developed School Reform Models and ELLs

There have been some research reports in recent years about externally developed reform models and their effectiveness for ELLs (Datnow, Stringfield, & Castellano, 2002; Stringfield et al. 1998). Findings from these studies have been both positive and negative. Datnow et al. (2002) conducted a four-year study of 13 schools from a large, multilingual, multicultural school district in the southern part of the United States; these schools were in the throes of reform. Each chose to adopt one of six externally developed restructuring models: Coalition of Essential Schools, Comer School Development Program, Core Knowledge, Audrey Cohen College System of Education, Modern Red Schoolhouse, and the Success for All (SFA)/Roots and Wings programs. The researchers observed classrooms and meetings, collected data regarding implementation of the program, and interviewed teachers and school and district administrators in order to determine the efficacy of the models in educating ELLs. Results of
the study showed that most of the reform packages had to be adapted to accommodate the linguistic needs of ELLs, a task often not easily accomplished. While some reform models were not easy to adapt, other designs like Core Knowledge proved very adaptable.

Linguistic adaptability aside teachers reported that they sometimes found it difficult to teach ELLs all of the topics included in the curriculum because material was not available in the students’ native languages. As a result, the curriculum was frequently not as comprehensive for the ELLs as it was for English proficient students. In the case of one Success for All Spanish program, teachers substituted ESL strategies for the strategies suggested by the model for oral language development.

Additionally, researchers found that, except in the case of one school implementing Success for All, schools received little support from either the design team or the district when they had to make adaptations for their ELLs. The authors of the study stressed the importance of including equity and multiculturalism as explicit goals in any reform initiative. While they found that some models helped teachers learn about their students’ languages and cultures, others did not. The needs of ELLs were a low priority in some schools. Many teachers had a preconceived idea that ELLs were not capable of higher order thinking.

In a report related to the same study, Stringfield et al. (1998) described a school, referred to as Wild Cypress, that had successfully adapted the Core Knowledge reform model for its bilingual students. The population of the school was 90% Hispanic, and more than a third of the students were classified as limited English proficient (LEP). A major goal of the school was “exemplary bilingual education for all students” (p. 243). Teachers at Wild Cypress chose the Core Knowledge model because they felt it would “build on the school’s strengths and...help the faculty and students focus on the substantial contributions of all nations to the world’s rich history and diverse cultural fabric” (p. 343). Teachers worked together to adapt the Core Knowledge curriculum for their students. They collaboratively decided when and in which language they would introduce the components of the program to the students. The authors
concluded that “a carefully chosen reform plus a thoughtful, persistent, thorough implementation has resulted in consistently high achievement for a large number of potentially at-risk, multilingual students” (p. 344).

Datnow and Castellano (2000) conducted a qualitative study of three schools implementing Success for All. Their sample consisted of one school that had successfully implemented the model for two years, one that was having implementation problems, and a third school that was just beginning implementation. All three schools had high Hispanic populations (from 45 - 72% of the student body) and high percentages of students classified as Limited English proficient (from 46 - 85%). The researchers conducted extensive interviews with teachers and administrators and observed instruction in individual classes both during SFA instructional periods as well as during non-SFA instructional periods. Results of the study showed strong administrative influence on the adoption of SFA at the schools. In one case, the school had received a large Title VII bilingual education grant and therefore needed a research-based bilingual literacy program. The principal explained to the staff that SFA was the only bilingual program he had found that was supported by strong research evidence. Some teachers felt pressured by this to accept the SFA model. While teachers and principals regarded training in the SFA program as positive overall, teachers trained in the Spanish component of the program expressed some dissatisfaction. Training for them was conducted in English but the manual they were given was in Spanish. Consequently, they had to adapt much of the training they received to a different language.

Datnow and Castellano (2000) reported problems with instructional groupings and learning materials for ELLs. Overall, the homogeneous grouping of students for the 90-minute SFA reading time was typically unproblematic. However, there was a problem in one school where students were placed in the Spanish SFA reading program but were in an English-only program for the rest of the day. Teachers did not see the benefit of teaching students to read in Spanish while writing instruction was conducted in English. As for the material provided by
the SFA program, teachers using the materials for the English SFA component considered them acceptable, while teachers using the Spanish materials found them to be unacceptable. There were reported to be fewer choices of basal readers and novels for the Spanish version of SFA, language errors in the Spanish material, and a hard-to-understand teacher’s manual.

Results of the SFA reading assessment as well as anecdotal information from teachers reported by Datnow and Castellano (2000) showed an overall gain in reading achievement both in English and Spanish at all three schools. One teacher reported that his Spanish-language students were transitioning more quickly into English. The researchers also assessed the effectiveness of instructional practices. Several areas of theory and research informed the questions used for the assessment, including research on education, diversity, authentic pedagogy, and effective programs for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Results showed that while there was evidence of student dialogue in all three schools, none were considered strong in encouraging personal and cultural identity. They also found that the pedagogical strategies used during SFA time were not being used by teachers during non-SFA time.

“I believe you have to do a resource needs assessment, but I believe all parties must be involved in it to build ownership of the problem from the beginning; because unless I recognize the problem, I won’t act on it.”

—Sharon Saez, Educational Testing Service
Locally Developed School Reform Models

A Study of Secondary Schools That Help Recent Immigrant Students Succeed

Adger and Peyton (1999) reported on four schools that did not adopt external comprehensive school reform models but instead participated in designing a program to help recent immigrant students succeed in their secondary schools. With assistance from the Program in Immigrant Education (an organization funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation) and in collaboration with a local outside organization such as a university or a research-, business-, or community-based organization, the schools designed projects with an emphasis on: (1) innovative strategies for improving ELLs’ English language proficiency and literacy and (2) providing academic content mastery and better access to postsecondary institutions or the work force. At the core of each project was a school-based committee consisting of teachers, administrators, and community members (e.g., university researchers, business people, employees of non-profit agencies); the committees were instrumental in reorganizing and restructuring standard procedures in their schools to better accommodate ELLs. The committees based their decisions on student data such as academic achievement, English language proficiency, scores on state testing, dropout rates, and the percentage of ELLs who pursued a postsecondary degree. For example, the task force of a Maryland high school that had partnered with the University of Maryland-Baltimore County created special courses to help ELLs pass the state-mandated tests in citizenship, reading, writing, and math. These classes helped more ELLs pass these tests. The task force also provided assistance to prospective college-bound ELLs. It organized groups of students and helped them fill out college applications, apply for scholarships, write resumes, and visit colleges. Results showed that in the first year, the 27 students who were regular participants were all accepted to college, with many receiving scholarships. The second year of the project yielded similar results. Partnerships with parents and community organizations were vital to the success of several Program in Immigrant Education projects. In one middle school, teachers and parents worked together

Adger and Peyton (1999) concluded that “changing schools structurally to make them responsive to immigrants requires a range of players in addition to the ESL/bilingual teachers who have traditionally worked with and advocated for immigrants” (p. 221). They emphasized that the needs of ELLs must be a “central focus” in school restructuring (p. 222).
to help students with their homework assignments. The homework assistance program resulted in improved grades for all students involved.

In another example of school-community partnership, a middle school and a local university established a mutually beneficial relationship. University officials provided opportunities for the students to visit their campus and interact with university students of similar backgrounds. The school and university hoped that this interaction would convince the middle school students that postsecondary education was viable for them. Students from the university also participated in a mentoring program with the middle school students.

The university provided professional development to the middle school faculty in sheltered (comprehensible) instruction for ELLs and on other topics of interest. In turn, school administrators allowed the university to establish a “learning laboratory” at the middle school for students in their college of education whose focus was urban education and language-minority students.

As a result of studying the projects involved with the Program in Immigrant Education, Adger and Peyton (1999) concluded that “changing schools structurally to make them responsive to immigrants requires a range of players in addition to the ESL/bilingual teachers who have traditionally worked with and advocated for immigrants” (p. 221). They emphasized that the needs of ELLs must be a “central focus” in school restructuring (p. 222).

The Importance of Teacher Commitment and Taking Care of the Whole Child

Borman et al. (2000) studied a grassroots model of school improvement as part of their study of four different types of school improvement models. They reported on one Midwestern school, with a 92% Latino population, that showed marked improvement as measured by student
attendance, authentic instruction, and standardized test scores. The school’s improvement plans emphasized ongoing professional development and positive relationships with community organizations. The school annually assessed the needs of students’ families and implemented programs designed to take care of the whole child. Community agencies assisted the school in providing resources to the families.

A committee that included current teachers and the principal hired new teachers. Teachers implicitly understood that the school would not tolerate low expectations for these students because of their economic or ELL status. The principal had confidence in the ability of her teachers and did not mandate the adoption of a certain program or method of teaching. Instead, she encouraged teachers to attend professional conferences and to share what they had learned with their colleagues. The school initiated an after-school lab where teachers, and sometimes parents, worked together to improve teaching and learning.

Over the eight-year period in which the school was studied, the attendance rate increased from 94% to 97%. From spring 1992 to spring 1999, reading scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) increased by 29 percentage points. The math scores for the same time period increased by 44 percentage points.

The authors of the study concluded that grassroots reform efforts are effective if they have the initial support and commitment of the teachers. Teachers will accept a proposed reform more willingly if they are provided with solid evidence that a reform will “make a difference for their students” (p. 67). Additionally, reform efforts must consider the needs of the whole child and not just improvement in academic achievement. In other words, reform models should provide resources that help students function in their community.

**Challenging Content and a Strongly Developed Second Language Acquisition Program at the Elementary and Middle School Levels**

The National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning has published Educational Practice Reports (McLeod, 1996; Minicucci, 1996; Nelson, 1996) on innovative school reforms that successfully provided ELLs with both challenging content and a strongly developed second language acquisition program. A nationwide search for schools
successful in achieving high standards for their ELLs was conducted. National, state, and local educators with an understanding of ELL programs nominated 156 schools and selected eight (four elementary and four middle) for study. Aside from having achieved high standards, criteria for nomination included: (1) schools with language arts, mathematics, or science programs that were of high quality, especially for LEP students; (2) schools undergoing restructuring; and (3) schools with comprehensive, well-implemented language acquisition programs for their LEP students. Regrettably, the authors did not specify their criteria for determining the programs to be “high quality” and “well implemented.” Based on their selection criteria, telephone interviews were conducted with 75 potential sites. From these telephone interviews, the number of potential sites was reduced to 25. Fifteen of those sites were chosen for a one-day visit based on demographic, geographic, and/or programmatic reasons. The researchers wanted their choices to represent the diverse environments in which English language learners receive their education. For example, in some schools most of the LEP population was from a single language background, while in other schools English language learners spoke several different languages. In some cases the school was a neighborhood school, while in other cases students lived throughout the district. Eventually, eight of those sites (four elementary and four middle schools) were chosen for intensive study.

