

2016

# Increasing Black Student Literacy Proficiency Using English Language Learner Instructional Strategies

Niki Tiara Newman-Brown  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

 Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#)

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Niki Newman-Brown

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Maureen Ellis, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Rudolph Lopez, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Sara Rofofsky-Marcus, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2016

Abstract

Increasing Black Student Literacy Proficiency Using English Language Learner

Instructional Strategies

by

Niki T. Newman-Brown

MA, Trinity Washington University, 2006

BA, University of Maryland, College Park, 2002

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2016

## Abstract

Historically, identifying solutions to the achievement gap between Black and White students has plagued education. Twenty-first century challenges have emerged to include an achievement gap between Black and Hispanic students in literacy as early as 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Limited research exists on the use of English language learner (ELL) instructional strategies with Black standard English learners (SELs). This project study narrows the gap in previous research. The goal was to use a collective case study approach to investigate the professional development needs of the Northeast School District through the perspective of 5 Title I, ELL, kindergarten through sixth-grade elementary school principals. Social constructivism guided the theoretical framework. The research questions focused on principals' perceptions of the effect of ELL strategies on Hispanic ELL literacy rates and the benefits of systemic professional development on using ELL strategies for Black SELs. Data were collected from the principals through a focus group discussion and 5 semi-structured interviews. The data were then transcribed and coded to establish themes, based on the participants' perceptions. The major themes centered on the need for teachers to understand and incorporate their student culture in lessons through cultural proficiency; the instructional benefits for Black SELs in ELL classrooms; and the importance of consistent, applicable, systemic professional development. School districts may use these findings results to make decisions on systemic professional development for elementary school administrators and teachers, with positive results for Black SEL proficiency in literacy.

Increasing Black Student Literacy Proficiency Using English Language Learner  
Instructional Strategies

by

Niki T. Newman-Brown

MA, Trinity Washington University, 2006

BA, University of Maryland, College Park, 2002

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2016

## Dedication

This study is dedicated first to my mother Carlene Carson, grandmother Alice Newman, and cousin Lloyd Newman who have made great contributions and sacrifices. Secondly, dedication goes to my family and friends who have provided constant words of encouragement. Finally, I dedicate this study to my two family members who have passed on, but served and still serve as constant sources of inspiration, my stepfather William A. Carson and uncle Lawrence E. Newman.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge all doctoral candidates at Walden University; Dr. Maureen Ellis, my committee chair; Dr. Rudolph Lopez, my committee member; and Dr. Sara Rofofsky Marcus, my University Research Reviewer. I would also like to acknowledge the participants of the Northeast District for their contributions to this project study.

## Table of Contents

Section 1: The Problem.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Definition of the Problem .....	3
Rationale .....	5
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level.....	5
Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature.....	14
Definitions.....	16
Significance.....	17
Guiding/Research Questions.....	18
Review of the Literature .....	18
History of the Achievement Gap .....	19
Theoretical Framework.....	20
Black Students and the Achievement Gap.....	21
Hispanic Students and the Achievement Gap.....	24
Black and Hispanic Achievement Gap .....	26
Teacher Quality and Effectiveness and the Achievement Gap.....	29
Teacher Professional Development and the Achievement Gap.....	31
Culturally Relevant Teaching for ELLs and SELs .....	32
Implications.....	34
Summary .....	34



Section 2: The Methodology.....	36
Introduction.....	36
Qualitative Research and Justification.....	37
Case Study Method and Justification.....	39
Participants.....	42
Selection and Justification of Participants .....	42
Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants.....	43
Role of the Researcher .....	43
Data Collection .....	44
Ethical Treatment of Participants.....	44
Focus Group.....	46
Semi-structured Interviews .....	48
Data Analysis .....	50
Data Analysis for Case Studies.....	50
Focus Group Data Analysis .....	51
Semi-Structured Interview Data Analysis .....	52
Data Validation.....	52
Conclusion .....	53
Research Findings.....	54
Interview Findings on Theme A: Instructional Strategies .....	56
Interview Findings on Theme B: Lack of Teacher Preparedness.....	66
Interview Findings on Theme C: Professional Development.....	70

Summary of Research Findings .....	81
Validation.....	83
Section 3: The Project.....	85
Introduction.....	85
Description and Goals.....	85
Rationale .....	86
Review of the Literature .....	87
Social Constructivism and Adult Learning Theory .....	88
Effective Professional Development.....	89
Cultural Proficiency .....	92
ELL Instruction.....	92
Implementation .....	96
Potential Resources and Existing Supports.....	96
Potential Barriers .....	97
Proposal for Implementation and Timetable.....	97
Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others .....	99
Project Evaluation.....	101
Implication Including Social Change.....	103
Local Community .....	103
Far-Reaching.....	104
Conclusion .....	104
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	106

Introduction.....	106
Project Strengths.....	106
Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations.....	107
Scholarship.....	108
Project Development.....	109
Leadership and Change.....	109
Analysis of Self as a Scholar .....	110
Analysis of Self as a Practitioner .....	111
Analysis of Self as a Project Developer.....	111
The Project’s Potential Impact on Social Change.....	112
Implications, Applications, and Direction for Future Research .....	113
Conclusion .....	114
References.....	116
Appendix A: The Project .....	130
Appendix B: Walden University Internal Review Board Approval Letter.....	222
Appendix C: Northeast Public Schools Research Study Request Application.....	224
Appendix D: Project Study Information Session E-mail.....	231
Appendix E: Focus Group Interview Guide .....	232
Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Guide .....	233
Appendix G: Interview Research Log .....	236
Appendix H: Focus Group Interview Research Log.....	237
Appendix I: Northeast School District Research Approval Letter .....	238

Appendix J: Peer Debriefing Confidentiality Form..... 239

## List of Tables

Table 1. NAEP Average Scale Scores for Reading, Grade 4, by Race/Ethnicity .....	3
Table 2. 2011–2013 Northeast Grade 4 State Assessment Data.....	6
Table 3. 2012 District Population.....	7
Table 4. 2011–2013 Reading Grade 4 District Assessment Data .....	8
Table 5. 2011–2013 School 1 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4.....	9
Table 6. 2011–2013 School 1 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4.....	10
Table 7. 2011–2013 School 3 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4.....	11
Table 8. 2011–2013 School 4 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4 .....	12
Table 9. 2011–2013 School 5 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4.....	13

## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

The success of most public schools is measured by their abilities to meet or surpass the annual measurable objective (AMO) on state assessments. Established in 2001, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was designed to hold local educational agencies (LEAs) accountable through improved standards and decreasing achievement gaps. However, the assessment results were counterproductive to the intent of this legislation for fourth-grade reading achievement (Dee & Jacobs, 2011). NCLB requirements became barriers to innovative state and local reform needed to increase student achievement (Cummins, 2009). Currently, 34 states and the District of Columbia have received approval for the United States Department of Education Flexibility Waiver. The Northeast School District that will be the focus of this study is in a state currently operating under the flexibility waiver. Specifically, this waiver removes the school improvement process and adequate yearly progress (AYP) from the state's accountability system. This system was replaced with the school performance index, which provides direct attention to the lowest performing schools. In addition, all schools are now measured by student success rates in reference to the AMO set by each school, rather than a statewide target (Community Research Partner, 2014).

From *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) to the NCLB (2001) legislation, the focus has been on the achievement gap between Black and White students. However, as the population of the United States continues to diversify, there has been an additional focus on the achievement gap between White and Hispanic students. Hemphill and Vanneman (2011) stated, "Hispanics are the fastest-growing segment in the United States population" (p. iii). By 2010, the Hispanic

population in the United States increased to 50.5 million (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011). The growth rate of the Hispanic population is now four times that of the total population of the United States (Ennis et al., 2011). The growth of the Hispanic population increases the responsibility of public schools to ensure the academic success of Hispanic students. As with the population of African American students, the achievement gap also exists between White and Hispanic students (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2013).

In 2013, the NAEP was administered to fourth-grade elementary students. The results indicated a 26-point achievement gap between Black and White students, as well as a 25-point achievement gap between White and Hispanic students in average scale scores (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011). Table 1 describes the national fourth-grade reading assessment data from 1992–2013. Of the 13 administrations of the assessment from 1992–2013, a small achievement gap is prevalent between Black and Hispanic students. This gap fluctuated between two and six points, with Hispanic students maintaining an average score higher than Blacks 9 of the 13 years. The remaining 4 years, Hispanic students maintained an average score equal to that of Black students.

Table 1

*NAEP Average Scale Scores for Reading, Grade 4, by Race/Ethnicity to Report Trends, Year, and Jurisdiction: 2013, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2005, 2003, 2002, 2000, 1998, 1994, and 1992.*

Year	White	Black	Hispanic
2013	232	206	207
2011	231	205	206
2009	230	205	205
2007	231	203	205
2005	229	200	203
2003	229	198	200
2002	229	199	201
2000	224	190	190
1998	225	193	193
1998	225	193	195
1994	224	185	188
1992	223	192	197

*Note.* Scale ranges from 0–500. Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin. The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0–500. *Source.* U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013.

### **Definition of the Problem**

This project study focused on a five large, Title I, ELL elementary schools in an urban public school district in the northeast United States. Specifically, data were gathered on the district's endeavors to decrease the achievement gap between Hispanic and Black students by



increasing literacy rates on standardized assessments, through professional development for administrators and teachers on using ELL strategies for Black students. Concerns related to this issue were the topic of informal discussion at the 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 end-of-year principals’ meetings in the Northeast School District. Four principals from Title I schools, including the researcher, expressed concern about the Black and Hispanic achievement gap indicated by their schools’ state assessment data for reading. The principals questioned the preparedness of teachers to increase literacy rates for both populations and decrease the achievement gap between the two. The discussions revealed the strong presence of systemic professional development on the upcoming Common Core standards. However, there was an absence of planned professional development to assist administrators in preparing teachers to move Black readers from “learning to read to reading to learn” (Suhr, Hernandez, Grimes, & Warschauer, 2010, p. 6).

In addition, these principals discussed the lack of consistent systemic professional development throughout the school year and limited number of days with which administrators were provided to implement follow-up sessions in individual schools. To date, systemic professional development has continued on the original schedule of 3 days per year for school-wide sessions. A need for professional development prior to the academic school year and continuing throughout will assist administrators in developing teachers’ proficiency with literacy instruction.

## **Rationale**

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

A review of state assessment data for one of the leading 10 public school systems in the United States illustrated a Hispanic and Black achievement gap in reading at the fourth-grade level, as seen in national reading data (Community Research Partner, 2013). The northeast state maintained a curriculum standard that is the foundation for all instruction in its public schools. Despite using and implementing common standards, the achievement gap in reading, from 2011–2013, was prevalent. In 2011, new baseline data were set for each school. This change was a part of a new school improvement process where each school is measured against its own AMO targets. Table 2 illustrates the trends (for 3 years) for this northeast school system and includes fourth-grade reading achievement data for White, Black, and Hispanic students. Although only 3 years of state-level data were available, the Hispanic and Black achievement gap clearly exists.

Table 2

*2011–2013 Northeast Grade 4 State Assessment Data*

Year	White	Black	Hispanic
2013	89.1%	75.4%	79.6%
2012	90.7%	77.5%	84.3%
2011	88.8%	75.4%	84.7%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

With more than 200 schools and approximately 120,000 students, the school district in this study is considered one of the 25 largest public school systems in the United States.

Although this district sustains a predominantly African American population, the Hispanic and Black achievement gap exists at the district level and in at least five elementary schools. Table 3 provides an overview of the diverse population serviced.

Table 3

*2012 District Population*


---

Demographic	Percentage
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.5%
Asian	2.9%
Black/African American	67.4%
Caucasian	4.6%
Hispanic/Latino	22.6%
Native Hawaiian	0.2%
Two or More Races	1.7%

---

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of students of each ethnicity enrolled in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

The demographic data indicated that this school district is predominantly composed of Black students; however, Hispanic students constitute almost 25% of the total population. Some principals are concerned about the instructional strategies needed to increase the achievement of both subgroups, because of their overall lag in achievement behind White students. Table 4 provides district data on the percentage of students who are demonstrating proficiency on the fourth-grade state reading assessment. Table 4 also provides evidence of the Black and White, Hispanic and White, and Black and Hispanic achievement gaps for this northeast school district for the past 3 years (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011; Reardon & Galindo, 2009).

Table 4

*2011–2013 Reading Grade 4 District Assessment Data: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	White	Black	Hispanic
2013	79.1%	75.9%	76.3%
2012	83.3%	77.3%	81.4%
2011	77.1%	72.5%	82.9%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014

Although the size of the achievement gap differed, the data revealed the consistent Black and Hispanic achievement gap for the last 3 years for fourth-grade students.

Specific evidence of this gap existed within elementary schools in this school district. Tables 5 through 9 represent the Black and Hispanic achievement gap at the fourth-grade level during a 3-year timeframe for five different Title I schools in the northeast school district. The demographics of each school differed but all manifested the consistent common factor of a Black and Hispanic achievement gap. The data for the population of White students were not included in the tables because, based on the reporting requirements, there were too few students and the data do not exist.

Table 5

*2011–2013 School 1 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	Black	Hispanic
2013	73.7%	81.3%
2012	61.0%	79.1%
2011	85.4%	76.0%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

Table 6

*2011–2013 School 2 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	Black	Hispanic
2013	68.6%	67.7%
2012	67.4%	72.8%
2011	69.7%	84.6%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

Table 7

*2011–2013 School 3 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	Black	Hispanic
2013	73.1%	84.0%
2012	77.3%	85.6%
2011	69.7%	87.2%

*Note.* The data reflects the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.



Table 8

*2011–2013 School 4 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	Black	Hispanic
2013	77.8%	84.0%
2012	75.0%	74.0%
2011	72.2%	77.3%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

Table 9

*2011–2013 School 5 Reading Assessment Data Grade 4: Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced*

Year	Black	Hispanic
2013	58.6%	63.3%
2012	52.8%	57.8%
2011	75.0%	89.5%

*Note.* The data reflect the percentage of each total population scoring proficient on the Northeast State Assessment in a school in the Northeast School District. *Source.* Community Research Partner, 2014.

According to Title I principals in this northeast school district, literacy proficiency rates have increased among Hispanic students because the population includes students previously receiving English language learner (ELL) services. Due to these students' mastery of the World-Class Instructional Design Assessment - Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English language learners (WIDA ACCESS), they were exited from the ELL program (WIDA, 2014). I believe there is a need for additional professional development opportunities on the use of ELL strategies to raise the student achievement scores of struggling Black standard English learners (SELs). By empowering general education teachers with the same strategies implemented through the ELL program, a strong foundation is built for these students to advance their academic achievement through language development (WIDA Consortium, 2014).

Professional development in this school district was limited by top-level reorganization, time allotted for professional development, union contracts, and consistent focus and monitoring of systemic initiatives to raise student achievement (Community Research Partner, 2014). During

changes in executive level administration from June 2012 to August 2013, the district maintained a general vision and mission for students, but lacked specific details for specific subgroups of students in the areas of academic progress. Professional development was limited to three half-days per year. An opportune time for professional development in schools would be during staff meetings; however union contracts limit the amount of time principals can retain staff for monthly meetings. Therefore, staff meetings are restricted to 2 hours a month and regulated by start and end times based on the end of the school day. Short time allotments cause difficulty in providing school level professional development to build teacher capacity. Many initiatives have been implemented in the district, but few last longer than two years and none have been monitored for effectiveness. Finally, of the systemic professional development provided to general education teachers, none has included ELL strategies. ELL students are struggling readers, as are the Black students. Professional development for administrators and teachers on these strategies will enhance the educators' toolkit. By mastering ELL instructional strategies for use with Black SEL students, principals can provide professional development to their staffs and begin to increase the literacy rates for Black students.

### **Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature**

The achievement gap has been referred to as a discrepancy in educational attainment between White students and minority students (Collopy, Bowman, & Taylor, 2012). For 30 years, research on the achievement gap morphed from a focus on the U.S. educational system as it relates to the rest of the world, to a focus on the Black and White achievement gap. With the growing Hispanic population, there is an increased emphasis on the Hispanic and White achievement gap (e.g. Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics,

2011; Rojas-Lebouef & Slate, 2012). From its inception to the present, NCLB (2002) legislation continues to use data to expose achievement gaps between students of color and White students, and among minority groups. Overall, these studies are limited to identifying the size of the achievement gaps, and explaining trends throughout time. Studies have not included the strategies that increase student achievement, and therefore do not contribute to decreasing those gaps.

Educational literature is also replete with conceptual and theoretical frameworks, as well as research recommendations for improving student achievement; however gaps still remain (Jackson & Ash, 2012; Madrid, 2011). Many of the recommendations to decrease the achievement gaps include exploration of school, family, and social variables (Condrón, Tope, Steidl, & Freeman, 2013). The conceptual and theoretical frameworks involving the achievement gap in literacy are centered within social constructivism. The frameworks also focus on the fact that “educators roles are embedded within and influenced by larger society, the school, and diverse communities” when working to improve minority students’ literacy attainment (Au, 1998, p. 306; Daniels, 1996; Ogbu, 2003; Spivey, 1997). As a result, recommendations do not provide specific instructional strategies to increase literacy skills, and require that educators take on societal and community factors grounded in a history of inequities that cannot be solved in the classroom.

Both Longo (2010) and Cummins (2011) found a connection between low academic achievement and pedagogy. Longo discussed the impasse of transmission-oriented instruction versus creative instruction. The problem with the underachievement of Hispanic and Black students is directly correlated to schools’ “transmission-oriented” instructional focus, which

prepares students for high-stakes testing, and requires teachers to “teach to the test” and “focus on drill and practice instructional activities” (Longo, 2010, p. 54). Transmission-oriented instruction does not allow students to experience engagement and “further increases the disparity in Black and Hispanic students’ academic achievement” (Cummins, 2009, p. 39). Longo states the need for more creative methods of instruction that also ensure student achievement.

Cummins (2011) suggested “literacy engagement” as a principal factor “influencing literacy achievement for both English learners and underachieving students” (p. 142). Although literacy engagement is a possible solution to increase the achievement of ELLs and minority students, it has not been a prominent topic discussed during instruction debates in U.S. educational policy (Cummins, 2011, p. 143). Therefore, the problem remains; for researchers to continue studying pedagogy that increases literacy for Hispanic and Black students and determine how school districts can provide systemic professional development for administrators and teachers.

### **Definitions**

This section will provide definitions and terms used in this project study:

*Achievement gap*: The difference between how well low-income and minority children and their peers perform on standardized tests (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

*Annual Measurable Objective (AMO)*: AMO are performance objectives or targets of student achievement for schools (Community Research Partner, 2013).

*Black*: Black describes a person of any Black racial groups of Africa. Black can also refer to people who identify their race as Black, or African American (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011).

*Culturally Relevant Theory (CRT)*: Effective differentiated instructional planning and implementation that uses “cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of culturally diverse students” (Gay, 2010).

*English Language Learners (ELL)*: “A student whose initial language is not English and is learning English” (ERIC thesaurus, 2012).

*Hispanic or Latino*: Hispanic refers to a person of “Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin” (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011, p. 2).

### **Significance**

The disparity in the academic achievement of different clusters of students has been a consistent topic of conversation as early as 1963 and the Lyndon B. Johnson administration (Guskey, 2009). Under NCLB legislation (2001), schools not only must report achievement gaps among the various demographic of students, but generate and administer specific action steps to increase the academic achievement of all students. Decades of assessment data have shown an achievement gap between racial minorities and White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Since the early 1970s, the achievement gap has been used to refer to the White/non-white achievement gap in research, which has led school systems to focus specifically on these gaps.

In this project study, a cohort of principals from Hispanic ELL populated schools noticed trends in reading assessment data. Although Black students comprise more than 60% of the total student population, more Hispanic students were demonstrating proficiency, thus creating a Black and Hispanic gap. The principals within the cohort of ELL schools attributed this increase to the pocket of Hispanic students who currently benefit or have benefited from ELL

instructional support. This trend of lower achieving Black students will continue if reading instruction continues on the current trajectory.

### **Guiding/Research Questions**

This project study was guided by the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: What is the perceived impact of ELL strategies on the reading assessment levels of Hispanic ELL students?

RQ2: How do principals perceive the benefits of systemic, on-going professional development on the use of ELL strategies to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap?

Past research included data analysis and verification of the Black and White and Hispanic and White achievement gap, but no research on the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. There was also a lack of research on the use of ELL strategies to increase the proficiency level of minority readers, specifically Black students. The question of how the school system can provide professional development for this form of pedagogy was examined in this study.

### **Review of the Literature**

The following literature review reported on the most current research that addressed the discrepancy in closing the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. A review of the literature began with a brief overview of the legislative history impacting the achievement gap and an examination of the social constructivist theory, which guided this study. Following that are four themes relating to the Black and Hispanic achievement gap: current strategies to narrow the Black/White and Hispanic/White achievement gaps; professional development for teachers

regarding student achievement; and culturally relevant pedagogy. The review ends with a discussion of SELs as a form of culturally-relevant pedagogy to narrow the achievement gap.

A variety of research databases were used to gather information relevant to this study: ERIC, Education Research Complete, Education from SAGE, Education Research Starters, Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, JSTOR, and Wiley Online. Key search words and combinations included: Achievement gap, Black achievement gap, Black and Hispanic Achievement gap, Brown v. Board of Education, Constructivism, Cultural competence, Cultural relevancy, Culturally relevant theory, Culturally relevant teaching, English language learners, Hispanic achievement gap, Language acquisition, literacy, literacy proficiency, No Child Left Behind, Plessy v. Ferguson, Reading, Reading proficiency, Standard English Language Learners, Social Constructivism, Teacher quality, Teacher effectiveness, Teacher Development, Teacher development and the achievement gap.

Only peer-reviewed literature within the past 6 years was considered for this project study. Sources older than five years were included only for the theoretical framework and in areas when court cases or legislative acts related to the study topic were referenced.

### **History of the Achievement Gap**

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, policy makers at all levels worked to eliminate the achievement gap existing between White and minority students. In the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) case, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of “separate, but equal” public accommodations for Blacks and Whites, including public schools. The problem with this law was the inequality of education provided to Black students. In 1954, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*, because “separate but equal” “denied Black



children equal educational opportunities” under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution (Okoye-Johnson, 2011, p.2). The monumental change in public education is the foundation for future reform to close the achievement gap.

In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was used to transform the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Both legislative acts were designed to diminish the achievement gap between the White students and students from minority subgroups. Additionally, NCLB redesigned the accountability system for schools. NCLB outlined various subgroups, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and English language proficiency as areas of concern in regards to the achievement gap. NCLB also identified the 2013 – 2014 school year as the deadline for total student mastery of stated standards. Although all of the reform strategies are credible, to date, achievement gaps continue in reading. These achievement gaps were evidenced by a 26-point White/Black achievement gap, as well as a 25-point White/Hispanic achievement gap in average reading scale scores (NAEP, 2013).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Social constructivism posited that learning is an active process where the learner constructs knowledge based on personal experiences from the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2013, p.20). The goal of social constructivism research is to flood the data collection process with participant views, which are based on interactions with others. The intent of social constructivism is to interpret the definitions others have about the world. This qualitative collective case study utilized the experiences of Title I/ELL elementary school principals and

their interactions with teachers as the sole means of data collection. The data were analyzed to delineate strategies for closing the Hispanic/Black achievement gap.

Creswell (2013) stated that broad or open-ended questions guide studies based on social constructivism because of their ability to solicit responses that produce a pattern of meaning. Similarly, this qualitative collective case study used participants' responses to interpret the patterns within the education of Hispanic ELL students and Black SEL students. These patterns were then used to develop a systemic professional development plan geared toward reducing the Hispanic/Black achievement gap through the use of ELL strategies.

### **Black Students and the Achievement Gap**

The disparity in academic achievement between Black and White students has been the foundation for much of the work on the achievement gap. As early as two years into formal schooling, Black students start to lag behind their white peers on age appropriateness measures (Hartney & Flavin, 2013). Until now, the academic achievement gap has been viewed from the school-level lens and focused on differences in national assessment scores between White and Black students (Simms, 2012). NCLB shifted the focus, requiring schools to review assessment performance relative to White peers. Hartney and Flavin (2013) highlighted a small period of dramatic gains by Black students since the early 1990s; however this narrowing of the gap has since stagnated. Whaley and Noel (2012) stated that the Black/White achievement gap is no longer an isolated issue at the school level, but has begun to effect society.

An analysis of current literature on the Black/White achievement gap identified many contributing factors. Social and school factors, as well as cultural dynamics, were consistent themes among the explanations for the poor academic achievement of Black students (Burchinal

et al., 2011). Social factors have been specifically identified as the effects of socioeconomic status and family, historical incorporation of Blacks into American society, as well as teacher preparation and expectations (Bower, 2011; Condrón, Tope, Steidl, & Freeman, 2013; Rowley & Wright, 2011; Simms, 2012; Whaley & Noel, 2012; Williams, 2011). Although the achievement gap between Black and White students was initially narrowing, it has stagnated in recent years (NAEP, 2013). The following is a brief overview of the literature regarding the consistent social, school, and cultural factors contributing to the achievement gap.

Bower (2011) studied the achievement gap through developing social policy reform as a means to eliminate the contributing social factors. Social factors included in this study were “health and health care; housing and neighborhoods, economic well-being, and family” (Bower, 2011, p. 14). Bower (2011) stated, “social reforms might dramatically affect academic performance in a way that would shrink the achievement gap” (p. 24). The implementation of “Community Schools” where social policy is provided in conjunction with the school was suggested to narrow the achievement gap (Bower, 2011, p. 25). Schools, such as the Harlem Children’s Zone, provide comprehensive services to students and parents, limiting the social issues impacting student achievement. Bower (2011) suggested that a combination of both social and school reform can decrease the achievement gap. However, the success rate is contingent upon the time frame allocated.

Condrón et al., (2013) and Rowley and Wright (2011) found that school and “non-school” or social factors play a role in the Black/White achievement gap. However, Condrón, et al., (2013), stated, “school factors by themselves explain a larger portion of the Black/White gap” (p. 699). Much of the current literature on the Black/White achievement gap focuses on

strategies for alleviating the effects of social factors. Although schools have attempted to provide supplemental support with parent education workshops and free and reduced meal programs, social factors cannot be controlled nor terminated (Condrón et al., 2013). School districts, therefore, should do a needs-assessment of those educators in charge of delivering instruction to Black children. Ladson-Billings (2014) focused on teaching practice, rather than curriculum to increase Black student achievement. Specifically, Ladson-Billings (2014) expressed the need for teachers to practice culturally relevant teaching.

Culturally relevant teaching (CRT) is an effective teaching strategy that fosters Black students' academic success by connecting principles of learning, extensive comprehension, and cultural appreciation (Ladson-Billings, 2014). In CRT, learning is a social process where teachers empower students by incorporating grade level standards with students' lived experiences to increase academic performance (Esposito, Davis, & Swain, 2012; Irvine, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2014). CRT is a cyclical process that requires teachers to act as action researchers who practice constant reflection. Throughout the process, curriculum and instruction should be meaningful, recognize students' voices and experiences, and utilize a variety of tools to provide frequent assessment feedback (Adkins, 2012). One way in which teachers have used CRT to close the achievement gap is through Culturally Responsive English Instruction (Adkins, 2012). Culturally Responsive English Instruction creates a classroom environment where students experience success "as they develop literacy skills by utilizing their experiences as strengths... to make learning relevant and meaningful" (Adkins, 2012, p. 73). Empowering students through lived experiences is one CRT instructional method to move student achievement. An integral strategy is to provide students texts with which they can identify.

Adkin's (2012) attributed that students' mastery of literacy skills to the CRT method of instruction. These teaching strategies empowered students academically through text they could relate to while also requiring them to critically analyze literature. In this form of differentiated instruction, students achieved not only academic mastery of literacy standards, but also the confidence needed to sustain this achievement as they matriculated through school. Over time, the CRT has been used in studies to discuss ways to narrow the Black/White achievement gap, and now the Hispanic/White achievement gap.

### **Hispanic Students and the Achievement Gap**

Hispanics are documented as the most rapidly growing population in the United States of America (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011). It is estimated that in 2010, Hispanics made up 50.5 million (or 16%) of the United States Population (Ennis et al., 2011). The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2011) conducted a quantitative study, which included detailed information on the magnitude of the Hispanic/White achievement gap at both the national and state level. The study also included an explanation of how the Hispanic/White achievement gap has changed over time. An additional factor impacting the academic success of Hispanic students is their status as ELLs. According to this study, 73% of the fourth-grade Hispanic participants were ELL students. Therefore, the increasing size of the Hispanic population and the number of fourth-grade students identified as ELL are factors of the Hispanic/White achievement gap (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011). Although the data from this study illustrated the existence and patterns of academic gaps between Hispanic and White students' achievement, it does not explain the causes or differences in student achievement.

The Hispanic/White achievement gap is defined as "the difference between the average

score for White students and the average score for Hispanic students” (NCES, 2011, p. 1).

According to Gandara (2010), there is evidence of an academic lag between Hispanic and White students even at the beginning of kindergarten. Analysis of current literature on the Hispanic/White achievement gap identified many contributing factors. Similar to Black students, social, school, and cultural dynamics were consistent themes among the explanations for Hispanic students’ academic performance (Madrid, 2011). Socioeconomic status, family, and teacher preparedness were consistent factors in the research explaining the difference in the academic performance of Hispanic and White students (Madrid, 2011).

A correlation exists between socioeconomic status and the Hispanic/White achievement gap (Reardon & Galindo, 2009; Wallenstein, 2012). Hispanic students are more likely to live in poverty than their White peers (Aud & KewalRemani, 2010). Many Hispanic parents have a limited education, a factor that leads to lower-income households (Lopez, 2009). The lack of parent education creates low-income households and impoverished conditions, which has a direct correlation to the educational achievement of students (Aud & KewalReamani, 2010). Impoverished Hispanic students often attend school with many health issues that impede their learning process (Gandara, 2010). Schools have tried to combat these social issues with school-wide free breakfast programs and mobile dentist, but most are not equipped to handle the overwhelming need (Gandara, 2010).

As populations of schools in the United States diversify, teachers must be prepared to effectively deliver culturally relevant instruction that incorporates students’ cultures with high academic expectations (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; McCollough & Ramirez, 2012). Culturally relevant instruction empowers students emotionally and academically, leading to

higher student achievement (Esposito et al., 2012). When implemented successfully, CRT allows teachers to be non-judgmental and inclusive of all cultures while facilitating learning (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

The inclusion of language is paramount for Hispanic students because many return to homes where their parents have limited or no English proficiency (Gandara, 2010). The absence of English in the home means there is a lack of reinforcement with the academic vocabulary needed to be successful in literacy. Rojas-LeBouef and Slate (2012) stated language acquisition and literacy is the foundation for academic achievement. Inclusion of language as a part of CRT increases students' comfort level, focus, and their effort to learn the content needed to be proficient readers (Rajagopal, 2011). However, when implementing CRT with Hispanic students, teachers must include many aspects of their students' lives, not simply language (Rajagopal, 2011).

### **Black and Hispanic Achievement Gap**

The cultural-ecology theory (CE theory) has been a major contributing theory for examining school achievement gaps throughout history (Matusov, DePalma, & Smith, 2010). Based on CE theory, different minority groups adopt cultural models (involuntary or voluntary minority) based on the initial incorporation into their host society (Matusov et al., 2010). Black or African American students are involuntary minorities if their ancestors were brought to the United States against their will, which creates oppositional behavior towards education (Matusov et al., 2010). CE theory posited that Black students view hard work and education as a means for succeeding, but believe there must also be opposition to the barriers imposed on them by the majority culture (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). The conflict between hard work and education and

oppositional identity creates contradictory beliefs that negatively effect the education of Black students (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). When applied to Hispanic students, the CE theory yielded a different explanation for academic achievement.

Hispanics are considered “voluntary minorities” (Matusov et al., 2010) because they purposefully moved to the United States, often in search of a better way of life than in their home country. Although they experience discrimination, their cultural differences promote accommodation without assimilation (Matusov et al., 2010). Hispanics have interpreted standards of academic achievement as necessary assimilation for future success. Assimilation is a method to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for obtaining school credentials that will aid future employment and self-advancement in the United States (Matusov et al., 2010). Based on CE theory, Hispanic students will achieve because there is no resistance to education. Education is not viewed as assimilation into the oppressive majority culture, but as a means to acquire a better life.

The CE theory has been questioned by researchers such as Gilbert (2009), who discussed the relevance of cultural dynamics and Black student achievement through her review of Ogbu and Simon’s CE theory. Gilbert (2009) found that the sole cause of low performance in Black students is not oppositional behavior due to being an involuntary minority. Once “behavioral and attitudinal factors” are controlled, immigrant status no longer affects Black students’ reading achievement (Gilbert, 2009, p.88). Overall, the study found that socioeconomic status was a contributing factor to the achievement gap.

Socioeconomic status is recognized as a significant prognosticator of children's school performance (Zhang et al., 2013). Academic success for Black and Hispanic students is



dependent on teachers who are well versed in language acquisition and literacy, specifically vocabulary (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Rojas-LeBouef & Slate, 2012). Specific instruction in the areas of language, literacy, and vocabulary are needed to ensure Standard English proficiency (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Rojas-LeBouef & Slate, 2012). Currently, Hispanic students also identified as ELL receive additional instruction to develop Standard English proficiency (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011). The strategies used in ELL instruction may be the cause of the higher literacy achievement for Hispanic students on recent assessments.

ELLs are students “who were not born in the United States”, or “grew up speaking a language other than English” (Okoye-Johnson, 2011, p.1). SELs are traditionally described as students whose first language is English, but who have not mastered Standard English because their home language differs in structure and form from the Standard English used in school curricula (Okoye-Johnson, 2011). The difference in home language and Standard English can be detrimental to overall academic achievement and college readiness (LAUSD, 2012; LeMoine, 1999). SELs include a variety of subgroups such as African Americans, Hawaiian Americans, Mexican-Americans, and Native Americans. Unlike ELLs, SELs are not considered a precise subgroup, apart from their ethnicity in standardized testing (Okoye-Johnson, 2011). This lack of separation means there is no specific legislation that ensures accommodations for SELs, therefore SELs do not receive the additional language acquisition and vocabulary instruction that is required for ELLs (Okoye-Johnson, 2011). Although, schools cannot control district, state, and federal mandates regarding the instructional services students receive, they can control administrator and teacher quality through professional development and curricula. Schools can effect administrator quality, teacher quality, and professional development through the use of

culturally relevant pedagogy.

