

A CASE STUDY OF THE CONTEXTUAL FACTORS WHICH SHAPE THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF A MODEL SCHOOL LEVEL BILINGUAL PROGRAM

BY

ELIZABETH JANE FRANKS

A dissertation submitted to
The Graduate School of Education
Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Education
Graduate Program in Educational Administration and Leadership

Approved by

Catherine A. Lugg, Ph. D, Chair

Mary Curran, Ph. D.

Alisa Belzer, Ph. D

New Brunswick, New Jersey
May, 2012

Copyright 2012, Elizabeth Jane Franks

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since it has taken a decade to complete this process, many friends and colleagues have accompanied me at different points along the path. First and foremost, I am eternally grateful to Dr. Catherine Lugg, my advisor throughout this process. I would not be writing this acknowledgement, had she not “gently checked in” over the years and encouraged me to continue. Her steadfast belief in my ability to complete this dissertation guided me through each step. I also truly appreciate the insight and tremendous support from Dr. Mary Curran and Dr. Alisa Belzer, members of my dissertation committee. Their feedback and comments significantly strengthened my final iteration.

I want to thank the administrative and teaching staff at West Park Public School district who allowed me into their world and answered all my questions. I sincerely appreciate their honesty, openness and contributions to this dissertation study.

My mentor, Barbara Tedesco, began this journey with me ten years ago. I am grateful for her consistent and silent cheering. Her friendship and unwavering belief in me have been a source of immeasurable support.

Thanks to my parents who instilled in me determination and compassion. My father always supported my educational efforts even when women were not expected to pursue academic endeavors. My six siblings have now assumed that role of support and encouragement. Their humor and unconditional love always bolster my spirit.

Last, but never least, my partner, Ann, her children, Rob and Roseann, and our dear grandson, Cameron, have brought such balance into my life. They had to deal with my absences and preoccupation over the years yet Ann has joined me on this journey. I am forever indebted to her for her unswerving faith in us through all of life’s travails.

Abstract of the Dissertation

A Case Study of Contextual Factors Which Influence the Implementation of a Model Bilingual Program

By Elizabeth J. Franks

Dissertation Chairperson: Catherine A. Lugg, Ph. D.

The political landscape of No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) created a sense of urgency about the performance of the growing population of English learners. As a result, emerging studies examined the characteristics of principals' and teachers' practices in exemplary schools and model programs for English learners. However, no studies have examined the larger contextual framework which impacts these model programs for English learners.

This dissertation study identified contextual factors that influenced the implementation of a model transitional bilingual program through the lenses of various stakeholders at all levels of one educational community. From the national perspective to the socio-cultural features and responses at the district level, to the background experiences and practices of the school leaders, this case study, completed over a twelve month period, triangulated data through interviews, observations and documents. A conceptual framework guided the initial data analysis followed with the identification of emerging patterns.

The data indicated three major factors which shaped the implementation of a model bilingual program: political landscape, the district instructional leadership which shaped the principals' interactions. First, the standards movement and accountability measures of the NCLB Act (2002) surfaced as a major catalyst at all levels. This

legislation motivated this district to align standards, instruction and assessment to improve outcomes while pressuring principals to focus on test results (Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton & Newton, 2010; Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). Accordingly, relational and structural organizations emerged as key factors in supporting the teaching and learning process (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). As district supervisors aligned the curriculum for all learners and provided consistent professional development, a knowledgeable bilingual director designed and supervised the district-wide bilingual program. Expert bilingual staff integrated initiatives throughout the system while maintaining the philosophical integrity of the bilingual program (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Griego-Jones, 1995). Finally, the principals' cultural responsiveness and collaborative leadership styles influenced their interactions with school and community members (Carranza, 2010; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring & Porter, 2006). In summary, all district and school level administrators assumed responsibility for specific features of the bilingual program while all bilingual personnel expanded their responsibilities to implement district-wide initiatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
Chapter	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Methods	6
Plan of this Dissertation	6
Limitations	7
Significance of Study	7
Summary	8
Definitions of Terms	10
II LITERATURE REVIEW	13
Educational Practices for English Learners.....	14
English Learners	14
History, Federal Laws, Court Decisions, and Policies..	16
Program Design	24
Socio-political Influences of Program Design	26
Transitional Bilingual Education Program Design	29
Second Language Acquisition	32
Second Language Acquisition and Bilingual Education.	37
Effective District Practices	41
Effective Schools	43
Effective Schools for English Learners	44
Principal's Role in Effective Schools for English learners	48
Parental Involvement	50
Summary	52
III METHODOLOGY	55
Setting	56
Sample	57
Data Collection	61
Interviews	62

	Observations	66
	Review of Documents	67
	Data Handling and Storage	67
	Role of the Researcher	68
	Data Analysis	68
	Limitations	71
	Significance of Study	71
IV	DESCRIPTION OF SITES.....	73
	Demographics	73
	West Park Public School District	74
	Model Program	76
	District Organization	80
	District Bilingual Office	85
	District-based Perspective	88
	Bilingual Program Design	92
	Early Childhood Education.....	98
	District Perspective to School Settings	104
	Summary	105
V	PERSPECTIVES OF BILINGUAL PROGRAM FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS LENSES...	106
	North Street School	106
	South Street School	108
	Parental Involvement	112
	No Child Left Behind	129
	District Context	134
	Impact of Budget Cuts.....	146
	Collaboration with Bilingual Office	148
	Principals' Instructional Leadership	153
	Principal's Vision and Leadership Style	154
	Importance of Principal's Knowledge	159
	Summary	164
VI	DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS.....	167
	Federal Legislation	168
	District Context	175
	Model Program Design.....	180
	Collaboration with Bilingual Office	183
	Principal's Instructional Leadership	192
	Principal's Vision and Leadership Style	192
	Importance of Principal's Knowledge	195
	Implications for Current Practices.....	198
	Implications for Future Research	201

Limitations.....	201
Conclusions	202
Afterword	204
REFERENCES	205
APPENDIX A Model Program Application	217
APPENDIX B Consent Form.....	223
APPENDIX C Interview Protocols.....	225
APPENDIX D Observation Protocols	229
APPENDIX E IRB Approvals	231

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. NJ NCLB Benchmark Scores	11
2. Components of Transitional Bilingual Program Design for English learners ...	30
3. Research on Principal Attributes in Effective Schools for English learners.....	53
4. Data Collection Calendar and Matrix	63
5. Comparison of Schools and EL Subgroup of AYP achievement	78.
6. Distribution of Elementary Bilingual Classes	97
7. Grade Level Responses: Weaknesses of school.	125
8. Grade Level Responses: Five year goals	134

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Top Five Languages in New Jersey	16
2. Range of Communicative Tasks	34
3. Prism Model Factors	35
4. Conceptual Framework	54

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Researching best educational practices for growing population of English learners encompasses many layers which begin at the national level and end in the classroom context. The political landscape, at the federal and state levels, plays an integral role in the implementation of a successful program for English learners.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 ushered in a new stage for the standards based movement by proposing to close the achievement gap between “disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers” by holding schools and districts accountable for outcomes (NCLB Act, 2001, p. 16). Title III of the NCLB Act mandated that states also develop English language proficiency (ELP) standards for English learners and annually measure their attainment of these ELP standards. Since this standards-based reform movement promoted academic excellence for all students, many assumed that the linguistic needs of English learners would be considered (Bunch, 2011; Short, 2000).

Closing the achievement gap by focusing on outcomes was a dramatic shift in educational policy in the United States and drastically changed public education. Since minority groups, historically, have not performed at the same academic level as their middle class white peers, educators began to concentrate on the achievement of the various identified sub-groups: Black, Hispanic, children with special needs, English learners and economically disadvantaged students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001; Pachon, Tornatzky & Torres, 2003). In the past, the achievement of

Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged children received more attention than students with special needs or English learners. (Alva & de los Reyes, 1999; Deville & Chalhoub-Deville, 2011; Ferguson, 1998; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1999; Ogbu, 1994). By focusing on outcomes, NCLB reversed the practice of exempting English learners from statewide achievement tests; a practice which marginalized them and allowed districts and schools to ignore their needs (Deville & Chalhoub-Deville, 2011). From this point of view, NCLB has been advantageous to English learners

However, the elation of inclusion subsided when the reality of the accountability measures became apparent. The accountability measures for the English learner subgroup “defy logic” (Wright, 2006, p. 22). The law describes an English learner as one “whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the state's proficient level of achievement on state assessments” (Sec. 9101(37)). Amazingly, NCLB mandated that the dynamic English learner subgroup make adequate yearly progress (AYP) at the same rate as other subgroups which were identified on static characteristics (Bailey & Huang, 2011). Otherwise, schools that missed AYP suffered various levels of sanctions. Due to this regulation, many teachers have been forced to teach to state tests instead of focusing on the linguistic, cultural and academic needs of English learners (Wright, 2006).

Historically, the teaching of English learners focused on the language of instruction which caused considerable controversy and continues to be a highly politicized topic today (Arizona Proposition 207: August & Hakuta, 1998; California Proposition 227; *Lau v. Nichols*, 1974; Menchaca-Ochoa, 2006; Yarborough, 1994).

Unfortunately, politics often overshadows best practices in educational pedagogy for these students. Nevertheless, schools still face the challenge of implementing effective programs to improve academic progress (Kindler, 2002).

From the national landscape to school leadership, research has cited the important role of the principal in transforming schools to boost student achievement for all students (Beck & Murphy, 1996; Edmonds, 1982; Lezotte, 1998; Wilson, 1997; Keefe & Howard, 1997; Smith, 2008). Indeed, Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, and Meyerson (2005) found that effective school leadership was a key factor in high student achievement. Leadership influenced school factors which, in turn, influenced student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Leithwood, Riedlinger, Bauer, & Jantzi, 2003).

More recently, the knowledge and practices of central office administration have also emerged as essential to implementing curricular reforms which improve school achievement (Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton & Newton, 2010). Although principals shoulder the accountability for school improvement; content supervisors, teacher leaders and other professionals also play a role in leading instructional improvement (Heller & Firestone, 1995; Smylie & Denny, 1990; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). In monitoring teaching and learning, principals who collaborated with and shared leadership responsibilities enhanced organizational performance (Dubrin, 2004). Many researchers have also found that organizational structures, leadership roles and conditions of the school environment contributed to overall school improvement (Edmonds, 1982; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Lezotte, 1998; Wilson, 1997; Smith, 2008).

None of these studies, however, focused on the impact of district leadership on effective programs for English learners. A few emerging studies did, though, focus

explicitly on school level leadership roles in model programs for English learners (Aird, 2002; Torres, 2006; Littleton, 2003). Aird's (2002) case study compared two elementary school principals in high-performing bilingual schools in Illinois. Aird (2002) examined effective school correlates, community building and the principal's support for the bilingual program. Torres (2006) specifically focused on three principals' understanding of sheltered instruction. Short (2000) found that principals in schools with a high concentration of English learners played a pivotal role in promoting and supporting teachers' delivery of high-quality instruction. Principals who knew the effective teaching strategies for this population better supported and evaluated instruction and implemented appropriate programs (Short, 2000). Accordingly, principals of schools with a significant number of second language learners who had knowledge of effective strategies and understood the key contextual factors surrounding this population contributed to their success (Lucas, 1992). These factors included: effective pedagogy for English learners; sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic needs of these learners and their families; an understanding of the seminal federal laws, court decisions and policies; and a systemic approach to ensure integration of students and collaboration between grade-level, content area and ESL teachers.

Much of the school leadership and effective schools research was captured in exceptional schools whereby the shared traits of these settings were identified (Edmonds, 1982; Sergiovanni, 1984; Lezotte, 1985). Carter and Chatfield (1986) suggested research in bilingual education and its impact on learning should, therefore, be examined within the effective school context.

More research on effective practices exists at the programmatic, classroom and individual levels. Snow (in August & Shanahan, 2006) concluded that English learners instructed in their native language and English performed better on English reading measures than English learners instructed only in English. August and Shanahan (2006) found that not only classroom and school factors but individual characteristics of English learners influenced second-language literacy development.

Subsequently, educators at all levels of schooling are interested in creating effective programs and practices for English learners. Much of the research is fragmented in the separate silos of school leadership, effective schools, classroom practices and program design with little cohesion among the various layers and levels. *Therefore, this dissertation examined the contextual factors in one New Jersey public school district, recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education, as implementing a model transitional bilingual education program of instruction.* This study viewed the contextual factors surrounding the education of English learners through the lenses of various stakeholders at two high performing elementary schools as well as district level bilingual personnel. The major research question guiding this study was:

- 1) What contextual factors shaped the implementation of a model school level ELL program?

The research question explored the perceptions of various stakeholders on the political, legal, and district level factors as well as the knowledge base, attributes and experiences of all participants in their respective roles in relation to the bilingual program.

Methods

This case study examined the contextual factors which contributed to the implementation of a successful bilingual education program. The study investigated the experiences of various stakeholders and how they perceived their role and the role of others in support of the achievement of English learners. Interviews with district and school based staff formed the foundation of the exploration. Observations of grade level, staff and committee meetings, in addition to general interactions with various participants throughout the schools, added to the rich collection of data. Finally, a review of district and school documents and data further informed this case study.

Plan of the Dissertation

Chapter I introduced the research question and provided an overview of the relevant research, limitations and implications of this dissertation. With high stakes testing and accountability regulations directing school reforms, all stakeholders require requisite knowledge to work with all subgroups of students. This study focused on effective practices with English learners.

Chapter II reviews the relevant literature of the strands related to the research. The fields of educational leadership at the district and school levels, effective practices for English learners and the interface of these topics form the foundation of this inquiry.

Chapter III describes and explains the methodology used, the selection of the sample, the data collection, the sequence for coding, and the process of data analysis. The study collected data about the experiences and background knowledge of two elementary school principals in a district with a model transitional bilingual education program in addition to other stakeholders at various levels.

Chapter IV describes the West Park Public School District and provides an overview of the district context. Since both schools were in the same urban district, the transitional bilingual program model was district-based, therefore a full description of the bilingual model is provided.

Chapter V discusses the three factors which contributed to the principals' practices at North and South Street Schools. It provides a rich description of the features particular to each school and the perspectives of the principal, vice principal, teachers and home school liaison.

Chapter VI discusses the contexts of the bilingual program. The conclusions and findings are presented and discussed.

Limitations

The inclusion of only two elementary schools was one of the major limitations of this case study. In addition, this inquiry only explored the factors and practices as they related to one program design, a transitional bilingual education model. The fact that only seven districts had recognized model programs in the state of New Jersey further limited the scope of this research.

Significance of Study

The findings from this research question provided insight into the contextual factors which contributed to the implementation of a model transitional bilingual program. This study found that the comprehensive manner in which a district responds to national and state legislation plays a critical role in the success of English learners. This district with a cohesive and comprehensive structure and plan based on the socio-cultural

and linguistic needs of its community impacted the achievement of the English learners in its schools.

To make informed decisions, educational leaders need to ensure that ELL students benefit from what research indicates is most effective (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Lindholm-Leary, 2005). As mentioned previously, there has been and will continue to be significant growth in English learner school population. Given this fact, school leaders can benefit by understanding the importance of inclusion of the needs of English learners in all of their policies, practices and beliefs in order to improve outcomes for this population.

Furthermore, the findings of this study could also inform into administrator and teacher preparation programs. In this way, states and universities can build capacity to address the needs of all learners from the larger landscape.

Summary

This study was situated in scholarship on educational leadership in relation to English learners. Currently, more than 19% of the US population speaks a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). The increasing likelihood that teachers will teach English learners makes it essential that they develop the knowledge and skills to do so (Lucas, 2000). However, a U.S. national survey of classroom teachers revealed that only 26% of respondents felt prepared to teach students from diverse language backgrounds (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). These statistics are likely to be similar among school leaders since they are often recruited from the teaching pool.

Leadership was one of the four critical features and the major impetus behind high-performing schools (Beck & Murphy, 1996; Edmonds, 1982; Lezotte, 1998; Wilson,

1997; Keefe & Howard, 1997; Smith, 2008). The other three features include: productive school climate, relevant parental involvement, and high expectations for all students (Levine & Lezotte, 1995). As public schools were held to a greater accountability on high stakes tests for *all* learners, the onus of responsibility fell squarely on the shoulders of teachers and principals (Ma, 2002; No Child Left Behind Act, 2002). Accordingly, the role of the principal as manager evolved into principal as instructional and transformational leader over the past four decades (Elmore, 2000; Hallinger, 1992). As a transformational leader, the principal initiated change from within the school (Hallinger, 1996) while, as an instructional leader, the principal created equitable learning opportunities for students and professionals. Many researchers defined the instructional leader as the principal who considered teaching and learning the primary goal of the school (Fradd & Tikunoff, 1987; Knapp, Copland & Talbert, 2003; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). Since teaching and learning were the primary goals of the school, the principals' beliefs about student and teacher learning had a significant impact on student outcomes (Firestone, Schorr & Monfils, 2004; Nelson, 1998).

However, recent studies have indicated that district policies and practice also contribute to school improvement (Honig et al., 2010; Dubrin, 2004). Therefore, to ensure that all students have equal access to an education based on academic excellence and high expectations, all school leaders must have some preparation or support to obtain requisite knowledge for these specialized populations. Yet research indicated that administrators' training in multicultural and bilingual education was very limited (Acosta, 1987; Barcelo, 1993, Growe, Schmersahl, Perry & Henry, 2002; Herrity, 1997; Keefe &

Howard, 1997; Texas Education Agency, 1990). As a result, many school leaders with a high percentage of English learners in their districts and schools lacked the preparation needed to develop appropriate policies, provide professional development, or implement effective educational programs for diverse students (Herrity, 1997). Aguilar (1979) stated that one of the greatest needs in improving bilingual programs was the preparation of administrators who were supportive and sensitive to the educational needs of English learners. In light of these facts, exploring the contextual factors that influenced the practices in a district with significant numbers of English learners and a history of successful outcomes was critical.

Definition of terms

The terms used in this study are given the following definitions:

Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) are three benchmarks that are established (annually) to measure and report on progress toward and attainment of English proficiency and academic achievement standards. They are designed to hold school districts accountable for meeting targets for English language proficiency (ELP) for their English learners over time (NCLB, 2002). In New Jersey, English learners' English proficiency progress is measured using the state mandated assessment ACCESS for ELLs. Three specific AMAO target areas have been established under NCLB and include:

AMAO 1: Percentage of students making required progress in learning English (10 scale score points on composite score of ACCESS for ELLs).

AMAO 2: Percentage of students attaining English language proficiency by the end of each school year by exiting or reaching the target composite score of 4.5 on ACCESS for ELLs.

AMAO 3: Percentage of English learners meeting academic achievement standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics by making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) within subgroup under Title I

Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP: State and federal laws require the annual monitoring of school performance and student academic achievement. Each year, based on No Left Behind (NCLB, 2002), all New Jersey public schools and districts must meet the state's four Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives. The 2009-2010 AYP objectives included:

1. Attendance — All schools must have an attendance rate of at least 90% or show growth over the prior year.
2. Dropout rate must be less than 2.6% or .5 % less than prior year.
3. Test Participation: 95% of all students enrolled in the tested grade(s) must participate in the NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK)
4. Benchmark scores: Percentage of students who reach proficiency in general and in each subgroup must meet the following benchmark scores (NJDOE, 2010).

Grade span	3-5	6-8	11
English Language Arts	59	72	85
Math	66	61	74

Table 1. NJ NCLB Benchmark scores

Bilingual Education: The use of two languages, the student's first language and a second language for instruction. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are a component of bilingual education.

English as a Second Language (ESL): Programs, methodology and curriculum designed

to teach English learners English language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction is in English with limited use of first language support.

English Language Learner (ELL): A term used in NJ Administrative code to identify a student whose first language is not English and who is in the process of learning English.

English learner: New term used in the pending reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to identify students whose first language is not English and who is in the process of learning English.

Language Proficiency: The level of competence at which an individual is able to use language for basic communicative tasks and academic purposes across four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Limited English Proficient (LEP): In federal law this is currently the terminology used to identify the English learners.

English learner is the most used term in this study to identify the students who are in the process of learning English since this is the term utilized in the pending reauthorization of the ESEA. LEP and ELL are terms used at various statutory levels. The term ELL is used in NJ Administrative code while LEP was used in NCLB. These terms are only used when referring specifically the statutory document.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Many districts have become more concerned about the performance of English learners on state-mandated achievement tests due to the mandate of the NCLB Act. If even one subgroup does not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by each state, public school districts faced punitive consequences which become increasingly severe each year that AYP is not achieved. These consequences include: designation as a failing school; provision of supplemental services; parental right to “choose” to attend other schools in the district; a loss of federal funds; and ultimately, replacement of the administrators and staff in the building, or closing the school and transforming into a charter school.

Over the past ten years, the English learners’ subgroup was one of the populations which did not meet the AYP requirements due mostly to the fact that AYP is calculated inappropriately for this subgroup (Wright, 2006). Some states recognized this fact and raised the cutoff for the number of students that a school must count as a subgroup (Wright, 2006). Other states initially attempted to exclude the test scores of English learners who were enrolled for fewer than four years (Wright, 2006). However, in 2006, the federal government disallowed these exclusions. Therefore, educational leaders were left to search for answers on how to best serve this population.

Four main areas of research informed recommendations to serve this population and thus, provided the framework for the review of literature guiding this study: best educational practices for English learners, effective district practices, effective schools,

and the interface of these domains. This review provides a synopsis of the literature in these four fields.

Educational Practices for English Learners

With the heightened sense of urgency about the achievement gap between English learners and native speakers of English, district and school leaders and practitioners are interested in implementing effective educational practices for English learners (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). However, several considerations must be understood before adopting effective practices. First of all, these effective practices cannot be generic since the essential personal characteristics of English learners are quite variable and affect the type of services needed. The length of time that an English learner is in the country and in a school program, the child's English proficiency level and most importantly, the child's first language literacy skills will impact the type and length of services required to become academically proficient in English. In addition, district and school leaders must be aware of the historical and legal basis for educational programs and services for English learners as well as the social and political influences which impact practices. Finally, the educational theories for second language acquisition must be considered since they shape language policies, program design and instructional practices.

English learners.

The New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC): 6A:15 defines English learners as:

students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 whose native language is other than English and who have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language as measured by an English language proficiency test, so as to be

denied the opportunity to learn successfully in the classrooms

where the language of instruction is English. (NJAC 6A:15-1.2)

This definition includes students born in the United States as well as students who have recently immigrated to this country. English learners cross all socio-economic classes as well as racial categories. Some English learners have strong literacy skills in their first language, while others have limited skills and limited exposure to educational opportunities. Undocumented immigrant parents are reluctant to engage with institutions that require identification. They experience social exclusion which may influence family life and child development (Yoshikawa, Godfrey & Rivera, 2008). Since school personnel are not permitted to ask the status of parents, this may be an unknown stressor for a family (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1981). School administrators need to understand the heterogeneity of this sub-group in order to provide and support effective programs of instruction (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006).

According to the report, *Perspectives on a Population: English Language Learners in American Schools* (2009), approximately 49 million students enrolled in grades K-12 during the 2005-2006 school year. Identified English learners comprised 9.1% of those 49 million students, or approximately 4.5 million students. Nationally, English learner enrollment increased by 18 % between 2000 and 2005. The top five languages spoken in the United States at that time were: Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and French. In New Jersey over 65,000 English learners were identified in the total public school population of 283,425 students during the 2008-2009 school year. Figure 1 delineates the top five languages (other than English) spoken and the breakdown of English learners who received services within each of those language groups. Spanish

speakers comprised 67% of all English learners in New Jersey. The other four top languages were: Arabic, Korean, Portuguese, and Gujarati. Overall, families of students enrolled in the public schools of New Jersey during 2008-2009 spoke 187 languages.

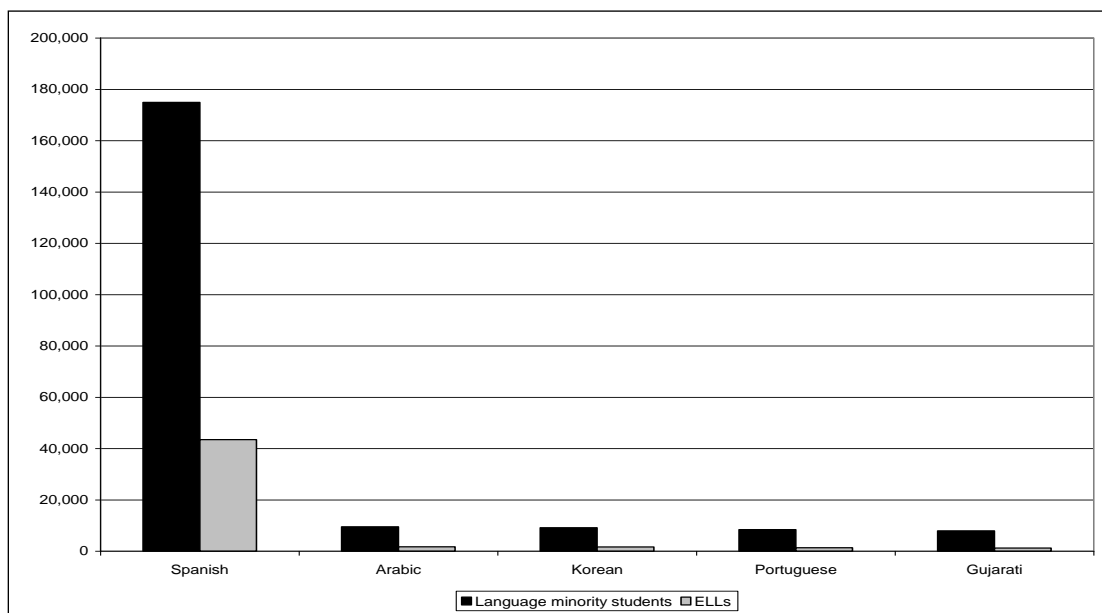


Figure1. Top five languages (other than English) spoken by students enrolled in NJ public schools and number of English learners from those language groups.

History, Federal Laws, Court Decisions, and Policies

This section examines the main historical events which shaped the educational environment in which programs and services were designed (Ovando, Collier & Combs, 2003). Administrators who were aware of the laws, legal requirements and court cases associated with the educational needs of English learners became strong advocates for this specialized population in their schools (Smiley & Salsberry, 2007).

According to the *Harvard Law Review* (2003), European immigrants during the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century were educated using a bilingual model of instruction. In 1839, Ohio was the first state to adopt a bilingual education law, permitting German-English instruction if parents requested it. Louisiana followed with an

identical law for French and English in 1847, as did the New Mexico Territory, for Spanish and English in 1850. By the end of the 19th century, twelve states had passed similar laws. In other places, localities provided bilingual instruction in Norwegian, Italian, Polish, Czech, and Cherokee without state approval. At the beginning of the 20th century, enrollment data counted at least 600,000 primary school students (about 4% of all American children in the elementary grades) who received part or all of their instruction in the German language (*Harvard Law Review*, 2003).

However, the political climate changed during and after World War I. A majority of states enacted English-only instruction laws designed to "Americanize" these groups because of fears that non-English speakers in general, and German Americans, in particular, were not loyal to the United States (Zabetakis, 1998). Some researchers identified the need to develop effective communication within the emerging industrialized society as a reason; others concluded that it was the result of xenophobia (Ryan, 2002). Nonetheless, bilingual education programs did not totally disappear. In several small regions of the country where large immigrant groups had political clout to control the local schools, they supported retention of the language and culture while learning English. In Hawaii, there were one hundred and sixty-three foreign language schools in the territory. Nine were conducted in the Korean language, seven in the Chinese, and the remainder in Japanese. In 1927, *Farrington v Tokushige* overturned Hawaii's restriction on foreign language schools and held that the Japanese parent had the "the right to direct the education of his own child without unreasonable restrictions" (273 U.S. 298, 1927). Also, in 1961 in Miami, middle-class Cuban refugees developed

bilingual programs (Zabetakis, 1998). Overall, however, English-only instruction was the norm for English learners until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

With the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the issue of bilingual education at the national level surfaced again. This legislation banned discrimination based on the grounds of race, color or national origin in any program receiving federal assistance (Pouncey, 1981). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required that non-English speaking children be given educational opportunities that addressed their particular needs. In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act, also known as Title VII, formally recognized academic instruction using languages other than English and, for the first time, offered financial support for bilingual education (*Harvard Law Review*, 2003; Wilson, 1997).

Theoretically, all students were entitled to a quality education; however, some educators and school districts resisted adequately serving English learners. As a result, legislation passed, and court decisions were rendered to “protect the rights of ...those who are limited in their English proficiency” (Lyons, 1992, p. 1). In the 1970s, a Supreme Court decision became the landmark case which provided the impetus for change in the public school system (Sarason, 1982). A class action suit, brought by parents of non-English-proficient Chinese students against the San Francisco Unified School District, claimed that their children were not receiving help due to their limited English status. These parents argued that their children were entitled to these services under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Office of Civil Rights, 2005). The U.S. Supreme Court in 1974 ruled in favor of the students and stated that the district must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by the non-English speaking

Chinese students in the district [414 U.S. 563 (1974)]. The Supreme Court stated in the decision that:

Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students. (U. S. 568, p 414)

This decision reverberated throughout the public school system by expanding the rights of limited English proficient (LEP) students (which became the federal designation for this population) and mandating that districts devise plans to meet the needs of all students (Wang, 1975). The suggested methods of instruction included English as a Second Language (ESL), transitional bilingual education programs, and language maintenance programs. Consequently, the Bilingual Education Act of 1974 established a program of federal assistance to states and local school districts for the specific purpose of developing programs designed to meet the needs of the limited English proficient population (Wilson, 1997). The Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) of 1974 explicitly stated the need for primary language instruction and implied that districts had a duty to take such action to overcome language barriers.

No state shall deny equal educational opportunity... by the failure to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. (20 USC Sec.1703)

Ironically, the *Lau* decision, which called for schools to address language barriers by grouping students on the basis of language, was released during the same time period that desegregation policies were mandating the integration of Mexican-American children (San Miguel, Jr., 2005). However, by the latter part of the 1970s, the majority of Latino scholars, educators, parents, and activists had become disheartened with desegregation as a strategy to improve access to a quality education for Latinos/as (González, 1979 in San Miguel, Jr., 2005). The continuing rulings of opposing federal mandates contributed to this disappointment. Instead, activists relied on bilingual education as a more appropriate strategy to change the patterns of underachievement of Mexican American children (San Miguel, Jr., 2005). Even today, this dichotomy between desegregation and bilingual education continues to impact the selection of program designs and placement of students.

In 1981, *Castañeda v. Pickard* established key criteria for determining a school's level of compliance with EEOA. The *Castañeda* decision advanced the following three criteria of theory, practice and results:

1. The school must pursue a program based on sound educational theory;
2. The school must implement the program with fidelity to transfer theory into reality;
3. The school must not persist in programs that fail to produce results (*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 1981).

Subsequent policy statements from the US Office of Civil Rights (OCR) offered more specific guidance for schools in relation to staffing, exit criteria, special education, gifted and talented programs, and compliance issues (1991, 2000). As a result of these policy

statements, the OCR developed a manual which described a district's legal responsibilities in developing or revising a program for English learners.

In 1986, Churchill (cited in Carranza, 2010) developed a framework that identified six stages of possible policy responses for English learners. If a district is at Stage One, English learners are considered to be deficient since they lack "the correct language" (Churchill in Carranza, 2010, p.45). The typical policy response at this stage would be to provide ESL instruction and to transition students to the dominant language environment as soon as possible. If a district functions at Stage Two, then an English learner's deficit is connected to family status and language. Therefore, social workers, aids, and tutors would be added to ESL instruction. A district at Stage Three would include cultural differences as a concern for the English learner. Deficits are viewed as related to differences in the relative status of the student's culture and the dominant culture. Consequently, the district would need to adopt a multicultural education curriculum and train staff in culturally responsive teaching methods. A district at Stage Four would consider the loss of the first language at a young age to be a barrier in acquiring the new language. Accordingly, its policy would provide transitional home language support. At Stage Five, a district would identify the loss of home language as a definite deficit for English learners; thus, policy makers would consistently use the home language as a medium of instruction in the early years. Finally, a district at Stage Six would value the languages of minority and majority populations equally. Consequently, policy would require that both (or more) languages be used as the medium of instruction for all or most years of schooling.

