Welcome back from what I hope was a wonderful and renewing summer. And welcome “forward” to the 2008-2009 school year! It is filled with the promise of redoubled dedication to providing the very best educational opportunities for the students and families in the APS community.

In keeping with Superintendent Brooks's goal of increased student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap(s), the LCE mission is, and will continue to be, the well-being and success of APS students.

To reach the goal of improved student learning, we are using several approaches. We offer on-going professional development for teachers, in the classroom and through other venues, in support of implementation of best practice in curriculum and delivery of instruction and culturally responsive teaching. In addition, we have provided rigorous and proven materials for language learners at all levels.

The website, lcequity.com, our newsletter, Making Connections, and the Cross Cultural Professional Library are available to all as professional resources. We train school contact personnel on accessing and managing student information. Our cadre of testers continue to aid schools in determining the language proficiency levels of their students through the NMELPA and Spanish LAS assessments so that students receive appropriate services. In conjunction with these efforts, valuable outreach to the community comes from Translation and Interpretation Services and our Multicultural Coordinator who provides diversity training and support to teachers in multicultural education.

Most of these approaches have been in place for some time, and we continue to refine our work in those areas. We are very excited about several new efforts. First of all, with the purchase of Edge materials for high school ESL students, High Point at the middle school level, and Avenues at elementary, we have a solid base of excellent language arts and literacy materials for ESL students and their teachers. The materials have been independently researched with excellent results, but as research also shows,
Last year at Valle Vista Elementary School, we adopted Macmillan-McGraw Hill Treasures and Lectura as our school-wide core reading programs. One of the most challenging aspects of implementation has been integrating the cores into our 50:50, simultaneous biliteracy development dual language program. One reason that we chose these programs is that the core selections are different in English and Spanish (not direct translations), and the Spanish text is, for the most part, authentic Spanish literature. The biggest issues centered on scheduling—how to fit everything from the core program into daily schedules with limited time in each language.

What follows is a discussion of our first year implementation experience and our next steps in this journey.

**First Year Implementation**

As discussed in a previous article (see *Making Connections, September 2007, at www.lcequity.com*), we implemented the core reading programs in our dual language programs last year by focusing on three key considerations:

1) how to structure whole-group and small-group reading instruction across the languages; 2) how to integrate the core reading program writing components across the languages; and 3) how to ensure fidelity to the language-specific phonics core reading components.

We alternated the core reading program structures of whole-group and small-group reading on a weekly basis between the two languages. This structure ensured that:

1) Students had opportunities to participate in literacy activities along the continuum of high to low teacher support (Mooney, 1990).

2) The pace of the core reading objectives was maintained in both programs (e.g., the “what” lessons were not redundant.

Students received the phonics component of each core program daily, based on the fact that an important difference between teaching reading in English and in Spanish lies in the language-specific phonics.

We integrated each core’s writing and grammar component with the whole group reading instruction, making it the only component not implemented in both languages. Over the six-week unit, three weeks of writing process lessons were in English (Treasures) and three were in Spanish (Lectura). This weekly alternating of writing workshop by language also ensured that the daily literacy lessons were not redundant.

Given these considerations, the following daily schedules were implemented:

**Table 1. Dual Language 50:50 Schedule for a Six-Week Unit Plan from Treasures and Lectura**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks 1, 3, and 5</th>
<th>Weeks 2, 4, and 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treasures whole group reading lessons including vocabulary, phonics/spelling - (45 minutes)</td>
<td>Treasures small group reading lessons w/ independent centers (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasures Writing Workshop (45 minutes)</td>
<td>Treasures phonics (30 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectura small group reading lessons w/ independent centers (60 minutes)</td>
<td>Lectura whole group reading lessons including phonics/spelling (45 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectura phonics/spelling (30 minutes)</td>
<td>Lectura Writing Workshop (45 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---continued on page 3---
This schedule provides three hours of literacy each day (1.5 hours in English and 1.5 hours in Spanish) and maintains fidelity to the 50:50 simultaneous, biliteracy dual language program.

Lesson Planning

After setting up the general schedules, our focus turned to daily lesson planning, and a lesson planning template was developed (see template and sample lesson plan in Table II below). The purpose of the template was to have a consistent communication tool for discussing implementation of the core reading programs and to show that we were interacting with the cores based on our student needs and not blindly implementing page by page.