In order for Black and Hispanic students to succeed, a culturally relevant pedagogy can be implemented to guide the instructional practices of educators. The language concerns for Hispanic students or ELLs and Black Students or SELs can be addressed through CRT. Linguistic and cultural capabilities are components that should be incorporated in CRT practices (Santamaria, 2009).

### **Teacher Quality and Effectiveness and the Achievement Gap**

Teacher quality and effectiveness are the most prevalent variables affecting student performance (Hartney & Flavin, 2013; LeMoine, 1999; Okoye-Johnson, 2011). Teacher quality and effectiveness can encompass a variety of components including teacher certification, teacher training or experience, teacher efficacy, and teacher/student relationships (Hartney & Flavin, 2013; Li & Hasan, 2010; Williams, 2011). Li and Hasan (2010) identified a positive connection between teacher qualifications and student reading achievement. A highly qualified teacher is defined as an educator who holds at least a bachelor's degree, a full state certification or licensure, and has satisfied the necessary requirements for teaching specific subjects at specific levels (Community Research Partner, 2003). Certification reflects a teacher's ability to differentiate instruction based on pedagogical and content knowledge in the midst of instruction. However, even with these qualifications, a teacher may not have the skillset needed to implement the culturally relevant instruction to successfully reach Black and Hispanic students.

The inequitable dissemination of highly qualified teachers has been a consistent contributor to the achievement gap in the United States (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012). Easton-Brooks and Davis (2009) conducted a study to determine "the differential effects of

teacher qualifications” (as defined by NCLB) “on the reading achievement” of Black and White students matriculating from kindergarten to third grade (p. 2). The findings were consistent with earlier studies, which expressed that the reading achievement gap for Black and White students was decreased when Black students were provided instruction from a qualified teacher. Although Easton-Brooks and Davis (2009) found a positive correlation between teacher quality and reading achievement, an overall achievement gap continues and illustrates the need for additional pedagogical strategies (Marszalek, Odom & LaNasa, 2010).

Li and Hasan (2010) discussed their findings and strategies for building relationships with students through nurturing the whole child in the areas of academic knowledge, responsibility, confidence, and resiliency. In order to begin this developmental process, a positive teacher-student relationship must be present (Irvine, 2010; Roberts, 2010; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2011; West, 2013). Teacher-student relationships have led to an increase in the student achievement of Black students (Roberts, 2010; West, 2013). Ijei and Harrison (2010) also suggested the inclusion of teacher acceptance of students’ culture. The combination of a positive instructional environment and teacher cultural competence fosters a relationship that generates buy-in from minority students. A major factor to abolishing the achievement gap is teacher belief in their students’ ability to grow academically regardless of academic level, race, or ethnicity (Ijei & Harrison, 2010). Li and Hasan (2010) explained how the Four Build Strategy facilitates positive teacher/student relationships and increases student achievement among minority students. The Four Build Strategy focuses on confidence and self-esteem, a positive academic environment, academic engagement time, and a supportive social context to create schools and classrooms that promote a supportive learning environment and narrows the

achievement (Li & Hasan, 2010). The strategies discussed are not a part of the pedagogical or content assessments required to become a highly qualified teacher. However, schools and teachers successful in reducing the achievement gap have these four culturally relevant strategies at the foundation of their instructional practice.

### **Teacher Professional Development and the Achievement Gap**

Williams (2011) expressed that the educational community cease the search for who and what is responsible for the achievement gap and focus on the development of “true reform” (p.65). Veteran and novice teachers contribute to teacher quality. Both must understand the need to continually develop new strategies that “will transform the learning process for students” that are not progressing (Williams, 2011, p.69). Williams (2011) concluded that there is a great need for school districts to use systemic professional development sessions to ensure that all educators are prepared using the most effective instructional practices. Overall, individual school environments must support this work through a culture that values learning and quality teaching, evident through collaborative planning, student efficacy expressed by all staff, and high quality professional development (Williams, 2011).

Successful school improvement has been preceded by systemic professional development activities that are effectively implemented, and designed to increase the instructional skillset of educators (Guskey, 2009). Through the implementation of consistent, collaborative, and structured professional development, teacher quality (and therefore student achievement) improves overall (Saunders, 2014). To date, there is a void in the literature on professional development as it relates to culturally relevant teaching, although studies do exist showing the benefits of this pedagogy. The following is an explanation of how the Los Angeles Unified

School District (LAUSD) implemented their “English Learner Master Plan” for both teachers and students (LAUSD, 2012, p. 83).

### **Culturally Relevant Teaching for ELLs and SELs**

Very little research can be found on the SELs. Because SELs are not a subgroup demographic separate from ethnicity for testing, there is no policy or legislation to mandate that schools provide additional services for these students. However, Black students (who are considered SELs) are lagging in the Black/White achievement gap, and now the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. These achievement gaps demonstrate the need for supplemental services (similar to those provided to ELLs) to assist Black students in mastering Standard English. The LAUSD has begun to combat the issue of consistent and coherent language instruction for ELL and SEL students through their development of the English Learner Master Plan. The purpose of this Master Plan is to present ELL and SEL students with an English Language Development (ELD) program that is separate but complementary to daily literacy instruction. These services are provided through culturally relevant teaching to all “ethnic and linguistic” populations (LAUSD, 2012, p. iii).

ELD is the foundation of the ELL and SEL instruction in the L.A. Unified School District. ELD requires teachers to provide explicit language instruction (vocabulary, syntax, grammar, discourse, functions, and conventions) in addition to the comprehension skills necessary for the development of social and academic language proficiency (LAUSD, 2012). ELD instruction is research and standards based and relates directly to the common core because it addresses the four domains of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Although the overall focus of ELD is listening and speaking, mastery of these domains will increase

students' literacy development because of the positive correlation between oral language and literacy (August & Shanahan, 2008). In order for students to gain English proficiency, it is important that classes for ELL and SEL students take place in addition to their daily literacy instruction (LAUSD, 2012).

LAUSD (2012) offered a variety of programs that prepare ELL students to start a career or attend college following high school graduation. At the elementary level, students can participate in one of five programs. Each program has teachers meeting with ELL students for 45 – 60 minutes each day, to provide the language acquisition and vocabulary instruction needed for student to access the comprehensive curriculum independently.

In addition to the LAUSD's ELL program, there is also an SEL program. SELs "possess a variety of linguistic and cultural abilities" (LAUSD, 2012, p. 83). SEL instruction is additive because it focuses on maintaining students' home language, but provides instruction that teaches students to use contrastive analysis. SEL strategies make students aware of the differences in their primary (or home) language and academic language (LAUSD, 2012). Overall contrastive analysis benefits SELs because it increases students' ability to differentiate between Standard English and the linguistic varieties used in the home. Students become proficient at editing their own writing for language, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax; and students increase their overall use of oral and written Standard English, which increases overall literacy proficiency (LAUSD, 2012).

The LAUSD has implemented the Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) to address the language, literacy, and learning needs of SELs enrolled in their school system. LAUSD (2012) stated that the instructional strategies implemented for this population are

research-based and proven to develop proficiency in the areas previously listed. The AEMP, like the ELL model, requires 45 – 60 minutes of language and vocabulary instruction in addition to the literacy block each day. The purpose of an AEMP program for SELs is to “build academic language, and provide scaffolded learning to SELs” (LAUSD, 2012, p. 86). Overall the academic achievement of the SEL population “(African American, Mexican American, Hawaiian American, and Native American)” increases (LAUSD, 2012, p.84).

### **Implications**

This section discusses the implication for of this project, which was based upon anticipated findings from the data collection and analysis process. Unfortunately, the intersection of research examining the Black and Hispanic achievement gap, and best practices to narrow this discrepancy has not been fully investigated. More studies are needed that examine the connection between using ELL instructional strategies as a culturally relevant method for teaching SELs at the elementary level. Godley and Escher’s (2012) study found a positive statistical relationship between bi-dialectal students with high academic achievement who spoke only Standard English (SE) in English classes. Bi-dialectal students receiving a grade of C or below did not use SE in classes, but also demonstrated lower academic levels overall. There is also an absence of quantitative data on the growing Hispanic/Black achievement literacy gap and qualitative data to determine the need for systemic-wide professional development on the use of ELL instructional strategies to increase the literacy achievement of Black SEL students.

### **Summary**

Currently, the growing Black and Hispanic achievement gap is a phenomenon that has yet to be studied as an achievement gap. The Black and Hispanic achievement gap is further

complicated because SEL instruction has not been used to reduce either the Black/White, or the Hispanic/Black achievement gap, outside of the LAUSD. Section 2 of this study discusses the application of the qualitative collective case study research approach in this study.



## Section 2: The Methodology

### **Introduction**

The problem addressed in this project study was the achievement gap that has developed between the scores of Black and Hispanic students on fourth-grade literacy assessments. Specifically, Hispanic students have scored higher than Black students at the national, state, and district level in a northeastern school district (Community Research Partner, 2014; NAEP, 2013). The Hispanic population includes both ELL students and those who have exited from the ELL services. Students exit ELL services based on their scores on the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English assessment (ACCESS). These are students who have received ELL services, but due to their level of language acquisition on the ACCESS, they no longer receive daily ELL services. These students still receive ELL consultation services as needed.

Although exited students no longer participate in daily ELL instruction, an ELL teacher monitors their progress and provides intervention when needed for 2 years following the students' testing out of the ELL program. Current research discusses both the Black and White achievement gap, and the Hispanic and White achievement gap, but there are no studies focusing on the achievement gap between Black and Hispanic students (Cummin, 2009; Hartney & Flavin, 2013; Vanneman et al., 2009; Whaley & Noel, 2012). The literature also lacks research on how administrators are professionally developed in the use of ELL strategies to ensure that all students become proficient in reading.

## **Research Design and Approach**

### **Qualitative Research and Justification**

A qualitative research approach was used in this project study. The rationale for implementing the qualitative approach was due to my ability to address the research questions through open-ended questions presented during a focus group, as well as one-on-one interview data from Title I/ELL elementary school principals. The interview data focused on instructional strategies, teacher preparation through district level professional development, ELL and SEL instructional delivery strategies, and professional development needed to enhance both reading proficiency among both Black and Hispanic students. Specifically, data regarding instructional strategies implemented to enhance Black students' reading proficiency levels were collected. Interview data also provided information on a northeast school district's systemic professional development. Data collected were used to understand the similarities and differences of current SEL and ELL instructional strategies implemented by teachers. Finally, data were collected regarding the needs for systemic professional development on the delivery of literacy instruction that is effective and equitable for Hispanic and Black students. Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2002) stated that qualitative research is an inductive process where the researcher collects data to develop concepts or theories. The results of qualitative research are described using words or pictures to explain the new understanding about a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. I used raw data from principals' interview responses to develop overall interpretations. These interpretations were used to determine the need for a professional development series for administrators on the use of ELL strategies with non-ELL Black students to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap.

According to Creswell (2009), qualitative and quantitative research designs differ but are not “polar opposites, or dichotomies” (p. 3). Each type of research design exists on the opposite end of a continuum. The mixed-methods design represents the center of the continuum, due to its incorporation of both approaches. Qualitative and quantitative research designs also differ in methods of data collection and philosophical assumptions. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research is a progression from philosophical assumptions to the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. In addition, a qualitative inquiry approach is used to collect data in a natural setting and identify patterns and themes. Overall, qualitative research seeks to further comprehend claims through constructivist perspectives (Creswell, 2009).

Collective case studies concentrate on one issue through multiple case studies (Creswell, 2013). For the purposes of this study, the qualitative strategy I implemented was a collective case study. This project study specifically focused on the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in literacy through the lens of five cases. I gathered meaning by comparing data collected via the focus group and one-on-one interviews. In qualitative research design, the researcher is the primary source of data collection (Creswell, 2009).

Neither the quantitative or mixed-methods research designs were selected for use in this study. Quantitative research uses theory as a way to explain or predict a relationship between variables that form questions or a hypothesis (Creswell, 2009). The mixed-methods design uses theory deductively or inductively and serves as a blending of quantitative and qualitative research designs. Although a constructivist theoretical approach was implemented, relationships among variables were not tested, and data were not collected through instruments that require

statistical procedures for analysis. Overall, the research design evolved from the problem and research questions posed. The data collected and analyzed informed the questions and lead to the development of a systemic professional development plan, not a discussion of results in reference to an overall hypothesis.

### **Case Study Method and Justification**

Narrative analysis, phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography are four of the five qualitative research approaches discussed by Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2002). All four approaches use qualitative data collection tools such as interviews, observations, and/or artifacts, during the data gathering process (Creswell, 2013). These approaches are similar in process, but differ in outcome. This qualitative, collective case study resulted in the development of a professional development series for administrators on the use of ELL strategies with non-ELL Black students in order to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. The study used multiple cases (five Title I/ELL elementary schools in a northeast school district) to understand the principal's perception of the impact of ELL strategies on the literacy achievement of Hispanic students, and the perceived benefits of systemic professional development on this topic. A qualitative collective case design was the choice for this study because of the many factors that affected the participants' perception and my ability to discover meaning through interviews.

The narrative analysis research approach was not chosen for this project study. Narrative researchers use a collection of one or two individual participants' descriptions of lived events and experiences (Creswell, 2013). These experiences are then reported in chronological order to develop a story conveying a message (Creswell, 2013). The guiding research questions for this project study did not solicit participants' responses that will lead to an overall story of Black and

Hispanic students. The questions did not solicit participants' stories regarding experiences. This research approach did not provide the data needed to develop a systemic professional development plan to close the Black and Hispanic achievement gap.

A phenomenological study, like a narrative analysis focuses on the lived experiences of participants. However, the phenomenology approach uses individuals' lived experiences to identify a common meaning of phenomenon experienced by all participants (Creswell, 2013). This commonality is used to construct a descriptive analysis of participants' experiences, and the setting influencing how participants experienced the phenomenon. The results of a phenomenology study include the researcher's personal statements regarding their experiences with the phenomenon. A collection of lived experiences would not provide the data necessary to understand the effect of ELL strategies on Literacy assessment levels, nor principal perceptions of the types of instructional strategies needed to decrease the Black and Hispanic literacy achievement gap. Therefore the phenomenology research approach was not implemented in this project study.

The grounded theory research approach was not implemented in this project study. The purpose of grounded theory is to develop or discover a theory. Grounded theory begins with a specific focus of study from which a theory is developed (Merriam, 2002). The data collected is precise because that data were used to explain a process or action over time. This project study began with the social constructivism theory, and the data collected was used to develop an overall interpretation of the instructional strategies and professional development needs to close the Black and Hispanic reading achievement gap.

Creswell (2013) stated that ethnography research uses participants' views to develop a description of social behaviors of a culture or culture-sharing group. Although principals provided information regarding the differences in instructional strategies used to educate Black SELs and Hispanic ELLs, this data did not result in a cultural interpretation of the behaviors of Black and Hispanic students. Therefore, the ethnography research approach was not implemented.

A case study approach is used by qualitative researchers to create an in-depth understanding of a single case or multiple cases within a bonded system over time, and begins through identification of a specific case, which may consist of an individual or small group within a specific place and time. When multiple cases are involved, they are compared (Creswell, 2013). The selection of multiple cases provides a variety of perspectives on the issue. This project study used the collective case study analysis approach to identify and compare themes among the perspectives of current principals charged with being the instructional leaders. For this study, five cases were selected from a purposeful sample of the 60 elementary schools that service Black and Hispanic students, have an ELL program, are identified as Title I, and have a fourth-grade Black and Hispanic literacy achievement gap. Comparisons were made regarding the need for professional development on ELL strategies and instructional strategies for struggling Black readers. Creswell and Merriam (2002) discussed four other qualitative research approaches. Overall, the collective case study research approach provided the data needed to develop a systemic professional development plan for administrators and teachers to assist with closing the Hispanic/Black achievement gap in reading.

## **Participants**

### **Selection and Justification of Participants**

The setting of this project study was five large, urban, Title I, elementary schools, with an ELL program in the Northeast School District. In addition, each school has experienced the Black and Hispanic achievement gap on the Northeast State Grade 4 Assessment from 2011 - 2013. All of the schools in the study maintained an enrollment of 550 – 750 students, provide ELL services for ELLs, and had a predominantly Hispanic and Black student population 60%. The setting and presence of the Black and Hispanic achievement gap for each school was used to determine the principals that were asked to participate in this project study.

Purposeful sampling was implemented to select each participant for this case study. Purposeful sampling was used because it permitted participant selection that informed the overall understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2013). In this study, five principals from the schools listed in Tables 5 - 9 were selected as participants. Minimizing the number of cases maintains manageability for identifying themes, and conducting cross-case analysis (Creswell, 2013). The small sample size in this study ensured that I gained an in-depth information from each participant during the data collection process (Merriam, 2002). According to Creswell (2013), four to five is an appropriate size for a case study. The principals that were selected to participate used their experience as instructional leaders of these schools to explain their understanding of how ELL strategies effect the Hispanic ELL students' achievement in reading, and the specific needs for future professional development on using ELL strategies to close the Black and Hispanic achievement gap.

### **Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants**

I requested permission to gain access to the participants through the Northeast School District's Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE). The process began with the completion of the application to conduct research (Appendix B). The completed application provided the specific details of the study and the needs of myself as the researcher, and participants. No data were collected until I obtained Walden Institutional Review Board approval, informed consent from all participants, and received complete authorization for conducting a study by the DRE.

Once approval was granted, I gained access to participants' e-mail addresses via the school district's public website. All principals' e-mail addresses were obtained through the publically accessible school informational websites provided by the Northeast School District. My Walden e-mail account was solely utilized to invite participation to the study informational session, to provide informed consent documents, and for general contact via scheduling of the focus group discussion and confirmation of one-on-one interviews.

### **Role of the Researcher**

Creswell (2013) stated that on-site research should cause minimal disruption to the natural environment of participants. The sites identified for this study were Title I elementary schools with an ELL program, and a Black and Hispanic achievement gap in scores on the Northeast State literacy assessment. The participants in this study were principals that have worked with teachers to prepare instructional delivery to both ELL and SEL students. After Walden University IRB and DRE approval, I conducted two forms of interviews, a focus group and one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. Data were collected through audio recordings that were



transcribed, and then analyzed to identify themes. I transcribed all focus group and semi-structured interview recordings using Nvivo software. Once the study was complete, I presented the results to the participating principals. Allowing participants to review the results ensured the overall validity of the information used to develop interpretations of the analyzed questionnaire and interview data.

Although I am employed as an elementary school principal by the school district where the research was conducted, I did not interact with any participants on a daily basis or oversee any professional development implementation or evaluation of the schools being studied. I served as the focus group moderator and the interviewer during semi-structured interviews. My previous and/or current roles in the District did not cause any bias throughout the data collection process.

### **Data Collection**

The qualitative case study research employed two forms of interviews: a focus group discussion and one-on-one interviews. The following section provides an overview of each form of data collection and a plan for implementation in this project study. I allocated four weeks to conduct the focus group and follow-up interviews.

### **Ethical Treatment of Participants**

Creswell (2009) stated that ethical issues result from a lack of reciprocity between a researcher and participants. Ethical issues do not only occur during the data collection process, and therefore, must be considered during each phase of a study (Creswell, 2013).

Numerous measures were implemented to ensure the ethical treatment of all participants in this project study. These measures included an informed consent form, which ensured confidentiality and strategies for protecting participants from harm (see Appendix D), the Walden University

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval form (see Appendix B), and a letter of research approval from the Northeast School District's DRE (see Appendix I).

I began by completing the Northeast School District's DRE application process, which included a summary of the project study proposal. Following approval from the Northeast School District DRE, I submitted the project study proposal, and the Walden University IRB Application to the Walden University IRB for final approval to collect data (Walden IRB Approval #03-11-15-0068089). Once approval was received, I sent an email of invitation to all potential participants to an informational meeting (see Appendix D). During the informational meeting, all participants were provided an introduction to the study. All participants were informed that their participation was completely voluntary, and that they were able to discontinue their participation at any time with no negative consequences. Participants were also informed that their participation in the study and any responses would be kept confidential, in that no identifying demographic information would be collected (i.e. names, gender, age, or years of service as a principal).

Wolcott (2008) stated that more than one case in a study reduces the quality of data a researcher can collect. Creswell (2013) stated that case study research should be limited to a maximum of four to five cases in a single study. A small number of cases permitted me to gather sufficient data for the development of themes (Creswell, 2013). These themes were used to complete a cross-case analysis of the themes. Therefore, a total of five potential cases from the Northeast School District were selected for this project study.

Once participants signed the consent form (see Appendix E), I scheduled the focus group and arranged a location that was central for all participants. In addition, I worked with

participants to determine the most convenient date and time for the focus group. At the conclusion of the focus group, participants were provided the opportunity to schedule their one-on-one, semi-structured interview. All one-on-one interviews were conducted at a time, date, and location that were determined by the participant. The one-on-one interviews took place in the weeks immediately following the focus group.

### **Focus Group**

The data collection process began with a focus group. Hatch (2002) stated that focus groups are a distinct form of qualitative research that should be used as a supplemental source of data. When used in conjunction with other qualitative data collection tools, focus groups enrich the data collected in a qualitative study (Hatch, 2002). Focus groups are conducted in accordance with the predetermined focus group protocol, and focus group questions developed based on the research questions that guide this project study. The focus group format was implemented to allow participants to explore the real life topic of the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in-depth, through interaction with all study participants (Hatch, 2002). Creswell (2013) stated the characteristic of a proficient qualitative case study is inclusion of an in-depth knowledge of the case. This focus group is one form of data collection that provided the understanding needed to identify professional development desired to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap.

Overall there are benefits and risks of using a focus group when conducting qualitative research. Hatch (2002) explained that a focus group permits the collection of “concentrated data on precisely the topic of interest” (p. 132). In this study, the focus group was used to collect data on the perspective of all participants as it relates to the Black and Hispanic achievement gap within their schools. There were four guiding questions for the focus group.

Q1: Describe your views on the effects of ELL instructional strategies on Hispanic students' reading achievement.

Q2: Describe instructional strategies you have used or witnessed that positively impact Black students' achievement in reading? How have the previously discussed instructional strategies moved students to proficiency in reading?

Q3: Discuss the types of professional development previously delivered and its effects on ensuring that Black and Hispanic students are reading successfully (on grade level)?

Q4: Discuss the types of professional development you feel should be implemented to ensure that all Black and Hispanic students are reading successfully (on grade level)?

When compared to one-on-one interviews, the use of these guiding questions in a focus group generated a plethora of data in a short period of time (Hatch, 2002). Although the focus group was initiated with guiding questions, the implementation of a focus group interview also allows for participants to have a role in the direction of the interview. Participants' autonomy allowed the group to shape the direction of the interview when providing perspective and developing understanding of the topic (Hatch, 2002). Being interviewed in a group gave participants "a sense of security and comfort" (Hatch, 2002, p.132). According to Hatch (2002), this level of comfort is not found in one-on-one interviews and will lead to participants providing responses that are both honest and thoughtful.

Focus groups offer advantages and disadvantages to a qualitative research study. The purpose of having a moderator is to encourage participant discussion on the specific topic. However, if the moderator takes too much control, participants' responses will be less natural and data will be limited (Hatch, 2002). Hatch (2002) also identified participant discomfort as a

disadvantage to the implementation of a focus group. Some participants may be uncomfortable speaking in front of a group, or providing candid answers in front of colleagues. Low participant comfort level can lead to biased data because the focus group will only capture the perspective of those participants who will speak the most or are more assertive.

### **Semi-structured Interviews**

Hatch (2002) identified interviews as a qualitative data approach that researchers use to understand participants' experiences or interpretations of a phenomenon. In addition, it is the method of data collection recommended for studies based in constructivist theory because of overall flexibility (Hatch, 2002). An interview allows researchers to understand a situation from the participant's vantage point, and provides overall insight into the meaning of a participants' experience (Hatch, 2002). Tier two of the data collection process for this project study, was the implementation of the semi-structured interviews.

One-on-one semi-structured interviews provided participants that were uncomfortable in the group setting, the opportunity to speak candidly and privately with me. In addition, participants had the opportunity to expand on any comments made during the focus group. Semi-structured interviews allow guiding questions to navigate the process, but provided participants' the opportunity to lead through their responses, and allowed for probing questions to gain additional information (Hatch, 2002). The guiding questions for the interviews in this project study permitted the researcher to delve more deeply, and the participants to provide additional feedback regarding the current instructional delivery methods to Black and Hispanic students, the effect of ELL strategies on the reading attainment of Hispanic students, and the needs of district level professional development.

The questions in the interview guide (see Appendix G) were based on the research questions and relevant literature. Any additional questions were based specifically on participant responses during the focus group, and were documented in the interview guide. All questions gave each participant the opportunity to provide more detail regarding the Black and Hispanic achievement gap, instructional strategies needed to move all Black and Hispanic students to proficiency in literacy, and systemic professional development needs for educators.

Tools that were used during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews include a small battery-operated digital recorder, a laptop computer, the interview guide, and a research log (Hatch, 2002; Creswell, 2013). The digital recorder ensured participants' responses were recorded and available for review once the interview ended. The questions used in the interview were open-ended, few in number, and designed to gather accurate views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2009). The use of open-ended questions solicited rich responses from participants. Collaboratively, these responses were used to identify overall themes that guided the development of the systemic professional development series for this project study.

The questions also expanded upon the information collected via the focus group, and included follow-up questions that were used for clarification of individual participants' responses. I transcribed all digital recordings within 48 hours of each interview by uploading the digital recording to Nvivo software. Member checking provided participants with the opportunity to review the transcripts to ensure transcription and information accuracy (Creswell, 2013). Once participants provided clarification and approved the transcripts, I continued analyzing the data for common themes using those identified by the Nvivo software and those identified during my review of the notes taken in the interview guide.

An interview guide was used to record the specific date, time, place, interviewee, and the open-ended interview questions used in each one-on-one interview (Appendix G). This guide ensured the same questions were asked of each participant and allowed me to note clarifying questions during the interview process (Creswell, 2013). A research log was used immediately following the interview (see Appendix H). The research log provided a space to reflect on the research process, and record the human side of the experience, which removed bias from the data collection process (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002).

Each stage of data collection required data analysis. The next section provides an in-depth description of how all data were analyzed. Specific procedures for coding information and assuring accuracy, and finally the steps taken to resolve any discrepancy within the participants' responses are discussed.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is a time-consuming process that requires researchers to explore data collected in a circular rather than linear approach (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data analysis is a process where a researcher develops an informed interpretation reflecting raw data collected through open-ended questionnaires, interviews, observations, or focus groups (Creswell, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

#### **Data Analysis for Case Studies**

This project study progressed through the cyclical process of data analysis, reducing the data from a focus group and one-on-one semi structured interviews through coding, for the purpose of identifying themes. An interpretation of the data was used to develop a systemic professional development workshop for administrators on the use of ELL strategies for SELs as a

means to close the Hispanic/Black achievement gap (Creswell, 2013). I used this collective case study to develop an assortment of data based examples that give meaning to the Hispanic/Black achievement gap in large, Title I, ELL elementary schools in a Northeast School District.

### **Focus Group Data Analysis**

Data collected using the focus group (transcripts and interview guide) were stored on my Walden University Google Drive. The data were secure because this internet storage is only accessible via login and password. I was the only person with access to the login and password required to access the data. Audio recordings were analyzed using the Nvivo software. The Nvivo software was only accessible from my computer, which required a login and password to access. The login and passwords for the Google Drive and laptop are different, creating another layer of protection for the data.

All audio recordings were uploaded to the Nvivo software within 48 hours of the focus group. The software was used to produce a verbatim transcription of all audio-recorded interview data. The coding process began by reviewing all transcripts for expected, surprising, and interesting or unusual information. Described by Creswell (2013), I then completed a line-by-line analysis of the transcripts to condense codes by grouping similar codes into themes. The initial list of codes and key terms was later expanded as more information was gathered through one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Creswell (2013) suggested that the list begin with approximately five to six codes. The list was expanded to include additional categories during each review of participants' responses. Responses from participants agreeing to participate in a one-on-one interview were reviewed to determine specific questions to be asked during the next phase of data collection.



### **Semi-Structured Interview Data Analysis**

The second form of data collection was through the use of semi-structured interviews. The interview guide was designed to gather additional information from each participant through the use of the main and follow-up questions. The main questions served as the skeleton for each interview and were designed to provide additional information directly related to the overarching project study questions. The follow-up questions were based on the individual participants' responses during the focus group and will allow for additional exploration of themes, concepts, or ideas discussed by the participant in the first stage of data collection. The data collected through semi-structured interviews, was analyzed in three phases, preparing transcripts, coding, and comparing concepts and themes (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

### **Data Validation**

Validation is defined as a process used to evaluate the findings in a qualitative study (Creswell, 2013). The forms of validation that were implemented in this study included peer debriefing, clarifying researcher bias, and member checking. Peer debriefing and clarifying research bias did not involve the actual review of data collected. Creswell (2013) defined a peer debriefer as someone who assures that the researcher remains honest. This person questions the researcher's methods, meanings, and interpretations for the better of the study. The peer debriefer also serves in the role of a listener when the researcher needs to express their feelings. A current colleague and doctoral candidate acted in the role of peer debriefer for this project study. The peer debriefer was a qualified choice for this position because of her doctoral study topic regarding university elementary education programs and their preparation of future teachers to service diverse populations. The peer debriefer did not only ask the difficult

questions, but also served as a sounding board throughout the process. The peer debriefer provided feedback in writing and questioned any portion of the project study that lacked cited evidence, or was in need of additional explanation.

Member checking ensured the overall validity of the information used to develop interpretations of the analyzed questionnaire and interview data. Participants had the chance to examine their focus group responses and interview transcripts for accuracy. In addition to transcripts, all participants were given the opportunity to review my transcripts and interpretations allowing them the opportunity to ensure that the themes generated collectively from the common topics in each interview, clearly conveyed the overall experience and instructional professional development needs of principals in schools experiencing the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. Overall, the validity strategies implemented ensured the accuracy of the data collected and analyzed

### **Conclusion**

This qualitative case study used the perceptions of principals to: examine the effect of ELL strategies on ELL students' literacy proficiency, and the benefits of systemic professional development on the use of ELL instructional strategies with SEL students. The design of this project study was a collective case study, because it allowed for the making of meaning through comparing data collected via a focus group and one-on-one interviews. Upon the approval of the project study committee, the researcher requested approval from the Northeast School District's DRE, and Walden IRB to ensure ethical protocols, the protection of all participants, and enhance the trustworthiness of data collected.

A qualitative research design was implemented to collect data from a purposefully selected sample, consisting of five principals. Through the use of a focus group and one-on-one semi structured interviews, the researcher collected data. The participants' responses from the focus group and interview questions were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for recurring themes. The common themes were then compared and used to develop an overall interpretation regarding the effect of providing administrators in this northeast school district with systemic professional development workshops on the use of ELL strategies with SELs to close the Hispanic/Black achievement gap.

### **Research Findings**

The purpose of this qualitative project study was to explore the perceptions of elementary school principals experiencing the Black and Hispanic reading achievement gap at the fourth grade level. Specifically, this case study focused on the effect of ELL strategies on Hispanic ELL students' reading achievement, and the perceived benefits of systemic on-going professional development on the use of ELL strategies to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. The participants were comprised of five principals of large, Title I, ELL schools in the Northeast School District. The data collection process included one focus group and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. A summary of the finding for the two research questions provided through an explanation of the major themes developed from information communicated by participants during the interviews. The remainder of this section explores each theme in detail using specific participant responses, and is guided by the focus group and interview questions. In order to maintain the anonymity of each participant as follows: Principal 1; Principal 2; Principal 3; Principal 4; and Principal 5.

The main research questions guiding this project study were: What is the perceived impact of ELL strategies on the reading assessment levels of Hispanic ELL students and how do principals perceive the benefits of systemic, on-going professional development on the use of ELL strategies to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap? The data analysis process yielded three themes, instructional strategies and professional development. Further analysis of the data produced the following sub themes: (a) ELL instructional strategies; (b) teacher preparedness; and (c) professional development. These research findings will be discussed based on the participants' responses to the following sub questions from the interviews.

1. Explain how current ELL strategies impact Hispanic student achievement in reading. What specific instructional strategies have your teachers used to move reading student achievement with Black students?
2. Describe the differences between the ways in which teachers deliver instruction to Standard English language learners (ex. Black students) and English language learners (ex. Hispanic students) during the early childhood grades? How does this impact vocabulary growth?
3. Prior to hiring, do you feel teachers were prepared to serve students who are simultaneously learning English and academic content? How has this affected the reading achievement of your Black and Hispanic students?
4. What systemic professional development is needed for administrators and teachers to effectively and equitably, deliver reading instruction to Hispanic and Black students? What would be the model for this professional development? How frequently should it take place? How will implementation be monitored? The research findings from the

data have been presented below by identifying the sub question from the interviews, a summary of the themes that emerged, and finally participants' responses as evidence of the theme.

Data was collected from the participants' responses to focus group and semi-structured interview questions. After transcribing, I reviewed each participant's responses for commonalities. I began the coding process by reviewing each transcript for keywords or phrases from the focus group and semi-structured interview questions. This resulted in 13 different codes. Due to the repetitive nature, I then condensed the number of codes based on commonalities within the principals' responses to three major themes (instructional strategies, lack of teacher preparedness, and professional development) that included a minimum of two and a maximum of four subthemes

### **Interview Findings on Theme A: Instructional Strategies**

The first set of sub questions for this project study explored the principals' perceptions on the impact of ELL strategies on Hispanic ELL reading achievement and the instructional strategies currently used to enhance Black SEL reading achievement. Through the coding process, the analysis of participants' responses revealed the instructional strategies as a major theme and *ELL instructional strategies*, and the *Balanced Literacy Model* as sub themes. The principals interviewed shared similar ELL instructional strategies that have impacted Hispanic ELL reading student achievement in their schools. Principal 1 provided observations of the effects of ELL instructional strategies on the reading achievement of Hispanic ELL students:

ESOL teachers will provide vocabulary strategies to General Education teachers and students to help students that will help those students master those words, and will help

them attack the text in an easier way, more effective way. By the ESOL teacher coming in and modeling those strategies, the students are able to better understand the concept, and master the skills that they're learning. The students are definitely able to show better mastery than if they wouldn't have had those strategies. Most likely the students wouldn't have shown that level of understanding.