McLeod (1996) explains that the study “focused particularly on understanding the ways in which recent trends in education reform can be applied in a school context that includes significant numbers of students with limited English proficiency” (p. 5).

Four Exemplary Elementary Schools Studied

Nelson (1996) reported on the four elementary schools that implemented language development programs for English language learners as part of the school-wide restructuring project. Two of the schools were located in Texas, one in El Paso and the other in the Houston school district. The third school was in an inner-city neighborhood of San Diego, while the fourth was located in Chicago. He highlighted six elements of restructuring that the four
Schools had in common: (1) a reorganization of the school that supported improved teaching and learning for all students, including ELLs; (2) adaptation of school programs to address the needs of ELLs; (3) access to challenging content for ELLs; (4) opportunities for ELLs to interact with English-only peers; (5) introduction of innovative curricular strategies such as whole-language, literature-based curriculum and thematic, integrated curriculum; and (6) implementation of innovative instructional strategies including cooperative, active, and experiential learning. Two of the four schools restructured so that ELL teachers could team-teach with monolingual English teachers. In addition, teachers integrated students from both classes for some instructional activities. Another of the schools in the study divided its students into four ungraded “wings” based on developmental stages instead of grade placement. Teachers were then able to organize instructional groups according to developmental needs rather than on the basis of traditional age/grade structure. Teachers also were instrumental in planning their own professional development, which included learning and implementing new strategies for the language development of ELLs. The four schools employed several different approaches to addressing their students’ English language acquisition needs. Two of the schools used a transitional bilingual approach, and a third used a two-way bilingual model. Spanish was the primary language of all the students from these schools. Since the fourth school had some students whose primary language was Spanish as well as students who spoke one of the Southeast Asian languages, the school opted for a combination of bilingual and sheltered instruction and hired support staff fluent in the students’ languages to provide primary language assistance.

Teachers adapted strategies normally used with English-only students for the ELLs, because access to advanced English literacy skills was deemed just as important for ELLs as their English language acquisition. The schools implemented strategies such as Writer’s Workshop and Reader’s Workshop in both the first and second language. Accelerated Reader, a computer-based test, enhanced reading comprehension at one school. Students read books outside of class in either English or Spanish and then took a comprehension test. Teachers reported that “students were engaged in their reading and were willing to try increasingly sophisticated books… [teachers] felt the program increased reading comprehension and a love of reading and provided exposure to a wide variety of experiences through books” (p. 9).
Four Exemplary Middle Schools Studied

Minicucci (1996) reported on the four exemplary middle schools that were able to provide ELLs with quality science and math courses. Minicucci cited several features common to all the schools: (1) math and science curriculum were creative and aligned with national efforts in math and science; (2) the school afforded ELLs the opportunity to participate in the innovative math and science programs; (3) the second language development programs and the science and math programs coordinated with each other; and (4) the school reorganized to support the curricular changes. Additionally, all schools partnered with an outside agency that assisted in curriculum design and professional development.

One of the exemplar schools, a school in the Boston area, worked with the non-profit agency Technical Education Research Center (TERC) to develop a science program for students in the school’s Haitian Creole bilingual program. Students decided on the topics they would study and developed the questions they would explore on that topic. The school introduced a method called “science talk” (Cheche Konen, see Roseberry, Warren, & Conant, 1992) whereby students selected a topic to discuss (in either Haitian Creole or English) that was related to findings from an experiment they had conducted. This method allowed students to “guide the discussion, develop topics, argue evidence, explore their findings, and formulate additional questions” (p. 10).

Minicucci (1996) reported on another exemplary school, located in a low-income Latino community in California. This school devised a method of transition for ELLs by which students ready to enter English-only classes were “clustered together” in those classes. For example, an eighth-grade, monolingual, English algebra class had 15 ELLs. The students worked together in cooperative learning groups to solve math problems. They used both their first language and English when discussing in the groups. Many of the teachers in the English-only classes had received training and certification in ELL education.
A third school, situated in San Francisco, adopted a block scheduling program that allowed students to study a topic that integrated content from math, science, language arts, and social studies. The teaching format used extended units on topics that were relevant to students. The fourth school, located in Texas near the Mexican border, adopted an innovative newcomers program. The Language Acquisition for the Middle School Program (LAMP) provided sheltered English classes as well as an intensive English as a second language (ESL) program. In addition, students received Spanish language arts classes. The LAMP classes were smaller in size, usually 14 to 15 students per class. Teachers grouped students into LAMP families (one for beginning ELLs and another for intermediate ELLs). The five teachers assigned to each family met on a daily basis to plan classroom and school-wide activities and discuss any problems their students were having. Instructional strategies employed at the school in Texas included cooperative learning and using thematic units relevant to the students’ lives. The School of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) supported the school’s professional development activities. Teachers attended a math institute at UTEP that helped them restructure the math curriculum. Other professional development opportunities for the teachers included training in multicultural education, language development, and the use of computers in the classroom. Minicucci (1996) concluded that the needs of ELLs could and should be considered in reform of curriculum and instruction, particularly in math and science. The exemplary schools she presented showed that creative practices like site-based decision making, smaller class size, alternative scheduling, and teacher collaboration resulted in quality instruction for ELLs in both content and language development.

“Practitioner research gets teachers to become self-reflective and forms the best staff development. Engaging teachers and school staff in doing research about the community and about practice creates a space to change belief.”

--Pedro Pedraza, Hunter College
High School Small Learning Communities and ELLs

In contrast to the successes for ELLs in the above-mentioned schools, Lili Allen (2001) found that ELLs were in danger of losing basic services when five Boston high schools initiated the Career Pathways reform efforts. Under this reform, the schools were restructured into smaller learning communities, and students in Career Pathways attended classes together. The project-based curriculum emphasized a particular career theme. A school-to-work model provided out-of-school experiences in the workplace (such as job shadowing) and opportunities for exploring postsecondary study and skills development. Allen found that headmasters at the schools struggled to ensure that Career Pathways attended to the needs of and services for ELLs in the midst of this restructuring. There were concerns about whether appropriate Career Pathways courses would be made available to all ELLs or only to the more proficient ones. State requirements about language assessment teams that are required to meet and assess progress for the ELLs were also a concern. Another major issue was how to staff all the smaller learning communities with a sufficient number of bilingual personnel, because they were limited in number. There were also not enough bilingual staff to teach the upper-level pathway courses in the students’ native languages. Some schools tried to concentrate resources by staffing only a few career pathways with their bilingual and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) teachers and encouraging ELLs to choose those pathways.

The leaders of the five schools in the report handled the problem in different ways. At one high school the headmaster organized the staffing and class scheduling in collaboration with the bilingual director. Because of their efforts, ELLs were able to take the same pathway courses as English-dominant students but in their native language. Sometimes these students were taught by mainstream teachers who were fluent in the students’ first language. At a second high school, ELLs with advanced proficiency could not benefit from pathway courses because the timing of the courses conflicted with upper-level ESL courses. With the help of a consultant, the school somewhat resolved the issue by having ELLs with advanced English proficiency attend mainstream career pathway courses and receive core content courses in their native language.

As increasing numbers of high schools are restructured into smaller learning communities and career or theme-centered “academies,” they must contend with the issues of providing ELLs access to opportunities, resources, and qualified ESL and bilingual staff, discussed by Allen (2001). Funded by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, researchers at Brown University’s
Education Alliance are currently conducting research on these and other issues relating to English language learners, small learning communities and high school reform.

**Related Research on Schools Demonstrating Success with English Language Learners**

Given the limited number of studies on comprehensive school reform and English language learners, schools seeking to design successful, integrated, school-wide approaches for English language learners must look farther afield to other related research. There are a number of studies and reports on schools that have redesigned curricula, provided professional development, and involved students, parents, and communities in creating programs for English language learners.

For example, Walqui (2000) reported on four high schools that designed special programs for their newly arrived immigrant students. One high school opened a “Reception Center” for newly arrived English language learners. The students spent half a day at the center in ESL classes, which helped prepare them for sheltered (comprehensible) content and mainstream classes that they would attend during the other half of the day. Another school described by Walqui concentrated reform efforts on teacher training and staff development. Teachers concentrated on learning about and discussing the cultural and linguistic development of their many English language learners. Additionally, they received training in the best methods and strategies for working with English language learners. The staff of the school even decided to work on a Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) program for their students.

“Don’t just look at students within your school; look at students who’ve left and the factors causing them to leave. That’s a way to involve other schools and agencies too. Before you start restructuring groups, do your due diligence and get a sense of what the real structure is in and out of the school.”

---Ariana Quiñones, National Council of La Raza
Reyes, Scribner, and Scribner (1999) in collaboration with the Region One Service Center of Texas as well as the Texas Education Agency conducted a study of eight schools (three elementary, three middle, and two high schools) that outperformed most other schools in their district on state standards. The schools, which were located on the Texas-Mexico border, had a high population of English language learners as well as a large number of students of low socioeconomic status. The schools were purposely selected for this qualitative case study because the authors wanted to highlight schools that demonstrated instructional practices and learning environments that resulted in achievement of high standards. Criteria for selection were that two thirds of the students in the school were Mexican-American; standardized tests scores (TAAS) of the students were well above average; and the school had received some type of state or national recognition for teaching and learning. Various components of the schools, such as leadership, parent involvement, community participation, math, and reading instruction, were studied. Wagstaff and Fusarelli (1999) reported on the leadership qualities that were evident in these schools. They found that administrators, professional staff, and community members in these exemplary schools communicated and collaborated in both the governance and leadership of the school through a site-based management approach. Both the school mission and the school vision were clear and supported by all parties involved. Additionally, instructional needs revealed by testing results were used to design curriculum and professional development. In another section of the report, Scribner, Young, and Pedroza (1999) reported on parental involvement. They found that when parents committed themselves to the school, they supported all the children not just their own. There were three different types of school/community relationships observed in the schools in this study. Brooks and Kavanaugh (1999) identified the Community as Resource Model, the Traditional Community Model, and the Learning Community Model. A large number of the schools in this study fit the Community as Resource Model. The relationship between the school and the community was tenuous at best and depended on the needs of the school. The school looked to the community...
for assistance in solving the school’s problems. In the Traditional Community Model, the school served as the “center of activity” (p. 63) for both the school and the community. The populations of the school and community were similar, and teachers and other school members were fully integrated into the community. One school in the study fit the Learning Community Model. In this type of model, the school is considered an integral part of the whole community’s learning. School staff are actively involved in working out solutions that will help not only the school but also the surrounding community. Based on the results of the study, the researchers made several recommendations for improving school-community relationships. They encouraged more professional development for both school personnel and community members. Additionally, they felt that the cultural and economic characteristics of the community should be considered when devising plans for school-community partnerships, taking into account the continuously changing nature of a community.