The first three columns of the template are basic scheduling (a traditional lesson plan). The fourth column, Student Friendly Objective, is a best practice for second language learners and is posted in the classroom and discussed with students before the lesson. It also provides a way for teachers to interact with the core and not merely copy the objective that was already in the teacher’s manual. The fifth column in the template was added for teachers to highlight their lesson specific differentiation strategies, as well as to document student-specific accommodations. These differentiation strategies could come from the core or teacher-generated strategies (e.g., think-pair-share to answer a question). The last column shows any adjustments to the core that the teacher needed to make due to time constraints (e.g., unable to have students practice every word in the phonics lesson) or because they felt like something in the core wasn’t appropriate (e.g., replacing a graphic organizer with one that made more sense).

One simple school-wide scaffolding strategy that we implemented with respect to the core last year was making sure that the weekly vocabulary words introduced from the main selections (Tier II words—Beck, McKeown, & Lucan, 2002) were posted in the classrooms with corresponding pictures/photos (see photo, p.9). This approach is also consistent with the high yield strategy of non-linguistic representations (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001) and provided a natural scaffold for all of our learners (but especially our language learners) to begin to understand the meaning of these Tier II words.

Next Steps

Our biggest realization in implementing the core reading program last year was that the core gave us the overall structure for literacy instruction but, by using the lesson planning template, we were still able to use professional judgment in “how” to deliver instruction that best met our dual language students’ needs.

As we enter our second year of implementation, there are several areas that we will be focusing on with respect to the core programs. We

---continued on page 11---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II. Lesson Planning Template</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. 1/29/08</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

---continued from page 2---
It’s no longer just the second language learners in our classrooms who need support for oral language development! Children today spend large chunks of time passively getting information from movies, TV, the internet and even video games. Information bombards them but there is very little need for them to produce language. With increased academic requirements in all classrooms, many teachers seem to feel that there is less and less time for academic discussion with their students and much less time for purposeful interaction between/among students. Thus, teachers have become more givers of information than negotiators of information. All students need support moving from social to academic language. Oral language has long been recognized as an essential bridge to literacy and literacy development.

For second language learners this link between oral language development and literacy is especially important. Most language acquisition studies conclude that language use is a major key to language development. Being immersed in language and having access to good language models is important, but it is not in itself enough to develop language competence. In pre-school through high school classrooms, it is essential that teachers engage students in academic dialogue daily and across all curricular areas.

Second language learners in particular need many and varied opportunities to use spoken language.

---continued on page 5---

**A few ideas for developing oral language across the curriculum...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Purposeful peer interaction</th>
<th>Teacher scaffolding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math groups given different problems to solve; explain answers to other groups in an oral report-out.</td>
<td>Teacher asks clarifying questions and assists report-outs with recasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>In groups, students try to find out if air has mass. They have to find a solution and use concise language when explaining it to the teacher.</td>
<td>Talking about the talk. Teacher has a mini lesson on scientific vocabulary necessary to use with students’ oral reporting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>Students in groups of 4 first discuss in pairs (think/pair/share) and then as group of 4 (think/pair/square) to determine the sequence on the timeline before they report out.</td>
<td>Teacher provides students with pictures depicting main event for a timeline; she reminds students of precise academic vocabulary needed for the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy/Language Arts</td>
<td>Book clubs with task cards for each student in the club. (Roles include summarizer, clarifier, questioner, etc.)</td>
<td>Guide students to answer using complete thoughts. Help students with sentence stems such as, “On this page...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While all children come to school with social language, our job is to move them from concrete to increasingly abstract language. Most students use language as they work through a problem. For example, English language learners working on an experiment might say:

Hannah – "Try...the other way."
Marco – "Yeah, like that!"
José – "We tried that."
Danielle – "That's it. We did it."
(adapted from Pauline Gibbons)

Through strong teacher guidance, we can help this group explain their experiment to others who had not been part of their activity.

Hannah – "Our task was to find out what objects a magnet will attract."
Marco – "First we tried holding the magnet over some thumbtacks, and they jumped up and attached to it."
José – "Next we tried a little plastic dog and a piece of paper. They just sat there."
Danielle – "We concluded that magnets attract metal objects but do not attract plastic or paper."

TEACHER SCAFFOLDING
According to Pauline Gibbons in her book *Bridging Discourses in the ESL Classroom*, there are several necessary steps a teacher can take to help students move from concrete, in-the-moment language to academic discourse. She describes situations where the teacher is guiding students as they report to the class about their experiments.