Similarly Principal 4 and Principal 5 expressed the positive influence of ELL strategies in their schools. Principal 4 stated:

When teachers are implementing ELL best practices such as visual learning techniques, hands-on learning techniques, discussion techniques it allows the Latino learners to become more engaged with the activity and become more engaged with the learning. Also, when teachers get students opportunities to connect their learning to what they already know, it allows students to remember and allows students to retain information, to transfer it into other learning.

Principal 5 agreed with this and included: "When teachers are using realia, real-life experiences, and visuals with their ELL students it helps them to better tap into their native language and connect it with English."

Principal 3 and Principal 4 expressed that ELL instructional strategies, language acquisition, and small group instruction training for teachers would positively effect their Hispanic ELL students in reading. Principal 3 explained:

My ELL students are working on beginning sounds and they're working on environmental print. I think that, just teachers in general, just not ESOL teachers, but general education teachers, they need to have more strategies, there needs to be more

classes that really help teachers understand that our ESOL children aren't at a deficit, it's just that they don't speak the language. We see these particular children needing that hands-on, needing chunky, needing that experience that they can make those connections with because a lot of times that's what they're missing. They're missing the background knowledge, they're missing some real-world experiences, or they have some real world experiences and they don't know how to connect it to what they're doing in school.

Principal 2 added to the discussion through an explanation of the inclusion of ELL instructional strategies in the general education classroom via small group instruction. In addition, Principal 2 included the importance of language acquisition through phonics skills and vocabulary. Principal 2 stated:

We use a push in model for our students and so our ELL teachers go in and they plan with the teachers and they develop how they will work with them in the classroom. We do a lot of small group instruction within the classroom. We use these small groups to work on a lot of the lower-level phonic skills and you know sight words and word recognition and things like that.

All five principals provided examples of the different types of ELL instructional strategies that are moving student achievement in their schools. Although each principal had a slightly different perspective on the specific strategies that are working for the Hispanic students enrolled in their school, the commonality throughout was the positive effect of ELL instructional strategies on Hispanic ELL students' reading achievement.

The balanced literacy model was another subtheme uncovered during the data analysis. The Balanced Literacy Model is the foundation of the reading curriculum in the Northeast

School District. This model ensures that daily reading instruction includes three major components; reading, writing, and word work (Community Research Partner, 2014). The principals in this project study provided various instructional strategies and tools currently used with Black SEL students, however all directly correlated to the components of the Balanced Literacy Model. Principal 1 and Principal 2 discussed how their teachers use discussions and visual tools as a way to help instruct Black SEL students in reading. Principal 1 stated:

We currently use extended discussion so having turns and talks, think-pair-share that has allowed the students to verbalize, their thinking, the understanding. The teacher is able to check for understanding and address misconceptions, or add on, or reteach, or able to see that the students are actually getting it and now they're ready to move on, or make meaning of the conversation or questions more rigorously. We also use scaffolding so providing things like graphic organizers, any additional tools like that has definitely helped them. Also visual aids and pairing them with a peer... those have been strategies that Black students are able to use to develop a better a better understanding and able to apply the skills that they're learning.

Principal 2 stated:

We use a lot of think-pair-share with our students. We use a lot of graphic organizers with our students and so they do that both whole group and both small group with all different types of skills. We are really trying to get kids to be able to hold discussions so we use a lot of discussion starters.



Principal 2 also included the use of interactive word walls in her school as a way to help Black SEL students with vocabulary or the Word Work component of Balanced literacy. Principal 2 stated:

Whereas word walls were just kind of there on the wall, we're trying to do more interactive word walls, that's been at the primary grade levels. We're still using a lot of visual cues within a classroom with African-American students. We strive to incorporate and make sure that the room is very print rich, there's lots of vocabulary and there's an emphasis on that all the time, every day, in every content area.

Principal 3 discussed the use of Balanced literacy through the lens of supporting below grade level Black SEL students in reading. The principal further explained the importance of phonics or Word Work (a Balanced literacy component), and building background knowledge to assist students with the ability to access texts through independent decoding of words. Principal 3 also shared the uses Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) to provide Black/SELs with daily reinforcement of foundational reading skills found in the Balanced Literacy Model.

We're starting at the basics and it allows them in a 30 minute session every single day, to really work on basic skills like sounds, grammar, familiar reads, every single day to one build up their stamina, to build their comprehension, and to also make them feel comfortable with reading. So, they work on phonics, they work on writing, they are introduced to a new book, and they are looking at words, and chunking words and looking at beginning sounds and ending sounds. So it's a mixture of reading. The teacher also has to give running records every other day. We also see these particular children needing that hands-on, needing chunky, needing that experience that they can make those

connections with because a lot of times that's what they're missing. They're missing the background knowledge, they're missing some real-world experiences, or they have some real world experiences and they don't know how to connect it to what they're doing in school.

PD's responses correlated with the other principals in regards to the importance of the Word Work component in the Balanced Literacy Model, but was the only principal to include the importance of parent literacy on Black SELreading achievement.

We provide our African American students with vocabulary building in order to provide academic language for our African American learners with reading comprehension. With our African American learners it's important that we engage their parents into what we do as far as literacy. So we hold a lot of literacy family nights for our African American families in order for our African American families to support their students at home as well.

Principal 5 communicated the importance of Black/SELs receiving not only vocabulary instruction, but also consistent exposure to realia during small group instruction. Both of these instructional strategies are encompassed with the Balanced literacy model through Word Work and Guided Reading respectively.

I think those students need more explicit vocabulary instruction, along with realia, along with visuals. We use realia with our students. We connect as much education as we can with real life experiences. We provide them with opportunities to build their background knowledge. We also give them a lot of small group instruction and we cater to the various

learning styles. It is very important that we are giving those students some small group instruction and just reiterating those things constantly with them.

The participating principals provided a variety of strategies their teachers have used to move the student achievement of Hispanic ELL and Black SEL students. Although they listed individual instructional strategies, there was a consistent focus on ELL instructional strategies and Balanced literacy. Within each sub theme all principals discussed the importance of phonics, decoding, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary, which is all encompassed in language acquisition instruction.

The second set of sub questions explored principals' perceptions on the differences in instructional strategies used with Black SEL and Hispanic/ELL students during the early childhood grades. Early childhood grades were defined for principals as Pre-Kindergarten through Kindergarten. The participating principals were then asked to explain the effect on vocabulary growth. The coding process continued to provide instructional strategies that fell within the two sub themes ELL Instructional Strategies and Balanced literacy for Hispanic ELLs and Black/SELS respectively. Overall, there was a consensus that ELL instructional strategies positively effect vocabulary growth in Hispanic ELL students.

Of the five principals interviewed, four expressed a difference in the instructional strategies used in the early childhood grades for SEL and ELL students. Principal 1 shared the observation of question scaffolding and building background knowledge to assist students with understanding vocabulary within texts.

The major strategies have to allow for that discussion, scaffold the objectives, provide that vocabulary or build that background, and even though I feel those are more ELL

strategies, they had definitely helped our African-American or black students as well.

This has definitely impacted them because we do have a lot of Black students that come, and they don't have a lot of language acquisition, and they don't have the vocabulary. In our classrooms they participate in the Balanced Literacy Model, but benefit from the ELL strategies implemented for their Hispanic peers.

Principal 1 discussed the effect of ELL instructional strategies on Black SEL student achievement in the early childhood grades, with a specific focus on indirect benefits to Black SEL students. Principal 3, Principal 4, and Principal expressed similar observations, however the responses were specifically categorized into Hispanic ELL instructional strategies and Black SEL instructional strategies. Principal 3, Principal 4, and Principal 5 all stated that ELL instructional strategies such as the use of visuals, phonics, and vocabulary work were used with Hispanic ELLs at the early childhood level in their schools. On the other hand, instructional strategies from the Balanced Literacy Model such as small group instruction and discussions were identified as being used with Black SEL students.

Principal 3 shared the views of Principal 1 in regards to the there being a difference in ELL and SEL instructional strategies, but focused on the effect of the use of visual aids.

The differences would be that they are really trying to utilize a lot of visual. So they are giving them the words, with a picture and/or video. So they trying to really tap into all of the different learning styles so they can make you know those connections whereas in a standard class they may use it, but they may not focus on it as much as if it's an ESOL classroom. Because students are able to see the word, see the picture associated with the word, see the word in action, they're able to build a better understanding of what that

word means of and being able to really use it like in their writing in their speaking and in their every day of interaction. So it really assists in just building their vocabulary, building their understanding, building their speaking ability, their writing ability, their reading ability so being able to hear it, see it, touch it really pushes them to the next level.

Principal 4 also acknowledged a difference in ELL and SEL instructional strategies and provided similar information regarding the importance of visual aids.

I believe that teachers who teach non-English language learners teach differently than teachers who have to teach English language learners. The differences include using visuals in instruction. So you would see a lot of charts, pictures, technology usage, hands-on activities, colors, students engaging in lesson versus with non-ELL students wouldn't see as many of those visual aids. Also non-ELL teachers would not have to spend as much wait time, and would provide more opportunities to discuss with a partner, group work, and more opportunities for small groups. In my school in particular, this impacts vocabulary growth because in order for students to comprehend, they must have a baseline academic vocabulary. So in order for the teachers to be able to teach the strategies and skills, the students must know the meaning of the words and must be able to know the point of the lesson. Therefore the teachers have to do a lot of background building and prior knowledge connection in order to build on the vocabulary for the students.

Principal 5 responded similarly to the other participants regarding the use of visuals, but also included the need for realia when working with Hispanic ELL students.

In the early childhood grades, is definitely building a lot of background knowledge, through the use of realia, through the use of visuals, and things of that nature. Connecting everything that you do to visuals to realia helps ELL primary students. Actually reiterating the sounds, letters, sight words, although that is something we do with the General Ed population, it is really important with our ESOL students. At our school in particular, it's very important because a lot of our students come from areas where their primary language is an indigenous language, so it's very disconnected from English. So they need a lot of those pictures, and a lot of that realia in order for them to really grasp the concept because the sights and sounds are not enough. So I think that is the most important, that real life, that background knowledge, and reiteration, constantly teaching the same skills over and over again. I think it tremendously impacts the vocabulary growth. If they're exposed to it constantly in various ways, they're able to make those connections. I think that ELL strategies would definitely impact not only Black students' reading ability, but also going a step further with their comprehension. I think sometimes we do a great job of giving students the ability to phonetically, or sound out words, identify sight words, and they are able to read, but I think the next step further is "I can sound this word out, I see the diagraphs, I see the rime and onset here however, I don't really know what this word means." So vocabulary instruction and strategies to unlock unknown words will definitely help our students more.

In summary the participants' responses indicated that ELL Instructional strategies have been the foundation of Hispanic ELL students' daily instruction. This instruction has positively impacted the vocabulary growth and reading proficiency of Hispanic ELL students as well.

Instructional strategies from the Balanced Literacy Model are implemented for Black/ELL students in each school. Currently, the impact on reading student achievement demonstrates the need for additional strategies to enhance the reading achievement of Black/SELS.

### **Interview Findings on Theme B: Lack of Teacher Preparedness**

The third set of sub questions focused on the teacher preparedness to work with Hispanic ELL and Black SEL students and the effect on reading achievement. Through the coding process, the theme lack of teacher preparedness was consistent in all responses. The sub themes identified were barriers contributing to the theme; the *fixed mindset of in-service teachers* and *ill-prepared novice teachers*. All of the principals interviewed explained that their novice teachers were not prepared to work with Hispanic ELL or Black/ELL students prior to being hired. Principal 1 stated:

To be honest no, I don't think they were prepared. They would rely a lot on our English language learner teachers, our ELL teachers. I feel that my recent graduates were ready to teach to the you know general education child whose English was their first language, but really didn't have any background or training on how to differentiate and teach that same level and same rigor to our ELL students.

Principals 2, 3, 4, and 5 shared the concern regard the lack of teacher preparedness.

Principal 2 stated:

No. No. I think coming in, I think people already have an idea of what they feel like is appropriate when coming into an ESOL setting, but it's not until you get in, and you start doing the work that you realize that what you thought it was, is something completely different.

Principals 3 shared:

No! I really believe that our universities and colleges are not preparing our teachers to work in a diverse setting. They are really struggling with thinking about how to differentiate this instruction. Although our district has provided a curriculum, that's like a baseline, a lot of our children are still below the baseline. So, teachers are really struggling with how to make this different. We need to create a program for our upcoming and future teachers to help them understand that children that are coming from different backgrounds need different stuff. So absolutely we're failing our teachers in those realms because when they get placed at schools like mine, they don't have those strategies to quickly try and transfer into another skill so no, teachers are not prepared.

Principal 4 stated:

No not at all. I believe so because many of our incoming teacher candidates were not given the proper field experiences prior to becoming a teacher that allowed them to work with African American students or English language learners. A lot of the coursework that our candidates experienced did not require them to have practice with differentiating and creating engaging lessons for ELL or African American students.

Principal 5 responded:

In some instances I think that teachers are very much prepared, especially teachers who have received ESOL training prior to coming to our school. Teachers who have taught in diverse settings are able to be more culturally sensitive and culturally competent.

However, unfortunately I have not been able to secure teachers for every position in this



school that have had ESOL preparedness, are prepared to teach ESOL, or are truly ready or have been equipped with the skills that are truly needed to teach our ESOL students.

The principals' perspectives regarding teachers' preparedness to work with students learning English and academic content simultaneously focused on novice teachers, specifically those that recently entered the field of education from undergraduate studies. Principals 1, 2, and 3 not only expressed an issue of lack of preparedness in novice teachers, but also a fixed mindset in veteran teachers. Principal 1 stated:

My veteran teachers always feel like I have to lower the rigor, I have to water down, and make it easier, take it one or two grade levels behind in order to teach it to them and so definitely that showed that they didn't have the training, or the appropriate professional development to teach them that.

Principal 2 stated:

My more veteran teachers are teachers that have been here for a long time. So they've been here 20 years, some 30 years, and so they came in during a time when the population was not what it is now. So, they really haven't gone through the training to be equipped to service the kids that are here now versus the kids those were here 20 years ago. So my new teachers that come in, they all go through Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, we had someone from the ESOL Department come in and do a weekly teaching reading and writing to ESOL students so a lot of my new teachers went to that training. My new teachers are young and eager and want it, so you can tell them they are going to training and they will do it. Whereas my veteran teachers it takes a little bit more to get them on board. They have to see how the professional development is

going to benefit them. So I've had some veteran teachers that are on board and have done the SIOP training and have done the trainings after school and I have others that are 20 – 30 years in and the mindset is so difficult to change. Both personally and because they are coming from a time “when I was here there wasn't a lot of Hispanic and African American students.” The population is totally different now so it's almost like I shouldn't have to change, people need to adapt to how I teach. So we try to do a lot of professional development during staff meetings or during collaborative planning, but staff meetings are twice a month and one of those months we try to do other things and then that once a month that's for professional development. that's it until the next month unless you're doing something during collaborative planning but that intense professional development we just don't have the time in-house to do as much as we need to do to get everybody where they need to be.

Principal 3 provided similar evidence regarding the veteran teachers at School 3:

It's really interesting when you're looking at your more seasoned teachers, it depends on when they came. So I could be a seasoned teacher and I've been in for 50 years, and a seasoned teacher and I've been teaching for 20 years, or even 10. The mindsets of what kids can and cannot do, it can be really difficult for some teachers to really understand that some of our traditional approaches to instruction really doesn't meet the needs of our children today. So you really have to approach them in a manner that you're not degrading them, but letting them know that we got to change our practice, that we really need to look at how our kids are today, and what they really need now. And that requires you to really think outside your box, so that is really difficult. It tends to be a little bit

easier with teachers who have been in the transition of one school house, one row, one way of teaching because they been in that transition putting the needs of kids first. But with your veteran teachers you just really have to let them know these are the expectations, and that if you are going to continue to be an education, we have to really move towards what the expectations are, or they may have to consider something else. So you really have to be strategic on how you approach some of our veteran teachers. Let them know that I still care about you, but I care about students and their success even more it can be challenging, but it can be done.

In summary, all five participants indicated that novice teachers were not prepared to develop lesson plans or deliver instruction to students who are simultaneously learning English and academic content. The principals' responses were also the same in regards to the negative effect novice teacher preparedness has had on vocabulary growth in Black/SELs and Hispanic ELLs. In addition, Principals 1, 2, and 3 also expressed concern regarding veteran teachers' abilities to deliver instruction to Black/SELs and Hispanic ELLs. A fixed mindset was the common contributing factor identified in their responses.

### **Interview Findings on Theme C: Professional Development**

The third set of sub questions identified the current needs for systemic professional development in the Northeast School District. Through the process of coding the participants' responses, three sub themes were identified: (a) *ELL Instructional Strategies*; (b) *Cultural Proficiency*; and (c) *professional development models*. Participants all discussed consistency and accountability however, this was discussed in conjunction with their responses regarding models and therefore will be included below in the sub theme *professional development models*.

Each principal expressed the importance of professional development on ELL instructional strategies for teachers and principals. There was a consensus on the idea that ELL strategies are good instructional strategies that benefit both Hispanic ELL and Black SEL students. Principal 1 stated:

So the type of professional development I think is key, that all teachers receive training on successful English language learner strategies. I think that it definitely benefits both like in second language learners not only Hispanic, but any student that is acquiring the language because with ELL, they're looking at different strategies that are going to help. I feel that when you bring those ELL strategies in you're helping all of the children. So I think that's definitely a PD I think will benefit all the teachers that are teaching in schools where you have a majority English language learners as well as Black students. I feel that everyone will benefit, both administrators and teachers will benefit from strategies that focus on how to close the achievement gap between our English language learners, which will also help our Black students and their peers in more affluent schools.

Principal 3 and Principal 5 discussed the use of ELL instructional strategy professional development through the use of the Shelter Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP).

Principal 3 specified:

I feel like the same strategies that we are using for ESOL students also apply to our African-American students, even though they speak the language, but sometimes we also have those gaps with the vocabulary and not really understanding what those words actually mean and how to use them in context. I think that schools should also implement the Shelter Instruction Observation Protocol, which is SIOP. It includes many best

practices that are very beneficial to both ESOL students and could also be beneficial to African-American students. So from SIOP to resources that deal with at risk African American students, I think that those would be some really good programs that would definitely help.

Principal 3 provided the following summary as a response:

I feel like the same strategies that we are using for ESOL students also apply to our African-American students. Even though they speak the language, sometimes they also have those gaps with the vocabulary. They don't really understand what words actually mean and how to use them in context. So the District really needs to invest in, or share the wealth with General Education teachers. They should receive the same kind of training that are ESOL teachers are receiving and the accessibility to all the resources that they receive. General Education teachers as well as the administrators should have access to all that information.

Principal 5 shared the same sentiment: "I think that schools should also implement the Shelter Instruction Observation Protocol which is SIOP, which includes many best practices that are very beneficial to both ESOL students and could also be beneficial to African-American students."

Principal 5 also stated:

I think we all need to know the best practices for ESOL. I like to call it ESOL 101, just the basics, just what do we need to do because ESOL best practices can be utilized with any student to help them be successful. Basic ESOL strategies, teachers understanding the WIDA standards, the "Can Do" descriptors that go along with each level and teachers

understanding what behaviors should be expected from those different students. I think that will definitely help us to help our children better.

Principal 4 shared:

ELL best practices need to be taught throughout school systems and school sites. When I think about linguistic learners, I think about a student may have a dialect that could be from let's say he's English speaking, but he could have an African dialect and the teachers would need to have training around work with students with different dialects. I believe that our District needs to provide professional development around best practices for ELL learners. I believe that our teachers need professional development around vocabulary acquisition and language and linguistic acquisition and that can be for ELL learners and African American students. I feel like the same strategies that we are using for ESOL students also apply to our African-American students, even though they speak the language but sometimes we also have those gaps with the vocabulary and not really understanding what those words actually mean and how to use them in context.

Principal 2 explained:

I think there should be more professional development offered by the ESOL Office around what that looks like. I think our ESOL teachers need to be trained more, by the ESOL Department on ESOL instructional strategies and how those things can be implemented in the classroom. I think our ESOL teachers and General Education teachers need Professional Development on what does a good push in program look like and what does a good pullout program look like. There are some ESOL teachers that might not

need to be ESOL teachers because they don't have the background knowledge around what is an ESOL learner, how do they learn, and what strategies are most effective.

Cultural proficiency professional development was identified as a need for teachers (novice and veteran) and administrators. Each principal believed that schools in the Northeast School District would provide higher quality education if they had a cultural understanding of the students they service. Principal 1 stated: "I believe that cultural proficiency training needs to first take place for classroom teachers and specialists in order for teachers, and educators to learn how to learn about different cultures and how to integrate cultures into instruction."

Principal 2 expressed a similar perspective:

First it's important for us to just learn, to do professional development around, just culturally how do we support Hispanic and African American students. Because I think sometimes we forget that there is a culture with that, and we have to learn that culture in order to figure out how to best meet their needs and best instruct them. So definitely, something to teachers about the culture of Hispanic and Black or African Americans, and that link with education and the importance of education.

Principal 3 shared the need for systemic professional development on cultural proficiency versus using outside sources:

I feel that there are many other organizations like Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) that has lots of courses that teachers can take. Of course you have to pay for it, but they are very, beneficial because they focus on at risk African-American boys or Hispanic ELL students. They help teachers understand that our minority students are can be very successful, we just learn differently, that we need

different things and that if we're going to talk about differentiating instruction we have to really know how our minority students actually learn. How we actually engage in text and what some of our root causes are, and this is why we're falling behind, and this is how we catch you up.

Principal 4 explained the need for educators' cultural proficiency as follows:

I strongly agree with cultural competency being a mandatory training for all schools, regardless of their populations. I believe that cultural proficiency training needs to first take place for classroom teachers and specialists in order for teachers, and educators to learn how to learn about different cultures and how to integrate cultures into instruction. Then I believe that cultural leadership needs to be taught to administrators and to central office employees in order for our leaders to know how to lead teachers to integrate culture proficiency into instruction.

The responses from Principal 5 coincided with the other principals' responses:

I believe that cultural proficiency training needs to first take place for classroom teachers and specialists in order for teachers, and educators to learn how to learn about different cultures and how to integrate cultures into instruction. Then I believe that cultural leadership needs to be taught to administrators and to central office employees in order for our leaders to know how to lead teachers to integrate culture proficiency into instruction. I think that our District really needs to focus on a systemic training, not necessarily mandatory for every school, but where we are addressing the needs of our ESOL newcomers. This is a population that I also think is not touched. They come to the



country and they are just put into a general education classroom, without getting those foundational skills. But I also think that that could also be for student who have broken or have interrupted education or traumatic experiences. So this could actually, the newcomer model could actually be used for other populations who've had similar situations and maybe just don't have that language barrier.

The consistent systemic professional development topics expressed by the principals were ELL instructional strategies and cultural proficiency. There was a common request among the principals' for an ongoing model implementation model in the Northeast School District. First and foremost, each principal shared the need for consistency. Second, they wanted a model where there was instruction, action-research, reflection, and a group think tank for sharing successes and challenges. There were various methods for monitoring that were shared, but all lead to a similar agreement of how to monitor the implementation.

Each principal shared their frustration regarding the lack of consistency in current systemic professional development and stated that anything implemented in the future should be ongoing throughout the school year. Principal 1 explained the need for on-going professional development on ELL instructional strategies.

Specifically Principal 1 expressed:

I think that it should be done on a consistent basis and it should be back mandatory because if you want that to be a systemic changes and see all of our ESOL schools succeed then it can't be optional for some schools to opt out of it. I think that it should be everyone, it should be on a monthly basis, people in central office content leads or ELL leads that will go into the schools and work with the ESOL teams if there's one already in

place to launch you know that professional development and say okay every second Thursday this what we're going to do.

Principal 2 shared:

If everybody had the same professional development, no matter where you go you will be able to service those kids because everybody's got the same professional development. When I think about how often systemic professional development should take, I think it depends on how deep you're going. So if you're really trying to dig deep. This should be something that occurs once a week. I don't know how you do that with so many people in the District. So I don't know if that means biweekly, once a month, but it needs to be something that you go and do it and bring back something that shows evidence of. So that you can see if you're growing, or did I just get the information and go back and it just sits in a file cabinet somewhere and I never go back to it.

Principal 3 stated:

It's an ongoing cycle, it's not something you do quarterly. It really needs to be something that you know where you're in the work constantly. What we have now is not consistent. It is really sad to say, that I don't think that as a District we've really truly had that focus. It's like the umbrella, this is what you can do with your ESOL students, or this is what you can do with your at-risk African-American males, but to say that as a District, that really, truly has a high ESOL population and nearly 80% African-American, that we really truly concentrate on strategies that really work for our minority students.

Principal 4 explained the importance of mandatory professional development implemented with fidelity: "I believe our county offers plenty of professional development however I don't believe

that the professional development is done with fidelity, or I don't believe anything is mandatory.”

Principal 5 stated: “A training should go on throughout the school year, possibly four – eight times a year.”

The models for implementation suggested by each principal are comparable as well. The principals wanted professional development sessions that provide: (1) participants with detailed instruction; time for classroom implementation and reflection; sharing of successes, challenges, and brainstorming during sessions, and monitoring via walkthroughs. Principals 1 and 5 stated the need for the professional development with focus on the needs of individual schools:

Principal 1 explained:

First I think it needs to be targeted, so looking at the schools where you have a majority Hispanic ELL and Black population. I think that at these schools it should be everyone. It should be on a monthly basis and people in central office, content leads or ELL leads that will go into the schools and work with the ESOL teams if there's one already in place to launch that professional development and say okay every second Thursday this what we're going to do. And then at the same time the monitoring can be things like learning walks, ideally unannounced I don't think all of the schools need it. They have to look at look at the population, the demographics of each school, and see which ones will qualify for these professional development initiatives.

Principal 5 stated:

I think we should have some say so and be able to tweak it to some extent with support from the ESOL Department because they're the experts. I think that there should be a

training that goes on throughout the school year, possibly four to eight times a year. The sessions should also have an opportunity to apply, and then reflect on the practices they've learned about and have an opportunity for administration or the ESOL Department to come in and monitor those things.

Principal 5 also spoke about the importance of buy-in.

I think at the beginning of both trainings there should be buy-in from each school as to what cultural proficiency will look like in this school, and what ESOL best practices will look like in this school, and that checklist can be used to monitor those classrooms and monitor those teachers as they go in.

Principals 2, and 3 agreed with the model discussed by Principals 1 and 5.

Principal 2 suggested the following model for professional development:

It should be something where you go to training, you get this information, and now you're going to try that in your classroom. You come back and you talk about that, you share examples of what you did, and you get feedback from other people about this work in your classroom and what you're going to try next time. Almost like a focus group, but maybe not necessarily. I don't know how you do that with so many people in the District, but it needs to be something where it's not you just get it and you go, but you have to go do something and bring something back as evidence that you tried it. You have to discuss if it was effective, and if not get feedback from somebody else so you can go back and try it. So that you can see if you're growing, or did you just get the information and go back and it just sits in a file cabinet somewhere and you never go back to it.

Principal 3 explained:

Right now they have this model where they have Professional Development Lead Teachers (PDLTs) that go out, receive training, and they are supposed to turnkey it, but I don't know that it's effective as it needs to be. So maybe if there's a small cohort in your building that goes and receives this training and then they come back, they implement it, maybe have like two weeks to implement it as a school, and then go back and talk about. They explain this is what we learned, these are our findings, this was what was successful and then whoever is really overseeing it, assists the cohort in how to tweak it. They would have them talk about successes, failures, and how to tweak that. Then cohort would go back, implement it, collect data, and return back to the larger group with their results. So it's an ongoing cycle, it's not something you do quarterly. It really needs to be something that you know where you're in the work constantly, where you're always evaluating, reevaluating, implementing, and assessing. It really needs to be a small cohort of teachers, in your building, and not just one or two.

Principal 3 also shared a barrier to this method of implementation:

It's really hard especially if you have a school where you have 100 staff members like mine, and there are just two PDLTs, and they're also a classroom teacher. But if you're able to really focus in on maybe just the grade level chairs, or your leadership team they could be responsible for going to this training. If it's after school, then they stay for this training and they come up with a plan on how to really deliver that information to the staff. Then the staff is held accountable for implementing it, and administration has to go in and monitor through learning walks or walkthroughs. We would then collect that data,

and go back to the District and show the success of our learning. So, it's just an ongoing cycle.

### **Summary of Research Findings**

A review of the research findings as they relate to the focus group and interview questions provided meaningful information on the perspectives of principals of Title I, ELL, elementary schools and the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in reading at the fourth grade level. The data provided by the five participating principals contributed to the development of the project for this study. The findings from this study revealed that ELL instructional strategies have had a positive effect on Hispanic ELL students reading proficiency, while Balanced literacy instructional strategies used with Black/SELs has stagnated Black SEL students' progress in reading proficiency. The data also exposed a gap in teacher preparedness for both novice and veteran teachers. Finally, the principals' responses provided examples of preferred professional development models, with an exclusive focus on cultural proficiency and the use of ELL instructional strategies for ELL and SEL students.

The findings revealed that ELL instructional strategies have had a positive effect on Hispanic ELL student achievement in reading. Specifically, the principals stated that the focus on language acquisition provided students the ability to not only independently access vocabulary through phonics and phonemic awareness, but also the ability to truly comprehend vocabulary when reading independently. Language acquisition strategies permitted Hispanic ELL students to make meaning of the texts they are exposed to in reading and overall has increased their reading proficiency.

Balanced literacy was the dominant topic of discussion among the participating principals in regards to instructional strategies used with Black SEL students reading proficiency. Two principals discussed interventions used to enhance the reading achievement of below grade level Black/SELs. These interventions included the same strategies in the Balanced Literacy Model, however instructional delivery takes place in an additional 30-minute small group pullout setting. There was a consensus amongst all five principals that there is a need for additional strategies outside of Balanced literacy to increase Black SEL student achievement in reading.

The findings also showed that the lack of teacher preparedness is having a negative effect on the student achievement on those learning English and academic content simultaneously. Novice teachers are not prepared to service ELLs or SELs because they have not received instruction during their undergraduate work, or teacher preparation programs. Furthermore the findings suggest the lack of preparedness of veteran teachers as well. The principals attributed a fixed mindset regarding the changes in student demographics to veteran teachers willingness to participate in professional development that will enhance their instructional practices. Overall, the principals stated that they have included a tremendous amount of on-the-job training for all teachers at the individual school level and believe systemic professional development would be more beneficial.

The research findings also revealed a need for systemic professional development provided by the Northeast School District. Consistent systemic professional development was very important to each principal. Consistency was defined as the frequency of implementation as well as the topics covered. ELL Instructional Strategies and Cultural Proficiency were expressed as important areas to be covered systemically. Additional findings identified a model that

permitted administrators and teachers the opportunity to work in cohorts or focus groups; learn material from an ELL specialist; time to practice instructional strategies in their schools, time for reflection, time to share successes and challenges with the overall cohort, and time for reimplementation as needed. Although various methods of monitoring were mentioned, returning to the cohort to share the results of implementation and learning walks were the most prominent suggestions for monitoring this type of systemic professional development.

### **Validation**

The data collected in this project study was validated through member checking and peer debriefing. Providing each participant a copy of their individual responses from the focus group and semi-structured interviews to review completed the member checking process. In addition, participants were provided the themes that were interpreted from the data collected. The process of member checking allowed participants to ensure that the themes generated collectively from the common topics in each interview, clearly conveyed the overall experience and instructional professional development needs of principals in schools experiencing the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. Member checking was used to clarify participants' responses if needed, and to ensure the interpretations developed during the data analysis clearly represented the participants' perspectives. Based on the results of member checking, no discrepant information was reported by the participants.

Peer debriefing occurred through the assistance of a colleague within the Northeast School District. This colleague has received their doctorate from a local university. The coding process was very overwhelming because of the large amounts of data reviewed. The peer debriefer reviewed my interpretations to ensure that any bias as a principal in an ELL school was



not apparent in the analysis. This person also assumed the role of a sounding board during this time to help maintain focus and provided redirection to the research questions when confusion occurred. Overall, the peer debriefer questioned my methods, interpretations, and ensured that any interpretations were free of bias. Discussions with the peer debriefer also led to possible future research topics.

## Section 3: The Project

### **Introduction**

Section 3 of this project study provides an overview of the goals for this program once implemented successfully in a northeast school district. This project study is a systemic professional development plan on the use ELL instructional strategies with SEL students. Based on the data analysis in Section 2, a rationale is provided to support the need for professional development on the topics cultural proficiency and the use of ELL instructional strategies with SEL students. An explanation is provided to demonstrate how the connection between the literature reviewed and data collected led to the development of this professional development plan. The professional development plan is explained to provide specific information regarding the implementation timeline, on-going follow-up sessions, and how implementation will be monitored in schools. Section 3 ends with a detailed plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the plan, and next steps for the following school year. The plan begins with a detailed discussion of the learning targets, or goals for the professional development plan. These targets guide the overall structure of the systemic professional development plan. Appendix A includes the components needed to implement the plan, which includes, a syllabus of monthly readings and assignments. Appendix A also contains all documents used for orientation, needs assessments, session feedback, and evaluation of the professional development series.

### **Description and Goals**

This project study is a year-long, systemic professional development plan on using ELL strategies with SEL students. The plan is designed to provide Title I elementary schools in a northeast school district, servicing Black and Hispanic students, with the instructional strategies

needed to decrease the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in a northeast school district. The plan addressed the need for teacher and administrator professional development in the area of ELL instructional strategies and cultural competency. The project begins with an overall needs assessment of general education teachers in a northeast school district. The needs assessment was used to determine the current instructional strategies implemented to move Black students reading below grade level to proficiency. The assessment also provides the data needed to plan differentiated professional development based on teachers' and administrators' knowledge of ELL instructional strategies. The professional development strand will begin in June 2016 during the Northeast School District Leadership Institute and continue until June 2017.

