



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee
FROM: John B. King, Jr.
SUBJECT: Raising the Achievement of English Language Learners
DATE: October 28, 2010
STRATEGIC GOAL: Goals 1 and 2
AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Will the Board of Regents approve staff developing a legislative proposal in support of additional resources and strategies needed to raise the achievement of English Language Learners (ELLs)?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Review of Policy

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the November 2010 meeting.

Background Information

In the past five years, schools in New York State have experienced a steady increase in the number of English Language Learners (ELLs). The number of ELL students has increased 33%, from 220,000 in 2005 to 293,334 in 2010. The number of school districts serving ELLs has increased 31%, from 420 in 2005 to 552 in 2010. In the last year, the number of charter schools serving ELLs increased 28%, from 88 in 2009 to 113 in 2010. Forty-nine (49) percent of Persistently Lowest-Achieving (PLA) schools serve an ELL student population of at least 10%; 20% of PLAs serve ELL student populations of at least 20%. The achievement gap between ELL students and the overall student population is immense. ELLs' proficiency levels in core subjects, as measured by national and state assessments, are well below the proficiency levels of the total student population. (Attachment A)

Current Programmatic Resources / Strategies

The Department has developed an array of resources and strategies to help meet the diverse needs of English Language Learners. These resources include efforts to support effective instruction, teacher and administrator development, program evaluation and technical assistance. These efforts are aligned to the New York State Education Department P-12 Strategic Vision of the Board of Regents and the Commissioner, with special focus on meeting the learning needs of ELLs in high need schools and districts. Current programmatic resources and strategies include (Attachment B):

- Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) Technical Assistance Centers (BETACs)
- Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute
- Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Education
- Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Special Education
- Bilingual/ESL Teacher Leadership Academy I (BETLA I)
- Bilingual/ESL Teacher Leadership Academy II (BETLAII)
- Limited English Proficient / English Language Learner Program Evaluation Toolkit (LEP/ELL PET)
- Supplemental Middle School /High School LEP/ELL Grants
- Two-Way Grants
- ARRA Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Competitive Grant Projects
- Bilingual Special Education Specialists in the Regional Special Education Technical Assistance and Support Centers (RSE-TASC)
- Bilingual School Psychology Support Center
- Speech-Language and Bilingual Speech-Language Personnel Development Technical Assistance Center
- Response to Intervention Initiative
- University Training Program Enrollment and Capacity Survey

NYS Race to the Top (RTTT) Resources / Strategies which support ELLs

The award of the Race to the Top funding allows the New York State Education Department P-12 Strategic Vision to be implemented at a more rapid pace. The key areas of focus are: the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and CCSS for Mathematics, both with the additional K-12 recommendations; Curriculum; P-20 Data System; Great Teachers and Leaders; and School Innovation. Throughout these four assurance areas, the unique learning needs of ELLs will be addressed (Attachment C).

Proposed new resources / strategies to support ELLs

In order to expand resources and strategies to support the diverse learning needs of ELLs, the following three strategies are proposed to be included in the Board of Regents Legislative Agenda for 2011. The strategies include:

- Parent Education Initiative
 - Provide parents with educational programs to increase their own proficiency in the English language (including English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and General Educational Development (GED) programs).
 - Provide activities for parents that will demonstrate ways in which they can support their children's learning outcomes.
 - Provide workshops for parents about setting and achieving goals for college readiness.

- Teacher Recruitment Strategy
 - Subsidize credits for the SED bilingual education extension certificate or English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certificate requirements that provide teachers with the skills and knowledge to supply appropriate services to ELLs. The following options are available for teachers who have a master's degree, hold a valid teaching certificate and are enrolled in a NYS-approved college program:
 - For a Supplementary Bilingual Education Extension Certificate: 1) subsidize a 3-credit course for teachers, who are accepted into an approved NYS Bilingual Education program to receive a supplementary bilingual education extension while working on their full bilingual education extension, or 2) subsidize a maximum of 15 semester hours for the full bilingual education extension certificate. Teachers must pass the Bilingual Education Assessment (BEA) to receive a bilingual extension.
 - For a Supplementary ESOL Certificate: 1) subsidize coursework required for certified elementary teachers with a bilingual extension, or 2) subsidize a maximum of 15 semester hours to receive an accelerated ESOL certification. Teachers must pass the Content Specialty Test for English to Speakers of Other Languages to receive the Supplementary or full ESOL certificate.
 - Target additional resources to recruitment of Bilingual and ESOL teachers.