The two final sections of the study that were reported involved the math and reading curricula (Reyes & Pazey, 1999; Rutherford, 1999). The researchers noted that the teachers believed in the academic ability of the students and expressed their expectations of quality work. Teachers received training in strategies for working with their populations. They planned integrated units that incorporated the students’ first languages and cultures and connected to the students’ personal knowledge and backgrounds. The classrooms were student centered with evidence of cooperative learning activities, opportunities for students to interact with one another, and both peer and cross-age tutoring. In some schools there were special classes for students transitioning from Spanish to English. The teachers in the schools used several types of assessments: teacher-made tests, oral assessment of a student’s knowledge of content, portfolios, and extended student projects. In concluding their reports, the authors cited specific reasons for the success of the programs in the schools studied: (1) strong support from the leadership of the school; (2) a committed faculty and staff; (3) community and parent support; and (4) programs for the students varied and were geared to the specific needs and wishes of the parents, students, and/or community.
Comprehensive School Reform at the District Level

The District Role in Comprehensive School Reform

Districts play an important role in successful implementation of any school reform and often influence the types of reforms chosen by individual schools (Yonezawa & Datnow, 1999). For example, California districts encouraged particular schools to apply for CSR funding, provided technical assistance, and supported model fairs so schools could learn about particular models (WestEd, 2002). In Puerto Rico, where the entire commonwealth is considered a school district, the Puerto Rico Department of Education reviewed a number of external reform models and then presented schools with a finite list of initiatives they could pursue (Hamann et al., 2001). The Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE, 1998) suggested that districts could be instrumental in ensuring an effective match between a particular reform design and the needs of the school by providing schools with the facts necessary to make informed choices. Districts also need to ensure that the curriculum and content standards of schools entering into a comprehensive school reform align with the district and state standards. Additionally, districts may have to make changes in their operational routines in order to support school-level reform. Responsibilities at the district level can also include monitoring both the quality and performance of the design team, informing parents and community members about school reforms, and administering an appropriate accountability system.

Massell (2000) indicated that, in many instances, help from the district—which she identified as the local school board, the superintendent, and the central office staff—was the only source of external assistance schools received in their reform efforts. In a policy brief that reported on a two-year CPRE research study in 22 school districts—in California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, and Texas—Massell highlighted four “capacity-building” strategies that showed potential for being “major mechanisms for enacting improvement” (p. 1). The strategies included using data to make decisions about teaching and learning, increasing teachers’ knowledge and skills, assuring that curriculum and instruction...
are aligned with state standards as well as district policies, and providing additional resources and attention to schools that are performing poorly.

**Studies of District Support for Comprehensive School Reform Initiatives in Schools with English Language Learners**

School-wide reform efforts have a better chance of providing quality education for all students if the district supports them (Berman et al., 1995; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000). Research shows that district support is an essential component of successful school reform programs (Berman et al., 1995; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000; Wong & Sunderman, 2000). The relationship between school and district is important even when schools enter into contracts with externally developed models such as Success for All, Core Knowledge, Coalition of Essential Schools, Modern Red Schoolhouse, Comer Schools, and others. Studies indicated that district involvement can have both positive (Berman et al., 1995; Kirby et al., 2001; Minicucci, 1996; Stringfield et al., 1998) and negative consequences (McLaughlin & McLeod, 1996; Stringfield et al., 1998) for schools implementing reform. Two studies reported preliminary findings from 13 multilingual/multicultural schools, in a large urban school district, that were in the early stages (second through fourth year of implementation) of school-wide reform (Stringfield et al., 1998; Yonezawa & Datnow, 1999). The district’s superintendent was instrumental in the initial phases of school reform, organizing fairs at which educators from district schools received information about various reform designs. Administrators from the district frequently visited schools, sponsored workshops, provided funds for teachers to attend conferences, and assisted principals in adapting some reform models to the needs of their ELLs. Likewise, in their study of eight exemplary schools in the midst of reform, Berman et al. (1995) found that district support for innovative, high-quality programs made a “direct and, in some cases, a crucial contribution” to the successful education of ELLs (p. 2). Although the level of support for the school differed from district to district, common features included training, support for smaller class size, and flexibility in creating a program to meet the needs of their student population. Dentler and Hafner (1997) found that administrators’ expertise regarding ELL-pertinent issues (e.g., second language acquisition, alternative assessment) correlated with effective support of ELLs. Researchers also found that decentralizing control and encouraging site-based decisions in regards to budgets, personnel management, curriculum, assessment, and scheduling contributed to successful school reform implementation (Minicucci, 1996; Miramontes et al. 1997).
Lack of district support, or pressure from the district to adopt particular models, may impede implementation and success of school-wide reform. Some schools chose their school-wide reform designs based on available funding or on a district administrator’s personal agenda, rather than on a model’s appropriateness for the student population (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000). Certain reform design models require a high percentage of teacher support and approval before implementation. However, in some cases teachers reported feeling pressured by school and district administrators to accept a certain reform model; in these cases teachers were less confident that the model was appropriate for their students and therefore less confident implementing the new program. Changes in district administration also proved detrimental to some school reform programs (Datnow et al., 1998).

In 1995, a newly appointed superintendent of the Philadelphia Public Schools initiated a district-wide reform agenda entitled Children Achieving. The agenda implemented new academic standards in math, English language arts, science, and art. The plan divided the district into clusters of elementary, middle, and high schools. Schools in the cluster were expected to become learning communities that would plan and make decisions regarding curriculum and professional development (Wong & Sunderman, 2000). Wong and Sunderman studied four schools during the first two years of the Children Achieving reform. The students in the four schools were predominantly minority children from low-income families. Two of the schools had a high number of language-minority students; one of the schools had a large Hispanic population, and the remaining school had a high population of Asian ELLs. Researchers visited the schools, conducted interviews with staff members, observed classrooms, and collected documents pertinent to the school and the students. Teachers reported more flexibility in providing services for their students because they were not tied to district directives about special classes or instruction. The researchers found, however, that instructional practices at the two schools with a high population of language-minority students did not change significantly as a result of the Children Achieving agenda. Teachers continued to delegate instruction and remediation of the lowest performing students to teacher assistants or to programs that took students out of the classroom—“pull-outs”—instead of considering alternative teaching strategies. There was no indication in the study whether teachers addressed the specific learning needs of their second language learners or what district support was offered to schools with this special population.
**Districts and the Needs of English Language Learners**

It is important for districts to work with individual schools and the designers of reform models to ensure that programs specifically address the needs of ELLs. These students often do not have the opportunity to fully participate in school-wide reform. Districts should address issues of equity and multiculturalism as part of any reform initiative. Berman et al. (1995) documented the district’s role in supporting reform at eight schools considered exemplary in involving ELLs in reform. Although the intensity of the support varied, common characteristics of actions these districts took included: fiscal and managerial control at the school level, recruitment of personnel trained in language acquisition and bilingualism, professional development for teachers, district endorsement of the school’s efforts in developing bilingualism for their students, and circulation of information about reform efforts to school staff. These districts also secured waivers of state requirements that precluded full participation of ELLs in reform initiatives. Some federal and state rules and restrictions regarding services provided to ELLs have been cited as impediments to full inclusion of ELLs in school-wide reform (Mace-Matluck et al., 1998; Stringfield et al., 1998). Stringfield et al. (1998) found from their work in the 13 urban, diverse schools undergoing reform that some ELL students were separated from other students because of their limited English proficiency. Schools excluded these students from some portions of the reform program, and they received less model-specific instructional time than students in mainstream classes. Additionally, some models did not allow for instructional adaptations to meet ELLs’ academic needs. Likewise, in searching for schools that provided exemplary science or math programs for ELLs, Minicucci (1996) found that often schools had an exemplary program in the desired discipline but did not accommodate ELLs. She explains: “In some cases, they [national, state, and regional experts] conceived of LEP students as belonging to a larger group of ‘disadvantaged’ students and did not specifically consider the language development issues confronted by teachers educating LEP students. The dilemma can be put in simple terms: the experts who concerned themselves with LEP students were not familiar with efforts underway to upgrade science and
mathematics learning, and the educational experts who concerned themselves with upgrading science and mathematics learning were not familiar with educating LEP students” (p. 3). This reiterates Miramontes et al.’s (1997) point that efforts to accommodate ELLs and efforts to reform schools have been unnecessarily dichotomized. In contrast to this, in their study of 11 school districts with an increasing number of immigrant students, Dentler and Hafner (1997) found that the three districts showing improvement all had a good understanding of ELL issues above the classroom level. Districts can also recommend that school reform designs be initially created with the ELL population in mind and later adapted for the monolingual English student body. For example, staff members from the Technical Education Research Center (TERC) in collaboration with teachers from a school in Boston developed an innovative science program for ELLs. Part of the program involved student-led discussions related to experiments and activities conducted in class. Teachers allowed students to discuss in their first language (Haitian) and use English for purposes of clarifying misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Since the program proved quite successful for the ELLs, the school adapted it and implemented it for the rest of the school population (Minicucci, 1996).

At times, district administrators working to ensure quality educational programs for ELLs were at cross purposes with those working to ensure successful school reform. Driven by the need to ensure equitable programs for non-English speaking students and by the demands from the local Chamber of Commerce—which was having problems finding qualified bilingual professionals—one district issued a mandate requiring that all teachers not endorsed to teach English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) complete the required training so that they could be endorsed (Yonezawa & Datnow, 1999). Teachers juggled their time between the professional development needed to obtain the ESOL endorsement and the professional development needed to understand and implement the new school reform agenda. Yonezawa and Datnow reported that some principals were not able to fully implement reform designs because
they could not demand any more time or effort from faculty who were studying for the ESOL endorsement. This conflict between programs was a common problem in many CSR schools with ELLs. Although Stringfield et al. (1998) found one school that was able to accommodate both the needs of the ESOL program and the needs of the reform designs by securing a waiver from the state’s mandates for ELLs, most schools attempted to resolve the problem by reducing the amount of time that ELL and ESOL teachers participated in the reform program. Berends et al. (2002) researched the implementation of externally developed models of reform in the San Antonio, Texas school district during the 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 school years. They compared schools that had adopted models supported by the New American Schools (NAS) initiative with non-NAS schools to see if the NAS schools were more innovative in regards to curricula and instructional approaches. (Models supported by the NAS included Audrey Cohen College; Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for All Students; Co-NECT; Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound; Modern Red Schoolhouse; National Alliance for Restructuring Education; and Roots and Wings.) The population of students in the sample included 85% Hispanics and 10% African Americans. The LEP population was 16%. Surveys, observations, and interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and administrators. Student data were also collected.