### **Rationale**

A consistent theme throughout the data analysis was the need for consistent professional development in a northeast school district. In addition, the principals' responses developed a second theme around the positive effects of ELL instructional strategies and the need for additional instructional strategies to move the literacy academic achievement of struggling Black students. A year-long systemic professional development plan provides the opportunity for administrators and non-ELL teachers to learn, implement, and practice ELL strategies and operate as a think tank for using this information to differentiate instruction in general education classes for Black students as well. In Section 2, the principals interviewed expressed an overall concern regarding the need for professional development on ELL instructional strategies as a method for differentiating instruction for all students. The literature review that follows enhances the wealth of information gathered on the topic of the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in Section 2. The topics discussed provide additional information regarding the importance of

culture as medium for moving student achievement; specific ELL instructional strategies to increase students' access to independent reading and comprehension; and the theory guiding the instruction of adults. Overall, the project enhances the skillset of teachers and provides additional strategies to attack the issue of Black students performing below grade level in reading. The project not only provides instructional strategies, but also a professional learning community where teachers and administrators learn, apply, and reflect on their instructional experiences. This project will also serve as a problem-solving unit, where educators will work together to assist with editing instructional strategies to ensure instructional success, which leads to increased academic achievement. Finally, this project has the potential to be a foundation course for all new teachers in the Northeast School District, as well as a springboard for future professional development for seasoned teachers. Teachers mastering the concepts and demonstrating academic growth in Literacy in Black students can become future facilitators of this learning in their own schools, or at the district level.

### **Review of the Literature**

The findings of the study indicated that principals of large, Title I, ESOL schools are concerned about the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in their schools, the lack of cultural competency among pre-service and in-service teachers, and administrators, and the lack of consistent systemic professional development and monitoring of instructional strategies for Black SEL and Hispanic ELL students. Participants expressed a need for professional development that focuses on ELL instructional strategies for teaching reading to below grade level Black students. Professional development for administrators and teachers on the use of ELL instructional strategies will provide the additional culturally differentiated instructional strategies

that may increase Black student reading achievement on standardized assessments and throughout their lives.

The following literature review reports on the most current research focused on research regarding professional development for educators. A review of the literature begins with a brief overview of adult learning theory and the correlation to social constructivism. Following that are the themes identified by research participants during the data collection process regarding best practices for professional development in large school systems. The review ends with a discussion of web-based professional development. The literature review was conducted through the Walden University Library generating scholarly sources from various databases. The key word search terms included: *adult learning theory, cultural proficiency, professional development in education, effective professional development, and professional learning communities in education*. Only peer-reviewed literature within the past 6 years was considered for this project study. Sources older than 6 years were included only for the theoretical framework when referenced. The literature review begins a discussion of adult learning theory and its correlation to social constructivism.

### **Social Constructivism and Adult Learning Theory**

Social constructivism “maintains that knowledge is the result of social interaction and language” (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008, p. 59). Lev Vygotsky is considered one of the pioneers of social constructivism due to his belief in social interaction as an essential segment of learning (Huang, 2002; Powel, & Kalina, 2009). Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development posits that “learning collaboratively with others, particularly in instructional settings” enhances development during the instructional process and permits “true learning” to occur (Daniels,

1996, p. 132; Lantolf & Thorne, 2000, p. 207). Although Vygotsky's work discussed pedagogy or methods of teaching children, his work correlates to andragogy or methods for educating adults. Both methods are grounded in social constructivism and emphasize that the learner own their learning and that instructional strategies include "experiential learning and problem solving approaches" (Huang, 2002, p. 34). The systemic professional development series designed as a result of this project study will provide participating principals the opportunity to learn in a face-to-face and online environment through discussions with their colleagues. In addition, participants will participate in experimental learning, through their implementation of the instructional strategies within their schools. ELL Instructional strategies will be discussed, questioned, and implemented with struggling Black readers throughout the series. Participants will further their learning by discussing the effect of the instructional strategies attempted and revise the approach based on needs identified during online discussions and physical meetings.

### **Effective Professional Development**

Student achievement is directly correlated to teacher quality (Bayar, 2014). The demand for highly qualified teachers has led to the coordination of professional development opportunities that enhance the practice of both novice and veteran educators (Bayar, 2014). Various methods of professional development exists; however, traditional methods such as "sit and gets" have not proven successful (Nashimura, 2014, p. 37). Effective professional development for educators must be meaningful and sustainable, and it must permit time for self-reflection (Domitrovich, Gest, Gill, Jones, & DeRousie, 2009). Effective professional development is grounded in participant "buy-in" (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011, p. 7). Once buy-in is established, "professional development must be delivered in a way that yields

direct impact on teacher practice” (Archibald, et al., 2011, p. 3). Finally, effective professional development permits all learners the opportunity for praxis and reflection (Stewart, 2014).

Educator buy-in alone does not ensure effective professional development. Learning Forward (2015) identified four pre-requisites that “reside where professional learning intersects with professional ethics” (p. 3). Efficacy is the underpinning of effective professional development (Learning Forward, 2015). In order for educators to ensure that all students are receiving a distinguished education, they must ground themselves in the life-long learning process, which begins with high quality professional development. In addition to a commitment to all students, educators must be “ready to learn” when participating in professional learning activities (Learning Forward, 2015). This permits the opportunity to build their instructional knowledge base through collegial interactions, which can “foster collaborative inquiry that enhances individual and collective performance” (Learning Forward, 2015, p. 3). Finally, professional learning must be differentiated to ensure that all participants can access the learning in a way that will move their overall instructional practice. Learning Forward (2015) stated that once these prerequisites are in place, professional learning activities aligned to school district visions, missions, goals, and schools’ needs can be developed.

Professional learning opportunities must provide educators with support and experiences that promote the use of assessment data to address the needs of diverse student populations (Archibald, et al., 2011). High quality professional development provides educators with a venue to develop their skillset in the use of data to implement linguistically and culturally responsive instructional practices (Archibald, et al., 2011). Learning Forward (2015) and Archibald, et al., (2011) listed the following as standards for effective professional development:

- Alignment to state, school district, and school standards and assessments.
- Expert leaders who cultivate skillset, develop, and establish support systems for professional learning.
- A mandated cycle for “prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources” (Learning Forward, 2015, p. 2).
- Instructional strategies that directly reflect the core content and content-specific instructional strategies.
- Inclusion of human learning theories and research.
- Opportunities for implementation and practice of the new instructional strategies.
- Opportunities for collegial collaboration.
- Embedded follow-up and continuous feedback from the facilitator.
- Employs research on change and the strategies needed to sustain professional learning activities over time.

Currently the Northeast School District’s Coherence Framework focuses on Literacy (Community Partner, 2014). In addition, all schools in the district have been charged with moving student achievement on the Scholastic Reading Inventory, an independent reading comprehension assessment for students in grades two – eight. This project study aligns to the district goals, of developing educator capacity, which will in turn ensure proficient readers at the elementary level, as an effort to decrease future dropout rates by ninth grade. In order to ensure high quality and effective professional learning activities, the standards listed above will be used to design each session in this professional development series.



## **Cultural Proficiency**

The demographics of urban public schools have continuously diversified since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Ball, 2009). However, the neighborhoods of these urban, public school students generally remain segregated, and their teachers lack the preparation required to educate students from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Ball, 2009). Culturally proficient teachers and administrators begin with a superintendent serving as culturally proficient role model (Wright & Harris, 2010). It is pertinent a school district superintendent facilitate student achievement by providing pre-service and in-service educators professional development that fosters the growth of an optimistic and diverse mindset (Keiser, 2009). Culturally proficient professional development educates administrators and teachers on how to limit bias and stimulate equity within the classroom (Sheng, Sheng, & Anderson, 2011). Educators who take full advantage of cultural proficiency professional development and implement it in their schools are cognizant of cultural differences, and adapt pedagogy to differentiate daily instruction for the diverse groups of students they service (Sheng, Sheng, & Anderson, 2011). Overall, cultural proficiency refocuses the instructional strategies of teachers to ensure that the needs of all students are met regardless of cultural differences, and encourages an environment when students and teachers learn collectively (Beckett, 2011).

## **ELL Instruction**

Understanding the process of learning a second language is important for teachers and administrators because it is relevant to the learning of all students (Short, Vogt, & Eschevarria, 2008). Through the use of the multiple forms of language (oral, non-verbal, visual, and written) communication exists (Pandey, 2012). ELL instructional strategies entail listening, speaking,

reading, and writing skills, which are essential for literacy (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Academic contents builds on the foundation of basic language (Pandey, 2012). Students cannot be expected to perform on grade level if their “level of English proficiency is below what is needed to understand the instructions” of the assignments or assessments administered (Short, Vogot, & Eschevarria, 2008, p. 18). ELL instructional strategies provide students with the skills needed to access the grade level content necessary for progressing at each grade level. In order for teachers and administrators to understand the implementation of ELL instructional strategies, an overall comprehension of language acquisition is needed.

Language acquisition is the result of continuous “interactions between internal child factors and the environment” (Shatz & Wilkinson, 2010). Students who speak minority language can be greatly impacted educationally because they have had “fewer opportunities to develop and use” their home language within the majority language culture (Shatz & Wilkinson, 2010, p. 49). Teachers and administrators must understand language acquisition because of its connection to overall learning (Short, Vogot, & Eschevarria, 2008). In order for students to learn a language teachers must provide instruction that moves students’ to:

1. Understand the sounds, intonations, morphemes, phrases, sentences, varieties, and cultural meanings.
2. Speak clearly and in a culturally appropriate tone.
3. Demonstrate proficiency on grade-level content.
4. Read and write using correct grammar and spellings (Pandey, 2012).

Overall, teaching discourse (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and spelling) is imperative to language acquisition (Shatz & Wilkinson, 2010).

Baker et al. (2014) discussed four types of academic content and literacy instructional strategies for teachers of ELL students. The recommendations begin with a focus on the key areas of ELL instruction by providing strategies for vocabulary, content area oral and written instruction, structured opportunities to develop written language, and small group intervention. Vocabulary is the primary entryway for education (Marzano, 2010). A robust vocabulary “is an important part of language development and is essential to academic success” (Short, Vogot, & Eschevarria, 2008, p. 20). Successful students are comfortable with content-area vocabulary (August et al. 2009). To develop such learners, teachers must instruct students in the areas of “word learning, word awareness strategies, and in cognate recognition and use” (Short, Vogot, & Eschevarria, 2008, p. 20). In addition, students must be provided with multiple methods of exposure to vocabulary within context (Shatz & Wilkinson, 2010).

Baker et al. (2014) recommended educators “teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities” (p. 3). Specifically, teachers select five to eight words from a brief piece of on grade level texts that are necessary for understanding the texts and have “cross-language potential” (Baker et al., 2014, p. 17). The selected words are taught over time using various modalities such as speaking, listening, and writing. This provides student consistent exposure and word with the words throughout the learning process. Finally, teachers must provide “word-learning” strategies that develop their ability to independently use the context of a sentence, word parts, or cognates determine the meaning of a word (Baker et al., 2014).

Oral and written ELL instruction should be integrated into the various content areas students study. ELLs require visual support to understand daily communication within a

classroom (Haynes, 2007; Gunderson, 2009). Baker et al. (2014) suggested four instructional strategies to implement successful oral and written instruction. Visual tools such as short videos, and graphic organizers can be used to assist students with comprehending academic content. Videos provide an entryway for ELLs by providing the background knowledge needed to engage in discussions about the content (Baker et al., 2014). Graphic organizers allow teachers to scaffold instruction based on the instructional needs of students. They also assist students in identifying patterns or themes within written texts. The explicit instruction of content-specific vocabulary and academic vocabulary “ensures new words become part of students’ listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies” (Baker et al., 2014, p. 44). Daily opportunities for discussion provide ELLs time to rehearse conversational language, and also provides the teacher opportunities to gather data regarding students’ proficiency in the areas of understanding and processing. Finally, the use of writing activities with students enables the opportunity to demonstrate application of the skills and concepts (Baker et al., 2014).

This literature review provides the additional information needed to ensure a research-based professional development plan. Adult learning theory is used to ensure that all instructional strategies are appropriate for an audience of teachers and administrators. Effective professional development strategies are included to guarantee that the plan is developed using criteria proven to enhance the skillset of educators. The literature review in Section 2 discussed culturally relevant teaching, but did not include cultural proficiency and ELL instructional strategies. Both themes are pertinent to the development and implementation of the project study and therefore were included in the post data analysis literature review.

## **Implementation**

### **Potential Resources and Existing Supports**

The Northeast School District has recently developed an office dedicated to diversity affairs. This central office is a potential resource for this professional development plan. Currently the Northeast School District uses the Coherence Framework to create interdependence among the various aspects of the District as well as enhance understanding how each reinforce one another to enhance student achievement (Community Resource, 2014). At the core of this framework is literacy in the Northeast School District. This project study is key to the work of enhancing literacy levels of all students and therefore will have the full support of central office.

Another potential resource and supporter of this project study will be the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Office. The ESOL office will provide multiple forms of support for this professional development plan. As ESOL Instructional Specialists and mentor teachers are experts on ELL instructional strategies. These specialists can serve as facilitators of the professional development sessions, or can recommend distinguished ESOL teachers throughout the district that can serve in this capacity. Finally, Northeast School District ESOL department will be a source of materials. The first cohort of participants will be administrators and student of schools experiencing the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. Since these schools currently work with the ESOL Department, administrators will not have to allocate funding for the instructional materials used.

**Potential Barriers**

The two potential barriers to this project study may be funding and time. Funding for these professional development sessions may be a barrier. If the sessions are provided during the school day, funding will need to be provided to fund substitutes. The alternative of after school professional development will require funding for teacher stipends. However, the schools involved are Title I and if principals are aware of this training prior to completing their annual Student Based and Title I budgets, resources can be allocated at the school level to assist the school system with overall costs.

Administrators and teachers are consistently concerned about the limited amount of instructional time in a school day. There is also concern regarding the amount of time lesson planning consumes. Currently the Northeast School District maintains an approximately six hour and ten minute school day at the elementary level. This leaves very little time for teacher planning during the school day, unless principals have allocated funds for substitutes for monthly day-long collaborative planning. In addition, participation in monthly cohort professional development, the planning required to implement ELL instructional strategies, and the additional time needed during the literacy block to include these strategies all require additional time. Similar to the issue of funding, if principals are aware of need for substitutes for planning purposes prior to the submission of fiscal budgets, funds may be allocated during this time. The school system could also provide funds to assist with this systemic instructional improvement.

**Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

This set of professional development sessions are designed to enhance the instructional capacity of administrators and teachers charged with increasing the literacy proficiency levels of

below grade level Black students within their schools. Throughout the sessions, the cohort will gain an understanding of ELL strategies and their effective use during literacy instruction. The professional development sessions will be conducted once a month for approximately three and a half hours after school. Once a quarter, one after school monthly meeting will be replaced by a day-long session, which will last eight hours. Participants will be responsible for participating in ten sessions from July to the next June of one school year. A needs assessment will be administered to each participant two months prior to the first session. Responses will be used to determine any glaring topics that may have been overlooked in the development of the course.

The Northeast School District ESOL Department will participate in the hiring of two ESOL mentor teachers as session facilitators. Throughout the year, guest facilitators will lead sessions. Guest facilitators will be General Education teachers, proficient in the implementation of ELL strategies. They will share their methods of including ELL strategies during their daily Balanced literacy lessons; and progress monitoring. Although these facilitators are General Education teachers of predominantly ELL students, they will provide participants with an in-depth view of their use of ELL strategies with SELs as well.

ELL instructional strategies encompass a variety of areas. This year-long professional development session will include 11 sessions covering three major topics. The first three sessions will discuss cultural proficiency and culturally relevant teaching. The next four sessions will cover language acquisition skills necessary for phonics and phonemic awareness development. The final four sessions will provide instruction on academic vocabulary within content specific areas. Each session will begin with the cohort reviewing their reflections of previous implementation. Collaboratively the group will celebrate successes, and problem-solve to

alleviate challenges. Direct instruction from the facilitator will include group discussions and will conclude with time for the cohort to plan the implementation of strategies in their individual schools for the next month.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others**

Participation from numerous stakeholders will be needed to ensure the success of this professional development series. I will serve as the program coordinator. My responsibilities will include developing, monitoring, and maintaining the cohort Google site. This site will maintain the schedule of sessions, updates, and additional materials participants may find helpful. As program coordinator I will also provide monthly e-mail reminders regarding future professional development sessions, assignments, and expectations. The Northeast School District will require a liaison between the program and the district. As program coordinator, I will be responsible for this task. Meetings with Northeast School District executives will be held to discuss the initiation of the program, district level responsibilities, challenges, and successes. In order to collect data as evidence to support the success of the professional development session, I will observe all cohort sessions, review monthly feedback forms with facilitators and enhance sessions as necessary, and participate in learning walkthroughs with school-based cohorts to observe the teachers' instructional delivery.

The success of this professional development series is extremely dependent on the participants within the cohort and the facilitators. Administrators are responsible for modeling the expectation of attending all sessions, collaboratively planning with teachers during sessions and in the school, providing time for school-based cohort reflections and learning walkthroughs, and informally observing instructional practice and providing non-directive feedback. Teachers



are responsible for attending all sessions, openly participating in all collaborative planning and reflection sessions, consistently implementing the ELL instructional strategies in their classroom with struggling Black readers, and collecting and progress monitoring their students' literacy data throughout the school year.

The facilitator of this professional development series has the responsibility of planning engaging and informative sessions for the cohort. As an ELL Mentor Teacher in the Northeast School District, the facilitator serves as the expert in the room. They will be a consistent resource for the cohort on ELL instructional strategies. The effectiveness of each session will depend on the facilitator's preparedness. Although the program coordinator will assist with organizing the over all content for this professional development series, the facilitator is responsible for organizing materials for each monthly session, monitoring the cohort's Google question site throughout the month, and adapting the sessions to the needs of the participants. As each school designs their learning walkthroughs to gather data on their implementation of the ELL instructional strategies, the facilitator will assist with designing the learning walkthrough forms, and participate in the actual walkthroughs to ensure proficient implementation of ELL instructional strategies.

The Northeast School District has a major stake in this professional development series because it strives to close the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. District level approval will be required for many factors that will ensure the series will take place. The approval to partner with the Northeast School District ESOL Department is needed, to begin the process of selecting a facilitator or multiple facilitators for these professional development sessions. The district will ensure a location for monthly professional development sessions; provide refreshments for all

three and half hour sessions, and breakfast and lunch for all day long sessions. The district will also grant the program coordinator and facilitator access to each participating schools' data in the online assessment database.

### **Project Evaluation**

The overall goals of the evaluation are to determine how effective the professional development sessions are at enhancing the skillset of administrators and teachers in the area of instructional strategies that will close the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. The effectiveness of this project study will be monitored via a formative approach. At the conclusion of every professional development session, participants will be asked to complete a plus, delta, and appreciation feedback form. Participants will be asked to focus on their learning and their learning needs within the cohort. Based on this specific feedback each session will be altered to meet the needs of the participants. This will allow for consistent adjustments throughout the year that will provide an environment most conducive to adult learning.

District level literacy assessments are administered in October, January, and May. Participants will be required to bring their data from these District level assessments for review. Teachers of primary grades (K – 1<sup>st</sup>) will bring Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) data. Intermediate grade level teachers (2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>) will submit Scholastic Reading Inventory lexile scores. During these sessions, participants will discuss growth in student data, specific contributing factors, successes, and challenges. As a collective body the team will work with facilitators to discuss the additional information needed to ensure that the Black and Hispanic achievement gap is decreasing, while proficiency overall for both subgroups of students is increasing.

To date it has not been determined when state assessment data will be available. In previous years this data is available the summer preceding the school year. In addition, this data is generally only available to the principal and is embargoed until August of the next school year. Although principals and teachers are participating in this professional development, by law principals would not be permitted to release the state level data to the participating teachers until late August. Therefore a summative evaluation is currently not a feasible tool for evaluating the success or challenges of this project study. However, once the summative data is permitted for release, the cohort that is set to begin the second year of the systemic professional development session can use it.

There are many stakeholders in this project study, including the Northeast School District Executive Cabinet, Instructional Directors, principals, teachers, and students. Overall, the members of executive cabinet are concerned about student achievement. In the Northeast School District, the superintendent and members of the executive cabinet have identified literacy as the district-wide instructional focus. Specifically, the cabinet has implemented a Coherence Framework with literacy at the core, and evaluates the interdependence of various aspects of the school district (culture, systems, resources, stakeholders, and environment) reinforce and support the implementation of various instructional improvement strategies (Community Research Partner, 2015). The focus on enhancing the literacy proficiency levels of Black students in this district where they make up the majority of the students enrolled is critical. It is assumed that the Northeast School District executive cabinet will evaluate this program against its Coherence Framework to determine initial support and implementation, and future support and expansion.

## **Implication Including Social Change**

### **Local Community**

As the data in Tables 4 – 9 illustrate, there is a Black and Hispanic achievement gap at the school and district level in the Northeast School District. Principals in this study expressed the lack of consistent systemic professional development on instructional strategies to assist Black below grade level readers move to proficiency in literacy. Specifically, stated the positive correlation between Hispanic ELL students' receipt of ELL instructional strategies and higher literacy proficiency levels. This project study provides administrators and general educators with the additional instructional strategies needed to enhance the foundational reading skills of Black SELstudents.

Administrators and teachers in this Northeast state are required to renew their teaching certificate every six years. The Northeast School District can offer this professional development series to participants with a workshop pay option, or for credit based on the Northeast State Board of Education guidelines. All teachers in the Northeast School District must participate in professional development annually in order to fulfill the requirements for the observation process. Each teacher can document this professional development series for an entire year. Lesson planning documents, learning walkthrough recordings, and teacher reflections can serve as evidence of teacher full participation. Finally, principals can use this professional development series as an instructional focus for their school to improve overall literacy proficiency for Black SEL students.

### **Far-Reaching**

This project study has the potential to become an on-going series for current teachers in the Northeast School District. In order to develop novice teachers and provide proactive support to new teachers, this professional development series can be a part of a systemic New Teachers' Academy, or can be provided as a series for veteran teachers in search of increasing their instructional toolkit to better meet the needs of their students. Those successfully completing the series can; serve as mentors in their schools; facilitate future professional development series for the school system; as well as open their classrooms as models for systemic walkthroughs.

The Black and Hispanic achievement gap and the Black/White achievement gaps are not isolated issues to this Northeast School District. The Black/White achievement gap continues to be a national issue. In addition, the Black and Hispanic gap exists at the national level as evidenced by the data in Table 1 of this project study. This professional development series can be duplicated in other school districts to assist with both the Black and White and Black and Hispanic achievement gaps. This project study has potential to assist failing school systems increase student achievement by enhancing teacher instructional practices.

### **Conclusion**

Section 3 provides begins with an overview of a description and goals for this project study. Next a rationale is provided to explain why a systemic professional development plan is the best method for addressing the problem in this project study. Based on the data collected from the participating principals, a second literature review is provided to discuss themes not addressed in the Section 2 literature review (Adult Learning Theory, Effective Professional Development, and English language learner Instruction). An explanation of how this project

study will be implemented in the Northeast School District follows and includes potential supports and barriers that may affect the professional development series. The implementation subsection concludes with an explanation of the roles of all stakeholders and a description of how the project study will be evaluated. Section 3 ends this with an overview of how this project study will create social change within the local and far-reaching communities of education.

Section 4 of the research study discusses the strengths and limitations of the project. A reflection of my scholarly journey is discussed through multiple lenses such as scholarship, leadership, practitioner, and project developer. Section 4 will conclude the project study by focusing on its potential to impact social change in education, applications to current educational issues, and pathways for future research.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

Section 4 of this project study focuses on my learning as a reflective practitioner. Section 4 begins with an overview of this project study's strengths and limitations in addressing the problem of the Black and Hispanic achievement gap in literacy. An overview of my learning in regards to scholarship, project development, leadership, and change is provided. This is followed by an in-depth analysis of myself as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Section 4 concludes with a discussion of the project's potential impact on social change, and implications for future research.

### **Project Strengths**

Effective professional development is not only a high-quality experience, but is directly correlated to teacher practice (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011). This professional development series is designed to increase the instructional toolkit of general education teachers responsible for moving struggling Black SELreaders to proficiency. A strength of this project study is the enhancement of general education teacher practice on the use of ELL instructional strategies with Black SELstruggling readers. The accountability factor is also a strength of this project, because teachers and administrators are responsible for implementation, collecting, and monitoring data, all of which is shared and used to begin the next session's discussion.

Much of the research on the achievement gap focuses on the issues between Black and White students. This study identifies a growing gap in literacy achievement between Black and Hispanic students. It also provides specific instructional strategies administrators and teachers can use to plan literacy instruction that will enhance the foundation of below grade level,

Black/SEs. As the number of ELL students continues to rise, elementary schools throughout the country will be faced with learning ELL instructional strategies (Honigsfeld, 2009). Since these instructional strategies provide the foundation for literacy achievement and have proven to increase the academic achievement of Hispanic students, school districts can replicate this project study to combat the Black/White achievement gap as well.

### **Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations**

The role of the project coordinator of this professional development series is very detailed. It requires a lot of preparation time, and time in schools as an observer of instructional practice. As a principal of a large, Title I, ELL school I am responsible for instructional practice and student achievement within my own school. Serving as project coordinator would be a limitation due to the extreme commitment needed to ensure the success of not only this professional development series, but also the academic achievement of my own school. One way to remediate this limitation is to work directly with the Northeast School District to define the expectations of the program coordinator and the expectations of my role as a principal. With my immediate supervisor and associate superintendent, a plan can be devised that provides a gradual release of responsibilities to my assistant principals, which will provide additional time for me to serve with fidelity as the program manager of the professional development series.

A second limitation of this project study is the role of the principals' responsibilities in this project. Currently principals have the responsibilities for monitoring the instruction of teachers formally and informally, assisting teachers with the development of student learning objectives and monitoring them throughout the school year, the accountability of all assessment data administered to students, managing multimillion dollar budgets, and ensuring the daily



effectiveness of systems and operation. There may be some resistance to a professional development series that requires additional time for attendance and monitoring. For this reason, I propose that the Northeast School District pilot this project first with the five principals and two substitute participants from this study. This would provide a cohort of principals that are dedicated to the process, and a year to remediate any issues that may occur and cause widespread difficulties on a larger scale. This is the same method of implementation for a data analysis initiative in the Northeast School District, therefore it will be received well by the executive cabinet as a proposed initiation.

### **Scholarship**

Draeger (2013) stated that scholarship is a form of in-depth learning that promotes the connection of a variety of information across disciplines. Throughout this project study, I learned that scholarship requires understanding published research in the field of education, but also determining the gaps within the research. These gaps provide opportunities to extend the field of understanding, and the methodologies for increasing student achievement. For example, this project study began as research on struggling, Black, readers in elementary school, however this data brought me back to the Black/White achievement gap, which has been studied since the desegregation of schools. As I began to compare the data across various races and ethnicities, I found the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. My review of scholarly journal articles revealed no evidence of research on this academic discrepancy, and initiated my scholarly contribution to the field of education from a different lens of the achievement gap.

### **Project Development**

Project development must be grounded in effective processes, which can only be found in the scholarly research. As the project coordinator, I learned the importance of providing research-based instruction that has proven positive outcomes on student achievement. I also learned the importance of developing a professional development series that is differentiated based on the needs of teachers and administrators, and also designed to fill the instructional gap that is the focus of my school district as well. The development of this professional development series stresses not only teacher-directed learning time, but also the opportunities for application through lesson planning, and reflective practice. I learned that professional development alone does not improve instructional practice and student achievement. There must be buy-in, time for participants to be vulnerable through expression of challenges, opportunities for the cohort to work together to assist each other with problem solving and the sharing of successes, and accountability through the observations and the monitoring of student data.

### **Leadership and Change**

Kotter (2012) stated that leadership parallels people to the overall vision of an organization. This project study has taught me the importance of ensuring that professional development is consistent and supports the vision and mission of a school district. As discussed by participants during the interviews, there is a lack of consistent professional development that focuses on instructional strategies to improve the literacy proficiency of Black SEL students. When developing this project study, I realized the need for a professional development series that differs from current offerings. In order to gain district level buy-in, I learned that his project study would have to align the district's overall vision of increasing literacy proficiency. I also

learned that in order to create such a change in the professional development offerings, this project study would have to be supported by colleagues and teachers. The creation of this professional development series has taught me the importance of culture and educator mindset when developing a professional development plan. In order to motivate the actions of others to change instructional practices, a school district must motivate and inspire the appropriate people towards a common goal.

### **Analysis of Self as a Scholar**

My journey as a scholar in the field of education began at Walden University. I have learned a lot about myself as a scholar through the research process. My goal as an educator has always been to contribute to the development of a positive society. The doctoral study process taught me how to focus my goal into individual areas. I have learned the need to inform myself using as many scholarly resources as possible, search for a gap in the literature, and how to develop a project that fills a void in my field. This process has taught me that my work as a principal is one piece of changing the field of education as a whole. It will be through my dedication to continuous professional development and research that will assist me in consistently positively impacting education. As a candidate for my doctoral degree, I have learned that there are many other topics that I am interested in studying. My work has provided a clear understanding of the process and patience that is required when contributing to the bountiful research that comprises education. I have the foresight to identify issues and develop plans of action from an unbiased approach that will allow me to develop distinguished work to move student achievement throughout our nation. I have learned that my work as a scholar and practitioner is grounded in social justice.

### **Analysis of Self as a Practitioner**

The Walden University doctoral program has allowed me to move beyond simple research around problems in education. I have learned the steps needed to not only create a possible solution, but also the importance of practicing these solutions, and adapting my strategies as needed. I have learned that my role as a principal is so much greater than monitoring teachers' instructional strategies, but also includes my instructional practices as well. When planning professional development for my staff, I must ensure that all presentations include research-based strategies on adult learning theory and effective professional development standards. Although my study focuses on a large, urban, public school district, I have learned that the practice of moving student achievement with below grade level students maintains similar obstacles. Overall, this doctoral program has encouraged me to continue my practice as a reflective practitioner. This will allow me to constantly improve my overall practice to ensure I am meeting the needs of my students and staff.

### **Analysis of Self as a Project Developer**

Project development is a difficult process. This project study taught me how to consider the different caveats that may effect professional development. I have learned the importance of completing a needs assessment to determine the current state of what has been provided, and what those in the field are requesting to complete their jobs successfully. As a project developer, I learned that in order to create change in instructional practice, professional development must be aligned to the vision and mission of the school district. This creates the support needed at the district level to ensure implementation can take place. As a professional developer, I also learned the importance of providing participants a time to reflect on their learning and implementation in

an environment of no-fault, and the need for time to problem-solve as a cohort to ensure every educator's success.

### **The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change**

I believe that social change is grounded in social justice. Social justice is not only inspired by “an intellectual ideal, but also by moral outrage at the unmet needs of students” (Marshall & Oliva, 2009, p. 7). As a 21<sup>st</sup> Century principal, I consider myself a social justice leader. I have also struggled with understanding why Black students consistently perform at lower proficiency levels than their peers. My work in this project study addresses the need in our society to stop focusing on identifying the problem of below grade level literacy achievement among Black students and shift towards providing quality instruction that will alleviate this issue.

The project has the potential to impact social change beyond the Northeast School District. The Black/White achievement gap is an issue in various states throughout our country. This professional development series can be tailored to the needs of administrators and teachers in other school districts and implemented to support other district's systemic initiatives around increasing the reading proficiency of Black SEL students. For those school systems experiencing an influx of ELL students, this project study can begin the process of providing general education teachers the instructional strategies to enhance the language acquisition and inevitably student achievement of ELLs in the classroom. The principals in this study discussed the need for ELL instructional strategies, cultural proficiency, and differentiated instruction for Black/SEs in the undergraduate setting. This project study has the potential to serve as the foundation for a semester long course or dual semester course for undergraduate students

preparing to work in urban, Title I, or schools experiencing the Black and White or Black and Hispanic achievement gap.

### **Implications, Applications, and Direction for Future Research**

According to the literature reviewed, there is a need for additional research on professional development in the area of specific instructional strategies that can be implemented to improve Black SEL student achievement in reading. There is also evidence of a need to expand scholarly research to focus on the growing Hispanic/Black achievement gap in literacy. Future research implications should include the perspective of classroom teachers on their needs to increase the literacy proficiency with Black SEL students. Inevitably this project study can be expanded even further through the development of parent workshops on understanding language and vocabulary.

The data collected via principals' perspectives is evidence that this professional development series can extend beyond ELL schools experiencing the Black and Hispanic achievement gap, but to any schools in the Northeast School District with below grade level Black SEL students. Future research would provide the data needed to adjust this professional development series to meet the needs of schools experiencing the Black/White achievement gap, and schools in need of additional strategies to move below grade level Black/SELs to proficiency in reading.

The intent of this project study is to eliminate the Hispanic/Black achievement gap in the Northeast School District. Prior to the start of every school year, teachers new to the Northeast School District are required to attend the Professional Educator Induction Program. Further research would allow for the collection of data regarding pre-service preparedness to provide

instruction to struggling Black/SELEs. Based on the data collected from further research, the professional development series could be used as the basis for the creation of an undergraduate elementary education course at a local university. It could also serve as a module of a course of differentiating instruction.

Balanced literacy instruction is a requirement in all Kindergarten through sixth grade classrooms. As found in this study, the current small group instructional techniques are not providing all below grade level students with the support needed to be proficient readers. Future research can involve the perspectives of teachers to determine avenues for including ELL instructional strategies during daily whole and small group instruction. This could possibly lead to an extension of the Balanced Literacy instructional model currently used in the field of education.

### **Conclusion**

Section 4 of this project study serves as a space for reflective practice. I was able to reflect and express the study from conception to conclusion. The strengths of the study as well as possible limitations are provided. Remediation strategies for all limitations are provided to ensure the best application of the professional development series. A discussion of my learning in relation to scholarship and leadership and change is included. The inclusion of scholarship expresses my understanding of the process to produce a study credible of being a part of the field of educational research. Leadership and change explains the key components needed to initiate, advocate, and deliver this professional development series in the Northeast School District. A reflection of my learning in regards to myself as a scholar and practitioner is included as a means to show the areas of discovery and my growth as a researcher in the field of education

throughout this doctoral journal. Section 4 concludes with a correlation of the study to social change within our society and the field of education and the implication for future research and application.