- Virtual / Blended Learning
 - Develop a high quality pilot program to use virtual/blended learning as a strategy for improving the achievement of ELLs. Currently, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Competitive Grant Projects is one of the programmatic strategies for ELLs. Projects have four theme-oriented, evidence-based priorities, one of which supports limited English proficiency/English language learners (LEP/ELLs) and students with disabilities. The intent of this pilot will be to increase opportunities for ELLs to benefit from virtual / blended learning.

Next Steps

Staff will be directed to fully develop legislative proposals in each area identified by the Board of Regents. These will be included in the 2011 Department Legislative Agenda.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Proficiency Levels of ELLs

Attachment B: Current Programmatic Resources / Strategies for ELLs

Attachment C: NYS Race to the Top Resources / Strategies which support ELLs

Attachment D: Percent Change in Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers 2000-01 and 2008-09

Proficiency Levels of ELLs

Figure 1

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Proficiency Levels				
	Grade 4 Reading Percent Proficient (2007)	Grade 4 Math Percent Proficient (2009)	Grade 8 Reading Percent Proficient (2007)	Grade 8 Math Percent Proficient (2009)
ELLs	5%	13%	1%	5%
All Students	36%	40%	32%	34%

Figure 2

2010 State Assessment Proficiency Levels				
	Grade 4 ELA Percent Proficient	Grade 4 Math Percent Proficient	Grade 8 ELA Percent Proficient	Grade 8 Math Percent Proficient
ELLs	20%	36%	4%	24%
All Students	57%	64%	51%	55%

Current Programmatic Resources / Strategies for ELLs

Bilingual/ESL Technical Assistance Centers (BETACs)

Fourteen (14) BETACs statewide provide services to school districts to enhance the quality of education for ELL students. BETACs work with districts to develop programs that promote equity and excellence and help ELL students meet the expectations established in the State's standards. In that capacity, BETACs provide technical assistance, disseminate information, conduct staff development activities for educators and workshops for parents, and assist districts in planning and implementing regional and statewide activities.

Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute

The Institute is designed to promote and develop leadership and public speaking skills in Hispanic high school students throughout New York State. Two hundred students participate in training sessions organized in their home districts and acquire an understanding of the NYS legislative process in order to become more involved in public policy issues. The students attend a three-day institute in Albany where they meet legislators and debate legislative bills in a mock assembly.

Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Education

The Intensive Teacher Institute is designed to increase the pool of certified bilingual and ESL teachers by providing tuition assistance for up to 15 credits of study in designated colleges and universities with registered teacher education programs leading to State certification. As of August 2010, 229 graduate and 40 undergraduate students from across the State were participating in the Intensive Teacher Institute.

Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Special Education

The Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Special Education is designed to increase the pool of 1) certified special education teachers, teachers of students with speech and language disabilities, school psychologists, counselors and social workers with bilingual extensions; and 2) special education teachers with ESL certification by providing tuition assistance for up to 15 credits of study in designated colleges and universities with registered teacher education programs leading to State certification. Funding is also provided for bilingual paraprofessionals and full-time bilingual undergraduate students seeking initial certificates necessary to work with English language learners with disabilities. As of July 2010, 145 professionals, 30 paraprofessionals and eight undergraduate students from across the State were participating in the Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Special Education.

Bilingual/ESL Teacher Leadership Academy (BETLA I)

The BETLA I was created to instill leadership skills in exemplary teachers, who then work to support fellow teachers and administrators regarding the educational needs of ELLs. Teachers and leaders refine their practice in their own classrooms, which are used as school labs for bilingual and ESL instruction, as they support high achievement for all students. There are currently 30 participants from across the State in BETLA I.

Bilingual/ESL Teacher Leadership Academy (BETLA II)

A new Bilingual/ESL Teacher Leadership Academy for Westchester County and Long Island will train aspiring administrators with a focus on the educational needs of ELLs. There are currently 25 participants in BETLA II.

Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners Program Evaluation Toolkit (LEP/ELL PET)

The LEP/ELL PET is a comprehensive document that will make sure the instructional quality and academic rigor of bilingual education and freestanding ESL programs are aligned with State regulations (CR Part 154; EL 3204, 3602; CR Parts 100, 117, 200; CR Parts 80.9 and 80.10) and federal mandates (NCLB Titles I and III). It provides professional development for school leadership, instructional staff, and all other service providers working with LEP/ELL students. It also helps districts with compliance requirements.

Supplemental MS/HS LEP/ELL Grants

The Middle and High School LEP/ELL Grants initiative will focus on the development of before and/or after school tutorial programs or Saturday tutorial programs to help LEP/ELLs meet the NYS standards and graduation requirements.

Two-Way Grants

Two-Way grants integrate limited English proficient (LEP) with English proficient (EP) students in an instructional program which uses two languages for instruction with the goal of academic excellence and bilingual proficiency and bi-literacy (proficiency in two languages) for both groups of students.

ARRA Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Competitive Grant Projects

New York State has distributed, on a competitive basis, \$47.6 million of the ARRA for Education Technology funds to promote effective use of technology to transform schools and to improve student academic achievement. Four theme-oriented, evidence-based priorities have been identified as the program focuses. Priority 4 is: Using technology to better support limited English proficiency/English language learners (LEP/ELLs) and students with disabilities. SED administers federal NCLB and ARRA funds to support services to ELLs, including Title III for ELL and immigrant students. LEAs decide how to spend their Title III, Part A funds, as long as the funds supplement (not supplant) and are aligned to the LEAs' strategic initiatives and goals in improving the academic achievement of English Language Learners. The Title I ARRA funds that are expected to support services to ELLs are

either only for Schools in Improvement Status or to the seven LEAs that qualify for the funds disbursed under Section 1003(g). The other Title I funds (including Title I ARRA) are disbursed through the allocation process to LEAs, who in turn make the decisions as to how to expend those funds within the limits of the NCLB legislation.

Bilingual Special Education Specialists in the Regional Special Education Technical Assistance and Support Centers (RSE-TASC)

Regional Special Education Bilingual Specialists positions are funded in seven of the RSE-TASC regions of the State through the State's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Discretionary Funds. These positions are funded to provide regional information and technical assistance relating to effective instructional practices for bilingual/English language learner (ELL) students with disabilities.

Bilingual School Psychology Support Center

The Bilingual School Psychology Support Center provides assistance for professionals seeking a bilingual extension or initial/professional certification in School Psychology. The Center helps recruit individuals interested in enrolling in programs leading to certification and interested in working in NYC Public Schools and it provides professional development for school psychologists currently employed by the NYC Department of Education.

Speech-Language and Bilingual Speech-Language Personnel Development Technical Assistance Center (SLPD TAC)

The SLPD TAC provides online coursework and other supports needed to obtain initial or professional certification in Teaching Students with Speech and Language Disabilities and licensure in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) for individuals who sign a commitment to work in NYC Public Schools. There are currently 53 monolingual English-speaking candidates and 22 bilingual candidates taking courses supported by this project.

Response to Intervention (Rtl) Initiative

This project is aimed at closing the achievement gap for all students, including students at risk, students with disabilities, and English language learners, by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps. The Department has established a regulatory policy framework for Rtl in relation to school-wide screening, minimum components of Rtl programs, parent notification and the use of Rtl data in the identification of students with learning disabilities. There is one chapter of the document devoted entirely to ELL students: "Considerations when Implementing Rtl with Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners."

One of the main components of the project is the establishment of an Rtl Technical Assistance Center (Rtl-TAC), which is housed at Buffalo State College. The TAC operates under a 5-year contract with the State Education Department. The main

focus of this Rtl-TAC is to work with 14 pilot schools that have received grants to support their efforts. At least half of the pilot schools have significant populations of students who are English language learners.

In addition to supporting 14 pilot site schools spread throughout New York State, the Rtl-TAC is contracted to conduct three regional training sessions each year that are open to all schools and other interested parties.

University Training Program Enrollment and Capacity Survey

The University Training Program Enrollment and Capacity Survey project conducts an annual survey of colleges and universities on the enrollment and unused capacity of programs leading to bilingual and monolingual certification in special education, related services, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The survey results are used to examine trends in enrollment and target funding to address shortage areas.

