

Mt. Diablo Unified School District

English Learner Programs Audit

Final Report

May 24, 2011



SYSTEMS CONSULTING FOR EDUCATION
language • learning • equity

Sacramento, CA 95819 • www.normgoldassociates.com
norm@normgoldassociates.com • (916) 731-4734 • (916) 731-4562 fax

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Executive Summary

Norm Gold Associates was asked to conduct an audit of English learner (EL) programs in the **Mt Diablo Unified School District** (the district). The district enrolls over 6,874 English learners (20 percent of total enrollment). Thirty-five percent of the district's 34,316 students have a home language other than English (ELs plus 5,194 fluent English proficient (FEP), students).¹

This audit, conducted between February and May 2011 employed standard education evaluation techniques, and included an examination of the consistency of implementation of the essential components of high quality EL programs.² We developed information that could be used to identify assets and needs for improvement of EL services in the Mt Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD or district). This was not a program impact evaluation or comparison of program types or schools. In collaboration with district staff, we reviewed documents, interviewed parents, teachers, administrators and board members, and conducted structured visits to a sample of three elementary schools, and to one middle school and one high school. Details on the scope and methodology of the study are found in the body of the report.

This audit was undertaken at a time when the district was undergoing a great deal of scrutiny as a result of state and federal accountability activity. Earlier this year, the district prepared a new Title III, Year 4 corrective action plan. The district is also responding to the PI status of seven elementary schools and three middle schools, with a number of actions that are designed to improve academic outcomes for all students.³

The report begins with this executive summary of findings and recommendations. The summary is followed by background information, a description of procedures used, a more detailed explanation of each of the findings, and specific recommendations for improvement. The report concludes with recommendations for three phases of follow-up work. Additional data, selected references and resources are provided in the Appendix.

Findings

A. The district has a number of strengths and assets

1. School environments are clean, orderly, and conducive to learning.
2. The district has many hard working, dedicated educators.
3. The administrator responsible for direction of the district's EL programs has a depth of knowledge and experience about the EL program research, practice and state and federal requirements.
4. The Assessment Center provides valuable service for secondary school students and their families.
5. Most teachers are appropriately authorized for EL instruction.

¹ Data from CDE at DataQuest for 2009-10. <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

² See CDE, 2010. Note that essential components of successful programs for ELs are derived from research as well as from state and federal law and guidelines such as the Academic Program Survey (APS). See also: Gold, *Successful Bilingual Schools*, 2006, pp. 10-11, and Goldenberg and Coleman, 2010.

³ The district has made a substantial effort at improvement in instructional practice to meet the Essential Program Components in the California Department of Education Academic Program Survey (APS.CDE, 2009), as well as in the CDE-required Title III Year 4 Accountability Action Plan. CDE documents are available at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ti/stateassesspi.asp>

6. Many teachers and administrators have been trained or exposed to high-quality research-based strategies for ELs.
7. Core curriculum materials appear in place for all students for all content areas.
8. New ELD materials for middle schools and high schools have been purchased, and are in specific ELD classrooms. ELD teachers have been trained on these.
9. Many elementary classrooms have a supply of the basic ELD materials.
10. The system for I.D. of ELs and assessment appears to work well. Information is provided to sites on a timely basis.
11. ADEPT assessment supplements CELDT scores in a way that can help teachers monitor progress.
12. Board Language and Board Math at elementary sites complement EL services in several ways.
13. The district provided parents training on various topics as well as support for the DELAC.

B. There are eight major findings of needs

In spite of all these assets, we found that English and academic outcomes of ELs in the district fail to meet state and federal targets. ELs in MDUSD lag behind the state and comparable districts.

With few exceptions, the district's EL programs are not well understood. Staff throughout the district and in the various schools interpret requirements and research-supported best practices in ways that vary substantially. There are no commonly understood program designs or standards for Structured English Immersion, English Language Mainstream Programs, or Alternative Bilingual Programs. Programs vary widely in their implementation.

We found that the essential components of high quality EL programs⁴ are not in place or consistently implemented. And the district does not currently have an optimal alignment of resources (staff, guidance documents, instructional materials, etc.) for the most effective implementation of EL programs.

We identified eight major areas of need, and make recommendations in response to each of these. The eight major findings are listed in this Executive Summary. The body of the report provides additional details on each of the findings and specific recommendations for responding to these.

Finding 1: English and academic outcomes fail to meet accountability targets and lag behind state and comparable districts.

Finding 2 The guidance and messaging provided to the schools about English learner programs and services has been inadequate and inconsistent.

Finding 3. Services for ELs have not been top priority for the district. There is a lack of district-wide coordination, direction and accountability.

Finding 4. The district has insufficient staff, structure and resources to ensure effective implementation of EL services.

Finding 5. The essential features of EL programs are not well understood.

Finding 6. Schools are not implementing best EL instructional practices.

Finding 7. There is limited primary language support in the schools and a perception among some staff and parents that they are discouraged from using the primary language of students.

⁴ These essential components are derived from research (CDE, 2010) as well as state and federal law and guidelines such as CDE's Academic Program Survey (APS). See Appendix and N.Gold, Successful Bilingual Schools, 2006, pp. 10-11. http://normgoldassociates.com/docs/articles/SBS_Report_FINAL.pdf

Finding 8. Teachers and administrators have received conflicting direction regarding bilingual programs. Some of this guidance does not match current district policy, state law or research on best practices for ELs.

C. These needs and root causes have led to:

1. Lack of understanding of the core features of EL services and the commitment to provide them.
2. Lack of ELD instruction for every English Learner.
3. Lack of differentiation of instruction (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, SDAIE) based on language, cultural and academic needs of ELs.
4. Instruction that does not capitalize on the primary language abilities of students.
5. Instruction that pays little or no attention to cultural proficiency, and that fails to maximize the benefits that can come from culturally- and linguistically-responsive approaches.
6. Inconsistent and limited communication with parents.

D. Types of Recommendations for Action

Specific recommendations are detailed in the body of the report. This brief summary provides examples of actions needed in five major categories: 1) Policy, plan and messaging, 2) District structure, 3) Site structure, 4) Instruction, and 5) Resources. The body of the report includes these recommendations, and others, in relation to each of the findings of need.

1. Policy, Plan and Messaging

- a. There is a need to revise the board policy, develop a usable master plan, and set in motion a consistent system of messaging.
- b. The district should plan now for a major roll-out and professional development (PD) effort on the new plan that will reach all teachers, counselors, administrators, clerks (and others).
- c. Provide frequent and specific district-wide messaging on core components of EL services, even before the work on the new master plan is completed. These messages should focus on implementation of research-based practices.
- d. Given the size and complexity of the district, clear, concise written messaging on EL services is needed as the basis for district direction. Oral delivery is insufficient, often incomplete and open to misinterpretation.
- e. Ensure that a regular flow of EL information goes to teachers as well as to site administrators. Specifically, the Assessment Center recommendations for middle and high school placement should go directly to teachers as well as principals.

2. District structure

- a. The EL Department should be led by a director, should have adequate staff to coach and monitor and support principals and staff at 56 schools. This will require adding at least seven Full Time Equivalent (FTE) district Teachers on Special Assignment or similar staff capability. The district has resources for this investment in a total categorical resources budget of about 10.2 million dollars, and 4.5 million dollars of carry-over.
- b. The district should establish an English Learner Coordinating Council (EL CC), that meets monthly, and that is comprised of selected site administrators and key district directors, chaired by the Superintendent.

3. Site structure

- a. Current elementary site ELD specialists (consider renaming them as “EL specialists”) perform important services now, but most of their time is spent with direct instruction for

students, and some of their duties are clerical. The need at the sites is for specialists to also provide expert demonstration, coaching and monitoring to ensure effective implementation of all EL Services.

b. Consider re-writing the duty statement for Elementary EL Specialists, and establishing similar positions at the Secondary level. Steps should be taken to ensure that each school has some funded (non-teaching) time for an EL Specialist, and to keep assignments to three schools or fewer.

c. Establish primary language qualifications for at least some office staff positions in conformance with EC 4985, especially in those sites subject to the 15% rule for translated materials.

d. The district should institute monthly meetings for designated EL leads at the middle and high school to support building their expertise and guide more effective implementation.

4. Instruction

a. As part of the master plan revision effort, the district should clearly define the essential ingredients of SEI, EL Mainstream and bilingual programs.

b. As part of the master plan revision effort, work with stakeholders and outside assistance (as necessary) to substantially re-design the program options for middle and high school to ensure that each EL receives daily ELD instruction.

c. There is a need to capitalize on the large number of teachers and administrators who have received substantial training on EL best practices by providing substantial demonstration, coaching and monitoring on implementation.

d. Services for ELs on IEPs and 504 plans should be of the highest quality and consistent with the programs for all other ELs (including primary language instruction and support).

e. To improve the quality and effectiveness of ELD instruction at middle and high schools, the district should work with principals to recruit teachers who have strong interest in ELD instruction, and have strong preparation for this work, and the district should provide PD and coaching support.

5. Resources

a. Examine all appropriate categorical funds to determine resources available for the initiatives above, and to re-examine all major categories of expenditures to determine the extent to which they contribute directly and optimally to the language, academic and cultural proficiency objectives for ELs.

b. At the elementary level, the district should either adopt new ELD materials or reconfirm the official “core” ELD materials that will be provided with local funds and then adopt and support the addition of ELD materials that will greatly enhance the elementary ELD instruction. The district should require the use of these materials.

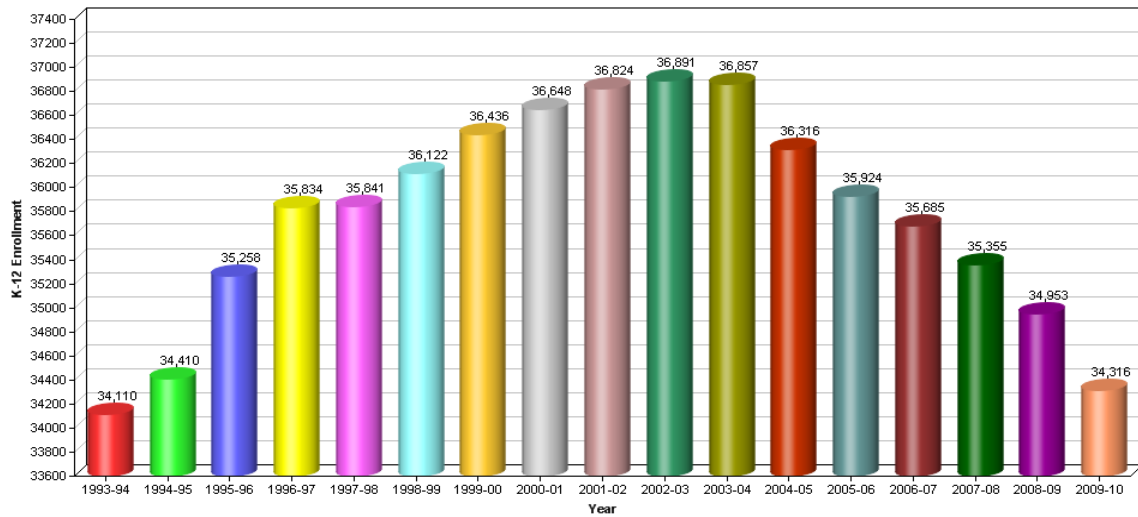
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Background

The District

The Mount Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) has 29 elementary schools, ten middle schools and six high schools. It also operates 13 alternative school programs. In 2009-10, the district enrolled 34,316 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. After many years of overall growth, the total enrollment of the district has been declining since 2002-03. See Figure 1, below.

Figure 1. Mt Diablo USD Enrollment, 1994 – 2010



Source: CDE, DataQuest, Downloaded 5-4-11

Demographics and Diversity

The district has some diversity among its teachers and administrators. However, there is a substantial difference between the backgrounds of staff and students. In particular, African Americans are under-represented among teachers; Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islanders and Filipinos are under-represented among teachers and administrators. See Table 1, below.

Table 1. Demographics of MDUSD, 2009-10
Students, Teachers and Administrators

	Total (100 %)	Am Ind %	Asian %	Pac Is %	Filipino %	Hispanic %	Af Amer %	White/ Other %
Students	34,316	202 (0.6%)	2,610 (7.6%)	332 (1.0%)	1,488 (4.3%)	11,743 (34.2%)	1,698 (4.9%)	16,243 (47.3%)
Teachers	1,602	4 (0.2%)	68 (4.2%)	2 0.1%)	37 (2.3%)	121 (7.6%)	36 (2.2%)	1334 (83.3%)
Administrators	105	0	3 (2.9%)	0	0	7 (6.7%)	14 (13.3%)	81 (77.1%)

Source: CDE: DataQuest. The racial/ethnic categories are those used by CDE.

The district has been working to address the lack of diversity among teachers and administrators for some time. In 2009, the district evaluation report stated, *One of our goals is to hire personnel to match both the ethnic and language backgrounds of our students.*⁵ There is support among some administrators and board members for recruitment, hiring and retention activities that will bring greater balance to some of the under-represented groups, including Asian, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, Hispanics and African Americans.

The Achievement Gap. Overall, many students (particularly African Americans and Hispanics) in the district currently do not perform well on most academic measures. They score lower on standardized tests than students in the rest of the state, and ELs as a group are among the lowest performing subgroups when tested in English. A review of the ethnicity gaps on Math and ELA proficiency, show that, while most groups have made some improvements, from 2002 to 2009, the gaps between White students and Hispanic and African American students remain about the same or increased. See Table 2, below.

⁵ 2009 MDUSD Eval report: p. 3.