At the state level, New Jersey legislators passed the Bilingual Education Act in 1974, which mandated bilingual education. Subsequently, the department of education advocated the transitional approach placing New Jersey at Churchill's Stage Four in policy response. As one of a dwindling number of states which still has such a mandate, the New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC) specifically notes when a district must offer a bilingual education program (NJAC 6A:15-1.4):

(d) The district board of education shall establish bilingual education programs whenever there are 20 or more LEP students in any one language classification enrolled in the district.

However, districts may request a waiver (NJAC 6A:15-1.5(a))

to implement an alternative instructional program for bilingual education when there are 20 or more students from the same language background but due to age/grade span and/or geographic location, it would be impractical to implement a full-time bilingual program.

According to the *State Profile of LEP students in 2008-2009* (NJ Department of Education, 2009), seventy-two districts met the criteria which requires them to provide bilingual education in their districts. The bilingual designs in those 72 districts varied from full-time, self-contained programs to part-time, pull-out programs to alternative programs. Forty-three of the districts offered both a full-time program for one language group (usually Spanish) and an alternative design for other languages (Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, and Gujarati). Twenty districts offered part-time only programs while nine districts had only full-time bilingual programs for Spanish speakers.

In 2002, at the federal level, the No Child Left Behind Act specified that Limited English Proficient (LEP) students be full participants in the educational system. This obliged districts to hold the same standards, teach the same content and administer the same assessments for English learners as for native English speakers. The law also emphasized the adoption of research-based educational programs. Titles I and III in the NCLB Act held schools accountable for the development of high academic achievement of the English learner subgroup in addition to progress in and attainment of English proficiency. Clearly, federal and state laws mandated that public education accommodate the needs of English learners.

Program Design

English learners receive instruction through various bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. These services differ in their design throughout the nation based on state regulations, school district demographics and community support. Contrary to popular belief, bilingual education is not a single standardized program or a uniform pedagogy, but an approach that includes a variety of models (Ovando, et al., 2003). ESL instruction is a required component of bilingual education, so if a school has a bilingual program, inherently there is ESL instruction. However, the reverse is not true. Schools may have an ESL only program. Crawford (1997) identified the five most commonly implemented program designs as: pull-out ESL, structured immersion in English, transitional bilingual, maintenance bilingual and dual language. Few administrator preparation programs offer instruction on the different program designs even while there is growing evidence that if programs are not successfully implemented they will ultimately fail (Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999).

In New Jersey, each district determines the program that will best meet the needs of their student population. The NJAC 6A:15 defines the programs permitted to service English learners under the Bilingual Education Act. The district must have a three-year plan which outlines the program to be implemented. The following programs and definitions are included in the NJAC 6A:15-1.2:

Bilingual education program means a full-time transitional program of instruction in all those courses or subjects which a child is required by law or rule to receive, given in the native language of the LEP students enrolled in the program and in English; ...All students in bilingual education programs receive English as a second language(ESL) instruction.

Bilingual part-time component means a transitional program alternative in which students are assigned to mainstream English program classes, but are scheduled daily for their developmental reading and mathematics instruction with a certified bilingual teacher.

Bilingual resource program means a transitional program alternative in which students receive daily instruction from a certified bilingual teacher in identified subjects and with specific assignments on an individual student basis.

Bilingual tutorial program means a transitional program alternative in which students are provided one period of instruction from a certified

bilingual teacher in a content area required for graduation and a second period of tutoring in other required content areas.

Dual language bilingual education program means a full-time program of instruction in elementary and secondary schools which provides structured English language instruction and instruction in a second language in all content areas for LEP students and for English speaking students enrolled in the program.

Sheltered English instruction is an instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to LEP students. Sheltered English classes are taught by regular classroom teachers who have received training on strategies about how to make subject area content comprehensible for LEP students.

High-intensity ESL program means a program alternative in which students receive two or more class periods a day of ESL instruction. One period is the standard ESL class, and the other period is a tutorial or ESL reading class.

These program designs correspond to Churchill's six stages of policy responses from Stage One, a High Intensity program, through Stage Six, a dual language approach. In the 2008-2009 school year, the full-time transitional program was the most common bilingual model implemented throughout the larger urban areas in the state (NJDOE, Department of Education, 2009).

Socio-political influences of program design.

In response to the various legal requirements and mandates, districts implemented one of the aforementioned educational program designs to address the needs of English learners. As previously noted political controversy existed about the best method to teach English learners (Greene, 1997; Ma, 2002; Ramirez, Yuen, Ramey & Pasta, 1991; Rossell, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Proponents of Proposition 227 in California, entitled *English for the Children*, asserted that teaching in the primary language was un-American and that teaching in English-only was the most effective educational approach (Necochea & Cline, 2000). Yet, some researchers found that well-implemented bilingual programs with clear direction, administrative support, prepared teachers and appropriate resources were especially successful (Necochea & Cline, 1993; Ramirez, et al., 1991; Tikunoff, et al, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1996).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) also had a tremendous impact on the selection of program design. The intense focus on standardized tests, initially offered only in English, pressured educators to reduce the emphasis on native language literacy (Garcia, 2003). The costs associated with bilingual education programs versus ESL-only designs and the availability of highly qualified bilingual teachers were other socio-political issues which impacted the selection of the program design (Carpenter-Huffman & Samulon, 1981). The advantage versus the disadvantage of separating students while they participated in bilingual education classes was another concern (San Miguel, Jr., 2005).

Over the years, several researchers studied the effectiveness of the various programs with diverse conclusions (Greene, 1997; Ramirez, Yuen, Ramey & Pasta, 1991;

Thomas & Collier, 1996, 2002). Ramirez et al. (1991) concluded that children in bilingual classes acquired English language skills equivalent to those acquired by children in an English only program. Conversely, Thomas and Collier (1996) concluded after a seven-year longitudinal study that the dual language approach produced students with the highest sustained achievement.

Some of these studies came under scrutiny and criticism. In 1996, Rossell and Baker conducted a review of the literature on the effectiveness of bilingual education and concluded that the majority of 75 methodologically acceptable studies showed that bilingual education was not effective. Greene (1997) re-examined their literature review to substantiate the list of methodologically acceptable studies. After identifying only eleven studies that actually met the standards for being methodologically acceptable, Greene (1997) concluded from those studies that English learners made slightly higher gains per year in transitional bilingual programs than in English-only programs. Hakuta (1997) also suggested that native language approaches were beneficial for children learning English (National Research Council, 1997). Consequently, the literature reviews on bilingual education have been used to support opposing conclusions which created the inconsistent interpretations of research findings.

As a result, bilingual education has often become a contentious political issue with little consensus to corroborate effectiveness of a specific design (Ma, 2002). In a Civil Rights Project Report from Harvard University, Ma (2002) concurred that there “is a limited body of evidence and data regarding bilingual education and the most effective approach for educating English learners” (p.1). In light of many divergent views of what is best, Necochea and Cline (2000) asserted that “to avoid failure of English learners, it is

essential that the discussion, which has been largely political in nature, be taken to the level of pedagogy with collaboration between educators, policy-makers, and researchers” (p.31).

As a result, the emerging research has focused more on effective classroom strategies and student outcomes in addition to studying what is the more effective language of instruction (August & Shanahan, 2006; Calderon, 2011; Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2000). In December 2000, the *National Reading Panel* released a report which established five research-based principles which must be present in any high quality reading program for children who are monolingual English speakers. The panel deliberately decided to exclude scientific literature on the development of language and literacy for English learners. Following the release of that report by the United States Department of Education, a new panel convened to determine whether those same principles applied to English learners. August and Shanahan (2006) led the effort with eleven other experts in second language development, cognitive development, curriculum and instruction, assessment and methodology. As a result, the *National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth* created a comprehensive report which evaluated and synthesized the existing literature on the topic. Not surprisingly, the panel found little available research which met the rigorous, established selection criteria. Nevertheless, the panel’s review of existing research found that many factors influenced second-language literacy development, such as: “the age at which skills are acquired, individual differences in second language oral proficiency, cognitive abilities, first language oral proficiency, first language literacy, socio-cultural variables and classroom and school factors” (p. 1).

Members of the panel specifically reviewed twenty studies which focused on evaluating the impact of language of instruction on reading achievement (Francis, Lesaux & August, in August & Shanahan, 2006). The studies selected included randomized experiments as well as matched designs with experimental and control groups. In summary, Snow (in August & Shanahan, 2006) concluded, “the studies demonstrate that language-minority students instructed in their native language (primarily Spanish) and English perform, on average, better on English reading measures than language-minority students instructed only in their second language” (p. 639). Amazingly, even though this panel was federally funded, the United States Department of Education did not release this 651 page report as they did with the National Reading Panel report. As a matter of fact, since the United States Department of Education decided not to publish the report, the authors published it commercially (August & Shanahan, 2006). This fact attests to the realization that bilingual education continues to be affected by the political atmosphere instead of focusing on the scientifically research-based reality.

Transitional bilingual education program design.

Since the purpose of this study was to examine the contextual factors in one district with a model, full-time, transitional bilingual education program, the above-mentioned findings of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth (2006) guided the selection of this program design. In this design, children are initially taught in their native language while being introduced to English (Krashen, 1998). English language instruction increases and native language instruction decreases over a period of three to four years until all instruction is in English. The highest priority of most transitional programs is to learn English, with the goal of moving children into

general education classrooms as soon as possible (Ovando et al., 2003). Table 2 delineates the core components of the transitional bilingual program design. In this design, students are not only learning English, they are accessing the academic content curriculum while enhancing their knowledge of their first language (Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999). Transitional bilingual education was based on the theory that children's achievement in a second language depended on their mastery of their native language (Cummins, 1981). More recent research indicated that students can learn to read concurrently in both languages (Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000). Therefore, many proponents of this model now teach literacy in English and the native language while transitioning into all English instruction (August & Shanahan, 2006). Bilingualism is promoted with a solid foundation in biliteracy.

Transitional Bilingual	
Language Goals	Transition to all English
Cultural Goals	Understanding of and integration into mainstream American culture
Academic Goals	Same as district goals for all students
Student Characteristics	Limited or no English. All students have same L1. Variety of cultural backgrounds.
Grades served	K - 8 usually but may include high school, if numbers of students indicate that a program is needed.
Entry grades	K - 12
Length of student participation	2 - 4 years
Teacher qualification	Bilingual endorsement Elementary or content area certificate
Instructional Materials	In L1 and English; English adapted to proficiency level

Table 2. Components of Transitional Bilingual Program Design for English learners. Adapted from Genesee (1999).

In addition, the allocation of two languages across the curriculum is a critical instructional decision and practice in transitional bilingual classrooms (Ovando, et al., 2003). Researchers who have studied the advantages and disadvantages of the concurrent

use of two languages have concluded that it is better to separate the two languages and to clearly define the language of instruction by blocks of time and content area (Christian, 1994; Crawford, 1999; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). The California Department of Education (1991) concurred that the best approach for long-term academic achievement was the separation of the two languages through clear curricular decisions. Based on this research, the New Jersey Department of Education (2008) model program application seeks a language use policy (Appendix A).

Expectedly, the transitional bilingual education model has its critics since staff, students, parents and community members sometimes perceive these programs as remedial and a form of segregation (Spener, 1988 in Ovando, et al., 2003; San Miguel, Jr., 2005; Valdes, 2001). In fact, *Castañeda v Pickard* specifically addressed this concern by stating that segregation is permissible because the:

benefits which would accrue to [LEP] students by remedying the language barriers which impede their ability to realize their academic potential in an English language educational institution may outweigh the adverse effects of such segregation. (648 F. 2d at 998)

Ovando et al. (2003) noted that another concern with transitional programs is the assumption that three years is sufficient to learn academic English. In actuality, NCLB does not restrict the number of years that students can remain in the program, only the number of years that English learners can be assessed in their first language. New Jersey is one of only a few states which has developed state standardized tests (NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge, grades 3 -8) in Spanish. Therefore, students may be assessed in

Spanish for three years but must then transition to English assessment. This reality dictated the perceived necessity to transition to all English instruction in an expeditious manner so that students can adequately perform on the high stake state assessments. Administrators in schools with English learners may or may not have an understanding of these underlying issues which impact their ability to address these topics with all stakeholders.

Second Language Acquisition

The process of second language acquisition shapes all learning no matter which design is adopted. Consequently, Short, Vogt and Echevarria (2008) and Smiley and Salsberry (2007) recommend that administrators in schools with English learners have a basic knowledge of this multi-layered process. In this way, school leaders can better understand successful classroom instructional strategies and pedagogy for English learners. Smiley and Salsberry (2007) specify that principals in schools with English learners need to know how students acquire a second language, the various dimensions of language proficiency, the variables that affect that acquisition, and the instructional practices that promote both second language acquisition and content achievement.

As in all learning, theories of learning guide instructional practices. Over the years, second language acquisition theories have evolved from behavioral models to cognitive models to sociocultural approaches (Johnson, 2004).

Second language acquisition process.

Various theories of second language acquisition have informed instruction over the years (Krashen, 1985; Cummins, 1984; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Johnson, 2004; Van

Patten & Williams, 2007). Many of these concepts have relied on an information-processing or cognitive model.

Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis influenced the foundation of classroom practices for many years. Krashen (1985) made a distinction between learning a language and acquiring a language. Krashen (1985) believed that language learners acquired the rules of language in a natural order by receiving understandable messages slightly above their current level of proficiency. Comprehensible input included use of context, gestures, visuals, background knowledge and connections to prior knowledge. Krashen (1985) identified the silent period as a predictable time when beginning level students acquired knowledge through listening and understanding, and thus did not produce much linguistically. The socio-emotional or affective filter also influenced the student's ability to process language and interact with others (Krashen, 1985). Thus, language learning needed to occur in a low anxiety environment in order for students to successfully process the language. Krashen's theories shaped pedagogy by encouraging teachers to focus on meaningful communication in low anxiety, learner-centered classrooms. Even though many researchers have criticized and scrutinized Krashen's hypotheses (Ellis, 1994; Gass & Selinker, 2001; Johnson, 2004), they still continue to form a basis for many instructional strategies.

Dimensions of language proficiency.

Cummins' (2002) theory followed the cognitive tradition but expanded the dimensions of language proficiency to include academic language. He distinguished among three aspects of language proficiency when implementing programs to promote student achievement: conversational fluency, discrete language skills, and academic

language proficiency. Mere exposure to English was not enough to acquire full academic proficiency. Students underperformed academically because they lacked the necessary academic language to achieve school success, even though they conversed effectively (Short et al., 2008). Academic language proficiency required that students know and understand low frequency vocabulary and produce complex oral and written language. As students progressed through the grades, the language demands became more difficult at the same time that the context was reduced. Cummins (2000) conceptualized a framework that captured this phenomenon in Figure 2.

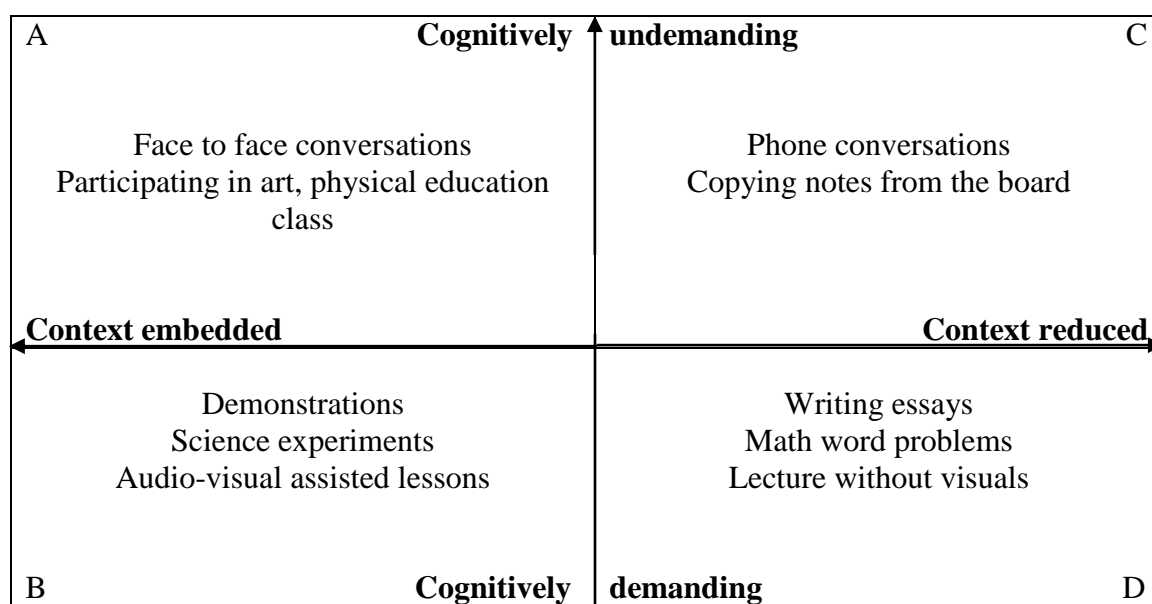


Figure 2. Range of Communicative Tasks based on Cummins' Framework

All educators must understand the nature of the differing cognitive demands when language is used in context-rich settings versus context-reduced situations. In this way, they can apply this knowledge to classroom lessons by consciously providing comprehensible contexts for the cognitively demanding information. Administrators must also have this knowledge since they directly support classroom instruction (Smiley &

Salsberry, 2007). According to Cummins (2002), English learners must have full engagement in a rich literacy environment with extensive opportunities to read and write across content areas. Following Cummins' theory, academic language must be systematically developed and taught in ways that are sensitive to the needs of English learners (Marzano, 2009; Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

Other variables that affect second language acquisition.

Thomas' and Collier's (1997) Prism Model identified the interdependence of four variables in second language acquisition: socio-cultural, linguistic, cognitive and academic development. They proposed that all four factors be addressed concurrently so English learners can achieve academic success in English. Their model, depicted in Figure 3, placed the socio-cultural factors; such as the affective instructional environment, attitudes from peers in the target culture, and acculturation, at the core of the child's acquisition process (Collier, 1995; Thomas & Collier, 1997). The linguistic factors involved language development in the first and second languages while the cognitive features focused on the developing students' meta-cognitive skills. The last variable, and possibly the most critical one, was academic development in all subject areas whereby students are provided with grade level instruction.

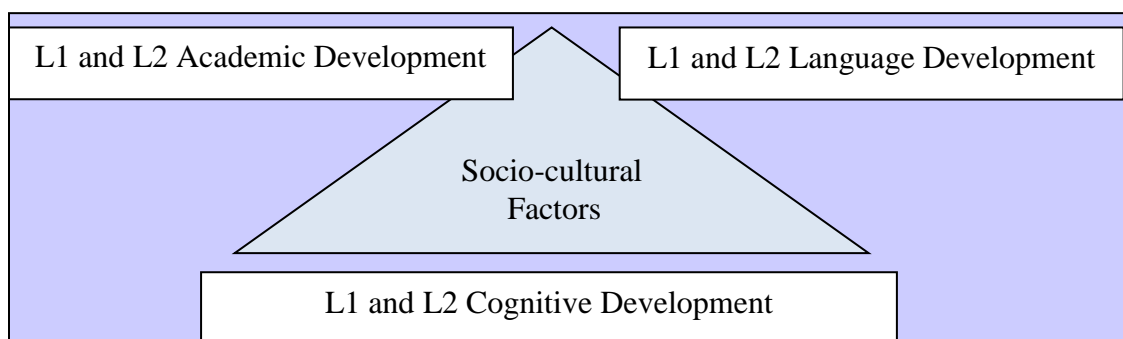


Figure 3. Prism Model Factors that influence second language acquisition (adapted from Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Accordingly, Thomas and Collier (1997) cited three recommendations for children to achieve overall academic success: 1.) grade-level academic instruction using the student's first and second language; 2.) interactive, discovery learning activities; and 3.) a socio-cultural setting which integrated English learners in a safe, supportive environment.

Second language acquisition as socio-cultural, culturally responsive pedagogy

More recently, several theorists have approached second language acquisition from a socio-cultural approach. Over the years the cognitive model of second language acquisition expanded to include Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, whereby interactions with more knowledgeable others in a social context negotiate language learning (Johnson, 2004). Johnson (2004) advocated combining Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory with Bakhtin's literary theory of connecting multiple voices through a dialogic process to arrive at a new approach for second language acquisition. Vygotsky's perspective asserted that language and literacy mediated students' social worlds (Li, 2004). These theories highlighted the connection between the learner's mental processes and interactions with others in the community rather than focusing independently on one or the other. Lam (2005) noted that in this new model, language competence occurred through language use in a real social context; thus requiring that the second language learner be an active participant in the target culture. Haneda (2008) highlighted the importance of providing English learners with ample participatory opportunities in the classroom. This new way of thinking profoundly impacted classroom instruction. In this model, the classroom became a dynamic socio-cultural setting where teachers nurtured active participation. Teachers viewed cultural differences as resources and saw student's background knowledge as "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1994). Gee (2001) noted that

“comprehension of written and verbal language is as much about experience with the worlds of home, school, and work as it is about words” (p. 714).

As a result, teachers working within this model developed culturally relevant and linguistically congruent instructional activities (Au & Jordan, 1981; Banks, 2002; Li, 2004). Such instructors constructed activities designed for the Zones of Proximal Development for each student by creating opportunities for appropriate dialogue, tasks, and instructional conversations (Johnson, 2004; Levykh, 2008). In this way, students participated in linguistically and culturally rich activities through interactions with others; they heard many different voices and speech genres which, in turn, prompted metacognition and affected their cognitive development (Johnson, 2004, Gee, 2001).

Second language acquisition and bilingual education.

Several cross-linguistic theoretical frameworks shaped the design of bilingual education. The most relevant frameworks included transfer theory and underlying cognitive abilities theory (Cummins, 1978, 1979; Geva & Ryan, 1993; Lado, 1964; as cited in August & Shanahan, 2006). The transfer theory posited that when both languages share similar features and when students demonstrated proficiency in their first language, second language acquisition accelerated. Cummins (1981, 2000) hypothesized that since first and second language acquisition were developmentally interdependent, students who developed oral proficiency and literacy skills in their first language made better progress in second language acquisition. Similarly, underlying cognitive abilities, such as phonological short-term memory, phonological awareness and working memory had a positive effect on second language acquisition (Geva & Ryan, 1993, as cited in August & Shanahan, 2006). Studies also indicated that conceptual knowledge in a first language

facilitated vocabulary acquisition in a second language (August & Shanahan, 2006). In addition, the *National Literacy Panel Report* cited evidence from randomized studies which indicated a moderate effect in favor of bilingual instruction. Snow (as cited in August & Shanahan, 2006) stated that if “there is educational value attached to bilingualism and biliteracy, then bilingual programs are to be preferred even more strongly because there is no basis in the research findings to suggest that they are in any way disadvantageous to English academic outcomes” (p. 639). This recommendation supported the program design of the district which was the focus of this study since the majority of students were from Spanish-speaking backgrounds and the community strongly supported bilingual education (NJ School Report Card, 2008).

Rate of second language acquisition.

First and foremost, learning a second language is a complicated process which involves the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the target language. It requires considerable effort and takes many years to achieve (Brown, 2000; Short, et al., 2008). The variability of language and learning abilities in the first language, previous educational history, motivation, readiness to learn, acculturation, age, language status, home support, personality, learning style and quality of language instruction add to that complexity (August & Hakuta, 1997; McLaughlin, 1992). All of these factors impact the amount of time needed to learn an additional language and to achieve academic competence in that language (Smiley & Salsberry, 2007).

In synthesizing recent research, Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders and Christian (2006) found that English learners needed three to five years to reach advanced proficiency in oral English and that students progressed from beginning to intermediate

levels at a faster rate than they moved from intermediate to advanced levels. This synthesis also found that the instructional strategies that English learners used to learn the second language varied according to the level of language proficiency. Students at the beginning levels used receptive strategies, memorization, and repetition while students at advanced levels of proficiency used monitoring strategies to clarify and refine their communication (Genesee, et al., 2006).

As previously mentioned, the transfer and cognitive abilities theories of bilingual education contend that building academic knowledge in the first language and then applying that knowledge to the second language accelerated academic language learning in the second language (Cummins, 2000; Geva & Ryan, 1993 in August & Shanahan, 2006). The *National Literacy Panel Report* cited that correlations across languages in performance on particular tasks supported this argument. However, they cautioned that other individual factors, such as intelligence, visual memory or meta-linguistic skills, also contributed to this effect. Nevertheless, when provided high quality instruction, students who had strong skills in their first language usually acquired academic skills in English at a faster pace than those students who lacked academic knowledge in their first language (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Under Title III of the NCLB Act, states are required to monitor how long it takes for English learners to attain English proficiency. In New Jersey, the Department of Education adopted five English language development standards for English learners developed by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, a 27 state alliance which shares English language development standards and assessments. The WIDA assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®, identifies six stages of

language proficiency (beginning, emerging, developing, expanding, bridging and reaching) across the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The five standards address social/instructional language usage and academic language usage in the content areas of: language arts literacy, math, science and social studies. Title III accountability regulations of NCLB required districts to annually document and report the percentage of students who made the requisite progress across proficiency levels in addition to the percentage of students who attained proficiency. If students do not meet Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO), districts are then required to design an action plan to address the issue.

Assuring that English learners succeed has been more challenging than many educators assumed. The challenge is connected to the definition of academic success in school (Cook, et al., 2011). The language demands for English learners have shifted to skills which involve more specialized, content-specific vocabulary as well as grammar and discourse unique to the various content areas (Anstrom, DiCerbo, Butler, Katz, Millet, & Rivera, 2010). Research suggests that academic achievement in English is connected to long-term support for academic language development in socio-culturally responsive environments (Anstrom, et al., 2010). In addition, the way that adequate yearly progress is calculated for this subgroup must take into consideration the language proficiency level of the English learner. Cook, et al. (2011) compared the English language proficiency assessment and academic reading assessment in one of the states which adopted the WIDA standards and used the ACCESS for ELLs as its language proficiency assessment. They found that as the ELP level increased the distribution of students' reading scale scores also increased. This analysis highlights the problem with

the current accountability model under NCLB which does not consider the English learners' proficiency levels (Cook, et al., 2011) and treats the ELL subgroup as a homogenous entity.

Teachers have to be knowledgeable of the current and sequential stages of their students' proficiency levels so that they could determine appropriate lesson objectives, instructional strategies to differentiate activities and assessment practices. Administrators, as instructional leaders, who evaluate teacher effectiveness must also be aware of these developmental stages and appropriate strategies for differentiation based on English proficiency level. When all stakeholders are knowledgeable of interventions, effective program designs and strategies, second language acquisition is facilitated more efficiently (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). Then, and only then, can English learners be afforded every opportunity to enhance their educational success.

Effective district practices.

After decades of concentrating on schools as the key element to school improvement, policy makers now acknowledge that schools are embedded in district-wide systems and that the structural and professional relationships between a central office and its schools may be essential to improvement (Chrispeels, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2006). Several studies have examined the critical role that central administration plays in supporting teaching and learning improvement efforts (Honig et.al, 2010; Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010; Datnow, Lasky, Springfield, & Teddlie, 2005). The argument is no longer about whether schools or districts should be leading the changes but that school improvement is a systemic problem which requires involvement at both levels. The NCLB Act (2002) forced districts to review and align their curriculum

framework with the new accountability system; thus creating a mandate for better communication and equitable dissemination of resources within districts (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). Honig et al. (2010) also found that central office administrators served critical roles in supporting district-wide teaching and learning initiatives. Datnow et al. (2005) also identified promising practices for district reform. Districts that have experienced some success in the teaching and learning process share the following characteristics: (a) stable leadership focused on improving student learning; (b) the development of system-wide capacity; (c) the provision of material and human resources, including sustained and appropriate professional development; (d) a record of trust and cooperation among multiple stakeholders; (e) the use of multiple data for planning, problem solving, and decision making; (f) a system-wide curriculum tied to state standards; and (g) a high degree of consistency at the district and school board level. Efforts to improve both individual and large groups of schools are unlikely to be successful for any length of time without district support (Datnow et al., 2005). Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) summarized the three critical elements that support district-wide improvement as: district-wide focus on achievement; consistency of instruction, and strong instructional leadership.

The district-wide school improvement research examined these practices holistically with little mention of implementing programs for English learners or students with special needs (Calderon et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, Datnow et al., 2005, Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). Research is scant which specifically addresses competencies needed for district supervisors responsible for the implementation of bilingual or ESL programs. Historically, bilingual programs operated in isolation as a

parallel strand to the mainstream classes (Aguila, 2010). Moreover, bilingual programs were the domain of designated bilingual personnel (Griego-Jones, 1995). The NCLB Act moved English learners into the general education arena but with little guidance on actual implementation of bilingual programs.

Effective Schools Practices

In 1966, the Coleman report concluded that school resources had little impact on student achievement (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfield, & York, 1966). Coleman, et al. (1966) found that the most influential variable in student achievement remained the educational and social background of the child. Indeed, even today, out of district factors continue to influence student outcomes (Rothstein, 2004). Edmonds, Lezotte and Ratner (1977) refuted this claim through their effective schools research. They defined an effective school as one which closed the achievement gap between the poor and middle classes (Edmonds, et al., 1977). They documented two schools which did not support Coleman's conclusion. The decade of 1966-1976 witnessed the expansion of descriptive studies on effective schools. Researchers questioned why some low-income schools succeeded while others did not. Through the 1970s and into the 1980s, a network of researchers observed these exceptional schools in detail and identified the shared traits of these settings (Edmonds, 1982; Sergiovanni, 1984; Lezotte, 1985).

Regardless of the children's backgrounds, several attributes were consistently evident in high performing schools in many different cities. First, a safe and orderly environment existed with all staff members holding high expectations for all students. Second, the principals built a shared vision and had a clear mission. In addition, all students had an opportunity to learn while teachers monitored student progress. These

schools also provided meaningful staff development and created a positive home/school relationship. Finally, teachers had a sense of efficacy and principals demonstrated strong instructional leadership (Edmonds, 1982; Fradd & Tikunoff, 1987; Lezotte, 1985). Fradd and Tikunoff (1987) defined the principal as the instructional leader who considered teaching and learning the primary goal of the school.

Effective Schools for English Learners

The characteristics of effective schools for English learners mirrored those found in effective schools in general. With a linguistically complex student population, however, additional knowledge, skills and dispositions were necessary to address the linguistic, academic and cultural needs of students (Gold, 2006).

Tikunoff (1983a) completed one of the first studies to investigate successful bilingual instruction. He observed 58 bilingual classrooms "of teachers nominated as the most successful bilingual instructors" (p. 15). His research identified the following five significant bilingual instructional features: (a) congruence of instructional planning, organization, delivery of instruction, and student consequences; (b) active teaching behaviors; (c) use of the student's native language and English for instruction; (d) integration of English language development with content areas; and (e) inclusion of information from the student's home and culture.

The California Department of Education also undertook the task to identify successful bilingual programs. At first, it was difficult to study effective bilingual programs because many bilingual programs were housed in ineffective schools or districts (Carter & Chatfield, 1986). Subsequently, Carter and Chatfield (1986) suggested that a new paradigm of the relationship between bilingual program and school-wide

effectiveness be established for continued research in bilingual education. Thus, it was argued that the effectiveness of bilingual education and its impact on learning should be examined within the effective school context.

Carter and Maestas (1982) described and analyzed three effective bilingual programs. These programs shared the same attributes as the ones identified in the effective schools research. Subsequently, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) (1990) conducted a four year evaluation of six elementary campuses identified as having strong bilingual programs. Bilingual teachers and school administrators identified the following variables as influencing a bilingual program's success: (a) parental and community involvement; (b) strong administrators who had a theoretical knowledge base of bilingual education; (c) high student expectations; and (d) quality of bilingual materials, transition materials, and textbooks. Again, the basic components of effective schools were evident with the additional factor of administrator knowledge base of bilingual education. Likewise, Keefe and Howard (1997) recognized the interrelatedness of these key factors and the importance of the interactions among them with the added feature of incorporation of primary language and culture.