NYS Race to the Top (RTTT) Resources / Strategies which support ELLs

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

On July 19, 2010, New York State adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and CCSS for Mathematics, with the understanding that additional K-12 expectations and aligned prekindergarten standards may be added. The Board of Regents Standards Review Committee's proposed draft of P-12 NYS Learning Standards for English Language Arts will include up to 15 percent of additional standards that will incorporate opportunities to make our learning standards even more rigorous and more appropriate to a range of students, including ELLs.

Curriculum

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) funded by Race to the Top will produce curriculum models, formative instruction/assessments, and corresponding professional development for ELA, Mathematics, and prekindergarten support materials to help teachers implement the new Common Core State Standards. The materials will provide:

- Curriculum guidance with specific examples that further illuminate the standards and suggested instructional activities.
- Insight and guidance for addressing the needs of all students, including ELLs, who lack adequate fluency, comprehension, and prerequisite skills, but are expected to perform at a specific grade level.
- An item-by-item analysis of the NYS curriculum-embedded formative assessments to assist teachers of ELLs with strategies for changing instructional practices based on student outcome data.

P-20 Data System

- New York State is expanding the data elements collected on ELLs to over 25 data elements. This expansion will enable the following:
 - A detailed profile of each English language learner that will inform policy on instructional practices.
 - A full analysis of the Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) population.

- Education Data Portal

In order to use data to improve instruction, NYSED will create a statewide comprehensive instructional reporting and improvement system available to all stakeholders through the Education Data Portal. The system will be particularly valuable for educating traditionally underserved target populations, including ELLs.

- Early Warning System

NYSED will build an Early Warning System that includes the early indicators that predict the likelihood that a student will drop out prior to completing the P-16 system. One such indicator will be the status of ELLs who are not making adequate progress in English acquisition. To ensure the Early Warning System is especially helpful to ELLs, NYSED is greatly expanding its collection of data about their background and progress. This expansion will enable us to create a detailed profile of each English language learner that will help local educators, with more aggregate data becoming available to policymakers to create better intervention strategies.

Great Teachers and Leaders

- Recruitment

To improve the effectiveness of the teaching workforce, NYSED will select providers to develop clinically-rich teacher preparation programs through a Fall 2010 RFP process. These transformed programs will prepare teachers to be effective in high-need schools with a focus on students in the performance gap, including ELLs.

- Differentiated Compensation

In order to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, NYS will use evaluations to inform compensation. The Transfer Fund will provide financial incentives to encourage the most effective teachers in the STEM disciplines for ELLs to take assignments in high-need schools. The Supplemental Compensation Incentive Fund will afford the opportunity to provide outstanding teachers and principals in hard-to-staff subjects and areas with supplemental compensation based on effectiveness (as defined by the Commissioner's Regulations) and willingness to take on additional assignments.

School Innovation

- Turnaround Strategies

To aid Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in their selection of one of four intervention models for each persistently lowest-achieving school, LEAs will be required to participate in a diagnostic assessment conducted by a Joint Intervention Team that includes an analysis of student performance with a focus on the needs of ELL students. An example of a possible turn around strategy is increasing access to quality Career and Technical Education.

- Charter Schools

A major focus of Chapter 101 of the Laws of 2010 is to provide equal access to charter schools for ELLs.

- Education Law §2854(2) is amended to clarify that charter schools may be formed to serve ELLs, whether or not they are considered at risk of academic failure, and that charter schools must demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain an enrollment of specific subgroups, including ELLs, comparable to that of the school district in which the charter school is located.

Percent Change in Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers 2000-01 and 2008-09

Schools in New York State face a severe shortage of certified teachers for ELL students. New certification pathways are needed to help increase the number of Bilingual and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers in order to provide the appropriate instruction to raise the achievement of ELLs. See Figure 3. The greatest Bilingual and ESOL teacher shortages exist in New York City.

Figure 3

Percent Change in Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers 2000-01 to 2008-09*		
ESOL	Bilingual (Not Sp. Ed.)	Bilingual (Sp. Ed.)
38%	- 27%	- 55%

* 2008-09 data is preliminary