

WSD ELL Program Report Spring 2008 NWREL

Rationale / History:

The Northwest Regional Educational Library bilingual program review is part of the district's effort to improve ELL achievement. Data analysis that was conducted in the fall of 2007 showed that as a district we are not closing the achievement gap between our ELL and Anglo students. There are individual schools that have made great progress in closing the gap, but as a district the gap remains. In addition, the performance of Wenatchee's ELL students declines over time (i.e. from 4th grade to 10th grade). The purpose of the review is to provide the district and individual schools with a profile of the educational experience for ELL students across all grade levels with a focus on reading and mathematics. Over the course of 6 days, NWREL staff members conducted site visits at each of WSD's 12 schools to collect data through classroom observations, and interviews with staff and parents. What follows is a summary of the findings and recommendations of that review.

Findings:

Element 1: Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Exit

1-1: The ELL assessment and identification procedure implemented through a centralized district process is problematic.

1-2: Not all teachers are informed of or confident in some of the district ELL policies and procedures, particularly as they relate to exiting from the ELL program.

1-3: Systems for supporting and monitoring students after they exit the ELL program are not consistent throughout the district.

1-4: The results of the language proficiency assessment are not accessible or used by teachers.

Element 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Data presented in this section are disaggregated by program model; Dual Language (A), Pull-out/Push-in (B), K-2 Spanish literacy (C), and Content-Sheltered ESL (D).

Dual Language Model (A)

2-1(A): Instructional practices in classrooms using the dual language model at both Lewis and Clark and Mission View were consistent with the model and supported content and language development.

2-2(A): At the school implementing the dual language model, teachers were aware of and used multiple strategies for differentiating instruction without reducing the cognitive demand of the content.

2-3(A): At the school implementing the dual language model, teachers regularly collaborate to make instructional decisions about ELL students.

2-4(A): At the school implementing the dual language model, teachers use ongoing assessments to inform instruction and adapt program elements.

2-5(A): At the school implementing the dual language model, a positive school climate respectful of all cultures and in which all staff hold high expectations for all students is evident.

2-6(A): At the school implementing the dual language model, an insufficient supply of curricular materials at some grades for some subjects is a concern.

ESL Pull-out/Push-in Model (B)

2-1(B): Instructional practices at the school using an ESL pull-out/push-in model were rich in language development opportunities.

2-2(B): At the school implementing an ESL pull-out/push-in model, teachers were aware of and used multiple strategies for differentiating instruction without reducing the cognitive demand of the content.

2-3(B): At the school implementing an ESL pull-out/push-in model, general education teachers regularly collaborate with ELL program staff.

2-4(B): At the school implementing an ESL pull-out/push-in model, teachers use ongoing assessments to inform instruction and adapt program elements.

2-5(B): At the school implementing an ESL pull-out/push-in model, a positive school climate respectful of all cultures and in which all staff hold high expectations for all students is evident.

2-6(B): At the school implementing an ESL pull-out/push-in model, there is an adequate supply of curricular materials.

K-2 Spanish Literacy Model (C)

2-1(C): Instructional practices in schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model were consistent with the model and rich in language development opportunities in K-2 classrooms, but less so in grades 3-5 classrooms.

2-2(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, the practice of differentiating instruction without reducing the cognitive demand was common.

2-3(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, the level and quality of collaboration between ELL staff and general education teachers varied by school and grade level.

2-4(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, most teachers use ongoing assessments to inform instruction and adapt program elements. They also feel there is a need for an assessment to monitor English language growth.

2-5(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, a positive school climate respectful of all cultures and in which all staff hold high expectations for all students is evident from some staff members, but is not universal.

2-6(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, an insufficient supply of curricular materials at some grades for some subjects is a concern.

Below is an additional finding for the K-2 Spanish literacy model.

2-7(C): At schools implementing the K-2 Spanish literacy model, the transition from K-2 Spanish literacy to grade 3 English-only is problematic.

Content-sheltered ESL Model (D)

2-1(D): Instructional practices in schools using the content-sheltered ESL model, were varied and provided inconsistent language development opportunities.

Instructional practices supporting language development were more frequently observed in specialized ESL classrooms than in general education classrooms.

2-2(D): At schools implementing the content-sheltered ESL model, teachers were aware of and described multiple strategies for differentiating instruction without reducing the cognitive demand of the content.

2-3(D): At schools implementing the content-sheltered ESL model, general education teachers seldom collaborate with ELL program staff to make instructional decisions about ELL students.

2-4(D): At schools implementing the content-sheltered ESL model, most ELL

teachers use ongoing assessments to inform instruction and adapt program elements, but this is not a regular practice among general education teachers.

2-5(D): At schools implementing the content-sheltered ESL model, evidence of a positive school climate respectful of all cultures and in which all staff hold high expectations for all students was limited.

2-6(D): At schools implementing the content-sheltered ESL model, an insufficient supply of curricular materials at some grades for some subjects is a concern.

Element 3: Qualified Staff for ELL

3-1: Most schools do not have adequate staff to meet the varied needs of ELL students.

3-2: There is a need across the district for targeted and ongoing professional development focused on meeting the needs of ELL students.

3-3: Recruiting and hiring staff members who are bilingual/biliterate or representative of the ethnicity of the student population have been insufficient to adequately implement the program models at most schools.

Element 4: Program Collaboration and Support for ELL Students

4-1: There is little evidence of a coherent framework for instruction or consistent program goals across schools and program models.

4-2: Systems for communication between schools about ELL students are not consistently implemented across the district.

4-3: The level of collaboration between ELL staff members and general education teachers varies by program model/school.

4-4: The policies and procedures for determining special education eligibility for ELL students is not clear to many staff members and is the source of some concern.

Element 5: Parent and Community Involvement in the ELL Program

5-1: The district and most schools are making efforts to ensure that ELL parents feel welcome and part of the school community.

5-2: ELL parent involvement is evident in some school and district outreach efforts, but not in others.

5-4: There is a need in some places for increased cultural awareness to promote respect for and appreciation of the Hispanic culture as represented in the school community.

Recommendations

Element 1 - Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Exit

- Ensure that program processes are known, understood, and consistently implemented by all staff.
- Develop, communicate, and consistently implement a systematic process for monitoring ELL student progress toward English language proficiency, including periodic progress checks for students who have exited the ELL program.

Element 2 - Curriculum and Instruction

- Establish and communicate district-wide goals for all ELL programs, including the articulation of a comprehensive framework for instruction.
- Provide leadership, both from the building and district level, to increase the belief that it is the responsibility of the whole school and each staff member to educate their ELL students.
- Assess the efficacy of each program model in use, taking into account the context of the school and the recommendations from current research and literature.
- For each model implemented, provide sufficient materials and qualified staff for the program to be implemented effectively.

Element 3 - Qualified Staff for ELL

- Provide targeted professional development for all instructional staff on practices that support ELL student needs.
- Ensure that staffing of newcomer, ESL, sheltered, bilingual classes at all levels is adequate to meet the needs of students with varied ESL levels.

Element 4 - Program Collaboration and Support for ELL Students

- Develop and implement systematic processes for communication and collaboration about the ELL program and students, including the procedure for identifying ELL students eligible for special education services.

Element 5 - Parent and Community Involvement in the ELL Program

- Continue and extend existing ELL parent outreach efforts.