



What Makes for Quality Education for English Learners in the 21st Century?

What Needs To Be Included and What Actions Can We Take:
Lessons Learned from the Past and New ideas for Today

Open Space Report: Chicago

As a convener, we would like you to put together a short report from your group describing the following:

1. **Names of group members**

Yesenia Vazquez
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Luisiana Melendez
Leah Radinsky
Reyna Hernandez

2. **Issue/Topic/Activity**

Early Childhood Bilingual Education Issues and Recommendations

3. **Highlights of Discussion/Recommendations/Next Action Steps**

- **People who are bilingual/ bicultural should be at the table making decisions/ affecting policy/ creating assessments and curriculum**
- **There should be a more holistic approach to teaching bilingual/early childhood ed, including topics of special education, etc.**
- **Federal recommendations on issues surrounding bilingual early childhood ed**
- **Make information available for other states implementing bilingual early childhood**
- **Raise awareness of the need for bilingual ed in early childhood years**
- **There is little research available to guide thinking and policy for children 0-5**
- **Outreach to parents of ELLs is difficult**
- **Identification of ELLs at young age is a challenge**
- **There are issues around access to Pre-K, assessment, and program alignment**
- **Risk of ELLs losing L1 , losing parent/culture connections**
- **Identity development and culture is learned through language**
- **We know the advantages of bilingualism, however we need to identify the best practices for implementation at the 3-5 age level**
- **Misunderstandings and misconceptions need to be dispelled, through parent education, teacher education, and media representation and reporting on issues of bilingualism**
- **There is a lack of high quality teacher ed on topics of bilingualism – needs to be addressed**

Available Resources

- Local initiatives, such as BEWL are integrating all types of language ed
- Dual language initiatives are being built, Pre-K is ideal starting point
- Headstart is open to dual language and bilingual models
- ESEA – We need to integrate ELL issues, build into ESEA
- Faculty forums: Initiatives to bring together educators from various fields
- SALSA – Spanish language assessments are being developed
- Universities are building more bilingual/early childhood programs at undergraduate and graduate levels (Erickson, National Louis, DePaul), others beginning (UIC)

4. Follow-up requests

5. Next steps/Action Items/Recommendations

- Invite Dept. of Education to Illinois to discuss issues, expansion of Illinois model for bilingual Pre-K
- Seek out, push for more funds earmarked for early childhood ELL education, to encourage action at state level
- Open conversations locally and across states to address early childhood bilingual education, using Illinois as model for PreK bilingual ed
- Identify statewide/nationwide guidelines for Early childhood/ Bilingual ed, that include parental involvement piece
- Request for Special Education national organizations to develop bilingual SpEd guidelines
- Address the issues of over-assessment of young children, and look into more developmentally appropriate assessment tools
- Create a national network of resources and research on Early Childhood / Bilingual issues, with a localized site that is palatable, sensitive to public response using national funds, and organization such as Opportunity Agenda to help develop this
- The early childhood developmental perspective should trickle up to kinder and beyond for more meaningful data, assessment and accountability tools
- Identify potential bilingual teachers at the High School level
- Create high school parenting classes including topics of bilingualism
- Low incidence language issues need to be brought to table

6. Please type in this report in one of the laptops and hand in this sheet. Thanks!