Table 2. MDUSD Achievement Gap, 2002 – 2009

Years	Percent At or Above Proficient			Relative Gap with White Students	
	Hispanic	African American	White	Hispanic	African American
Math – CST					
2002	16.0	14.0	41.0	-25	-27
2009	31.6	28.9	56.6	-25	-27.7
ELA – CST					
2002	15.0	17.0	48.0	-33	-31
2009	33.2	36.8	69.8	-36.6	-33.0

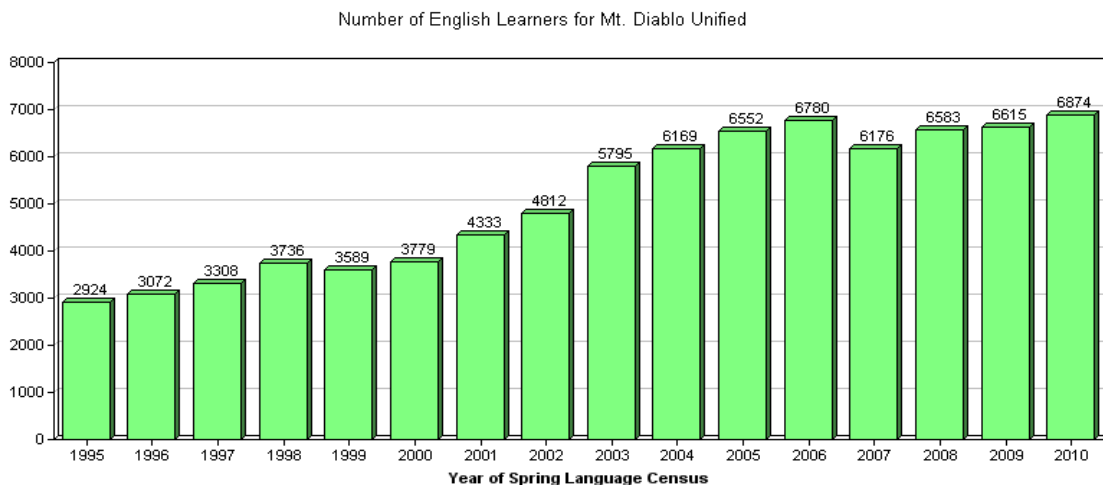
Source: MDUSD District Evaluation Report, November 2009, pp 47-48.

English Learners

At the same time the district’s enrollment has been declining, the English learner (EL) enrollment continued to grow. It increased substantially from 2,924 in 1995 to a peak of 6,780 in 2006 (a growth of 132 percent), declined somewhat in 2007, and then grew to a total of 6,874 in 2009-10 (a further growth of 6.7%). See Figure 2, below. ELs now make up 20 percent of all students and are enrolled in substantial numbers at most of the district’s schools. The vast majority (82.3 percent) of ELs speak Spanish as a home language.

Most ELs in the district receive instruction delivered only in English. In 2009-10 only 478 ELs (7 percent of the total) were reported as receiving some form of primary language instruction (bilingual education). Another 435 (6.3 percent) were reported as receiving some primary language support.

Figure 2. Number of English Learners for Mt. Diablo USD



Source: CDE, DataQuest, Downloaded 5-4-11

EL Low Achievement. Under-achievement of English learners has been a concern in MDUSD for some time. Evaluation reports (2003, 2004) clearly documented how ELs had less access to advanced high school courses, and – in the majority of cases – had lower GPAs than other groups (2004: pp. 16-17). They were also greatly under-represented in the GATE program (based on their percent of district population) by a factor of 30 (*pp. 12 and 17*)

Resources

A substantial amount of categorical funds supplements the general funds for English learners and disadvantaged students. The district has entitlements of approximately \$ 10.2 million in the selected state and federal categorical funds that are most directly related to providing supplementary services for English learners. See Table 2, below. A substantial portion of these funds have been carried over each of the last four years.

The carry-over issue is of major concern, as there are many unmet needs of English Learners and other students who are eligible for these funds. The total carryover increased from \$2.7 million (32% of that year's entitlements) in FY 2006-07 to \$4.5 million (44 % of entitlements) in FY 2009-10. See Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Selected Categorical Funds, FY 2009-10
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Mt. Diablo USD
 Fiscal Year: 2009-10

Fund Source		Carry-over from Previous Year (a)	Entitlement (b)	Total budget Available (a + b) (c)	Expenditure (d)	Carry-over (e)	Carry-over Percent of Entitlement (e) / (b) (f)
Title III, NCLB	A (Site)	454,834	658,300	1,113,134	-	649,787	99%
	B (Centralized)				463,347		
Title III, - SNORE	A (Site)	-	-	-	-	-	0%
	B (Centralized)						
EIA	A (Site)	2,312,436	3,818,013	6,130,449	3,058,582	2,667,095	70%
	B (Centralized)				404,772		
SCE	A (Site)	-	-	-	-	-	0%
	B (Centralized)						
ELAP	A (Site)	269,748	222,636	492,384	78,081	414,303	186%
	B (Centralized)						
CBET	A (Site)	40,972	178,585	219,557	178,585	40,972	23%
	B (Centralized)						
Title I, NCLB	A (Site)	1,185,416	5,351,275	6,536,691	3,417,723	766,013	14%
	B (Centralized)				2,352,955		
Total	A (Site)	4,263,406	10,228,809	14,492,215	6,732,971	4,538,170	44%
	B (Centralized)				3,221,074		

Source: MDUSD Receivables/Special Projects - Fiscal Services Department, 3-09-11

Note: Fund sources included are: Title III, NCLB, Title III – SNORE, EIA, ELAP, CBET and Title I, NCLB. Fund entitlements, expenditures and carryover amounts do not exactly match the district's Final Audit Report for FY 2010, dated 1-25-11 from Auditor Christy White. Other categorical funds (Notably NCLB Title II, School Improvement, etc.) bring additional funds to the district that should also be providing direct services to many English learners.

Table 4. MDUSD Major Categorical Funding Sources
FY 2006-07 to FY 2009-10 (Amounts in \$ Millions)

Year	Carry-over Previous Year (a)	Entitlement (b)	Total budget available (a + b) (c)	Expenditure* (d)	Carryover (e)	Carry-over Percent of Current Year Entitlement (e) / (b) (f)
2006-07	2.396	8.288	10.684	7.998	2.687	32%
2007-08	2.687	8.479	11.166	7.813	3.353	40%
2008-09	3.353	8.775	12.129	7.866	4.263	49%
2009-10	4.263	10.229	14.492	9.954	4.538	44%

* Expenditures were split between site and centralized.

Source: MDUSD Receivables/Special Projects - Fiscal Services Department, March 9, 2011.

Administration of EL Programs

Structure and recent history. The district's EL programs are currently coordinated by an Administrator, with support from 1.5 FTE clerical staff at the district office, as well as from two ESL teacher specialists and one Community School Coordinator at the Assessment Center, and two clerical staff. This structure has been in place since about 2008. Prior to that time, EL programs were administered by an Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction, with many of the current staff plus an additional ELD specialist.

The district had been identified by the California Department of Education (CDE) as needing a Title III improvement plan in 2008, due to failure of ELs to meet selected accountability targets. The district was again required to develop an improvement plan in 2010, as MDUSD failed to meet some of the AMAO (Annual Measurable Achievement Outcome) targets for the fourth straight year.⁷

During 2010, a large task force met repeatedly with the EL Programs Administrator and the Assistant Director of Categorical Programs to prepare the ELSSA (*English Learner Subgroup Self Assessment*) and to support the development of the Title III LEA Improvement Plan Addendum. This task force included over 50 Mt. Diablo USD administrators, site administrators, and teachers.

During the prior year (2009-10) a working group of six elementary administrators met periodically with district staff to seek some additional streamlining and standardization of English Learner services in the elementary schools. They developed some consensus regarding a way to

⁷ The district did meet AMAO #1 and AMAO #2b, but not AMAO #2a or AMAO #3.

strengthen systems and a standard calendar for ELL work, expectations for ELD support teachers, and other materials.

During each school year, the EL Programs Coordinator meets monthly with a group of about 15 elementary ELD specialists, some of whom are based at a single site; others have responsibility for several sites (up to three or four), that they are expected to support every week. The monthly ELD teacher meeting is the principal forum for coordination of EL services at the elementary schools. In addition, the EL Programs Administrator meets frequently with the Student Achievement and School Support Division, and periodically has some time on the agendas when the administrators of elementary, middle and high schools meet together.

Guidance Documents. The district’s work with ELs has been guided by several previous documents, including:

1. Board Policy 6174 (Adopted January 9, 2007)
2. Administrative Rule 6174 (Adopted May 25, 2004)
3. Guidelines for Instruction of English Learners (EL Master Plan). Three binders: Elementary, Middle and High Schools. (Dated 2004 – 2007, updated in 2010)
4. The Local Education Agency Plan (LEAP)
Goal 2 - All limited-English-proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics. (2006-07 through 2008-09).
5. Title III LEA Improvement Plan Addendum (December 2, 2008), and a subsequent Title III LEA Improvement Plan Addendum (2011).

Evaluation and Accountability

Board Policy – AR 6174, (2004) states that, *The District’s Research and Evaluation Office shall annually evaluate the English Learner Program by gathering and analyzing data around four distinct areas of inquiry:*

1. *Acquisition of English*
2. *Academic Achievement*
3. *Participation in Advanced Course Work*
4. *Dropout Rate*

It appears that the last such comprehensive evaluation reported to the administration and the board was in June of 2004. Subsequently, some data on ELs has been reported, as part of district-wide analysis of student achievement, but it appears that there has been no evaluation reporting comparable to the efforts in 2003 and 2004. The Research and Evaluation Department has responsibility for testing and accountability programs, but currently has a limited capability, due to budget cuts in recent years.

Recent work on EL programs has included responses to state and federal accountability mandates, and specifically the requirements of NCLB, Title III. Since the district’s ELs failed to meet some of the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) several years in a row, district staff has conducted self assessments, and developed separate analyses of student performance in

English and academic achievement. That material is summarized in the MDUSD Title III, Year 4 LEA Needs Assessment (December 9, 2010), and the subsequent Title III Action Plan.

Audit Scope of Work and Methodology

This audit was designed to respond to the Mt Diablo Unified School District board and superintendent wish to optimize the effectiveness of programs for ELs. The audit assessed the key organizational, staffing, and instructional components known to contribute to effective programs for English learners.⁸ The aim is to ensure that the district operates programs for English learners that are consistent with state and federal law, and that provide for optimal development of academic competence and language proficiency.

The evaluation was conducted between February and May 2011. It was based on interviews with parents, board members, key district office administrators, and with principals, staff, and teachers.⁹ We also examined selected district program documents, as well as state and local program and accountability and fiscal data. Together with district staff, we conducted brief observations at five school sites.

Goals of the evaluation. This evaluation of English learner programs, in collaboration with efforts of district and site personnel, was intended to result in:

- A. Better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the current programs for English learners,
- B. Recommendations for improvements in the major elements of structure and instruction for English learners, leading to,
- C. Improvements in academic, language and cultural proficiencies¹⁰ for all English learners.

The evaluation design included an examination of the consistency of implementation of the essential components of high quality EL programs, and the development of recommendations for improvement, including ways the district could better align resources (staff, guidance documents, instructional materials, etc.) for the most effective implementation of these programs. This was not a program impact evaluation. It is not possible within the scope of work for this audit to make determinations of the effectiveness of a specific program type or of individual schools.

Site Visits. Together with district administrators, we interviewed administrators and several teachers at three elementary and at one middle school and one high school. In addition to the interviews, we conducted brief observations in 157 classrooms at these school sites between February and April 2011.¹¹ We selected these sites from among all district schools, ensuring that we visited schools with both large and smaller enrollments of ELs, schools with higher and lower socio-

⁸ These essential components are derived from research as well as state and federal law and guidelines such as the state's Academic Program Survey (APS). The most recent research-based approaches for ELs are thoroughly covered in CDE, 2010. For a summary of research on the effective schools literature related to ELs, see: N.Gold, Successful Bilingual Schools, 2006, pp. 10-11. [Download from: http://normgoldassociates.com/docs/articles/SBS_Report_FINAL.pdf](http://normgoldassociates.com/docs/articles/SBS_Report_FINAL.pdf)

⁹ See Appendix, Table B.

¹⁰ Cultural proficiency is not widely-acknowledged, and is rarely included in district or school goals. It is an important ingredient for students' success within and beyond their home community (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2009). See a definition of *cultural proficiency* and additional references in the Appendix, Figure 1.

¹¹ See Appendix, Table A for a list of the schools visited, and their characteristics.

economic status,¹² and schools operating some form of bilingual instruction as well as sites providing instruction overwhelmingly in English.

Administrator and other interviews. We conducted 22 confidential interviews with individuals, including board members, administrators, former district administrators, teachers, and counselors. See details in the Appendix, Table B.

Parent interviews. We held a focus group meeting with parents at a meeting of the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) on February 16th. The parent focus group was attended by over 30 parents whose children are enrolled in EL programs in the district's elementary, middle and high schools, as well as by staff from several sites.

Those meetings were conducted in Spanish. These interviews confirmed that parents shared a view of overall program strengths, and also confirmed a number of program needs, which are detailed along with the report of needs and recommendations, below.

ELD Teacher Interviews. We held a focus group meeting open to all elementary ELD teachers in the district on March 16, and received input from 15 teachers who attended that meeting.

Advisory Group. The district formed an advisory group for this evaluation with representatives from, teachers, principals and district staff. We met twice with that group in the course of this project, March 16th, and April 13th, first to share the overall audit design and questions, and later to preview selected preliminary findings.¹³

¹² SES was based on numbers receiving Free or Reduced Price Meals.

¹³ See Appendix, Table C.

Findings and Recommendations

The findings and recommendations are a result of reflection on: 1) Interviews with parents, teachers, administrators, 2) Classroom visits, 3) Review of documents, including district memoranda and policies.

Each of the main findings are discussed and followed by specific recommendations for improvement. Those are followed by a few additional recommendations that may assist the district in refining programs for ELs. The recommendations are intended to help the district design and implement improved and long-lasting systems for operating more effective English learner programs. We first report on overall strengths and assets of the district's programs for ELs, and then identify areas of need.