As more studies emerged in this area, Gold (2006) found that this multifaceted set of attributes, when added to the characteristics of effective schools in general, resulted in a higher level of academic achievement for English learners. The selected bilingual schools in Gold's study (2006) shared many features identified in the effective schools literature. The principals had a clear mission, set high expectations for success and demonstrated strong instructional leadership. The staff monitored student progress and

planned learning opportunities accordingly. Students spent time on task in a safe, orderly environment while staff and parents enjoyed positive home-school relations (Gold, 2006).

Gold's (2006) findings concurred with the research on effective programs for English learners. Staff demonstrated knowledge of language acquisition methodology and the theoretical rationale for instruction in the primary language. They provided high quality academic instruction initially in the students' home language, without translation. In most cases, students developed literacy first in their home language and then in English. Interactive strategies and techniques made academic instruction in English comprehensible. Instruction to accelerate English language development occurred in a socio-culturally supportive environment. The administrators and teachers had established a climate of accountability that supported high achievement in English, and did so with respect for the Spanish language and home cultures of the students (Gold, 2006).

Thus, many studies supported Carter and Chatfield's (1986) paradigm that effective bilingual programs have a nested relationship within effective schools. Most of the schools studied shared the characteristics of strong leadership and a cohesive plan of curriculum and instruction as key features of their success (Gold, 2006; Keefe & Howard, 1997; Texas Education Agency, 1990). Since leadership is one of the most common factors in these effective schools studies, the next section focused on the detailed roles of the principal in effective schools for English learners.

Leadership Practices

In delving more deeply into the topic of strong leadership, Murphy et al. (2006) found that leadership behaviors were shaped by four major points: (a) the previous experiences of a leader; (b) the knowledge base amassed over time; (c) personal

characteristics of a leader and (d) the set of values and beliefs that define a leader. These findings set the parameters for the update of standards established by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

In 1996, the CCSSO adopted a set of *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)* policy standards for educational leaders based on the belief that school leaders were essential to the effective operation of schools. However, at the time, there was little consensus on the characteristics of effective school leaders. In the interim, several studies affirmed that administrators' beliefs and actions about student and teacher learning had a direct impact on student outcomes (Cotton, 2003; Firestone et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005; Nelson, 1998; Smith, 2008). Over a seven year period, Smith (2008) studied eight award-winning schools that had effectively improved student outcomes. Smith (2008) found that student success occurred when the primary focus of school leaders was the teaching and learning process. He identified nine characteristics of successful principals and created a conceptual framework that defined the relationship among these characteristics. With teaching and learning at the core, the principals had a vision of what the schools should look like while always understanding the ramifications of undergoing change. Under these overarching elements of vision and change, the principals consistently made decisions strategically; were mindful of relationships with all participants; pursued student success courageously; exemplified the characteristics of a lifelong learner; communicated powerfully; and empowered all stakeholders. During the same period, Marzano et al. (2005) completed a meta-analysis of sixty-nine studies covering a twenty-three year period and cited twenty-one principal responsibilities that impacted student achievement.

Accordingly, studies have found that leadership is second only to classroom instruction in influencing student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2004). Effective leadership developed teachers' capacity to improve achievement levels. Therefore, the most successful administrators questioned their prior beliefs about teaching and learning; rethought their practices on the basis of the new standards for achievement; and reflected on how they related to the diverse students in their schools (Nelson, 1998; Smith, 2008).

Principal's role in effective schools for English learners.

Effective leadership is crucial to meet this challenge. Without strong leadership and a coordinated effort among all stakeholders, English learners struggle to meet the expected standards (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). Research on effective schools and the impact of leadership has grown and evolved over the past forty years.

As found in all of the effective schools research, leadership plays a critical role in closing the achievement gap. Tucker and Coddling (2002) summarized the reality of education in the current climate when they stated that today's principals must work effectively with diverse stakeholders in order to implement critical reforms within the political parameters. Although they were not directly referring to principals in schools with a significant number of English learners, their finding resonated for this group of leaders. Today's instructional leaders need additional skills and knowledge, particularly those leaders in settings with a high concentration of English learners (Batsis, 1987; Smiley & Salsberry, 2007). Carranza (2010) found that in order for principals to function as instructional leaders, they must be prepared to understand and support initiatives that relate to demographic changes. Miramontes, Nadeau, and Commins (1997) noted that effective principals of English learners required a solid understanding of curricular issues,

which were critical to the success of the programs for English learners. Herrity (1997) found that administrators in successful schools for English learners had a clear school mission which they effectively communicated to all stakeholders. These leaders had a strong commitment to close the achievement gap by conscientiously monitoring English learners' progress and actively coordinating the curriculum. Knowledge of bilingual educational theory and methodology and sensitivity to cultural norms and the social/emotional needs of diverse students were critical factors in ensuring administration of successful bilingual programs (Herrity, 1997). Not surprisingly, studies have consistently identified the pivotal role that the principal played in making the achievement of English learners a priority (August & Hakuta, 1997; Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Tikunoff et al., 1991). In fact, Carter and Chatfield (1986) found that when the principal prioritized the needs of English learners, student achievement improved. With a growing English learner population, principals needed to understand the cultural, linguistic, instructional, and legal implications of educating this group of students (Carranza, 2010).

In addition, district and school leaders need to support the general education teachers who work with English learners. By developing a systemic model of support for the general education staff to address the unique needs of this population, they build capacity to deliver appropriate programs that address their needs (Carranza, 2010; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). School leaders needed an understanding of the differentiated needs of newcomers and the impact of language and culture while creating a welcoming and embracing attitude. Effective principals built accountability and ownership for English learners into the life of the school. August and Hakuta (1997) also found that principals

who placed a high priority on culturally and linguistically appropriate professional development for all staff created programs that effectively served English learners. Likewise, Lucas (1992) noted that principals who created a climate of professional growth and accountability supported teachers in becoming proficient educators of English learners. English learners and their teachers were no longer isolated and disconnected from the rest of the school (Soltero, 2011). Finally, school leaders who possessed this knowledge and these skills improved the usual secondary status of English learners and truly promoted equity in schools (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999; Vandervelde, 2001).

Parental involvement

Parental and community involvement was another critical feature of effective programs which required a focus from principals. Epstein (2007) created a framework to guide districts and schools to develop high quality parent involvement policies and programs. She identified six types of parental involvement that focus on goals for successful student outcomes: parenting, volunteering, communicating, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.

These features are essential in a high quality program for culturally and linguistically diverse families. When working with these families, administrators must reconsider the typical definition of parent-school relationships based on the White, middle class model (Nieto, 2000). If parents have limited schooling or do not speak English, they may rely on the school to educate their children. Yet, the school and the teachers view this as a lack of parental interest or involvement. Peterson and Heywood (2007) found that culturally and linguistically diverse families are often viewed within a deficit model which assumes that the linguistic and economic capital of families limit

parents' participation. To respond in culturally relevant ways, district and school leaders must gain an understanding of the histories, cultures and life stories of their immigrant parents (Stuftt & Brogadir, 2011). Family connections are essential to a child's sense of identity and responsibility (Suarez-Orozco, 2001, cited in Peterson & Heywood, 2007). As a result, educational leaders must recognize that if minority students are to succeed, the district must adapt to the community needs by using the culture, language and students' funds of knowledge to develop culturally responsive policies, programs and practices (Guerra & Valverde, 2007).

These practices include components of Epstein's model (Epstein, 2007). District and school leaders who discovered ways to involve parents of English learners in educational decision-making, despite language barriers, and who were able to engage parents and community members in a relevant, authentic manner affected the success of the program (Lucas, Henze & Donato, 1990). In examples of successful leadership, communication to parents was provided in native language as much as possible in order to build community support and understanding of the bilingual program (Lucas et al. 1990). Parents were encouraged to use and extend the family's primary language at home through participation in literacy-rich activities (Crawford, 1997; Wong Fillmore, 1991b; Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999). Emphasizing the use of English in a home where it is not the first language may actually be detrimental to both the learner and the family (Peterson & Heywood, 2007). In addition, schools empowered parents not only by educating them about school programs, operating procedures and parents' rights; but also equipping them with the knowledge and skills to advocate, question and participate in school (Guerra & Valverde, 2007).

Summary

Finally, as previously noted, education of English learners has been a contentious political issue; thus, principals must advocate for their students in the larger political and social context (Lucas, 1992). As Aguilar (1979) asserted, “the more knowledgeable the school principal is concerning the purpose of the bilingual program, the more effective public relations person he/she can become” (p. 27).

This fund of research demonstrated the various layers which operate within a system which ultimately impact the outcomes for English learners. District supervisors, principals, vice-principals, teacher leaders and teachers play critical roles in the implementation of standards for achievement, although each makes a different contribution. The essential research on leaders of successful implementation of programs for English learners is highlighted in Table 3.

Conceptual Framework

This study, grounded in educational administration and supervision, was framed within the context of the educational leadership in effective districts and schools research. Many studies focused on the characteristics of districts and schools which succeeded in closing the achievement gap between middle and lower income students. Fewer studies, within that framework, examined the effective schools with effective bilingual programs. More recently, research has investigated the role that the district context contributed to the teaching and learning process (Honig et al., 2010; Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). In both areas, the roles of the leaders were identified as critical features. Within those roles, district leaders and principals worked together to synergize their knowledge and expertise.

Research on attributes of leaders in schools with effective programs for ELLs
Principals must be able to build accountability and ownership for ELLs into the life of the school (Olsen and Jaramillo, 1999; Reyes, 2006). All administrators need a clear vision of expected outcomes from the bilingual program and the ability to communicate this vision to all stakeholders (Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999; Herrity, 1997).
Effective principals of ELLs had an understanding of curricular issues, critical to the success of ELLs (Miramontes et al., 1997; Reyes, 2006). Effective school leaders understood the needs of the newcomers and the impact of language and culture on education while building capacity to deliver effective services (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). School leaders who placed a high priority on professional development and who created a climate of professional growth and accountability for all staff created programs that effectively served ELLs (August & Hakuta, 1997; Lucas, 1992).
Students spent time on task in a safe, orderly environment (Gold, 2006). Principals actively recruit and retain dedicated staff (August & Hakuta, 1997).
Parents used the family's primary language through participation in literacy-rich activities (Crawford, 1997; Wong Fillmore, 1991b; Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999). Communication was provided in native language (Lucas, et al. 1990).
Instruction to accelerate English language development occurred in a socio-culturally supportive environment. The administrators established a climate of accountability that supported high achievement in English with respect to students' home languages and cultures (Gold, 2006).
Principals worked effectively with diverse stakeholders in order to implement critical reforms within political and legal parameters (Tucker & Coddington, 2002).

Table 3. Attributes of leaders in effective schools for English learners.

In summary, the following contextual factors influenced the practices of all stakeholders and contributed to the successful implementation of a high quality program for an at-risk population. First, the establishment and communication of a clear vision based on the belief that teaching and learning were the primary goals and focus of the district and school. Second, the principals and teachers set high expectations for all students. Third, central office administrators had a solid knowledge base of effective program designs. Furthermore, the district and school leaders had the ability to identify and allocate available and appropriate resources and understood the importance of advocacy in all facets of education. Finally the central office administration in concert

with the principal established the capacity to promote a positive home/school/community relationship among all stakeholders. Figure 4 demonstrated the relationship between and among the various levels of effective district and schools research reviewed, as well as the practices and knowledge base that was demonstrated by all stakeholders in these successful schools.

This framework initially guided the collection and interpretation of data on the characteristics and practices that contributed to the success of the English learners in a district with a model transitional bilingual education program in New Jersey.

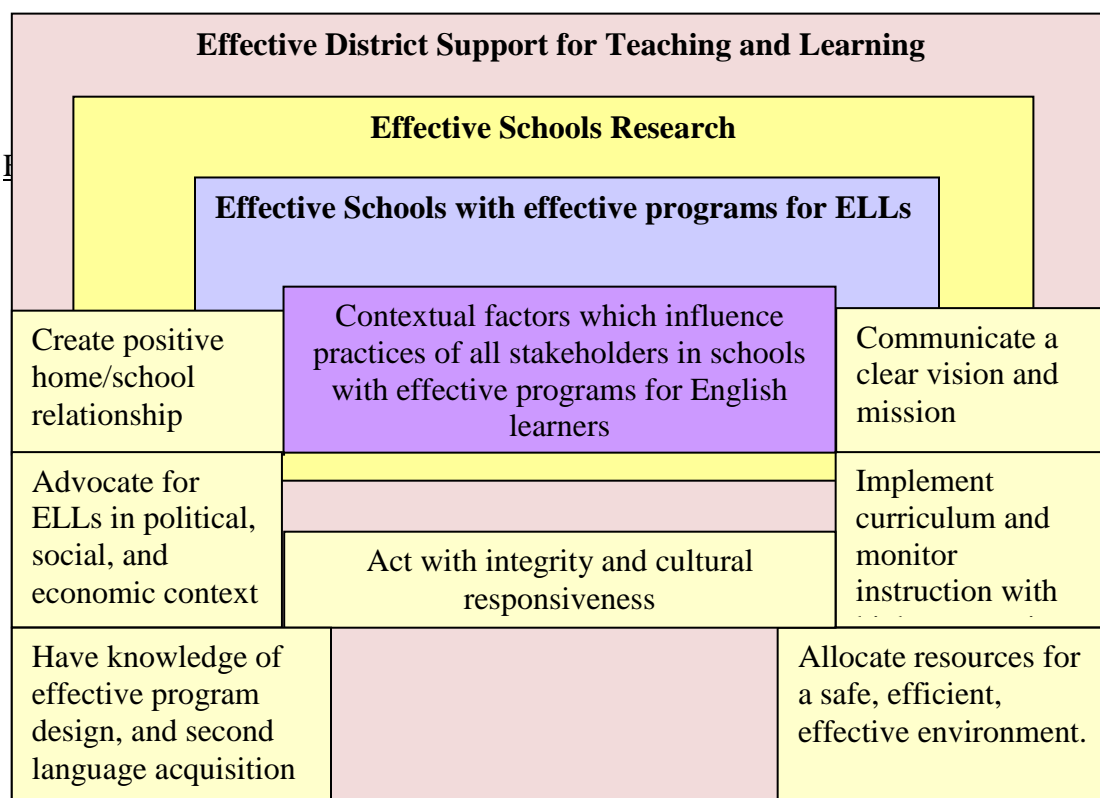


Figure 4. Conceptual Framework of Systemic Support in Effective Schools for ELLs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Having an interest in knowing more about the field and in improving the practice of education leads to asking researchable questions, some of which are best approached through the qualitative research design model. Merriam (1998, p. 1)

Introduction

The methodology for this research project was a descriptive case study. Yin (2003) defined a descriptive case study as an inquiry that explored a current phenomenon within its real-life context and resulted in a detailed thick account of the experience under study. A case study closely examines bounded systems (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, cited in Cresswell, 1998). Therefore, this case focused on a public school district with a model transitional bilingual education program. Initially, the case was designed to compare the practices of two principals who had varying degrees of background knowledge and expertise in bilingual education. However, during data collection, it became apparent that the political landscape and district context played critical roles in the implementation of this model bilingual program. Therefore, the focus changed from the practices of the principals to the contextual factors which influenced the implementation of the bilingual program.

Data were collected through the lenses of district level bilingual personnel, school leaders and teachers in two high performing elementary schools. The two elementary schools had a significant population of English learners enrolled in bilingual classes. The careful exploration of the contextual factors which influenced the practices of

stakeholders at various levels in the system was a current phenomenon which fit the criteria for a descriptive case study.

Setting

In an attempt to recognize successful programs, the New Jersey Department of Education identified several districts with model bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs for the 2008-2010 school years. Districts had to meet the two Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) established under Title III by the U.S. Department of Education to be eligible to submit an application. These AMAOs measured the growth in English language proficiency and the exit rate of English learners from the program.

The New Jersey Department of Education utilized a modified nominated schools design whereby schools initially completed an application and nominated themselves (Appendix B). Subsequently, a committee of experts, consisting of State Department of Education personnel and district supervisors recognized in the bilingual and ESL field, convened to screen the applications. They then chose districts to visit based on the screening process and ultimately conducted a site visit. At least three representatives from the selection committee visited each site. Based on the results of the site visits, the committee identified seven programs with varying programmatic designs.

The selected setting was a public school district in Central New Jersey. This site was chosen as a focus of the study due to its selection as a district with a model transitional bilingual program in the state of New Jersey. Two high performing elementary schools were the foci of the study since there is greater concentration of English learners in the lower grades (Kindler, 2002). In addition to their characteristics

as representative of several variables present throughout the district, each school had special accolades and/or bilingual classes unique to their setting. First, North Street School had been selected as a National Distinguished Title I School. Next the English learners in both schools made AYP. A third reason for their selection was that the principals had varied background experiences in bilingual education and, lastly, each school accommodated a specialized class for English learners.

The first school, North Street School, housed approximately 800 K-4 students, 58% of whom spoke Spanish and 7% who were students with special needs. North Street School made adequate yearly progress (AYP) during the 2007-2008 and 2009-2010 school years (NJ School Report Card, 2008, 2010). The second school, South Street School, housed approximately 400 K – grade 4 students, 46% of whom spoke Spanish and 2% who were identified as students with disabilities. During the 2007-2008 school year, South Street School met the requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the NCLB mandate but failed to meet AYP in Language Arts Literacy during the 2009-2010 school year (NJ School Report Card, 2008, 2010).

Sample

A stratified purposeful maximum variation strategy was used to select principal participants who had varying degrees of bilingual experience and different leadership styles. The rationale for choosing principals that fit the varying degrees of background experience was to examine the characteristics and practices between the principals and the schools (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Several contextual variables were common since both principals were in the same district with the same bilingual program design.

After a discussion with the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Rivers, about the purpose of the study, the participants were purposefully chosen from the population of principals. Rivers suggested the two principal participants whom she described as exemplar principals with different leadership styles and background experiences in bilingual education. One principal was a monolingual English-speaking female with limited background experience in bilingual education while the other was Latina with background as a bilingual English/Spanish teacher.

Jane Jones, a European-American female, had been in West Park since 1985 and had been the principal of North Street School for the past ten years. Prior to that, she had been a vice principal in a different school for two years. Jones was initially hired to be an intervention teacher for the small bilingual program at that time. Jones is not bilingual and readily admitted that she had zero background in bilingual education when she first began in West Park. She was currently contemplating retirement in light of the recent political landscape in New Jersey.

In contrast, Gonzalez has aspirations to become a superintendent, as she just completed her doctorate in educational leadership two years ago. Emily Gonzalez, a Hispanic female, had been in West Park for 29 years and had served as the principal of South Street School for three years. Prior to that, she was the vice principal at South Street School for one year and vice-principal at another school for one year. She began her career in West Park as a bilingual teacher even though she did not have bilingual certification at the time. Hired under a provisional license, Gonzalez received her master's degree and certification in bilingual education, financed by the district. As a bilingual teacher for twenty years, she primarily taught Grades One through Four, but

ended her teaching career as a second grade bilingual teacher. During that time, she witnessed the evolution of the current transitional model since she worked with four different bilingual supervisors over the course of her career.

As a recent doctoral student she was sympathetic to the research. She was extremely cooperative and open to the interviews and forthcoming in providing other documentation. She always cleared her calendar and asked her secretary to hold all calls during the scheduled interviews. During visits to the school, the main office was a place of calm and solitude. Very few visitors filed through the office. Gonzalez's office was meticulous with no papers or books on her desk but shelves filled with binders and books and teddy bears.

Several additional stakeholders were interviewed in order to gain their perspectives of the district practices in relation to the English learners in their schools. The district bilingual director shared her perspective on the collaboration among the district supervisors and between the principals and the bilingual department. Dr. Townson had been the director for the last ten years. She is a Latina with a background in second language acquisition and experiences that span Kindergarten through Adult Education.

The vice principals' perceptions were invaluable in triangulating data on shared leadership and parental involvement. Throughout the data collection, the director and principals consistently mentioned other key personnel. Therefore, a snowball sampling was used to identify appropriate additional participants. Principals, vice-principals and the bilingual director referenced the importance of the Central Intake Center where four bilingual resource specialists processed all of the new entrants, which numbered 600

during the year of the study. Therefore, one of the four bilingual resource specialists was interviewed to gain her point of view on the collaboration with building principals. In addition, principals praised the literacy coaching model established by the Language Arts supervisor. The district employed a district-wide bilingual literacy coach in addition to a building-based literacy coach in each school. The interview with the bilingual literacy coach, who worked closely with the principals, offered a perspective of the linkages between the bilingual department and the Language Arts Literacy program.

Last but not least, each school had a specialty area. North Street School had an extensive well-developed home school partnership. Jones consistently referred to the home/school liaison as an integral member of the staff. As a result, Ms. Parker's interview illuminated the comprehensive parental involvement program instituted at North Street School. South Street School, on the other hand, was one of two schools piloting a dual language program in grades kindergarten and first grade. Gonzalez proudly praised the dual language teachers and was pleased with the interim results. Interviews with the dual language kindergarten teacher and a bilingual first grade teacher invaluable informed this study about the critical importance of principal support. The principals recommended these teachers since one taught in the specialized dual language program and the other was a bilingual teacher who could provide insight from the classroom perspective.

In June of 2010, Gonzalez was appointed principal of one of the middle schools and Grace Vasquez, the vice-principal became the interim principal. Gonzalez completed the three interviews before she left. However, the interview with Vasquez, Mrs. Oveido, the bilingual teacher, and Mrs. Arias, the dual

language teacher, occurred while Vasquez was serving as the interim principal.

She was subsequently appointed as the principal of South Street School.

The interviewees consented to participate in the study after a discussion of the purpose of the study, the benefits, risks and the amount of time needed. (Cresswell, 1990) (Appendix C). Each participant understood that his or her identity and setting would remain confidential. Guiding interview questions were developed prior to the interviews to ensure consistency and provided a framework for data collection. Participants were provided the focus questions in advance of the interview.

Data Collection

In adherence to the case study design, multiple data sources were employed. In this way, the widest array of data collection provided a rich description of the leaders' beliefs and practices (Cresswell, 1998). As Patton (2002) noted, "Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no one single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective" ... in this way, "the fieldworker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross-check findings" (p. 244).

Yin (2003) cited six forms of data collection useful for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts. For the purpose of this study, the following sources were used: interviews from school and district staff in multiple roles with multiple perspectives; direct observations of principals' and vice principals' interactions with parents and staff; direct observations of staff, grade level, school leadership council and parent meetings; and a review of relevant documents relating to the district bilingual program and the instructional leadership and practices of the identified principals. Cresswell (1998) recommended the use of a matrix to display the information sources to convey the depth and complexity of

the data collection. Following that recommendation, Table 4 provided an overview of what was collected, who was interviewed and observed and when these events occurred. Each component of the data collection is described in the subsequent sections.

The large gap in data collection from June to January occurred due to the appointments of Gonzalez as principal of a middle school and Vasquez as interim principal of South Street School. With the transition, access to Vasquez was initially difficult to obtain. By January, when Vasquez had settled into her position, she became available for an interview. Since three interviews had been completed with Gonzalez as principal of South Street School, Vasquez completed the interview as the vice-principal, her previous title. Subsequently, the teachers at South Street School were not interviewed until that time, as well.

Interviews

As Cresswell (1998) noted, interviewing is central to a case study design. However, as many researchers have stated, the quality of the information gathered during an interview depends on the interviewer (Patton, 1990; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Seidman, 1998). Since the purpose of interviewing was to access another person's perspective with the assumption that his/her perspective is "meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (Patton, 1990, p. 278), it is critical that the interviewer be a good listener and develop a rapport with the interviewee.

For this study, the standardized focused interview approach was used since it built credibility, focused the interviewee, allowed for respectful use of the interviewee's time,

	Interviews	Observations	Review of documents
Feb.	First interview with principal from each school	Direct observations of interactions with parents and staff at each school. Participant observation of SLC meeting at South Street School. Direct observation of interactions with parents and staff in the main office at South Street School.	Memos, notices to parents, from each school. Agenda
March		Participant observation of staff and grade level meetings at South Street School. Direct observations of interactions with parents and staff at South Street School.	Agenda
April	Second interview with Gonzalez (South Street). Interview with Fina, district bilingual literacy coach. Interview with Parker, North Street home/school liaison	Participant observation of a staff, SLC and Technology subcommittee meetings at North Street School. Direct observations of interactions with parents and staff at each school. Tour of North Street School with Jimenez, vice principal.	Agenda, minutes
May	Third interview with Gonzalez (South Street). Interview with Jimenez, vice principal of North Street School.	Participant observation of grade level meetings at North Street School Direct observations of interactions with parents and staff at each school.	Collect memos and other artifacts from each school, i.e. letters to parents, flyers, and notices.
June	Second and third interviews with Jones (North Street). Interview with Townson, bilingual director Interview with Rosen, bilingual resource specialist		Bilingual handbook Data analysis of current and former bilingual students completed by Townson and staff
Jan.	Interviews with Vazquez, vice-principal/interim principal (South Street), Arias, dual language teacher, Oveido, bilingual teacher. Member check to verify data collection with each principal		

Table 4. Data Collection Calendar and Matrix

and facilitated data analysis (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003). Each principal participated in three standardized focused one-on-one interviews using interview protocols each time (Appendix D). The interview protocols were adapted from self-assessment questionnaires developed by Smiley and Salsberry (2007) based on research on effective bilingual programs. A focus group of two principals and an ESL supervisor from another identified model program (not included in the study) vetted the adapted interview questions. The focus group met for three hours and reviewed the proposed questions. The group validated the types of interview questions posed and clarified any ambiguous wording of questions.

Seidman (1998) recommended a three-interview series with specific intervals between interviews and specific purposes for each. However, variations in spacing and process existed. The three-interview series followed a focused format which integrated Seidman's recommendations of a focused life history, details of experience, and reflection on the research on effective bilingual programs. The three interviews with each principal spanned different time frames due to the reappointment of Gonzalez and a minor illness that Jones experienced. The first interview for each principal, however, occurred on the same day. Each principal shared her journey to becoming a principal of a school with a bilingual program. The first interview also explored the principal's vision and advocacy efforts on behalf of English learners. Specific questions probed the principal's perspective on her role in the implementation of the bilingual program as well as why the district was selected as a model program. It was also an opportunity to establish rapport and to build trust.

The second interview focused on the details of what each principal did in relation to the instructional program and professional development opportunities. The second interview with Gonzalez occurred four weeks after the initial interview while, for Jones, it occurred six months later due to an injury she incurred with her eye which caused her to miss school during this time. Gonzalez's third interview occurred six weeks after the second interview while Jones' third interview occurred two weeks after the second meeting. The third interview provided an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. The final interview was conducted and served as a member check to verify the data collected after the observations of staff, school leadership council and grade level meetings and interviews with other participants. Each principal was offered a draft of her case description to review as an opportunity to provide feedback. This practice developed the credibility of the study and also provided an opportunity for the principal to reflect on the meaning of her experience (Cresswell & Miller, 2000; Seidman, 1998).

An open-ended protocol for the interviews with other stakeholders was developed based on the research questions to ascertain their perspectives on the contextual factors which influenced the principal's practices (Appendix E). The district bilingual director, the vice-principal of each school, a bilingual resource specialist, the bilingual literacy coach, North Street School's home/school liaison and a bilingual and a dual language teacher were interviewed. The teachers were selected by nomination from the principal and vice-principal. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes and occurred in the principal's office or the conference room. The interviews were tape-recorded with two devices and transcribed within one week to the date of the interview. Some information

was recorded manually with a Livescribe pen in a specialized notebook in the event that the audio equipment malfunctioned (Cresswell, 1998).

Observations.

Observation is an essential part of the data collection process in a case study design (Cresswell, 1998). Merriam (1998) advised that the observation sessions be purposeful, planned, systematic and credible. I directly observed the interactions between the principal and other stakeholders while waiting in the main office in-between the interviews and on the days that the staff or grade level meetings were held. In this way, I observed typical practices and interactions. Observations of faculty meetings, grade level meetings and School Leadership council meetings also occurred during this time period. I obtained a first-hand account by capturing the principal's instructional leadership practices in everyday situations (Merriam, 1998).

An observational protocol was used during each observation session that focused on types and themes of interactions with staff, students and parents (Appendix F). A field note journal was used to jot down both descriptive details and reflective notes (Cresswell, 1998). Field notes were transcribed within two weeks after each session. When taking field notes by hand, notes were written on one side of the page with available space on the other side for observer comments and/or reflections and/or memos. A *livescribe* pen was used which allowed for the backup audio-taping as well as the ability to save the notes on the computer. Reading through the day's notes after completing the observation clarified and expanded notes. This process also revealed gaps in information and provided the focus for follow up questions. The data review concentrated on the various roles that the stakeholders played as identified in the conceptual framework.

Review of documents.

The third strategy used to collect data was a review of pertinent documents. These documents included public records, such as the *NJ School Report Card*, and district website information; memos to staff and colleagues; professional development agendas; staff meeting agendas; site-based management team minutes, letters and flyers to parents, newsletters, parent handbook, and policies that related to the contextual factors which impacted the implementation of the bilingual program during the time period of the study. After an initial meeting with each principal, both agreed to create a folder where all relevant documents were placed.

Documents included a broad range of materials. Marshall and Rossman (1999) recommended that this document collection be guided by the research questions, educated guesses, and emerging findings. Once relevant documents were identified, their authenticity and accuracy were verified through interview questions and triangulation of other document information (Burgess, 1982; cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Data Handling and Storage

Cresswell (1998) stressed the importance of developing a system to handle and store the data carefully. The following steps were followed:

- Backup copies of computer files were developed and placed on a dedicated back up drive.
- Two high quality digital recorders were used in case of a malfunction.
- A master list of information to be collected was created and the information was tracked over time.
- Pseudonyms were used to protect anonymity of participants.

- The data collection matrix was expanded as new data were added so that information could be located easily.
- All field notes and interviews were transcribed within one week after the collection period.

Role of the Researcher

The most salient issue when looking at relationships between researchers and participants is power (Meara & Schmidt, 1991). I was a district bilingual supervisor in a district which had a model bilingual program that was not a part of the study. I served on the state selection committee for Model Programs during the 2004-2006 selections. However, I did not visit the site selected for this study, nor did I know the principals of the selected schools. There was some familiarity with the district supervisor since we had been colleagues on various state committees. Since we had a collegial, equitable relationship there were no issues of power or hierarchy. With other participants, there was no conflict in terms of familiarity, power and hierarchy.

As a district supervisor, I had the opportunity to work with other district supervisors and principals across the experience and leadership style spectrum. Thus, I was interested in learning about which contextual factors influenced the systemic practices of district personnel and school leaders. In this way, this study contributed to the knowledge of the salient contextual factors which shaped district and school practices in model program schools in New Jersey.

Data Analysis

Since data analysis is the process of bringing structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data, a cohesive plan was designed and implemented

(Marshall & Rossman, 1999). For a case study design, analysis consisted of first writing a rich description of the cases and their settings (Cresswell, 1999) and then completing the analysis and interpretation (Stake, 1995, cited in Cresswell, 1998).

Miles and Huberman's (1994) model concisely categorized data analysis as three levels of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion-drawing/verification. After transcribing the field notes and reading and re-reading them, data reduction began by orienting and focusing the information through the use of the conceptual framework. The first coding process utilized the categories from the contextual factors which influenced the practices of district personnel, the school leaders and teachers (e.g., home/school relationship, curriculum/instruction, etc.) and the research questions.

After the initial data reduction, analysis continued by displaying the collected information for each school and the bilingual department through descriptive and explanatory categories on a Microsoft Excel file (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Display of the data encouraged further reduction and re-coding of themes. Coding of transcripts, field notes and summaries of documents was done manually on the *Microsoft Excel* file. A second display used the same categories and triangulated the data from the interviews, observations and document reviews across all settings. As patterns emerged, conclusions and connections were constructed.

Just as data reduction was ongoing, so was conclusion-drawing and verification. Miles and Huberman (1994) identified twelve verification tactics. As data was being collected, some analysis and conclusions were made. The following tactics were used before the report was written to prove trustworthiness and credibility: triangulation

among the three data sources; using member checks in the final interviews to obtain the principals' perspectives on the case descriptions and checking for researcher effects.