1. **Recasting (rewording).** The teacher responds to a student's reporting by recasting, or rewording, his contribution into more appropriate academic terms. *(Student: "I thought that all metal can stick on magnets but when I tried it some of them they didn't stick." Teacher: "OK, so you thought that no matter what object, if it was a metal object it would be attracted to the magnet?")

2. **Talking about the talk.** Teachers can be explicit and point out to the students that they are learning a new register. Sometimes teachers call this “talking like scientists”. *(Teacher: "I'm going to help you with a word today. Remember we're scientists and we need to use the proper words."

3. **Reminding and handing over.** Teachers can prompt students to reformulate what they have said. Once students are able to carry out a task alone, the teacher's scaffolding is pulled away somewhat and learners take increased responsibility. *(Student: "One north pole standing up next to another north pole which you put on top will push it away." Teacher: "I want you to use that new word that we talked about for 'push away.'" Student: "It can repel the other magnet."

When the teacher allows for this kind of report-out, the students are given the chance to “take the floor” as knowledgeable learners who have something to say that is not already known by others. It is an authentic experience because of the information gap. It is a powerful opportunity for student output. The other students in the class are expected to ask clarifying questions. Thus, the student's oral language is stretched by both the teacher's scaffolding and by his peers.

PEER INTERACTION
Having planned opportunities for meaningful interaction between and among peers is another powerful way to build academic oral language. If set up effectively, peer interaction has advantages over whole-class work for second language learning and oral language development. Students interact with many other speakers, so their output is increased. There is opportunity for redundancy and chances to clarify. It affords a positive affective environment; students may be more comfortable talking with peers than in front of the whole class. For example, a teacher might ask students to turn to a neighbor to discuss a question or concept before moving on.

According to Vygotsky, learning is a social activity. The development of cognition is a result of participation with others in a goal-directed activity. Teacher scaffolding and peer interaction are two powerful ways we can build oral language in the classroom.
Planificando en colaboración con la señora Ledis Fábregas, maestra de la clase de biología bilingüe de la Preparatoria West Mesa para los grados nueve al doce ha sido una experiencia enriquecedora que podría ser emulada por otro maestros de nuestro distrito.

Este trabajo colaborativo tuvo la finalidad de organizar a largo plazo todas las actividades de enseñanza-aprendizaje de todos los elementos esenciales del currículo bilingüe de la Biología: qué, cómo, cuando enseñar y cómo evaluar sistemáticamente el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

**ASPECTOS QUE SE TOMARON EN CUENTA:**
1) ¿Por qué y para qué planificar?

La planificación a largo plazo es un instrumento valioso para todo maestro(a), porque es donde se organiza de manera consciente la práctica educativa; esto reduce el nivel de incertidumbre e improvisación de lo que desea enseñar. En esta etapa logramos discutir cómo estarían organizados los contenidos, las opciones metodológicas, las estrategias para desarrollar el vocabulario científico, el texto y el contexto, los materiales y las actividades de enriquecimiento del currículo y la evaluación de los contenidos.

2) Componentes de la planificación

Aquí tratamos de estructurar los contenidos y objetivos. Revisamos los estándares nacionales, estatales y del distrito. Una vez revisado los estándares, seleccionamos los contenidos y su nivel de profundidad.

Los estándares nacionales y del distrito los tomamos como las aspiraciones de alto nivel que pretendemos lograr en este currículo.

**Los contenidos**

Son un conjunto de saberes, es un trozo de los conocimientos que se requieren en la clase de biología en este caso. Se logró seleccionar los contenidos por unidad temática. Se organizaron de acuerdo a su importancia y prioridad en el aprendizaje de los estudiantes bilingües en la preparatoria. Al final se logró una selección intencionada de los contenidos donde se organizaron, se distribuyeron y se les dio la secuencia en función de los estándares planteados y en los tiempos en que se dosificó el contenido en un calendario académico.

**La metodología**

Es el momento crucial para todo educador, es cuando piensa cómo enseñar los contenidos que planificó. Aquí logramos hacernos preguntas tales como: ¿cuál es la manera más efectiva para desarrollar el tema? ¿cuál es la estrategia más eficaz para motivar y movilizar el pensamiento científico? ¿cómo aprenden mejor?

Entre las estrategias que seleccionamos se pueden mencionar: la instrucción directa, la clase práctica, el uso de técnicas grupales, aula laboratorio, proyectos, eco-proyectos y giras de campo a un parque nacional.