This project study permitted a forum for principals of large, urban, Title I elementary schools to express their perspectives on the Black and Hispanic achievement gap. The analysis of data revealed the needed for consistent systemic professional development for administrators and teachers on specific instructional strategies to increase Black SEL student achievement in literacy. The research also expressed the positive effects of ELL instructional strategies on Hispanic ELL student achievement, and the necessity for professional development on these strategies for all general education teachers to increase the literacy proficiency of Black SEL students. The project is designed to provide a year-long professional development series for a cohort of principals and teachers of schools experiencing the Hispanic/Black achievement gap. The cohort will work collaboratively to learn and master ELL instructional strategies, plan literacy instruction that includes these strategies, and monitor their progress with students through learning walkthroughs, and student Literacy assessment data. This collaborative effort between the Northeast School District, principals, and teachers will influence social change as their success with implementation will effect not only future professional development in this district, but will be a catalyst for addressing the achievement gap and Black SEL students' literacy proficiency in the field of education.



## References

- Adamson, F., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). Funding disparities and the inequitable distribution of teachers: Evaluating sources and solutions. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 20(37), n37. Retrieved from <http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/1053>
- Adkins, T. A. (2012). “Can’t nobody sleep” and other characteristics of culturally responsive English instruction. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 14(2), 73–81.  
doi:10.1080/15210960.2012.673308
- Archibald, S., Coggs, J., Croft, A., & Goe, L. (2011). *High-quality professional development for all teachers: Effectively allocating resources*. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- Au, K. H. (1998). Social constructivism and the school literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 30(2), 297–319.  
doi:10.1080/10862969809548000
- Aud, S., Fox, M. A., & KewalRamani, A. (2010). Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic groups. (NCES 2010-015). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.  
*National Center for Education Statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED510909>
- August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2008). *Developing reading and writing in second-language learners: Lessons from the report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

- August, D., Hajuta, K., O'Day, J., et al. (2009). The American recovery and reinvestment act: Recommendations for addressing the needs of English language learners. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/files/ELL-Stimulus-Recommendations.pdf>
- Ball, A. F. (2009). Toward a theory of generative change in culturally and linguistically complex classrooms. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(1), 45–72. doi:0.3102/0002831208323277
- Baker, S., Lesaux, N., Jayanthi, M., Dimino, J., Proctor, C. P., Morris, J., Gersten, R., Haymond, K., Kieffer, M. J., Linan-Thompson, S., & Newman-Gonchar, R. (2014). *Teaching academic content and literacy to English learners in elementary and middle school*. [Report No. NCEE 2014-4012]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation. Retrieved from [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications\\_reviews.aspx](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications_reviews.aspx)
- Bayar, A. (2014). The components of effective professional development activities in terms of teachers' perspective. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 6(2), 319–327. doi:10.15345/iojes.2014.02.006
- Beckett, K. (2011). Culturally relevant teaching and the concept of education. *Philosophical Studies in Education*, 42, 65–75. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ960327>
- Bower, C. B. (2011). Social policy and the achievement gap: What do we know? Where should we head? *Education and Urban Society*, 45(1), 3–36. doi:0.1177/0013124511407488
- Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

- Brown-Jeffy, S., & Cooper, J. E. (2011). Toward a conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy: An overview of the conceptual and theoretical literature. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 38(1), 65–84. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ914924>
- Burchinal, M., McCartney, K., Steinberg, L., Crosnoe, R., Friedman, S. L., McLoyd, V., & Pianta, R. (2011). Examining the Black-White achievement gap among low-income children using the NICHD study of early child care and youth development. *Child Development*, 82(5), 1404–1420. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01620.x
- Calderon, M., Slavin, R., & Sanchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 21(1). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1519298056?accountid=14872>
- Collopy, R., Bowman, C., & Taylor, D. A. (2012). The educational achievement gap as a social justice issue for teacher educators. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 16(1), 4–25. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ994080>
- Condrón, D. J., Tope, D., Steidl, C. R., & Freeman, K. J. (2013). Racial segregation and the Black/White achievement gap, 1992 to 2009. *Sociological Quarterly*, 54(1), 130–157. doi:10.1111/tsq.12010
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Crosson, A. C., & Lesaux, N. K. (2010). Revisiting assumptions about the relationship of fluent reading to comprehension: Spanish-speakers' text-reading fluency in English. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 23(5), 475–494. doi:10.1007/s11145-009-9168-8
- Cummins, J. (2009). Transformative multiliteracies pedagogy: School-based strategies for closing the achievement gap. *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, 11(2), 38–56. Retrieved from <http://www.cec.sped.org/>
- Cummins, J. (2011). Literacy engagement: Fueling academic growth for English learners. *Reading Teacher*, 65(2), 142–146. doi:10.1002/TRTR.01022
- Daniels, H. (1996). *Introduction to Vygotsky* [Electronic Resource]. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/waldenu/detail.action?docID=10057539>
- Dee, T. S., & Jacob, B. (2011). The impact of No Child Left Behind on student achievement. *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management*, 30(3), 418–446. doi:10.1002/pam.20586
- Domitrovich, C., Gest, S., Gill, S., Jones, D., & DeRousie, R. (2009). Individual factors associated with professional development training outcomes of the head start REDI program. *Early Education & Development*, 20(3), 402–430. doi:10.1080/10409280802680854
- Draeger, J. (2013). Why bother with the scholarship of teaching and learning? *Insight: A Journal of Scholarly Teaching*, 8
- Easton-Brooks, D., & Davis, A. (2009). Teacher qualification and the achievement gap in early primary grades. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 17(14/15), 1–16. Retrieved from <http://Epaas.asu.edu>

- English language learners. (2012). In *ERIC thesaurus*. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?ti=English+Language+Learners>
- Ennis, S. R., Ríos-Vargas, M., & Albert, N. G. (2011). *The Hispanic population: 2010*. Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *US Census Bureau*. Retrieved from <http://catalog.lib.cmich.edu/record=b2361862>
- Esposito, J., Davis, C. L., & Swain, A. N. (2012). Urban educators' perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy and school reform mandates. *Journal of Educational Change*, *13*(2), 235–258. doi:10.1007/s10833-011-9178-6
- Gándara, P. (2010). The Latino education crisis. *Educational Leadership*, *67*(5), 24–40. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/>
- Gay G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gilbert, S. (2009). A study of Ogbu and Simons' thesis regarding black children's immigrant and non-immigrant status and school achievement. *Negro Educational Review*, *60*(1–4), 71-91. Retrieved from [http://oma.osu.edu/vice\\_provost/ner/index.html](http://oma.osu.edu/vice_provost/ner/index.html)
- Godley, A., & Escher, A. (2012). Bidialectal African American adolescents' beliefs about spoken language expectations in English classrooms. *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *55*(8), 704–713. doi:10.1002/JAAL.00085
- Gunderson, L. (2009). *ESL (ELL) literacy instruction: A guidebook to theory and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Guskey, T. R. (2009). Closing achievement gaps: Revisiting Benjamin S. Bloom's "learning for mastery". *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 19(1), 8–31. Retrieved from <http://www.sagepub.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/home.nav>
- Hartney, M. T., & Flavin, P. (2013). The Political Foundations of the Black–White Education Achievement Gap. *American Politics Research*, 1–31.  
doi:10.1177/1532673X13482967
- Hatch, J.A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Hemphill, F. C., & Vanneman, A. (2011). *Achievement gaps: How Hispanic and White students in public schools perform in mathematics and reading on the national assessment of educational progress*. [Report No. NCES 2011-459]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Honigsfeld, A. (2009). ELL programs: Not "one size fits all". *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 45(4), 166–171. Retrieved from <http://www.kdp.org/publications/archives/recordsm09.php>
- Huang, H. (2002). Toward constructivism for adult learners in online learning environments. *British Journal Of Educational Technology*, 33(1), n27. Retrieved from <http://www.wiley.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/WileyCDA/>
- Humes, K., Jones, N. A., & Ramirez, R. R. (2011). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin, 2010*. Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, US Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://catalog.loc.gov/>

- Ijei, C., & Harrison, J. (2010). The long and winding road to social justice: Missouri district uses culturally responsive instruction to close the achievement gap. *Journal of Staff Development, 31*(4), 30–35. Retrieved from <http://www.nsd.org/news/jsd/index.cfm>
- Irvine, J. J. (2010). Culturally relevant pedagogy. *Education Digest, 75*(8), 57–61. Retrieved from <http://www.eddigest.com/>
- Jackson, J. K., & Ash, G. (2012). Science achievement for all: Improving science performance and closing achievement gaps. *Journal of Science Teacher Education, 23*(7), 723–744. Retrieved from 10.1007/s10972-011-9238-z
- Jordan, A., Carlile, O., & Stack, A. (2008). *Approaches to learning: A guide for teachers*. Berkshire, GBR: McGraw-Hill Education. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Keiser, K. (2009). Educational administration candidates' diversity dispositions: The effect of cultural proficiency and service learning. *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development, 21*59–71. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ965156>
- Kotter, J. (2012). *Leading change*. United States of America: Harvard Business Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: Aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*(1), 74–84. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1511014412?accountid=14872>
- Lantolf, J., & Appel, G. (Eds.) (1994). *Vygotskian approaches to second language research*. West Port, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

- Learning Forward. (2015). Standards for professional learning. Retrieved from <http://learningforward.org/docs/pdf/standardsreferenceguide.pdf>
- LeMoine N. (1999). *Language variation and literacy acquisition in African American students*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Li, N., & Hasan, Z. (2010). Closing the achievement gap: Strategies for ensuring the success of minority students. *National Teacher Education Journal*, 3(2), 47–59. Retrieved from <http://www.ntejjournal.com/>
- Longo, C. (2010). Fostering creativity or teaching to the test? Implications of state testing on the delivery of science instruction. *Clearing House*, 83(2), 54–57.  
doi:10.1080/00098650903505399
- Lopez, M. H. (2009). *Latinos and education: Explaining the attainment gap*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/reports/115.pdf>
- Los Angeles Unified School District. (2012). English learners master plan. Retrieved from [http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,1211279,33\\_1211309&\\_dad=ptl](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,1211279,33_1211309&_dad=ptl)
- Madrid, E. (2011). The Latino achievement gap. *Multicultural Education*, 19(3), 7–12.  
doi:10.1080/15348431.2010.491048
- Marshall, C. & Maricela, O. (2009). *Leadership for social justice: Making revolutions in education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Marszalek, J. M., Odom, A. L., LaNasa, S. M., College, D., & Adler, S. A. (2010). Distortion or clarification: defining highly qualified teachers and the relationship between certification and achievement. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 18(27), 1–29. Retrieved from <http://Epaas.asu.edu>



- Marzano, R. (2010). *Teaching basic and advanced vocabulary: A framework for direct instruction*. Boston: Heinle.
- Matusov, E., DePalma, R., & Smith, M. (2010). The creation and maintenance of a "learning-loving minority" in conventional high schools: A research-based response to John Ogbu. *Oxford Review Of Education*, 36(4), 463–480.  
doi:10.1080/03054985.2010.491186
- McCollough, C., & Ramirez, O. (2012). Cultivating culture: Preparing future teachers for diversity through family science learning events. *School Science & Mathematics*, 112(7), 443–451. doi:10.1111/j.1949-8594.2012.00158.x
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (2013). *Have achievement gaps changed?* Washington, DC: Retrieved from  
[http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2013/#/achievement-gaps](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps)
- National Center for Education Statistics (2011). *Achievement gaps: How Hispanic and White students in public schools perform in mathematics and reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress*. [Report No. NCES 2011-485]. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Nishimura, T. (2014). Effective professional development of teachers: A guide to actualizing inclusive schooling. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, 10(1), 19–42. Retrieved from  
[http://www.wholeschooling.net/Journal\\_of\\_Whole\\_Schooling/IJWSIndex.html](http://www.wholeschooling.net/Journal_of_Whole_Schooling/IJWSIndex.html)

- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, § 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).
- Okoye-Johnson, O. (2011). Intangible heritage of standard English learners. *SAGE Open*, 1(1).  
doi:10.1177/2158244011408441
- Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. (1998). Voluntary and involuntary minorities: a cultural-ecological theory of school performance with some implications for education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 29(2), 155–188. doi:10.1525/aeq.1998.29.2.155
- Ogbu, J. U. (2003). *Black American students in an affluent suburb: A study of academic disengagement*. Routledge.
- Padney, A. (2012). *Language building blocks: Essential linguistics for early childhood educators*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).
- Powell, K., & Kalina, C. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, 130(2), 241–250. Retrieved from [http://www.projectinnovation.biz/education\\_2006.html](http://www.projectinnovation.biz/education_2006.html)
- Rajagopal, K. (2011). *Create success!: Unlocking the potential of urban students*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Reardon, S. F., & Galindo, C. (2009). The Hispanic-white achievement gap in math and reading in the elementary grades. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(3), 853–891. doi:10.3102/0002831209333184
- Roberts, M. (2010). Toward a theory of culturally relevant critical teacher care: African American teachers' definitions and perceptions of care for African American students. *Journal of Moral Education*, 39(4), 449–467. doi:10.1080/03057241003754922

- Rojas-LeBouef, A., & Slate, J. R. (2012). The achievement gap between White and Non-White Students. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 7(1), n1.  
Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ971502.pdf>
- Rowley, R. L., & Wright, D. W. (2011). No "White" Child Left Behind: The Academic Achievement Gap between Black and White Students. *Journal of Negro Education*, 80(2), 93–107. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41341113>
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2011). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sampson, D., & Garrison-Wade, D. F. (2011). Cultural vibrancy: Exploring the preferences of African American children toward culturally relevant and non-culturally relevant lessons. *Urban Review: Issues and Ideas In Public Education*, 43(2), 279–309.  
doi:10.1007/s11256-010-0170-x
- Santamaria, L. J. (2009). Culturally responsive differentiated instruction: Narrowing gaps between best pedagogical practices benefiting all learners. *The Teachers College Record*, 111(1), 214–247. Retrieved from <http://www.tcrecord.org>
- Saunders, R. (2014). Effectiveness of research-based teacher professional development. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(4), 10.  
doi:10.14221/ajte.2014v39n4.10
- Shatz, M., & Wilkinson, L. (Eds.). (2010). *Education of English language learners: Research to practice*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Short, D. J., Vogt, M., & Echevarría, J. (2008). *The SIOP model for administrators*. United States of America: Allyn & Bacon.

- Sheng, Z., Sheng, Y., & Anderson, C. (2011). Dropping out of school among ELL students: Implications to schools and teacher Education. *Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 84(3), 98–103.  
doi:10.1080/00098655.2010.538755
- Simms, K. (2012). Is the Black-White achievement gap a public sector effect? An examination of student achievement in the third grade. *Journal of At-Risk Issues*, 17(1), 23–29.  
Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ978517>
- Spivey, N. N. (1997). *The constructivist metaphor: Reading, writing, and the making of meaning*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Stewart, C. (2014). Transforming Professional Development to Professional Learning. *Journal of Adult Education*, 43(1), 28–33.
- Suhr, K. A., Hernandez, D. A., Grimes, D., & Warschauer, M. (2010). Laptops and fourth-grade literacy: Assisting the jump over the fourth-grade slump. *Journal of Technology, Learning, And Assessment*, 9(5). Retrieved from  
<https://136.167.2.46/ojs/index.php/jtla/article/view/1610>
- United States Department of Education (2012). *Continuing to expose and close achievement gaps*. Washington, DC: Retrieved from U.S. Department of Education  
<http://www2.ed.gov/polic/elsec/gid/esea-flexibility/resources/close-achievement-gaps.pdf>
- United States Department of Education (2012). *Definitions*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.ed.gov/race-top/district-competition/definitions>

- Vanneman, A., Hamilton, L., Anderson, J. B., & Rahman, T. (2009). *Achievement gaps: How Black and White students in public schools perform in mathematics and reading on the national assessment of educational progress*. [NCES 2009-455]. Washington, DC: Retrieved from National Center for Education Statistics  
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED505903.pdf>
- Wallenstein, R. (2012). Educating students of poverty: One school's story. *Schools: Studies In Education*, 9(2), 160–175. doi:10.1086/667913
- Whaley, A. L., & Noel, L. (2012). Sociocultural theories, academic achievement, and African American adolescents in a multicultural context: A review of the cultural compatibility perspective. *Journal of Negro Education*, 81(1), 25–38. Retrieved from  
<http://www.journalnegroed.org>
- West, E. T. (2013). A phenomenological case study of the experiences of African American high school students. *SAGE Open*, 3(2). doi:10.1177/2158244013486788
- WIDA Consortium. (2014). *The WIDA standards framework and its theoretical foundations*. Madison, WI: Retrieved from World Class Instructional Design and Assessment  
<https://www.wida.us/DownloadDocs/standards/TheoreticalFramework.pdf>
- Williams, A. (2011). A call for change: Narrowing the achievement gap between white and minority students. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 84(2), 65–71. doi:10.1080/00098655.2010.511308
- Wright, H. J., & Harris, S. (2010). The Role of the Superintendent in Closing the Achievement Gap in Diverse Small School Districts. *Planning and Changing*, 41(3-4), 220–233.
- Wolcott, H. (2008a). *Ethnography: A way of seeing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.

Zhang, Y., Tardif, T., Shu, H., Li, H., Liu, H., McBride-Chang, C. . . & Zhang, Z.  
(2013). Phonological skills and vocabulary knowledge mediate socioeconomic  
status effects in predicting reading outcomes for Chinese children. *Developmental  
Psychology*, 49(4), 665. doi:10.1037/a0028612

## Appendix A: The Project

### **Using ELL Instructional Strategies with Black SEL Students in Reading**

The purpose of this professional development series is to teach administrators and teachers English language learner (ELL) instructional strategies for the use with Black SELbelow grade level readers. Participants are expected to plan literacy lessons with the cohort and implement these plans in their schools. As a result, Black SEL students will receive additional support needed to create a strong foundation in reading and progress them to independent proficient readers. The learning outcomes for this professional development series are as follows,

Administrators and teachers will work collaboratively to:

- Learn and understand ELL instructional strategies such as cultural proficiency, language acquisition, and academic vocabulary development.
- Design lesson plans for whole and small group Literacy instruction that includes the use of ELL instructional strategies to differentiate instruction for Black SEL students.
- Implement lesson plans developed during this professional development series within their classroom on a daily basis.
- Participate in learning walkthroughs within their own school and others within the cohort to provide feedback on implementation as well as gain new ideas.
- Support all members of the cohort during reflections of challenges, and assist in the development of re-teaching lesson as needed.
- Collect and progress monitor student data to ensure on-going evidence of student successes and challenges.

### Professional Development Session Outline

Session/Time	Topic	Learning Outcome	Materials
June Pre-Service	Needs Evaluation	Participants will complete a brief electronic evaluation regarding their professional development needs and learning styles	Electronic Needs Evaluation
July Pre-Service	Orientation	Participants will gain an understanding of the professional development course and expectations	Presentation LCD Projector Ice-Breaker Activity Course Syllabus Texts for Distribution
Session 1 - August 3.5 hours	Cultural Proficiency	Participants will: gain an understanding of cultural proficiency and its role in their classroom	Cultural Proficiency Presentation LCD Projector
Session 2 - September 3.5 hours	Culturally Relevant Teaching	Participants will: learn gain an understanding of Black/SELs and the relationship between ELL and SEL instructional strategies and CRT	Culturally Relevant Presentation LCD Projector
Session 3 - October 8 hours	Cultural Relevant Teaching	Participants will: learn ELL instructional strategies that promote CRT in the classroom	Culturally Relevant Presentation LCD Projector



Session/Time	Topic	Learning Outcome	Material
Session 4 – November 3.5 hours	Language Acquisition	Participants will learn: the theories of language acquisition	Language Acquisition Presentation LCD Projector
Session 5 – December 3.5	Language Acquisition	Participants will learn: the foundations, language building blocks, and social versus academic language acquisition	Language Acquisition Presentation LCD Projector
Session 6 – January 8 hours	Language Acquisition	Participants will learn how to apply language acquisition instructional strategies and WIDA Standards and philosophy to the general education classroom	Language Acquisition Presentation LCD Projector
Session 7 – February 3.5 hours	Academic Vocabulary	Participants will gain an understanding of vocabulary development	Academic Vocabulary Presentation LCD Projector
Session 8 – March 3.5 hours	Academic Vocabulary	Participants will learn and apply ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary instruction (visuals cues)	Academic Vocabulary Presentation LCD Projector

Session/Time	Topic	Learning/Outcome	Materials
Session 9 – April 8 hours	Academic Vocabulary	Participants will learn and apply: ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary instruction through the use of technology	Academic Vocabulary Presentation LCD Projector
Session 10 - May	Celebration	The cohort will meet to present their action plans and celebrate the completion of the course and their learning throughout the year.	N/A
Online	Course Evaluation	Participants will complete a brief electronic evaluation regarding their learning and practical application of information. Information will also be gathered on changes needed for the next cohort.	Electronic Course Evaluation

**Using English Language Learners Instructional (ELL) Strategies with Below Grade Level Standard English Learners (SEL)  
Series Syllabus**

This eleven session professional development series is designed to enhance the instructional toolkit of administrators and teachers in Title I, elementary schools (Kindergarten - Sixth Grade) experiencing the Black/Hispanic literacy achievement gap. Participants will learn how to differentiate instruction for Black/SEL students through the use of ELL instructional strategies.

Through a series of monthly workshops, participants will explore cultural proficiency and ELL instructional strategies for use in a general education classroom with below grade level Black/SELs.

**Professional Development Series Objectives**

Participants will:

- gain an understanding of cultural proficiency and its role in their classroom
- learn the correlation between ELL instructional strategies
- learn ELL instructional strategies that promote CRT in the classroom
- learn how students acquire social and academic language
- learn the foundations and language building blocks
- learn and apply language strategies instructional strategies
- gain an understanding of vocabulary development
- learn and apply ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary instruction (visual cues, technology, vocabulary games)

### Required Texts

Electronic versions and hard copies of each text will be provided. All texts are listed below in the event you would like to download electronic copies or purchase the full texts.

- Haynes, J. (2007). *Getting started with English language learners: how educators can meet the challenge*. ASCD.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: Aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74-84. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1511014412?accountid=14872>
- Los Angeles Unified School District. (2012). English learners master plan. Retrieved from [http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,1211279,33\\_1211309&\\_dad=ptl](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,1211279,33_1211309&_dad=ptl)
- Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: research on what works in schools*. Alexandria, VA, USA: ASCD. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Marzano, R. J., & Simms, J. A. (2013). *Vocabulary for the Common Core*. Bloomington, IN, USA: Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- McKinnley, J. (2010) *Raising black students' achievement through culturally relevant teaching*. ASCD
- Okoye-Johnson, O. (2011). *Intangible heritage of standard English learners*. *SAGE Open*, 1(1). doi:10.1177/2158244011408441
- Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.
- Shatz, M., & Wilkinson, L. (Eds.). (2010). *Education of English Language Learners : Research to Practice*. New York, NY, USA: Guilford Press. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Short, D. J., Vogt, M., & Echevarria, J. (2008). *The SIOP model for administrators*. United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Takaki, R. (2008). *A different mirror: A history of multicultural America*. Hachette Book Group.
- Teaching Tolerance (2015). *Teacher leadership: Self awareness and cultural competency description*. Retrieved from [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2013/#!/achievement-gaps](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#!/achievement-gaps)
- WIDA Consortium. (2014). *The WIDA standards framework and its theoretical foundations*. Madison, WI: Retrieved from World Class Instructional Design and Assessment <https://www.wida.us/get.aspx?id=3>

WIDA Consortium. (2014). *The WIDA can do philosophy*. Madison, WI: Retrieved from World Class Instructional Design and Assessment  
<https://www.wida.us/DownloadDocs/standards/TheoreticalFramework.pdf>

## Required Readings/Assignments

### August

- Cultural Proficiency

### Reading

- Teacher leadership: Self awareness and cultural competency description.
  - [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2013/#/achievement-gaps](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps)
- A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America by Ronald Takaki
  - Ch. 13
  - Optional (Ch. 2, 3 and 5)

### September

- Culturally Relevant Teaching - The Correlation Between ELL Instructional Strategies Literacy

### Reading

- Intangible Heritage of Standard English Learners
  - Handout (Available on Google Site)
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: Aka the Remix
  - <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1511014412?accountid=14872>
- Los Angeles Unified School District
  - [http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,1211279,33\\_1211309&\\_dad=ptl](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,1211279,33_1211309&_dad=ptl)

### October

- Culturally Relevant Teaching - ELL Instructional Strategies that Promote Culturally Relevant Teaching

### Readings

- Education of English Language Learners: Research to Practice p.98 - 104
- Language Building Blocks: Essential Linguistics for Early Childhood Practitioners
  - Multilingual Media p. 79 - 80
  - Additive Language Strategies p. 80 - 82
- Getting Started with English Language Learners : How Educators Can Meet the Challenge
  - Ch. 6

## Required Readings/Assignments

### November

- Language Acquisition Theories and Dialect Acquisition

#### Readings

- Language Building Blocks: Essential Linguistics for Early Childhood Practitioners
  - Why Learn About Language Acquisition? p. 95-96
  - Key Concepts in Language Acquisition p. 100
  - Acquiring Language versus Learning Language p. 101
  - Language Acquisition Theories and Research Approaches p. 101 - 105
  - Second Language Dialect Acquisition p. 106
  - *Optional: Foreign Language versus Language Learning Acquisition Theories*
    - Available on the Google Site
    - Hard copies available by request

### December

- Language Building Blocks and Social versus Academic Language Acquisition

#### Readings

- <https://youtu.be/4K11o19YNvk>
- Language Building Blocks: Essential Linguistics for Early Childhood Practitioners
  - Language Building Blocks p. 7 - 9
- Getting started with English Language Learners: how educators can meet the challenge
  - How Students Acquire Social and Academic Language

### January

- Language Acquisition - Applying WIDA Standards and Philosophy to Black/SELs in the General Education Classroom
- Applying Language Acquisition Instructional Strategies

#### Readings

- The WIDA Standards Framework and Its Theoretical Foundations
  - <https://www.wida.us/get.aspx?id=3>
- The WIDA Can Do Philosophy
  - <https://www.wida.us/DownloadDocs/standards/TheoreticalFramework.pdf>

**Required Readings/Assignments****February**

- Academic Vocabulary - Introduction to Vocabulary Development

## Readings

- Vocabulary for the Common Core.
  - Ch. 1 - 2
- Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement: Research on What Works in Schools
  - Ch. 4

**March**

- Academic Vocabulary - Differentiation Through Visual Cues

## Readings

- <https://sites.google.com/a/pgcps.org/esol/elementary/instruction/instructional-resources>
- <https://sites.google.com/a/pgcps.org/esol/system/app/pages/search?scope=search-site&q=Graphic+Organizers>

**April**

- Academic Vocabulary - Differentiation Through Technology

## Readings

- Language Building Blocks: Essential Linguistics for Early Childhood Practitioners.
  - Ch. 10

**May**

- Professional Development Evaluation



<b>Professional Development Series Requirements</b>
<p>All participants must have internet access to access the course Google Site. The Google Site will house course assignments, handouts, and serve as an area for academic discourse between session. In addition, all participants must use their Northeast School District e-mail address and password when participating in this professional development series. This information will serve as your login and password to access many of the links to readings in the syllabus, as well as the course Google Site.</p>
<b>Attendance</b>
<p>The professional development series is designed to not only provide information, but allow time for participants to plan lessons that will be implemented in their own classrooms. It is imperative that participants attend every Face-to-Face session. Absences will be handled on a case by case basis. In the event that someone is not able to participate with fidelity, the principal will be asked to select an alternate participant.</p>
<b>Session Format</b>
<p>Each session will begin with an engagement activity that will directly correspond to the Pre-Reading assignments. A brief lecture will be provided to introduce you to the key concepts within your reading. We will continue by discussing questions, ideas, and reflections based on the material. Prior to the end of each session, each school team will be asked to begin working on how this topic can be implemented within the respective school.</p> <p>It is important to remember that in order to enhance your knowledge of these topics, reading prior to class, developing questions and ideas to share during our discussions, and implementation after class is key. Although you will be working within your school groups to prepare your implementation strategies within your school, remember that we are a cohort. As a cohort we are here to support each other through sharing of ideas, respectful push-back, and the development of implementation plans.</p> <p>Since we will only convene once a month, a Google Site has been developed to allow for conversations between each school to continue. In addition, this electronic platform will also house all information relevant to the professional development series (i.e. syllabus, calendar, reading materials, as well as online multimedia materials). Please use the link below to access the Google Site. Saving it as a bookmark will permit expedite access.</p> <p><a href="https://sites.google.com/a/waldenu.edu/ell-strategies-for-sels---professional-development-series/">https://sites.google.com/a/waldenu.edu/ell-strategies-for-sels---professional-development-series/</a></p>

Calendar of Monthly Assignments			
Month	Series Session	Assignment	Due Date
June	Pre-Service Online	Online Needs Evaluation	June 30 <sup>th</sup> 5:00 PM
July	Pre-Service Orientation	No Assignments Required	
August	Session 1 Cultural Proficiency	<b>Topic: Cultural Proficiency and the Classroom</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the information from this session, as a team develop a Learning Walk form and complete a Learning Walk of your school. Discuss your findings and be prepared to share one area you would like to grow your colleagues in the area of Cultural Proficiency.</li> </ul>	August 31 <sup>st</sup>
September	Session 2 Culturally Relevant Teaching	<b>Topic: The Correlation Between ELL Instructional Strategies and Literacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection: How do ELL Instructional Strategies and <u>SEL</u> Instructional Strategies address cultural relevancy and culture proficiency?</li> </ul>	September 20 <sup>th</sup>
October	Session 3 Culturally Relevant Teaching	<b>Topic: ELL Instructional Strategies that Promote Culturally Relevant Teaching</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select one ELL Instructional Strategy that resonated with you. Begin implementing this strategy in your classroom. Write a brief reflection regarding this experience with your Black/SEs in your classroom.</li> </ul>	October 20 <sup>th</sup>
November	Session 4 Language Acquisition	<b>Topic: Language Acquisition Theories and Dialect Acquisition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection: What was your biggest take-away from this session in regards to the SEs you service within your classroom?</li> </ul>	November 20 <sup>th</sup>

Calendar of Monthly Assignments			
December	Session 5 Language Acquisition	<p><b>Topic: Language Building Blocks and Social versus Academic Language Acquisition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflection: Based on your understanding of Social and Academic Language Acquisition, reflect on your current methods for teaching Academic Language. What steps will you take to enhance this experience for Black/SELs in your classroom?</li> </ul>	December 20 <sup>th</sup>
January	Session 6 Language Acquisition	<p><b>Topic: Applying WIDA Standards and Philosophy to Black SELs in the General Education Classroom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflection: Briefly discuss your biggest take-away from this session.</li> <li>● As a school team, discuss how the WIDA Standards, Philosophy, and “Can DO” descriptors can be used with Black SELs in your school. Develop a short action plan that will begin the process of using these elements to improve the education of Black SELs.</li> </ul>	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
February	Session 7 Academic Vocabulary	<p><b>Topic: Introduction to Vocabulary Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflection: Discuss the area of Vocabulary Development you feel is the most difficult. Be prepared to share in the next session.</li> </ul>	February 20 <sup>th</sup>
March	Session 8 Academic Vocabulary	<p><b>Topic: Differentiation Through Visual Cues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Select one method of differentiation through visual cues and begin implementing it in your classroom. As a team take time to discuss the pros, cons, and assist each other with implementation throughout the month. Be prepared to share your experiences in the next session.</li> </ul>	March 20 <sup>th</sup>

Calendar of Monthly Assignments			
April	Session 9 Academic Vocabulary	<b>Topic: Differentiation Through Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As a school team, use the knowledge gained during this course to develop a plan of action for using ELL Instructional Strategies with <u>SELs</u> in your building next school year. Be sure to include the grade levels implementing the strategies, the specific strategies that will be used, your plan for monitoring, meeting, and discussing your data.</li></ul>	April 20 <sup>th</sup>
May	Online	<b>Topic: ELL Instructional Strategies for SELs Action Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Course Evaluation</li></ul>	May 31 <sup>st</sup>

Facilitator's Guide						
<p><b>Session 1 - 3.5 Hours</b> <b>August</b></p> <p><b>Cultural Proficiency</b></p>						
Objectives						
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● gain an understanding of cultural proficiency and its role in their classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gain an understanding of their personal culture and how this influences or has influenced their education</li> <li>○ gain an understanding of Black/African American cultural history</li> </ul> </li> </ul>						
Participants Materials						
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Participant's Journal</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Cultural Iceberg Handout</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="border: none;">2013 National Reading Assessment Data (online)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="border: none;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps">http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps</a></li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	Participant's Journal	Cultural Iceberg Handout	2013 National Reading Assessment Data (online)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps">http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps</a></li> </ul>	
Participant's Journal	Cultural Iceberg Handout					
2013 National Reading Assessment Data (online)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps">http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/achievement-gaps</a></li> </ul>						
Outline						
<p><b>Engagement</b> In your participant's journal, briefly discuss what you know about cultural proficiency, and what you would like know about cultural proficiency. Be prepared to share your responses with our cohort.</p> <p><b>Session Outcomes</b> The facilitator will review the session outcomes with participants and discuss any questions they may have prior to beginning.</p> <p><b>Activity 1: "Who Are You?"</b> Members of the cohort will count off by twos and pair up with someone who is not from their school. For the first minute Partner A will ask Partner B "Who are you?" Each time Partner B answers the question Partner A repeats the question "Who are you?" After one minute, the activity is repeated with Partner B asking the question "Who are you?" and Partner A responding. The activity is repeated for two more rounds. Partners will take 5 - 7 minutes to discuss what happen as they progressed through each round.</p>						

**Possible Questions:**

- What did you notice about your responses?
- What did you notice about your partner's responses?
- What did you notice about your comfort level?
- How does this impact your work moving forward within the cohort?
- What are the implications when working with children?
- What is the connection to cultural proficiency?

The cohort will share as a whole. The facilitator will end the activity through the use of the Cultural Iceberg Theory. The facilitator will use the activity to discuss future work with cultural proficiency, and the need for differentiated learning opportunities for students.

**Activity 2: Data Review (30 minutes)** Members of the cohort will review the 2013 National Reading Data. Lead a discussion on their noticings and wonderings about the data.

**Possible Questions:**

- What does this data tell you?
- What do you wonder about this data?
- What role does cultural proficiency play in the data in front of you.

Facilitator will provide a lecture on how this data connects to district level, and school level data, and extend the connection to cultural proficiency.