A. The district has a number of strengths and assets

- 1. School environments are clean, orderly, and conducive to learning.** On each of the five site visits, we found campuses that welcomed students and visitors, and we were impressed with the overall educational settings.
- 2. The district has many hard working, dedicated educators.** Interviews and observations provided evidence of many caring, concerned individuals who seek to make maximum use of best practices in fostering student learning. From both confidential interviews and conversations with site administrators we were able to get a sense of their dedication and passion for this work. Administrators and teachers are not satisfied with the status quo; almost all encouraged investment in needed improvements, and made many suggestions.
- 3. The administrator responsible for direction of the district's EL programs has a depth of knowledge and experience about the EL program research, practice and state and federal requirements.** The small district staff is supported by a group of elementary ELD teachers who meet monthly, and support ELD instruction in the schools.
- 4. The Assessment Center appears to provide a valuable service for secondary school students and their families.** It has staff who are linguistically and culturally supportive, and can draw on resources in a number of languages. They conduct assessments and make initial placement recommendations to the middle and high schools. In addition, Assessment Center staff monitor placements and grades of English learners.
- 5. Most teachers are appropriately authorized for EL instruction.** Teachers hold basic CLAD or BCLAD or comparable authorizations for their principal assignments. In several cases, sites have made an effort to recruit and hire bilingual staff who are able to provide primary language support or instruction and to communicate effectively with parents and students (principally in Spanish).
- 6. Many teachers and administrators have been trained or exposed to high-quality research-based strategies for ELs.** We were able to confirm from district records and interviews that – over the past decade – the district invested heavily in bringing high-quality EL training to district staff and administrators. This included work by Susana Dutro, Kate Kinsella, Laurie Olsen, SIOP and GLAD training, and others.
- 7. Core curriculum materials appear in place for all students for all content areas.** With the exception of limited classroom materials in Spanish for support in SEI classrooms, or

supplemental bilingual or sheltered materials at all grades, we found a sufficient supply of core instructional materials at the elementary schools. The secondary schools have core textbooks, but lack key Spanish materials in content areas, and lack ELD materials for ELs who are at higher CELDT levels and are enrolled in general or intervention language arts (ELA) classes.

8. New ELD materials (Inside and EDGE) have been purchased for the secondary schools, and are found in most Middle and High School ELD classrooms. The district has provided training on these new materials.

9. Many elementary classrooms have a supply of the basic ELD materials.

10. The district's system for identification of ELs and for initial and annual CELDT assessments appears to work well. Over the last two years, the EL Department has improved the ways that the district provides pre-slugged letters and data reports with CELDT and other EL data that greatly facilitates the work of site administrators and teachers.

11. The ADEPT assessment is reported to be a helpful tool that supplements CELDT scores at the elementary schools, and helps teachers monitor progress in English proficiency.

12. In the elementary grades, a district initiative to support Board Math and Board Language has led to the use of these strategies in several elementary schools. Board Math and Board Language provide graphic structures and systematic ways to use 15-20 minutes a day to recap and reinforce mathematics and language arts instruction. They incorporate active strategies for language as well as for concept development that can be important supports for ELs – as well as for others. The reviews of content instruction are done in ways that can be adjusted to meet the needs of students with various language abilities. While these activities can help reinforce content mastery and development of content-specific academic language, they cannot cover the differentiated English Language Development that ELs need on a daily basis.

13. Parents reported that there have been a number of effective efforts to engage in parent outreach and education, including family literacy work, and some training via PIQE (Parent Institute for Quality Education). The district has also provided support for the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC).

B. The district has a number of major needs and root causes.

We found that the essential components of high quality EL programs¹⁴ are not in place or consistently implemented. The district does not currently have an optimal alignment of resources (staff, guidance documents, instructional materials, etc.) for the most effective implementation of EL programs. To remedy this, the district will need to make substantial improvements and modifications in order to have the likelihood of implementing programs for ELs that are optimally effective.

While the district does have many district staff and a large number of teachers with basic qualifications for teaching ELs, most are not engaged in a systematic delivery of instruction for ELs using research-supported best practices to ensure that the highest quality EL programs are implemented consistently. Resources are not configured to provide optimal leadership and management of EL programs.

The specific findings, below, identify both symptoms and root causes that appear to have led to the failure of the district to implement optimal programs for English learners, and therefore contribute to the low achievement of English learners. We found that the guidance and messaging provided to the schools about EL programs and services has been inadequate and inconsistent, and that services for ELs have not been made a top priority. There is a lack of district-wide coordination, direction and accountability for EL programs. In addition, the MDUSD has insufficient staff, structure and resources assigned to ensure effective implementation of EL services at both the district and site levels. The district has provided much professional development but has failed to support implementation of best practices with demonstration, coaching, monitoring and follow-up. We noted that there is very little primary language support in the schools, and that teachers and administrators have received conflicting direction about the district's bilingual programs.

C. These needs and root causes have resulted in:

- 1. Lack of understanding of the core features of EL services and the commitment to provide them.** There is an overall perception that the only core feature for ELs is the provision of ELD instruction, but even that is incompletely understood and implemented.
- 2. Lack of ELD instruction for every English Learner.** Only ELs at the lowest levels of English proficiency are placed in settings where they could receive daily, leveled ELD instruction. ELs at the intermediate level and above are typically not provided ELD instruction. These students are most at risk of becoming long-term ELs.
- 3. Lack of differentiation of instruction (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, SDAIE)** based on language, cultural and academic needs of ELs. Few of the 157 classrooms we visited were making use of research-supported best practices for sheltering or scaffolding of content instruction.
- 4. Instruction that does not capitalize on the primary language abilities of students.** There are many missed opportunities to build important skills, and to motivate and engage students who are most at risk.

¹⁴ These essential components are derived from research (CDE, 2010) as well as state and federal law and guidelines such as the Academic Program Survey (APS). SEE: N.Gold, Successful Bilingual Schools, 2006, pp. 10-11. http://normgoldassociates.com/docs/articles/SBS_Report_FINAL.pdf (PDF, 1.7MB).

5. Almost no attention to cultural proficiency. This has not been a topic of focus or professional development. Schools are not equipped to build cultural proficiency among administrators, teachers, counselors or office staff, and school personnel are not able to guide students and their families toward greater cultural proficiency.

6. Inconsistent and limited communication with parents. A number of parents and administrators reported that some parents do not understand how students are identified as EL, or what that means, nor what standards students must meet to be reclassified as FEP. They are not aware of the full range of services that should be available to any EL in the district.

Specific Findings and Recommendations

Presented below are eight major findings. Each one is followed by one or more recommendations for improvement. We begin with a focus on the achievement of English learners.

Finding 1.0 English and Academic Outcomes Fail to meet Targets

English and academic outcomes of ELs fail to meet state and federal targets. ELs in MDUSD lag behind the state and comparable districts. The failure to meet accountability targets has been acknowledged, and the district has developed improvement plans. Prior improvement plans (2008), however, were only partially implemented. The lack of achievement of ELs becomes clearer when MDUSD performance is compared with the performance of similar school districts.

Mastery of the English language and academic achievement of ELs has been an area of concern for some time in the district, and there are concerted efforts on the part of teachers and administrators to work on student achievement overall. We did confirm the evidence summarized by the district in its recent needs assessment prepared for the Title III Corrective Action Plan, but do not repeat it here in detail.¹⁵

The district did meet some of the federal targets, the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs): It met AMAO #1 (percentage of ELs making progress), but the percent of students meeting AMAO #1 has been declining since 2007-08. **The district did not meet the target for AMAO #2a (percentage of ELs in the district 1-4 years reaching the proficient level).** Nor did the district meet AMAO #3. AMAO #3 represents achievement of ELs on the standardized tests of English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. **ELs in MDUSD failed to meet NCLB targets for percent proficient in ELA and mathematics each of the last three years.**

The district's ELs perform below ELs in the state on several measures of progress and proficiency in acquisition of the English language, as well as on standards-based assessments of literacy and mathematics. We examined how MDUSD ELs are performing in comparison to similar communities in California, and we found that they lag behind the performance of ELs in several other districts that are roughly comparable in size, poverty and enrollment of ELs.

Comparison districts. In order to place in perspective the progress and proficiency in language and academics of English learners in MDUSD, we selected five districts for comparison (See

¹⁵ The district did a thorough job of completing the English Language Subgroup Self Assessment (ELSSA) during the fall of 2010. See: *Title III Year 4 LEA Needs Assessment*, MDUSD, dated December 9, 2010.

Table 2). The comparison districts have approximately similar overall enrollments and numbers of ELs, and these are overwhelmingly Spanish-speakers.¹⁶

The comparison districts enroll students who are mainly Latino, Spanish speakers of relatively lower income.¹⁷ If anything, some of these districts are faced with even greater challenges in the proportion of students who are ELs, and greater challenges of poverty and lower parent education than those in Mt. Diablo. Note that a smaller proportion of MDUSD students are ELs.

MDUSD lags behind on most achievement measures. The state accountability program provides a measure in that helps view the performance of all students in comparison with all schools statewide and with similar schools. Some of the district's schools have improved their standings since last year, but only 12 of them rank above the lowest four deciles on the API similar schools ranks, and only four schools rank above 6 when compared with similar schools.¹⁸

When compared with ELs in five selected districts, the ELs in MDUSD do score somewhat higher than those in two of the districts on Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) 2 (ELD proficiency). But the district reports lower scores on AMAO 1 (ELD progress) in all cases, and has reclassified a smaller proportion of ELs than the state average and all but one of the comparison districts. The API calculated for the EL and Hispanic subgroups is at or below that of the comparison districts, and fewer ELs reach the AYP standards for scoring proficient or advanced in ELA or mathematics in all except one of the ten comparisons. Out of 45 total comparisons (nine variables X 5 comparison districts), the results for MDUSD are only stronger than any of the five districts in four cases. See details in Table 5, below.

Recommendation - 1.1 Implementation of the remaining recommendations in this report should contribute to greatly improved outcomes for ELs. The district can achieve improvements in student outcomes by implementing more cohesive, coherent EL programs in response to the other recommendations in this report.

¹⁶ The districts selected share some, but not all, important characteristics with MDUSD. It is not possible to precisely identify school districts with identical features.

¹⁷ The exception, Garden Grove, has the largest number of ELs in the group; only 67 percent are Spanish speakers, the next largest group, speakers of Vietnamese, account for 29 percent of ELs).

¹⁸ 2010 Base API Report released 5/5/11. CDE, DataQuest at www.cde.ca.gov

Table 5: Outcomes for English Learners in MDUSD Lag Behind the State and Comparable Districts – 2009-10

District	Reclassification (Number reclassified / prior year ELs)	AMAO 1* English Progress	AMAO 2b * > 5 yrs. CELDT "Proficient"	Current API (gain from prior year)	AYP (% proficient+) ELA**	AYP (% proficient+) Math**
Mt Diablo Enr: 34,316 EL: 7,235 (21.1%)	631 (9.5%)	54.7%	42.3%	Tot: 784 (+11) EL: 662 Hisp: 692	EL: 30.2 Hisp: 37.5	EL: 38.5 Hisp: 41.1
California	175,417 (11.6%)	Target = 53.1%	Target = 41.3%	EL: 692 Hisp: 715	Target = 56.0	Target = 56.4
Fontana Enr: 41,004 EL: 15,064 (36.7%)	1,602 (10.0%)	61.6%	55.8%	Tot: 731 (+21) EL: 703 Hisp: 727	EL: 36.5 Hisp: 41.9	EL: 44.5 Hisp: 46.5
Desert Sands Enr: 29,323 EL: 7,010 (23.9%)	947 (14.4%)	58.4%	40.3%	Tot: 797 (+21) EL: 713 Hisp: 751	EL: 37.3 Hisp: 46.8	EL: 48.1 Hisp: 52.9
Garden Grove Enr: 47,914 EL: 21,603 (45.1%)	2,197 (9.8%)	62.7%	58.2%	Tot: 802 (+12) EL: 761 Hisp: 735	EL: 46.3 Hisp: 40.5	EL: 62.2 Hisp: 53.4
Newport-Mesa** Enr: 21,718 EL: 5,883 (27.1%)	481 (8.4%)	58.9%	56%	Tot: 820 (+9) EL: 701 Hisp: 733	EL: 35.3 Hisp: 42.1	EL: 42.3 Hisp: 46.6
Oakland USD Enr: 46,616 EL: 15,091 (32.4%)	1,746 (12.2%)	58.5%	40.1%	Tot: 719 (+26) EL: 695 Hisp: 692	EL: 36.6 Hisp: 36.3	EL: 51.4 Hisp: 46.7

Notes: *There is no published state average for Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) 1 or AMAO 2.
 ** Newport-Mesa is a Basic Aid District, and has substantially higher per pupil base funding than Mt. Diablo.
 SOURCE: DataQuest, CDE. May 5, 2011

Finding 2.0 The guidance and messaging provided to the schools about EL programs and services have been inadequate and inconsistent.

Guidance documents on EL services, including the EL master plan,¹⁹ are not usable.

District personnel do not regard the Guidelines as sources of guidance. It also appears that current board policy and administrative regulations (BP 6174 and AR 6174) are not used as guides to district or site implementation of programs.

The current EL master plan (2004 – 2007, updated in 2010) lacks an index and pagination, is repetitive, contains extraneous material, and has proven to be unusable as a guide to implementation. Some of the material in the plan describes alternative approaches or practices for different schools, but, in doing so, fails to guide all school personnel regarding implementation of best practices or about specific state and federal legal requirements for EL services.

An effective master plan should cover the district goals for EL programs, how ELs are identified and placed, the district's specific instructional programs for ELs, standards and procedures for reclassification, monitoring of program implementation and student progress, parent and community involvement, staffing and professional development, use of district and categorical funds, etc.

The purpose of an EL master plan is to provide an operational guide for EL programs. It should direct the work of all district and school staff toward explicit goals of coherent and consistent implementation of effective EL programs, and toward ensuring that all ELs reach explicit language, academic and cultural proficiency goals. The master plan should be tailored to the specific needs of the district, its students and community. A comprehensive EL master plan will serve as the road map for all district staff and community engaged in supporting the education for ELs. It will provide the basis for the district to consistently implement EL programs, and to hold all accountable for this implementation. See links to sample plans in the References.