**La evaluación**

Al reflexionar durante este proceso de planificación, llegamos a una conclusión que la evaluación es una herramienta generadora de información valiosa de cómo se está enseñando —continúa en la página 7—
Recursos y materiales
Los recursos y materiales son el apoyo intelectual de lo que se quiere enseñar. Logramos en cada unidad temática proporcionar recursos digitales en internet. Esto les permitirá a los estudiantes ampliar sus conocimientos a su propio ritmo intelectual.

Generalmente, la planificación a largo plazo para muchos docentes es percibida como una exigencia burocrática de parte de la administración. Pero en realidad, si se hace de manera colaborativa como se efectuó con la señora Fábregas no hay dudas que puede llegar a ser una actividad gratificante que conlleva a preparar una guía organizada y efectiva del currículo para obtener éxito en la práctica docente.

---continuación de la página 6---

PLANTAS
National Standards

C.2.a. Core Competencies
1. Life processes in living systems including organization of matter and energy.
2. Similarities and differences among animals, plants, fungi, microorganisms, and viruses.

C.2.b. Advanced Competencies
20. How to design, conduct, and report research in biology.
21. Applications of biology and biotechnology in

---continuación de la página 7---
Traditionally, Dolores Gonzales Elementary School had implemented a 90/10 dual immersion program in kindergarten followed by a 50/50 model in first through fifth grade. The theory of simultaneous literacy in English and Spanish was practiced with some success, but when speaking specifically to first grade teachers, a trend that became apparent could not be ignored. Looking at our DRA2/EDL2 fall data of 2006, it was brought to our attention that some of our students at Dolores Gonzales were not progressing in reading either their home or new language.

This began a conversation on what we felt were the contributing factors in the students’ lack of reading growth in both Spanish and English.

A group of educators came together to have a discussion regarding various approaches to reading. We researched Dual Language: Teaching and Learning in Two Languages (2004), by Sonia White Soltero. In this book, we were intrigued by the section entitled, “Language of Initial Literacy.” This prompted us to revisit simultaneous reading instruction in English and Spanish in grades K-2. After much discussion and study in the spring of 2007, we created different schedules to implement direct and explicit instruction in first language literacy. For the 2007-2008 school year, we decided to take the following steps:

- the implementation of first language literacy skills in kindergarten and first grade;
- a focus on oral language development and early literacy skills in students’ first language during kindergarten:
  - building phonemic awareness and phonics skills using Estrellita and Fundations programs with fidelity; and
  - developing second language oracy through content areas.

**Teachers’ Schedules**

The process for developing the schedules was challenging and time consuming. After several meetings in the spring and summer, teachers eventually developed the following schedules (see tables in the adjacent column).

During the first language/literacy block, students go to the appropriate teacher according to their

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**Daily Schedule for 1st Grade Teaming Situation-Spanish Teacher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:10</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>8:30-10:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-10:00</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:25</td>
<td>SSL</td>
<td>SSL</td>
<td>SSL</td>
<td>SSL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25-10:55</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:30</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>12:30-1:30 Library/Comp</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:35</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Daily Schedule for 1st Grade Teaming Situation-English Teacher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:10</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>8:30-10:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-10:00</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td>1st Language Literacy Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:25</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25-10:55</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Math, Science, SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:30</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
<td>Switch Math, Science, SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>12:30-1:30 Library/Comp</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>2:35</td>
<td>Dismiss</td>
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</table>
RESULTS
Teachers are now seeing the fruits of their labor, based on the data. Our preliminary DRA2/EDL2 findings at the end of the 07/08 school year showed that among our struggling readers, the emphasis on reading in their first language increased their scores significantly. For example, we had students in second grade that began the year reading at an EDL2/DRA2 level 2; because of our initiative, we focused on their first language literacy throughout the first semester. Although the reading levels improved from a few points for some students to as much as 22 points in the EDL2 and 20 points in the DRA2 for others, there were still many questions and concerns about the implementation of pedagogy for first- and second-language literacy in a dual language setting.

NEXT STEPS
This past year has put us on a steep learning curve, and we are looking forward to seeing further progress as students transition from kindergarten to first grade and first grade to second. At the end of the 2007-2008 school year we considered the following questions:

• How do we determine first language proficiency?
• Which language assessment tool should we use to determine language proficiency?
• When do we introduce formal literacy instruction in the second language?
• How do we adjust schedules to provide more time for first language literacy?
• How do we maintain a 50/50 model in a team-teaching situation while implementing first-language literacy?