Researcher effects fall into two categories: the effects of the researcher on the case and the effects of the case on the researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To minimize researcher effects on the case, I was initially introduced to the staff at the first staff meeting and at every other team or school leadership council meeting so all participants were aware of my purpose in attending. For the most part, I sat in the back of the room or on the side to be as unobtrusive as possible. At North Street School, I often waited in the main office between interviews or meetings while in South Street School, I remained in a conference room while the principals summoned the other interviewees. Even though the vice principal at South Street School seemed uncomfortable, since she was new to the interim principal role, she still met with me and allowed access to a teacher whom she knew would be critical of her lack of support of the dual language program. I found the bilingual director to also be forthright in her answers by providing me honest insight about the program.

To address the effects of the case on the researcher, I followed the guidelines provide by Miles and Huberman (1994). I obtained information from "high and low status informants" since I interviewed the bilingual district supervisor and a bilingual teacher (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 266). Due to life circumstances (re-assignment of principal and principal illness), I unfortunately spent much time away from the site. In addition, the bilingual resource specialist was an informant with a different point of view and did not always paint the same picture as the principals. Finally, triangulation of data

better informed the analysis and sharing data with my advisor highlighted the new information which changed the focus of my research question.

Limitations

There were several limitations with the various strategies. Participant observation as a data-gathering technique has been described by some as highly subjective, thus unreliable (Merriam, 1998). Patton (2001) recommended that researchers become skilled observers and interviewers by training in the field to increase the reliability of their observations. A limitation of document analysis was the dependence on the interpretation of the documents by the researcher. Therefore, a pilot study within the district where I was supervisor was completed in 2007 to address some of these limitations by honing my observation and interviewer skills. From a methodological perspective, the pilot study informed me about the importance of having back up technology as the tape player on the first interview stopped functioning and all the data were lost. The pilot study also helped to better frame the interview questions to elicit the information needed to answer my questions about principal beliefs and practices.

Examining only one district was also a limitation of the study. However, there was a limited pool of candidates from the seven model programs selected by the State Department of Education. Only three of the seven programs had a transitional bilingual program design. The other schools were ESL-only programs.

Significance of Study

As the population of English learners increases and the requirements and sanctions of federal policy become more punitive, district and school administrators must examine the research for ways to address these concerns. Much has been written about

effective schools and whole school reform, in general, and the roles that principals play in this process, specifically. However, little has been done in the area of the contextual factors which influence the implementation of a model bilingual education program. This study investigated the systemic process that impacts the programs for English learners and how the levels of the system can function cohesively and comprehensively to affect student outcomes. Some of the factors explored include: the knowledge that principals have about second language acquisition and the practices they implemented in relation to that knowledge; program designs; curriculum and instruction; the allocation of resources; and the home/school connection.

The interactions among the various levels of leadership, the adoption of district-wide practices inclusive of English learners, the structural relationships in the district and the district-wide professional development initiatives informed successful outcomes. These findings can inform pre-service and in-service workshops for school leaders and teachers. Since districts face the daunting mission of educating the English learners in the 21st century, communication, preparation and knowledge were key components for success in meeting this unique challenge.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND THE BILINGUAL OFFICE

Overview of West Park Community

In an effort to respond to the expectations of NCLB, the district's leadership has made many efforts to address the needs of the student and community population. With a high percentage of English learners, a closer look at other contextual factors which influenced the district and school leaders at two of the elementary schools offered insight into how district initiatives translated to the school level in regards to the bilingual program. The development of a pilot dual language program in one of the early childhood centers is representative of the district response to the community's cultural and linguistic needs. Therefore, descriptions of the district context inclusive of the district bilingual department and early childhood program as well as the community and each school's context are presented in this chapter.

Demographics.

West Park is an historic 4.5 square mile municipality located in Central New Jersey with approximately 50,000 residents. Over the years, West Park has served as a portal for various immigrant groups: Irish, Polish, Italian, Cuban and Puerto Rican. Currently the majority of immigrants are Spanish-speakers who originated from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. However, Spanish speakers from over 20 other countries were also identified in the American Community Survey (US Census, 2010). Many second and third generation families from the former immigrant populations have remained in West Park, which accounts for the high Latino population.

The city population was over 58% white, approximately 9% black, and 1% Asian. Close to thirty percent of the population identified themselves as “some other race” while over 76% of the population identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race (US Census, 2010). The majority of city residents (70%) were over the age of 18. Thirty six percent (36%) of the adult population were foreign born. A substantial percentage (79%) of the school-age population spoke another language other than English at home.

Education and economics.

According to the American Community Survey, 32% of the West Park population over 25 years of age had less than a high school diploma while 35% had graduated from high school (US Census, 2010). Nineteen percent (19%) of the over 25 population had some college or an associate’s degree while only 13% of the over 25 population held at least a bachelor’s degree or higher. Economically, the average median family income was \$52,000 with 14% of families below the poverty level; there was an unemployment rate of 7% (US Census, 2010). A majority of housing units are renter-occupied (61%) with only 39% of homes occupied by the owner. Educational background and economic status of families in West Park have shaped the West Park Public School District.

The West Park Public School District

The West Park Public School District is a public school system, formerly identified as an *Abbott* district. In New Jersey, 31 districts had once been identified as *Abbott* districts. These districts were classified as a result of thirty years of controversial litigation and thirteen decisions by the New Jersey Supreme Court (Librera, 2005). In 1990, the Court found that the school funding formula was unconstitutional for poorer, urban districts because they did not provide the level of funding that wealthier districts

provided. Therefore, the court required the state to fully fund these districts at a rate equivalent to the cost per child provided by wealthier districts in the state. Eventually, as a result of this litigation, districts such as West Park received a considerable increase in state funding. In addition, districts were classified into District Factor Groups (DFG) based on the following six US census data factors: the percentage of each district's population with no high school diploma; the percentage with some college education; the poverty level; the unemployment rate of the district; as well as the residents' occupations and income. Each group consists of districts with similar factor scores. Districts are assigned ratings from A-J with I and J districts scoring highest on the socioeconomic scale (SES) and districts with A and B designations falling on the lower end of the SES scale. Thus, using the aforementioned census data, West Park received a District Factor Group rating of A placing it at the lowest end of the spectrum.

No Child Left Behind

The NCLB Act (2002) has had a significant impact on all districts and communities since school districts were categorized based on the achievement of the total student population, as well as the achievement of subgroups such as English learners and economically disadvantaged. Under NCLB regulations, West Park was initially identified as a “district in need of improvement.” School districts are evaluated annually on whether or not the students tested in each grade span within the district attained the necessary proficiency levels to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Districts that miss AYP for two consecutive years in all grade spans, in either Language Arts Literacy or Math, are identified as “Districts in Need of Improvement” (NJDOE, 2005). As of 2009, West Park had achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years district-wide

and subsequently changed its status and has maintained a passing grade as a district for the past two years (NJ School Report Card, 2010).

Model Program

Since West Park instituted a district-wide bilingual program, they were able to implement a quintessential model of the transitional bilingual approach. Multiple perspectives identified the reasons why the NJDOE selected the West Park program as one of the models for the state of New Jersey.

Several stakeholders asserted that success on NCLB accountability measures contributed to why West Park's bilingual program was selected as a model program by the NJDOE. Inexplicably, no one at the district bilingual office mentioned the fact that the English learners in West Park have scored well on the standardized tests, especially when compared to the general education students in grades four, five and seven. However, both principals, Jones and Gonzalez, noted this accomplishment as their first reason why West Park had model program status.

Dr. Joan Townson, bilingual director, and the bilingual district staff disaggregated the data to focus solely on former English learners. The data analysis of the 2009 scores uncovered interesting results. First, former English learners (those who exited the program within the last two years) performed better than general program students in grades four and five on the state assessment, NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK), in Language Arts. In grade four, sixty-seven percent (67%) of former English learners scored at or above proficiency while only fifty percent (50%) of general program students did the same. In grade five, similar results were noted: sixty percent (60%) of former English learners as opposed to fifty-one percent (51%) of general program

students scored at or above the proficient level on the state assessment for Language Arts Literacy. On the NJASK Math, grade five and seven former English learners also had higher rates of proficiency than general program students (grade five: 80% vs. 68%; grade seven- 52% vs. 46%). Finally, one hundred percent (100%) of the former English learners were proficient or above on the grade four NJASK Science as compared to eighty-nine percent (89%) of general program students. Townson noted that when the scores of the former English learners were aggregated with the scores of the general education students, the overall district score increased at these grade levels.

In addition, the staff reviewed the results of the whole ELL subgroup (current and former English learners) in both Language Arts and Math in grades three through eight and grade eleven. Table 5 demonstrated a comparison of AYP achievement between the schools and their respective ELL (current and former ELLs) subgroup for the spring of 2009. Amazingly, all ELL subgroups, with the exception of grade five in Math at one of the middle schools, either made AYP or “Safe Harbor,” a designation by the federal government that a district demonstrated expected progress within a subject area.

Even though bilingual district staff did not mention these data when asked about model program status, the results certainly demonstrated the positive achievements of the English learners in West Park. Townson had definitely succeeded in transmitting this accomplishment to school based leadership as this was their first response when asked about the district’s model program selection. Principals of both schools emphasized the fact that the English learners’ subgroup made AYP.

School	School Made AYP		ELL subgroup made AYP		School made safe harbor		ELL subgroup made safe harbor	
	LA	Math	LA	Math	LA	Math	LA	Math
High School	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
#1 Middle Grade 5 Grades 6-8	YES NO	NO NO	NO NO	NO NO	 NO	NO NO	YES YES	NO YES
#2 Middle Grade 5 Grades 6-8	YES NO	YES NO	* NO	* NO	* NO	* NO	* YES	* YES
North St Grades 3-4	NO	YES	YES	YES				
South St Grades 3-4	NO	YES	YES	YES				
West Street Grades 3-4	NO	YES	YES	YES				
Central Grades 3-4	YES	YES	YES	YES				
East Street Grades 3-4	YES	YES	*	*				

Table 5. Comparison of schools and EL subgroup of AYP achievement, Spring 2009.

* Less than 30 in the subgroup so not reported

Other factors for the model program selection also emerged. Townson believed that the gradual and systematic design of the transition from Spanish to English was a critical factor while June Rosen, bilingual resource specialist, and Luz Martinez, bilingual home/school liaison, believed that having key people in key positions contributed to the designation as a model program. Several interviewees identified a general appreciation of

the students' culture and background and the overall understanding that a child learns a language with time as other considerations for selection as a model program. In addition, the district recognized that not all students arrived with grade level skills in their first language and thus, developed a special program, *Viaje*, which is described in detail in this chapter. Others identified the equity and equality that was observed throughout the district as a reason for the selection.

Townson, Rosen and Vasquez, vice principal at South Street School, sensed that the Central Intake Center was a central feature of their model program status. Townson pointed out that the Central Intake Center was staffed by expert bilingual assessors with vast experience in the field of bilingual education. Since the bilingual resource specialists had a global outlook on the whole program, they were better positioned to make decisions on the proper placement of new incoming students.

Members from the model program committee also commented on the coordination and integration of the bilingual program into the whole school community, unlike places Laura Fina, bilingual literacy coach, had visited where the bilingual classes operated separately from the rest of the school. Fina also highlighted the communication among district supervisors and the support from the building and department administration as exemplary.

Oveido, a first grade bilingual teacher, lived in the community with her husband who was a bilingual science teacher at the high school. They reveled in witnessing the transformation of the bilingual children as they progressed over the years. The children began with her in the bilingual first grade but by the time they arrived at high school they were in the general program and applying to college. She expressed great satisfaction

when they were able to celebrate the end “product.” Oveido summarized the feelings of pride about the bilingual program in West Park.

Every activity is bilingual here. I don’t feel separate. I feel integrated. I cannot say anything negative. We receive help from the principal, vice principal and bilingual director. We care about our kids. It’s like a triangle for communication: school, home, community. Everything is integrated. ... from the administration to the teacher... we are proud of our program.

Last, but not least, Fina and Rosen mentioned the articulation and partnership between bilingual, classroom and ESL teachers. Teachers shared the responsibility for meeting the World-Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency standards and NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS). Accordingly, the individuals closely involved with the bilingual program identified the key components to their success.

District Organization

The West Park Public School District educated over 10,000 students from an ethnically diverse population. It operated three early childhood centers for 3 and 4 year olds, five elementary schools (grades K-4), two middle schools (grades 5-8), one comprehensive high school (grades 9-12) and one of the few remaining accredited adult high schools. The student population in West Park was predominantly Spanish-speaking (65%). The Board of Education building was located in the center of the city in the old high school building. Central administration consisted of a Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning.

District context.

Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) identified several important district practices that comprehensively supported school improvement. Over the past decade, school officials at West Park made deliberate attempts to implement and coordinate many of those practices which included: strong instructional leadership, a focus on achievement, consistency of instruction, district-guided curriculum, aligned assessments, frequent monitoring and use of data and cohesive professional development. District supervisors first reviewed and revised the curriculum and ensured that all students had access to the grade appropriate NJCCCS. Next, these district content leaders researched best practices and provided training and support for teachers in these initiatives through the adoption of a coaching model. Initiatives adopted during this time period consisted of: balanced literacy, writing workshop, calendar math and implementation of new textbook materials in Language Arts Literacy, Science and Math.

At the same time, quarterly benchmark assessments were developed and administered in all core content areas in grades K-12. Finally, this past year the district incorporated a data management program, *Performance Matters*, where the benchmark assessments were recorded in a timely manner. This process allowed teachers and principals to review student performance both individually and as a class. Simultaneously, teachers received training on how to analyze the data so they could differentiate instruction to better meet the needs of their students.

Since the bilingual program was the focus of this study, a closer examination of how the general district practices specifically affected the bilingual program was completed.

Infrastructure.

The district infrastructure itself promoted communication and collegiality among administrators through monthly district supervisors' meetings and monthly principals' and supervisors' meetings (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). Waters and Marzano (2006) identified certain district responsibilities that were correlated to student achievement. A collaborative goal setting process, which resulted in a set of consistent objectives for achievement and instruction, was one of those tasks. An example of this process occurred at administrative team meetings. As a first step to implementing a new initiative, supervisors shared their ideas and obtained feedback from the principals. Once they heard their comments, the initiative may or may not move forward. These opportunities for articulation created an atmosphere of mutual respect. Townson, bilingual director, confidently stated that principals would not discuss the intricacies of bilingual education unless she was present at the meeting to address their concerns. According to Jones and Gonzalez, they regularly conferred with Townson if they had a question about placement of a bilingual student or a question about the program.

Curriculum.

The curricula at all levels of the bilingual classes aligned with general education curricula as a result of NCLB legislation. Rivers realized that bilingual students and students with special needs did not have access to all of the NJ Core Curriculum Content standards. As a district, the content level supervisors and the bilingual director began an initiative to ensure that all students had access to the standards. Oveido, the bilingual teacher reported that the bilingual teachers had expressed their concerns about the different materials they had and how they always felt shortchanged to the Language Arts

Literacy supervisor. For these reasons, all district programs were now the same across all disciplines and programs. The language of instruction was the only difference. In fact, district-based decisions on textbook adoption evolved over the years to the point where the district did not consider any textbook that did not have a Spanish edition.

Consequently, the literacy program, *Storytown*, mirrored the English version with guided reading libraries in English and Spanish while Houghton Mifflin Math and Science/Ciencias also supplied Spanish editions inclusive of supplemental materials.

Progress monitoring.

Since the district instituted quarterly benchmark assessments, all bilingual students also took the same assessments. These district created assessments were translated so bilingual teachers could determine progress towards mastery of content standards. At times, though, bilingual teachers had to design their own questions to address various skills which did not translate directly. Once the benchmark scores were tabulated, the bilingual specialists and bilingual and ESL teachers carefully reviewed and analyzed the results.

Professional development.

A district perspective allowed for continuing teacher education to occur through several pathways: school-based sessions, in-service days, after school meetings and programs offered by local universities. Bilingual and ESL teachers attended the school-based sessions provided by their respective principals in addition to district-wide content-based offerings. Some bilingual teachers participated in Master of Arts degree program in mathematics offered by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Effective professional development opportunities for teachers who worked with English learners were essential (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006). Townson, the bilingual director, planned and offered workshops on in-service days for district bilingual staff. Last year, Dr. Margarita Calderon, a national expert on struggling adolescent English learners, addressed bilingual and ESL teachers. In collaboration with Dr. Rivers, Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Educational Services, Townson also organized sheltered instruction training for general education teachers who worked with English learners. In addition, Townson and other district personnel presented workshops on transitioning from Spanish to English. Annually, the bilingual specialists reviewed the administration of ACCESS for ELLs®, the state-adopted annual assessment which measured growth in English language proficiency and monitored readiness to exit the program.

Peer visitations to colleagues' classes were also offered and, at times, suggested. When Townson observed a teacher with a particular need, she recommended that she observe a peer who had mastered that practice. Since Townson observed the bilingual teachers throughout the district she knew who had expertise in certain areas.

The district context played a major role in the success of the bilingual program (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2006). The district leadership developed a system of support through a core group of knowledgeable instructional supervisory leaders. These leaders purposefully implemented and coordinated new initiatives with a focus on achievement for all students. In this way, they built capacity for consistency of instruction and common goals across programs. The infrastructure supported alignment, integration and shared pedagogy. These factors contributed to the establishment of a district-wide

bilingual program which was aligned with general programs yet still addressed the specific needs of English learners.

District bilingual office.

The knowledge of high quality instruction by the district administrators and the tradition of supporting teaching and learning in the classroom have a major impact on the success of programs (Honig et al., 2010). Both principals of the focus schools and other staff members identified the district bilingual staff as “key people in key positions.” As advocates and resources, they provided essential services for new entrants as well as for teachers and administrators throughout the district.

Organization.

The district bilingual office was located on the third floor of the Board of Education building, which at one time served as the district’s high school. Bilingual director, Joan Townson, and bilingual supervisor, Susan Monk, managed the implementation of the district-wide program of over 2,000 English learners and 120 bilingual and ESL teachers. West Park had established a centralized intake center where four bilingual resource specialists were responsible for specific grade level clusters: pre K – grade one; grades two - four; grades five - eight; and Grades nine - twelve. Laura Fina, the bilingual literacy coach, Luz Martinez, bilingual home school liaison and two bilingual secretaries completed the district department personnel.

The responsibilities of the director and supervisor reflected the findings of Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) of elements which supported system-wide improvement. Townson and Monk ensured that the bilingual curriculum aligned with the general program curriculum. In addition, they analyzed all district data related to English learners

as well as supervised and monitored instruction provided by the bilingual and ESL teachers. Articulation occurred through their participation on all district committees and subsequent communication between grade level teachers and principals of the various schools. Both planned and monitored professional development while Townson managed the Title III federal grant which involved after-school, summer and Saturday programs. Together, they ensured that documents were translated and parents were informed about involvement opportunities. In addition they continuously informed the community about the efficacy of the bilingual program. Finally, Townson served as the liaison between West Park and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) in any matter related to English learners, such as: assessment, instruction, Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA) reviews, and quality assurance reviews. School principals shared the responsibilities of classroom walkthroughs, observations, parental involvement programs and monitoring instruction.

Townson continuously provided information about the program to all stakeholders: central administration, principal and other administrators, staff, parents and community members through memos, newsletters and articulation at district administrators' meetings. She found that simply because people had been in the district for some time, they were not always cognizant of the issues regarding bilingual education.

The bilingual resource specialists, who were experienced bilingual teachers in their respective grade level cluster, conducted the initial assessment when children arrived in the district. June Rosen, one of the resource specialists, also held certification as a Learning Disabilities Consultant which was invaluable when discussions ensued

about language difference versus language disorder. In addition to their responsibilities at the Intake Center, the resource specialists served as liaisons between their grade level teachers and the bilingual central office by providing guidance and assistance with data analysis, progress monitoring and recommendations for placement at the correct level. Even though principals had input on placement, in actuality, the resource specialists and bilingual teachers evaluated each student's results on their report card, ACCESS for ELLs® test and the length of time in program. At the beginning of the year, the specialists reviewed the ACCESS scores with the teachers and highlighted the areas to address in instruction throughout the year.

Fina, the lone bilingual literacy coach and a member of the district literacy team, functioned as the resource linkage between the Language Arts Literacy and bilingual departments. Through her work, bilingual teachers were trained and supported on the literacy initiatives implemented across the district. Fina facilitated and supported the bilingual teachers by modeling techniques and strategies, translating needed literacy materials, completing benchmark assessments and articulating the teachers' needs to district supervisors. In addition, she organized and led a *Parents as Partners* Book Club at North Street School. Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) noted that resources that connect central office and schools not only enhanced communication but also reinforced consistency in practices.

One of the school-level reform efforts that results in improved achievement is the development of initiatives to involve parents in productive ways (Datnow, et al., 2005). West Park had home/school liaisons in each building as well as a district bilingual home/school liaison who supported the bilingual program in many crucial ways. When

parents completed the registration process, Martinez met with them to explain the different cultural expectations of parents in US schools. She also assisted teachers and principals by communicating with parents either by phone or through home visits, when needed. In conjunction with the school-based liaisons, she conducted parent workshops. If parents had any medical or social service needs, she connected them to the proper agency. At other times, she secured additional documentation, obtained parent signatures or supplied bus passes. Not only were the practices of district bilingual personnel integral to the successful implementation of the bilingual program design, but Townson found that having the district based perspective contributed to efficiency and ultimately, to student achievement.

District-based perspective.

The advantage of having a district perspective is that... there is a philosophical integrity to the [bilingual] program. My background is in bilingual education, linguistics and second language acquisition...My staff are people who are also experts in the field.

By allowing us to have a district based program, we are able to maintain that integrity. Joan Townson, bilingual education director.

Having a district bilingual supervisor who is knowledgeable in the field has been one of the salient features identified in the selected model bilingual programs (personal communication, Raquel Sinai, 2010). This quote best exemplified why having a knowledgeable supervisor was a prerequisite for developing an effective program.

The impact of having a district-based program was one of the recurring themes throughout all of the interviews. Each interviewee at some point in time discussed the

positive effect of having a district perspective. As Townson noted, it began with a central administration that understood the importance of bilingual education. Rosen acknowledged that this philosophical integrity started at the top with a director who believed in and truly understood bilingual education. A “ripple effect” then permeated throughout the district with principal buy-in and support for the director and the teachers. According to Fina, a culture existed throughout the district where mutual respect of different expertise was evident. When principals had questions about the program, they called the bilingual central office.

Efficiency.

Townson stressed that a district-based program was more effective because she could easily assign or reassign resources where they were needed (August & Hakuta, 1997). As an example of this, she described a scenario which had occurred this past year. A great influx of *Viaje* students in the middle school arrived at the beginning of the year. The enrollment of one class reached 21 (much larger than the intended 15) and the principal and teacher contacted the director to discuss some options. Since Townson understood the whole district picture, she realized she could combine a *Viaje* class with a Level One class in another school to release a teacher and create an additional class. Although combining *Viaje* students with Level One students was not the optimal solution; based on numbers, it was the most viable one. After discussing the situation with both principals and central administration, they all agreed to collapse one class and add another. If the bilingual program had been school-based, no one would advocate for moving teacher A to school B since principals were not usually willing to lose staff

members. Townson understood the principal's perspective but since the bilingual program was district-based she applied the needed resources.

Central intake center.

The central intake center promoted efficiency since all new potential candidates for the bilingual program were processed there. Even though 600 students passed through the intake center last year, they were assessed and appropriately placed in a timely manner under this procedure. Having the same team of specialists assess all newcomers contributed to efficiency and conformity of placement. Coordination of placement teams and consistency of evaluations would pose a problem if this process was delegated to the schools.

Last year when central administration discussed the possible disbanding of the central intake center due to budget cuts, one of the principals, a former bilingual teacher, spoke "passionately and eloquently" in defense of it. She reminded everyone of the chaos in the schools prior to the implementation of the intake center (imagine having to process 600 students throughout the schools). Having a principal support the center was very powerful.

The process began upon the parents' arrival at the Bilingual Office where they completed a Home Language Survey with the assistance of the bilingual secretary, home school liaison or a bilingual resource specialist. Once the survey was completed and if further screening was needed, one of the bilingual resource specialists administered a native language reading and math assessment to determine the child's ability in their first language. The child's English language proficiency was also assessed and reviewed by the specialist, who then made the recommendation for placement. The resource specialist

met with the parents to explain the placement. Sometimes they recommended that the child remain in the same grade due to the curriculum demands in the United States as compared to their native country. This meeting provided the opportunity for the resource specialist to explain the bilingual program in detail, especially if the child needed to be transported to another school or to attend a *Viaje* class. Parents better understood the process and usually did not object to the placement or transportation. If parents were receptive, Rosen provided parental tips of how to assist their child.

It's a very important interaction... A frequently used tip is if:
 ...'you're sitting there watching TV, ... have your child... retell
 [or] explain what took place or the sequence of the movie. That
 will actually get them prepared for what will be taught to them
 when they're reading, how to retell the main ideas and not tell
 every single aspect of the movie.' You know parents can't read
 sometimes, so it's something that they can do. If I see they can
 read then I tell them to read to their child a couple pages. ...I think
 it's very important. June Rosen, bilingual resource specialist.

Parents received a copy of the Parent Handbook (available in English and Spanish) and signed a letter indicating whether they accepted or declined services as required by NJAC 6A:15-1.13. Once parents accepted bilingual services, the bilingual home school liaison, Mrs. Martinez, contacted them to answer any additional questions and to collect pertinent background information. She also provided mini-lessons on cultural differences in the educational and legal systems between their home countries and the United States. The

central intake center not only ensured that a complete academic and social profile was compiled but it was also the first critical connection made with parents.

District bilingual specialists.

Having district-wide bilingual specialists, such as the resource teachers, the bilingual literacy coach and the bilingual home school liaison, emphasized the important linkages as well as the differentiation needed for this subgroup. When the Language Arts Literacy supervisor had a cross-curricular project, she utilized the “awesome articulation” process among the supervisors and principals first to inform them. Then the district literacy team consisting of all the literacy coaches, inclusive of the bilingual literacy coach, facilitated and supported the implementation of district literacy initiatives. Fina had the added responsibility of finding comparable materials in Spanish, when necessary. All coaches met bimonthly with the Language Arts Literacy supervisor to ensure communication and articulation throughout the district. The team of central office specialists worked directly with the principals and the teachers to ensure consistency of instructional pedagogy and availability of needed resources. The bilingual home/school liaison was aware of community events and programs happening in each school. She provided support and encouragement for parents to be involved. Since it was a district-based program, all stakeholders had to be knowledgeable about the unique bilingual design.

Bilingual program design in West Park.

For the past 25 years, West Park met the criteria established by the bilingual law in New Jersey (N.J.A.C. 6A:15) which established the conditions when districts must provide a bilingual education program in grades K -12. West Park had historically

implemented the transitional bilingual education model for Spanish speakers consistent with the definition of bilingual education described in the N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.2:

A full time transitional program of instruction in all those courses or subjects which a child is required by law or rule to receive, given in the native language of the LEP students enrolled in the program and also in English;...All students in bilingual education programs receive English as a second language (ESL) instruction.

Townson described the program in this way, “Students transition from their native language into English in a gradual and systematic way.” The transitional model most closely coincided with Stage Five of Churchill’s levels of policy responses: use the home language as a medium of instruction in the early years (cited in Carranza, 2010).

With the large number of English learners district-wide, it was more cost effective and educationally sound to create a district-based program rather than a school-based one. In this way, students were grouped according to levels of English language proficiency and a systematic, transitional program could be implemented. Resource specialists made every effort to place students in their neighborhood schools; however, the best class based on their English language proficiency might be in different school. The district provided transportation for those students from their neighborhood school to their new assignment.

West Park had bilingual classes at every grade level but the proficiency level classes were dispersed throughout the elementary schools. Since there were Level One bilingual kindergarten and first grade classes at every elementary school, in all likelihood, those students were able to attend their home school. Students in grades two and above,

though, were placed in a school according to their English proficiency level. Therefore, beginning level students with little or no English were placed in a Level One bilingual class at their appropriate grade level.

According to the Bilingual/ESL Parent Handbook bilingual classes in grades Kindergarten – Two were

designed to help the student acquire reading and writing skills in his dominant language in order to establish a firm foundation for the transfer of literacy skills to English. Students will learn how to read more easily in the language they speak and understand. In grades K-2, students learn how to read and write in their native language and gradually make a transition to English reading and writing by the end of grade 2. (Townson, 2008, p. 5)

In grades 3 -8, students were grouped into three English proficiency levels. Students at Level One received instruction primarily in Spanish in all content areas with an additional period of ESL to emphasize academic English vocabulary. Level Two students transitioned from native language to English whereby teachers began the year mostly in Spanish but as the year progressed gradually employed more English with the support of an ESL teacher. The ESL teacher began the year pulling students out for instruction but as the transition occurred, she would begin to push in during the Language Arts Literacy block. According to Townson, knowing when to transition was an art. No specific guidelines were available on how or when the transition occurred; however, Townson strongly discouraged simultaneous translation. So, variation existed as to which content areas were taught in English and/or the amount of time of English instruction

since teachers based their decisions on individual student needs. At one time, there was an arbitrary date of January 1st, when teachers were expected to transition totally into English. Many Level Two bilingual teachers resisted being “put in a box.” Therefore, Townson removed the arbitrary date for transitioning. Teachers now moved students into English when the children were ready. By Level Three, all instruction was in English with grade appropriate and supplemental materials. Bilingual teachers used the native language only for clarification and support while students continued to receive daily ESL instruction.

Viaje.

Another unique component of the West Park program was the development of *Viaje* classes at every grade level from second grade through high school. The Bilingual/ESL Parent Handbook described the *Viaje* classes as:

designed for students who are academically delayed because of limited formal schooling in their native countries. They are usually older than other students in the same grade and may be several years below grade level in reading and other academic skills. *Viaje* classes teach basic academic skills in Spanish in order to prepare students for age appropriate grade placement in the bilingual program. These children also receive one period of ESL a day.

(Townson, 2008, p. 6)

Master teachers taught these special classes designed to have only fifteen students so that teachers could begin to close the educational gaps. In this way, teachers provided intense interventions and individualized attention. Due to these factors and to the appropriate

placement by the bilingual resource specialists, Townson found that the *Viaje* students made significant progress in a year or two and began to recover from the educational interruption.

However, the implementation was not always smooth. At the middle school, the district adopted a policy for an accommodation on the report card for the *Viaje* students. Nonetheless, Townson still received inquiries from the principal and guidance counselor asking how to calculate the grade point average with those “grades.” Unfortunately, it was difficult to address all concerns when the specialized program did not fit neatly into the school system’s boxes.

Table 6 demonstrated the distribution of district bilingual classes for the elementary schools during the 2008-2009 school year. If students made the expected progress through the proficiency levels, they were usually able to remain in their home schools (with the exception of South Street School in grade two and East Street School in grade three). The newly arrived students in the upper grades were typically the students who had to travel away from their home school to another district school. Students who began in kindergarten were expected to exit by fourth grade while students who began in the preschool program were expected to exit in second grade.

Since the bilingual program was transitional, children usually began at Level One and progressed through Level Three before exiting the program. Previously, most kindergarteners were Spanish dominant and placed in bilingual classes. However, those numbers were dwindling since these children spent two preschool years mostly in English and consequently, no longer benefited from a literacy program predominantly in Spanish. The universal preschool program mandated for former *Abbott* districts was successfully

reaching 80% of the preschool population in West Park. However, the preschool design had an impact on the bilingual program design for the early grades as well as student achievement in later grades.

	North Street	South Street	East Street	Central	West Street
Kindergarten	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered 1 Dual	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered 2 Dual	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered
First Grade	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered 1 Dual	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered	1 Bilingual 1 Sheltered
Second Grade	<i>Viaje</i> Level 1 Level 2		Level 1 Level 2	Level 2	Level 2
Third grade	Level 2 Level 3	Level 3	Level 1	Level 2 Level 3	<i>Viaje</i> Level 1 Level 3
Fourth grade	Level 3	Level 3		<i>Viaje</i> Level 1 Level 2 Level 3	Level 2 Level 3

Table 6. Distribution of elementary bilingual classes.