Messaging has been inconsistent and inadequate. The district has not had a regular system of administrative memoranda or directives to communicate issues of EL programs implementation to the sites. There has been inconsistent and weak messaging regarding EL services, and the guidance that is provided to schools is overly-reliant on periodic oral communication. The district has not provided comprehensive training for stakeholders on the fundamental features of services and roles and responsibilities for EL services. The district currently has no concise guide to EL services that is provided to every new teacher or administrator.

¹⁹ Guidelines for Instruction of English Learners, 2010. Elementary, Middle and High School volumes.

Recommendations re: guidance documents and messaging

Recommendation 2.1 - Produce an updated and operational *EL Master Plan*.

We recommend that the district initiate a project to revise and develop a new master plan that will be presented to the local governing board for adoption. The master plan revision should be based on an up-to-date policy for ELs, so the Board Policy (6174) should be reviewed for any possible changes, prior to commencing the work on the plan.

The master plan revision project is likely to require eight to nine months. This project should make use of a task force of key stakeholders that may include parents of ELs, district and site administrators and teachers, as well as other stakeholders. We recommend that the district seek an external facilitator for this work. Broad-based stakeholder engagement will serve at least three purposes: (1) It will provide an opportunity to build a common understanding of current research and practice in EL programs and services among key stakeholders, and, (2) It will bring together local expertise and perspectives that can lead to development of an EL master plan that is most responsive to the conditions and specific needs of the Mt. Diablo USD community, and, (3) It will result in a knowledgeable group of individuals who are likely to be key supporters of implementation of the new plan.²⁰

Once adopted by the local board, all district personnel should be expected to follow the procedures specified in the master plan. We recommend that it be published in both print and electronic versions, (in both English and Spanish) and posted on the district's website. The master plan should be reviewed annually, and should be revised every five to six years.

Recommendation 2.2 – Provide clear operational definitions of EL programs in the master plan.

Along with other content, the master plan should include clear definitions of all EL programs. The district should develop concise, operational descriptions that apply to all elementary, and secondary schools for:

- a. Structured English Immersion
- b. English language mainstream program
- c. Bilingual programs

Each program type should specify the goals of the program, the students who are typically served by this program, key program components, staffing requirements, and additional support options for students in the program. Additional material should be developed to provide guidance on instructional materials and on how program features will operate, such as the relative emphasis on ELD, academic content instruction to be provided in a sheltered mode, or by means of the primary language, time and formats for ELD instruction, the role of primary language support, etc.

In the past, the district has tried to describe alternative approaches for specific schools. We recommend that the core, non-negotiable features of all programs be defined in the

²⁰ It is important to distinguish the purpose of an EL master plan from the other planning documents developed by the district. For example, the *LEA Plan*, the *Title III Addendum*, the *APS* responses, and the *ELSSA* (See glossary) all have audiences external to the district and are not designed to provide comprehensive operational guidance to administrators, counselors and teachers on how to implement EL services and programs.

master plan for all to implement. Beyond that, the plan can provide for minor modifications in implementation, as long as the goals are met, and the essential instructional features are included.

For example, every EL must be provided daily ELD instruction, and differentiated instruction appropriate to their language proficiency, and related cultural and academic needs. The pattern of courses and course titles should be identical in all schools – to the extent feasible -- but may need to be altered somewhat in cases where there very few ELs are enrolled at a site. The task force working on the new master plan will need to spend considerable time working on this aspect of the plan.

Recommendation 2.3 - As the master plan is developed, the task force should consider some specific transition programs for newcomers.

These could include an intensive English plan for those ELs who arrive with no English proficiency at grades 3-5, or a separate newcomer site or structure to support middle school and high school newcomers. The aim should be to provide needed services to each English learner, even if they initially enroll later in their school career, or in small numbers at some schools.

Recommendation 2.4 - Provide a minimum of four to six hours professional development on the new EL master plan for all stakeholders.

The production and publication of the master plan is only a first step along the road to consistent and coherent implementation of EL programs. The district will need to provide direct professional development on the EL Master Plan for all administrators and teachers. Differentiated professional development will be needed for other stakeholders as well.

In addition to conventional presentations, use multiple media and formats to communicate master plan content and the program designs, and tailor these to specific audiences (clerks, teachers, administrators, parents, and those who provide guidance or counseling). Professional Development in the form of presentations should be followed by demonstration, practice, coaching and follow-up for site implementation. Both the original PD and follow-up will require specific action plans, calendars and budgets.

In the formal training, the district should communicate all aspects of the plan, and especially the program descriptions, to all staff and to parents and community members, using both English and Spanish and a variety of approaches. Based on our experience with a number of other districts, **direct training for principals may require a total of 15-20 presentation hours**. **Basic training for all teachers may require 4 – 6 hours**. In addition to conventional training procedures, consider using all of these media to disseminate information about the plan:

- a. Brochure
- b. Video/ DVD
- c. Radio, TV, local press
- d. Parent meetings
- e. District and school websites

Only with direct, face-to-face training, can the district be ensured that staff gets the message about the guiding role played by the new master plan. Without this investment,

it is not likely that the key elements of the district's EL programs will be heard or understood by district personnel. In addition to direct training, support for full implementation of EL services should make use of best practices in professional development (Joyce and Showers, 2002), including demonstration, practice, coaching and follow-up. Only then, is it likely that programs will be consistently implemented. See also recommendations for Finding 6.0, below.

Recommendation 2.5 - The district should ensure that a regular flow of EL information goes to teachers as well as to site administrators.

An expanded flow of messages to teachers is needed to ensure more consistent implementation of programs. The district should plan for some general brief messaging to all teachers about EL services throughout the year, possibly on a monthly or quarterly basis.

In addition, some specific information about specific students could flow directly to teachers. For example, the district should develop ways for the Assessment Center recommendations for middle and high school placement to go directly to teachers as well as principals. One way to accomplish this may be by emailing PDFs of placement recommendations to teachers of record; there may be other approaches.

Recommendation 2.6 - Institute a system of regular messaging about EL issues.

- a. **Website.** For example, provide a front-page link to EL Services on the district website, and post weekly brief reminders from the superintendent about this topic.
- b. **Memoranda.** Periodic messages (monthly or quarterly) should go to principals in memorandum form, to remind them of key dates and activities in the school year, regarding placement of ELs, provision of daily ELD instruction, ELACs, CELDT testing, follow-up on R-FEP students, and (in middle and high schools) planning and staffing for ELD, sheltered and other special classes for ELs for the coming year.
- c. **Newsletter.** Consider instituting a weekly one-page EL newsletter from the EL Department that is distributed electronically to all district and site administrators and to EL Specialists at each school. Other districts have had success with this approach. It serves to provide consistent messaging re: EL services, reminds stakeholders of key contacts and website links, and provides reasonably-sized chunks of technical information re: EL programs and services, drawn principally from the content of the EL master plan.²¹
- d. **Meetings.** Include a standing agenda item to cover EL issues at least twice a month in meetings for site administrators.
- e. **Content.** Include in the expanded system for messaging topics like: raising expectations for all students, but especially ELs, Latinos, and African American students, along with the core instructional features of comprehensive EL programs: ELD, SDAIE, primary language support, cultural proficiency, parent and community engagement, etc.

²¹ An excellent example is the [EL Links](#), distributed weekly by Newport-Mesa USD for at least seven years.

Finding 3.0 Services for ELs have not been top priority for the district.

Services for ELs have not been top priority for the district. There is a lack of district-wide coordination, direction and accountability. Individuals with substantial historical perspective in MD USD point to the lack of a director-level administrator with sufficient district staff to provide direction for EL services, to the lack of usable master plan, to the lack of annual reporting on EL program implementation and outcomes, and to the lack of a consistent forum for surfacing EL issues as evidence that these programs are not given the highest priority in the district's planning and operations.

Our observations and review of materials confirmed that – while there is a sincere interest in working on EL issues – the district has not made it a top priority in terms of structure, staffing or messaging. In addition, we note that, in recent years there have been no formal briefings or study sessions for board members on EL programs and services.

ELs are currently 20 percent of all district enrollment, and – combined with FEP students – students who come from homes where English is not the first language make up 35 percent of all enrollment. These demographics, plus the fact that the EL subgroup performs substantially below other groups in the district, argue for putting EL programs and services at the top of the district's list of priorities.

Recommendations related to making EL services and programs a top priority.

Recommendation 3.1 Incorporate selected features of EL services into evaluations of the superintendent, district administrators, principals and all certificated staff.

The district should identify a limited number of key tasks and milestones that will serve as indicators of successful implementation. For example: site administrators should be held responsible for all EL services, but specifically for ensuring that each EL receives daily ELD instruction, and other key features of the adopted EL instructional programs. We recommend that the district make use of a monitoring checklist, and conduct monitoring of implementation of selected items on a widely-publicized calendar.

Recommendation 3.2 - During school year 2011-12 provide two to three briefings and a study session for the governing board on EL, and calendar two updates per year into the future.

Given the high priority of EL students in the district, it would be beneficial for the board and local community to have a regular flow of information regarding EL programs and services. These sessions can provide important background information to the board on what is known about best practices for ELs, and can brief the board on how the district is making progress on implementation of these practices in the schools.

Recommendation 3.3 - Schedule a DELAC report to the Board toward the end of every year.

There is a statutory requirement that the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), “...*advises the school district governing board...*” on a number of tasks

related to programs and services for ELs.²² Many districts ensure that the DELAC, or their representatives, participate in a variety of district-wide committees, and also set aside time of the DELAC to make a formal presentation to the board toward the end of every year. At that formal presentation, DELAC representatives provide their advice and perspective on how EL programs and services are being implemented, describe school-specific needs, and can provide the board with parent and community perspective on how the district's programs are meeting key outcome milestones.

Recommendation 3.4 - Allocate staffing and resources for EL services to ensure adequate structure, staff and materials for full implementation.

The district will demonstrate that it is making EL services a top priority by constituting an implementation team at the district level consisting of a top-level administrator with sufficient highly-qualified staff to support the sites with demonstration, coaching and monitoring. In addition, the investment in a full range of materials for ELD at the elementary schools, and professional development and support their use, will be a concrete step forward in ensuring that the highest quality programs can be implemented.

Recommendation 3.5 - Set a timetable and allocate sufficient staff time to prepare an annual evaluation report to the superintendent, the DELAC, and the local board on implementation and outcomes of EL programs and services.

To adequately monitor programs and services for ELs, the district will need a comprehensive, but concise, flow of information regarding both implementation and outcomes. The district should allocate staff time, provide the resources, and ensure that there is a practical calendar for data collection, analysis and reporting related to the EL programs. A summary report should be prepared and presented to key stakeholders each year.

²² Education Code (EC) 35147, 52168, 52176, 62002.5, and Title 5, Code of California Regulations (T5 CCR) 11308.

Finding 4.0 The district has insufficient staff, structure and resources to ensure effective implementation of EL services.

The district has limitations in the numbers and positions of key staff assigned to support implementation of EL services, and has not directed sufficient resources toward ensuring that every student has the specialized instructional materials necessary for optimal learning. The lack of materials is particularly acute in the area of elementary ELD instruction, but also extends to materials that can be used to support sheltered content instruction and primary language support.

The size of the EL population (over 20 percent of all enrollment), their low performance, and the number of schools in MDUSD are sufficient to warrant the investment in a larger district-level leadership staff to provide additional guidance and support to the schools. The district does not have a clear structure with sufficient designated staff who have clear roles and responsibilities that are likely to lead to accountability for implementation of EL services at the site level.

The lead administrator for EL Services is a coordinator, and not at a high enough position to be the authoritative voice of the district on matters of implementation at the sites. With the exception of the two teacher-specialists at the Assessment Center, who spend most of their time supporting middle and high schools, no other certificated staff is currently assigned to work at the district level on EL services.

We found that the current certificated staff are viewed as knowledgeable, helpful and supportive by the sites. Clerical staff at the district office and at the Assessment Center, and the community liaison also provide consistent support to the sites. But these few individuals are insufficient in numbers to provide the support needed by over 1,600 teachers and over 100 administrators who are direct providers of services to over 7,000 ELs in 56 school sites.

Recommendations regarding staff, structure and resources to ensure effective implementation of EL services

Recommendations in this area are provided for both the site and district levels.

4.1 Site Level Recommendations - Staff, Structure, and Resources

Recommendation 4.1.1 - At the elementary level, the district should either adopt and purchase new ELD materials or reconfirm the official “core” ELD materials that will continue to be provided with local funds and then adopt and support the addition of supplemental ELD materials that will greatly enhance the elementary ELD instruction.

With careful attention to the purposes of each funding source, selected categorical funds may be used to purchase these supplemental ELD materials. Once designated and purchased, the district should require the use of the very best materials in daily ELD lessons for each EL.

Recommendation 4.1.2 - The district should seek to establish primary language/ bilingual qualifications for selected site office staff positions to support communication with students and families and support compliance with Education Code 4985 (15% rule on L1 translated materials).

We identified a concern that some parents, students and community members have difficulty communicating with site administration and staff, and that some sites do not always translate all school notices as required by the Education Code.

The district should work with the sites to inventory primary language/ bilingual capabilities of current staff, and should identify those sites where bilingual office staff is needed.

Recommendation 4.1.3 - At least one highly-trained EL teacher at each middle and high schools should be relieved of instruction at least one period a day to serve as the site EL specialist.

Release time for those sites enrolling larger numbers of ELs may be two or three periods, or more. These specialists would work closely with the site administrators and would serve as advocates for EL students.

These individuals might be drawn from among those currently providing ELD or sheltered or primary language instruction. They should be provided with a duty statement that includes roles and responsibilities as well as training to support their peers in EL instruction, to monitor student placement and progress, and to advocate for optimal implementation of EL programs. **The district should institute monthly meetings for these designated EL specialists at the middle and high school** to support building their expertise as guides to more effective implementation.

Recommendation 4.1.4 - To improve the quality and effectiveness of ELD instruction at middle and high schools, the district should work with principals in recruiting and retaining teachers in these positions who have strong interest in ELD instruction, and who have strong preparation for this work.