The researchers did not find significant effects of the NAS designs on student achievement, although they cautioned that the programs were still in the early stages of implementation. They did find, however, a positive link between student performance and the leadership qualities of the principals in both the NAS and non-NAS schools. Schools whose principals communicated their expectations to both teachers and students, supported and encouraged the activities of the teachers and staff, demonstrated confidence in the teaching staff, and took a personal interest in the professional development of their faculty had higher scores in reading and math on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).
Findings from interviews with teachers suggested that the district may have unknowingly impeded implementation of reform designs by pushing for a concentration on teaching TAAS skills. Teachers reported not having enough time to implement the reform model’s curriculum due to the district’s emphasis on teaching skills included on the TAAS exam. The researchers criticized federal and state policymakers for promoting CSR and other reform initiatives at the same time: “The implementation of high-stakes testing regimes—the apparent outcome of many standards-based reforms—might preclude the adoption of rich and varied curricula that challenge students and motivate them toward more in-depth learning experiences” (p. xxv).

**Districts, Accountability, and English Language Learners**

Many districts have endorsed the use of standardized tests as a measure of students’ academic progress. However, concerns have been expressed as to whether this type of test is a fair assessment of what students really know and are able to do, especially when those students are still in the process of learning English. Some researchers believe that the only fair assessment of ELLs’ progress is through a measure developed specifically for that population, while other researchers support the idea of including ELLs in mainstream testing as long as accommodations or modifications are provided (Menken, 2000). What matters is that ELLs be included in wide-scale assessment in some manner so that districts and schools realize the importance of offering these students the same quality and quantity of instruction afforded mainstream students (Rivera & Stansfield, as cited in Menken, 2000).

**Comprehensive School Reform at the State Level**

In a 2001 study, Hamann, Zuliani, and Hudak found few explicit references to English language learners in state-issued requests for proposals (RFP) for CSR. They concluded that ELL concerns may become more central to school CSR programs when state departments of education build more explicit and frequent references to ELLs into their requests for CSR proposals and into their scoring rubrics.
Conclusion

In this chapter we have highlighted three different bodies of research on approaches to CSR in districts with an ELL population: studies of schools successful in educating ELLs, studies of locally created or externally developed reform models implemented in schools with a high population of ELLs, and studies of system-wide initiatives in districts with a high population of ELLs. These studies yielded common characteristics of successful approaches to integrating ELLs into comprehensive school reform:

- ELLs’ needs were considered in the planning stages of CSR.
- ELLs were supported by the entire school staff.
- Partnerships were maintained with parents and community organizations.
- Professional development was conducted for all staff on issues of language and culture.
- High expectations were set for ELLs.
- District support was provided for resolving conflicts when the implementation of CSR initiatives was not aligned with state and district mandates for ELLs.

“Don’t say, ‘What are the resources I need to give to these schools?’ but ‘What are the resources the community can give?’ Build on your strengths not your weaknesses. ‘How can we collaborate to make this community stronger?’ Be proactive, not simply responsive. Create a different way of thinking about engagement and what that means.”

--Sharon Saez, Educational Testing Service
V. Tools for ELL-Responsive Comprehensive School Reform

Comprehensive School Reform Planning

Successful school reform does not just happen. It requires significant time and effort on the part of school and district staff. Comprehensive school reform depends upon:

- The involvement of key stakeholders in the planning process
- Careful needs assessment
- Buy-in from school and district staff, parents, and communities
- Identification of appropriate research-based strategies and/or models that meet the identified needs of the school population

While conducting research on appropriate school reform strategies is a task that school and district staff must undertake themselves, there are a variety of tools that district and school staff have used and found helpful. This chapter of Claiming Opportunities contains discussion guides, checklists, data grids, and other tools specially designed and adapted to support the planning and design of ELL-responsive reforms. The appendix and the LAB Web site, at www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/csr/csr_tools.shtml, provide additional materials to guide you through the complex process of school-wide change, as well as links to additional school reform resources.

Planning for ELL-Responsive School Reform

For school reform to successfully impact the education of ELLs, the characteristics of the school’s ELL population must be considered in the earliest planning stages. Individuals with knowledge about and commitment to ELL populations should participate in planning. Inclusion of such individuals will affect the accuracy and credibility of the needs assessment as well as buy-in from staff, parents, and the community.
### Planning Team Checklist

**Who’s on the planning team?**

- Are some members of the school reform planning team qualified by:
  - knowledge of ELL research?
  - ELL advocacy roles?
  - membership in the school’s (various) ethnic communities?
- Are there ESL and/or bilingual teachers on the team?
- Are there administrators of ELL programs on the team?

**Who are the external providers of models and technical assistance?**

- Are some members of the external design and staff development teams qualified by:
  - knowledge of ELL research?
  - bilingualism?
  - ethnic community membership?

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If your team does not include such members, you’ll need to do some recruitment. This should not prove too difficult if you offer qualified and committed individuals the real opportunity to make your reform program responsive to ELLs. If you have identified potential team members in some of the above categories they may help you identify others.

### Needs Assessment

Your planning team should develop a portrait of the school’s ELL population(s). Here are some questions to guide your inquiry. Data to answer these questions will be found at the school, in the district office, and in the community.
Student Population Discussion Tool

- How many or what percentage of students in the school have a home language other than English?

- What languages are spoken in their homes?

- What places of origin are represented?

- Are students from urban or rural backgrounds?

- What community organizations represent various groups?

- What educational backgrounds are represented? (Continuous or interrupted prior schooling, no prior schooling, schooling in home country, rural or urban schooling, preschool, kindergarten?)

- Are some students literate in another language?

- Are ELLs the subject of many disciplinary referrals or actions in your school?

- How many or what percentage of students in the school are actually classified as ELL?
  - How many currently receive language services?
  - How are these students distributed across grade levels?
  - What are their levels of English proficiency?
  - What language services do ELLs currently receive?
  - In what types of classrooms do they receive literacy and content instruction?
  - What are their academic strengths and weaknesses?
    - What is your evidence for this judgment?

- How many students (for whom English is a second language) have met exiting criteria and are now classified as English proficient?
  - How are these students distributed across grade levels?
  - What services, such as monitoring or transitional support, do exited ELLs currently receive?
  - How do they perform in mainstream classes?
    - What is your evidence for this judgment?
  - What are their academic strengths and weaknesses?
    - What is your evidence for this judgment?
Designing Your Reform Program

Once you have developed an evidence-based portrait of the ELL population(s) of your school, your team and other members of the school community can examine this portrait. Look closely at the achievement patterns of ELLs and of students who have been in your ELL program. How does their achievement compare with the achievement of other groups of students and with the school/district as a whole? In what areas or skills do you see the greatest need for improvement among ELLs? In what areas or skills do you see the greatest need for improvement among other groups of students? Analysis and discussion of these questions will generate goals for your reform program.

General Strategies for Designing ELL-Responsive Reform

1. Rather than looking for reform models and strategies in the mainstream and adapting them to the needs of ELLs, consider reform models and strategies implemented with ELLs that can be used with or adapted for monolingual English and English-proficient students. In our staff development experience, when ELL pedagogies and materials designed for ELLs are shown to mainstream teachers, they often respond, “This would be good for all students, not just ELLs!” Many students benefit from the assessment and build-up of background knowledge and vocabulary, careful scaffolding of comprehension, and attention to language patterns.

2. Consider strategies and reforms that explicitly address cultural and linguistic differences. Consider the extent to which issues of language and culture are not limited to ELLs. Not all English-speaking children speak the same type of English used by their teachers or written in their books.

3. Consider reform strategies that view bilingualism and knowledge of other cultures as assets to be developed and shared. Dual-immersion or two-way bilingual programs are examples of this approach.

4. Require that external model developers provide research and explicit information on the model’s success with ELLs. Create a market demand for such research.
Gathering Information and Visualizing Reform

Once you’ve established some goals for your ELL-responsive reform program, you will need to gather information on how those goals may be reached. Here are some suggestions:

- Visit the Web sites and read the materials suggested in the annotated bibliography.
- Visit schools that are reputed to do a good job educating ELLs in settings and with populations similar to your school’s or district’s.
- Talk to ESL and bilingual teachers and administrators at these schools and districts.
- Talk to ethnic community leaders, parents, and the students themselves.
- Attend workshops and conferences on ELL education.

ELL Instruction Discussion Tool

English language learners should not be segregated or isolated from English-proficient students, nor should they be thrown haphazardly without support into classrooms where the language demands predetermine that they will sink rather than swim. ELLs should not be placed in below-grade-level tracks or in special education classes for reasons of limited English or limited prior schooling. ELLs need specialized and structured help in acquiring oral and written English, but they are individuals with diverse interests and aspirations.

- Reflect upon and discuss what kinds of classrooms, instructional groupings, and schedules would be most appropriate for the populations of ELLs in your setting.
- What kinds of teaching teams might work most productively with ELL students? How can team members support and inform each other’s work?
- How can instruction be scaffolded so that ELLs can participate in a challenging curriculum?
- How can educators support and provide for students who need more time to reach curriculum standards?
- What courses, student or community activities, study themes, cross-age programs, or partnerships could use ELL students’ home languages and prior knowledge as resources?

Based upon your goals, research, and discussion, begin to visualize what ELL-responsive reform might look like in your school.
What ELL-Responsive Pedagogy Looks Like

Below, we ask you to think about the nine principles of ELL-responsive pedagogy discussed in chapter III. Give some examples of practices you would see in an ELL-responsive school that is similar to yours in grade levels, setting, and demographics.

Principle 1
Language and literacy are infused throughout the educational process, including curriculum and instruction.

Principle 2
There are strong and seamless links among home, school, and community.
Principle 3
Teachers are properly prepared to teach ELLs.