When analyzing the third grade NJASK scores Townson found that former English learners did not fare well especially when compared to former English learners at higher grade levels. Only thirty-one percent (31%) of former English learners were proficient or above in NJASK Language Arts as compared to fifty-one (51%) of general program students. Similar results were found in NJASK Math with fifty-four (54%) of former English learners scoring proficient or above while seventy-five percent (75%) of general program students did so. Townson hypothesized that since these former third grade English learners exited in grades one or two and, most likely, participated in the preschool program, they did not benefit from the transitional bilingual process nor was academic English firmly acquired.

As one response to this situation, Townson established sheltered English kindergarten classes and subsequently first grade classes for the children who had developed some proficiency in English. General education teachers, who received training in using techniques appropriate for English learners, taught these classes entirely in English with support from an ESL teacher during the Language Arts Literacy block. However, one of the administrators in one of the early childhood center responded in a different way to these issues. She researched and requested permission to establish a dual language pilot program to address these concerns. A closer examination of early childhood education in West Park illuminates the dilemma.

Early childhood education.

The district-wide early childhood program differed from the K-12 program and caused concern about the transition from preschool to kindergarten; thus, re-shaping the bilingual program design and services in the early grades.

History.

Not only did the landmark New Jersey Supreme Court school-funding case, *Abbott v. Burke*, impact school funding, it also mandated early childhood education in the highest poverty districts in the state. Beginning in 1999, three- and four- year old children began to attend preschool education programs. When those classes were established in West Park, they initially followed the structure of the K-12 program, which consisted of bilingual preschool classes with ESL support. With the update of the *School Funding Reform Act of 2008* (P.L. 2007 c260, NJ 18A:7F-43-63, § 1-21) more details were written into code specific to English language learners. N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-5.1 stated:

The program and curriculum shall include, but need not be limited to the following: 1. Systematic support for language acquisition for all children, including approaches for helping English language learners acquire English while maintaining their home language within their regularly assigned preschool classroom; ...

To further support high quality programs and consistent implementation for children across the state, the *Abbott* Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines were developed (Frede, Jung, Barnett & Figueras, 2009). The above mentioned regulation and subsequent guidance seemed to support the implementation of bilingual classes; however, the guidelines were not mandated as K-12 education regulations are under N. J.A.C. 6A:15. Nor did districts have highly qualified bilingual preschool teachers to teach in all the classes.

About that time, as reported to Townson, the prevailing attitude in West Park was that children who were born in the United States should be speaking English and that young children are “sponges” and pick up the language easily. Since many of the preschool English learners had been born in the United States, board members and some community members questioned why they were teaching in Spanish in the preschool classrooms. Unfortunately, since districts were not compelled to follow the state guidelines, that sentiment within the community influenced the Board of Education and the previous superintendent to eliminate the bilingual preschool classes (although ESL support remained). Even though the majority of entering three-year olds spoke only Spanish, they were enrolled in a program with ESL support only and no formalized system to transition children from Spanish to English. Ultimately, this had a major impact

on the bilingual program design in kindergarten and first grade and on student achievement in later grades, particularly the aforementioned grade 3 NJASK scores.

Reviewing the process of how these changes occurred provided critical information for how the district responded to the linguistic and cultural needs of these students.

Early childhood program design.

Due to the NJDOE Preschool Implementation Guidelines (NJDOE, 2010), the program design at the early childhood centers did not follow the K-12 model. In 2010, the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) in the NJDOE revised the original Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines for the funded preschool programs. Although these revised procedures further addressed the needs of English Language Learners, or dual language learners as they are identified in this document, again, they were not considered mandates, only guidance.

Support for Home Language is Essential

Support for continued development of the home language is critical in the preschool years as it impacts the child's basic language foundation as well as content learning...educational programs should focus on first language development as well as English language acquisition. In fact, the support of the development of the home language has been shown to facilitate effective transfer of learning to English (August & Shanahan, 2006; Snow, 1998). This support is also important because the children's first language is intricately tied to their concept of self,

family, and home (Wong Fillmore, 1991). (as cited in NJDOE
Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines, 2010, p. 35)

These guiding principles strongly supported the importance of first language development, however, the next paragraph created an atmosphere whereby ESL support was virtually eliminated from the preschool level.

Support Should be Built into Classroom Activities and the Curriculum

Classroom support for children's language occurs best in the context of natural interactions and environments. Pull-out and push-in strategies are not appropriate for young children learning language. (NAEYC, 1995; Neuman, et al., 2000). (as cited in NJDOE Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines, 2010, p. 35)

To support the home language, many of the classes in West Park had Spanish-speaking paraprofessionals. But findings from studies on Social Competence and Resilience by Oades-Sese, Esquivel, Kaliski and Maniatis (2005, 2007, 2008 to present) indicated that Spanish and English were used for different functions. The teachers conducted instructional conversations in English while the paraprofessionals managed behavior in Spanish. This pattern did not constitute, "the development of depth, richness and complexity in the home language" as stated previously in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines (NJDOE, 2010, p. 35).

So, over the years, Townson found that those three-year olds who entered the preschool program speaking only Spanish were, in effect, immersed in English. Even though some children did overcome this barrier and learned English quickly, the majority

of children struggled and had very long, extended silent periods. In fact, Oades-Sese, et al. (2010) found that half of these children did not attain competency in either English or Spanish by the time they entered kindergarten which could explain the standardized test scores in later years.

These mixed results created a dilemma for Townson because these children did not have a foundation for reading in either language. She sadly reflected on the phenomenon that although West Park was a bilingual community; children experienced a great deal of “language loss” at the preschool level.

Accordingly, the resource specialists spent the entire months of April and May testing hundreds of four-year-olds trying to figure out the correct placement for kindergarten. Truly, these two polar approaches did not fully address the needs of the group lost in the middle.

Dual language pilot program.

Two brand new early childhood centers housed over 1,100 children who accounted for over eighty percent (80%) of the preschool population. Full and extended day sessions with many supports, including portal to portal transportation, were features of this comprehensive program. Even though over sixty percent (65%) of these children came from Spanish-speaking homes, Townson did not have supervision responsibilities within the early childhood program. However, she became peripherally involved in an exciting initiative in one of the early childhood centers. This initiative directly impacted the transition between pre K – Kindergarten.

The Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines clearly stated that students need to have the benefit of both languages. As a result of aforementioned studies (Oades-

Sese, et al., 2005, 2007, 2008), Teresa Crisafelli, one of the early childhood center principals, and Assistant Superintendent Rivers with Townson's support decided to pilot a dual language program. The dual language model used both English and Spanish with classes consisting of English learners and children who were English dominant (N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.2). It began in four preschool classes; two classes with three-year olds and two classes with four-year olds. Students alternated teachers weekly. One week they were taught by an English-speaking teacher, the next week in Spanish with a Spanish-speaking teacher. This pilot program elevated West Park to Stage Six of Churchill's policy response whereby the language of English learners and the target language had equal status and value (Carranza, 2010).

Since Oades-Sese had completed previous studies in the preschool program, Rivers commissioned her to evaluate the pilot dual language program. Oades-Sese (2011) compared children in the dual language preschool classes to children in the general education classes to determine which program was most effective in developing school readiness skills, acquisition of oral English skills and social-emotional functioning. In her report to the district, Oades-Sese (2011) found that children in the dual language classrooms performed significantly better on oral language skills in English; overall school readiness skills in expressive Spanish; and identification of shapes and letters in Spanish. These children also outperformed the children in the control classrooms in overall school readiness skills in receptive English; and identification of shapes and sizes in English. Needless to say, the teachers, parents and principal found the dual language model to be very successful. Hence, Crisafelli has expanded the number of dual language classes to eight.

Townson and Rivers both credit Crisafelli as the driving force behind the implementation and success of the dual language program. Crisafelli, who is monolingual and has no background in bilingual education, then committed to creating a fully bilingual staff and expanding the dual language classes. She and Townson discussed how to implement a dual language program for all students, a daunting task for 1,400 preschool children.

Not surprisingly, a parent survey indicated that parents were very interested in continuing this program into kindergarten and beyond. So Rivers approached the elementary principals about the possibility of creating dual language kindergartens. Rosen asserted that if the principal did not believe in it, it would not happen. Fortunately, two elementary principals embraced the model and welcomed a dual language kindergarten program in 2009 which continued into first grade in 2010. Gonzalez, the principal of South Street School, was one of those principals.

District Perspective to School Settings

The district bilingual perspective contributed to the evolution of the leveled transitional program design. The systematic, gradual transition from Spanish to English has been institutionalized in this plan for grades K -12. Traditionally, West Park experienced success with student achievement with this design. However with the addition of the early childhood program, children were not benefitting from this traditional model and concerns surfaced on how best to service these students. The district responded to the needs of the community by piloting a dual language program at the preschool level and expanding this model to several district schools in grades kindergarten and grade one.

Summary

Federal legislation of NCLB directly and indirectly impacted many of the initiatives implemented in West Park school district. NCLB has caused district and schools to examine their efforts to improve student outcomes. Much of the research on effective schools concentrated at the school level (Davis, et al., 2005; Marzano, et al., 2005). However, central administration “linkages” have also impacted the teaching and learning process in West Park (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). District factors affected the school reform efforts undertaken in the district. With a significant Hispanic population and approximately 20% identified as English learners; West Park adopted and implemented a district-based transitional bilingual education program. Recently, it had been selected by the NJ Department of Education as a model program.

Examining how principals in two elementary schools implemented the district bilingual program and integrated the district initiatives provided an enhanced picture of other contextual factors which influenced the success of the bilingual program. School administration, school level organizational patterns, parental involvement and quality of teachers contributed to the tapestry of effectiveness. A closer analysis of the two schools and the stakeholders in the schools provided more details about the three major contextual factors which influenced the implementation of a successful; the influence of and response to federal and state legislation; district context and initiatives, and the principals’ personal qualities and background knowledge.

CHAPTER V

PERSPECTIVES OF BILINGUAL PROGRAM FROM TWO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS' LENSES

To capture the contextual factors from others' perspectives, an in depth exploration of two elementary schools was completed. These schools were recommended by the assistant superintendent since they were led by two exemplary principals with diverse background experiences and leadership styles. In this way, common insights from varied settings and expertise informed the search for the shared contextual factors that influenced the implementation of the bilingual program.

North Street School Background

North Street School is special. I'm not biased. It's a whole different [atmosphere]. June Rosen, bilingual resource specialist.

North Street School is located in the heart of West Park. It is tucked at the dead end of three streets with two-family residential homes. It was the first "new" school built twenty years ago. The student population is ninety-seven percent (97%) minority with eighty-eight percent (88%) of the children eligible for free or reduced lunch. It was originally referred to as the "bilingual school" due to the number of Spanish speakers in the school, but now only fifty-nine percent (59%) of the students speak Spanish at home. Another one percent (1%) of the student population speaks languages other than English or Spanish. Of those linguistically diverse students, sixteen percent (16%) are identified as English learners (NJ School Report Card, 2010). Other pertinent data reported in the NJ School Report Card (2010) student and faculty mobility rates. Notably, the student

mobility rate (26%) was considerably higher than the state average of 10.5%, while, the faculty mobility rate was lower (1.3% vs. 4%).

In 2008, North Street School was recognized as a Title I Distinguished School, an honor bestowed on only two schools in the state of New Jersey. The National Title 1 Distinguished School Program has recognized schools across the country for their progress in helping Title I populations achieve high educational standards. North Street School received this acknowledgment due to their “exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years” (National Title 1 Distinguished School Program, 2011, p. 1). Ironically, as a result of their selection, the NJ Department of Education completed a Collaborative Assessment for Planning and Achievement (CAPA) review which is usually completed at schools designated “in need of improvement” under the No Child Left Behind Act (2002). The CAPA review is a comprehensive process intended to identify areas of strength, pinpoint obstacles to student achievement and make recommendations for improvement. Parker, the home/school liaison, reported that, “At the exit interview, the CAPA team stated that it was the first time that they were able to give the highest scores in every single category.” Even though it was time-consuming and intense, Jones and her staff experienced a great deal of pride and satisfaction in the findings. In 2010, North Street School was the only elementary school in West Park to meet AYP in both Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics. The other elementary schools met AYP in Mathematics but not Language Arts Literacy.

Jones, easy-going and self-effacing, never took credit for the accolades that her school had been awarded but instead credited her staff and others for their success. She was somewhat uncomfortable with the Title I Distinguished School recognition and

commented that any of the elementary schools could have been selected because she felt that they all had worked hard and made great strides. She joked that if she knew she had to undergo a CAPA review, she would have declined the honor.

South Street School Background

I love this school. This is where I started. Grace Vasquez, vice-principal of South Street School.

South Street School was the oldest elementary school building in the district as well as the one with the smallest enrollment of 574 students. South Street School was located on the eastern edge of the city on one of the main thoroughfares. However, it was set back from the road by a blacktop playground in front of the school and surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence. Most visitors entered through the back entrance from a side street. The student population was 95% percent minority with 85% percent of the children eligible for free or reduced lunch. According to the NJ School Report Card (2010), forty-six percent (46%) of the students spoke Spanish at home while two percent (2%) spoke languages other than English or Spanish. Of those linguistically diverse students, fifteen percent (15%) were identified as English learners.

The NJ Department of Education School Report Card for the 2009-2010 school year indicated that, similar to North Street School, the student mobility rate was higher than the state average (18.5% vs. 10.5%) while the faculty mobility rate WAS 0% for the last two years (NJ School Report Card, 2010).

Even though North Street School was recognized as a Title I Distinguished program, South Street School was truly an innovative site. Due to Gonzalez's motivation and desire to improve student outcomes, she piloted new approaches to bilingual

education and intervention programs. Under Gonzalez's guidance, South Street School was one of only two buildings where a pilot dual language kindergarten and first grade class functioned. She allocated the necessary financial resources in her school budget to order all the materials in both languages, a critical component to the success of a dual language program. Gonzalez also arranged for Arias, the dual language kindergarten teacher, the selected para-professional and the ESL teacher to visit a district with a model dual language program. They talked to the teachers and observed the model in action. Arias admitted that before she started teaching in the dual language program, she did not believe in its principles. Crisafelli, the principal of the dual language preschool, convinced her to try it. In addition, Rivers coordinated fifty (50) hours of professional development to support Arias and the other dual language teachers as they implemented the program.

Gonzalez reported that the benchmark scores for the dual language class were equivalent to or better than the other classes. The first year, Arias confirmed that her class outperformed the other six general and bilingual kindergarten classes in English on the Terranova and in Spanish on the Supera assessments. Because of her skepticism, she thought that perhaps it was a "gifted" class but has now observed similar results in the current year with a group of students who actually began the year significantly lower than her previous class. Gonzalez attributed this success to the effectiveness of the teacher whom she identified as "excellent." These results prompted Gonzalez to find a way to continue the dual language class into the first grade. Due to budget cuts the literacy coach was placed back in the classroom. Fortunately for Gonzalez, she was bilingually certified and she agreed to teach the dual language first grade.

Gonzalez and her staff also incorporated a modified *Response to Intervention* process that used student performance data to inform instruction. Through this process, students who needed additional interventions were identified, support was provided on a daily basis through a scheduled intervention period and their progress was monitored on a regular basis (Vanderheyden, 2011). As a school leader, Gonzalez was focused on creating a successful school.

Through interviews, observations and a review of documents, similar themes emerged from South Street School with slightly different details. As in North Street School, the most prominent factors were: the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act from a standards perspective and the subsequent pressure of the accountability measures; the district context in response to the federal legislation and with the desire to improve school outcomes for all students; and the knowledge and expertise of school leaders.

Organization.

The administrative teams of each school (grades K-4) consisted of a principal and vice principal who orchestrated the education of their respective schools. In North Street School Jones and Jimenez worked with a supporting cast which included: a literacy coach, a Math coach, technology teacher, home school liaison, a bilingual social worker, two counselors and a bilingual nurse. The district bilingual literacy coach, Laura Fina, and two district bilingual resource specialists, June Rosen and Sara Blanca, had satellite offices in the building and served on various school-based committees. Gonzalez and Vasquez from South Street School worked with their “awesome articulation team” consisting of: two reading specialists, (one of whom was bilingual), a math specialist and the technology teacher. During the period of study, the school experienced a transition as

Gonzalez was appointed as a middle school principal and Vasquez assumed the title of interim principal.

Both schools have operated a School Leadership Council (SLC) since 1999 when the *Abbott V* decision mandated that every *Abbott* school create a school management team (MacInnes, 2009). Jones wholeheartedly endorsed this concept. She tried to make most decisions collaboratively with the council because she believed that stakeholder buy-in was crucial to success. According to Jones, some of the best discussions and ideas have emerged from committee meetings. An organizational chart with the SLC at the center described the subcommittees which revolved around the SLC: staff development, technology, educational data, climate, home/school relations, nutrition and curriculum. Almost every staff member served on a subcommittee and contributed to the functioning of the school. The committee at North Street School was efficient and very active and exemplified the tenets of shared leadership. At 8:10 AM, thirteen team members assembled in the parent library; one bilingual teacher and the Jimenez, the vice-principal, represented the bilingual department on the SLC. The meeting was facilitated by the two co-chairs, who teach first and fourth grades, respectively. Although both Jones and Jimenez, the vice principal, were at the meeting, they did not lead the agenda. A variety of topics were addressed: setting the date for the summer planning meeting, parent conferences, testing dates and schedule, parent events and update on budget cuts. The co-facilitators kept everyone on target and the meeting ended at 8:40 AM.

The organizational chart was similar to North Street School with some of the same subcommittees: technology, home school committee, staff development and curriculum. However, in contrast, eleven members of the SLC met at 4:00PM after the

school-mandated staff meeting; a bilingual teacher and para-professional represented the bilingual department on the team. The discussion centered on parent activities and student events. However, instead of discussing as a group what was happening, the principal was answering questions directed to her about new events and discipline problems. A different atmosphere engulfed the meeting at South Street since Vasquez was clearly in charge and made unilateral decisions by rejecting certain ideas but agreeing to allow “a Flag Day celebration, if someone [else] assumed a leadership role.”

Parental involvement.

Understanding the importance of parental involvement, West Park established positions for home/school liaisons in each school in addition to one district-wide bilingual home/school liaison. The current job description actually had melded the attendance officer and community agent positions into the home-school liaison responsibilities. Both schools had a home/school liaison who served as a bridge between the parents and the school; however, neither liaison was bilingual. Nonetheless, North Street School seemed better able to cope through their history and partnership with the bilingual office.

North Street School

Parental involvement was a source of pride at North Street School and they boasted the highest levels of parental involvement in the district. In describing the various programs, Jones reiterated that it was not only the structure of a program that made it successful, but the people as well. Several studies highlight the importance of home involvement as a key factor in improving student achievement (Cotton, 1995; Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000, as cited in Datnow, et al., 2005).

The home-school relations subcommittee led by the home/school liaison, Julie Parker, adopted Epstein's (2011) comprehensive framework as their guide for parental activities and included an overview of the model in the committee description. The types of involvement included: assist parents with parenting skills; develop effective two way communication; involve families as volunteers; include families as decision-makers, provide workshops on ways to learn at home; and coordinate resources and services in the community. The home-school relations committee, one of the largest and most active committees in the school made many of the decisions about the sponsored activities for parents. Annually, each member received and reviewed the goals and objectives of the committee. The main objective was to ensure that effective parent involvement occurred throughout the year. This committee, consisting of teachers, parents and administrators, met twice a month with an extensive agenda to oversee the success or challenges of each program. In the November minutes, the large volume of visiting parents caused a logistical concern even though everyone was pleased to have over 300 parents attend the parent-student luncheon. So the committee members devised a better plan for the upcoming spring luncheon.

Since Parker has worked in West Park for over twenty years and in North Street School exclusively for ten years, she perpetuated the warm parent culture. As a community member, she saw parents at the laundromat and the supermarket. She met with parents when a child was not doing homework and usually found out more in-depth information about the home circumstances. On one occasion, she learned that there was no electricity in the home. Fortunately, she knew the agencies and organizations which offered outreach services to parents.

When asked about how she addressed the needs of Spanish speaking parents since she was not bilingual, Parker noted that all flyers went home in both English and Spanish so parents were aware of the events and knew they were invited. In addition, they tried to remove all obstacles by providing translators at every meeting and babysitting during evening sessions. Initially, the meetings with the translators took twice as long as they waited for the information to be relayed in Spanish. Also when they had to stop and translate they would lose the parents' attention and interest. Then they discovered that the bilingual department had specialized translation equipment whereby one could simultaneously translate into a headset while parents wore earpieces, similar to what was used in the United Nations. After borrowing the bilingual department's set several times, Jones purchased a set specifically for North Street School. Now during every meeting, someone sat in the back and translated into the headset. Therefore the meetings took the expected amount of time instead of twice as long and parents stayed engaged. At one workshop there were more Spanish speakers than English speakers, so they reversed the pattern and the English speakers wore the earpieces. Jimenez reported that it did not work perfectly all the time but at least they were responsive to parents' needs.

Teachers were very conscious of the need to translate any communication that went home. Several examples highlighted this awareness. At the grade level meetings teachers decided that a letter to parents about NJASK testing would be composed and translated for parents. Two teachers came to the office to ask if a certain flyer could be translated, a second grade teacher informed the administration that she needed directions translated. The availability of translators during parent conferences was topic for discussion at the SLC meeting. When teachers needed a translator for a conference, it

took more than the fifteen minutes allotted for each meeting. Translators were supposed to be available in each wing however, some translators were absent and so it became a hardship. Ray, one of the custodians, who had been trained as a parent facilitator (as reported by Parker) had to be utilized as a translator. Some bilingual teachers tried to assist when they could but they had their own conferences. This topic generated much discussion which was not resolved at this meeting.

Some workshops, though, were offered separately in each language. Parker and Martinez, the district bilingual home/school liaison, led a series of parent education workshops, entitled Every Person Influences Children or EPIC, a national evidence-based program, designed to support and enhance basic parenting skills and knowledge. Parker facilitated the meetings in English while Martinez worked with the Spanish-speaking parents. Since these discussions were often confidential in nature, parents wanted to speak without interruptions due to translations and felt more of a sense of privacy.

During one of the observations, representatives from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) presented information on the effects of asthma. One representative spoke Spanish so the sessions were offered separately, one in English and the other in Spanish. Fina reported that The *Parents as Partners* Book Club evolved as a result of parent workshops in the fall. Parents expressed an interest in their own book club. Hence, once a week they met to discuss a book. Fina facilitated these discussions in the dominant language of the group. Consequently, they chose books which were available in both languages. Currently the group was discussing *Esperanza Rising* in Spanish. Fina took the opportunity to model comprehension strategies (predicting, questioning, inferring) for parents.

In addition to the home/school committee, a concerted effort was made to create an environment where parents felt that their children were in a safe, nurturing space. The bilingual social worker, Parker, and Jimenez ensured that parents felt that someone was paying attention to them, which did not happen accidentally. Since parent involvement was part of the school's core philosophy, Jimenez noted that addressing parent needs as soon as possible was a systemic value. Observations in the main office verified that Jimenez or Jones met with parents as soon as they could. Jimenez stated, "We never say to a parent, 'we can't take care of you.' If a parent comes in we always have something ... an answer they may not like, but they don't leave empty-handed." Jones explained how the North Street Cares program also responded to parent needs. Members of the staff paid a few dollars so they could wear jeans on Fridays. Then that fund was used to help a family in need. In the past, they had bought beds, paid bills and contributed gift cards from the local Shop-rite.

As indicated by Jones, Jimenez and Parker, the commitment to parent involvement began over twenty years ago with the adoption of a state grant, *Schools for Excellence*. A strong home/school relationship was identified as one of the features of an excellent school. The principal, at that time, who had been a mentor for many staff members and an icon in the community, collaborated with the staff to design ways to build a strong home/school relationship. A culture and tradition of making parents feel comfortable has since permeated the school. Greetings from bilingual security guards from the community, bilingual secretaries and administration; a table at the entrance with handouts in two languages; and a parent library indicated that North Street School was dedicated to working with parents. Fina, as the bilingual literacy coach, affirmed that

parents felt welcomed and that the school cultivated an open door policy. The school's motto, created twenty years ago, continued to this day: North Street School + Parents = Success.

The Saturday Morning Family School was one of the ideas which emanated from those original brainstorming sessions under the *School for Excellence* grant. Eighteen years later, North Street School still hosted Saturday morning classes for anyone in the district. As the anchor program for parental involvement, it had evolved into a community project. As a matter of fact, the program expanded to a school on the other side of town just three years ago. Coordination with several district departments and offices created an all-encompassing Saturday Morning Family School. The Adult School offered ESL and enrichment classes, such as, music, scrapbooking, computers, and aerobics classes for parents, grandparents, and community members. The bilingual department sponsored classes for English learners while Title I and the Saturday Morning Family School coordinator developed classes for pre K – 4 children. Not to leave the teen-agers behind, the 21st Century Grant funded a Teen Club for middle and high school students. Parker worked with the Saturday Morning Family School coordinator and provided a parent workshop component.

In addition to working well with the parents, Parker coordinated and monitored all of the parental activities. She documented how many parents attended each function and maintained those records. During the 2008-2009 school year, six general programs attracted 5,486 parent contacts. The general programs included: Saturday Morning Family School; back to school night; family information fair; fall and spring parent teacher conferences; American Education Open House and visitations to the parent

library. Other series of workshops which occurred over the course of the year included: Family Math, New Horizons in Science, Parents as Partners in Literacy and the Kindergarten Academy for Parents.

The Kindergarten Academy was an outgrowth of teacher observations. Jones and the kindergarten teachers found that parents needed an orientation because the kindergarten curriculum was significantly different from the preschool model. So last year they instituted the Kindergarten Academy where parents met for four two-hour sessions in the spring prior to their children's entrance into kindergarten. The academy, a huge success with over 250 parents attending, was offered in the morning and again in the evening to accommodate parents' schedules. The social worker, guidance counselors, and home-school liaison presented three topics each session. The guidance counselors introduced the parents to the academic areas addressed in kindergarten while the social worker discussed the social emotional development of children at this age. The home-school liaison concentrated on parenting skills; such as setting limits, and asserting their rights as parents. In a follow-up survey, Jones and Parker found that the students whose parents participated in the academy tended to complete class assignments in a more responsive manner.

North Street School sponsored over twenty additional opportunities for parents to become involved in school activities. Some of the unique events included a father/son game night, a mother/daughter scrapbooking night that "filled the house," a volunteer luncheon for the parents who helped throughout the year and "Oscar Night," created by a fourth grade teacher for "best writing" in different genres. Students dressed up and walked down a red carpet with a tuxedoed escort to accept their awards. Another event

allowed parents the option to eat lunch in the cafeteria with their children twice a year (fall and spring). Last year, 310 parents came in the fall while 325 parents ate lunch with their children in the spring.

Accordingly, when a teacher had an idea for a parental involvement activity, Parker and Jones supported it. One of the teachers wanted to have a literacy night pajama party which was not on the annual plan. The committee did not know how they were going to make it happen since they did not have money in the budget for teachers or refreshments. One of the teachers said, “Well, we’re just going to make this happen.” Parker went to the principal who supported the idea. The teacher then went individually to other teachers and asked if they would volunteer to come that night and host a group in their classroom and read to the students. Unbelievably, 125 families attended. Teachers bought cookies, juice and milk. This process seemed to be integrated into the culture of the school.

As previously stated, reading is at the heart of everything that was done at North Street School. Students read twenty minutes every night and parents or guardians verified that this task was completed. During SLC and grade level meetings, teachers found that many students did not have books to read so it was difficult to always ensure that students took books home from the classroom. Collaboratively, they resolved to find solutions. First they decided to transform the parent resource room into a parent library. The initial dilemma was how to get books to stock the bookcases. The superintendent gave Jones permission to ask corporations for donations. In the first year, over 1,000 books in both English and Spanish were donated. Subsequently, staff members and parent volunteers leveled and labeled all the books. A parent volunteer, who maintained a log of visitors,

managed the space from 2:30 - 4:00 p.m. In this way, parents read with their children for 20 minutes right after school or checked the books out and took them home. Parker often noticed the parent volunteer remaining past library hours.

A second idea emerged which confronted this challenge of lack of literacy materials in the home on a different level. Jones attributed this accomplishment to her reading specialist who found a factory that gets slightly damaged used books. She bargained with the owner and bought the books at a significantly reduced rate. The school then held book sales whenever a large number of parents happened to be in the building (back to school night, conferences, etc.). This provided access to literature at a fraction of the cost. Jones knew they had accomplished their goals when she saw that the children were not looking at the toys. “They were dragging their parents over to buy the books. And that’s what they wanted... one of the mothers said to me, ‘They even have me reading now.’”

At the end of the year, Jones held a meeting with parents to discuss how to prevent the “Summer Slide.” Because of their fundraising activities, they were able to give each child four books to take home to read over the summer. In addition, each student received a packet of learning activities so they would not lose what they learned.

Overall, Parker documented 9,080 parent visitations at these and other events during the 2008-2009 school years. With this type of parental involvement, North Street School definitely impacted the family and community. Since Jones valued the parents, she believed that North Street School met their needs. In fact, she asserted that if they did not meet a parent’s need, either they were not aware of the problem or the parent was not interested in getting help.

South Street School

Gonzalez and Vasquez perceived the community and the schools working “hand-in-hand to provide cultural experiences for the children.” Since the majority of parents spoke Spanish, a concerted effort was made to hire Spanish-speaking support staff. Hence, both secretaries, the vice-principal, the nurse and all of the para-professionals were Spanish speakers who also translated documents when needed. Consequently, school flyers and notices were sent home bilingually.

South Street School did not have the same tradition of parental involvement as North Street School nor did it have the same breadth of parental programs. Nonetheless, they had a home/school liaison, an active PTO, a home school committee and a host of monthly parental events. Most importantly, since Gonzalez and Vasquez were bilingual, they were strong advocates and cultural mediators for parents.

When parents had concerns about moving to another school to receive bilingual services, it was advantageous to have a principal who understood and supported the bilingual program design. Both Gonzalez and Vasquez had responded to parental concerns about moving to another school. Once they explained that the placement best met the needs of the child, they both reported that most parents agreed with the change. Vasquez also reassured parents that the class was leaving as a group and, in all likelihood, would return as a group in third grade. This scenario usually relieved parents’ anxiety. In addition, parents felt comfortable asking for advice about how to help with homework when they did not speak English. Vasquez shared her own personal story in an attempt to ease their distress.

Under the School Leadership Council (SLC) there were several subcommittees, one of which was the home school committee. The home/school liaison served on this committee and helped the members plan different educational workshops for the parents; such as Family Math, Literacy Nights, Family Science, and How to Prepare your Child for Kindergarten. She also collaborated with the counselors and teachers on parenting programs and contributed to the active PTO's monthly events. In the beginning of the year, the committee actually held a meeting on how to fill out forms. The meetings were offered during the day and in the evening to accommodate parents' schedules. For *Read Across America*, they invited parents into the school for the day and they were pleased that 52 parents visited their child's class and participated in reading activities.

The home/school liaison's other responsibilities consisted of assisting parents on an individual basis. When parents came into the building, she facilitated their needs and visited their homes if there was an attendance issue. The home/school liaison also completed the paperwork for excessive absences and ultimately had to appear in court with the parents on occasion.

Gonzalez admitted that having a monolingual English speaking home/school liaison created problems at times because the parents did not feel comfortable approaching her. She noted that in schools where the home/school liaison was bilingual, a better relationship existed. However, Oveido mentioned that the home school liaison "grab [bed] whatever and whoever to help with parents." She called and visited parents and found the information that they needed. Gonzalez also pointed out there was a district bilingual home/school liaison who assisted when needed.

To build parental relationships Gonzalez recognized a student and parent of the month during the monthly PTO activities. Each PTO meeting had a theme, such as: Harvest Night, a laser show, a sweetheart dance and a covered dish night. Gonzalez included a presentation on an educational topic before the “fun” activity. One month they covered bullying while in March they had a workshop for parents on how to help prepare their children for testing. The teachers presented the results from the benchmarks and provided parents with some activities to do at home. At each grade level, an English- and Spanish- speaking teacher presented collaboratively. In addition, Vasquez provided transportation for parents to attend the *Kids in Concert* event in another town.