These teachers should be designated far in advance of the beginning of each school year, and should be provided with training on current ELD course standards, the ELD materials, objectives, and best practices. A specific program of PD and coaching support should continue through the year. We recommend that the middle and high school ELD teachers be brought together four to six times per year for training and collaborative work.

Recommendation 4.1.5 - Rewrite the duty statement for the elementary site EL Specialists (Currently: “site ELD teachers”) so that they focus mostly on demonstration, coaching and monitoring of EL services.

We recommend that these site EL support positions be renamed as “Site EL Specialists.” In this and other cases of district and site EL work, it will be helpful to **make use of more inclusive terminology that refers to English Learner programs and services as the umbrella term**, rather than referring to “ELD staff,” and “ELD programs,” or “ELD Department,” etc. ELD is only one very important feature of all EL programs. Effective EL programs require a more comprehensive set of features.

If there are extensive clerical duties that these teachers have been doing at the sites, we recommend that these duties be covered by classified staff, freeing site specialists to act more in a coaching and mentor role. Sites can make use of their supplemental funds for this clerical support when related to monitoring placement, progress on benchmarks, and follow-up on reclassified students.

Recommendation 4.1.6 - The district should consider setting bilingual (Spanish-English) qualifications for Site EL specialists to increase the levels of support for the majority of ELs and their families.

Recommendation 4.1.7 - The district EL director should actively participate in recruitment, hiring and supervision of site EL specialists. This is likely to require development of a protocol to make clear how the EL Director and site administrator share supervision and evaluation of the specialists.

4.2 District Level Recommendations - Staff, Structure, and Resources

Recommendation 4.2.1 – Establish a position of Director of EL Services. An EL Services Director is needed to oversee programs for over 6,800 students, and to ensure that state and federal resources totaling over \$10.2 million are spent effectively, using the most up-to-date research-supported practices.

Given the importance of focusing district efforts for ELs, the district should establish a leadership position for EL services at the director level. A number of other districts do have positions at this level.²³ The person occupying this position would participate with other directors in leadership decisions of the district. The EL director should have extensive management experience and advanced expertise in EL programs, should manage the core EL work group (see recommendation 4.2.2 below), and should speak with the authority of the district about EL services.

The director of EL services and the specialists in the EL Department will provide support to others (the cabinet, the EL Coordinating Council (see 4.2.3, below), site principals, and the site EL specialists (see 4.1.5, above). This recommendation for designation of a director of EL services is tightly coupled with the recommendation to constitute a core EL work group, recommendation 4.2.2, and with the recommendation to constitute an EL Coordinating Council, recommendation 4.2.3. This structure will help coordinate the district's work programs for ELs with all other curriculum and instruction and improvement initiatives in the district.

Recommendation 4.2.2 - Constitute a core EL work group at the district level.

This work group should be comprised of the director (see recommendation above) and **at least seven (7) full-time-equivalent (FTE) certificated specialists** (teachers on special assignment) or a comparable complement of teacher specialists and administrators. Many districts of comparable size and total EL enrollment have constituted an **EL Services Department** for this purpose.

²³ Corona-Norco USD, Hayward USD, Newport-Mesa USD, Ventura USD, and Woodland JUSD, are just a few examples.

The EL Department should have adequate staff to coach and monitor and support principals and staff at 56 sites. Given the large amounts of carry-over from categorical funds designated for serving ELs, it appears that the district does have the resources to support this much-needed staff (See Table 3, above).

The EL Department's top quality EL specialists should regularly visit their assigned schools, walk through classrooms with the principal or site EL specialist, and provide demonstration and coaching for teachers. Each person would have responsibility for no more than eight sites. The specialists would maintain weekly contact and support with all their sites, including visits, emails, telephone, SKYPE conferences, etc, and would provide the principal point of contact for EL support to the sites.

Recommendation 4.2.3 - Constitute an EL Coordinating Council. The district should establish an English Learner Coordinating Council (EL CC), comprised of key district directors, chaired by the Superintendent.

The district should establish an EL Coordinating Council comprised of top district administrators and representatives from schools at all levels. This council should meet at least monthly. Several district superintendents have done this by holding a meeting in conjunction with one of the district's regular meetings of directors, and including other key administrators.²⁴ The Hayward USD superintendent sets aside two to three hours once a month for the work of the council. The EL department provides staff support.

Here is one example of the organization and purpose of an EL Coordinating Council:

The EL Coordinating Council will meet at least monthly to discuss topics pertaining to the development and implementation of the district's Master Plan for ELs. It will also serve as a clearinghouse for strategies, ideas, and suggestions for the improvement of EL programs. It will provide a forum to evaluate how effectively the practices, resources and personnel are being used to meet the needs of English learners.

The Council will make recommendations for reporting on the performance of ELs, and will contribute to the review of the Evaluation Plan, and the Annual Evaluation Report on EL programs. The Council will participate in deliberations about any needed EL program modifications, and will ensure the necessary communication and articulation to reach excellence in the district's goals for all ELs.

Recommendation 4.2.5 - Establish a district translator position. Mt. Diablo USD has sufficient need to justify one full-time expert translator/ interpreter to ensure that there will be top quality translations for all district documents, as well as interpretation in Spanish at board meetings and other major community meetings.

²⁴ The composition of the council should be determined based on MDUSD needs. Other districts (Newport-Mesa, Hayward, Fontana) have included district administrators; some include site administrators from each level as (Elementary, Middle, HS). This council would meet monthly, be staffed by the EL Department, and would serve as a clearinghouse for work on improving instruction for ELs throughout the district. Through this council all departments would be better informed of EL issues and best practices, and will build capacity to carry key messages re: EL programs and services. See the Newport-Mesa EL Master Plan. <http://web.nmusd.us/ELMAsterPlan>; Also: Hayward USD, www.haywardELL.org; Fontana USD, www.fontanaEL.org.

Recommendation 4.2.6 – Review and reconfirm major categorical programs funding commitments.

District leadership should examine all appropriate categorical funds to determine resources available for the initiatives above, and to re-examine all major categories of expenditures to determine the extent to which they contribute directly and optimally to the language, academic and cultural proficiency objectives for ELs.

Finding 5.0 The essential features of EL programs are not well understood.

EL programs are widely misunderstood as focusing only on ELD instruction.

While ELD is one important feature of effective programs for ELs, comprehensive EL services require attention to Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), primary language (L1) support, cultural proficiency, parent and community engagement, and much more. ELs – especially in middle and high school – need access to electives and career and technical education in addition to the core courses needed for graduation. We found that, with a few exceptions, specific differentiation in core curriculum instruction, primary language support, parent and cultural proficiency goals and activities are not well-understood features of the programs provided at the five sample schools. These are lacking at other schools in the district as well, according to our interviews and the materials we reviewed.

English Language Development (ELD). We found that EL programs are mostly described as consisting of an ELD component. Unfortunately, however, we found that, while ELD instruction is better understood in most elementary schools, it was poorly implemented in all of the schools (3 elementary sites, one middle school, and one high school) we visited.

With a few exceptions, in the elementary schools teachers are providing remedial reading lessons, or follow-up to the grade-level English Language Arts curriculum, rather than ELD instruction, even when ELD is scheduled. Overall, ELD instruction was poorly implemented throughout the district.

In the secondary schools, the district guidance to schools excludes ELs enrolled over four years from receiving ELD. They are placed in reading intervention classes, where they do not receive ELD instruction. This is contrary research on best practices and to state law. While long-term ELs need not take a class titled “ELD” every semester, they – like others who have yet to demonstrate full proficiency in English – must receive ELD instruction on a daily basis in some class. That means that they should be enrolled in classes where teachers set language as well as content objectives, and work consciously on academic language to meet specific, diagnosed language needs of individual students.²⁵ This is rarely the case in the schools we visited.

Sheltered Instruction/ SDAIE. Consistent with current MDUSD guidelines, many ELs were enrolled in “TM” (Transitional Maintenance) classrooms, but we found teachers frequently did not understand the meaning of the “TM” designation, and we saw no specific EL services provided in these classrooms. Large numbers of students are enrolled in classes where there is no sheltering of instruction. In those settings, we saw almost no support in the students’ primary language provided by a teacher, a paraprofessional or instructional material.²⁶ The TM English

²⁵ See Saunders and Goldenberg (2010) and Dutro and Kinsella (2010) in CDE, 2010.

²⁶ The district’s EL Guidelines (2010) provide for both “Sheltered” classes and “Transitional Mainstream” classes at the middle and high school, and both are to include differentiated instruction, including the use of

classes appear to be reading intervention classes and do not appear in any way to be targeted to English learners, who generally make up about half of each class.

Some high school and middle school teachers commented that it is their opinion that there is no need to differentiate instruction for the ELs in their class. We come to a different conclusion after looking at some of the outcome data. Our analysis of grade information for one high school indicates that over a third (36 percent) of ELs are getting Ds or Fs in their English classes, while only 17 percent of non-ELs received a D or F in English.²⁷ We also found data confirming disproportional failure in other content areas at the schools we visited, suggesting that differentiated instruction and primary language support may be of benefit to ELs.

Cultural Proficiency.²⁸ We found that this important instructional component has not been an overt goal or feature of the district’s general education, nor of its EL programs. In interviews with administrators and teachers, and in school visits, we noted very limited understanding of cultural proficiency or examples of work in this area. A number of stakeholders interviewed, however, pointed directly to examples of how the district needs to grow in this area, citing lack of effective communication, and a lack of cultural sensitivity toward Latinos, African Americans, and other racial, ethnic or language groups.

The proponents of cultural proficiency describe it this way:

Cultural proficiency is a way of being, a worldview, and a perspective that are the basis for how one moves about in our diverse society. Once people learn cultural proficiency, they embrace it as a natural, normal way to interact with and respond to people culturally different from them. (Lindsey, Robins and Terrell, 2009; pp. 4-5).

Building cultural proficiency for students means providing them with tools so that they can make the most effective use of their academic content knowledge and their proficiency in the English language as they move into the wider, English-speaking society. It also provides them with tools and understandings so that they can continue to engage effectively in their home and family environments, benefiting from the warmth, guidance and discipline of family and community. And it provides them with similar ability to respond effectively to diverse peoples throughout our world, and to benefit from interactions with them.

Cultural proficiency for educators means equipping them with ways to assess culture, value diversity, manage the dynamics of difference, adapt to diversity, and institutionalize cultural knowledge. With these tools and competence, educators are better able to interact effectively with and to support learning for students of diverse backgrounds. (op cit., p. 21).

With the exception of one elementary site, we found very little evidence of work on cultural proficiency in our visits to the sample of five MD USD schools. Even at a surface level, we saw only a few representations of Latino, Mexican or Hispanic contributions to literature, mathematics, science or the arts in the classroom visits. Neither were there representations from Asian, African or other cultural sources. There is substantial evidence and a large body of

SDAIE techniques, primary language support and culturally-responsive instruction. We saw virtually none of these techniques or strategies in use.

²⁷ The district Technology & Information Services office provided data on Ds and Fs for the fall semester of this year for “High School X”. It showed that 36 percent (n = 135) of the ELs received either a D or F grade for English and at least one other academic course. By contrast, 168 non-ELs (I-FEPs, English-only, and R-FEP students) – 17 percent -- received a D or F in English and one other academic course. There was a similar disproportionality in Ds and Fs for other content areas.

²⁸ See glossary, Figure 4, and the work of Lindsey, Robins and Terrell (2009).

literature that supports the inclusion of cultural proficiency, culturally responsive teaching, and other aspects of affirming diversity in programs for ELs and others (CDE, 2010, CSDE, 1986; Nieto, 1996; Tikunoff and Ward, 1991, etc.).

A related concern: Disproportional representation. Last year the district was identified as one of 85 in the state with substantial disproportional representation of racial/ ethnic minorities (specifically, Hispanics and African Americans) among the Special Education population.²⁹ The district is working on plans to remedy this condition, through a careful examination of policies, procedures and practices. The district conducted a self review, and is developing an equity agenda that will emphasize prevention steps that can be taken in classes before students are identified for special education. Culturally and linguistically-responsive materials and practices are important elements of this equity agenda.

We noted the need for such an agenda in our classroom and school visits. Many of the culturally- and linguistically relevant strategies that will help support access to demanding academic content for ELs will also benefit all students in the district. A focus on cultural proficiency may be one feature in the wider district effort to address the concerns of disproportional representation in the special education population or among those facing suspensions, expulsions or other disciplinary actions.

As we visited five schools we looked for examples of attention to cultural proficiency – evidence that the schools were using culturally and linguistically responsive materials and techniques. We had hoped to see evidence of inclusion and representation of the various groups attending the Mt Diablo schools: including not only the Hispanic, mostly Mexican-origin, English learners, but also Asian-American, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos and African Americans. We concluded that the district is in need of great improvement in this area.

Schools in California have the unique possibility of helping staff and students develop full cultural proficiency – the competence and skill to work effectively with all peoples, including those who are different from them in language, ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds.³⁰

Conclusion re: understanding of EL program features. We conclude that there is a great need to expand the understanding of the essential features of effective EL programs among teachers, administrators, parents, students and the wider Mt Diablo USD community. These features do include ELD instruction, but also SDAIE or sheltered content instruction, primary language instruction (in bilingual programs), primary language support, explicit attention to building cultural proficiency, and ongoing attention to building parent and community engagement.

Recommendations to improve understanding of EL program features

The recommendations in this section will lead to building a stronger and more coherent knowledge base in the district. Recommendations under finding 6.0 will lead to stronger, more consistent implementation of best instructional practices for ELs for each of these features.

Recommendation 5.1 - The district should make use of more inclusive terminology that refers to “EL programs” as the umbrella term for all EL services, rather than referring to “ELD staff,” and “ELD programs,” or “ELD Department,” etc.

²⁹ We understand that there are similar concerns regarding disproportional representation among students identified for discipline or expulsion.

³⁰ See in particular, works by Lindsey, Robins and Terrell, 2009.