After an initial meeting this summer we decided to investigate the impact first-language pedagogy has on the development of second-language literacy in a dual language context. Our professional development for this year will focus on the following areas:

❖ establishing biliteracy through the use of first language pedagogy and instruction; researching how first language literacy skills transfer to the second language;
❖ evaluating the strategies of explicit teaching of L1 literacy skills in order to facilitate the transfer of those skills to L2;
❖ understanding the role that oral language development plays in first and second language literacy development; and
❖ determining when students are ready for explicit instruction of advanced literacy skills in L2.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work of all the teachers at Dolores Gonzales, as well as our principal, Dora Ortiz, for her support and leadership.

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the teacher is the single most important factor in achievement and learning. We are committed to intensive support and regular professional development for teachers of ESL using these new materials. Study groups, national trainers, in-service days, weekly in-classroom work with resource teachers—these are all “in the works” for this year.

Research shows that development of the primary or home language, including literacy, positively affects students’ achievement. Therefore, we are continuing to work with schools in strengthening dual language programs and home language instruction. Moreover, we will continue to Language Acquisition Design (G.L.A.D.) training to elevate oral language development and the acquisition of academic language. We are especially proud of beginning a Navajo language class at C.E.C. for APS high school students.

These and other initiatives to foster student success will require strategic planning and work. But with all of us joining efforts toward the same goals, we can expect great results! We look forward to a wonderful year at APS.

WestEd—SchoolsMovingUp: English Learner Webinar Series

WestEd’s “SchoolsMovingUp” website provides quality resources for raising student achievement. This free series of nine webinars focusing on English language learners runs from Oct. 8 to Nov.18. Topics include a focus on literacy development, oral language development, research on ELL instruction, secondary mathematics, and the SIOP Model. For more information on specific titles or to sign up, visit their website at www.wested.org or contact Julie Duffield at jduffie@wested.org.

Be sure to check it out!
For Highland High School ESL teacher Charlie Steele, raising expectations for his students while resisting the temptation to oversimplify instruction is a mantra that guides his work with students who are developing their English language skills. Mr. Steele has high hopes that this outlook, combined with efforts to modify instruction and integrate language learning, will provide his English language learners (ELL’s) with equal access to quality instruction.

His approach is twofold, a combination of ESL techniques applied to content teaching, coupled with an ongoing process of reflection regarding the assumptions he is making regarding his students and his expectations for them. “I am trying to find that balance where I am providing them the same basic instruction as I give my honors class but still make it comprehensible for them. I know it will look different—they aren’t going to be doing everything the same way—but I want them to have the same kind of class.” The academic content of Steele’s course is language arts and literature, and the concepts are often abstract. Steele acknowledges that changes must take place in the delivery of instruction. Fundamental supports for English language learners are immediately apparent in Steele’s teaching, including:

- a slower rate of speech;
- increased use of gestures;
- asking for retelling and clarification; and
- a focus on academic vocabulary.

“I emphasize vocabulary, and we do different activities with each word so students see it more than once.” Steele’s room is a print rich environment and he refers to the language found in the walls and on the board when he speaks, often pointing out specific words and sentences as he speaks. English, the target language, is used for classroom routines as well as for direct instruction.

Sheltering content for English language learners means that in addition to making the subject matter more accessible, instruction is designed to facilitate language acquisition. In a class of all English language learners, the teacher is the only fluent speaker of the target language. To address the lack of English speaking peers in his ESL classes, Steele models language that students might use to answer a question or to begin a dialog, and provides sentence stems to guide students' responses both in writing and in speaking. "I try to give them a way to at least begin to say something in English and see how far they will go with it.”

One of his regular techniques used to structure face-to-face interaction is a corners activity (see page 11). This cooperative learning exercise structures interaction, integrates movement, and allows the students to express opinions and engage in critical thinking in a way that is not based solely on language proficiency. Steele extends the corners activity by asking the students to keep a log of their opinions and how they might have changed as a result of listening to their peers express their thoughts.

<table>
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Corners Activity

1. Write an engaging statement on the chalkboard, overhead, smartboard, etc. “All students and teachers should be required to follow a dress code.” (Encourages students to investigate problems, explore conflicts, and engage in critical thinking.)

2. Place a large piece of paper in each corner of the room labeled with one of the following: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Students decide what corner they will go to without talking it over with peers.

3. Students now go to the corner that best describes their opinion. (English language learners can “vote with their feet” and express an opinion even if they are not ready to talk about it to the whole class. Extra classroom talk such as “OK, now walk to a corner,” further increases the opportunity for language acquisition.)