Principle 4
Educators recognize the heterogeneity of the student population collectively labeled as ELL.
Principle 5
School leaders, administrators, and educators recognize that educating ELLs is the responsibility of the entire school staff.

Principle 6
School climate and general practice reinforce the principle that students’ languages and cultures are resources.
Principle 7
Assessment is authentic and credible to learners and instructors, and includes first-language literacy development.

Principle 8
ELLs have access to all programs and levels of instruction.
Principle 9
Teachers have high expectations for ELLs.

“If we frame the problem in terms of race and language... then the solution has to directly address the issues and language....It’s got to be on both ends, in the problem and the solution, and it’s got to be in a way that we aren’t creating this deficit model.”

--Kris Gutierréz, University of California, Los Angeles
How Responsive to ELLs Is Your School? How Responsive Can It Be?

The next tool is designed to help you think about your school and your reform plans in terms of the nine principles of ELL-responsive education identified in Chapter III.

In column A, rate your school’s current level of practice.
In column B, provide evidence for your judgment.
In column C, list some strategies for making progress toward a higher level of implementation.
In column D, come up with some action steps you might take right away to get started.
In column E, list names of individuals who will assume responsibility for these first steps.

“Answering the question [What resources do schools need to restructure and serve the ELL population?] can lead us back into the trap of dealing with ELLs as compensatory, which prevents us from changing the system. Instead, how do we rethink so that the way we deal with instruction in general automatically deals with conditions for ELLs or students in general? This reconceptualization shouldn’t be an afterthought but inherent in our teaching and learning, our approach to curriculum.”

--Kris Gutierréz, University of California, Los Angeles
ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

**ELL Principle 1**
School leaders, administrators, educators, and design team members in our school setting recognize that educating ELLs is the responsibility of the entire school staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
<th>E. Person(s) Responsible for Action Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgment.</td>
<td>Ideas for greater implementation</td>
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## ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

### ELL Principle 2

Educators in our school setting recognize the heterogeneity that may characterize the student population collectively labeled as ELL.

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<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
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<tr>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgment.</td>
<td>Ideas for greater implementation</td>
<td>Ideas on how to get started toward this goal</td>
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ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

**ELL Principle 3**
Current school climate and general practice in our school setting reinforce the principle that students’ languages and cultures are resources for further learning.

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<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
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<td>A. Current Level of Practice</td>
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ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

**ELL Principle 5**

ELLs in our school setting have access to all programs and levels of instruction, including special education, gifted and talented education, and high-level courses such as calculus.

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<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
<th>E. Person(s) Responsible for Action Steps</th>
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<td>Low  Moderate  High</td>
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<td>Ideas for greater implementation</td>
<td>Ideas on how to get started toward this goal</td>
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1..2..3..4..5
### ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

#### ELL Principle 6
Teachers in our school setting have high expectations for ELLs.

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<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
<th>E. Person(s) Responsible for Action Steps</th>
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<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgment.</td>
<td>Ideas for greater implementation</td>
<td>Ideas on how to get started toward this goal</td>
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### ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

**ELL Principle 7**

All teachers in our school setting are willing and properly prepared to teach ELLs.

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<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
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<th>E. Person(s) Responsible for Action Steps</th>
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<td>Low Moderate High 1-2-3-4-5</td>
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### ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

**ELL Principle 8**

In our school setting, language and literacy are infused throughout the educational process, including curriculum and instruction.

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<td>Describe the evidence for your judgment.</td>
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<td>Ideas on how to get started toward this goal</td>
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### ELL-Responsive School Reform Planning Tool

#### ELL Principle 9
Assessment of ELLs is authentic and credible to learners and instructors.

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<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Strategies for Improvement</th>
<th>D. Action Steps</th>
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<td>Low</td>
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<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgment.</td>
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**ELL Principle 9**
Assessment of ELLs is authentic and credible to learners and instructors.
Integrating the Principles of ELL Responsiveness With the Components of Comprehensive School Reform.

The chart below is intended to provide a framework for thinking though the integration of ELL responsiveness and comprehensive school reform. The 11 CSR components and their elements are presented from an ELL-responsive perspective.

**Component 1: Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies**

1.1. School reform strategies (curriculum, instruction, management) enable ELLs to meet state and district standards.

1.2. School curriculum, teaching strategies, and methods are scientifically proven for ELL learning and teaching.

1.3. School management practices are scientifically based strategies that include ELL teachers and administrators.

1.4. Classroom management practices are proven (scientifically based) strategies that support ELLs’ participation in your school reform efforts.

1.5. The instructional and management strategies your school is using have been used successfully with ELLs in other schools.

**Component 2: Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components**

2.1. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment for mainstream, ESL, bilingual, and ELL content classes are aligned within and across grade levels to support student achievement.

2.2. Curriculum, instruction, and assessments for ELLs are aligned with standards.

2.3. The improvement of teaching and learning for ELL students is a focus for school faculty and administrators.

2.4. The school program is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners and diverse populations (i.e., Title I, special education, and ELL students).

2.5. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies are based on needs assessment data that has been disaggregated for ELLs.

2.6. Improvement efforts encompass the whole school rather than focusing on particular grade levels, subjects, or programs. Reformed curriculum is accessible to ELLs.
**Component 3: Professional Development**

3.1. Professional development activities are based on a needs assessment and are directly tied to school goals and to the learning needs and cultures of ELLs.

3.2. Professional development activities addressing language acquisition and diversity are attended by all staff and faculty members including administrators, ESL, bilingual, and mainstream teachers. All professional development topics and activities explicitly acknowledge and consider ELL responsiveness.

3.3. Time is allotted for all staff and faculty members to share, talk about, and apply the knowledge and strategies gained through professional development.

3.4. The district ELL program administrator supports and contributes to the school plan and professional development agenda.

3.5. Professional development is continuous and builds on previous successful efforts.

3.6. Incentives are provided for participation in professional development activities (time, money, academic credit).

3.7. The professional development plan includes training on leadership in linguistically and culturally diverse settings for the principal and other leaders.

**Component 4: Measurable Goals and Benchmarks**

4.1. Your school has clear goals, objectives, and benchmarks for each grade level, subject, and ESL level.

4.2. School and student expectations are made clear to all students, and appropriate benchmarks are available to track progress of all students including English language learners.

4.3. School goals and expectations of ELLs are clear to all teachers.

4.4. There are ESL strategies for working with ELL students who do not meet benchmarks.

4.5. School and student benchmarks are analyzed regularly to make appropriate curricular or programmatic changes.

4.6. Intervention strategies are effective in moving ELL students from non-proficiency to competency.
Component 5: Support Within the School

5.1. The school has an active leadership team including members knowledgeable about ELLs and members from ethnic communities.

5.2. The principal and staff agree with and work to implement the school plan to improve achievement of all student groups, including ELLs.

5.3. Members of the school community engage in reflective practices and are willing to make changes and improvements when necessary to improve services to ELLs.

5.4. All staff members are in agreement with the school improvement plan and accept responsibility for ELL students.

Component 6: Support for Teachers and Principals

6.1. Your school provides support on ELL issues for teachers, the principal, administrators, and other school staff.

6.2. The principal, administrators, and teachers share responsibility and leadership for ELL responsive reform.

6.3. Your school encourages teamwork between ESL/bilingual teachers and teachers of mainstream, gifted, special education, and world language classes, providing time for planning, examining student work, reflecting, and celebrating accomplishments.

6.4. Appropriate support (e.g., professional development) is provided to teachers who are asked to make changes to their instructional strategies or classroom management strategies, or to welcome more diverse students.

Component 7: Parent and Community Involvement

7.1. Linguistically and culturally diverse parents and community members are involved in the design and implementation of school improvement activities.

7.2. Student expectations are clearly defined and accessible to the multilingual, multicultural parent body.

7.3. Parents representing the diversity of the student body are involved in decision making at the school on an ongoing basis.
7.4. The school program has strategies for encouraging positive parenting skills and for addressing cross-cultural and contextual differences in parenting and family-school relationships.

7.5. Communication with families is strong and the school has strategies for communicating across languages and cultures.

7.6. A good number of linguistically and racially diverse community members volunteer and attend school events.

7.7. The school has strategies for enhancing learning in the homes of English language learners that do not assume or rely upon parents’ English proficiency.

7.8. There is a high level of collaboration with community organizations and businesses including those in the ethnic communities.

Component 8: External Technical Assistance and Support

8.1. Technical assistance is clearly linked to programmatic and student needs, including the particular instructional needs of ELLs.

8.2. External assistance is continuous (weekly or monthly).

8.3. Technical assistance personnel are familiar with the school plan and work with staff to make targeted improvements.

8.4. The technical assistance provider has extensive experience in school-wide reform and improvement and is knowledgeable and experienced in educating ELLs.

Component 9: Evaluation Strategies

9.1. The school is engaged in an ongoing process to evaluate the effect of school reform efforts on the achievement of all student subgroups, including ELLs.

9.2. The school adjusts curriculum, teaching strategies, or management practices for student subgroups based on disaggregated evaluation results.

9.3. The school links its evaluation efforts to state and district standards as well as to national standards for the education of ELLs.
Component 10: Coordination of Resources

10.1. Federal, state, local, private, and community-based resources are coordinated in support of the school’s improvement plan.

10.2. The district provides material and staff support to leverage existing resources.

10.3. The school actively seeks fiscal, human, and other resources (state, federal, local, and private and community-based) to support its plans.

Component 11: Program Effectiveness

11.1. The entire school program (how all of the elements in the school fit together and align with each other) has been found, through scientifically based research, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students, including ELLs.

OR . . .

11.2. The entire school program (how all of the elements in the school fit together and align with each other) has been found to have strong evidence that it will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students, including ELLs.

“We talk about it as the panacea, but standards-based instruction does not guarantee or ensure, nor does it equate with, robust teaching and learning. Standards-based instruction does not shift or address the social organization of learning. Ideally, robust learning communities are standards informed, not standards driven.”

--Kris Gutierréz, University of California, Los Angeles

The next tool is designed to help you analyze your school’s current practices and to identify your priorities for reform. It is constructed to help you integrate the 11 CSR components and the nine principles of ELL-responsive education identified in Chapter III.

Using the ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

- In column A, “Current Level of Practice,” rate your school’s current level of practice for each subcomponent. Is it low, moderate, or high?

- In column B, “Evidence of Practice,” Describe the evidence for your judgment in column A. What quantitative or anecdotal data supports your “low”, “moderate,” or “high” rating of each subcomponent? Do group members agree that the evidence presented is adequate and appropriate? If not, can more relevant data be found?