Although these events were offered for parents, teachers still desired more parental involvement. In the staff meeting, when asked about the weaknesses of the school, three out of four grade levels cited lack of parental participation or support as their second response (see Table 7). Kindergarten teachers especially noted the language barrier, the number of English learners with a low vocabulary level (in English) and the need for more parent workshops as weaknesses.

Oveido, however, remarked that the bilingual parents felt comfortable at South Street School. She shared a few anecdotes of how families were treated. One family who recently had a fire in their home received clothes, furniture and monetary support from the whole school community. Another bilingual teacher contacted the adult school for a parent who wanted to finish school. The guidance counselor contacted the appropriate agency when there was a health problem. Oveido stated proudly that the school community tried to solve any problem that parents had.

4 th grade	3 rd grade	2 nd grade	1 st grade	Kindergarten
Writing workshops besides Collins	Identify strengths earlier and use them	Too many programs and new initiatives	Not enough time	Language barrier
Give new programs 3 years before assessing.	Late/ attendance/ more accountability/ consequences for parents	Lack of classroom parent involvement create lessons that allow parents to participate	Not enough parental involvement	Lack of parental support
Do not ask for teacher input	More common planning time	Teachers pulled away from classroom instruction	Language Arts Literacy should be 120 minutes	Majority ELLs, therefore low vocabulary
Benchmark assessments should reflect nine week instruction.		Is tutoring program effective?	More oral language development; encourage children to use complete sentences	Using the school website
		Is after school program effective?	IRS more follow up visits; Case managers Model techniques	Parent workshops

Table 7. Grade level responses: Weaknesses of the school (Field notes, February 2, 2011)

Bilingual program design in each school

North Street School had a bilingual population of over 130 English learners in grades kindergarten through fourth grade who were placed according to their English language proficiency level and Spanish literacy skills. Preschool students were assessed with multiple criteria to determine their placement for the kindergarten bilingual or sheltered class. Students usually maintained the same program placements into first grade with similar language use protocols. Thus, bilingual kindergarten students joined a

bilingual first grade class, while students in the sheltered kindergarten entered a sheltered first grade.

Even though the transition to English was technically supposed to occur in Grade Two/Level Two classes, Jones reported that her first grade bilingual teacher, “who is very strong,” actually began to transition her students into English by using both languages when teaching Math and Social Studies. Then in the Grade Two/Level Two classes, the transition to English occurred sooner for some children. Jones trusted that the Level Two bilingual teachers knew best when to transition because they did “incredible jobs” with their children.

At the third grade level, North Street housed a Level Two and a Level Three class. In Level Two, children transitioned from Spanish to English in the same process as described in second grade. However, in the Level Three class, bilingual teachers only interpreted or clarified on an as-needed basis, since the materials and instruction were all in English. In fourth grade, only a Level Three class existed with all instruction in English.

North Street School also housed the district *Viaje* class for second grade and a Grade Two/Level One class. Both of these classes were for new entrants at the lower proficiency levels who lived throughout the district. Instruction was primarily in Spanish with daily ESL classes. As a result of the expertise of the bilingual resource specialists, students were appropriately placed in these classes so their educational needs were addressed immediately. According to Jones, the children properly placed in the *Viaje* classes felt more comfortable and hence learned more. Students usually spent only one year in *Viaje* classes and then were moved to their appropriate grade and English

proficiency level. Jones spoke very highly of the second grade *Viaje* teacher and the concept of the classes:

We have *Viaje*... I have V. whom, if you ever want to see a *Viaje* class, [you must see her]. She's amazing. She has children who come to her knowing nothing because they have not been to school and she just takes them to levels that are unbelievable. Had you taken those same children and put them in a regular classroom, they would fail.

Children at other English proficiency levels attended classes in other district schools with transportation provided from North Street School to the designated site (see Table 5).

Jones acknowledged that the bilingual program in her school met the needs of the bilingual learner. She referred to the bilingual teachers at her school as "the dream team." Jimenez boasted that the bilingual teachers were very committed and well respected by their peers. The kindergarten bilingual teacher was Teacher of the Year; the first grade bilingual teacher has been the leader of the School Leadership Committee for years; one of the second grade bilingual teachers led the grade level meetings; and the fourth grade bilingual teacher had a reputation as a "tough cookie" who held high expectations for her students. In addition to working well at their respective grade levels, they worked well together as a bilingual team articulating the needs of their students and sharing successful strategies. Since the bilingual teachers generally obtained positive results on the district assessments, Jones and Jimenez often asked the bilingual teachers to share their strategies with their general education colleagues.

This was in great contrast to another school where Jones had worked which was highly segregated. The “bilinguals” were in the bilingual wing and the bilingual teachers did not participate in the grade level meetings but rather had separate department meetings. This experience had a profound impact on Jones. Although this had not been a practice at North Street School, she ensured that the bilingual teachers met with their appropriate grade level teams and that the bilingual classes were interspersed throughout the school.

South Street School had a bilingual population of over 80 English learners in grades kindergarten through fourth grade who were also placed according to their English language proficiency level and Spanish literacy skills with the exception of the children in the dual language cohort. Similar to North Street School, the program began in kindergarten.

When Gonzalez realized that seventeen children from the preschool dual language program were part of her home school population, she volunteered to pilot a dual language kindergarten. In the preschool model, there were two teachers, one who was English dominant and one who was Spanish dominant, but in the South Street School kindergarten and first grade program, the model changed to one bilingual teacher who used both languages. Students received Language Arts Literacy in both languages during two separate ninety minute blocks: English in the morning with the assistance of an ESL teacher for the English learners in the class; and Spanish in the afternoon. Math was taught in the morning, alternating languages. The curriculum spiraled so a lesson was not repeated verbatim, however new concepts and vocabulary were introduced in both languages. Sixty percent (60%) of the dual language class consisted of English learners

while forty percent (40%) of the children were English dominant. When these children entered the three year old preschool program, they were selected through a lottery system and have remained a cohort for the past three years.

The preschool students who were not in the dual language cohort were assessed with multiple criteria to determine their placement for the bilingual or sheltered class. Exactly like North Street School's program, those placed in the bilingual kindergarten were instructed primarily in Spanish with daily ESL classes. In addition, the population of kindergarten students who entered with some ability in English but not yet proficient were placed in the sheltered English classes. Unlike North Street School where kindergarten bilingual students usually maintained the program placement into first grade with the same language use protocols, in South Street School there were two levels for the bilingual first grade: Level One and Level Two. Students in the sheltered kindergarten usually entered a sheltered first grade.

North Street and South Street schools' bilingual program designs also diverged in the second grade. Due to space limitations, South Street School second graders who required bilingual services were transported to one of the other schools in the district; therefore, no bilingual or sheltered class existed in second grade at South Street School. The following year, if students exited the program or they were Grade Three/Level Two, they returned to South Street School. As in North Street School, Level Two was the transition year, so students began the year with some subjects in Spanish and ended the year all in English. The teacher decided when and how to transition the Level Two students based on their needs. Initially, when the students were still reading in Spanish the ESL teacher provided an additional ESL class. Once the students were reading in

English, the ESL teacher pushed in during the literacy block to provide support. In fourth grade, there was only a Level Three bilingual class which was totally in English with English only materials and the ESL teacher pushing in during the literacy block.

North Street and South Street Schools had similar demographics and both offered bilingual classes. However, based on the distribution of bilingual classes throughout the district and the support of Gonzalez for the dual language program, differences existed in which classes were offered and which areas were emphasized.

The No Child Left Behind Act in North Street School

The NCLB Act (2002) was a major influence on practices at the districts and school levels. Even though negativity usually appeared around the federal requirements; Jones witnessed positive outcomes as a result of the legislation. Many people complained about the testing, but she believed that the assessment and standards changed teachers' expectations of what students could do. She attributed the raising of standards through the high stakes testing of NJASK as a constructive result of the federal law. When she compared how third graders wrote a few years ago with how they were writing now, she observed remarkable growth. Additionally, once the accountability system targeted grades 3 -8, the central administration concentrated more efforts on the elementary level than in previous years. The last two assistant superintendents ardently focused on curriculum and instruction, with a keen interest in the elementary schools. As a result, supervisors in the content areas were appointed who addressed the needs at the elementary level.

Including English learners as a subgroup in the accountability system also changed many stakeholders' perspectives. NJASK in Spanish did not appear until 2007

so, initially, students were exempt from Language Arts Literacy testing the first year, although they were still required to take the Math and Science assessments. Prior to 2007, English learners had to complete all the assessments in English in their second year in the program. As a result, there was a major impetus for alignment of the bilingual curriculum and materials with the general education program.

NCLB (2002) caused district and school administrators to raise expectations for all students, including English learners. Jones worked with her staff to meet those expectations as evidenced by North Street School's achievement of AYP. It became a school-wide goal to pass the NCLB accountability requirements. When asked by the new superintendent, why North Street School was the only elementary school to meet AYP in 2010, Jones cited collaboration and communication among her staff as two main reasons.

Jones' and Jimenez' explanations of West Park's selection as a model bilingual program reflected another example of the impact of the NCLB Act (2002). Both acknowledged the fact that the bilingual students made AYP. As a matter of fact, Jones emphasized this by stating, "That tells you everything you need to know about the program. They make AYP," as if it was the only factor that mattered. Jimenez further referenced the afore-mentioned district report which found that the scores of former English learners positively influenced district scores in grades four, five and seven. The analysis found that once the bilingual students exited the program, they scored as well as, if not better than, their general education counterparts; quite the opposite of the common perception that bilingual students negatively influenced standardized test scores. When pressed to explain how that could happen, Jimenez stated it began with administrators and teachers who knew and cared about the program. In her experience, she found that

many district administrators understood and believed in bilingual education, appreciated its benefits, and strongly supported it. The staff, both general education and bilingual teachers, also understood the design of the program and were very committed professionals. The fact that the bilingual students demonstrated proficiency on the standardized tests reinforced the belief in the transitional bilingual model.

The No Child Left Behind Act in South Street School

This federal legislation also influenced practices at South Street School but not as positively as in North Street School. Interestingly, when asked to identify the reasons why West Park's bilingual program was recognized as a model program, first and foremost, both Gonzalez and Vasquez also identified positive standardized test results as their immediate response. Gonzalez summarized the main reason as, "[the result] speaks for itself. My bilingual third and fourth graders made AYP. So they must be doing something right. I think the results speak volumes." Vasquez reiterated that finding when she stated, "Statistically, our ELLs do very well on the state tests and that's what impresses me the most."

Overall, though, the accountability measure of making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was the driving force behind many of the initiatives implemented at South Street School, Gonzalez expected all staff members to contribute to achieving the school-wide goal to make AYP every year. As a result, Gonzalez researched and introduced the *Response to Intervention* model as one way to meet this objective. The first year when South Street School implemented the intervention period, the NJASK scores increased dramatically, which was good news for meeting AYP. However, the following year, much to Gonzalez's dismay, South Street School did not meet the benchmark. Even more

frustrating was the fact that since they had done so well the previous year they could not even reach “safe harbor,” the measure of improvement of a specific population(s) who had *not* met the benchmark(s). The percent of partially proficient scores from the previous year must decrease by 10% in the current year for safe harbor to be achieved (NJ Department of Education, 2011). As a matter of fact, the students had scored so high previously, that the current year’s partially proficient scores actually *increased*. Gonzalez felt particularly distressed for the teachers because she knew how they internalized the students’ standardized scores. She described how anxious all the teachers were when the scores arrived. Gonzalez was baffled and could only account for the drastic drop due to the fact that the state had changed the proficient cut score on the test. Gonzalez sensed that as soon as the children started to do well, the state Department of Education revamped the process. She believed that a growth model would be a more appropriate measure for accountability for her students.

Vasquez also voiced her opinion about the unfair application of the NCLB accountability regulations. She could not understand how a school was held equally responsible for all children to score proficient on standardized tests when some children have been in the United States all their lives while others just arrived from another country. The pressure to make AYP adversely impacted what Vasquez knew to be good practices in bilingual education. Vasquez felt so much stress as an interim principal, she pressured the bilingual teachers to reduce the use of native language in preparation for the tests. She knew the Level Two teachers struggled the most because that was the transition year. So even if the child was not quite ready, they (teacher and principal) pushed them

into all English so that they would test in English. Always in the back of her mind, was the mantra, “I’ve got to improve my test scores.”

The pressure to make AYP was palpable at the March staff meeting. The teachers were grouped by grade levels and asked to brainstorm answers to several questions. One question, “*Where do we want to be in five years?*” demonstrated the prominence and preoccupation with NCLB and AYP as teachers in four out of five grade levels all identified, “passing school” or “meeting AYP” as their first response (Table 8). Other answers also highlighted the intensity of accountability measures: “proficient in all areas,” and “close the achievement gap.” Teachers identified improved technology and parental involvement as other goals to attain by 2016.

4th grade	3rd grade	2nd grade	1st grade	Kindergarten
Passing school	Performance and project-based learning	Meet AYP in all subjects	Passing AYP	Passing school
All classrooms technology equipped	Technology based classrooms with functional computers, smart-boards, document viewers	Technology driven school	Higher percentage of students reading at/above grade level	Close the achievement gap
All students proficient	Self motivating students.	Model school	More students coming in with appropriate grade level skills	Proficient in all areas
Universal Design for Learning in all classes	Parents not accepting failure as an option	New preschool curriculum so kids arrive better prepared		Close to 100% parental involvement

Table 8. Grade level responses (Field notes, February 2, 2011).

The NCLB Act had a distinct impact on the practices of administrators in both schools. At North Street School, Jones felt that teachers set higher expectations for children due to NCLB, and as a result, student outcomes improved. At South Street School where they had not met AYP the previous school year, Gonzalez and Vasquez felt pressured to design additional school-wide interventions and to push bilingual teachers to reduce the use of native language sooner rather than later. Unfortunately, AYP was the only measure that mattered in the success of the school. Both administrators highlighted the fact that former English learners met AYP requirements, a major factor, if not the only one, in measuring the success of the bilingual program.

Although AYP strongly motivated the school leaders' practices, the district's contextual factors created a different energy that also affected their approach.

District Context

It comes from the top. The support you get from the superintendent and his leadership in choosing an assistant superintendent [is important]. He also chose excellent supervisors. So I think we have a clear idea of what the district initiatives are... We work collaboratively and it comes from the top. You don't feel alone.

Jane Jones, principal of North Street School.

The themes of district and school communication, alignment of initiatives, and support from central administration reverberated throughout all of the interviews and observations. Communication, articulation, and coordination were three terms that consistently appeared throughout the data.

Crucial to the communication link between the central office and its schools is the establishment of structures that allow for the “exchange of information across the system” (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010, p. 757). Structurally, communication between the supervisors and principals was facilitated through monthly meetings. Both Jones and Gonzalez described in detail the district infrastructure that supported the real-life application of those three terms. First, once a month, the elementary principals met with central administration which consisted of the superintendent and assistant superintendent. The middle school and high school principals had parallel meetings with central administration. Then, the district supervisors also met monthly with central administration and finally the whole district administrative team met once a month to share any district initiatives. If the principals had any specific concerns they invited that director or supervisor to their principals’ meeting. This structure of meetings fostered collaboration and respect. Vasquez found that regular communication among the elementary school principals not only contributed to the consistency in the district but also provided modeling of instructional leadership and created a firm principals’ network. This network engaged principals as resources for each other and encouraged responsibility for their own professional development and that of their colleagues (Honig et al., 2010). As an interim principal, Vasquez appreciated this network and support. This consistent communication solidified the unification of district initiatives, and ultimately, and most importantly, led to greater benefits for students.

Not surprisingly, test scores and ways to improve performance were the topics of discussion at the last administrative meeting. The assistant superintendent charged the supervisors with researching and developing programs or initiatives to increase scores. In

the past, after sharing the latest research findings or state directive from their respective fields, directors and supervisors would suggest programs based on best practices. The whole team would then come to consensus on how to proceed. To Gonzalez's recollection, rarely did disagreements arise and the supervisors never implemented a project without first consulting with the principals.

Overall, the administrative team streamlined the instructional initiatives throughout the district similar to the design highlighted in San Diego City Schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). The directors and supervisors worked directly with Rivers to coordinate the articulation and communication of these initiatives by utilizing literacy and math coaches and technology specialists. According to Gonzalez, the principals were actually trained first. In this way, they could effectively support its implementation. The directors/supervisors then provided or arranged for the training of these specialists.

The supervisors, coaches and specialists ensured that all stakeholders were "on the same page" by creating an infrastructure for professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Supervisors communicated with building administrators and trained all the teachers; then, effectively used the coaches and specialists to reinforce the professional development sessions. Subsequently, the coaches and specialists shared the information with the staff through grade level discussions, after-school staff development meetings, in-service days and/or in-class coaching sessions. Gonzalez acknowledged that the principals helped in the implementation but the supervisors truly put forth great effort to make the uniformity a reality.

Typically, principals supported the goals both explicitly and implicitly (Waters & Marzano, 2005). Explicitly, principals allocated their resources to finance the initiatives and thus ensured that funds were targeted into the appropriate school account. Implicitly, they sustained the programs by providing time for collaboration and professional development. However, the supervisors were not the only ones who presented new initiatives. If a principal wanted to pilot a new idea or program, the superintendent usually supported the innovation (Waters & Marzano, 2005). As an example, Gonzalez wanted to establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and an intervention/enrichment period which were not in place in any other district school. Initially, she met with the superintendent and provided the rationale for the program. He then gave her permission to pilot the proposal in her building to evaluate its effectiveness and to identify possible challenges before considering expansion to all district schools.

School staff meetings were also used to deliver a unified district message. During one staff meeting in February, Rivers introduced the Universal Design for Learning model through a video clip which was shown to all elementary schools at the same time.

Vasquez personified the coordination of efforts throughout the elementary schools with this quote:

We do everything unified. We meet with the same grade levels.

We have the same staff meetings. We're part of one community.

Jones, Gonzalez, and Vasquez reported that the five elementary principals worked very well together. Gonzalez reiterated these sentiments:

We're very supportive of each other I could pick up the phone and say 'help, I'm stuck on this,' or 'what did you do for this?' If we have a report, we sit together... and analyze it.

Bryk and Schneider (2003) found that trust among all school stakeholders was a key resource for school improvement. This relational trust developed over time and through routine day-to-day interactions, in addition to being fostered through structural conditions (Bryk & Schneider, 2003).

The high student mobility rate within the district was another reason that communication and coordination were critical. As described in the NJ School Report Cards (2010), each school had a higher than average student mobility rate. Many of these students moved within the district. Over the past ten years, Jones noted that there had been a concerted effort to standardize curriculum and materials. These high-mobility students benefited tremendously with the consistency of initiatives across the district. In the past, if students moved from one school to another, in all likelihood, the materials and curriculum differed. Now when students changed locations, they found the same initiatives, the same curriculum and the same benchmarks; so the disruption was minimal. Even though each school's heart beat a little differently, students walked into the new classroom and were already accustomed to the materials and procedures. Gonzalez credited the district supervisors for creating this smooth transition. In fact, this standardization even extended to construction since the three new elementary school buildings were exact replicas of each other. In this way, children even had the familiarity of the building design.

In addition to developing consistency through communication, developing stability in leadership was another district goal. The unofficial practice of “growing your own” was a district feature which advanced communication and coordination. The previous superintendent wanted administrators who came through the system, who knew the community and understood the community’s culture. He encouraged teachers to pursue certification in educational leadership. At one time, courses were offered in district to encourage teachers to obtain an administrator’s certificate. Apparently, it was so successful, there were 18 in-district candidates for the vice principal’s position that became available when Gonzalez was promoted to principal. The current superintendent also fostered that environment. Even though he encouraged principals to prepare teachers for the future, Gonzalez did not feel that they specifically identified potential candidates and “groomed” them. However, opportunities existed if teachers wanted to advance. This practice sustained a sense of stability in leadership and was most evident in the fact that the principals and vice principals of both schools were also former teachers in the district.

Since many parents and children speak Spanish in West Park, the central administration deliberately created bilingual administrative teams whenever they could. Jimenez reported that in the past, they tried to have at least one bilingual administrator who could communicate with parents. This effort continued into the early childhood centers where there was one bilingual adult in every classroom. If the teacher was not bilingual, then the paraprofessional was.

District infrastructure and communication patterns contributed to the sense of uniformity and consistency among administrators in addition to building the relational trust needed in order to implement many of the initiatives. With this foundation in place,

common curricula based on standards, best practices in instructional techniques and universal benchmark assessments were developed and shared by the administrative team.

Curriculum.

The curriculum, initiatives, and planning guides were the same across programs; from general to bilingual to special education. The only difference in the bilingual classes was the language of instruction and subsequently, some of the materials. Echevarria et al., (2000) found that English learners do not always have access to the content standards as they acquire their second language. However, Vasquez emphasized that native language instruction assured access to the standards, thus was a major benefit of bilingual education. Oveido, a first grade bilingual teacher, stressed that bilingual teachers not only addressed the core standards but also “married” the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) with the “ESL” standards.

West Park had very structured Language Arts and Math programs. The elementary principals, as instructional leaders, were knowledgeable of the district initiatives and worked collaboratively with the district supervisors. In Language Arts and in Math, the books were the same in both languages. This was not the case in the past. At one time, the bilingual classes were using one reading series while the general education program was using another. Apparently, the English series was not available in Spanish. Within the last ten years, district practices changed to reflect the fact that if the materials were not available in both languages then it was not even considered for adoption. Having children in the bilingual classes working in the same series eased the transition from Spanish to English. Even in the book room, a resource area for additional materials, both English and Spanish supplies were available.

The goal of the district was to be “as consistent as possible” across programs so that when the students transitioned from the bilingual classes to English only, it was as smooth as possible. Jones attributed the success of the bilingual learners to three elements: rigorous curriculum aligned to the general education program; correct placement; and “great” bilingual teachers.

Progress monitoring and high expectations.

Benchmark assessments were administered in language arts, math, science and social studies every nine weeks. In addition, twice a year, the district supervisors reviewed the data in their particular discipline through department meetings with the staff at each school. By creating benchmarks in all content areas and holding all teachers and students accountable for meeting these benchmarks, the administration set high expectations for the students in West Park. All district benchmarks were translated into Spanish and students completed the assessment in the main language of instruction (Gold, 2006). Gonzalez found that if bilingual students could not complete the benchmark assessment, then, that usually indicated that they had been placed in the wrong level.

The scores were processed in-district for a quick turnaround and teachers had timely access to the results. All scores were input into the *Performance Matters* software program and analyzed which allowed administrators and teachers to view assessment data in one application. This was the first year that the district consistently used *Performance Matters* and both Jones and Gonzalez observed positive outcomes from this program since it identified the students who needed assistance with specific skills. Once the teachers received their benchmark scores, both principals met individually with each

teacher and reviewed the scores of each child. Jones discussed the pertinent issues and then identified appropriate interventions or ways to differentiate instruction for that child. Jones found this process to be very worthwhile even though it was quite time-consuming.

In reviewing literature, Jones read an article written by DuFour (2004) which recommended discussing the benchmark scores at a grade level meeting. Jones admitted that even though they discussed the information at grade level meetings, they did not analyze the scores to the depth that they could. DuFour (2004) suggested that once teachers analyzed the data as a group they may discover gaps in the curriculum. In this way, they could quickly identify what was not being addressed. After reading this article, Jones acknowledged that they were not as data-driven as they should be and expressed the desire to create that as a goal for the next year.

Gonzalez, on the other hand, implemented a more controlled process. She considered the review of data as the initial phase of the intervention. She realized that to address the deficiencies, teachers needed time during the school day. After and before school programs were offered but students could not always come to school early or stay after school due to parents' jobs and child care issues. Gonzalez wanted to effectively use those data, so she created a dedicated intervention/enrichment period each day when teachers could focus on the children who were having difficulties. With the approval of the superintendent, she piloted this initiative in South Street School.

Each day, every class had a scheduled intervention/enrichment period with an intervention teacher who pushed in during that time. The ESL teacher would push into the bilingual classes during this period as an additional support. Teachers targeted reading skills one day and focused on math concepts on another day. The teachers

grouped the students according to their needs in a particular subject area and provided a lesson to target the weakness. Students who had mastered that particular skill were assigned an enrichment task. Gonzalez required the teachers to use different materials and techniques during the intervention period. So, for example, since the district had adopted Storytown as its reading series, the teacher could not use those materials during the intervention period. They had to use other approaches or programs. Some teachers used the Orton-Gillingham method, which utilized phonetics and emphasized visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. Others used supplementary hands-on activities and games. One of the goals of the intervention was to tap into the children's multiple intelligences. This type of assessment and intervention cycle was most effective when implemented with fidelity (Soltero, 2011). Gonzalez monitored the implementation through the teachers' PLC grade level meetings.

Although the curriculum and the benchmark assessments were the same, the superintendent allowed for innovation on a pilot intervention program which provided principals some flexibility in addressing student gaps. Gonzalez took advantage of that flexibility and implemented a different model to address the concerns in her building.

Professional development.

The district offered tremendous opportunities for professional development. As previously stated, the assistant superintendent ensured that supervisors and consultants first trained the administrators in any new initiative. In this way, the administrators monitored, supported and evaluated the teacher's implementation of the new program. All of the teachers received the identical professional development and thus obtained the same basic knowledge and shared vocabulary. Professional development was offered via

many pathways throughout the district. Consultants from textbook companies, college professors, independent specialists, coaches and in-district specialists provided a myriad of opportunities. Configuration of sessions included: all day workshops, school-based sessions during after school meetings; or coaching sessions offered by in-district coaches and specialists. One particularly successful model of professional development began with an all-day workshop and then proceeded to job-embedded support through modeling and coaching, similar to the design used in San Diego City Schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Principals depended on the supervisors to coordinate the all-day workshops and to train the coaches and specialists. The literacy and math coaches then supported teachers in-class and during common planning time. Jimenez noted that West Park had faithfully implemented this model since its inception as a result of the *Abbott* decision and subsequent funding. Both Jones and Jimenez acknowledged that the literacy coach, in particular, contributed to the efficiency of teachers in reading and writing instruction and made a significant difference.

After school meetings were other venues for professional learning. Teachers were required to attend three after school meetings each month. One meeting was identified as a staff meeting, another one was a department meeting and the third was the principal's professional development meeting which addressed concerns specific to each school. However, Gonzalez used her staff meetings as professional development sessions so she had two after school meetings each month. Gonzalez, with the assistance from her articulation team, planned these sessions. The team members either presented the session or obtained the needed resources. Some of the topics which had been covered during these after school sessions included: Professional Learning Communities and the

intervention project; technology; *Performance Matters*; a book study; and the *Collins Writing Program*. The bilingual and ESL teachers attended all of these sessions as they were expected to adapt the strategy or program to the language and level of their students. The bilingual literacy coach provided support for the Language Arts literacy initiatives.

Gonzalez added peer observations to the menu of professional development opportunities since teachers often learned best from each other. Once she and/or the specialists identified a teacher who was implementing a strategy or components of a program effectively, she would recommend other that teachers observe that class. Gonzalez also acknowledged that a few teachers were resistant, that everything was not perfect. However, she believed that as a whole, when it was time for the staff to respond, they did.

Bilingual and special education teachers received professional development on the various components of the literacy program alongside the general education teachers. Everyone was informed about guided reading, balanced literacy, and academic vocabulary. However, the reading consultant did host a separate session just for the bilingual teachers to review the native language materials.

In addition, if the bilingual office noted a need which only pertained to bilingual educators, they arranged for that professional development separately. For example, the bilingual staff developed workshops specifically for Level Two teachers to discuss the transition process and they also hosted a seminar with Dr. Calderon on the topic of bilingual students with limited skills in their native language. Annually, the director and specialists presented workshop sessions on the administration of the ACCESS for ELLs test.

When asked about her own professional development, Jones acknowledged that she had attended a few workshops on English learners, but found the most valuable information from day- to- day interaction, questioning through discussions, and working with the bilingual teachers. She also credited Townson for educating her through research articles that she regularly shared with district administration. Jones also admitted that she learned the most about bilingual education from Jimenez, her vice principal. This relational support contributed to the development of her expertise.

The district context played a major role in the implementation of initiatives. The collaboration with the bilingual department as well as the district initiatives in curriculum, instruction and assessment were driving forces behind the principals' practices. Even the recent budget cuts were handled in a way at the district level which communicated respect for staff and the desire to minimize the impact as much as possible.

Impact of budget cuts.

Collaboration and trust were most needed this past year when West Park experienced major budget cuts. Some of the best practices that were based on key people in key positions were in jeopardy of being cut. Even under these difficult circumstances, the embedded structure of communication and articulation aided West Park's ability to sustain hard economic times.

Jones announced at the staff meeting in the middle of April that although each budget was cut by 25%, the superintendent was working diligently to keep as many people as possible. The superintendent did not want to publicly state the number of staff cuts until he was absolutely sure; however, the number started at 250 and it was rumored

to have dropped to 84. Jones continuously communicated to staff the status of the cuts. At the end of April, a significant number of teachers announced their retirements, thus Jones announced at the School Leadership Committee meeting that the number of teachers' positions to be eliminated had now fallen to 30. She shared with the committee that the superintendent was hopeful that the number of cuts would dwindle even more.

Unfortunately, non-tenured teachers would get notices but there was a strong possibility that many could be reinstated. She also informed the committee members that several high school students respectfully addressed the Board of Education about the possible loss of teachers.

Jimenez expressed the fear that they would not be able to maintain the excellent programs they had established due to the political climate. Many of the key people in the district were retiring or just leaving. She acknowledged that they were going to have to do what they could do, but she actually felt as if they were "going backwards." The central administration had decided that they would eliminate positions that were not related to direct classroom instruction, such as literacy coaches. This was unfortunate for the bilingual program that included the bilingual literacy coach and two bilingual resource specialists. Jimenez described these eliminations as "a knife in the heart of the program." Both Jones and Jimenez were disillusioned because they believed that the literacy coaches had made a great impact in improved instruction and were responsible for the high level of teacher efficiency. They advocated mightily for these positions but to no avail. Other losses included a counselor, a nurse, a security guard, one bilingual teacher and one special education teacher.

The budget cuts greatly impacted Gonzalez's "awesome articulation team." Both the math specialist and literacy coach positions were eliminated which left the reading specialist as the only member of the "team." Fortunately, the literacy coach was dually certified as a bilingual teacher, so Gonzalez assigned her to be the first grade dual language teacher. In this way, she expanded the dual language program and retained a highly effective teacher, finding a way to continue quality instruction with fewer resources (Boyd, 1982, as cited in Caruso, 2011). This was an example of how West Park made every effort to minimize the impact of the budget cuts by utilizing their expert staff in innovative capacities.

The district's structural and relational organization of communication, consistency and coordination set the conditions for effective collaboration with bilingual district personnel.

Collaboration with the bilingual office.

The district's structural framework guided and encouraged communication within and across systemic levels which supported the implementation of district initiatives. Communication, articulation and coordination continued to surface as key features to describe the relationship with the bilingual office. The personnel at the district bilingual office cultivated a close working relationship with the administrators at both schools which was evident in the two focus schools. Constant communication and coordination occurred through the relationships that had been nurtured with key people at each setting. The program design was established by the district bilingual office so the school administrator's task was to understand the rationale and ensure that staff abided by the protocol set by the bilingual director.

Vasquez stated that the bilingual program always had the support of the superintendent and West Park has been fortunate to have “great bilingual directors” over the years. Oveido, the first grade bilingual teacher, commented that the principal was in constant communication with the bilingual office and that even the assistant superintendent, Rivers, understood and supported the bilingual program. When Rivers completed a walkthrough, she always stopped in the bilingual classes to converse with the students and the teachers. At the bilingual centralized intake center, students were registered, assessed and placed by the resource specialists who also explained the whole process to the parents before the child even entered the building.

Bryk and Schnieder (2003) defined relational trust as an “interrelated set of mutual dependencies embedded within the social exchanges of any school community” based on respect, personal regard, competence and personal integrity (p.41). Relational trust was evident in the collegial relationships between the principals and bilingual office personnel. Jones commended Townson for her efforts to keep the principals aware of the current state mandates and best practices for English learners. She reiterated how Townson always informed administrators about any new state directives or initiatives at the Superintendent’s administrative team meetings. Townson also attended the elementary principals’ meeting if there was a need to discuss a specific bilingual issue.