**Activity 3: Cultural Proficiency Overview** This will be a lecture guided by the facilitator. The facilitator will include the information participants gleaned from Activities 1 and 2 as well as present the following information.

- Definition of Culture Proficiency
  - a mind-set, a worldview, a way a person or an organization makes assumptions for effectively describing, responding to, and planning for issues that arise in diverse environments. For some people, cultural proficiency is a paradigm shift from viewing cultural differences as problematic to learning how to interact effectively with other cultures (Moyer & Clymer, 2009).
  - a honoring the differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups (Lindsey, Robbins, & Terrell, 2003).

- Definition of Cultural Competence
  - Cultural competence is behavior that aligns with standards that move an organization or an individual toward culturally proficient interactions.
  - Cultural competence is interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences, motivate you to assess your own skills, expand on your knowledge and resources, and, ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior (Lindsey, Robbins, & Terrell, 2003).
- Key Principles of Cultural Proficiency
  - Culture is a predominant force in people's lives.
  - The dominant culture serves people in varying degrees.
  - People have both personal identities and group identities.
  - Diversity within cultures is vast and significant.
  - Each individual and each group has unique cultural value and needs.
    - These principles ensure that as schools begin their cultural proficient shift and that the shifts remain cultural and are not structural (Lindsey, Robbins, & Terrell, 2003)
- Review of the Cultural Iceberg
  - In order to ensure structural changes are not the guide for culturally proficient shifts, schools can also reflect on the Cultural Iceberg discussed earlier
  - When we see an iceberg, the visible portion that we can see above the waterline, is very small compared to the whole. Like an iceberg, the majority of culture lies beneath the surface. People often think that they can examine other cultures from observable characteristics such as languages, arts, foods, music and appearances. However, in reality, there are many cultural components that are invisible and lie below surface.
  - Possible steps towards improving cultural competency in a school
- Have participants share key learning points from Ch.13 of "A Different Mirror."
- Facilitator should review and fill in the gaps regarding the experience of African Americans and then share the Involuntary v. Voluntary Minority Theory
  - Chapter 13th

- Definition of Cultural Competence
  - Cultural competence is behavior that aligns with standards that move an organization or an individual toward culturally proficient interactions.
  - Cultural competence is interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences, motivate you to assess your own skills, expand on your knowledge and resources, and, ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior (Lindsey, Robbins, & Terrell, 2003).
- Key Principles of Cultural Proficiency
  - Culture is a predominant force in people's lives.
  - The dominant culture serves people in varying degrees.
  - People have both personal identities and group identities.
  - Diversity within cultures is vast and significant.
  - Each individual and each group has unique cultural value and needs.
    - These principles ensure that as schools begin their cultural proficient shift and that the shifts remain cultural and are not structural (Lindsey, Robbins, & Terrell, 2003)
- Review of the Cultural Iceberg
  - In order to ensure structural changes are not the guide for culturally proficient shifts, schools can also reflect on the Cultural Iceberg discussed earlier
  - When we see an iceberg, the visible portion that we can see above the waterline, is very small compared to the whole. Like an iceberg, the majority of culture lies beneath the surface. People often think that they can examine other cultures from observable characteristics such as languages, arts, foods, music and appearances. However, in reality, there are many cultural components that are invisible and lie below surface.
  - Possible steps towards improving cultural competency in a school
- Have participants share key learning points from Ch.13 of "A Different Mirror."
- Facilitator should review and fill in the gaps regarding the experience of African Americans and then share the Involuntary v. Voluntary Minority Theory
  - Chapter 13th



- Research about how people develop cultural identities suggests that children in as early as childhood can identify differences among cultural groups.
  - Involuntary Minorities - a group of people with ancestors did not choose to come to the United States, but they were brought here against their will, have been conquered, colonized, or enslaved. Unlike immigrant minorities, the nonimmigrants have been made to be a part of the U.S. society permanently against their will. Two distinguishing features of involuntary minorities are that (1) they did not choose but were forced against their will to become a part of the United States, and (2) they themselves usually interpret their presence in the United States as forced on them by white people (Ogbu, 1992).
  - Voluntary Minorities - a group of people with ancestors who chose to come to the U.S. because they expected better opportunities (better jobs, more political or religious freedom) than they had in their homelands or places of origin. The people in this category may be different from the majority in race and ethnicity or in religion or language. The important distinguishing features are that (1) the people in this category voluntarily chose to move to U.S. society in the hope of a better future, and (2) they do not interpret their presence in the United States as forced upon them by the U.S. government or by white Americans. Voluntary minorities usually experience some problems in school, especially when they first arrive, because of society's discriminatory educational policies and practices and because of language and cultural differences. However, immigrant minorities do not experience long-lasting school performance difficulty and long-lasting cultural and language problems. Some examples of voluntary minorities in the United States are immigrants from Africa, Cuba, China, India, Japan, Korea, Central and South America, the Caribbean (Jamaica, Trinidad, the Dominican Republic), and Mexico (Ogbu, 1992).
- Participants will be asked to discuss in small groups the possible impact of the Black American experience on current Black students in education.
  - **Questions to Facilitate:**
    - How does this relate to the Involuntary v. Voluntary Minority Theory?
    - How does this relate to cultural proficiency of educational staffs?

- The facilitator will review the purpose of Learning Walks and have participants work collaboratively within their school teams to begin developing a Cultural Proficiency Learning Walk form to implement in their school. The teams will be encouraged to use teams from other schools when questions arise. In addition, the teams will be asked to begin the process of how this information will be shared with their school prior to and after Learning Walk.
  - **Questions to Facilitate Brainstorming**
    - Is our staff still trying to teach students who used to go here?
    - Are we taking care of the needs of staff or students?
    - What assumptions and bias do we carry?

**Closure:** Go back to your participant's journal. Reflect on your experience today, write down what you learned about cultural proficiency. Express the next steps needed for your school-team to complete your Cultural Proficiency Learning Walk Form, and begin implementation in the future. What assistance do you still need?

**Evaluation:** Participants will complete the Plus/Delta/Appreciation Feedback Form

**References:**

Lindsey, R. B., Robins, K. N., & Terrell, R. D. (2003). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Corwin Press.

Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. (1998). Voluntary and involuntary minorities: a cultural-ecological theory of school performance with some implications for education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 29(2), 155-188.

Cultural Iceberg Handout



Facilitator's Guide
<p><b>Session 2 - 3.5 Hours</b> <b>September</b></p> <p><b>The Correlation Between ELL Instructional Strategies and Literacy</b></p>
Objectives
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participants will:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ learn gain an understanding of Black/SELs and the relationship between ELL and SEL instructional strategies and CRT</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Participants Materials
<p>Participant's Journal</p> <p>Articles (Available on Google Site)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intangible Heritage of Standard English Learners</li> <li>● Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: Aka the Remix</li> <li>● Los Angeles Unified School District English Learner Master Plan           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chapter 4</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Outline
<p><b>Engagement:</b> In your Participant's Journal discuss one major "ah ha" moment regarding your own instructional practices in regards to "Cultural Proficiency." What are your next steps to alleviate or expand upon this one area. Be prepared to share out when you are done.</p> <p>Now get with your school team and discuss how you will share the data collected from your learning walk with your entire school.</p> <p><b>Possible Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is the culture of our school's staff?</li> <li>● How do we ensure that our staff openly receives this information?</li> <li>● How will we share the findings of the Cultural Proficiency Learning Walk with all staff?</li> <li>● What is our focus for our school? What is a little, big win for staff to gain buy-in?</li> <li>● What professional development do we need to move our school towards cultural proficiency?</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 1:</b> Our readings over the last month discuss Standard English Learners, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and the English Language Learner and Standard English Learner Plan for the LA Unified School District. With a partner from your school, discuss your major take aways from each article. Be prepared to share your partner's response with the group.</p>

**Activity 2: Standard English Language Learners (SELS) Lecture****Possible Questions:**

- What races or ethnicities would be considered SELs?
- What is the correlation between Standard English Use and academic achievement?
- What groups students would you identify as Standard English Learners in your school?
  - How does their academic achievement relate to that of other students?
  - What is the difference in the instructional strategies used with SELs in your school?
  - What assumptions do we make about SELs and how does this help or hurt these students?

**Key Points from the article:**

- SELs are ethnic minority native speakers of English. Their mastery of the standard english used in the curriculum of schools is limited due to their use of ethnic-specific nonstandard dialect.
- There is a correlation between Standard English proficiency and academic achievement
- Language is a tool that allows everyone access to basic civil rights and opportunities in the areas of education, economics, and politics.
- Some examples of SELs are
  - African Americans
  - American Indians
  - Hawaiians
  - Mexican Americans
    - These students were born in the United States, were raised speaking English as their first language, and often their only language, however due to the dialect do not proficiently use Standard English which allows them full access to academic curricula.
  - SELs differ from ELLs in two ways:
    - ELLs may not have been born in the United States
    - ELLs usually have grown up speaking a language other than English as their first language and in their homes.
- Policies and regulations have been implemented to assist ELLs in the general education and ELL classroom settings.
- Currently there are no national regulations such as those for ELLs provided for SELs
- LeMoine (1999) stated SELs can attain mainstream literacy through practice similar to second language acquisition.
- Culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy that include language and literacy proficiency is needed to for SELs just as it is for ELLs
- African American or Black SELs have an ancestry that spans Africa, through slavery, to contemporary eras in the arts, politics and education.

- African American/Black SELs have been impacted by several educational policies including:
  - Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
  - Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
  - No Child Left Behind (2001)
  - Race to the Top
    - Although all of these legislation were designed to close the achievement gap, they addressed the issues of fair and equal school opportunities, school accountability, setting a continuously moving target for students to achieve and grants for school reform, none tackled the true issue of academic needs within the schoolhouse.
- African American English
  - dialect of English
  - a unique historical, cultural linguistic system spoken by many African American
  - also known as Black English or Ebonics
  - highly developed and structurally valid linguistic system
  - AAE differs from SE in various ways such as
    - phonological
    - lexial
    - synactic
    - sylistic,
    - use dimensions
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogical Standards
  - language concerns can be addressed through culturally relevant pedagogical strategies in the classrooms of SELs
  - Culturally responsive teaching incorporates
    - using the cultural knowledge of students, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles to make learning relevant to and effective for them
    - teaches to and through the strengths of these students
    - is culturally validating and affirming. Culturally responsive pedagogy is validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative and emancipatory

- There are six pedagogical AEMP methods which are also culturally relevant methods of teaching:
  - develop teachers' knowledge, understanding, and positive attitude toward SELs and the nonstandard languages they use
  - include linguistic knowledge about nonstandard language into instruction;
  - use second language acquisition methodologies to bolster the acquisition of school language and literacy
  - utilize a balanced approach to literacy acquisition that integrates phonics;
  - design instruction around the learning styles and strengths of SELs
  - infuse the history and culture of SELs in the curriculum.
- SELs are not recognized as a group separate from their ethnicity like ELLs

### Activity 3: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

This section briefly reviews the key points of the Ladson-Billings article.

- In a time when everyone was asking what is wrong with African American learners, Ladson-Billings asked what was right with African American students. Her work led her to explore what happened in classrooms where teachers experienced pedagogical success with Black students. The focus of her scholarly work, including the article read for this class is culturally relevant pedagogy.
- The three major domains of work in culturally relevant pedagogy are:
  - academic success - intellectual growth that students experience as a result of classroom instruction and learning experiences
  - cultural competence - the ability to help students appreciate and celebrate their culture of origin while gaining knowledge of and influence in at least one other culture
  - sociopolitical consciousness - the ability to take learning beyond the classroom using knowledge and skills to identify, analyze, and solve real world problems.
- Ladson-Billings found that focusing on
  - student learning and academic achievement v. classroom and behavior management
  - cultural competence v. cultural assimilation
  - eradication, and socio-political consciousness v. school-based tasks

permitted a view of student taking responsibility and interest in their education.

- The key to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is the ability to link principles of learning with deep understanding and appreciation for culture.
- This goal of Ladson-Billings work is to shift mindsets from Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to also Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

**Discussion Point:** As a group, let's discuss Ladson-Billings "Death in the Classroom." What did she mean by this? How does this phrase relate to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy? How does it relate to our work with African American/Black SELs in Literacy?

- Ladson-Billings discusses the work of other authors and how it has assisted in moving the parameters of culturally relevant pedagogy to culturally sustaining pedagogy.
- Think about these practices in reference to this professional development series. Currently we are attempting to add on to this work by taking a strategy isolated for the use of one group of students (ELLs) and incorporating its strategies to expand differentiated instruction and expand the academic achievement of African American/Black SEL students.

### **Activity 3: Crosswalk of the Los Angeles Unified School District English Learner Master Plan**

#### **Discussion Question:**

- What is the purpose of the LAUSD Standard English Learner Program? How does this work relate to the work we will do this year in this professional development series?

#### **Lecture Notes**

- Similar to ELL instruction, SEL instruction builds on cultural and linguistic strengths, and provides meaningful access to a curriculum that is standards-based, cognitively complex, rigorous and coherent.
- all teachers are teachers of language and content
- The key to effective education of SELs is first, properly identifying which students would benefit most directly from SEL development
  - SEL development is a responsive instructional intervention that develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Standard and academic English. The purpose is to assure that SELs will have meaningful access to the core curriculum, post-secondary educational opportunities, and career options.
  - The approach is linguistically responsive, in that it seeks to add Standard and academic English to the students' existing language repertoire. MELD accomplishes



- The approach is additive because of its dual grammar study of the student's home language variety and target language (Standard English). This dual grammar study is referred to as contrastive analysis and has been shown by research to be effective in teaching Standard English.
  - SELs is *additive, not subtractive*. The students' home language is never eliminated.
  - students have a rule-governed language system therefore the objective is not to correct, but to facilitate the acquisition of this new language form. We move from language correction to second language acquisition, from language eradication to language addition. This is the same process used for moving ELLs language acquisition.
- Socio-cultural perspectives and attitudes need to be taken into consideration in educating SELs.
  - Some SEL students may exhibit resistance to and/or skepticism about the value of learning Standard English.
  - Some students may need support to learn that it is possible to acquire mastery of Standard English without rejecting the language used by their parents in the home.
  - As students matriculate some will need help in understanding that what is appropriate in one setting is not appropriate in another, so that they can shift easily and competently between varieties in different social contexts
- SELs may perform at various levels on standardized assessments in reading, English-language arts, and mathematics.
  - Limited proficiency in standard and academic English may contribute to lower academic performance on assessments given in standard English, however educator's lack of understanding about the linguistic differences that **SELs** exhibit and possible negative attitudes towards these differences can often be an antecedent to academic failure.
  - To prevent adverse academic deficits from occurring, teachers must understand linguistic differences as differences and not deficits. It is also important for teachers to engage in frequent progress monitoring and multi-tiered instructional support for SELs.
  - Culturally and linguistically responsive interventions should be part of an effective pedagogical approach for SELs.
  - The use of universal screening tools, periodic assessments, and formative and

summative data are essential to developing an effective monitoring plan.

■ **Connection to Balanced Literacy - Possible Question**

- How do universal screen tools, progress monitoring, and multi-tiered instruction support relate to current components of the Northeast School District's Curriculum?
  - Guided Reading Instruction
  - Running Records
- The LAUSD's Academic English Mastery Program has six research-based principles proven to develop language, learning, and literacy skills in SELs.
  1. Building knowledge and understanding of the linguistic research as regards SELs and the impact of their language difference on learning.
  2. Integrating linguistic knowledge about non-standard varieties into instructional practice.
  3. Building on the observed learning styles or practices of SELs to design learning environments that support the acquisition of school language and literacy.
  4. Utilizing a balanced approach to literacy instruction that is constructivist (a theory of learning that states that learners construct knowledge out of their experiences) and provides access to culturally relevant literature to support meaning construction.
  5. Utilizing second language acquisition methodologies to support mastery of school language and literacy.
  6. Infusing the history and culture of SELs into the curriculum through the use of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning.
- Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural and historical referents to impart knowledge and skills, and to change attitudes.
  - Four fundamental principles to keep in mind when considering the infusion of students' history and culture into the curriculum:
    - Language is an integral part of one's identity and culture.
    - The dignity of a person is not guaranteed unless the dignity of her or his people is preserved.
    - The unique history, culture, and language of each student must be recognized and respected.
    - Teaching methodology must accommodate the culture and language of the student.
- ELL instructional strategies and Culturally Relevant Teaching

- As we have seen throughout our review of the articles and LAUSD Academic English Mastery Program, language is a key part of culture. It is the way our students communicate with each other and with their families. As with ELL students, Black/SEL students may use a dialect of English that is different from Standard English and may inhibit their abilities to access academic materials and assessments. ELL instructional strategies will allow SEL students to acquire the Standard English skills needed to move their literacy academic achievement, but can be done so in a way that is additive to their current language use. Teachers can show students the connects between both languages and the times in which each language can be used. By incorporating texts, author studies, and literary works that use Standard English from African Americans when incorporating language acquisition skills, teachers are able to show the value of both forms of language and move student achievement forward.
- **Discussion Question:**
  - As we begin our culturally responsive teaching with a focus on language, how will you introduce this concept to your students' parents?
  - How will you ensure they feel valued by the school, although their students will be learning to ways of using language?
  - How will your school team handle parent resistance to the use of ELL strategies with their SEL students?
  - How do you create buy-in? How do you incorporate parents so the learning can continue in the home?
- Using the information you just generated during the previous discussion, in your groups, begin brainstorming how you will introduce your SELs work to the parents of your SEL students.

**Evaluation:** Participants will complete the Plus/Delta/Appreciation Feedback Form

#### References

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: Aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74-84. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1511014412?accountid=14872>
- Los Angeles Unified School District. (2012). English learners master plan. Retrieved from [http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,1211279,33\\_1211309&\\_dad=ptl](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,1211279,33_1211309&_dad=ptl)
- Okoye-Johnson, O. (2011). *Intangible heritage of standard English learners*. *SAGE Open*, 1(1). doi:10.1177/2158244011408441

Facilitator's Guide
<b>Session 3 - 8 Hours</b> <b>October</b> <b>ELL Instructional Strategies that Promote Culturally Relevant Teaching</b>
Objectives
Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participants will:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ learn ELL instructional strategies that promote CRT in the classroom</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Participants Materials
Participant's Journal      Participants' Samples of Culturally Relevant Texts Grade Specific Literacy Data (DRA/SRI)      NESD Curriculum Map
Outline
<p><b>Engagement:</b> In September you were asked to reflect on the following question. Discuss your learning from our last session with a partner who is not from your school, and that you have not worked with previously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do ELL Instructional Strategies and <u>SEL</u> Instructional Strategies address cultural relevancy and culture proficiency?</li> </ul> <p><b>Breaks/Lunch</b> - Allow participants two 15 minute breaks one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In addition to bio needs breaks, it is important to provide provide participants at least 45 minutes for a lunch break. This provides time for participants to leave the building, purchase food, and eat. It also provides administrators the opportunity to check in at their schools via phone and e-mail.</p> <p><b>Activity 1</b>            Language Acquisition vs Language Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Language learning is not communicative.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Children acquire a second language in a similar way in which they acquire their first language.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ unaware of grammatical rules</li> <li>■ exposure and experience helps them get a feel for what is and isn't correct</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Natural communication is needed for language acquisition                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communication with peers</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Language learning comes from direct instruction on the rules of language.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Learners understand they are learning a language and can express what they know.</li> <li>■ Although the learner can learn the rules and possibly pass standardized assessments they may still struggle with speaking and writing skills.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### Principle and Practice in School

- ELL students benefit from instruction that increases both vocabulary surface knowledge and depth of knowledge.
- Examples of this are
  - repeated exposure to words in multiple contexts
  - utilizing a student's knowledge of home language to learn Standard English
  - explicit instruction on words through direct instruction of vocabulary words, definitions, and discussions on the parts of speech, roots, and morphological components
- Superficial word exposure with ELL students (a vocabulary set each week) is not effective with ELLs
  - Black students are expected to do better with this type of instruction, however due to a lack of Standard English knowledge in some students' homes a deeper level of vocabulary instruction is needed as well
- Vocabulary Instructional Techniques should allow students multiple approaches to access to new vocabulary.
  - Examples:
    - Working within the context of the classroom with students with language impairments provides the opportunity for small group instruction
    - Frontloading or introducing vocabulary to ELLs before the entire class allows students to become familiar with words before exploring them within text
    - Providing additional texts genres or experimental learning provides the words in context and multiple examples for seeing the word in context
    - Repetition
      - helps students through the learning process by increasing salience of cue and by increasing the connections between words and concepts.
      - helps develop stronger phonological representations of words so that students can retrieve and process more efficiently
      - ensures students can recall the words in the future
    - Deliberate comparisons between languages reinforces links between lexicons of each language

- Bilingual and Bidialectal Literature
  - Bilingual and bidialectal literature are available and are a culturally relevant way to work with ELLs. Both forms of literature are instructionally valuable because the use Standard English and a home language interchangably.
  - Literature that relates to students and their families and includes is an instructional tools for ELLs and SELs because of community involvement and more relevant to linguistically diverse students. Overall greater value is added to Literacy Instruction
- Multilingual Media
  - Multilingual media enhances students' vocabulary in the same way that bilingual and bidialectal literature does.
  - It provides students with an example of how their language or dialect has a direct correlation to Standard English.
  - Music is another form of multilingual that can be used to enhance Standard English
    - Music
      - builds phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and grammar
      - illustrates the value of language diversity
- Additive Language
  - ELL instructional strategies are additive. ELLs should never be denied the use of their home language because it creates linguistic insecurity.
  - Students must understand that their language or dialect is important and that Standard English is a way to help them better access academic materials that are not written in that way.
  - It is important to nurture bilingualism and positive language attitudes. The following steps can be implemented to ensure that additive language instruction is culturally relevant.
    - Observe students' language use
      - What languages or dialects are spoken in students' homes, the space each occupies, the functions each serves, and the nature of these exchanges? Include the way students use language at recess and in social conversation with peers. Then analyze it.
    - Gauge students' language radar.
      - What is their language awareness and attitude?
      - Are students able to differentiate between language varieties?
      - How do students refer to each other?
      - How knowledgeable are students regarding Dual Language Learners and others' language use?
      - Do students disassociate themselves from a particular variety? If so, how and why?
        - Invite students to discuss reasons and discuss them in small groups or as an entire class community.

- Assign bilingual and bidialectal resources
  - The same way you select “just right” books based on lexile or DRA levels. Pre-select appropriate (bilingual, multilingual, or bidialectal) resources.
    - Invite recommendations
    - Monitor and invite students’ reactions to these types of texts.
    - Assigned videos can be viewed online to provide students with the opportunity to experience different languages.
    - Include music to add excitement to your classroom, link home and school, and provide a more comforting environment for anxious or shy students. Providing the lyrics or invite students to transcribe them, so they can practice spelling and see which language units are similar. Have a discussion about students conclusions.
  
- Invite children to bilingualize and/or translate resources.
  - Engage students in hands-on code-mixing, comparison, substitution, and translation.
    - All help students pay attention to language, problem solve, enrich language and cultural experiences, and eliminate language insecurities.
  - Students will develop the following insights:
    - languages vary and reflect cultural differences
    - each language serves important functions, and has rules
    - Having diverse ways to communicate permit access to, the more we learn and the more created we are.
  
- Discuss the role of diverse varieties and apply to students’ lives.
  - Discuss how authors use different languages in literature.
  - Teachers share their own language or languages
  - Invite students to record and reflect on their (and family) out-of-class language and to share examples.
  - Compare their language use and attitudes
  - Discuss why different authors use specific dialects, in their writing and music lyrics.

#### **Activity 2 - Stop and Jot**

In your Participants’ Journal take some time to digest what we have just reviewed. Which instructional strategy introduced so far do you feel is most appropriate for the Black/SELs in your classroom. Discuss your reflection with a partner and be prepared to support your decision with your knowledge of the students in your classroom.

### Activity 3 - Fall Reading Assessment Data Review

Introduction: Before we can begin our hands-on planning process today, each team will need to review their October DRA and SRI Data. As you review your data think about the following:

- What is the data telling you?
- Look at specific questions. Why do you think students got it wrong?
  - What did the students need to be able to do to get that question right?
  - How was this more than what has been required or taught in class?

### Activity 4 - Lesson Planning and Collaborative Observations

Using the leveled readers/culturally relevant texts you brought with you, the Northeast School District Curriculum Map, and the information provided today. Begin working in two school team groups (primary and intermediate) to plan a Balanced Literacy lesson that demonstrates your learning of culturally proficiency, at least one ELL strategy discussed today, and leveled texts to differentiate based on ability level.

- How do you incorporate these strategies to ensure culturally relevant instructional strategies without singling out your Black/SELs?
- What day and time will the lesson take place? Will intermediate and primary team members observe both lessons or only the grade specific lesson?
- What form will your team use when observing?
- How do you ensure feedback is provided in a constructive and not evaluative way?

Please feel free to use your cohort colleagues for assistance as you develop your plans.

**Evaluation:** Participants will complete the Plus/Delta/Appreciation Feedback Form

### References

- Haynes, J. (2007). *Getting started with English language learners: how educators can meet the challenge*. ASCD.
- Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.
- Shatz, M., & Wilkinson, L. (Eds.). (2010). *Education of English Language Learners : Research to Practice*. New York, NY, USA: Guilford Press. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>



<b>Facilitator's Guide</b>
<p><b>Session 4 - 3.5 Hours</b>  <b>November</b>  <b>Language Acquisition Theories and Dialect Acquisition</b></p>
<b>Objectives</b>
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participants will learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the theories of language acquisition</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Participants Materials</b>
Participant's Journal
<b>Outline</b>
<p><b>Engagement</b>  During our last session we discussed language learning versus language acquisition. Based on our last session and your current reading, discuss the difference between the two. Discuss the implications for instruction in your school.</p> <p><b>Activity 1 - Discussion of Lesson Plan Development and Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Activity 2 - Learning About Language Acquisition</b></p> <p>This session we will begin by completing a jigsaw with the reading for today. We will count off in 4's and you will work with your team to review one assigned texts and then present the key points to our cohort. In addition, you will discuss the relevancy to our work with ELL instructional strategies with Black/SELS.</p> <p>Key Points from each reading that should be included during the group's presentations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why Learn About Language Acquisition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The average monolingual English using 3rd grader has a vocabulary of 5,000 words</li> <li>○ Most Dual Language Learners (DLLs) have a smaller English vocabulary and require 3 - 5 years to master academic language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● With individualized instruction, DLLs have a larger combined vocabulary and advanced cognitive and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>● Most DLLs know more-complex words than their monolingual peers.</li> <li>● Individualized instruction allows DLLs to come out ahead, given their combined vocabulary and advanced cognitive and interpersonal skills.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Discussion Statement:** Discuss the implication on what we have learned about Dual Language Learners on Black/SEEs.

- Key Concepts in Language Acquisition
  - Language Acquisition is facilitated by comprehensible input, that is easy to understand language
    - Cultural Input alone is insufficient for language acquisition
  - Input fosters interaction or meaning negotiation which enable scaffolding.
    - Scaffolding can include provisions of an example or template that children can use, direct or indirect feedback, and positive skill reinforcement.
  - Comprehensible Input, Interaction, and Scaffolding
    - Many children receive substantial input in at least one other language, yet fail to learn it unless they use it.
    - When individuals interact using a language, they are more likely to infer its component parts and patterns and receive feedback that helps them make necessary modifications.
- Acquiring Language Versus Learning Language
  - Most children unconsciously acquire their primary language, as opposed to the conscious process that characterizes much of classroom-based (language) learning has distinguished between acquisition and learning.
    - Collaboration is a necessary ingredient for both
    - The language adults use with infants and young children, and the nature of responses they expect vary.
  - Conceptions of language acquisition are shaped by culture.
- Language Acquisition and Research Approaches
  - In order for children to be vocal by age 3 they have to hear language.
  - The three major theories that account for language acquisition are
    - behaviorism
      - belief that language is an intimidated behavior
      - competent users teach language through conditioning - specifically modeling, reinforcement, and repetition, or rewarding acceptable language use
      - It is believed that repetition help students develop desired language habit through imitation and positive reinforcement
      - Behaviorists have no explanation for how children say things they have never heard before, or how they go from no words to thousands of words in one - two years without drastic changes to the input they receive.

- nativism
  - belief that we are born with the capacity to acquire language and that the process is only disrupted in rare situations.
  - language acquisition is a human instinct
  - belief that we are biologically predisposed to language and that there are similarities in languages in regards to the stages involved and the content and structures acquired.
  - belief that languages share commonalities at some deeper, semantic level
  - belief that children infer the rules of their language and put them to use, quickly doubling, tripling, and more than quadrupling their vocabulary and other language units.
  - Nativists
    - emphasize children's creativity, and focus on their ongoing language analysis and assembly.
    - believe that language acquisition is a direct result by comprehensible input provided by adults and children, through interaction and negotiation of meaning or scaffolding.
- functionalism
  - focus on the functional levels of meaning construction from social interaction.
  - believe that language serves multiple functions and that a child's need to communicate prompts language acquisition.
  - believe that language function or meaning drives acquisition
  - children use language to communicate their needs, collaborate, control, demonstrate, discover, invite, inquire, request, and respond
  - language is a vital and expressive learning tool for children
  - believe language acquisition and functionality are the same

- **Second Language Dialect Acquisition**
  - resembles Second Language Acquisition
  - language is the key to literacy
  - applies to African American children in addition to Native American, Latinos, and other minorities referred to in our previous session
    - Standard English may not be their primary language
    - One contributing factor to continuous disadvantage circumstances is because their language needs are improperly met.
    - Understanding the process of language acquisition enables educators to help these children and their families to acquire Standard English effectively, and maintain their home language
    - Drawing students' attention to language (peculiarities and differences) and engaging them in periodic analysis and comparison, educators can create strong spellers.
  - use of students' primary language is essential because the create a bridge to the classroom

**Activity 3 - Stop and Jot**

- **Insert reflection activity**

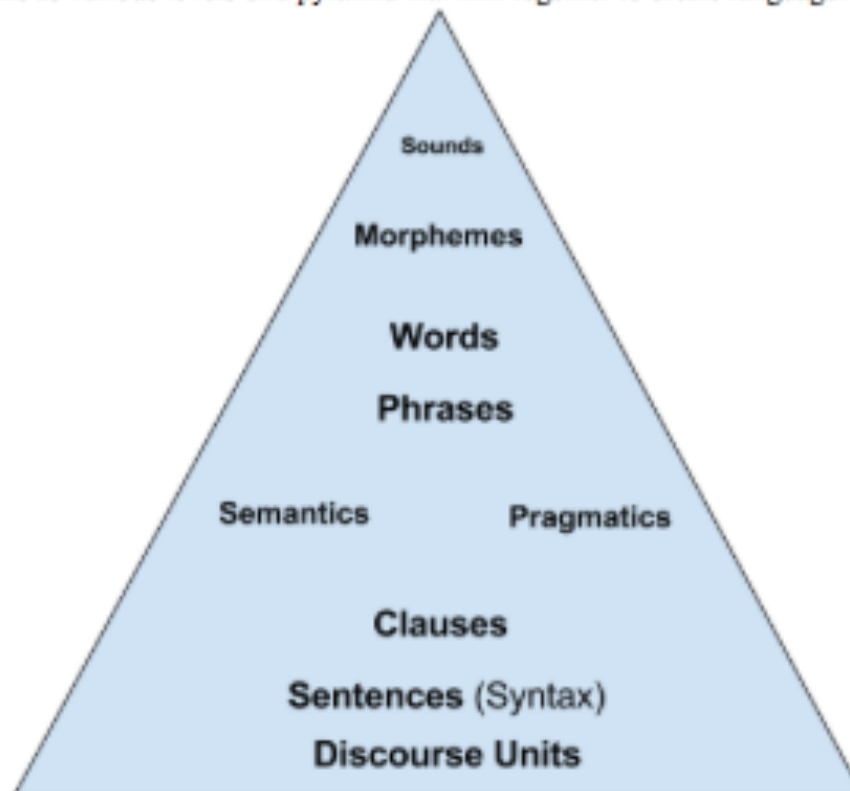
**References**

Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.

<b>Facilitator's Guide</b>	
<b>Session 5 - 3.5 Hours</b> <b>December</b> <b>Language Building Blocks and Social versus Academic Language Acquisition</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● learn: the foundations, language building blocks, and social versus academic language acquisition</li> </ul>	
<b>Participants Materials</b>	
Participant's Journal Language Building Blocks Pyramid Handout	The Iceberg Model Handout
<b>Outline</b>	
<p><b>Engagement:</b> Think back to your childhood, and stories you've been told by parents and/or guardians. In your Participant's Journal, discuss your memories of how you acquired social language versus academic language. How did you learn when to use social language and when to use academic language?</p> <p><b>Activity 1: Language Acquisition Video</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Group Discussions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussion Questions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In this video you listened to someone speak to you in German. What were the key differences in the way the speaker presented the information that helped you to acquire the language?</li> <li>■ What key instructional strategies did you learn from this video can you use in your classroom?</li> <li>■ How does this form of ELL Instructional strategy relate to educating Black/SEs? How can you use this strategy to assist SEs with acquiring academic language?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 2: Stop and Jot</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At the end of this professional development series, your school team will be responsible for developing a plan for Black/SEs in your school. Take a moment to write down your biggest take-away from this activity and explain how your school-team can implement this strategy to move Black/SEL Literacy Proficiency.</li> <li>● Be very specific about what strengths your school team has and what challenges you will face. For each challenge begin to problem-solve possible ways turn these potential challenges into to opportunities for learning for students.</li> </ul>	

### Activity 3: Lecture Notes

- Often we discuss language and really don't consider what language is. What makes up language. Language is comprised of building blocks or layers. You can think of these blocks as various levels of a pyramid that link together to create language.