- In column C, “Reform Priority,” consider the relative urgency of the various subcomponents: What areas require the most improvement? What areas require immediate attention? Although all 11 components are essential, you will need to focus on some subcomponents before others. Subcomponents which you rated as having low levels of current practice in column A will probably be high priorities for reform. Where current levels of practice are already moderate to high you may not feel that small improvements or fine tuning are your highest priorities. Student achievement data, school climate, district initiatives, and community values are among the factors that will influence prioritization.

- Examine the patterns of your responses in columns A and C. Do low levels of practice correspond to a high priority for change? When they do not correspond, discuss why. What are some other factors that have influenced your prioritization?

- List those subcomponents that were rated at priority levels 4-5. Present this list of reform priorities for review by other stakeholders and members of the school community. Do they agree?

- In column D, come up with a plan of action. List some steps you might take right away to get started.
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 1</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1.</strong> School reform strategies (curriculum, instruction, management) enable ELLs to meet state and district standards.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2.</strong> School curriculum, teaching strategies, and methods are scientifically proven for ELL learning and teaching.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3.</strong> School management practices are scientifically based strategies that include ELL teachers and administrators.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

**CSR COMPONENT 1**

**Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.4.</th>
<th>Classroom management practices are proven (scientifically based) strategies that support ELLs’ participation in your school reform efforts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Current Level of Practice</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Evidence of Practice</strong></td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Reform Priority</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Action Plans</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.5.</th>
<th>The instructional and management strategies your school is using have been used successfully with ELLs in other schools.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Current Level of Practice</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Evidence of Practice</strong></td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Reform Priority</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Action Plans</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 2</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1.</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum, instruction, and assessment for mainstream, ESL, bilingual, and ELL content classes are aligned within and across grade levels to support student achievement.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2.</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum, instruction, and assessments for ELLs are aligned with standards.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.3.</strong></td>
<td>The improvement of teaching and learning for ELL students is a focus for school faculty and administrators.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 2</th>
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<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The school program is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners and diverse populations (i.e., Title I, special education, and ELL students).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies are based on needs assessment data that has been disaggregated for ELLs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement efforts encompass the whole school rather than focusing on particular grade levels, subjects, or programs. Reformed curriculum is accessible to ELLs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 3 Professional Development</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
<td>Low Moderate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Professional development activities are based on a needs assessment and are directly tied to school goals and to the learning needs and cultures of ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Professional development activities addressing language acquisition and diversity are attended by all staff and faculty members including administrators, ESL, bilingual, and mainstream teachers. All professional development topics and activities explicitly acknowledge and consider ELL responsiveness.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 3 Professional Development</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.3.</strong> Time is allotted for all staff and faculty members to share, talk about, and apply the knowledge and strategies gained through professional development.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4.</strong> The district ELL program administrator supports and contributes to the school plan and professional development agenda.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.5.</strong> Professional development is continuous and builds on previous successful efforts.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Low** 1
- **Moderate** 2
- **High** 3
- **Very High** 4
- **Outstanding** 5
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 3</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives are provided for participation in professional development activities (time, money, academic credit).</td>
<td>1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The professional development plan includes leadership training on leadership in linguistically and culturally diverse settings for the principal and other leaders.</td>
<td>1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 4</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurable Goals and Benchmarks</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1.</strong> Your school has clear goals, objectives, and benchmarks for each grade level, subject, and ESL level.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2.</strong> School and student expectations are made clear to all students, and appropriate benchmarks are available to track progress of all students including English language learners.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.3.</strong> School goals and expectations of ELLs are clear to all teachers.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 4</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Goals and Benchmarks</td>
<td><strong>A. Current Level of Practice</strong>&lt;br&gt;Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td><strong>B. Evidence of Practice</strong>&lt;br&gt;Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td><strong>C. Reform Priority</strong>&lt;br&gt;Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td><strong>D. Action Plans</strong>&lt;br&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.4.</strong>&lt;br&gt;There are ESL strategies for working with ELL students who do not meet benchmarks.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.5.</strong>&lt;br&gt;School and student benchmarks are analyzed regularly to make appropriate curricular or programmatic changes.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.6.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Intervention strategies are effective in moving students from non-profiency to competency.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 5</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support Within the School</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.1.</strong> The school has an active leadership team including members knowledgeable about ELLs and members from ethnic communities.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.2.</strong> The principal and staff agree with and work to implement the school plan to improve achievement of all student groups, including ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 5</th>
<th><strong>A. Current Level of Practice</strong></th>
<th><strong>B. Evidence of Practice</strong></th>
<th><strong>C. Reform Priority</strong></th>
<th><strong>D. Action Plans</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support Within the School</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.3.</strong> Members of the school community engage in reflective practices and are willing to make changes and improvements when necessary to improve services to ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.4.</strong> All staff members are in agreement with the school improvement plan and accept responsibility for ELL students.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 6</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for Teachers and Principals</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.1.</strong> Your school provides support on ELL issues for teachers, the principal, administrators, and other school staff.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.2.</strong> The principal, administrators, and teachers share responsibility and leadership for ELL responsive reform.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

**CSR COMPONENT 6**  
**Support for Teachers and Principals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.3.**  
Your school encourages teamwork between ESL/bilingual teachers and teachers of mainstream, gifted, special education, and world language classes, providing time for planning, examining student work, reflecting, and celebrating accomplishments.

Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5

**6.4.**  
Appropriate support (e.g., professional development) is provided to teachers who are asked to make changes to their instructional strategies or classroom management strategies, or to welcome more diverse students.

Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5

Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5
### CSR COMPONENT 7
**Parent and Community Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 7</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent and Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.1.
Linguistically and culturally diverse parents and community members are involved in the design and implementation of school improvement activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>Reform Priority</th>
<th>Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.2.
Student expectations are clearly defined and accessible to the multilingual, multicultural parent body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>Reform Priority</th>
<th>Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.3.
Parents representing the diversity of the student body are involved in decision making at the school on an ongoing basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>Reform Priority</th>
<th>Action Plans</th>
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<tr>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4......5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

### CSR COMPONENT 7
**Parent and Community Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1......2......3......4......5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 7.4.
The school program has strategies for encouraging positive parenting skills and for addressing cross-cultural and contextual differences in parenting and family-school relationships.  

- Low | Moderate | High | 1......2......3......4......5 |

#### 7.5.
Communication with families is strong and the school has strategies for communicating across languages and cultures.  

- Low | Moderate | High | 1......2......3......4......5 |
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 7</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
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<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent and Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.6.</strong> A good number of linguistically and racially diverse community members volunteer and attend school events.</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.7.</strong> The school has strategies for enhancing learning in the homes of English language learners that do not assume or rely upon parents’ English proficiency.</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7.8.</strong> There is a high level of collaboration with community organizations and businesses including those in the ethnic communities.</td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low   Moderate   High</td>
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### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 8</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Technical Assistance and Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low</strong>  <strong>Moderate</strong>  <strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td><strong>Low</strong>  <strong>Moderate</strong>  <strong>High</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.1.</strong> Technical assistance is clearly linked to programmatic and student needs, including the particular instructional needs of ELLs.</td>
<td>Low  Moderate  High  1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low  Moderate  High  1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.2.</strong> External assistance is continuous (weekly or monthly).</td>
<td>Low  Moderate  High  1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low  Moderate  High  1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Technical Assistance and Support</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.3.</strong> Technical assistance personnel are familiar with the school plan and work with staff to make targeted improvements.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.4.</strong> The technical assistance provider has extensive experience in school-wide reform and improvement and is knowledgeable and experienced in educating ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 9 Evaluation Strategies</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.1.</strong> The school is engaged in an ongoing process to evaluate the effect of school reform efforts on the achievement of all student subgroups, including ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.2.</strong> The school adjusts curriculum, teaching strategies, or management practices for student subgroups based on disaggregated evaluation results.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2 ......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2 ......3......4......5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.3.</strong> The school links its evaluation efforts to state and district standards as well as to national standards for the education of ELLs.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1......2......3......4......5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 10</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of Resources</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.1.</strong> Federal, state, local, private, and community-based resources are coordinated in support of the school’s improvement plan.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.2.</strong> The district provides material and staff support to leverage existing resources.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.3.</strong> The school actively seeks fiscal, human, and other resources (state, federal, local, and private community-based) to support its plans.</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1.....2.....3.....4.....5</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### ELL School Self-Assessment Tool for Comprehensive School Reform

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<tr>
<th>CSR COMPONENT 11</th>
<th>A. Current Level of Practice</th>
<th>B. Evidence of Practice</th>
<th>C. Reform Priority</th>
<th>D. Action Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Effectiveness</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td>Describe the evidence for your judgement</td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.1.</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
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<tr>
<td>The entire school program (how all of the elements in the school fit together and align with each other) has been found, through scientifically based research, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students, including ELLs.</td>
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<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11.2.</strong></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low Moderate High 1...2...3...4...5</td>
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<tr>
<td>The entire school program (how all of the elements in the school fit together and align with each other) has been found to have strong evidence that it will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students, including ELLs.</td>
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</table>
Resources for Comprehensive School Reform

Identifying and Aligning District, School, and Community Resources

Carrying out your reform plan will require money, time, staff and other resources. Just as the components of your reform must be aligned to support and strengthen each other. Your resources must also be aligned for support and strength.

Instructions: Please use the following chart to identify and analyze how different resources are being used in your school to support your reform efforts. The purpose of this chart is to identify gaps and/or strengths in your current reform effort and to help you plan for future actions. The space under each funding source can be used to either check ✓ those funding sources used to meet various components or you can list the actual dollar amounts from that funding source.

“It bothers me that not much attention has been given to exploring the community’s vision for reform. Care needs to be taken by districts in selecting consultants who are knowledgeable about the community’s assets.”

