

engage^{ny}

Our Students. Their Moment.

English Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Board of Regents October 20, 2014



BRIEF OVERVIEW

What We Know:

- Early childhood education plays an essential role in preparing young English Language Learners (ELL) for success in school and later in life.
- Prekindergarten is a time of language discovery and multi-language opportunities.
- Research links preschool education to positive outcomes in both social and academic measures.

Committee on Bilingual Education in Prekindergarten Programs

Established in May of 2014 to address the following:

- Promotion of English Language Learners' receptive and productive oral and literacy development
- Values on the nature and advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism
- Incorporation of bilingualism into prekindergarten classrooms
- Incorporation of academically and linguistically relevant instruction into the Prekindergarten curriculum

The Teacher's Perspective

- **Our Communities**
- **Two growing needs: UPK and preparation for the instruction of ELLs**
- **In my Kindergarten classroom...**

Research

Additive Bilingualism

- ❖ When students are able to maintain their (home) language while acquiring their second language, the result is additive bilingualism. (Lambert, W. 1975)
- ❖ Students who experience additive bilingualism experience cognitive benefits, including greater metacognitive ability, greater mental flexibility, concept formation, creativity, analogical reasoning, visual spatial skills, and problem-solving. Cummins (1981)
- ❖ Additive bilingualism also positively affects a student's self-esteem.

Research

Critical Elements in Fostering Cognitive Development for English Language Learners

- Home language maintenance
- Academic English language development
- Parent engagement in the process

Alignment

New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core Learning Standards (EngageNY)

•“The primary purpose of prekindergarten standards is to ensure that all children, including children with disabilities... and English Language Learners (ELLs) have rich and varied early learning experiences that prepare them for success in school and lay the foundation for college and career readiness” (at page 6).

•It is “essential to encourage continued first language development in our children by providing them with appropriate education settings such as a bilingual classroom or integrated English as a Second Language (ESL) program, which support language and literacy learning in English.” (at page 7)

Guiding Principles

Six Research-Based Guiding Principles Serving the Needs of English Learners in Preschool “School Readiness” Programs

Principle #1 A child’s home language is a crucial foundation for cognitive development, learning about the world, and emerging literacy.

Principle #2 A learning environment that facilitates social-emotional growth and affirms a child’s culture and language is essential for full participation and healthy identity development.

Principle #3 One language is enhanced by another- therefore, effective programs provide intentional support and access to opportunities to learn in, whenever possible, both the home language and in English.

Guiding Principles

Principle #4 Effective approaches for linguistic and cultural congruity build strong home-school partnerships and support parents as a child's first teacher.

Principle #5 High quality, research-based professional development is needed in order for teachers, paraprofessionals and early childhood caregivers to meet the needs of preschool age English Learners and their families.

Principle #6 Culturally, developmentally and linguistically appropriate assessment is essential for effective, quality early childhood education.

*Developed through the Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center,
Spring 2005*

Research Informing Action

- **We know of the effectiveness of Pre-K education – seminal studies**
- **In our own state – UPK is associated with gains in ELA & Math**
- **Expanding UPK requires planning for Linguistically Diverse children**
 - In 2013 in New York, over 146,000 children ages 0 to 5 spoke languages other than English in their homes
 - Enrollment of “Limited English Proficient” children in half and full day Kindergarten exceeded 24,000 for that year
- **The cross-system nature of UPK**
 - UPK Guidelines are designed to generate collaboration
 - Nearly 60% of UPK classrooms were operated in Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
- **Guidance and Support Unique to the UPK System**
 - Reliably implementing initiatives across very different settings
 - Building towards a common understanding of language acquisition and bilingualism

Identifying Language Learners and Planning for Instruction

- **Language Learning**
 - At age 4 all language is emerging
 - Quantifying who is *Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced or Proficient* in the English language is fraught with complications
 - Consideration of the home language
- **Planning for Instruction**
 - Who is this child “linguistically?”
 - Specially developed Home Language Questionnaire
 - Social History
 - Interviews & Observations
- **Instruction**
 - Maintenance of the Home Language
 - “Bilingualism in Education”
- **Rolling it Out**
 - Guidance from UPK
 - Professional Development: Building towards a common understanding of language acquisition and bilingualism

A District's Perspective

- **Benefits of bilingual education and prekindergarten education**
- **Program development with guidance and support from State and local partners**
- **Resources that are academically and linguistically appropriate**
- **Tapping into students' language strengths at the prekindergarten level is critical**

We know that a new language can only be as strong as the home language

감사합니다 Natick
Danke Ευχαριστίες Dalu
Grazie Thank You Köszönöm
Tack
Спасибо Dank Gracias
谢谢 Merci Seé
ありがとう

Obrigado