- Phonemes
  - the sounds of language
  - are distinctive in different languages which makes it difficult to hear and/or produce sounds that are not in our home language
    - many languages have identical phonemes
  - French and Spanish have more sounds in common than Chinese and French.
    - Chinese is a tonal language
    - French and other romance languages are syllable timed where each syllable has almost the same beat
    - English is stressed-timed - some parts of a word or sentence are stressed differently, or have a louder sound
  - in some languages , single sounds can be meaningful
    - Example: Gaelic or Yoruba

- Semantics and Pragmatics
  - Semantics is the branch of linguistics responsible for meaning.
    - Semantics is culturally and content specific
  - Pragmatics refers to politeness or norms
    - determines how a language is interpreted
    - focuses on social etiquette
  
- Discourse
  - an important language unit
  - makes language bigger than a sentence
    - it includes paragraphs, e-mail, pre-literacy, and visuals
  - basic understanding helps
    - understand and appreciate cultural and linguistic differences
    - more effectively instruct students
    - partners with diverse families
  - stretches of language that collectively serve distinct functions are termed discourse units
  - In cultures that consider directness and aggression impolite, these are usually long utterances or multiple sentences. This is different from the US
    - Ex. "I love you" as an open expression is unconventional in Chinese and Indian cultures
    - Different turn taking can also reflect variations in language discourse
  - Due to the diverse nature of U.S. schools it is important for educators to pay close attention to discourse differences
    - This includes variations in the way various cultures express politeness and respect in language format and length.
      - stated versus implied meanings
    - open apologies is not a universal form of discourse, which is why all students do not say excuse me after they belch.
      - In East Indian cultures, apologies are usually reserved for unknown persons

**Activity 4: Acquiring Social Language and Academic Language Lecture Notes**

- Social Language
  - the language of the playground
  - BICS - Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
    - used to function socially in hallways, classrooms, school buses, on playgrounds and at home
    - support to make information comprehensible includes gestures, objects,
  - It takes ELLs 1 - 3 years to master the social language of their peers
  - The context of social language is embedded.
  - ELLs in the beginning stages are able to handle the following tasks:
    - Produce survival vocabulary such as the words for bathroom and water
    - Follow simple directions that are accompanied by gestures
    - Engage in one-on-one social conversations using gestures.
    - Answer low-level questions that require basic recall when answering.
    - Participate effectively in hands-on classes
    - Play uncomplicated games, particularly games that they play well in their home language
    - Produce simple drawings, charts, and graphs
  - Context-Reduced Social Language
    - Social interactions are usually context embedded.
      - These interactions occur in meaningful social settings and generally are not cognitively demanding.
    - Activities include:
      - Holding predictable conversations with teachers and peers.
      - Decoding simple reading passages
        - ELLs will be able to sound out words, but they may not comprehend that they are reading
      - Copying words and sentences from the board
      - Reading a weekly school schedule or homework assignment
      - Listening to and understanding a simple story.
      - Responding to and writing answers for short informational questions.
      - Executing answers to questions about a chart or map.
      - Understanding and communicating knowledge about math facts.
      - Interacting socially with classmates.
      - Should be able to ask for help with their work or understand instructions for a game.



- Acquiring Academic Language
  - CALPS - Cognitive Academic Proficiency
    - includes language for formal academic learning and for written texts in content areas
    - skills encompass reading, writing, and thinking about subject-area content material
    - is more than understanding vocabulary and learning academic facts for simple recall, it also requires students to sharpen their cognitive abilities while continuing to learn new curricula.
    - Students use CALP skills to compare, classify, synthesize, evaluate and infer.
    - Cognitive academic skills are both abstract and context reduced.
    - Some ELLs struggle to comprehend what they read and have difficulty expressing what they know in writing.
      - Many students can say all the words in a reading passage and memorize definitions of vocabulary words but are unable to apply these skills to comprehend text.
    - A teacher's instructional style can also affect how ELLs develop CALP skills.
- Connecting Languages
  - Learning academic subjects in their home language helps ELLs learn English.
  - Cummin's Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) theory.
    - shows the relationship between home language and second language
    - concepts are most readily developed in the home language, once developed concepts are accessible through the second language
      - what is learned in one language is transferrable to the new language
    - Cummin's (2000) "Iceberg Model"
      - shows two peaks above the waterline
        - Peak 1 represents a student's social language in the primary language.
        - Peak 2 represents a student's social language in English
        - The middle is where academic proficiency in English and primary language intersect. This is the CUP.

Cummins (2000) Iceberg Model

The diagram illustrates the Iceberg Model of Second Language Acquisition. It features two overlapping icebergs. The left iceberg is labeled 'BICS in Primary Language' and is partially submerged in a layer labeled 'CALP in Primary Language'. The right iceberg is labeled 'BICS in Second Language' and is also partially submerged in a layer labeled 'CALP in Secondary Language'. The two icebergs overlap in a central area labeled 'Common Underlying Proficiency', which is also partially submerged in the 'CALP in Primary Language' layer.

**Activity 5: Developing a Professional Development (PD) for Staff**

Phonemes allow us to pronounce words correctly in Standard English. Discourse plays a large role in the the conversations with have with students. Black/SELs may use phonemes, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse that are different from Standard English. In your school groups, begin developing a professional development session for your staff on discourse.

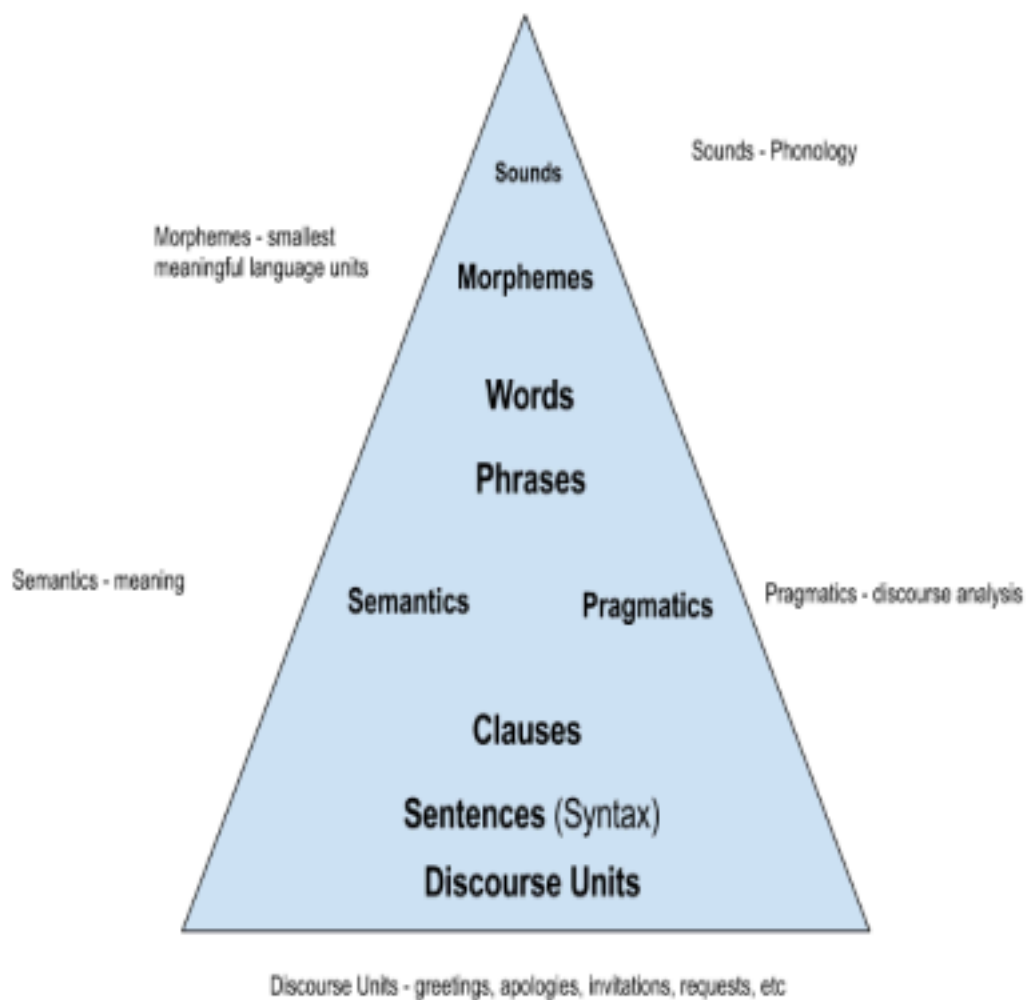
- Discussion Statements:
  - Compare and Contrast the Black/SEL semantics and pragmatics in your school.
  - Discuss current areas of Black/SEL discourse that have been troublesome in your school.
    - Why has this been troublesome?
    - What does your staff need to understand about discourse, and Black/SELs?
    - What are some areas of Standard English discourse that our teachers use that is troublesome for our students?
    - What assumptions do we make about our Black/SELs based on their dialect discourse?
    - How does the “Common Underlying Proficiency Theory” relate to our SELs? How does this impact the PD we plan for our staff?
    - How does understanding Social Language Acquisition and Academic Language Acquisition relate to our work on cultural proficiency and culturally relevant instruction?

**References**

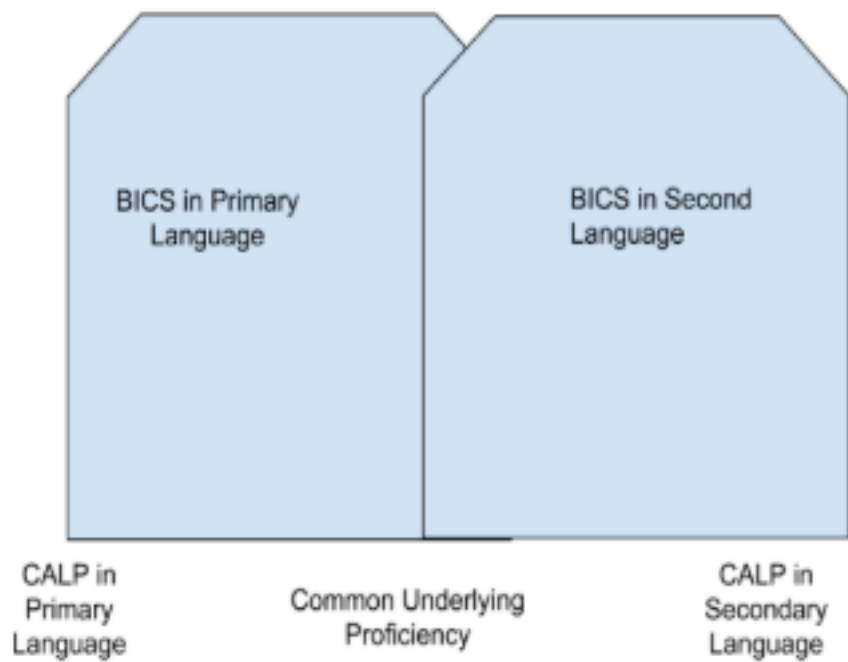
Haynes, J. (2007). *Getting started with English language learners: how educators can meet the challenge*. ASCD.

Krashen, S. (unknown). <https://www.youtu.be/4K11019Ynvk>

Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.

**Language Building Blocks Handout**

## Cummins (2000) Iceberg Model



Facilitator's Guide
<p><b>Session 6 - 3.5 Hours</b>  <b>January</b>  <b>Applying WIDA Standards and Philosophy to Black SELs in the</b>  <b>General Education Classroom</b></p>
Objectives
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participants will learn how to apply language acquisition instructional strategies and WIDA Standards and philosophy to the general education classroom</li> </ul>
Participants Materials
Participant's Journal
Outline
<p><b>Engagement</b></p> <p><b>Activity 1 - Lecture Notes "Overview of WIDA"</b></p> <p><b>WIDA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● World-class Instructional Design and Assessment</li> <li>● Mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advances academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To be the most trusted resource in the education of PreKindergarten through Grade 12 language learners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>WIDA's Can Do Philosophy:</b> believing in the assets, contributions, and potential of linguistically diverse students</li> <li>○ <b>Collaboration:</b> facilitating interaction among educators, state and local educational agencies, researchers, policy-makers, and experts worldwide</li> <li>○ <b>Innovation:</b> drawing from research and practice to find the best solutions for students and educators</li> <li>○ <b>Service:</b> exceeding expectations with friendly and knowledgeable support of</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

our customers and stakeholders

- All of WIDA's work revolves around the importance of academic language and how to empower language learners to reach academic success.
- WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development
  - language helps shape individual and collective study
  - language is a resource and ELLs are valued contributors to learning communities
  - acknowledge the diverse linguistic resources students draw from and the unique pathways they follow throughout the process of learning English
  - **Review the 10 WIDA GUIDING PRINCIPLES HANDOUT**

#### Activity 2 - WIDA Can Do Philosophy

- Can Do Philosophy
  - embraces inclusion and equity
  - focuses on expanding students' academic language by building on inherent resources of ELLs and the positive efforts of educators
  - Linguistically and culturally diverse learners bring a unique set of assets, that can enrich the learning process of all learners and educators.
    - focusing on what language learners "can do" shifts our lens to understanding how students' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds contribute to the early childhood and K - 12 educational institutions.
    - "It takes a village" - from stakeholders in the school community, to home care providers, to superintendents, everyone enhances the education of language learners.
    - Standards-based instruction will only be effective when all stakeholders understanding the cultural backgrounds, home environments, formative experiences, and positive contributions the experiences of our students can afford the school community.
    - Practitioners and educators have the power to recognize and unleash the potential that language learners bring to their learning communities.

- Language Learners' Assets, Contributions, and Potential
  - Linguistic
    - Contribution
      - knowledge of multiple languages
      - varying representations of ideas
      - metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness
      - diverse strategies for language learning
    - Potential
      - bi or multilingual practices
      - abilities which learners utilize to communicate effectively across multiple contexts
      - multiple forms of expressing ideas
  - Cultural
    - Contribution
      - different perspectives
      - practices
      - beliefs
      - social norms
      - ways of thinking
    - Potential
      - bi or multicultural practices
      - unique and varied perspectives
      - ability to develop relationships in a global society
      - ability to navigate a variety of sociocultural contexts
  - Experiential
    - Contributions
      - varied life and educational experiences
      - exposure to unique topics
      - diverse approaches to learning and expressing content knowledge
    - Potential
      - enrichment of the school curriculum
      - extracurricular and community activities
      - success in school and beyond
  - Social and Emotional
    - Contributions
      - Personal interests and needs
      - awareness of and empathy for diverse experiences
      - knowledge and enrichment of community resources
    - Potential
      - ability to form and sustain positive relationships
      - broker meaningful interaction among peers and others in and out of school

- **Activity 3 - WIDA Standards Framework and Theoretical Framework**
  - language use in academic contexts – the language that language learners must acquire and negotiate to participate successfully in school
  - Standards Framework - Five Components
    - Can Do Philosophy
    - Guiding Principles of Language Development
    - Age-appropriate Academic Language in Sociocultural Contexts
    - Performance Definitions
    - Strands of Model Performance Indicators
- **Theoretical Foundations that Support the Standards Framework**
  - Overall interest – understanding language use in school and the expansion of ELL students' skills in making meaning from that language
  - Within a learner's ZPD, language is acquired and mediated in interaction with opportunities for meaningful practice.
  - Evolving language proficiency is captured by the idea of interlanguage. As students build on prior knowledge they acquire more complex features of language, which they refine over time.
  - The WIDA standards framework is a synthesis of research in language development, content learning, and sociocultural theory.
  - WIDA acknowledges the diverse linguistic resources that students draw from, and the unique pathways they follow throughout the process of learning.
  - Language is organized around its communicative purpose.
    - Students use language in two ways that vary based on context
      - functional - how language operates in across curricula
      - communicative - helps negotiate the shift between social language and the language needed to be precise about conceptual knowledge
    - making language functions explicit provides students with a more defined tasks that all students must be able to perform in various content areas
  - **Discussion**
    - Does a functional approach to language exist in our schools for Black/SELs? Should this approach be used with Black/SELs? What are the benefits of teaching teachers how to incorporate a functional approach?



- Language is used within a communicative context
  - In school, students need frequent and direct opportunities to interact in English in order for language development to take place.
  - through negotiation of meaning, English language learners extend their productive capabilities
  - A language-rich environment, surrounding students with oral and written text provides opportunities for ongoing interaction and engagement in academic conversations and writing for a variety of purposes.
  
- **Discussion**
  - Are we currently providing Black/SELs the opportunity this opportunity? What are we doing and how can we improve upon our instructional practices to provide Black/SELs with this type of learning environment daily with fidelity?
  
- Language development occurs over time and depends on many factors.
  - Second language and literacy skill develop interdependently but at different rates and in different sequences
  - factors impacting second language acquisition include individual and environmental
  - many things can shape the access points into language development
    - background
    - experiences
    - curricula learning opportunities in and out of school (quality and quantity)
  - language growth occurs more slowly at intermediate levels of proficiency than that beginning levels
  
- **Discussion**
  - What individual and environmental factors affect Black/SELs at your school? If Standard English language development happens over time and depends on a variety of factors, what are the implications for Black/SELs?

- WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards
  - scaffolded steps within a linguistic progress across five levels of language proficiency
  - model performance indicators provide examples of language processing and use as students gain proficiency
    - can be readily utilized and adapted by educators to support instruction and curriculum development
  - ELD matrices includes
    - a connection to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) both place language features within in specific disciplinary arenas
    - an example context for language use
      - emphasizes the importance of teaching language in meaningful social cultural contexts
    - common cognitive function across levels of language development
      - encourages teachers to create tasks that involve complex thinking for all language learners

**Activity 3 -** Based on what you have learned today about the WIDA Standards and philosophy. How can you apply this learning to your work with Black/SELs? What is one main area of focus you want your school team to use when creating your Black/SEL Instructional Action Plan for next school year. Be prepared to share with your school team and the entire cohort.

**Activity 4 -** Next session each team will be responsible for teaching the cohort about a component of Academic Vocabulary. The administrator of each school group has been sent an [e-mail](#) with your group's presentation topic. Please use the remainder of the time to organize your readings assignments, and potential methods for presentation. This assignment will also be your homework over the next month.

**Homework -** During the next session each school group will present an assigned section of the readings. Please be prepared to provide opportunities for discussion, and application of skills.

WIDA Consortium. (2014). *The WIDA standards framework and its theoretical foundations*. Madison, WI: Retrieved from World Class Instructional Design and Assessment <https://www.wida.us/get.aspx?id=3>

WIDA Consortium. (2014). *The WIDA can do philosophy*. Madison, WI: Retrieved from World Class Instructional Design and Assessment <https://www.wida.us/DownloadDocs/standards/TheoreticalFramework.pdf>

## The WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development

**The Cornerstone of WIDA's Standards: Guiding Principles of Language Development**

1. Students' languages and cultures are valuable resources to be tapped and incorporate into schooling.  
Escamilla & Hopewell (2010); Goldenberg & Coleman (2010); Garcia (2005); Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri (2002); González, Moll, & Amanti (2005); Scarcella (1990)
2. Students' home, school, and community experiences influence their language development. Nieto (2008); Payne (2003); Collier (1995); California State Department of Education (1986)
3. Students draw on their metacognitive, metalinguistic, and metacultural awareness to develop proficiency in additional languages.  
Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan (2009); Bialystok (2007); Chamot & O'Malley (1994); Bialystok (1991); Cummins (1978)
4. Students' academic language development in their native language facilitates their academic language development in English. Conversely, students' academic language development in English informs their academic language development in their native language.  
Escamilla & Hopewell (2010); Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Tabors (2008); Espinosa (2009); August & Shanahan (2006); Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian (2006); Snow (2005); Genesee, Paradis, & Crago (2004); August & Shanahan (2006); Riches & Genesee (2006); Gottlieb (2003); Schleppegrell & Colombi (2002); Lindholm & Molina (2000); Pardo & Tinajero (1993)
5. Students learn language and culture through meaningful use and interaction.  
Brown (2007); Garcia & Hamayan, (2006); Garcia (2005); Kramsch (2003); Díaz-Rico & Weed (1995); Halliday & Hasan (1989); Damen (1987)
6. Students use language in functional and communicative ways that vary according to context. Schleppegrell (2004); Halliday (1976); Finocchiaro & Brumfit (1983)

© 2010 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of WIDA,  
www.wida.us

**The Cornerstone of WIDA's Standards: Guiding Principles of Language Development**

7. Students develop language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing interdependently, but at different rates and in different ways.  
Gottlieb & Hamayan (2007); Spolsky (1989); Vygotsky (1962)
8. Students' development of academic language and academic content knowledge are inter-related processes.  
Gibbons (2009); Collier & Thomas (2009); Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Echevarria, Vogt, & Short (2008); Zwiers (2008); Gee (2007); Bailey (2007); Mohan (1986)
9. Students' development of social, instructional, and academic language, a complex and long-term process, is the foundation for their success in school.  
Anstrom, et.al. (2010); Francis, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera (2006); Bailey & Butler (2002); Cummins (1979)
10. Students' access to instructional tasks requiring complex thinking is enhanced when linguistic complexity and instructional support match their levels of language proficiency. Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Gibbons (2009, 2002); Vygotsky (1962)

© 2010 Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, on behalf of WIDA,  
[www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)

Facilitator's Guide	
<b>Session 7 - 3.5 Hours</b> <b>February</b> <b>Introduction to Vocabulary Development</b>	
Objectives	
Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● gain an understanding of vocabulary development</li> </ul>	
Participants Materials	
Participant's Journal	Participant Created <a href="#">PowerPoints</a> for Presentation
Outline	
<p><b>Engagement:</b> Respond to the following prompt in your Participant's Journal. Be prepared to discuss your response with our cohort. During our last session we discussed in detail the WIDA standards, framework, and philosophies. Based on what you learned what was your biggest "ah ha" moment regarding language acquisition, development, and how this relates to Black/SELS. What are they key components that we currently are not considering when educating Black/SELS?</p> <p><b>Activity 1:</b> Cohort Lectures of the required readings. Below are key points from each assigned reading. Please make sure that each group covers this information in its entirety. Also make sure they make the necessary connections to SELs. All of the information is provided below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Academic Vocabulary for the Common Core</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A student's vocabulary is directly correlated to their academic success because vocabulary is an integral aspect of reading comprehension.</li> <li>○ Understanding the meaning of words and how their relationships creates networks of knowledge that allow student to connect new information with background knowledge.</li> <li>○ Students with greater background knowledge about a topic learn more and have a greater interest in the topic when it arises in lessons.</li> <li>○ Children initially develop their vocabulary through oral conversations. Background knowledge and context can help them determine word meanings when talking and reading.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- Not all students have had equal exposure to the same quality, quantity, and rich oral conversations that allow access to vocabulary at early ages.
  - What parents say and do with their children in the first three years of language learning and development has a direct impact on how much language the children learn and use.
  - Children in higher socioeconomic (SES) families experience more talk
  - A 2003 study found that children in higher SES families have more language learning experiences. These experiences are not as available for children of lower SES.
- Vocabulary
  - developed based on interests and socialization into various communities of practice
  - Children with larger vocabularies acquire words faster.
- Vocabulary and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
  - The vocabulary used in the CCSS is generally not in Ss interests genre.
  - The vocabulary tends to be intangible and not commonly used in everyday interactions. (Social vs. Academic Vocabulary)
  - Explicit descriptions and examples are necessary to help students understand and use many of the academic vocabulary terms critical to their success in school.
  - when students learn new words at a slower rate it impacts
    - Reading Ability
    - Independent Reading
    - Mental Process
  - Large oral vocabularies => recognition and understanding of more words asked to decode => more comprehension of the passages read
    - Ss who read well are more likely to read more. The more one reads, the larger their vocabulary becomes and the greater the increase in their comprehension.
    - Students who read less miss the opportunity to build these skills which leads to lower literacy achievement
  - A larger knowledge of words, allows students to think about more concepts in more ways.
- Vocabulary and Mental Processes
  - Vocabulary is related to a student's mental processes and skills
    - i.e Naming things => complex categorizing => summarizing and inferencing of new information
  - Quote to think about "To expand a child's vocabulary is to teach that child to think about the world."

- The Effects of Vocabulary Instruction
  - there is a lack of uniform and systematic vocabulary instruction is scarce in you U.S. schools
  - direct vocabulary instruction is needed in schools especially those servicing students of lower SES.
    - overall direct vocabulary instruction gives all students the tools they need to be successful in school
- **Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement**
- **Effective Forms of Direct Vocabulary Instruction**
  - Effective vocabulary instruction does not rely on definitions.
    - When students copy definitions from a dictionary, their understanding of the word is limited to the available space restrictions from the publisher. A student's ability to construct definitions is therefore limited to their familiarity with the structure of the definition rather than it is to their actual comprehension ability.
    - When word are first learned, they are understood more as descriptors rather than a definition.
  - Present word meanings to students in everyday language.
    - Conventional dictionaries may be more useful after students have established a basic understanding through a descriptive approach.
  - Linguistic and Nonlinguistic Representations
    - Dual Coding Theory (DCT)
      - for information to be committed to memory, it must have language-based and imagery based representations
      - writing a description and using a graphic organizer to represent the meaning of a word
      - create mental images of acting it out
  - Gradual Shaping of Word Meanings
    - Ss can obtain an idea of a word's meaning with minimal exposure. Deeper levels require repeated and varied exposure where they revise their initial understanding.

- during repeated exposure learning is enhanced if students interact with vocabulary in various ways
        - linguistic and nonlinguistic
        - writing
        - constructing graphic organizers
        - drawings
        - identifying similarities and differences
          - comparing
          - contrasting
          - classifying
          - creating metaphors
          - creating analogies (most complex)
      - Teaching and Using Word Parts
        - helps students determine the meaning of unknown words
      - Different Types of Instruction for Different Types of Words
        -
    - Students Interacting About the Words they Encounter
      - As students discuss they gain a deeper understanding and increase the probability that words will be permanently stored to memory
    - Use of Games
      - present manageable challenges to students
      - arouse curiosity
      - involve a degree of fantasy arousal
    - Focus on Terms Important to Academic Subject
      - list of subject specific words is needed
      - Available in Building Academic Vocabulary by Marzano
- **Academic Vocabulary for the Common Core - Continued**
- **Six-Step Process for Vocabulary Instruction**
  - Based grounded in research and theory
  - used with students of all ages
  - works in self-contained classroom (Primary Level) or content specific classes (Secondary Level)
  - Vocabulary knowledge develops gradually over time.
  - Vocabulary instruction should be thought as a process
  - direct vocabulary instruction does not necessarily have to produce in-depth understanding of vocabulary terms to be useful



- The six step of the vocabulary instruction process
  - Provide a description, explanation, or example of new terms.
    - First determine what students know.
      - Ask: What do you think you know about this term?
    - As students answer the teacher should listen for accurate understanding and misconceptions.
      - Accurate understanding can be incorporated into statements and descriptions the teacher uses later.
      - If there are misconceptions, the teacher can correct and clarify these in her explanation of the term.
    - Explaining Features of Words
      - helps students understand the important features of a word
      - other features may depend on who or what the word refers to
    - There are seven types of words with accompanying questions that teachers can ask students to draw out key features for each word type
      - people
      - events
      - intellectual, artistic, or cognitive products
      - social/societal groups, instructions, or organizations
      - shapes/direction/position
      - quantities/amounts/measurements
  - Ask students to restate the description, explanation, or example in their own words
    - In this step the teacher should asks students to record their own descriptions, explanations, or examples in a vocabulary notebook.
    - Students should think about how they would describe the new term and consider situations or circumstances in their own lives that exemplify the term.
    - Linguistic and Nonlinguistic Representations
      - information is stored in two forms in the brain: logogens and imagens
        - logogens - might contain sentences that use the word, other words related to the word, titles of stories or plays that feature a prominent narrator, or other language-based information
        - imagens - are storage packets that use pictures or images
    - Vocabulary Notebooks
      - where students can record and revise information about vocabulary terms

- can be created in an organized in various ways but should always include the following elements:
  - the term
  - the academic subject the term is related to
  - the category or measurement topic the term is associated with
  - the student's current level of understanding of the term
  - the student's linguistic description of the term
  - the student's nonlinguistic representation of the term
  - words related to the term, such as synonyms or antonyms
- Ask students to construct a picture, symbol, or graphic representing the term or phrase.
  - Nonlinguistic process deepens students' understanding of terms and creates image-based information packets (imagens) in the brains
  - Teachers and students should recognize that different words any require different types of representations.
    - Five nonlinguistic ways to represent terms
      - Sketch a symbol
      - Sketch an example
      - Sketch a cartoon or vignette with a character using the term
      - Sketch a graphic for the term.
    - Several techniques to assist students:
      - Teachers can model appropriate sketches for vocabulary terms
      - Teachers can provide examples of past students' nonlinguistic representations for terms
      - Teachers can provide all students to discuss their ideas for nonlinguistic representations in groups before they work individually on their pictures
      - Teachers can help students look for images on the Internet that represent the terms.
- Engage students periodically in activities that help them add to their knowledge of the term in their vocabulary notebooks.
  - involves activities that help students add to their knowledge of vocabulary terms
  - a teacher might ask students to say or write any words they think of when they hear a target word
  - Identifying Similarities and Differences

- Comparing and Contrasting - Distinguishing between attributes that are the same or different between two or more words or concepts
- Classifying - grouping like items together into categories
  - can be structured or open-ended
  - the key to success is prompting students to group words into categories
- Creating Metaphors - involves finding connections between ideas of concepts that do not appear to be connected on the surface level
  - students should not only create metaphors but also explain their reasoning for the grouping
  - to prompt and facilitate teachers may use a sentence starter.
- Creating analogies - describing the relationship between two items or concepts through comparison
- Examining Affixes and Root Words
  - understanding word parts and how words are constructed has a direct correlation to vocabulary knowledge
  - for confident readers, understand roots and affixes can help students remember words they have learned and assist with uncovering the meaning of unfamiliar terms
  - Three types of word parts are prefixes and suffixes (affixes) and root words.
    - root words - many words in English have Greek or Latin roots. Knowledge of these root word meaning can help student determine the meaning of an unknown word
  - Periodically ask students to discuss the terms with one another.
    - Discussion can
      - be surface
      - correct students' misconceptions about a word
      - help students look at a word from multiple perspectives

- teachers can facilitate effective vocabulary discussion in several ways
  - Role Cards - identifies specific roles in a group that allow students to deepen and extend their knowledge (include specific roles)
  - Paired Thinking - students sharing their thinking about a term in pairs, includes, think-pair-share
    - surfaces misconceptions
  - Inside-Outside Cards - students have a brief conversation with many different peers in a short amount of time about a specific word or concept
- Involve students periodically in games that allow them to play with terms.
  - played with terms previously learned
  - three characteristics of effective games
    - present appropriate and manageable challenges
    - arouse curiosity
    - prompt students to imagine different circumstances and situations
  - This group should share at least 5 examples in detail.

**Activity 3:** In your school groups begin reviewing the information discussed today. Begin developing an action plan for incorporating the information learned today into your next grade level collaborative planning session or next professional development day agenda. Remember this is the beginning stages. You will continue this assignment as homework.

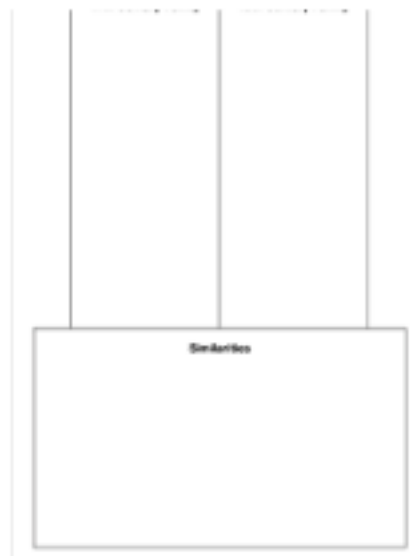
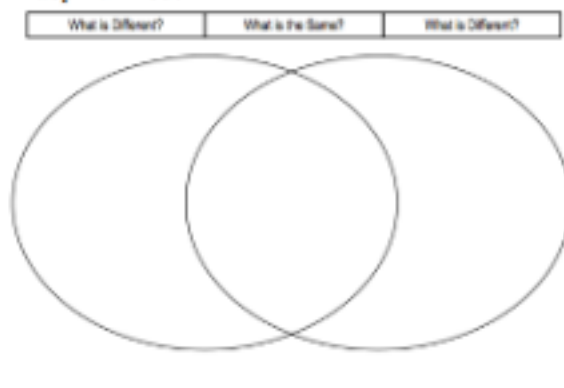
#### References

- Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: research on what works in schools*. Alexandria, VA, USA: ASCD. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Marzano, R. J., & Simms, J. A. (2013). *Vocabulary for the Common Core*. Bloomington, IN, USA: Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>

Facilitator's Guide
<p><b>Session 8 - 3.5 Hours</b>  <b>March</b>  <b>Differentiation Through Visual Cues</b></p>
Objectives
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● learn and apply ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary instruction (visuals cues)</li> </ul>
Participants Materials
<p>Participant's Journal  Graphic Organizer Handout</p>
Outline
<p><b>Engagement:</b></p> <p><b>Activity 1:</b> Our last session provided a tremendous amount of information regarding teaching academic vocabulary. When working with ELLs and SELs visual cues are very important. Today we will learn the importance of language cues, review and review how graphic organizers serve as a visual aide for students acquiring Standard English. We will be by reviewing Language Cue Cards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Language Cue Cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are manipulatives to help students increase their use of productive language (speaking and writing) during instructional activities.</li> <li>○ are a scaffold. Scaffolds are important for ELLs because they bridge the gap between the current level of performance and the intended instructional goal.</li> <li>○ ELLs need explicit instruction in academic language and many opportunities to practice academic language structures in various contexts.</li> <li>○ can be used in instruction in the following ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Before, during, and after reading any text selection</li> <li>■ Productive Language Development Scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PREDICT: You have just been called to the principal's office. What do you <i>think</i> he will say?</li> <li>● INFER: This animal looks like a horse, but has black and white stripes. What do you <i>infer</i> it is?</li> <li>● SUMMARIZE: Share the main points of the TV show you watched last night.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- **Graphic Organizers**

- are visual tools to help students not only organize their thoughts prior to writing, but are also tools that can be used to help students explore vocabulary.
- As discussed on the session on Academic Vocabulary, words can be explored in multiple ways. The use of a graphic organizer can assist with this.
  - Words can be compared and contrasted using a Venn Diagram or the Top Hat Model.



- A T-Chart can be used to allow students to explore what they know about a word before working with and what they learned afterwards.