Even though Townson managed the district implementation of the bilingual program, the principals technically had the ultimate responsibility of what occurred in their respective buildings. Townson created a reciprocal relationship with the principals so that communication and articulation could occur. If Gonzalez had a bilingual based problem, she contacted Townson to brainstorm solutions and vice versa. As an example,

Townson often consulted with Gonzalez if there was a question whether or not a particular child should be placed in the bilingual program. Gonzalez assumed it was because she had been a bilingual teacher. However, whatever the reason, she appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback. The day before, a child had been recommended for the bilingual program but the mother disagreed with the placement. So Townson sent the parent to Gonzalez to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the placement. Gonzalez and the parent agreed to allow the child to be placed in the general program for two weeks. After that period of time, the placement would be re-evaluated. If Gonzalez decided that the student belonged in the bilingual program then the parent agreed that she would move her into the program. In other situations when the resource specialists felt strongly about a particular placement, then Gonzalez respected their opinions.

Close contact between Jones and Rosen, the bilingual resource specialist, assured continuity and provided needed support. They regularly conferred about placement and concerns about children's progress especially those students in the *Viaje* and Level One classes. Jones had to be cognizant of the different needs and learning progressions of those students. On one point, though, Jones totally deferred to Rosen and the staff when determining which language version of NJASK to administer. Since the NJASK was available in English and Spanish, districts had the option to choose the language of assessment within specific criteria. This decision usually had to be made for the children in the Level Two classes since that was the transition year. The NJDOE established these guidelines when determining the appropriate language for assessment:

This accommodation should normally be reserved for native

Spanish-speakers: 1) for whom the current school year represents

their first or second year of enrollment in a public school in the United States; 2) whose English language proficiency may be described as *Entering* or *Beginning*; or, in some cases, *Developing* in accordance with the *WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners in Grades K to 12*; and/or 3) who are instructed in a bilingual education program that includes literacy and mathematics instruction in the native language. Districts should make decisions... on the basis of multiple measures of student English language proficiency. (NJDOE, Eligibility Guidelines for NJASK 3-8 Spanish Language Assessment, 2011, paragraph 5)

Jones relied on the bilingual teachers and resource specialists to select the language of assessment since this was not her area of expertise. The first and second criteria were quite clear since Level Two naturally students met those conditions. The bilingual teacher's input as to where the child was in transitioning to English was the key information needed in making the decision.

An additional example of collaboration between the schools and the district office was the flexibility of scheduling ESL instruction based on North Street school's needs and availability of staff. Townson allowed for this flexibility as long as the school followed the parameters of the state code. So each school did it a little bit differently. At North Street School, Jimenez was in charge of coordinating the schedule for the bilingual and ESL teachers. She tried to use the second language learning resources as best as she could. Last year, only one bilingual intervention teacher was available for the bilingual

classes, yet the ESL teachers had open periods. So Jones and Jimenez decided to pair an ESL teacher with a bilingual teacher to provide an additional hour of intervention. Thus the ESL teacher also served as an intervention teacher for part of the day.

Another way that ESL teachers were utilized differently at North Street School is during a “blitz” period. This period was added to the end of the day as a test besting period for one month prior to the administration of the state tests to address specific skills, especially in writing. At the end of the day, students were grouped homogenously according to a targeted need. Students from the bilingual classes were paired with general education students to work together on that particular skill with the ESL teacher. The whole school participated in the blitz period but Jimenez ensured that the bilingual students worked with an ESL teacher during this period. North Street School was the only school using ESL teachers in this way.

Collaboration and trust around the issue of staff evaluations and hiring also occurred. Non-tenured teachers were observed and evaluated by the principal, vice-principal and the language arts and/or math supervisors. If the teacher was in the bilingual program then either the bilingual supervisor or director completed the evaluation. When Gonzalez observed a bilingual teacher struggling, she contacted the bilingual director and arranged for another observation to ensure that they observed the same phenomena. Trust was cultivated between administrators in these day-to-day tasks by talking honestly with each other and being open-minded to another point of view (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). After consulting with each other, they provided targeted support, if needed, as soon as possible. When bilingual and ESL teachers were hired, they interviewed with the principal, the bilingual director and a committee of teachers.

Every May the trust and collaboration between principals and the bilingual director were again quite evident. Since it was a district-wide program, the elementary and middle school principals, the bilingual director and the resource specialists met to review the projected enrollment in the various proficiency levels. Because of the degree of understanding of the district-wide program, principals worked well together to make the necessary adjustments. Some schools had to change levels or add a *Viaje* class or had to move a class to a larger setting. Last year, South Street School did not have a Grade Three/Level Two class but the projected numbers required a shift to a Grade Three/Level Three section. So Gonzalez and Vasquez accommodated the bilingual program to meet the needs of the children. This year, Grade Three/Level Two students returned to the school and the few Level Three students attended a different building. Fortunately, West Park provided transportation to the other school so that the children could be placed at their appropriate level.

Collaboration with the bilingual department occurred seamlessly in both schools due to the level of trust and the structural communication patterns established in West Park. The district context was a major factor in the implementation of a model bilingual program. The last factor which influenced the success of the program was the principals' instructional leadership.

Principal's Instructional Leadership

Much of the effective schools research highlights the importance of the principal's ability to be an instructional leader (ISLLC Standard, 2008). This principle extends to leaders of schools with a significant ELL population (Miramontes et al., 1997). Implicit in the definition of instructional leadership are the principal's vision and beliefs,

leadership style, background knowledge based on previous experiences and knowledge base. These features that shaped leadership established the lenses to discuss the instructional leadership of both principals (Murphy et al., 2006).

Principal's vision and beliefs

Without strong leadership with a clear vision, it [success] cannot happen. Maria Jimenez, vice principal, North Street School.

I've always believed that if we give the right resources to our teachers – the right training, if we give them everything they need, then the program has a good chance of succeeding. Emily Gonzalez, principal of South Street School.

Both Jones and Gonzalez had a vision for their schools and students, albeit with a slightly different focus. Jones approached her vision of developing students into lifelong learners through literacy and empowerment of teachers. Gonzalez had a slightly different emphasis on student growth in the learning process. Subsequently, she concentrated her efforts on intervention programs which built capacity and accountability within the school.

North Street School

When asked what she thought others might say about her as a leader, Jones confidently stated that her staff would definitely say that she cared about children and their learning (Carranza, 2010). Jones envisioned her students becoming lifelong learners through development of strong reading skills. She firmly believed that solid reading skills enhanced overall student success. Therefore, she empowered the SLC sub-committees to identify ways to motivate students to read. The curriculum committee noticed that girls

were reading more than boys, so they brainstormed ways to involve more boys in the reading programs. One of the stereotypical ideas developed was to include a sports theme to hopefully interest more males in reading.

As a passionate proponent of shared leadership and teacher buy-in at every opportunity, Jones reiterated that “articulation and communication” were the foundational practices that created that community. Teachers had to be a part of the process and had to understand the value in any new initiative to truly change practice (ISLLC Standard 1, 2008). While the SLC and subcommittees created an environment where everyone had input into school activities, Jones also designed other opportunities where teachers experienced firsthand why changes needed to be made in curriculum and instruction. When the NJASK was first administered and the pressure rested on the shoulders of the third and fourth grade teachers, Jones shared the released samples with teachers in grades, K, 1 and 2. In this way, they viewed the objectives that students had to master in third and fourth grades. The kindergarten, first and second grade teachers were in shock when they saw the reality of the test specifications. That year she also scheduled the lower grade level teachers to proctor the exam so they could actually experience the duration and intensity of these assessments. Jones found that she did not have to do anything else to encourage teachers to change practices. That experience alone made a major difference in teachers’ understanding of the ramifications of their instruction. These teachers consequently set a K-4 school-wide goal to ensure that their previous students were well-prepared for these high stakes assessments.

Another example of successful teacher buy-in occurred when the recently retired Language Arts Literacy supervisor implemented a structured academic language program

at all grade levels. Teachers incorporated “tier two” vocabulary words into their daily planning. Because of this vocabulary initiative, each month a student from each class was identified as a word wizard. Teachers further embraced this idea by developing an end-of-the-year vocabulary parade of the words they studied that year. Each grade chose certain word categories; e.g., the bilingual kindergarten created cognate posters; another kindergarten class designed math word banners; and the bilingual first grade carried homonym sandwich boards.

To especially stress the importance of teacher buy-in, Jones pointed to the current mathematics benchmark assessment process whereby teachers did not see the value of the data. The teachers administered the same assessment four times throughout the year, so they knew that the students would not do well in September. Therefore, they did not even want to review the data. Jones advocated for her staff by sharing this fact with central administration in the hopes that the creators of the new benchmark assessment process for the K-2 math standards would take this information into consideration. Clearly, Jones deeply respected her staff.

South Street School

As a leader, Gonzalez was a firm believer that “every child can learn.” By June, she wanted to be able to assert that every child advanced in knowledge and skills. Gonzalez defined the year successful even if a child did not meet the criteria to move to the next level, but demonstrated growth. For that reason, she was a strong advocate for differentiating instruction using constant assessment and data to drive the decision making process. Consequently, she focused her efforts on interventions for all students not only on the 20% who needed a remedial program.

Gonzalez' leadership style was business-like with an air of efficiency surrounding her and permeating the office and school. She described herself as "a stickler for doing what's right." Her goal was to be fair across the board without showing favoritism. An illustration of her equity and efficiency emerged in her quest to create a modified *Response to Intervention* program. Understanding the need for central administration approval, she first lobbied the superintendent to allow her to pilot the program. Once she obtained his consent, she realized that she needed staff commitment as well. So she solicited a core group of teachers to attend the training for the model with her. In this way, she brokered their support for the initiative. This core group then presented the idea to the staff who subsequently "voted" on whether or not to proceed with the pilot. With the staff approval, she and the team designed an intervention/enrichment period that met every day so that all students' needs were addressed.

Gonzalez also found that it was important to educate the teachers about the specific goals she had (Herrity, 1997). If the explanation was too vague, teachers would not implement the change. In her experience, communication, support and resources made the difference. To facilitate communication she ensured that teachers met in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) weekly during their common planning period/grade level or specials meeting. Once a month she joined each group and required completed feedback forms on the weeks she did not attend. If the teachers had a question they communicated the question via the feedback form and Gonzalez responded accordingly. She maintained a log of all their weekly reports in addition to meeting individually with each teacher when the quarterly benchmark scores were released.

Since feedback and professional learning community tasks all occurred during the grade level meetings, Gonzalez ensured that bilingual teachers attended their respective grade level sessions. However the ESL and intervention teachers worked with multiple grade levels, so Gonzalez scheduled them to tag on to a different grade level each month. Unfortunately, though, Oveido, the first grade bilingual teacher, reported that she was only able to meet with the first grade team two days a week due to a schedule conflict. Since the ESL teacher was not always in the grade level meeting they had to discuss lesson plans at the beginning or the end of the period. Even so, Oveido believed that she and the ESL teacher worked together as a team. The ESL teacher prepared her own lesson plan but Oveido stated that there was a connection and continuity. Even though Gonzalez did her best to have bilingual teachers meet with the grade level, evidently, it was not always possible. Nevertheless, the teachers found ways to communicate and work together.

As a hands-on instructional leader, Gonzalez also provided mini professional development workshops during common planning periods. For example, this last common planning meeting she reviewed the end of year reporting and the teachers' professional development plans. If they did not meet their goals they had to provide the rationale and an action plan.

Gonzalez demonstrated her professional responsibility in other ways as well (Soltero, 2011). Oveido and the other bilingual teachers raised a concern about the Spanish benchmark assessments. When they compared the English assessments with the Spanish ones, they concluded that not only were they assessing two different skills; but, in fact, the Spanish assessment was more difficult. They shared these findings with

Gonzalez, who consequently contacted the bilingual director. After reviewing their objections, the director agreed and the assessment was modified.

In addition, Gonzalez monitored teacher implementation of initiatives through walkthroughs with district and other school level staff and completed lesson plan checks. Through the lesson plans, Gonzalez certified that the standards, objectives and evidence of learning were aligned. Gonzalez provided feedback to the teachers during the grade level meetings, individual conferences, or at after school staff sessions.

In connection with her vision of equity across the board and efficient leadership style, Gonzalez's background knowledge and past experiences also contributed to her advocacy and decision-making practices which were strongly related to instructional leadership (Miramontes et al., 1997).

Importance of principal's background knowledge.

Background knowledge is an area where Jones and the other administrators differed the greatest. Jones is monolingual and was an intervention teacher while Gonzalez, Jimenez and Vasquez are bilingual and spent their teaching careers as bilingual teachers. . In Carranza's (2010) study of bilingual and ESL teachers' perceptions of school leaders, principals who were bilingual were rated most positively in terms of ethical and social justice practices which promoted equity and achievement for English learners. However, just being bilingual may not be a determining factor when implementing a model bilingual program.

When Jones first arrived in West Park, she did not understand bilingual learners at all, but she worked with the first and second grade bilingual teachers and learned from them and from trial and error. However, when she was appointed principal at North Street

School, she truly gained a deeper understanding of bilingual education, even though she stated that “being in West Park, you start absorbing what needs to be done.” Interaction with the bilingual supervisors (past and current) and Jimenez, her bilingual vice principal, fostered a greater appreciation of the process of acquiring a second language and the bilingual design. Jones acknowledged that she has learned the most from Jimenez, due to Jimenez’s personal experiences. Jimenez definitely understood the plight of immigrant parents and their children since she had been an English learner who arrived in the United States at age fifteen. Before her appointment as the vice principal of North Street School four years ago, she was a bilingual literacy coach for three months and a bilingual teacher for thirteen years. In working with Jones, she shared her insights about the theory and practice of bilingual education. She credited her success to having strong skills and knowledge in her home language and transferring those skills and knowledge to English. Jimenez believed that disclosing her personal experiences allowed Jones to see the overall advantage of the transitional bilingual model and consequently made more informed decisions as an administrator (Miramontes et al., 1997). Jimenez strongly professed that administrators who had more information and background knowledge about the programs were more capable of determining appropriate courses of action (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). As a great advocate of bilingual education, Jimenez constantly educated both staff and parents about the benefits of using what you know in a first language and applying that knowledge into a second language. Her main responsibilities were to address the concerns of parents and to work closely with the bilingual and ESL teachers.

Evidently, the strategy of pairing a monolingual with a bilingual administrator was very effective at North Street School. Jones delegated the operation of the bilingual program to Jimenez who had more knowledge and expertise than she did. However, she learned a great deal about the program philosophy and design and worked with the bilingual resource specialists to decide on the correct placements.

At South Street School, Gonzalez and Vasquez had both been bilingual teachers and thus had a deep understanding of the philosophy of bilingual education as well as the process of the transitional bilingual education model (Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999). Vasquez also understood the advantages and challenges of being an English learner. Although she was a baby when her family moved to the United States, she lived in a household where only Spanish was spoken. She described herself as, “that child in kindergarten who didn’t know English because I wasn’t exposed to it as a baby.” She related to the struggles parents faced when they could not help with homework as her own parents’ experiences had not diminished from her memory. She also understood the experiences of the bilingual teacher since she had been a bilingual second and third grade teacher for seven years. Vasquez valued her experiences as a bilingual learner and teacher and believed that her background knowledge provided an advantage as an administrator. Both Vasquez and Oveido asserted that it was beneficial when the principal believed in the philosophy of bilingual education and had bilingual experience or at the very least had a strong understanding of the bilingual learner. However, Vasquez also believed that even if the administrator did not have a background in bilingual education, she could still support the bilingual teachers in addressing the needs of their students. She noted that she

did not have a background in special education, but she supported the efforts of the teachers in meeting the needs of that special population.

Gonzalez's background knowledge, experience and commitment to bilingual education clearly shaped her adoption of the dual language model and integration of the bilingual classes in all facets of the school organization. Gonzalez was a fervent supporter of the dual language model. As a second grade, Level Two teacher, she reported that she actually practiced dual language methodology years ago since she never dropped Spanish as the year progressed. Due to these positive experiences teaching in both languages, she embraced the idea of extending the dual language model from the preschool program especially since seventeen children from that cohort were scheduled to attend South Street School. Not only did she philosophically agree with the dual language program but also from a pragmatic perspective, allocated the resources needed to begin the dual language program in kindergarten (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). True to her quote, she also ensured that the dual language teachers received the training and support they needed to succeed.

In contrast, Vasquez was a staunch advocate for the traditional transitional bilingual program, so when she became the interim principal she was eagerly designing a way to establish a second grade bilingual class so children did not have to travel to another school for that year only. She also made certain that the new Grade Three/Level Two bilingual class had the needed materials in Spanish. Yet Vasquez admitted that she was not as strong a proponent of the dual language model as Gonzalez. So when the program expanded to first grade under her tenure, the dual language teacher did not receive all the materials she needed to operate a true dual language program. Since space

limitations already impacted the second grade traditional bilingual education program, serious concern existed whether the dual language program would be extended to second grade. Arias was disappointed when Vasquez did not attend the professional development training for the dual language program, yet encouraged when the bilingual director did show her support through her attendance at the trainings.

Arias theorized that since South Street School was designated as a School in Need of Improvement for not making AYP, Vasquez was focused on passing the NJASK 3 and 4. Therefore, she was not willing to sustain the dual language model until third and fourth grade. Vasquez half-heartedly stated, “I would like to see the dual continue if I had the room and space to make it work.” However, as previously stated, she was already advocating for a traditional second grade bilingual class at South Street School.

Surprisingly, Arias found that English dominant administrators and teachers were more supportive of the dual language model than bilingual administrators and teachers. In her opinion, some of the bilingual personnel felt threatened with the change since they fought so hard for the bilingual program to be established as it was. Arias was baffled by this reaction as she perceived the dual language program as providing more for English learners, not less. Gonzalez obviously agreed with that perspective since she was a strong supporter.

It is apparent that the principal’s knowledge was instrumental in the implementation of the program designs. If it was the district approved program, principals did not necessarily have a choice in implementing the model. However, when the design was a “pilot” program the principals had significant power in its adoption.

Clearly, Jones' leadership style as well as her past experiences significantly shaped her interactions with the bilingual staff and administration. Her previous experience of being in a building where the bilingual program was segregated made her a staunch advocate for integrating classes and teachers. Her open-mindedness allowed her to learn and gain a clearer understanding about bilingual education from her bilingual vice-principal. Her trust in others and her acknowledgement of her lack of expertise in the field caused her to share leadership responsibilities. Finally, her value and respect of and for parents enabled her to embrace the multitude of activities provided and to ensure that all events were offered bilingually and at varied times.

Summary

Three broad areas, ranging from federal legislation to district context to personal attributes and experiences, influenced district and principals' practices in West Park. First and foremost, the No Child Left Behind Act and the accountability of AYP had a direct effect on district and principals' practices.

At the district level, patterns for communication as well as district-wide initiatives were established and supported. The district perspective shaped the instruction and assessment at both schools. South Street and North Street Schools shared many features due to the systemic initiatives established. The district level relational and structural frameworks contributed to clear communication and consistent implementation of school reform efforts. Common curriculum across programs, common benchmark assessments and coordinated professional development added to smooth transitions for high mobility, students with special needs and bilingual learners. Gonzalez and Vasquez attributed these effective transitions to the district organizational features which supported consistency

across the community. Jones and Gonzalez described a collegial, supportive partnership with central office administrators. Both recognized the importance of having a knowledgeable bilingual director who collaborated and communicated with building principals about best practices and state guidelines.

The third contextual factor was the instructional leadership of the principals. Jones' own background knowledge and experiences contributed to the spirit of camaraderie and openness which pervaded the hallways. Jones and her vice principal, Jimenez, worked as a team and coordinated their efforts to address the needs of all students, teachers and parents. Jones admitted that bilingual education was not her strength so she initially depended on Jimenez to guide her decisions. She gained significant knowledge and a better understanding of the philosophy and practice as a result of their collaboration. She trusted the expertise of her teachers to make informed pedagogical decisions about the transition from Spanish to English as well as the language of NJASK administration. Due to her past experiences with segregated classes, Jones was steadfast that the bilingual classes and students be fully integrated into the fabric of the school (Datnow et al. 2005). Bilingual teachers met with their grade level colleagues to discuss and monitor their students' progress. Jones was also cognizant of the importance of parental involvement since she continued the storied parental program at North Street School. A confluence of federal, local and personal factors contributed to Jones' practices in relation to the English learners in North Street School.

Gonzalez was a motivated and innovative school leader who aspired to be a district leader. Her vision and leadership style exuded equity and efficiency while her background knowledge and previous experiences provided her with the expertise to

support the bilingual learners in her school. Due to her pioneering attitude, the dual language program was expanded to kindergarten and first grade. Unfortunately, she did not stay to see the fruits of this pilot program as she was appointed the middle school principal. Gonzalez researched and advocated to develop professional learning communities whereby teachers identified struggling students. As a result, she implemented a daily intervention period and scheduled two teachers in each classroom to differentiate instruction. At the end of June she was appointed the middle school principal, and her vice-principal assumed the role as interim principal. The transition was smooth since Vasquez had served as vice principal, had been a bilingual teacher in West Park and knew the routines and procedures. Vasquez was very much aware of the need to make AYP and the pressure caused her to encourage the bilingual teachers to transition students to English as soon as possible. Also, Vasquez did not have the same belief in the dual language program so she did not advocate expansion of the program. This transition highlighted the fact that the principal's beliefs and previous experiences can significantly influence the implementation of a "pilot" program.

The political landscape, district factors and principals' instructional leadership influenced the implementation of the model bilingual program. The next chapter will discuss the findings of this study and draw conclusions about these contextual factors.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

With the growing population of English Language Learners combined with the increasing pressure on district and school leaders to improve student outcomes, this study explored the contextual factors which influenced the implementation of a model bilingual program in West Park, NJ (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2011; Soltero, 2011). Recent research studied the effect of district initiatives on the teaching and learning process; however, these studies did not specifically examine the influence of district practices on the implementation of a model bilingual program. Initially the focus of this study was at the school based level since much of the school reform literature focuses on effective schools and the transformational leaders of those schools (Cotton, 2003; Firestone, et al., 2004; Marzano, et al., 2005; Nelson, 1998; Smith, 2008). Several studies also examined the effective bilingual programs within the effective schools framework as well (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Gold, 2006; Keefe & Howard, 1997; Tikunoff, 1983a). Carter and Chatfield (1986) recommended that bilingual education and its impact on learning be studied within the effective schools context. They posited that an effective bilingual program only occurred in an effective school. However, it quickly became evident that effective schools were actually situated in a larger district context of improved efforts in teaching and learning for all students (Honig et al., 2010). Consequently the focus of this study shifted to include all of the contextual factors which contributed to the successful operation of the bilingual program.

This case study demonstrated the commitment that West Park had to strong instructional leadership from central administration to the principals to the content

supervisors. As West Park examined its practices as a result of the accountability measures in NCLB, the connection of the relational and structural organization between the central administration and the schools emerged as a key factor providing support for the teaching and learning process (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). In West Park the central administration aligned the curriculum for all learners and provided consistent professional development for all staff (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). A district-wide bilingual program was designed and supervised by a well-regarded and knowledgeable bilingual director. Finally, at the school level, the principals' background knowledge, prior experiences and leadership styles influenced the interactions with the district bilingual personnel, school staff, students and parents, (Carranza, 2010; Murphy et al., 2006).

Federal legislation

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) developed more demanding regulations and accountability measures for educating English learners than any prior iterations of ESEA (Soltero, 2011). Thus, this legislation had important implications for all administrators and teachers. First, the NCLB Act (2002) fostered greater inclusion of English learners in standards-based instruction, assessment and accountability (August et al., 2010). In so doing, districts and schools have been held accountable for the performance of English learners in gaining English proficiency and in meeting grade level expectations. In essence, this legislation clearly highlighted the academic and language needs of English learners which motivated districts to align instruction and assessment to the standards in order to improve outcomes for ALL learners.

Unfortunately, this process pressured principals to focus on test results (Honig et al., 2010; Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010).

The Working Group on ELL Policy, a group of nationally recognized researchers with extensive experience in the education of English learners, identified key facts to be considered for the reauthorization of ESEA (August, et al., 2010). Primary to their recommendations is the understanding that English acquisition takes time and is influenced by in-school factors, such as type and quality of schooling in addition to out-of-school factors, such as Socioeconomic Status (SES), prior schooling and parents' undocumented status (August, et al., 2010; Yoshikawa, et al., 2008).

As much as the adoption of NCLB raised standards for English learners and forced districts and schools to examine their curriculum, to ensure that English learners had access to the content standards and to be accountable for their learning; a major flaw in the law was the accountability measure for English learners. Expecting students with limited skills in English to score at the same level of English speakers was an unattainable goal (Wright, 2006). This benchmark policy was destined to fail. The only hope that districts had to meet this requirement was to have a larger group of former English learners which would outweigh the number of current English learners. As was evident in West Park, the former English learners outperformed general education students and thus were able to “pull” the whole English learners’ subgroup past the percentage benchmark. That numerical advantage does not occur every year in every grade. A more meaningful accountability measure would consider an English learners’ level of English proficiency. Cook, et al. (2011) used results from one state’s English language proficiency assessment and academic content reading assessment to demonstrate

that as the learners' English language proficiency increased, the students' reading scores also increased. In the past, Townson had also compared the English learners' proficiency levels to their achievement on the state assessment and found similar patterns of growth.

Undoubtedly, NCLB affected the lives of the principals, teachers and students in West Park. Both principals acknowledged the significance of NCLB by establishing a school-wide goal of making AYP each year. Additionally, Jones and Gonzalez did their best to ensure that ALL students performed well on the standardized tests. For some, like Jones, it was the means for raising expectations and improving student performance. She witnessed a dramatic shift in the expectations and subsequently the performance of the children in her school as a result of this legislation. In fact, North Street School was recognized as a Title I Distinguished School for their exceptional student performance for two or more years. She believed that NCLB raised the bar in a positive way for all students. And even though North Street School met AYP and received this honor, Jones still implemented an NJASK tutoring period at the end of the day to "test prep" in the area of writing.

For others, like Gonzalez, it was dreaded legislation that measured school success through one single criterion. While North Street School had met the federal mandate for adequate yearly progress in both Language Arts and Math for the past three years, South Street School did not meet the benchmark in Language Arts. Therefore Gonzalez and her staff had to endure a comprehensive Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA) review by the NJ Department of Education and, consequently, were under a tremendous burden to, "improve, improve, improve." Gonzalez responded

by instituting more intensive instructional time through a school-wide intervention period (Soltero, 2011).

The importance of making AYP was evident in both Jones' and Gonzalez's explications of West Park's bilingual model program status. Both perceived the achievement of AYP by the ELL subgroup (current and former students) as the only criterion that mattered. Gonzalez stated, "I think the results speak volumes," while Jones' comment was: "That tells you everything you need to know about the program. They make AYP." Even though both principals heralded the achievement of the English learners' subgroup, it is not clear that they realized it was due to the inclusion of the former English learners' scores. District and school level administrators must clearly understand the calculation of this measure or they can misperceive the results of the assessments. Examining the relationship between the English proficiency level and the scores on the achievement tests provides a clearer picture of the progress that English learners are making in the goal to be academically proficient.

The pressure to make AYP also compelled district bilingual personnel and building principals to discuss achievement and assessment issues specific to English learners (Tucker & Coddling, 2002). The resource specialists and bilingual literacy coach continuously reminded the principals about the amount of time needed to become academically proficient in a second language (García & Beltrán, 2003; Miramontes et al., 1997). Students in Level Two and Level Three classes caused considerable concern. For example, Jones questioned why a bilingual third grader in a Level Two class, who was reading at a second grade level, was recommended for promotion to fourth grade. Level Three students also confounded principals since all of the instruction was in English and

students were using grade level texts. Jones concluded that those children should be passing the tests and the benchmarks, equivalent to native English-speaking students. Townson and the specialists explained that these children were NOT totally equivalent to the general program students. If they were equivalent, they would have exited the program. These students still required ESL support and accommodations, thus they may not have sufficient academic English to pass a standardized assessment in English.

Administrators also needed to understand the premise of the *Viaje* classes (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). By virtue of being placed in these classes, these students were identified as significantly below their grade level peers in their first language. So principals, such as Jones, who had a second grade *Viaje class* in her school, had to measure their growth and not expect that they pass the grade level benchmarks or standardized tests. Having bilingual resource specialists in central administration positions to continuously educate all stakeholders about the second language acquisition process was invaluable for teachers and students in West Park.

Rosen, a bilingual resource specialist, found that even principals and vice principals, such as Vasquez from South Street School, a former bilingual teacher, tended to forget the details and variables that affected bilingual students, such as previous schooling, transitions and the rate of acquisition. Due to the pressure to meet AYP goals and her intent to prove herself as an interim principal, Vasquez persuaded the bilingual teachers to reduce the emphasis on native language literacy and move into English as soon as possible since she believed that would improve their standardized test scores (García, 2003). Hakuta presaged this unrealistic expectation when he addressed the United Commission on Civil Rights in 2001 and stated that,

It is unreasonable to expect English Language Learners to perform comparably to their native English-speaking peers in their initial years of schooling...and holding them to this expectation too early in their educational careers can be detrimental to their academic progress. (as cited in García, 2003, p. 204)

Even though some current and former bilingual students fared quite well on the state tests and did well on the benchmark assessments, principals and teachers continued to feel the pressure from NCLB and at times had incongruous expectations.

In Townson's analysis of NJASK scores where she found that the former bilingual students outperformed the general education students in three grades, she also noted that the former third grade students did not score as well as the general education students. She hypothesized that the preschool students may have exited too early or did not have the benefits of developing a foundation in native language literacy (Cummins, 2002). One reason that preschool students may have exited too early is based on the second Annual Measurable Achievement Objective or AMAO which targets a certain percentage of English learners who must attain English proficiency within five years. In New Jersey, the time begins in the 3 year-old preschool classroom. Therefore, those children who were in the preschool program for two years are expected to attain academic English proficiency by the end of second grade. These data definitely indicate a need to investigate the services and progress of those children. With the success of the dual language pilot in kindergarten and first grade, it would be beneficial to continue the pilot into the tested grades when the cumulative benefits of dual language education begin to show evidence on standardized assessments (Collier & Thomas, 2004). Data

need to drive instruction and programmatic designs. Since former English learners performed the same or better than their general education peers, these third grade results are important to consider especially with the change in preschool program services. Since Townson had a district vantage point, she noted trends and patterns that the school principals did not notice (Honig et al., 2010).

Interestingly, the establishment of English language development standards and, subsequently, the assessment of those standards, mandated under Title III of NCLB, did not receive much attention in the data collected in West Park. Yet, districts are also held accountable for growth on the composite scaled scores of the English language proficiency assessment as well as for the rates of attainment of English proficiency which has been set between expanding and bridging (4.5) on the ACCESS for ELLs® scale. However, in order to self-nominate as a model program, the district had to have met those AMAOs under Title III (Appendix A). This achievement was not reported.

The bilingual teacher briefly referred to the “ESL” standards when working with the ESL teacher as did the bilingual resource specialist. None of the administrators mentioned the impact of these standards. The bilingual director only referenced the assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®, when discussing a professional development session to review the administration of the test. Yet, the WIDA ELD standards have changed ESL education (Soltero, 2011; Wolf, et al., 2008). For the first time, English learners were being assessed on their ability to use social instructional language AND academic language across the content areas. These issues are important since the interpretation of the scores should play a fundamental role in improving teaching and learning. As with any accountability system, assessment should guide decision making about learning goals

and appropriate pedagogy (Wolf, et al., 2008). None of these issues were discussed in relation to the WIDA standards or ACCESS for ELLs® assessment. The content achievement test (NJASK) and AYP consumed everyone's attention.

The standards and accountability measures of the content achievement under NCLB had an impact on the district's overall approach to teaching and learning which subsequently influenced the implementation of the bilingual program (Honig et al., 2010). As a matter of fact, the district context played a vital role in the development of the knowledge, skills and dispositions of various stakeholders.