ELD is only one (very important) feature of all EL programs; but effective programs for ELs require a more comprehensive set of features. This shift of terminology can help raise the awareness of all staff regarding the various components needed for effective EL programs.

Recommendation 5.2 - The district should use the latest CDE publication (2010) and other current sources as the foundation for further capacity-building throughout the district.

Professional development should be conducted for administrators, teachers and others to build an explicit awareness that comprehensive EL programs and services need to include all components: ELD, sheltered or L1 access to core instruction, L1 support (even in English-medium classrooms), cultural proficiency, parent and community engagement, etc.

The district could begin this capacity-building process with a series of seminars this summer for district and site administrators as well as for core EL program staff. In addition to studying the CDE publication, staff may make use of online resources; WestEd provides free access to 90 minute webinars on each of the six chapters in the book.³¹

Recommendation 5.3 - The district should begin as soon as possible to develop a 3 - 5 year professional development (PD) plan for all aspects of EL services.

The planning activity should begin with a thorough review of the status of implementation of all EL programs features, and an inventory of prior training and expertise among staff at each site and the district.³² That should be followed by a consideration various PD providers in order to determine those best suited to the needs of MDUSD. The district should select a principal approach to PD for each feature of EL instruction (e.g., ELD, SDAIE) and adopt that approach for use throughout the district.

The district should then make a long-term commitment for cycles of PD and support in all aspects of EL services. Conventional PD should be followed by a commitment of staff and other resources to ensure implementation of best practices (see recommendations in Section 6.0, below).

Recommendation 5.4 – The district PD plan should include PD in cultural proficiency that is coordinated with the district’s work on an equity agenda stemming from the issues of disproportionate (high) representation of Latino and African American students in special education and in cases of discipline.

³¹ For example, the webinar for Chapter 1 (Saunders & Goldenberg, Research to Guide ELD Instruction) is available at: <http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/view/e/4684> .

³² The detailed inventory of training for teachers should show, by school, how many have been trained in GLAD, Systematic ELD, SIOP, ADEPT, and by Kinsella, Feldman, etc. The district should then determine a strategy for building the capacity of the core implementation team at the district and at each site (Fixen et al.), and develop a 3-5 year strategy for implementation of best practices.

This PD should be provided for all district and site administrators. The aim of this component should be to ensure that EL programs achieve cultural proficiency as well as ELD and academic goals.³³

Finding 6.0 The schools are not implementing best EL instructional practices.

A major finding of this audit is that the Mt. Diablo USD schools are not effectively implementing best practices for English learners in most classrooms. In spite of a number of strengths and assets in the district, including substantial professional development provided for teachers and administrators during much of the last decade, and a great deal of emphasis and energy expended to support ELs, this group of students is not benefiting from what are known to be the most effective practices.

Through observations and interviews, we found that fewer than 20 percent of classrooms were using even some of the best practices for ELD instruction, but also SDAIE or sheltered content instruction, primary language instruction (in bilingual programs), and primary language support. In addition there is a lack of explicit attention to building cultural proficiency, and limited attention to building parent and community engagement.

Implementation Science. In recent years, California educators are paying increasing attention to the issue of how to move from knowledge about best practices to the consistent and effective implementation of those practices. A number of scholars and practitioners have pointed to the need to move beyond conventional professional development to ensure effective implementation (Joyce and Showers, 2002; Reeves, 2009). Reeves goes so far as to recommend the “7 to 1 Rule:” schools must invest seven days in coaching and demonstration for implementation for every day of seminars and keynotes that are presented (2009, p. 1).

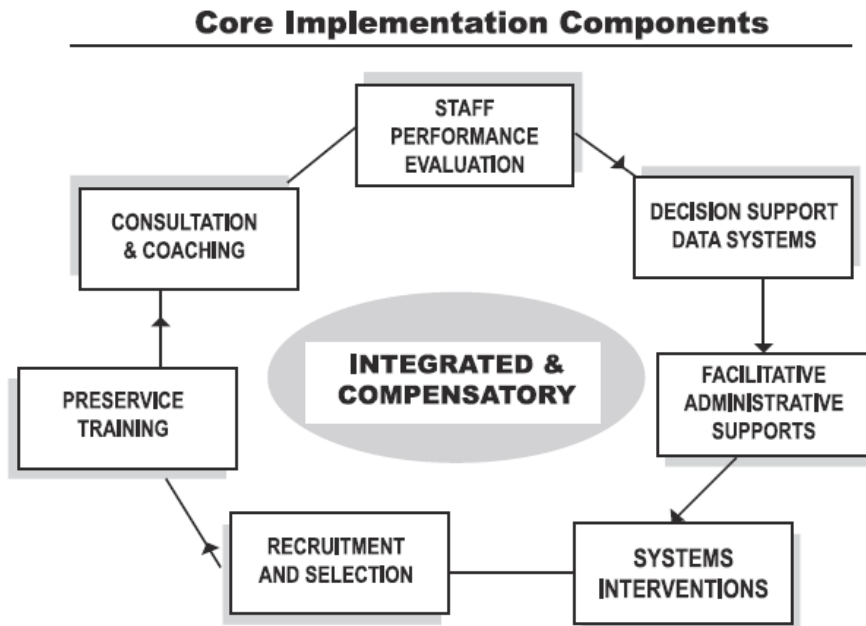
Recently, we have been provided with an even more comprehensive view of implementation by Fixen and his colleagues, who have documented the ingredients for effective implementation of significant innovations in education, health and other social service professions (2005, 2007, 2010). Their work can help us to use evidence-based practices to ensure the implementation of evidence-based instructional practices.

According to Fixen et al., we must of course attend to learning about the essential ingredients of an innovation or intervention (any program or set of variables that have been shown to lead to desired outcomes), but we must also invest a substantial amount of time, energy and resources into how to get that intervention effectively implemented and sustained in practice. Among the key components of implementation science are core implementation components that are often overlooked in our efforts to help schools improve student outcomes. These components of course include careful recruitment and selection of staff and conventional pre-service and in-service training. But they also include consultation and coaching, staff performance evaluation where

³³ Additional indicators of success of this effort will be increases in the numbers of ELs, Latinos and African Americans in participation in **GATE**, in completion of **a-g requirements** for college admissions, and in completion of **AP courses**. Our review noted that these groups have disproportionate (very low) participation in these success indicators.

implementation actions and milestones are carefully checked, as well as decision support data systems, facilitative administrative supports, and systems interventions (Fixen et al., 2005, 2007, 2010). Each of these components has a number of important sub-features. Fixen et al. provide numerous examples, and further elaborate on how important it is to plan for change, to plan for staff turn-over, and to proactively identify large enough implementation teams to ensure that implementation – once it starts taking off – will continue and be sustained (2005, *passim*). Figure 3, below, shows how the core implementation components work together to lead to effective implementation and sustained use of innovations.

Figure 3. Implementation Science



Source: Fixen et al., 2007, pg. 7

One of the missing ingredients for the district to date has been the capacity to provide coaching and consultation. We have made recommendations that the district constitute a core EL work group (a “district implementation team”) at the district level to ensure that there are highly-qualified staff who can do the demonstration, coaching and monitoring needed to support implementation, and that the EL specialists at the site have the skills and assignment to provide active support for implementation (See Recommendations 4.2.2 and 4.1.5, above).³⁴

To move programs for English learners in Mt. Diablo USD from what they are today to the point where most ELs in all classrooms receive research-based instruction most of the day, will take careful attention to the science of implementation as well as to the research about best practices for ELs. We cannot expect the best outcomes if best practices are only used occasionally. Fixen et al. tell us: *The most effective intervention will not produce positive effects if it is not implemented. Thus, assessments of performance are a critical component of implementation.* (2005, p. 55).

³⁴ Implementation science tells us that implementation teams will be necessary at the district and site levels. These are groups that: *know the innovations very well (formal and craft knowledge), that know implementation very well (formal and craft knowledge), and that know improvement cycles to make intervention and implementation methods more effective and efficient over time.* (Fixen, et al., 2010)

In addition, the recommended improvements in district messaging (Section 2), will increase the facilitative administrative supports for EL program implementation. Elsewhere, we have commented on the need to carefully recruit and select teachers for EL assignments, and to monitor staff performance on key implementation actions and milestones.³⁵ The following recommendations are intended to respond to the major need to improve implementation of best practices. Action on these recommendations will complement others that focus on building teacher and implementation team expertise in the innovations (specific research-based EL instructional practices), e.g., Recommendations # 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4, above.

Recommendations to improve implementation of best practices for English learners.

Recommendation 6.1 - The district should develop a comprehensive strategy to identify training assets at each school, (SEE REC. # 5.3, ABOVE) and to ensure that each faculty group has substantial support from demonstration, coaching and monitoring of best EL practices.

Demonstration, coaching and monitoring are essential implementation components, and these may come from principals, site EL specialists, or district EL Specialists, combined with cycles of peer coaching. Teachers should be encouraged to observe and help peers reflect on their own practice. Doing so, with expert guidance from the EL specialists, will help them reflect on, and improve their own practice.

In order for staff participating in previous and current professional development to move from awareness of best practices to frequent daily use of these best practices in the classroom, the district and all sites will need to make use of frequent demonstration and coaching, and monitoring.

*Most skills needed by successful practitioners can be introduced in training but **really are learned on the job with the help of a consultant/coach** (e.g., craft information, engagement, treatment planning, teaching to concepts, clinical judgment). Implementation of evidence-based practices requires behavior change at the practitioner, supervisory, and administrative support levels. Training and coaching are the principle ways in which behavior change is brought about for carefully selected staff in the beginning stages of implementation and throughout the life of evidence based practices and programs. [emphasis added]*

Fixen, et al., 2005, p. 29

Recommendation 6.2 – The district should design and implement a specific, comprehensive, multi-year coaching effort to help teachers and administrators make use of their knowledge of Systematic ELD, and should continue efforts to provide PD on ELD instruction.

This area requires specific attention. While the distinction between ELD instruction and

³⁵ In addition to Fixen, et al., there are a number of other places we can turn to for support for these core implementation components, including the work of Doug Reeves on accountability and implementation (2004, 2009), Richard Dufour et al., on professional learning communities and building collaborative cultures at school (2004), and others.

remedial reading is clearly set forth in Systematic ELD training that the district has provided to many teachers and administrators, and clear guidelines are available for ELD instruction in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of CDE's new research compendium (CDE, 2010), we found lack of understanding of this distinction, and failure to implement quality ELD instruction at all sites.

This demonstration and coaching effort should result in improved results in ELD, as teachers provide ELD instruction that is better aligned with the state's ELD standards and known best practices.³⁶

The following two recommendations are particularly urgent, due to the lack of EL services we found at all sites. Sufficient PD for all site administrators should accompany the written direction referred to in recommendations 6.3 and 6.4 so that they will have the understanding and tools needed to provide the rationale and initial direction to teachers and others on their campuses. The district will also need to provide coaching and follow-up. See also recommendation, #5.2, above.

Recommendation 6.3 - ELD instruction and differentiated content instruction should be implemented as soon as possible.

As an interim measure (even before a new EL Master Plan is adopted), the district should **provide clear written direction to all teachers and administrators, reminding them of the need to: (1) provide daily ELD instruction (in separate ELD classes, or embedded within other classes) to each and every English learner, and, (2) provide differentiated instruction for ELs in content classes**, including SDAIE strategies, primary language support and materials, and instruction that is culturally responsive. We recommend that this direction come from the superintendent, in order to make it clear that this has great urgency and is of the highest priority.

Recommendation 6.4 - For the elementary schools, the district should provide clear written direction to each elementary school, reminding teachers and administrators of the need to provide daily ELD instruction to every EL.

We recommend that – for grades 1 – 6 – this include a minimum of 45-60 minutes per day for explicit ELD instruction, depending on English proficiency level. In kindergarten, at least 30 minutes per day should be provided.³⁷

Recommendation 6.5 - As part of the master plan development effort during 2011-12, the district should clearly define the ELD program (including standards, curriculum, instructional materials) for all English language proficiency levels and for all grade-levels (elementary and secondary).

This should include clear descriptions of any grouping and scheduling options. Once approved, these definitions should be the subject of PD, as well as subsequent demonstrations, coaching and monitoring.

³⁶ CDE, 1999, available at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/englangdevstnd.pdf#search=eld%20standards&view=FitH&pagemode=none>, and CDE, 2010.

³⁷ Saunders and Goldenberg (2010), Snow and Katz (2010), Dutro and Kinsella (2010) in CDE, 2010, Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Recommendation 6.6 - The district should develop a cycle of training and support in coaching for principals, to better equip them to provide coaching on EL practices for teachers.

Staff Training Summary

The essence of implementation is behavior change. Training by itself seems to be an ineffective approach to implementation. [emphasis added]

Fixen, et al., 2005, p. 43

Recommendation 6.7 – The district should identify tools and procedures, and set calendars for overall monitoring of the implementation ELD, SDAIE, L1 instruction and L1 support. Similarly, principals should be provided with tools, templates and sample calendars so that they can monitor implementation at the classroom level.

Recommendation 6.8 – The district should formally monitor the implementation of the Title III Action Plan.

The action plan, in addition to helping the district meet state and federal requirements, warrants specific accountability measures. Such monitoring is an important component supported by implementation science (staff performance evaluation). The district should revisit that plan, and identify by number each SMART GOAL and Action Step. Then, designate dates and the person responsible for enroute monitoring of both the action steps and the outcomes of each goal.

In a highly functional systems, staff evaluation is part of a sequence of supports designed to have good people well prepared to do an effective job.

Fixen, et al., 2005 p. 48

The Assistant Superintendent Student Achievement & School Support, or alternate top administrator should review these monitoring checklists at least on a quarterly basis, and determine if adjustments to resources or staffing are needed to ensure successful fulfillment of the commitments made in the action plan.

Finding 7.0 There is very limited primary language support in the schools.

Local policy (BP 6174 and AR 6174) provides for up to 40 percent of instruction to be conducted in the primary language. State and federal law allow, and research on programs for ELs overwhelmingly supports the use of some primary language in Structured English Immersion (SEI) settings (CDE, 2010).