What I Know	What I Learned

- to identify known words in the text and the student's connection

Words in the Text	My Connection

- A Three-Column Chart can be used to have students explore academic vocabulary through identifying the word, their inference of the meaning, and providing what helped them to make the inference

Difference	Similarity	Difference

- Categorize and Classify vocabulary

<b>Categorize and Classify Chart</b>	
Category:	Category:



**Activity 2: Lecture Notes on Visual Cues**

- Language acquisition, reading, and vocabulary instruction should be fun.
  - Comics can be used (as discussed in our session on academic vocabulary) as an instruction technique because they engage and relax students.
    - cut out comic strip panels and invite students to create their own dialogue.
    - comics add a visual dimension that appeals to all children
    - existing comics can be used or students can be encouraged to create their own
  - Having students illustrate the meaning of words. All academic vocabulary should include a corresponding picture on the word wall. This helps students solidify their knowledge and understanding of the word.
  - Body gestures that mirror vocabulary is also helpful. Provide students with a body gesture that you and they will use when every they state the word. The gesture is visual to the audience and kinesthetic as well.
  - Make sure all words on word walls are arranged to show relationships, this helps students understand vocabulary in context and not in isolation

**Activity 3:** In your school teams begin planning a second Learning Walk of your building. Think about the graphic organizers we have discussed in this class and the use of visual cues for students. Plan your next Learning Walk for your school. This Walk will serve as a Needs Assessment for visual instructional aides within the building.

- Think About the following:
  - Are Graphic Organizers present in our school?
  - Are teachers implementing graphic organizer appropriately?
  - Are teachers using graphic organizers to help students understand academic vocabulary?
  - Has our school considered the use of Language Cues? How could this be beneficial to below grade level Black/SELs?
  - Are Word Walls present in our classrooms? Do students know how to use them? Are they beneficial for below grade level SELs?

**References**

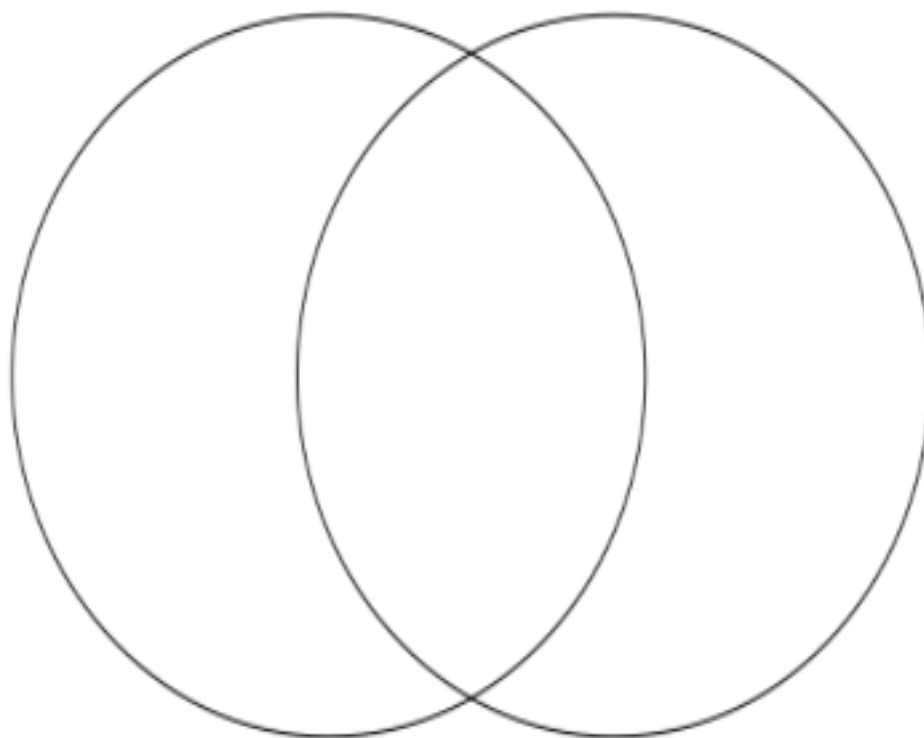
Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.

## Graphic Organizer - 1

Words in the Text	My Connection

## Graphic Organizer - 2

What is Different?	What is the Same?	What is Different?
--------------------	-------------------	--------------------



Graphic Organizer - 3

Difference	Similarity	Difference

Graphic Organizer - 4

Word	We Infer It Means	What Helped Us

Graphic Organizer - 5

## **Categorize and Classify Chart**

Category:	Category:

Facilitator's Guide	
<b>Session 9 - 3.5 Hours</b> <b>April</b> <b>Differentiation Through Technology</b>	
Objectives	
Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● learn and apply: ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary instruction through the use of technology and vocabulary games</li> </ul>	
Participants Materials	
Participant's Journal Laptop or Tablet	Approved Technology Websites for Reading, Language Arts, and Academic Vocabulary
Outline	
<p><b>Introduction:</b> Today's session will provide information on the use of technology as a method for Standard English language and vocabulary acquisition. After a brief lecture, your school team will begin building your Action Plan for next school year. Your teaching team will have this session and the rest of the month to meet and create your plan. Remember to include the information gathered from all of your Learning Walks and Professional Development Sessions implemented this school year. All of this information can be revised and included. Overall, you want a quality plan of action. You have been provided many different methods during this course, select what is best for your school at this time. While you are here today, remember to discuss ideas with your colleagues when you come to an impasse. The work you do today and over the coming month is the foundation for our work as a Cohort next school year.</p> <p><b>Activity 1: Lecture notes - ELLs and Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Technology has the ability to transport students to another world.</li> <li>● Many students are more responsive to technology than humans.</li> <li>● Many children are more knowledgeable about technology than adults.</li> <li>● Children find technology exciting so it is sensible to use this medium to reach them academically.</li> <li>● Technology             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ is multimodality, and possesses <u>multisensory</u> capabilities, which appeals to various learning styles.</li> <li>○ promotes inquiry and problem solving</li> <li>○ enables interactivity</li> <li>○ facilitates acquisition of multidisciplinary vocabulary</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Technology appeals to students because it looks more like a fun activity than schoolwork.</li> <li>● Language learners can interact with the target language at any time, and from any</li> </ul>	

location, without relying on a classroom teacher.

- Streaming media allows stories to come alive unlike in a traditional tangible book.
- Technology has modified language and literacy at the vocabulary level.
- Technology integration ensures high-quality teaching and learning for all students.
  - provides affirming and enriching instructional learning communities
  - expands instruction/learning time and contexts
  - creates global learning communities
  - accommodates variable abilities and learning and teaching styles
  - improves access to information and promotes self-paced and self directed learning
  - adjusts challenge levels for each student
  - linguistics is more accessible
  - Students can enhance their vocabulary in English and other languages
- Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing Applications
  - educational technology is pushing literacy instruction beyond the oral and print-based tradition through the use of audio books, e-books, etc.
  - technology is beneficial in reading instruction because it maintains students' interest while they are engaged in meaningful literacy activities.
  - e-readers allow students to annotate readings and compile word lists as they read
  - Interactive websites allow students the opportunity to hear age-appropriate vocabulary

Review Northeast School District approved technology programs.

**Activity 2:** As a school team, use the knowledge gained during this course to develop a plan of action for using ELL Instructional Strategies with below grade level Black/SELs and primary grade level Black/SELs in your building next school year. Be sure to include the grade levels implementing the strategies, the specific strategies that will be used, your plan for monitoring, meeting, and discussing your data.

#### References

Pandey, A. (2012). Language building blocks: essential linguistics for early childhood practitioners.



## Northeast School District Approved Technology for ELLs

Starfall.com- Reading instruction and reading games for students in Pre-K-1. It's hard to believe this site is free.

Reading is Fundamental. This site has many stories for Pre-K-2 students.

[http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read\\_aloud\\_stories.msp](http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read_aloud_stories.msp)

Storyplace.org -a site with online stories and activities. Grades pre-K-Kindergarten.

<http://www.storyplace.org/preschool/other.asp>

Online Story Time -This site is more for teachers but has many online stories. It is advertised as a pre-school site but the stories are suitable for K-1 students.

<http://www.first-school.ws/theme/onlinestory.htm>

British Council Stories -This site has many stories that are read aloud. Check for spelling and pronunciation differences. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids.htm>

Games on PBS Kids - Games for K-2. "WordPlay" can be used for students in grades 3-4.

<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/>

Storyline Online -A terrific site with stories read by actors from the ScreenActors' Guild.

Grades 1-4. <http://www.storylineonline.net/>

Raz-kids.com-Reading and listening activities for elementary age students.

<http://www.raz-kids.com/main/BookRoomMenu>

**Sites for Grades 3-5****MadLibs for Advanced Beginners in Grades 3-5**

<http://www.funbrain.com/brain/ReadingBrain/ReadingBrain.html>

Reading is Fundamental. Look at the writing activities for students in Grades 2-5.

<http://www.rif.org/educators/activities/online.msp>

**Grammar Gorillas for Advanced Beginners in Grades 3-5**

<http://www.funbrain.com/grammar/index.html>

**Stories for Kids for Advanced Beginners in Grades 3-5**

Postcards from Buster - See Buster's adventures from various places in the U.S. Each city has video, audio, map skills and games. Grades 3-5. <http://pbskids.org/buster/>

Scholastic - A program for kids to make flashcards. Grades 3-8.

<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/flashcards.htm>

Surfing the Net with Kids - Site with games and puzzles in different subject areas.

<http://www.surfnetkids.com/>

Write a book report - Students make a book report sandwich. Grades 4-8.

<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/sandwich.asp>

Spelling Wizard - Use spelling words to make a word search or sentence scramble. Grades

3-6. <http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/spelling.htm>

Poetry - Gives examples of different types of Poetry.

<http://pbskids.org/arthur/games/poetry/what.html>

Science vocabulary - Label pictures using science vocabulary. Grades 4-8.

[http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/maggie\\_science.htm](http://www.scholastic.com/kids/homework/maggie_science.htm)

Grades 3-12. Word Game Intermediate students in grades 5-8.

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmss05/bkb/ewordgame/index.html>

Owl online This is a good grammar site for 6-12

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/interact/index.html>

<b>Facilitator's Guide</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 9 - 3.5 hours</b> <b>May</b> <b>ELL Instructional Strategies for <u>SELs</u> Action Plan</b></p>
<b>Objectives</b>
<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• present their action plans to the cohort</li><li>• celebrate the completion of the Professional Development Series</li></ul>
<b>Participants Materials</b>
Participant's Presentations
<b>Outline</b>
<p><b>Presentation Format</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each school team will present their action plan for 30 minutes. The cohort will be provided 10 minutes to ask clarifying questions.</li><li>• Once all schools have completed their work, the facilitator will make sure that all plans have been uploaded to the Google Site.</li><li>• The cohort will celebrate the completion of the Professional Development Series with refreshments.</li></ul>

## English Language Learner Instructional Strategies for Standard English Learners Course - Needs Assessment

This professional development series is designed to provide instructional leaders and teachers English Language Learner (ELL) instructional strategies that can be used to ensure the success of any students not speaking Standard English. In order to differentiate the course to meet the needs of each individual learner, I am requesting that you complete this brief survey, which will take approximately 10 minutes. Your responses will only be shared with the Program Coordinator and Program Facilitator to ensure that the course sessions include the needs of all learners.

**Name**

Please type your first and last name.

**Current Position**

Please select from the drop down menu.

**E-mail Address**

**As an adult learner, briefly discuss you preferred learning style.**

**Briefly share your understanding of English Language Learners (ELL) and Standard English Language Learners (SEL).**

Briefly share your understanding of ELL strategies.

This professional development series will include face-to-face meetings as well as online discussions via Google Sites. Select the statement that best describes you.

How comfortable are you with Data Warehouse and retrieving student data?

**Submit**

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

# Using ELL Instructional Strategies with Below Grade Level SEL Students

Niki T. Newman-Brown  
Ed.D. Candidate  
Walden University

## Orientation Session Agenda

- Overview of the Course
- Course Description
- Purpose and Goals
- Format
- Syllabus
- Google Site

## Professional Development Series Description

The ELL Instructional Strategies for SEL Students Series is an eleven session professional development course for administrators and teachers in Title I, elementary schools (Kindergarten - Sixth Grade), on the use of ELL Instructional Strategies with below grade level Black/SEL students.

Through a series of monthly workshops, participants will explore cultural proficiency and ELL instructional strategies for use in general education classrooms when differentiating instruction with below grade level, Black/SELs.

## Series Objectives

Participants will:

- gain an understanding of cultural proficiency and its role in their classroom
- learn the correlation between ELL instructional strategies
- learn ELL instructional strategies that promote CRT in the classroom
- learn how students acquire social and academic language
- learn the foundations and language building blocks

## Series Objectives

Participants will:

learn and apply language strategies instructional strategies  
gain an understanding of vocabulary development

learn and apply ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary  
instruction (visual cues)

## Series Description

Participants will:

learn and apply: ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary  
instruction (technology)

learn and apply: ELL instructional strategies to differentiate academic vocabulary  
instruction (vocabulary games)



## Introductions of Cohort

Series Facilitator

Series Coordinator

Cohort Introductions

---

## Series Format

Face-to-Face and Online Formats

Class Google Site

Discussion Board

Assignments

## Series Format

### 2 Pre-service Activities

Online Needs Evaluation

Orientation

### 10 Sessions

1 Pre-Service Orientation

1 Post Service Evaluation

---

## Monthly Series Topics

August - Cultural Proficiency

September - The Correlation Between ELL Instructional Strategies Literacy

October - ELL Instructional Strategies that Promote Culturally Relevant Teaching

November - Language Acquisition Theories and Dialect Acquisition

December - Language Building Blocks and Social versus Academic Language Acquisition

## Monthly Series Topics

January - Language Acquisition - Applying WIDA Standards and Philosophy to Black/SELs in the General Education Classroom

February - Academic Vocabulary - Introduction to Vocabulary Development

March - Academic Vocabulary - Differentiation Through Visual Cues

April - Academic Vocabulary - Differentiation Through Technology and Vocabulary Games

---

## Monthly Series Topics

May - Professional Development Evaluation

## ELL Strategies for SELs - Professional Development Series

Search this site

- Home
- 1. Series Syllabus
- 2. Monthly Assignments
- 3. Reading Assignments (Handouts)
- 5. Discussion Board
- Questions for the Facilitator
- Sitemap

### Home

ELL Instructional Strategies for SELs

ELL Instructional Strategies for SELs

Today October 2015 Print Week Month Agenda

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	Oct 1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time Google Calendar

**Welcome to our page full of fun online activities!**

Please choose a category...

Subpages (5): 1. Series Syllabus 2. Monthly Assignments 3. Reading Assignments (Handouts) 5. Discussion Board Questions for the Facilitator

[Add files](#)

## ELL Instructional Strategies for SEL Session Feedback Form

### Plus

Please identify what went well in this session. Your response may include but is not limited to how you feel about your learning, what helped you learn in this particular session, or what you found most beneficial.

### Delta

Please identify what might be changed to improve the process or activity. Your response may include, but is not limited to what you think you need to learn more about, or what can be done to improve your learning.

### Appreciation

Please provide any appreciation you have for the facilitator regarding this session.

**Submit**

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

## ELL Instructional Strategies for Black/SEL Students - Final Evaluation

Thank you for taking the time to evaluate this professional development series. Your feedback will be used to evaluate and improve the quality of this series. All information is valued, so please be open and honest when responding. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

\* Required

**How many total hours did you spend reading and preparing for each session? \***

- 1 - 2 hours
- 2 - 4 hours
- 6 - 8 hours

**If you would like to expand on your answer to Question 1, please use the response area below.**

**The topics covered in the sessions were useful to my planning and lesson implementation process? \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 2, please use the response area below.

**I had adequate time to access the Series Facilitator \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**The Series Facilitator responded to my questions with in a 24 - 48 hour timeframe. \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 4, please use the space below.

**The Google Site was a helpful resource \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 5, please use the space below.

**My learning style was accommodated \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 6, please use the space below.

**The Series Facilitator was considerate and fair regarding in personal issues that arise and impeded my attendance or assignment submission \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- N/A



If you would like to provide additional information to Question 7, please use the space below.

**I saw growth in my Black/SEL students' literacy scores. \***

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 8, please use the space below.

**Course Content (syllabus, topics, readings, assignments) \***

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely Dissatisfied

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 9, please use the space below.

**Collaborating with Colleagues \***

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely Dissatisfied

If you would like to provide additional information to Question 10, please use the space below.

**Overall Satisfaction with the Professional Development Series \***

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely Satisfied

**Are you willing to present on any of the topics covered during future cohorts?**

This would allow future cohorts to receive information on the continuous implementation of the strategies learned.

- Yes, I am interested
- No, I am not interested

**If you are interest in presenting in the future, please provide your name and e-mail address below.**

**Submit**

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

## Appendix B: Walden University Internal Review Board Approval Letter

5/14/2015

Walden University Mail - IRB Materials Approved - Niki Brown



Niki Brown &lt;niki.brown@waldenu.edu&gt;

---

**IRB Materials Approved - Niki Brown**

6 messages

---

**IRB** <IRB@waldenu.edu>

Wed, Mar 11, 2015 at 6:36 PM

To: Niki Brown &lt;niki.brown@waldenu.edu&gt;, Maureen Ellis &lt;maureen.ellis@waldenu.edu&gt;

Cc: IRB &lt;IRB@waldenu.edu&gt;

Dear Ms. Brown,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Closing the Black/Hispanic Reading Achievement Gap Through Professional Development on English Language Learner Instructional Strategies."

Your approval # is 03-11-15-0068089. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on March 10, 2016. One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

---

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 1 week of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the IRB section of the Walden website: <http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBjzkJMux43pZegKmdIQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBjzkJMux43pZegKmdIQ_3d_3d)

Sincerely,

Libby Munson

Research Ethics Support Specialist

Office of Research Ethics and Compliance

Email: [irb@waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@waldenu.edu)

Fax: 626-605-0472

Phone: 612-312-1283

## Appendix C: Northeast Public Schools Research Study Request Application

[REDACTED] PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
[REDACTED]

Research Application

**Research Title:** Standard English Language Learners: Closing the Black/Hispanic Achievement Gap Through Professional Development on English Language Learner Instructional Strategies.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Type requested information in the spaces provided. Enter check marks in appropriate blocks where answer options are provided. All requests to conduct research must be accompanied by one copy of each of the following: a complete research proposal, summary of that proposal (summary should contain no more than five pages and must include no less than: (1) Research Project Description; (2) Hypotheses/Assumptions; (3) Significance; (4) Methodology/Procedures; and (5) Specific Benefits to PGCPS), completed research application, parental consent form/letter, and all data gathering instruments. Please note that failure to provide all requested information will affect the time required to process your research application.

**A. IDENTIFICATION OF APPLICANT**

1. Name of Applicant

Mr.     Mrs.     Miss     Ms.     Dr.

Home Address 13480 Lord Dumbore Place Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Home Telephone Number 301 - 518-5861  
Area Code                      Number

Business Address [REDACTED]

Zip Code 2 [REDACTED]

Business Telephone 301 - 518-5861  
Area Code                      Number

Business Fax -

E-mail address Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu  
Area Code                      Number

Your Professional Position (check one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> Professor
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Asst.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/> Research Associate
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Director	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher/Intern	Other (please specify)

2. a) Are you employed by the Prince George's County Public Schools?  
 Yes                       No
- b) If yes, check which of these answers applies to you?  
 Full-time employee       Part-time Employee  
 Employee on Leave
3. Indicate whether you are proposing this study as:
- A PGCPSS Office, Department or Program Unit
- \_\_\_\_\_
- (please specify)
- In response to a request for proposals (RFP) or grant announcement.
- Specify source of RFP: \_\_\_\_\_
- An individual researcher
- An external research organization
4. a) Are you proposing this study in connection with the degree requirements of a college or a university, for yourself or any other person(s)?
- Yes (If yes, answer parts b and c of this question.)  
 No (If no, skip to question 5.)
- b) Which degree requirements?  
 Masters                       Doctoral                       Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(please specify)
- c) Who is your advisor or committee chairperson?
- Name Dr. Maureen Ellis                      Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Institution Walden University
- Department in Institution Richard W. Riley School of Education and Leadership
- d) What is the approval status of your proposal at your college or university?
- Formally approved (attach approval form)  
 Approved by advisor but not yet by dissertation committee  
 Not yet at the approval stage  
 Other (specify)

**B. PROPOSED STUDY FRAMEWORK**

1. Title of Research Standard English Language Learners: Closing the Black/Hispanic Achievement Gap Through Professional Development On English Language Learner Instructional Strategies

2. The area of research (Sp. Ed., Mathematics, cognition, teacher in-service, etc.):

- Special Education             Mentoring
- Multicultural Education        Instructional Personnel
- School Climate                  Guidance/Counseling
- Early Childhood Education      Adolescent Pregnancy
- SAFE Drug Free Education      Other (specify) Reading, Achievement Gap

3. Hypotheses and/or objectives of research The purpose of this study is to collect data from Title I principals that will lead to the development of a systemic professional development program to decrease the Black/Hispanic achievement through the use of ELL strategies with both ELL and SEL students.

4. Type of school research site(s) required:

- Intact Classrooms             Student's home environment
- Other (specify) An actual school will not be used for this study, only the responses of principals.

5. Name (if known)/type of proposed PGCPSS school/site(s):  
The proposed PGCPSS sites will include 2 - 5 Title I Elementary Schools. The number of schools will be based on the responses in the initial questionnaire.

6. Proposed starting date October 2014

7. Proposed completion date January 2015  
(Proposals approved for one year; must request extension if needed)

**C. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBJECTS**

1. Will pupils be required as subjects for this study?  
 Yes (If yes, answer parts a, b, c and d of this question.)  
 No (If no, skip to question 2.)

a) Enter grade and number of students requested under the headings provided here. **(This information must be provided if student subjects are included.)**

			Total
Grade _____	Male _____	Female _____	_____
Grade _____	Male _____	Female _____	_____
Grade _____	Male _____	Female _____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____

- b) Check and describe any specific criteria for selection of students to take part in the study:

Ability level (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Socioeconomic level(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ethnic, racial background \_\_\_\_\_  
 Physical characteristics \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clinically identified conditions \_\_\_\_\_  
 History of personal problems (explain): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- c) Procedures which will be used to gather data from students:

Group Testing                       Questionnaires  
 Individual testing                 Observation  
 Interviews - face to face         Inventories  
 Interviews - telephone          Other (specify)

- d) Are file data on students required?

Yes                                       No

If yes, specify tests, scores, type(s) of other information and the period for which data are needed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Will school staff, parents, or former students be subjects in the study?

Yes (If yes, answer parts a, b, c, and d of this question.)  
 No (If no, skip to E)

- a) Give subject category and number (REQUIRED):

Subjects	Total Number of Subjects
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Teachers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Counselors	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School-based Administrators	approximately 4 - 5 Title I Elementary School Principals
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Office Administrators	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents	_____

- b) Are file data on staff requested?             Yes             No  
 (If yes, specify and discuss how data will be used)

- c) Are file data on parents requested?         Yes             No  
 (If yes, specify and discuss how data will be used)

- d) Are archival data on former students or graduates and/or their families requested?                                       Yes             No  
 (If yes, specify and discuss how data will be used)





2. What instructional materials will be used for research purposes? (Specify or indicate "none.")  None

**F. ATTACHMENTS**

Check items which you are attaching to this application:

- One copy of application  
 One complete proposal (REQUIRED)  
 One copy of the proposal summary (REQUIRED)  
 Parental consent letter/form (In addition to a space for the parent's or guardian's signature, the parent consent form **MUST** have spaces to write out the student's and the parent/guardian's name)  
 All instruments  
 Thesis committee approval form (STUDENT REQUIREMENT)  
 Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**G. SIGNATURES**

1. Studies proposed by School System employees require the signature of the applicant's immediate PGCPSS supervisor (i.e., principal, director, regional director, etc.).

Acknowledged: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Office/School \_\_\_\_\_

2. SIGNATURE OF THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The following is to be signed by the chairperson of the applicant's thesis committee:

I have reviewed the enclosed research proposal and find it to be technically competent, theoretically sound, and significant in focus.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: A copy of the results of the proposal review will be sent to the above-named chairperson.**

3. APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I understand that acceptance of this request for approval of a research proposal in no way obligates Prince George's County Public Schools to participate in this research. I also understand that approval does not constitute commitment of resources or

endorsement of the study or its findings by the school system or by the School Board.

I acknowledge that participation in research studies by students, parents, and school staff is voluntary. I will preserve the anonymity of all participants in the reporting of this study. I will not reveal the identity or include identifiable characteristics of schools or of the school system unless authorized by the Testing, Research and Evaluation office.

I have read Board Policy 5125.4 and Administrative Procedure 4131.34 and understand that I must comply with all requirements as stated. If approval is granted, I will abide by all Prince George's County Public Schools policies and regulations and will conduct this research within the stipulations accompanying any letter of approval. At the completion of the study, I will provide Prince George's County Public Schools with one (1) bound copy of the research results.

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant' Signature

Date

**Please send one (1) copy each of: this application, complete proposal, proposal summary, parental consent form/letter, and data gathering instruments to:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & EVALUATION**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**SCHOOL LANE, ROOM 202-C**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Project Study Information Session E-mail

**Niki T. Brown, Walden University**



Phone: 301-518-5861 • E-Mail: [Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu](mailto:Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu)

Dear Principal \_\_\_\_\_,

I am conducting a research project on the perspectives of Title I elementary school principals on the use of ELL strategies with SEL learners to close the Black/Hispanic achievement gap. The project is entitled *Standard English Language Learners: Closing the Black/Hispanic Reading Achievement Gap Through Professional Development on English Language Learner Instructional*. You may already know me as the Principal at \_\_\_\_\_ but this study is separate from that role. I am also a Doctoral student at Walden University.

This letter is an invitation to a brief informational meeting on Day, Month XX, 2014 at \_\_\_\_\_ campus at 3:00 p.m.

Please note that your participation will be voluntary and at your own discretion. Your decision of whether or not you choose to attend will be respected. This is not a recruitment meeting but an opportunity to provide an introduction to the study. If you have any questions or need further explanation about the study, do not hesitate to contact me by email [Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu](mailto:Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu) or by telephone at (301) 518-5861

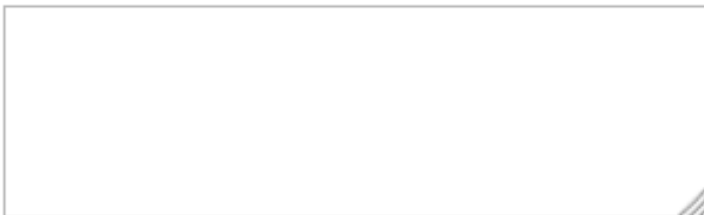
Sincerely,

Niki T. Brown

## Appendix E: Focus Group Interview Guide

## Focus Group Interview Guide

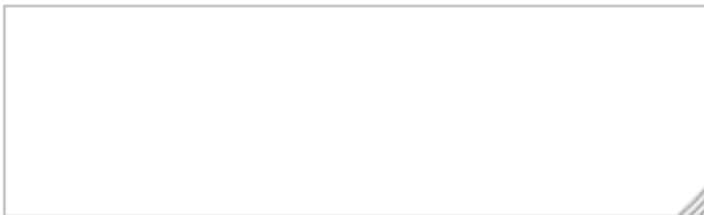
**Explain how current ELL instructional strategies impact Hispanic student achievement in reading.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent's answer to the first question. The bottom-right corner of the box is clipped with a diagonal line.

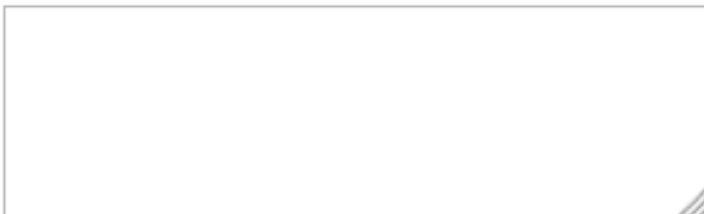
**Discuss the types of professional development previously delivered and its effects on ensuring that Black and Hispanic students are reading successfully (on grade level)?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent's answer to the second question. The bottom-right corner of the box is clipped with a diagonal line.

**Discuss the types of professional development previously delivered and its effects on ensuring that Black and Hispanic students are reading successfully (on grade level)?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent's answer to the third question. The bottom-right corner of the box is clipped with a diagonal line.

**Discuss the types of professional development you feel should be implemented to ensure that all Black and Hispanic students are reading successfully (on grade level)?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent's answer to the fourth question. The bottom-right corner of the box is clipped with a diagonal line.

## Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

## Project Study Interview Guide: Principals' Feedback Regarding the Hispanic/Black Achievement Gap

Purpose: This study is being conducted by Niki T. Brown a doctoral candidate at Walden University. As an educator, assisting all schools with eliminating the Black/Hispanic achievement gap through instructional professional development is of the utmost importance.

Date

Interviewee

Time of Interview

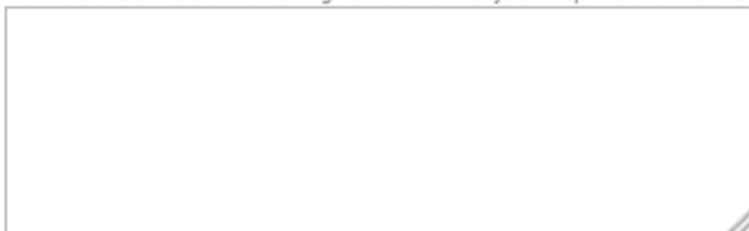
Type of Interviews

**What specific instructional strategies have your teachers used to move reading student achievement with Black students?**

How are these instructional strategies different of the same from those used with Hispanic students?

**Prior to hiring, do you feel your teachers were prepared to serve students who are simultaneously learning English and academic content?**

How has this affected the reading achievement of your Hispanic and Black students?



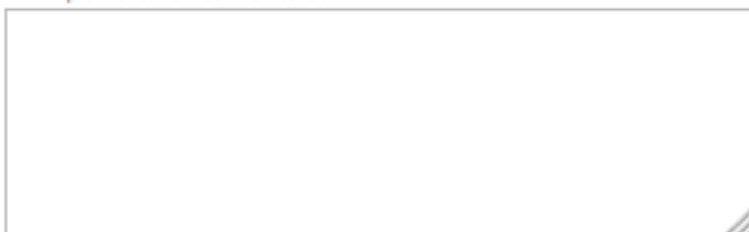
**Describe the differences between the way in which teachers deliver instruction to Standard English Language Learners (ex. Black student) and English Language Learners (Hispanic students) during the early childhood grades (Pre-K and Kindergarten)?**

How does this impact vocabulary growth in Black and Hispanic students?

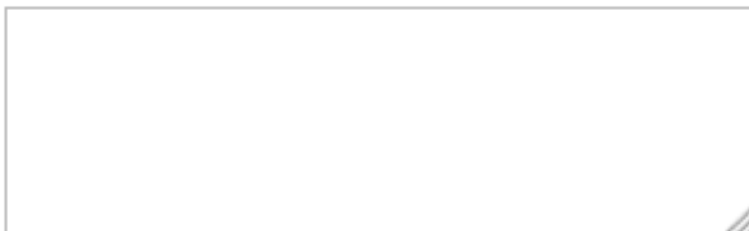


**What systemic professional development is needed for administrators and teachers to effectively and equitably deliver reading instruction to Hispanic and Black students?**

What would be the model for this professional development? How frequently should it take place? How will implementation be monitored?



**Clarification question based on individual principal's questionnaire responses.**



**Clarification question based on individual principal's focus group responses.**

**Clarification question based on individual principal's focus group responses.**

**Clarification question based on individual principal's focus group responses.**

**Submit**

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*



## Appendix G: Interview Research Log

## Interview Research Log

Purpose: This log will be used to identify logistical information regarding each one-on-one interview.

**Date**

**Participant**

**Length of Interview**

**Recording File Name**

**Researcher's Reflection**

Submit

## Appendix H: Focus Group Interview Research Log

## Focus Group Interview Research Log

Purpose: This log will be used to identify logistical information regarding each one-on-one interview.

**Date**

**Participant**

**Length of Interview**

**Recording File Name**

**Researcher's Reflection & Follow-Up Questions**

**Submit**

*Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

---

Appendix I: Northeast School District Research Approval Letter



Great By Choice

Director, Dept. of Research & Evaluation

November 21, 2014

Ms. Niki T. Brown  
13480 Lord Dunbore Place  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Dear Ms. Brown:

Your request to conduct the research entitled "*Standard English Language Learners: Closing the Black/Hispanic Achievement Gap Through Professional Development on English Language Learner Instructional Strategies*" has been reviewed by [redacted] research application reviewers. Based on the examination, I am pleased to inform you that the Department of Research & Evaluation has granted authorization for you to proceed with your study.

Authorization for this research extends through the 2014-2015 school year only. If you are not able to complete your data collection during this period, you must submit a written request for an extension. We reserve the right to withdraw approval at any time or decline to extend the approval if the implementation of your study adversely impacts any of the school district's activities. It is important that the procedure detailed in your proposal and related documents submitted be followed while conducting your study. Should you change the procedure, the revised procedure must be approved by this office before being implemented.

An abstract and one copy of the final report should be forwarded to the Department of Research & Evaluation within one month of successful defense of your dissertation. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at 301-780-6807 or by email, [redacted] I wish you success in your study.

Sincerely,

Director, Department of Research & Evaluation

KKS:kks

cc: Lisa D. Price, PMP, CGPM, BSP, Executive Director

[redacted]

## Appendix J: Peer Debriefing Confidentiality Form

Niki Brown, Walden University

Phone: 301-518-5861 E-Mail: Niki.Brown@waldenu.edu



**Peer Debriefing's  
Confidentiality Agreement**

IRB #: 03-11-15-0068089

Project Study Title:

Researcher: Niki T. Newman-Brown

I Dr. Tara E. Minter, the Peer Debriefing understand that I will be reviewing participants' responses from confidential interviews. The individuals who participated in this research project have revealed the information on these tapes on good faith that the information would remain strictly confidential. I agree to:

1. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., excerpts of transcripts from participants' responses) with anyone other than the researcher.
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., excerpts of transcripts from participants' responses) secure while it is in my possession.
3. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., electronic or printed documents) to the researcher when I have completed the research tasks.
4. After consulting with researcher, I will erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the researcher (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).

Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

Peer Debriefing

Dr. Tara Minter

Print name

Dr. Tara Minter

Signature

7/13/15

Date

This study has been reviewed and approved for human subject participation by the Walden University IRB. If you have questions or concerns about this study please contact the principal investigator. If you have questions regarding participant's rights, please contact the Walden University Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210.