--Nydia Mendez, Boston Public Schools
## Comprehensive School Reform

Identifying and Aligning District, School, and Community Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOURCES TO SUPPORT REFORM:</th>
<th>CSR Program</th>
<th>Other Title I Programs</th>
<th>Title II Professional Development &amp; Technology</th>
<th>Title III Language Instruction for ELLs</th>
<th>Title IV Safe and Drug-Free Schools</th>
<th>Other Federal Funds</th>
<th>Other: State and District Resources</th>
<th>Other: Community Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSR Program Components</td>
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<td>CSR Component 1</td>
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<td>Research-based Methods and Strategies</td>
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<td>Comprehensive Design and Aligned Components</td>
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<td><strong>CSR Component 3</strong></td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>CSR Component 4</td>
<td>Measurable Goals and Benchmarks</td>
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<td>CSR Component 5</td>
<td>Support Within the School</td>
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<td>CSR Component 6</td>
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<td>Support for Teachers,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrators, Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental and Community</td>
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<td>Involvement</td>
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<td>External Technical</td>
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**CSR Component 9**
- Evaluation Strategies

**CSR Component 10**
- Coordination of Resources

**CSR Component 11**
- Evidence of Effectiveness

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**Comprehensive School Reform**

Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory, a program of The Education Alliance at Brown University
Good information is another critical resource that you’ll need to design a reform program which provides maximum benefit for the students at your school. Chapter six identifies informational resources that can be of help to you as you design a reform to meet the needs of your school’s populations. We urge you to consult some of the print and electronic resources listed and to contact us at info@lab.brown.edu if we can be of help. Good luck!

“A better understanding of communication and resources will enable teachers to be better able to negotiate what kids bring to the classroom and what they need to learn to be successful academically.”

--Jerri Willet, University of Massachusetts
VI. Resources and Further Reading

English Language Learners

PRINT RESOURCES


This volume, in the Center for Applied Linguistics Topics in Immigrant Education III series, provides a framework for meeting the needs of secondary students with limited English skills and little formal schooling. The book explores submersion, pull-out ESL, bilingual, immersion, and two-way bilingual programs. The author provides specific examples of how these programs target the needs of Hispanic, Haitian, and Vietnamese students.


The focus of this book is to provide a working tool or handbook for educators investigating language policy and language practice in their schools. The book provides a framework of critical policymaking and language planning for social justice and provides educators with the tools necessary to investigate language policy and language use in schools. Each chapter ends with “Discussion Starters”—questions meant to prompt readers to reflect on the chapter and relate the information to their personal experiences. The final chapter is devoted to summarizing the questions that can guide educators’ investigation of school language policy and issues of critical policymaking.

In this volume, the contributors emphasize that educating children requires not only attention to language development but also the development of the whole child. Similarly, contextual factors—including school, family, and community—must also be considered for their impact on the education of second language learners. Thus, the scope of this volume includes addressing the influence of culture, the role of the family, and understanding the challenges that second-language immigrant and refugee children face. Some of the authors tackle tough issues such as low-literacy students and special education needs, and others offer general strategies and tools that will assist any educator in the classroom.


This volume, in the Center for Applied Linguistics Topics for Immigrant Education II series, provides a framework for teaching immigrant students. The chapters contain methods for professional development for teachers of immigrant youth. The authors provide follow-up content that supplements in-service professional development workshops. The book also examines new patterns of professional development that continue to support ongoing learning for teachers.


This book emphasizes that creating an atmosphere of cross-cultural awareness and respect is the best approach for the classroom teacher to bridge the gap between students’ expectations and the reality of academic achievement. The involvement of parents is considered essential for a smooth cultural transition, but when this is not possible, this book offers suggestions on how to accomplish this in other ways.

This edited volume emphasizes the social and cultural contexts of education on the acquisition of language and development of literacy among second language learners in the United States. The editor’s framework includes the social construction of literacy, based on the work of Buner and Vygotsky among others. This constructivist view rejects the notion that literacy consists of simple decoding and knowledge of sounds. Some of the contributions focus on ethnically diverse communities (American Indian, Puerto Rican, Vietnamese), and the work of the editor focuses primarily on literacy in the classroom. Each chapter ends with several activities for educators interested in exploring literacy grounded in culture and community.


This small volume provides readers with accessible information regarding best practices for educating language-minority students. The book is organized into nine broad topic areas, arranged to counter the myths surrounding the education of language-minority students. Some of the topics include demographics, enrollment, first and second language instruction, and assessment. Myths are listed under each of the nine topics and are followed by a concise reality statement, which is based on recent and relevant research. In total, the authors dispel over 40 myths. Practitioners will find this handy, especially in the current context of meeting the needs of English language learners.


The essays in this edited volume are divided into three major sections: (1) Racial and Ethnic Identity Theory and Human Development, (2) Research on Racial and Ethnic Identity Theory and Human Development, and (3) Challenges and Strategies for Multicultural Practices. The primary purpose of the volume is to feature the work of practitioners and researchers who demonstrate the connection between racial and ethnic identity and human development in order to promote successful pedagogical practices in schools.
ONLINE RESOURCES

Teaching Diverse Learners: Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory
http://www.lab.brown.edu/tdl/

This site is a resource dedicated to enhancing the capacity of teachers to work effectively and equitably with all students. Visitors will find research-based information from national organizations and experts on equity in the classroom. Educators can also share the successes and challenges of diverse classrooms with other teachers and administrators.

Center for Applied Linguistics
http://www.cal.org/admin/about.html

The Center for Applied Linguistics aims to promote and improve the teaching and learning of languages; identify and solve problems related to language and culture; and serve as a resource for information about language and culture. CAL is a private, non-profit organization—a group of scholars and educators who use the findings of linguistics and related sciences in identifying and addressing language-related problems. CAL carries out a wide range of activities including research, teacher education, analysis and dissemination of information, design and development of instructional materials, technical assistance, conference planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

The Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA)
http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html

The Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (formerly the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, OBEMLA) provides national leadership in promoting high-quality education for the nation's population of English language learners (ELLs). Traditionally, this population has been known as limited English proficient students (LEPs). OELA's mission is to include various elements of school reform in programs designed to assist the language-minority agenda. These include an emphasis on high academic standards, school accountability, professional development, family literacy, early reading, and partnerships between parents and the communities.
**Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)**

http://www.tesol.org/index.html#about

TESOL, an association of English language educators who work with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds in a wide variety of settings, is uniquely positioned to give a coordinated, knowledgeable response at the international, national, and local levels to issues affecting institutions that foster the development of effective human communications. TESOL’s mission is to ensure excellence in English language teaching to speakers of other languages. TESOL values are professionalism in language education, individual language rights, accessible high-quality education, collaboration in a global community, interaction of research and reflective practice for educational improvement, respect for diversity, and multiculturalism.

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**Tolerance.org**

http://www.tolerance.org/index.jsp

This extremely useful Web site is devoted to promoting tolerance and social justice. The homepage consists of links specifically designed for teachers, parents, and children. The Teaching Tolerance organization provides many useful resources free of charge, including a biannual journal and curriculum kits. The site also addresses current events and news topics related to tolerance.

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**The Knowledge Loom**

http://www.knowledgeloom.org/crt/index.jsp

This professional development Web site, operated by the Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University, addresses a wide variety of topics regarding what works in teaching and learning. The Culturally Relevant Teaching Spotlight provides a forum for discussion with a panel of experts, highlights success stories from exemplary classrooms, and points practitioners to additional resources and research. Educators may also register on the Web site to share stories and contribute their ideas.
The Cheche Konnen Center
http://chechekonnen.terc.edu/

The Cheche Konnen Center is engaged in a national reform initiative to improve elementary and middle school science teaching and learning for language-minority students. The center utilizes a research-based approach to teacher professional development that integrates inquiry and reflection in three areas: science and mathematics, teaching and learning, and culture and language. Educators interested in constructivist science teaching with English language learners can access an array of information and resources on the site.

Comprehensive School Reform and ELLs

PRINT


Through qualitative data the author outlines what happens to schools when they go through a comprehensive school reform. The author explains the rationale of schools adopting reforms, how administrators and teachers serve as crucial people to initiate reform, the changing roles of the reform design teams, and the impact of reform on education once it has been implemented.

ONLINE

Comprehensive School Reform: Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards (WestEd)
http://www.wested.org/csrd/guidebook/toc.htm

This new guidebook from the Region XI Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center is designed to help schools with successful implementation of comprehensive, school-wide reform. The guide offers step-by-step explanations and practical tools for school reform processes and approaches.
**CSR School Assessment (LAB)**


This tool helps schools prioritize needs related to the 11 components in the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program legislation.

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**Comprehensive School Reform Policy Briefs: Region III Comprehensive Center**

http://ceee.gwu.edu/csrbriefs.htm

This series provides an excellent overview of comprehensive school reform for prospective CSR schools and districts.

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This guide outlines six steps for schools to take in planning for comprehensive school reform.

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**Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory)**

http://www.nwrel.org/csrwp/Measurepartner.pdf

This resource helps schools measure how they are reaching out to involve parents, community members, and students in a meaningful manner.
CSR Web Sites

U.S. Department of Education

National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform
http://www.goodschools.gwu.edu/

SEDL School Awards Database
http://www.sedl.org/csrd/awards.html

New American Schools
http://www.naschools.org/

American Federation of Teachers CSRD Web Site
http://www.aft.org/edissues/rsa/csrd

Regional Educational Laboratory Network
http://www.relnetwork.org/
Reform Models

ONLINE

The Continuum of Evidence of Effectiveness. U.S. Department of Education (October, 1999)
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform/csrdgui.html#AB

This resource helps schools determine a model’s evidence of effectiveness across four dimensions: theory/research foundation, evaluation, implementation, and replicability.

Design Standards: New American Schools (NAS)
http://www.naschools.org/resource/draftstandards1.html

New American Schools (NAS) has developed standards for the purpose of ensuring the quality of its Design-Based Assistance (DBA) models. The standards document is organized around three categories: Standards for Designs, Standards for Design-Based Assistance, and Standards for Design-Based Organizations. Each standard is connected to a set of performance indicators that provide evidence that the standard is being met.

What Works: Six Promising School-Wide Reform Programs (American Federation of Teachers)
http://www.aft.org/edissues/whatworks/wwschoolwidereform.htm

This guide provides background information on six research-based programs that are shown to be effective in raising student achievement, particularly for at-risk students. It is a part of AFT’s Building on the Best, Learning from What Works series, which also includes descriptions of remedial reading and language arts programs.

http://www.aasa.org/issues_and_insights/district_organization/Reform/

This guide provides relative evidence of effectiveness for 24 schoolwide reform models.
Additional Resources


Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL): *District Leaders’ Guide to Reallocating Resources*

http://www.nwrel.org/csrdp/reallocating.pdf
VII. References


Comprehensive School Reform

Eleven Components of Comprehensive School Reform

In the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, two new components were added to the already existing nine components of Comprehensive School Reform. The new list of 11 components provides a guide for schools to use in creating a research-based comprehensive school reform plan. While whole-school reform models are typically adopted by schools engaging in comprehensive school reform, each school and district is responsible for ensuring that their school plan, including their selected model(s), is based on scientifically based research and addresses each of the 11 components.