In fact, the original research on Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs (Cited in Rossell and Baker, 1996), documented programs where the teacher was bilingual, and used a substantial amount of Spanish for instructional support for two to three years. More recent research (CDE, 2010)), supports the use of primary language in SEI or mainstream settings.

Nevertheless, we found a perception among some staff and parents that they are discouraged from using the primary language of students. In a few cases, we observed some overt hostility toward the use of the primary language. In addition, most sites have a limited primary language

capability among teachers, office staff and administration. Staff at the Willow Creek Assessment Center (and others in the district) do provide support for translations, but there is no dedicated district translator for Spanish or other languages.

The lack of bilingual staff has resulted in some difficulty for parents and community members in communicating with the schools. Some sites are not able to meet state requirements for providing all parent communications in the primary language (currently Spanish in MDUSD schools).³⁸ We found that few classrooms have the recommended primary language support materials (including bilingual dictionaries), and none of the classrooms we visited were providing the primary language support in SEI settings that is specified in current district policy (AR 6174) and is supported by current research (CD, 2010).

Recommendations regarding primary language support.

Recommendation 7.1 - The local board and superintendent should periodically provide messages to staff and the community at large regarding the importance of providing primary language communications for parents and community members, and the importance of primary language support in the classroom.

The board and administration should set the tone for the district by modeling primary language support. The district should provide simultaneous interpretation (currently needed in Spanish) at board meetings, and other general community meetings. See also Recommendation 4.2.5, above.

Recommendation 7.2 - The district should inventory primary language capabilities of personnel at each school, and the district offices, and encourage the augmentation of primary language capability throughout the district through recruitment and hiring and the provision of advanced language study for teachers, administrators and clerical staff.

Recommendation 7.3 - The district should inventory primary language materials to determine availability of bilingual dictionaries, and parallel texts in science, social studies, language arts and mathematics, as well as the availability of age and grade-appropriate literature in Spanish and other languages spoken by students in the district.

Recommendation 7.4 - Where the inventory finds that there are gaps in primary language capabilities or materials, the district should guide the sites in how to fill these gaps.

Recommendation 7.5 – The district should provide tools and direction to principals so that they can monitor the provision of primary language support in classrooms, and monitor the extent to which the site is meeting it’s statutory responsibilities to provide communications to parents and guardians in Spanish (and any other languages required by CDE, per *EC Section 48985*).

³⁸ Currently, translated communications are required by state law in Spanish in 30 of the district’s schools, per *EC Section 48985*. See: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/cm/gavinab680ltr.asp>

Finding 8.0 Teachers and administrators have received conflicting direction regarding bilingual programs.

We found that there is confusion regarding the status of bilingual programs in the district. Some oral guidance from various district sources does not match current district policy, state law, or research on best practices for ELs.

State law requires that districts provide parents with an alternative (bilingual) option at all grades.³⁹ Since 1998 the default, program for all ELs in California is one provided overwhelmingly in English. When parents wish to choose a bilingual option they are to submit an annual waiver application to the local principal.⁴⁰ Current district policy documents⁴¹ provide for a bilingual program option.

In recent years bilingual instruction has been provided at very few elementary schools, and for few students in Mt. Diablo USD. In 2009-10 only 478 ELs (out of 6,874) were receiving bilingual instruction (7 percent of the total).⁴²

From our interviews we found that a number of district administrators are concerned about the conflicting direction provided. We could not find any memoranda or other written explanation of the rationale for varying from district policy or past practice. Some interviewees indicated that information about bilingual options was not consistently provided to parents at the sites. It was reported that office staff don't always know about the program options, or do not explain these options to parents when they register students. Some teachers and administrators now perceive that there is substantial pressure to greatly reduce, or eliminate the bilingual option.

Background on the effectiveness of bilingual instruction and the MDUSD sites providing bilingual alternative programs.

There is a great deal of research and documentation on various bilingual models, and bilingual education has been demonstrated to be as effective, or more effective, than English-only instruction in leading students to full academic proficiency in English and to overall school success.⁴³ In California, and elsewhere, there are a number of successful bilingual schools.⁴⁴

As we pointed out in the design for this audit, it is not possible to judge the effectiveness of one program model versus another (i.e. bilingual versus English-only instruction) based on a simple comparison of current outcomes from a few schools. Numerous input factors (student and

³⁹ T5 CCR regulations state: (a) In order to facilitate parental choice of program, all parents and guardians must be informed of the placement of their children in a structured English immersion program and must be notified of an opportunity to apply for a parental exception waiver. (5 CCR 11309 (a)).

⁴⁰ The law states: Parental exception waivers **shall be granted** unless the school principal and educational staff have determined that an alternative program offered at the school would not be better suited for the overall educational development of the pupil [emphasis **added**], 5 CCR 11309 (b) (4), and *Ed Code 305, 310, 311*.

⁴¹ See BP 6174, AR 6174, and the [Guidelines for Instruction of ELs](#).

⁴² For prior years, the numbers receiving bilingual instruction were similar: 2008-09: 588 (8.9%); 2007-08: 556 (8.4%), and 2006-07: 529 (8.6%). (Source: www.cde.ca.gov, DataQuest).

⁴³ Lindholm-Leary and Genesee, Ch. 6 in CDE, 2010, Parrish, et al., 2006; Ramirez, 1991; Slavin & Cheung, 2003; Willig, 1985.

⁴⁴ Six successful bilingual schools are profiled in Gold, 2006

community conditions, initial English proficiency) as well as quality of instruction and implementation of specific essential practices, contribute to current outcomes.

For example, we found that schools providing instruction only in English have distinctly more advantaged ELs in terms of initial English proficiency and other background factors, when compared with the few schools providing bilingual instruction. We summarized data for six schools providing some bilingual instruction,⁴⁵ and compared that with five schools providing instruction only in English (2009-10).⁴⁶ These included all the elementary schools in the district enrolling at least 150 ELs overall.

These groups of schools differ substantially on four crucial variables:

1) Total number of ELs. The MDUSD schools providing bilingual instruction generally have a larger number and percentage of ELs (mean = 418 v. 202).

2) Percent in Poverty. The schools providing bilingual instruction have a greater proportion of students in poverty (89 percent receive free or reduced meals), compared with far fewer at the schools providing English-Only instruction (67 percent free or reduced meals).

3) Parent Education. Parents at the six schools providing bilingual instruction are much less likely to have completed high school or to hold college or graduate degrees (Parent Education Index = 2.09) compared with substantially more at the English-only schools (PEI = 2.71).

4) Initial CELDT Scores. The schools differ substantially in the proportion of students who enter at kindergarten and first grade with scores at the lowest level of English proficiency. The bilingual schools receive ELs in kindergarten who enter with much lower English proficiency (mean CELDT Listening scale score = 328.7; Speaking = 318.9) than those entering the schools providing instruction only in English (mean CELDT Listening = 355.2; Speaking = 360.5).

These differences in total numbers of ELs, percent in poverty, parent education and initial English proficiency appear to be substantial and significant.⁴⁷ But, in no way should this analysis be used to justify low expectations for the schools providing bilingual instruction (or for other schools), nor to excuse their overall low performance on state and federal accountability measures. State accountability data show that these schools are at the lowest API performance deciles when compared with similar schools (Three sites score at deciles 1-1 [State Rank/ Similar Schools Rank], one scores at ranks 2-3, and one at ranks 3-4). By far, most other California schools with similar students, some of them providing bilingual instruction, far outperform these schools (Gold, 2006 and Gold, 2011, in preparation).

This analysis matches similar examinations we have done in several other districts. Bilingual instruction is typically provided in sites where students enroll with very low proficiency in English. While other students can certainly benefit, these are precisely the students for whom bilingual instruction is likely to be of great benefit over time.

Conclusion: Our analysis of the inputs (initial English proficiency of kindergarten enrollees at selected sites), confirms that schools providing instruction only in English have distinctly more

⁴⁵ Bel Air, Cambridge, Meadow Homes, Rio Vista, Shore Acres and Ygnacio Valley.

⁴⁶ Delta View, Fair Oaks, Holbrook, Sun Terrace and Wren Ave.

⁴⁷ Due to the way data are presented on the CDE web-site, and lack of access to student-level data, we were unable to perform statistical tests of significance.

advantaged ELs in terms of initial English proficiency as well as other school background factors. Schools providing “some” L1 instruction are most often those enrolling ELs with the lowest initial proficiency in English. In addition, these schools have more ELs, a greater percent of students in poverty, and parents with less overall education.

The purpose of this analysis is to highlight the difficulties in making judgments regarding the effectiveness of individual schools or of program types. To do so would require detailed, longitudinal analysis of inputs (initial language proficiency, socio-economic status, concentration of ELs at each school, etc.) as well as the degree and quality of implementation of program designs. Such detailed analysis was not feasible with the time and resources provided for this audit.

We caution the Mt Diablo USD community not to draw (favorable or unfavorable) conclusions about the effectiveness of any model of instruction for ELs based on CST scores or other outcomes from schools that differ so greatly in the important inputs. It is appropriate to conclude, however, that schools scoring far below similar (roughly comparable) schools in the state are in great need of improvement. Twenty-seven of the district’s schools score at levels 1, 2, or 3 on the state’s API Similar Schools Rank; these require particular attention.

The district is, of course, free to define its own approaches for bilingual instruction, but state law requires each district to offer some alternative to English-only instruction. It should choose from research-supported models that may include variations of Transitional Bilingual Education, Developmental Bilingual Education or Two-Way Immersion. Bilingual education may not be the indicated program for every English learner, but the research evidence on the overall effectiveness of bilingual instruction is overwhelming.

As described above, we found that MDUSD has not been able to implement optimal EL programs in any of the schools we audited – whether bilingual programs or programs provided exclusively in English.

Recommendations regarding bilingual programs

Recommendation 8.1 Provide clear, written direction to the sites currently implementing bilingual instruction on how to provide the highest quality of ELD, SDAIE, and primary language instruction in the bilingual program.

For the coming school year, and until a new master plan is developed, base this guidance on current instructional designs for bilingual education (Guidelines, Sec. 5, and Sec. 6. (80-20 model, page 11). Provide demonstration, coaching, monitoring and follow-up to make certain that these best practices are followed and that high quality materials are used in every classroom. In other words, make sure that teachers assigned to these classrooms have the language and pedagogical skills to deliver the program, and that bilingual program designs are actually implemented with fidelity.

Recommendation 8.2 – In the process of developing a new EL Master Plan, district staff and task force members should carefully study the most up-to-date research-based approaches for bilingual instruction as well as evidence from successful bilingual schools.

Then, based on this information, the task force should either re-confirm the district's long-standing bilingual designs, or modify these, and make a recommendation to the superintendent regarding the goals and procedures to be used in the district's bilingual education programs for inclusion in the new master plan.

Recommendation 8.3 Once the new master plan is adopted, the district should assemble all administrators and teachers who are assigned to providing bilingual instruction for a comprehensive professional development cycle.

That professional development cycle should include demonstration, coaching, monitoring and follow-up to make certain that the adopted bilingual program designs are implemented with fidelity.

Conclusions and Next Steps

We determined that, overall, the district is not operating the most effective programs for English learners. The district has made some progress in developing the expertise of teachers in elementary schools regarding structured ELD instruction, and has provided core ELD materials for designated ELD classes in middle and high schools. We found that ELD instruction is poorly implemented, and many ELs receive only reading interventions and no ELD instruction. At the secondary level, the district designs actually exclude long-term ELs from ELD instruction.

There is generally a sufficient supply of core instructional materials, and many assets among current teachers and administrators. However most language and academic outcomes for English learners lag behind the state and similar districts. The district is not consistently implementing the essential components of high quality EL programs, and the district does not have the necessary alignment of resources for the most effective implementation of these programs.

While the district does have many administrators and teachers who hold the basic qualifications for teaching ELs, they are not engaged in a systematic delivery of instruction for ELs to ensure that the highest quality EL programs are implemented consistently. Resources are not configured to provide optimal leadership and management of EL programs.

Upon review of the findings and recommendations of this report, leadership of the district should examine how they fit into other reform and improvement efforts. We recommend that a detailed plan of action be developed to respond to those recommendations that fit most closely with other aspects of strategic planning, including work with Program Improvement schools, and also broader district strategic plans.

Below are suggestions for three phases of work that illustrate how some of the specific actions recommended above can be carried out.

Suggested Phases of Implementation:

This is not meant to be an exhaustive task-timeline. These are examples. Each task would need to be assigned to lead district staff, specifying benchmark dates and deliverables. Additional recommendations from the main body of the report can be included in these phases.

Phase 1: June – September, 2011

- a. Establish a position of district director for EL Services; recruit and hire a person to fill that position.
- b. Develop duty statements/ job descriptions and fund at least seven district Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) positions (or a combination of teacher specialist and administrator positions) to work under the director for EL Services to provide leadership of the district's EL work.
- c. Hire and train new staff on research-based EL practices and implementation science.
- d. Update board policies for EL programs and staffing; include a comprehensive commitment to academic, cultural and language proficiencies.
- e. Constitute an EL Coordinating Council. Hold monthly meetings, beginning in August.
- f. Convert current site "ELD Teacher" positions to EL Specialist positions, with a revised duty statement. Ensure that all schools employ *Site EL Facilitators or Specialists*

The district should work collaboratively with sites to assist in the selection, training and coaching of these facilitators.

- g. Begin work on producing a new EL Master Plan
- h. Develop a preliminary plan for professional development (PD) on a new EL Master Plan (PD to take place after board adoption, in spring 2012). Begin to identify PD approaches and funding.
- i. Continue to support leveled ELD instruction in the elementary schools, with ongoing training for principals, teachers and other staff. Ensure that leveled ELD instruction is aligned to state ELD standards, and does not merely provide remedial ELA/Reading lessons
- j. Constitute a curriculum study team that will identify and recommend for adoption ELD materials that will make possible more effective implementation of Systematic ELD.
- k. Hold discussions with the DELAC, teachers and others on how to increase engagement with parents and community.
- l. As an interim measure (before a new EL Master Plan is adopted), provide clear written direction to all middle and high schools on how they must:
 - (1) provide daily ELD instruction (in separate ELD classes, or embedded within other classes) to each and every English learner, and,
 - (2) provide differentiated instruction for ELs in content classes, including SDAIE strategies, primary language support and materials, and instruction that is culturally responsive.
- m. Plan and calendar an initial PD series on research-based EL practices for district and site administrators. Begin implementation of that series.

