

Florida Department of Education  
Office of School Improvement  
“Ride the Wave” to Success in the Classroom



**Strategies that Enhance Success  
for Limited English Proficient Students**

The Studies of Education Reform Program supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research, conducted research to identify exemplary schooling characteristics for language minority students. The report, authored by Beverly McLeod, identified the following common characteristics of exemplary programs.

***Characteristics of Exemplary Programs for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students***

**Inclusion**

Whether in the majority or minority, LEP students are viewed as full participants in the academic and social life of the school.

Through creative grouping processes, schools offer LEP students opportunities for specialized instruction geared to their particular needs combined with meaningful integration into all-English instructional environments.

**Enrichment**

Students are engaged in intellectually enriching activities in both English and their native language.

All students are expected to achieve high standards in English literacy and other academic areas. LEP students are not placed in remedial or basic skills instructional classes.

**Flexibility**

Schools implement innovative strategies to organize time and instructional resources.

In response to the needs of the students, instructional staff design and implement more appropriate and complex programs of study.

**Coordination**

Teachers of LEP and English proficient students coordinate both horizontally and vertically, meeting regularly to develop their programs collaboratively. Teachers of the same grade level or same academic subject are provided common planning times.

**Internal Impetus**

The teachers, principal and parents are the driving force and key players in reforming the school's program and designing and implementing innovative curricular and instructional approaches.

There is an atmosphere of inclusiveness, providing all students with an enriched academic program, responding flexibly to student characteristics and needs, and working with a high degree of coordination.

***School Strategies for Ensuring Access to High Quality Teaching for LEP Students***

- ◆ Encourage English acquisition
  - » Plan student transition from one language environment to another carefully utilizing an identified series of steps, in a supported and individualized environment.
  - » Place less emphasis on the students' classification as LEP or FEP (fluent English proficient) than on their competent and confident progress in English.
- ◆ Address students' social and emotional needs by implementing programs such as advisor-advisee.

## ***More Successful Strategies***

- ◆ Emphasize Meaningful Communication
  - » Engage all students, regardless of their proficiency in English, in thought-provoking literacy activities designed to produce highly competent readers, writers, and thinkers.
  - » Encourage students to use language to communicate meaningfully, allowing them to use their native language to ask or answer questions when they are unable to do so in English.
  - » Utilize curricular themes that are relevant to the students' lives and cross academic disciplines: engaging students' interest and motivation, increasing opportunities for natural conversation, and allocating larger chunks of time for in-depth study.
- ◆ Deliver Grade-level Content
  - » Subscribe to the notion that all students are capable of a high level of serious scholarship and offer rigorous curriculum to all students.
  - » Provide instruction, or frequent clarification, in the students' native language.
  - » Provide instructional materials in the students' native language.
- ◆ Organize instruction in innovative ways, examples include:
  - » schools within a school
  - » block scheduling
  - » flexible student grouping
- ◆ Utilize all resources including time, personnel and materials wisely.
- ◆ Protect and extend instructional time by:
  - » reducing class interruptions
  - » providing enrichment programs, before and after school, and summer programs
  - » implementing modified school schedules and calendars
- ◆ Expand teachers' roles and responsibilities, teachers as:
  - » researchers
  - » directors of curriculum
  - » professional development planners
- ◆ Utilize effective teaching strategies including:
  - » cooperative learning
  - » teachers trained in second language acquisition
  - » use of technology
- ◆ Involve parents
  - » Encourage their participation in the life of the school.
  - » Communicate with them in their language when possible.

**Information courtesy of the Office of Multicultural Student Language Education, Florida Department of Education. For more information contact the Florida Department of Education Office of School Improvement:**

**(850) 487-1023, SC 277-1023 or  
<http://osi.fsu.edu>**

## ***Additional Resources and References***

- Florida Department of Education, Office of School Improvement. *Multicultural Educational Programs That Work*. Florida: 1996.
- McLeod, B. *School Reform and Student Diversity: Exemplary Schooling for Language Minority Students*. California: NCBE Resource Collection Series, February, 1996.
- Office of Multicultural Student Language Education, Florida Department of Education. 850-487-8533 SC 277-8533