Also available is a School Self-Assessment Tool that schools can use to assess school readiness according to the 11 components.

1. **Effective, Research-Based Methods and Strategies:** A comprehensive school reform program employs proven strategies for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on scientific research and effective practices and have been replicated successfully in schools.

2. **Comprehensive Design:** A comprehensive design for effective school functioning integrates instruction, assessment, classroom and school management, professional development, and parental involvement. By addressing needs identified through a school needs assessment, comprehensive design aligns the school’s curriculum, technology, and professional development into a plan for school-wide change. The ultimate goal of this design is to enable all students to meet challenging state content and academic achievement standards.
3. **Professional Development**: The program provides high-quality and continuous teacher and staff professional development and training. Professional development involves proven, innovative strategies that are cost effective and accessible and ensures that teachers are able to use state assessments and state academic content standards to improve instructional practice and student achievement.

4. **Measurable Goals and Objectives**: A comprehensive school reform program includes measurable goals for student academic achievement and establishes benchmarks for meeting those goals. The U.S. Department of Education encourages LEAs to link these goals to their state’s definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP) in Section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.

5. **Support Within the School**: Teachers, principals, administrators, and other staff throughout the school support the program in a CSR school. They demonstrate this support by understanding and embracing the school’s comprehensive reform program, focusing on continuous improvement of classroom instruction, and participating in professional development.

6. **Support for Teachers and Principals**: A CSR program provides support for teachers, principals, administrators, and other school staff by creating shared leadership and a broad base of responsibility for reform efforts. The program encourages teamwork and the celebration of accomplishments. These and other means of support are part of the school’s comprehensive design.

7. **Parent and Community Involvement**: The program provides for the meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement activities. In addressing this component, schools create strategies that are consistent with the parental involvement requirements of Title I, Part A. (See section 1118 of the ESEA.) Schools design ways for parents to be involved in the instructional program and to contribute to the academic achievement of their children.
8. **External Technical Support and Assistance:** The program uses high-quality external support and assistance from an entity that has expertise in school-wide reform and improvement, such as an institution of higher education.

9. **Annual Evaluation:** The program ensures accountability by including a plan for an annual evaluation that will assess the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved. This evaluation helps ensure that the school is making progress toward achieving its measurable goals and that adjustments and improvements will be made when necessary.

10. **Coordination of Resources:** The comprehensive program must identify federal, state, local, and private resources (financial and otherwise) that schools can use to coordinate services that support and sustain comprehensive school reform.

11. **Strategies that Improve Academic Achievement:** The program must meet one of the following requirements: the program must have been found, through *scientifically-based research*, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students, or there must be *strong evidence* that the program will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children.
Comprehensive School Reform

Additional CSR Planning and Evaluation Tools

Decision-Making Guidebooks

- **Comprehensive School Reform: Making Good Choices.** A Guide for Schools and Districts. This guide, developed by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, presents a three-step strategy for deciding whether comprehensive school reform is a good choice for your school.

- **Guide to Working with Model Providers (2000).** This document offers advice to schools and districts working with an external model provider. The guide follows the process through initial stages, contract negotiations, and ongoing partnerships. Tools are included to assist throughout the process.

- **Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards.** This toolkit, developed by the The Region XI Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center offers a framework that schools can use to plan their own school-wide improvement efforts, with step-by-step explanations and practical tools. The guidebook also includes video profiles of schools undertaking comprehensive reform. The first video is an overview of the Comprehensive School Reform program, while the second video follows three schools as they begin to implement school-wide reform efforts.

- **If the Shoe Fits: A Guide for Charter Schools Considering Adoption of a Comprehensive School Design.** This document offers guidance specifically aimed at charter schools.
Decision-Making Tools

A variety of CSR specific assessment and model selection tools are available. These tools are designed to assist school planning teams in identifying priority areas for improvement and selecting appropriate intervention strategies from the variety of different types of school reform models and strategies.

- **The U.S. Department of Education’s Draft Guidance on Scientifically Based Research and the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program (PDF or MS Word)** discusses how scientifically based research will apply to the CSR program and provides guidance for schools on how to review the research on strategies and/or models considered for use.

- **School Self-Assessment Tool (PDF).** This assessment tool lists the 11 components of comprehensive school reform and specific subcomponents, or elements, of the 11 components. Using this assessment tool, your school leadership team, or your entire school staff, can rate your school’s *current status* or *current level of practice* for each element, the *evidence* that your judgment is based upon, and how *important* you feel each element is in supporting your school’s reform efforts.

- **School Profile (PDF).** This worksheet provides a simple way to list your school’s general curriculum and/or instructional focus, target populations or grade levels, school goals, and other important considerations for choosing a model. This School Profile can be used to make your ‘first cut’ of reform models that may fit with your school and district (Model Selection Tool 1).

- **Model Selection: Aligning School Needs with Model Characteristics (PDF).** This worksheet is the companion piece to the School Self-Assessment Tool (listed above). School leadership teams can use this worksheet to rank order priority goals and begin research on selected reform models to see which models truly address identified priority areas for improvement (Model Selection Tool 2).
• **Model Selection: Identifying and Aligning Resources (PDF).** This chart provides a quick reference to the variety of funding sources that a school and district can access to support whole school reform. Using this chart, your school can quickly identify how resources are being used and what areas need to be addressed (Model Selection Tool 3).

• **Model Typology (PDF).** School reform models come in all shapes and sizes. Some reform models focus on curriculum and provide scripted instructional strategies while others focus on building a governance structure and changing the climate in your school. Being able to identify the different characteristics in reform models is important as your school continues to engage in school reform. This tool presents one way of thinking about the differences among reform models (Model Typology).

• **The School CSR Self-Assessment Tool,** developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, can assist schools in assessing their needs related to the nine program components in the original comprehensive school reform legislation.

• **School Self-Evaluation Tool (NCREL).** The School Self-Evaluation tool, developed by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) allows schools to assess themselves through four categories: (1) Learning and Teaching, (2) Governance and Management, (3) School Improvement and Professional Development, and (4) Parent and Community Involvement.

• **Database of CSRD Schools.** The Southwest Regional Education Laboratory (SEDL) maintains a searchable database of schools receiving CSRD subgrants. This database, updated frequently, can help identify schools implementing particular reform models.
Evaluation Guidebooks

• Evaluating Whole-School Reform Efforts: A Guide for District and School Staff. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory’s Comprehensive Center Region X.

• Evaluating for Success: An Evaluation Guide for Schools and Districts. MCREL

• CSR Implementation Profile (Implementation Continuum). The WestEd Implementation Continuum can be used by school, district, or state visitors to assess a school’s growth toward comprehensive school reform. This continuum is a good approach for a school to assess if they are making progress. The continuum and the guidelines are available for download in a Microsoft Word version.
Comprehensive School Reform

Resources and Publications

National Clearinghouse

The National Clearinghouse on Comprehensive School Reform provides extensive information and links to CSR information and resources throughout the nation.

Comprehensive School Reform Models

There are a variety of school reform models and strategies that can be used by schools interested in implementing a comprehensive school reform program. Districts and schools are encouraged to research the different reform models available and identify models and strategies that may supplement their school-wide reform efforts. The following catalogs and publications provide an overview of school reform models available to schools. Please access our Tools page for information on matching school reform models to school characteristics and areas of need.

- **The Catalog of School Reform Models**, hosted by NWREL and NCCSR, includes descriptions of program models in two categories: entire-school models and skill- and content-based models, along with direct links for further information.

- **Comprehensive School Reform Issue site**, hosted by the Education Commission of the States, provides a wide variety of information about CSR, including updated ECS evaluations of 20 comprehensive school reform models.

• **Comprehensive School Reform Models Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners (1999).** The Region IX Southwest Comprehensive Assistance Center has developed a resource guide describing some of the nationally available and locally developed school models that have addressed the needs of English language learners.

• **Finding Common Ground: Service Learning and Education Reform** is a publication from the American Youth Policy Forum that looks at the compatibility between CSR programs and elements of service learning.

### U.S. Department of Education

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education maintains a site with links to many resources, as well as the most current information on legislation, funding, and guidance:

• **Estimated FY2002 State Allocations** - The FY 2002 budget for the CSRD program includes a $25 million increase in the Title I section and a $25 million increase in the Fund for the Improvement of Education Section.

• **Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program Guidance, August 2002** - The updated guidance reflects changes made in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, No Child Left Behind.

• **CSRD in the Field: Final Update (2000)** - This summarizes and updates information on how schools, districts, and states are developing and implementing CSRD programs. This document also contains links to many of the latest resources and research on the nine original components of Comprehensive School Reform.

• **CSRD Early Implementation Report (2000)** - This report, prepared by Planning and Evaluation Service (PES), provides baseline data and information on CSR implementation.
at the federal, state, district, and local level. This report is available in MS Word [600K] and PDF [344K].

- **Profiles of Early Implementation (1998)** - This brief, which profiles six states in the early implementation of CSRD, shows the important role states can play in supporting local schools and districts as they prepare for comprehensive school improvement. The brief also shows how states are integrating comprehensive reform with their own standards-based school improvement and accountability efforts.

- **Schoolwide Reform Programs** - This publication outlines how schools can integrate funds and resources from Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

- **Implementing School-wide Programs: An Idea Book on Planning (1998)** - This U.S. Department of Education publication provides multiple strategies and ideas that schools have used to implement school-wide reform.

**Additional Resources**

- **Guide to Working with Model Providers (2000)** - This document offers advice to schools and districts working with an external model provider. The guide follows the process through initial stages, contract negotiations, and ongoing partnerships. Tools are included to assist throughout the process.

- **Comprehensive School Reform: Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards (2000)** - This guidebook from the Region XI Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center is designed to help schools with successful implementation through intial stages, contract negotiations, and ongoing partnerships. Tools are included to assist throughout the process.
- Developed by The Region III Comprehensive Center, CSR Briefs is an occasional series of articles highlighting key issues related to the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform program.

- **District Leaders Guide to Reallocating Resources**: This guide for district- and building-level support of comprehensive school reform discusses resource reallocation decisions within the context of site-based planning and district-wide focus on higher achievement for all students.

- **Raising Student Achievement: An Internet Guide for Redesigning Low-Performing Schools** - This site, from the American Federation of Teachers, provides information on research-based programs, program selection and implementation, district profiles, and links.

- **Implementing School Reform Models: The Clover Park Experience (2001)**. This document provides an excellent overview of a district-wide comprehensive school reform initiative.
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