4. Students talk to others in their corner who share their opinion. Someone is chosen to jot down main ideas, and another student can be the spokesperson for the group. Encourage students to reread any text that might help them support their position. (Students who are not ready to speak can hear how others say things in a variety of ways; a small group usually means a more comfortable setting for those whose oral language is emerging. The responses are typically written in a list form which can be more understandable to ELL’s and beginning readers.)

5. When ready, each spokesperson explains their group’s position to the whole class. The other groups listen and do not comment at this time. (All voices are heard; space is equitably shared without interruption.) Teachers often ask students if they would like to switch groups after hearing opinions.

Driven by the desire to provide equal access to the highest quality instruction for all students, he is also aware that his expectations for his students must likewise be kept high. “Oh these kids are just as smart as anybody else…it’s hard because they don’t respond verbally like my non-ESL classes where we can have a free flowing discussion.” Steele acknowledges that it is sometimes all too easy to slip into instruction that is less substantive and guards against it though continuous reflection, noting, “I try and put myself in their place...what would I want to be doing?”

We will consider how to scaffold the core reading selections so that all of our students have access to grade-level text regardless of their language level. One of the Guided Language Acquisition Design (G.L.A.D.) strategies that we will look at is the “Pictorial Input Chart.” This is a strategy that provides the “frontloading” necessary to support second language learners’ comprehension of grade-level text. Because this requires extra time, we have two grade levels that are piloting a six-day core cycle instead of five.

We will also look at making our small group reading better targeted to students’ needs, especially in the area of language development (e.g., vocabulary, background knowledge and language structures). We currently use the DRA2/EDL2 in first through fifth grades to form our leveled small reading groups and the "Focus for Instruction" from these assessments for small group objectives. However, this year we would like to have more focused objectives and provide foundational professional development with all the components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and language development). This P.D. aligns with the core components and is key to any reading instruction, regardless of what core program you are implementing.

One long-term goal is integrating grade-level social studies and science standards with the core reading nonfiction texts (e.g., develop science kits that go with the science texts in the core) since finding time to teach a separate block of science and social studies in the daily schedules has become very difficult. But we are confident that we can balance this to benefit our students.

Key vocabulary is posted in every classroom with accompanying visuals or photos.
Coming Events

❖ CLARO—CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN RESOURCES AND OUTREACH—The fall calendar of professional development workshops for language and art teachers with El Centro de Recursos. All workshops are held in Albuquerque at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. For more information, contact Kitren Fischer at 505.277.6842.

❖ NEW MEXICO ORGANIZATION OF LANGUAGE EDUCATORS FALL CONFERENCE—Language Institute for Teachers—Uniting Professionals: Saturday, September 27, 8:00-1:00, at Highland High School in Albuquerque. For more information, please contact Kathy Zipf at kazipf@hotmail.com.

❖ 2008 CREATE CONFERENCE—A Focus on ELLs in Middle School: October 6-7, in Minneapolis, MN. For more information or to register, visit the conference website at www.cal.org/create/events/conference.html.

❖ LA COSECHA 2008, 13TH ANNUAL DUAL LANGUAGE CONFERENCE—November 12-15, 2008, at the Santa Fe Convention Center, Santa Fe, NM. For more information and a registration packet, visit the conference website at www.lacosecha.dlenm.org.

❖ NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION’S 18TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE—Beyond Celebrating Diversity: ReACTivating the Equity and Social Justice Roots of Multicultural Education: November 12-16, 2008, in New Orleans, LA. For more information, visit the NAME website at www.nameorg.org.


Cross Cultural Resource Library

Tuesday and Wednesday: 7:30-5:00
Monday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00-4:30
Closed daily for lunch: 12:00-1:00

LIBRARY SPECIALIST: Karen Hedstrom
Please call 880.8249, ext. 154, before making the trip to be sure the library is open.

FYI...

TESOL Endorsement and Survival Spanish Courses Fall 2008 and Spring 2009

LCE is making available courses at Sandia High School for the TESOL Endorsement and in Survival Spanish for Teachers. These courses are open to APS teachers, who will be reimbursed for tuition costs. The TESOL courses satisfy all NM State requirements for the endorsement. Survival Spanish course participants will learn to communicate better with monolingual Spanish-speaking children and their families. The Survival Spanish courses satisfy the foreign language requirement for the TESOL Endorsement. Tuition for each course is $525, to be paid on the first day of class and reimbursed when the course has been passed. Contact: Prof. Henry Shonerd, at 855-7271.