Phase 2 - October 2011 - April 2012

- a. Determine optimal PD approaches for ensuring that key district and site administrators build CLAD competencies and the further understanding of best practices for English learners.
- b. Make provision for follow-up to PD to include demonstration, coaching and monitoring. Select a limited number of core PD initiatives to form the core support for reaching the goals of EL programs.⁴⁸
- c. Begin development, editing, and revision of a new EL Master Plan. Determine schedule for submission for local board adoption, for publication, and for dissemination in print and electronically.
- d. As part of master plan development, determine specific goals for implementation and outcomes, design data collection instruments and timelines for monitoring and reporting on those goals.
- e. Ensure that the goals in the master plan cover explicit language, academic achievement, and cultural proficiency goals, and that the district makes a commitment to monitor overall implementation of EL programs.
- f. Develop and adopt a three to five year plan for core district PD initiatives. Identify goals, content, materials and PD providers. Consider both internal and external PD providers.
- g. (By January 2012) Monitor all sites on use of ELD materials and ensure that each EL receives appropriate ELD instruction.
- h. Monitor all sites on provision of appropriate classes/ programs in the elementary schools, and courses (secondary schools).

⁴⁸ See Appendix, Figure 5

- i. Develop and begin to implement PD for site and district staff to enhance parent engagement and communication.
- j. Monitor outcome goals and actions in the Title III Accountability Action Plan.

Phase 3 - April – December 2012

- a. Adopt and publish a new EL Master Plan.
- b. Begin a cycle of PD to support overall district awareness of the plan, including the roles and responsibilities of teachers, administrators, classified staff and others.
- c. Provide six or more hours PD for all stakeholders on master plan content (June - August). Differentiate PD for various stakeholders, including office staff, para-educators, etc.
- d. Plan and begin a cycle of site-by-site monitoring of the implementation of key EL program features.
- e. Continue phasing in PD regarding ELD, sheltered and primary language instruction, cultural proficiency, etc.

APPENDIX

Tables

A. Audit Sites Visited

B. Interviews Conducted.

C. English Learner Audit Advisory Group

Figure 5. Essential Features of Optimal English Learner Programs

Glossary

Acknowledgments

References

Table A. English Learner Audit Site Visits (2009-10 Data)

Site	2010 API Ranks*	2010 School API/ EL & Hisp API	Enrollment	Number & percent ELs	Classrooms and Date Visited
1 Delta View Elem	7 - 7	Sch: 825 EL: 805 Hisp: 780	674	256 (38%) (64% Spanish)	(32) April 1
2 Gregory Gardens Elem	6 - 2	Sch: 818 EL: (nss)** Hisp: 759	404	62 (15.3%) (45% Spanish)	(11) March 1
3 Oak Grove MS	1 - 1	Sch: 646 EL: 613 Hisp: 627	579	293 (50.6%) (91.1% Spanish)	(32) March 31
4 Mt Diablo HS	2 - 5	Sch: 651 EL: 577 Hisp: 619	1,610	394 (24.5%) (90.6% Spanish)	(38) March 10
5 Meadow Homes Elem	1 - 1	Sch: 648 EL: 633 Hisp: 641	915	760 (83.1%) (96.2% Spanish)	(44) February 17
Totals in sample sites			4,182	1,765 (42% of these sites; 25.7% of district ELs)	157 Classes visited
District Totals		Dist: 784 EL: 661 Hisp: 692	34,316	6,874 (21.1%)	

* State wide rank and similar schools rank (Based on 2010 API Base).

** nss = not significant subgroup

- The five sample sites enroll 12.2 percent of all students, and 25.7 percent of all ELs in the district.

Table B. EL Audit Interviews

Interviewee	Position	Interviewee	Position
1. Michelle Batesole February 7	Principal Woodside	12. Linda Mayo February 16	Board member
2. Pati Becerra February 9	Assessment Center, coordinator for DELAC	13. Gary Mc Adam February 7	Principal Concord High
3. Julie Braun-Martin March 31	Asst. Supt., Personnel	14. Dr. Wayne Miller March 10	Former MDUSD Administrator. Assistant Director, C & I
4. Dr. Mildred Brown March 2	Asst. Supt., Special Education and Student Services.	15. Susan Petersen March 2	Director, Elementary Support
5. Marjie Calbeck March 2	Principal /Valhalla	16. Bryan Richards March 2	CFO, Budget & Fiscal Services
6. Jorge Colaizzo February 9	English Learner Program Support Teacher	17. Denise Rugani February 8	Director, Secondary Support
7. Nancy Cummins April 21	Senior Secretary, ELD Department	18. Jennifer Sachs March 2	Assistant Director, Categorical Programs
8. Carmen Garces Various	Administrator, Coordinated School Support English Learners Services	19 Elaine San Juan February 9	Teacher in Charge. Assessment Center
9. Linda Hutcherson February 8	Principal Foothill	20. Marie Schrimmer February 16	Principal Cambridge
10. Dr. Steven Lawrence February 16	Superintendent	21. Gary Swanson February 16	Principal Clayton Valley HS
11. Rose Lock April 28	Assistant Superintendent, Student Achievement and School Support	22. Sherry Whitmarsh February 8	Board member

Table C. English Learner Audit Advisory Group

Purposes: Review the EL audit design, provide a sounding board for the preliminary findings and recommendations, and begin to consider an action plan to support implementation of recommendations.

Meeting Dates:

- March 16, 2011 - reviewed plan for the audit
- April 13, 2011 - reviewed preliminary findings and recommendations
- May 25, 2011 (scheduled)

Participants

District Administrators

1. Rose Lock- Assistant Superintendent Student Achievement & School Support
2. Denise Rugani - Director of Secondary Support
3. Susan Petersen - Director of Elementary Support
4. Jennifer Sachs - Assistant Director, Categorical Programs
5. Carmen Garces - Administrator, Coordinated School Support, English Learners Services

Principal Representatives

6. Bill Morones - Ygnacio Valley High School
7. Christine Huajardo - Riverview Middle school
8. Christine Richardson - Ygnacio Valley Elementary

Teacher Representative

9. Diane Burns- ELD teacher, (MDEA Representative).

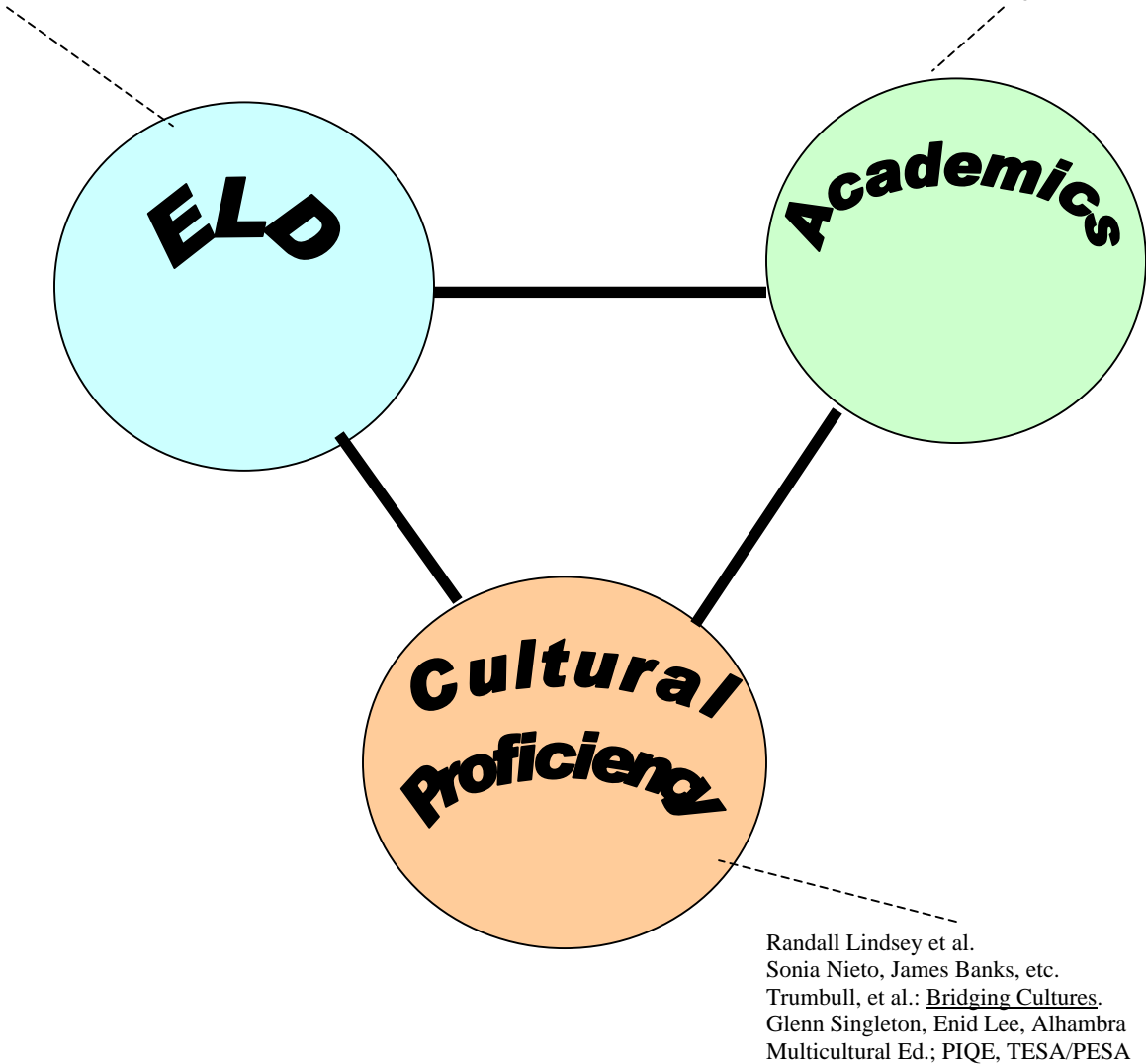
Figure 4. Essential Features of Optimal English Learner Programs

ELD, Access to Core Curriculum and Cultural Proficiency⁴⁹

Examples of Resources and Professional Development Providers

Saunders & Goldenberg, 2010; Focused Approach/
Systematic ELD – Dutro; Kinsella

L1 Support and L1 Instruction SDAIE, Sheltered
Instruction, GLAD, SIOP, Cooperative Learning Pre-
view, review, P. Gibbons - Scaffolding



⁴⁹ The ELD and Academic Achievement components can overlap in a number of ways. For example, cooperative learning can certainly contribute to ELD, but its main aim is to make grade level content more accessible.

Glossary

API – Academic Performance Index. California accountability system

AYP - Annual Yearly Progress, Federal accountability system

APS - Academic Program Survey - 2009

Downloaded 1-30-07 from: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ti/seppiattach2.asp>

The Academic Program Survey (APS) is a tool designed to help a school determine how well it is implementing the nine components considered to be crucial to an effective academic program. The nine Essential Program Components (EPCs) include:

- *Instructional program (use of State Board of Education [SBE]-adopted and standards-aligned instructional materials, including intervention materials) and high school access to standards-aligned core courses (9-12)*
- *Instructional time (adherence to recommended instructional minutes for reading/language arts and mathematics [K-8])*
- *Principals' instructional training (principals' AB 75 training on SBE-adopted instructional materials)*
- *Sufficiency of credentialed teachers and teacher professional development, e.g., access to AB 466 training on SBE-adopted instructional materials*
- *Student academic achievement monitoring system (use of data to monitor student progress on curriculum-embedded assessments and modify instruction)*
- *Ongoing instructional assistance and support for teachers (use of content experts and instructional coaches)*
- *Teacher collaboration by grade level (K-8) and department (9-12)*
- *Lesson pacing schedule (K-8) and master schedule flexibility for sufficient numbers of intervention courses*
- *Fiscal support*

CELDT- California English Language Development Test.

Cultural Proficiency

Cultural Proficiency is a way of being that enables both individuals and organizations to respond effectively to people who differ from them. Cultural competence is behavior that is aligned with standards that move an organization or an individual toward culturally proficient interactions (Lindsey, Robbins and Terrell, 2003; p. 5).

Cultural Proficiency is a way of being that enables people to successfully engage in new environments. (p. 13)

EL - English learner

ELSSA - English Learner Subgroup Self Assessment

*The English Learner Subgroup Self Assessment (ELSSA) document is designed to serve as a technical assistance tool for local educational agencies (LEAs) in analyzing and addressing program services as part of the process of preparing their *LEA Plan Addendum* (CDE, 2005).*

High quality EL programs include elements of effective schools and also:

- a. Research-based methods, materials, and qualified staff dedicated to teaching of the English language,
- b. Appropriate methods and materials in English, or in English and the primary language of the ELs, used by qualified staff to ensure access to the core curriculum,
- c. An emphasis on developing cultural proficiency among parents, students and school district staff,
- d. A component of parent and community engagement that builds a strong partnership between home and school, and,
- e. Monitoring and accountability for implementation of all these components, for progress in English, in academics and cultural proficiency of individual students, and for the overall successful accomplishment of the program goals.⁵⁰

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This is a report of work conducted with much-appreciated support from associates, Lauri Burnham-Massey and Chris López Chatfield.

Norm Gold
Sacramento
May 2011

⁵⁰ See especially, CDE, 2010 and also: August and Hakuta, 1998; Carter and Chatfield (1986); Cloud et al., 2000; Freeman, 1998; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lindsey, Robins and Terrell, 2009; Merickel, et al., 2003; Olsen et al., 1999; Parrish, et al., 2006 (especially Ch. 4), Reyes et al., 1999; Slavin and Cheung, 2003; Tikunoff and Ward, 1991.

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