District Context

District initiatives, administrative processes and relationships between the personnel at various systemic levels had a tremendous impact on practices of the school leaders with regard to the implementation of the bilingual program in West Park (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). West Park began to improve the teaching and learning process by incorporating research-based practices, such as balanced literacy and technology (Datnow, et al., 2005). Over the past ten years, stable leadership guided the district's direction (Waters & Marzano, 2006). The current superintendent, previously the business administrator, was familiar with district initiatives; while the assistant superintendent, Rivers, had been in her position for over five years. Rivers had held positions as a bilingual teacher and a principal in other urban and suburban districts. Together they forged a plan to focus on improving learning by building capacity through the district supervisors and implementing a rigorous coaching model (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Jones credited the last two assistant superintendents for having a keener focus on curriculum and instruction, especially at the elementary level. Curriculum, progress

monitoring and professional development were encompassed under the auspices of the district context inclusive of the bilingual teachers and students. These features strongly influenced the practices of the principals and the success of the bilingual program.

The themes of district and school communication, alignment of initiatives and support from central administration echoed throughout all of the interviews and observations (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). The relationships were built through a consistent forum for district and school level administrators. All interviewees described the structure for articulation as a monthly administrative team meeting with an additional monthly meeting within a cohort (i.e. elementary principals, middle and high school principals, supervisors and directors). This structure provided immediate support among colleagues at the appropriate levels as well as communication opportunities across cohorts to focus on instruction (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). Both principals reported that the communication and camaraderie among the elementary principals benefited students because a sense of unity coalesced around district programs.

The main informants in this study shared a history of long term employment in West Park as they have all risen from teacher to administrator over the years (Waters & Marzano, 2006). A spirit of mutual respect among Jones, Gonzalez and Townson was apparent not only to the researcher, but also to staff members. Oveido, a bilingual teacher, noted that Gonzalez was in constant communication with the bilingual office while Rosen, a district bilingual resource specialist, observed a “mutual respect for different expertise” among district administrators.

Curriculum and instruction

A district guided curriculum was another factor which effective districts implemented (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). During the past five years, West Park adopted a common curriculum tied to state standards for all students, including students with special needs and bilingual learners. Prior to this effort, the bilingual classes were using different texts and following a different curriculum (Griego-Jones, 1995). The supervisors streamlined their efforts and ensured that the district adopted only textbooks which were available in English and Spanish. Working with the same materials eased the transition from the bilingual program to the general education program.

Gonzalez acknowledged that the district supervisors were responsible for smoothly transitioning all schools and staff into this universal approach by connecting curriculum, instruction and assessment and then providing the requisite professional development to complete the cycle (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). In all content and specialized areas, the language arts, math and bilingual supervisors utilized the coaching model to sustain the professional development training. In this way, teachers and administrators used the same language and discussed the effectiveness of specific interventions. Gonzalez and Jones regularly met with their grade level teams to foster this dialogue.

Having a bilingual director with expertise in the field along with bilingual specialists who sustained the fidelity of implementation of the transitional model supported the principals' implementation of the program in their respective schools. Townson had the district perspective and thus was able to advocate for the inclusion of the bilingual learners in every district initiative (Griego-Jones, 1995). Her status in the

professional community contributed to the development of the common curriculum and appropriate assessments.

Progress monitoring.

As noted earlier, monitoring implementation and outcomes was an integral process in comprehensive reform models (Calderon et al., 2011). West Park's initiative included creating and administering quarterly benchmark assessments in all core content areas (with Spanish versions) to document the progress on the NJCCCS. In conjunction with the benchmark assessments, the district improvement plan incorporated a new software program, *Performance Matters*, to manage the data. As a result, principals and teachers efficiently used the data to inform instruction and to monitor progress in a timely manner (Lucas, 1992). Both Jones and Gonzalez met individually with general education and bilingual teachers to review the quarterly benchmarks. At South Street School, Gonzalez developed the modified *Response to Intervention* (RtI) program whereby teachers developed interventions based on the results of the quarterly assessments. In contrast, Jones discussed the results with the teacher but did not have a systemic period for interventions. North Street School teachers addressed the weaknesses during regular classes. However, Jones had recently read an article about ways to further the use of data by identifying patterns that might be connected to curricular gaps and expressed a desire to incorporate these individual discussions into future grade level team meetings. Both met with their teachers but had slightly different responses to these meetings based on the structures in place.

Determining whether a child is struggling due to the process of second language acquisition or a learning disability is a difficult decision to make. The current process in

New Jersey of identification of children with special needs using a discrepancy model between achievement and cognition is very problematic (Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez-Lopez, & Damico, 2007). Although few research studies have examined the RtI model specifically with English learners, evidence suggests that RtI leads to positive outcomes for this population (Sun, Nam & Vanderwood, 2010). A recent report by the Institute of Education Sciences' (IES) What Works Clearinghouse highly recommends using the RTI components of screening, evidence-based intervention, and progress monitoring with ELLs (Gersten, et al., 2007). The recommended RtI protocol uses explicit and systematic instruction in targeted groups (Sun, Nam & Vanderwood, 2010). Teachers in South Street School developed their own interventions as long as the existing reading materials were not utilized (per Gonzalez's directions). It was not clear if teachers received professional development on which interventions would be most appropriate for the various groups or if they followed a robust progress monitoring protocol.

Although RtI models are typically implemented at the school level, adopting this process from a district perspective and providing the resources and support needed integrates a universal design for learning. One of the key features of a high quality RtI program is building an intervention period into the school day (DuFour, 2004). Gonzalez has piloted this process at South Street School. The next step would be to expand this pilot to the district level and provide professional development on effective interventions with different types of learners as well as effective progress monitoring procedures.

Professional development

Systematic professional development creates a community of learners. West Park offered many opportunities for school leaders and teachers to become a learning

community and to improve their practice. Any district initiative was systemically delivered through the supervisors, coaches and specialists with the support of the principal. Targeted professional development was also available for teachers who required support in certain areas.

Although there were few specialized sessions for bilingual and ESL teachers, there was no professional development on the WIDA standards or strategies to develop academic language. With such a significant change in focus of academic language, ESL teachers need specific professional development on how to align the content standards with the WIDA ELD standards. ESL teachers cannot function in isolation. It is difficult to schedule common planning time with the ESL and grade level teachers. Therefore, ESL teachers must be aware of the content standards at each grade levels and design lessons that incorporate the academic language necessary to understand the content.

Townson mentioned sheltered instruction training for a small group of teachers but did not discuss any district initiatives to train all staff on any other features of working with English learners. Many educators believe that improving outcomes for English learners depends on deepening all teachers' knowledge about second language acquisition, literacy and academic English (Anstrom et al. 2010). Therefore, systematic, ongoing professional development should be provided for all teachers who work with English learners.

Model program perspectives.

One of the major criteria for selecting this district for the study was the fact that West Park was identified as having a model bilingual program. Understanding the perspectives of various stakeholders as to the rationale of being chosen led to interesting

insights about the contextual factors that influenced the implementation of the program. The district bilingual staff perceived the program design and the seamless integration of the bilingual classes into the fabric of the schools as essential. On the contrary, school leaders pointed to the achievement of AYP as THE most critical factor in being recognized as a model program.

With the pressure to make AYP at the school level, it was not surprising that principals and vice-principals immediately noted that the test scores of the ELL subgroup were the reason that West Park was selected. Several current and former English learners performed well on the standardized tests which was a main priority in both schools. Incredibly, though, the bilingual staff did not present test scores as a reason for model program status even though their office completed the data analysis which demonstrated this achievement.

“Key people in key positions” was the refrain heard most often in the bilingual office. Having highly qualified, respected professionals in significant positions built the trust that Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) identified as essential for improving accountability and ensuring an instructional focus. These relational links built the capacity to improve the teaching and learning process, thus impacting student outcomes. Other features mentioned which elevated the bilingual program to exemplar status were: the systemic transitional design; the establishment of the *Viaje* classes at grades 2 through high school; and the identification and placement process at the central intake center.

Townson highlighted the gradual and systematic design of the transition from Spanish to English. Bilingual office personnel also identified the fact that all stakeholders understood the district’s levelized program design and the relationship to the second

language acquisition process. The district-wide program allowed for the systematic transitional classes to be established. If the program remained at the school level, most likely there would not be the requisite number of students at each proficiency level to create a class at each grade level. Having leveled classes provided the opportunity to develop a language policy for language usage at each proficiency level which created the systematic transition. At South Street School, Vasquez, vice principal, noted that children accessed the NJCCCS through instruction in their native language and then transitioned those skills into English. Using native language allowed students to access the content standards while they were acquiring English.

Many more English learners with limited schooling or interrupted education are entering the United States and West Park schools (Short, 1998). Once again, West Park responded to this need systemically from a district perspective within the bilingual program. As a result of the growing number of students with interrupted education and low literacy skills in their first language, West Park established a *Viaje* class at each grade level, beginning in grade 2. They selected their best teachers to instruct this specialized group. In Response to Intervention, this would be a systemic intervention (before Tier One, which typically begins at the classroom level). In many districts, as Jones stated, these students are placed in the general education classes with little additional support. Oftentimes, they fail or are referred to special education.

The leveled bilingual classes and the *Viaje* program would not be as efficient or effective if the centralized intake center did not exist. This unique component functions as the gateway to the district programs. Having experienced bilingual resource specialists evaluate the English proficiency and the first language ability in literacy and math of

incoming children is invaluable. The bilingual resource specialists also have the opportunity to explain the bilingual program to the parents, to answer any questions, and to provide a mini parent workshop on ways they can help their children. It is a welcoming center for new immigrant parents and the beginning of the parental involvement process.

Jimenez believed that model program status began with administrators and teachers who knew and cared about the bilingual program. Evidently, the collaboration and communication between the district bilingual director, bilingual specialists and school leaders was an integral factor.

Collaboration between bilingual office and principals.

Successful implementation of school reform depends to a large extent on the partnership relationships between the central office and school-based leaders (Honig, et al., 2010). The bilingual office specialists worked collaboratively with the building principals on several fronts. Each building principal was in charge of her building yet ensured that the bilingual classes had the support and materials they needed. According to Fina, the district bilingual literacy coach, the building administrators had been extremely supportive and accommodating of her efforts.

The bilingual resource specialists concurred. Since Rosen had a satellite office in North Street School, she witnessed bilingual and ESL teachers requesting additional supplies from Jones; Jones always found a way to honor their request. In addition, after the specialists completed the initial assessment of new students, they preferred to discuss the placement with Jones and Gonzalez. The decisions were not always easy since the child may be somewhat proficient in English but not be on grade level. Both principals were sensitive to the number of children in each class, so they sometimes requested that

new students be placed in another building or class when the numbers increased. The specialists understood their perspective so they considered those statistics when placing students. Ultimately, Jones and Gonzalez had the final word on the placement but this happened only after much discussion.

On one occasion, Rosen, a bilingual resource specialist, was asked to consult on a concern about the possible retention of a student at North Street School. Since Rosen was also certified as a Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant, she had valuable expertise about children with possible learning problems. After reviewing the child's progress, Jones and Rosen thought that the child might have an auditory processing problem. Rosen recommended tutoring to address that specific difficulty. Jones followed through and provided that child with the needed intervention.

Another example of their collaboration occurred at the end of the year. Townson and the resource specialists met with the building principals and discussed the projected enrollments for the following year. Every year was different. Last year the projections indicated that two classes in two different schools would have only seven students in each class. Obviously forming one class at that grade/proficiency level was the solution. At other times, they had to add or remove a class, but Townson found the principals to be understanding of the process and very cooperative. The principals offered new space or thought of ways to find a room if it was needed.

Staffing was another area where principals and the director often worked collaboratively. They discussed who taught what and came to a consensus. If a new teacher had to be hired they both participated in the selection process. Townson, though, had to be very careful about who taught which level because the language skills needed

for the teachers were very different across the proficiency levels. The common perception was that if you were a bilingual educator then you could teach any level. However, not all teachers were equally proficient in both languages so Townson had to place teachers according to their own levels of proficiency in both languages. Since certified bilingual teachers are in short supply (US Department of Education, 2011), she had to be strategic in using the teachers that she had. Level One teachers had to be very proficient in Spanish. Level Two teachers needed to be balanced or equally proficient in both languages (Hakuta & Diaz, 1995) while Level Three teachers had to be highly proficient in English. Unfortunately due to the budget cuts last year, there were no new hires and people had to be reassigned and transferred. The principals' first priority was to fill positions but Townson ensured that teachers were properly placed. Understanding these issues, most principals respected Townson's choices for staffing (August & Hakuta, 1997).

This integration at the district level is reflected at the school-based level as well (Griego-Jones, 1995). After-school meetings were mandated three times per month: a principal's staff meeting, a staff development meeting and a supervisors' meeting. Bilingual and ESL teachers attended the meetings in their respective schools. They participated in all school-based staff development opportunities which were usually based on each building's unique needs. The principal and staff development meetings were organized by the principal and the staff development committee at each site. In the past, there were mandatory monthly bilingual department meetings, however, now the third mandatory meeting was shared among the supervisors and usually covered the current district initiative in the various content areas. So one month, it may be Language Arts

Literacy, another month it may be Math, etc. Occasionally the bilingual director convened her own department meeting, if needed. For example, right before the administration of the annual state-mandated English language proficiency testing (ACCESS for ELLs®), all bilingual and ESL teachers discussed the new changes. Shortly before that, there was a meeting for all Level Two teachers in grades two through four to discuss the transitional guidelines, materials and student progress. Some of the bilingual teachers met voluntarily at the end of the year to discuss any problems they had with the district-based assessments and made recommendations for the following year. But due to the three meetings per month limitation, regrettably, the monthly bilingual department meetings had been dropped. Fina lamented this loss because the topics were always specific to bilingual and ESL teachers. Bilingual and ESL teachers benefited from discussions of the skills they covered or advice for lessons that did not go as planned. Even though they attended the grade level meetings with their general education counterparts, it was not the same as discussing the issues with their bilingual colleagues. So collaboration with general education teachers took precedence over collaboration within the department.

An overlooked issue is the inclusion of the ESL teachers in the grade level meetings. Because ESL teachers often teach multiple grades, they are often teaching when the grade level teachers meet. So even though the bilingual teachers are included in the grade level meetings, the ESL teachers are not. This is a serious concern since many ESL teachers are pushing-in to the class, especially for the children at the higher English proficiency levels. If teachers do not have common planning time, then lessons are more than likely, not being planned together. The first grade bilingual teacher reported that she

and her ESL teacher were successful in finding time to discuss the lessons. However, because this is not a systemic period, it is dependent on teachers' availability and cooperative spirit. In light of the WIDA standards and the connections that ESL teachers must make with the content standards and development of academic English, common planning is a prerequisite to a quality ESL program.

Although the majority of time, principals did collaborate, Townson identified times when a principal's management style undermined the philosophy of bilingual education. Since Townson had "been in education a long time," she was aware how much principals characterized their individual schools. So even though there were district-wide policies, each principal implemented them in his or her own way, which caused some issues to arise around scheduling and staffing in certain schools. Some principals used the ESL teachers as substitute teachers when coverage was needed for classes which consequently disrupted ESL instruction. However, the two school leaders who participated in the study supported the philosophy of bilingual education and worked with both Townson and the specialists to implement the program with fidelity. Jimenez organized the schedule for North Street School while Gonzalez set the classes for South Street. Both had been former bilingual teachers who understood and supported the program.

Scant research exists on the efficacy of a district bilingual director or coordinator yet having a district level expert ensured fidelity of implementation of the transitional model, appropriate staffing and adequate resources in the native language. Griego-Jones (1995) advocated for integration of bilingual program into the district-wide reform effort yet noted it required changes in traditional roles of personnel. She found that non-

bilingual personnel needed to assume ownership for certain aspects of the bilingual program while bilingual personnel needed to expand their responsibilities to all operations of the district (Griego-Jones, 1995). West Park has achieved this balance in North Street and South Street schools. The collaboration between an expert in the field of second language acquisition and school leaders with sensitivity for diverse linguistic and cultural learners has led to a successful educational program for English learners in West Park.

Parental involvement.

Becker (2003) offered concrete guidance to help schools be more responsive to the academic needs of English learners by recommending that “educators recognize the importance of family participation and reinforce connections among home, school and the community through family and community activities” (p. 41). The West Park school district embodied the commitment to meaningful parental involvement. Both schools had an active PTO and hosted monthly parent meetings with all notices sent home in two languages. Each school also had a home school relations committee as part of the School Leadership Council.

A home/school liaison was assigned to each school in addition to a district bilingual home/school liaison who supported both the parents of English learners and school-based efforts. The home/school liaisons were responsible for a myriad of tasks from residency verification to assisting families in need. When the budget was cut, efforts were made to keep as many home/school liaisons as possible. Fortunately, the liaison positions at North and South Street Schools and the district bilingual home/school liaison were not eliminated.

Neither school liaison was bilingual which Gonzalez believed had a negative impact. At North Street School, though, the district bilingual liaison, Martinez, had a satellite office and worked very closely with Parker, the North Street School liaison. Both Parker and Martinez had been trained in the Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) program and ran these series of parental workshops each year in English and Spanish (Valverde & Armendáriz, 1999). Being monolingual did not prevent the liaison from North Street School from providing workshops for all parents. Jimenez and Jones ensured that interpreters were available and invested in resources for interpreters to use which did not affect the flow of the meeting.

Involving parents of English learners is an integral feature of a model bilingual program. The multiple facets of the family involvement program at North Street School are truly a model for all schools. Parents were meaningfully involved in many facets of their child's education; from serving as parent librarians, to participating in Book Clubs, to volunteering in various capacities, to serving on school subcommittees or just ensuring that their child read twenty minutes every day. The possibilities to contribute seemed endless. Parker and the home school committee found a way to support and involve their parents through many avenues.

Impact of budget cuts.

With the recent financial crisis in New Jersey schools, funding and the impact of the cuts caused West Park to reduce critical services. Nonetheless, districts were expected to continue to provide a quality education with considerably fewer resources. Often during these times of "politics of decline," conflict increased in schools as teachers' morale was adversely affected. Protecting teachers' morale became an important task for

principals as educational initiatives faded into the background (Boyd, 1982; as cited in Caruso, 2011).

Bjork and Blase (2009; as cited in Caruso, 2011) found that the district's response to the external political forces can minimize the impact of these deficits. In West Park, both Jones and Gonzalez confirmed that capacity, commitment and trust had been developed over the years. Even though anxiety permeated the buildings in April and May, the superintendent relied on the relational links and communication infrastructure to allay fears as he worked diligently with the board of education to decrease the number of staff dismissals. A history of trust and cooperation existed among stakeholders at all levels. Gonzalez's comments illuminated this point, "The [central administration] really shows consideration for their employees... [in 29 years] I can't tell you when at any time I haven't felt supported."

Allocation of resources.

Consolidating and distributing financial resources to support the teaching and learning mission is another feature of successful comprehensive district reforms (Darling-Hammond, et al. 2005). In West Park, a deliberate effort was made to allocate federal funds equitably throughout the district. With the recent infusion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, the district purchased laptops for all Language Arts Literacy teachers which included all of the bilingual teachers. In addition, there was a district-wide technology competition. Teachers were encouraged to submit proposals for a technology project. Townson boasted that some of the bilingual teachers won those mini-grants. Principals, searching for additional funds, contacted Townson to ask about the Title III federal grant money to support their bilingual classes. Townson had the

responsibility to ensure that those funds were used properly, so she could not indiscriminately release funds. However, when it was clear that these were worthwhile materials that would support instruction, Rosen, a district bilingual resource specialist, reported that she never heard Townson say, “No.”

The district context had a significant impact on the practices of the school leaders. A strong district-based bilingual program headed by a knowledgeable director respected by her colleagues facilitated the sound and faithful implementation of the systemic transitional model. Jones and Gonzalez worked collaboratively with Townson to keep the “integrity” of bilingual education intact. This collaboration was the anchor for instructional leadership to take root and evolve so that the English learners could experience the level of success needed to excel in education today.

The NCLB Act increased the need for coordination, communication and distribution of resources across the district (Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010). By responding from a district perspective, central administration was better positioned to direct the resources where they were needed. Schools also allocated funds where needed whether, bilingual, ESL or special education classes.

West Park central administration developed the relational and structural linkages needed to focus instruction on improved outcomes for all students. At the same time, school leaders appreciated the guidance and relationships which supported their efforts. This reciprocal relationship affected the principals’ leadership practices.

Principals' Instructional Leadership

Good school leaders have wide professional knowledge and deep understanding about their school's population and needs. (Soltero 2011, p. 159)

Certain leadership practices contribute to effective programs for English learners. Integrating the bilingual program into the school vision, professional development, parental participation approaches, instructional goals and assessment is a critical component (Griego-Jones, 1995) Reyes, 2006). Three key features guide principals in integrating the needs of English learners into the fabric of their schools: vision, instruction, and community (Soltero, 2011).

Principal's vision and leadership style.

The visionary leader not only demonstrates high expectations for all children through their commitment, innovation, values and beliefs; they also inspire others with this vision (Soltero, 2011) Both Jones and Gonzalez demonstrated high expectations for the English learners in their respective schools. Their commitment to the schools and the district was evident in their comments about their colleagues and central administration. Even though their leadership styles and personal characteristics were distinctive, the districts factors mediated their differences.

Jones' vision was focused on creating lifelong learners by concentrating on developing a love for reading. Many of the parent activities and school-wide events celebrated reading and writing in some fashion. Gonzalez was more of an innovator, though, with the piloting of the dual language program and implementation of the

intervention period and professional learning communities. Each inspired others but in ways connected to their different leadership styles and personal characteristics.

Jones also lived the shared leadership model. She encouraged Jimenez and the co-chairs of the SLC to assume leadership roles and provided latitude for their practices. In contrast, Gonzalez was more concrete and directly involved in day-to-day practices. Her focal point was targeting students' skills, providing appropriate interventions, conducting ongoing assessment and documenting growth. She attended the common planning periods and required weekly agenda and minutes. When Vasquez became the interim principal upon Gonzalez's re-assignment she continued some of Gonzalez's practices of direct involvement.

At North Street School, Jones and Jimenez worked as a team sharing building responsibilities. It was obvious that she was "grooming" Jimenez for her position once she retired. On the other hand, little evidence was noted of Gonzalez's collaboration with Vasquez, even though the superintendent encouraged the principals to develop the leadership skills of their vice principals. In fact, Vasquez reported that she was not involved in the decision-making process when the dual language program was established, so she was not sure if there had originally been a long term plan.

Not only do Gonzalez and Jones have different leadership styles, they were also at different junctures in their career paths. Jones was contemplating retirement in light of the political environment in New Jersey while Gonzalez was interested in pursuing a position in central administration. Therefore, she agreed to move to the middle school position in order to enhance her resume for a possible central office position.

Structurally, central administration expectations and state mandated regulations (*Abbott V*, 1998) governed the organization of both schools. An administrative team consisting of a principal and a vice-principal led each school. According to Jimenez, central administration ensured that the school leadership “respond[ed] to diverse community interests” (ISLLC Standard 4, 2008) by deliberately appointing at least one administrator who was fluent in Spanish. At North Street School, the vice principal spoke Spanish while at South Street School both administrators were bilingual.

Both schools also continued to operate a School Leadership Council (SLC). The district adopted these guidelines thirteen years ago and has faithfully required schools to operate under this shared leadership model (*Abbott v Burke*, 1998). However the functional operations differed in each setting due to the leadership style of each principal. The committee at North Street School was efficient and very active and exemplified the tenets of shared leadership. At 8:10 AM, eleven team members assembled in the parent library. The meeting was facilitated by the two co-chairs. A variety of topics were addressed. The co-facilitators kept everyone on target and the meeting ended at 8:40 AM. In contrast, at South Street School, eight members of the SLC met at 4:00PM after the school-mandated staff meeting. The discussion centered on parent activities and student events. However, instead of discussing as a group what was happening, the principal was answering questions directed to her about new events and discipline problems. A different atmosphere engulfed the meeting at South Street since Vasquez was clearly in charge and made unilateral decisions by rejecting certain ideas but agreeing to allow others.

The schools also had different school climates, reflecting the leadership styles of the principals and somewhat based on the configuration and location of the schools.

North Street School, led by Jones, was a dynamic, organic site. The main office was the hub of the school, well traversed by parents, teachers and students. As a visitor, this researcher was provided a school tour and ultimately allowed to find meetings and people on her own. On the other hand, South Street reflected Gonzalez's business-like, efficient approach. The main office was calm and quiet with few visitors. Interviews occurred in a conference room across the hall from the main office. This researcher was escorted there and the interviewees came to the conference room. The SLC committee and grade level teachers met in the same room, so access to the whole school was limited. As previously described, South Street School was located on a major avenue in West Park. Visitors entered through a side door and had to walk down a hall to get to the security guard and then be directed to the main office. North Street School was at the end of three parallel residential streets and the security guard and the main office were located in the entrance hall. On the five visits made to South Street, the main office was always subdued and quiet; yet North Street's main office was a bustling central hub with students, parents and teachers walking in and out. It was interesting to note that the climates of the school reflected the leadership styles of the principals.

Importance of principals' knowledge.

If a principal is not familiar with bilingual education... they are not going to understand certain things. Laura Fina, bilingual literacy coach.

Carranza (2010) found that educational leaders' perception of the maintenance and development of a student's home language as a right, privilege or barrier strongly influenced their practices. Not surprisingly, bilingual district personnel have found it advantageous when principals had a basic understanding and acceptance of the program philosophy and design, especially since the program was district-based. Specifically, principals needed to be aware of the leveled system, the parameters of each level (specifically the transition process in Level Two), and the particular features of the *Viaje* classes (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1997). Principals' experiences in West Park varied according to background knowledge, professional expertise and personal qualities.

Gonzalez's career track was similar to Jones, in that they both served as teachers first, then vice-principals, and ultimately principals. However, Gonzalez had been a bilingual teacher for twenty years while Jones was a monolingual intervention teacher. During that time Gonzalez acquired a comprehensive knowledge base in bilingual education. Thus, she engaged on a professional level on bilingual education topics with Townson and the bilingual staff. Jones, in contrast, did not have that background and thus often deferred to Townson or Jimenez on issues related to the bilingual program.

Jones and Gonzalez both reported a collegial, reciprocal relationship with Townson whereby they were consulted about placements and likewise, they contacted the bilingual office if they had a concern. However, due to Gonzalez's background as a bilingual teacher, Townson specifically sought her opinion and support when faced with difficult decisions or if parents challenged the placement. Therefore, having a background in bilingual education provided Gonzalez more opportunities for input into the program. Even though Jones did not have that expertise, she trusted the professionals

who did and hence learned from them and shared decision-making responsibilities. She had some input into decisions but relied more heavily on others with decisions about bilingual students and parents.

Although, the bilingual program was district-based and principals did not play a large part in the development of the design, they did have significant influence in the actual implementation and integration of the program. Both schools employed the transitional bilingual model and had bilingual kindergarten and first grade classes. Sheltered classes were created for those kindergarten and first grade students who had developed English proficiency in the preschool program. Both schools had transitional classes in third and fourth grade as well. However, North Street School housed more bilingual classes (11) with *Viaje*, Level One and Level Two second grade classes while South Street School housed eight (8) bilingual classes with no bilingual sections at the second grade. South Street School, though, housed a dual language kindergarten and first grade class due to Gonzalez's experiences and beliefs.

Gonzalez's tenure as a bilingual teacher convinced her to pilot the dual language model in her school. Gonzalez reported that when she taught the Level Two transition class, she successfully used the dual language approach rather than the transitional model. So she was eager to pilot the model officially in her school. The dual language kindergarten teacher reported positive results on the benchmark assessments for the two years that she had been teaching in the program.

However, not all administrators who had been bilingual teachers embraced the dual language model. Vasquez had also taught the Level Two transition class but was more of a proponent of the traditional transitional bilingual model. Subsequently, once

she was appointed as the interim principal, the status of the dual language program became questionable. Unfortunately, all of the needed resources were not ordered for the dual language first grade teacher and Vasquez was advocating for a transitional second grade class rather than continuing the dual language model into second grade (Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). So the principal had more authority and input when the program was a pilot and not the district-based design.

Implications for Current Practices

Having strong instructional leadership, which begins at central administration and threads through the schools and classrooms, leads to improved practices and better outcomes. A commitment to instructional leadership which is inclusive of all learners at every level provides common vocabulary and places all teachers and students on the same mission. One of the first steps is to align the bilingual and ESL curriculum with the general education curriculum based on content and WIDA ELD standards.

Then, select best practices, based on research that specifically focuses on bilingual students (Soltero, 2011). Many districts use research findings that are based on English-speaking students and apply those findings to English learners as well. Research on English-only students does not take into account the variables of bilingualism or the influence of the first language on second language acquisition (García & Beltrán, 2003; Guitérrez, 2001; Soltero, 2011). Once best practices are selected, then bilingual and ESL teachers must be included in all professional development district initiatives. When a district marginalizes the teachers, then students become marginalized as well.

The district perspective allowed the bilingual director in West Park to manage the needed resources in the best interest of the English learners. She was able to develop a

systematic transitional bilingual program by coordinating the classes district-wide.

Whenever a district has the opportunity to coordinate services across the district for English learners, it maximizes resources and can provide more targeted assistance.

The central intake center and the *Viaje* program are two other features of the program at West Park which practitioners may consider in planning a program.

Evaluating students' skills in their first language in addition to their proficiency in English provides a valuable profile for placement and delivery of services. Districts may not have the dedicated personnel to assess new registrants but appointing one person as an examiner and have an assigned schedule will lessen interruptions in instruction and provide for consistency in placement. With more students arriving in our schools with limited formal schooling, districts need to design additional support classes for these students. The typical bilingual or ESL program will not be enough to "catch up" to their age level peers.

With the education of English learners, it is important that one administrator, whether a director, supervisor, principal or vice-principal, has or obtains knowledge about the special needs of this population. With the dramatic budget cuts, more and more districts are eliminating or consolidating supervisory positions with more responsibility falling on the building principals or on one supervisor with a multitude of content areas. The elimination of specialists may affect the quality and quantity of bilingual and ESL programs.

On another note, when responding to federal legislation, school leaders need to be cognizant of valid methods to assess the progress of English learners and advocate to the local, state and national community for appropriate accountability measures for this

subgroup. Administrators then must be knowledgeable about second language acquisition and the time it takes to gain academic proficiency so they can accurately monitor progress. School leaders must provide professional development opportunities for all staff who work with English learners. Some suggested topics for consideration include: second language acquisition process; social and cultural aspects of English learners' background and status; academic language; WIDA standards; ways to differentiate instruction and assessment; and parental involvement.

This study demonstrated how a school leader without expertise gained knowledge and developed a shared leadership model with experienced others and successfully distributed decision-making responsibilities due to her leadership style. On the other hand, being bilingual and having that expertise did not always guarantee that sound decisions will be made. The political context with high stakes testing and upcoming high stakes evaluation may cloud judgment and decision-making ability; just as it did for Vasquez who responded to the pressure of making AYP by diminishing the time spent on native language literacy.

Administrators at all levels should be knowledgeable about the appropriate intervention process for English learners. The Response to Intervention is the recommended process for determining whether an English learner's struggles are related to language acquisition or a learning disability. The process though must be implemented with fidelity.

As the instructional leaders the administrators need to know the effective strategies for English learners so they can support the teachers' implementation of those strategies. Moreover, the ESL teacher, whether push-in or pull-out model, needs to

coordinate lessons with the classroom teacher. Therefore, the school leader needs to ensure common planning time for these teachers.

Overall, the important consideration for current practitioners is to be inclusive in all activities. English learners are too often marginalized in schools and classrooms. Our challenge is to develop communities where all voices are heard.

Implications for Future Research

Further studies should explore the contextual factors that influence other types of bilingual and ESL program designs across other urban and suburban district settings. The fact that this was a Spanish dominant community may have influenced the results. In addition, investigating how districts without a central bilingual or ESL supervisor implement model programs would inform the many districts who have been forced to eliminate these positions. West Park was fortunate to have a bilingual director, supervisor and four resource specialists, and a bilingual literacy coach; although three of those positions were eliminated after the completion of the study.

This case study examined the administrative perspective of the implementation of the model program. Exploring in-depth the socio-cultural aspects and instructional practices at the classroom level in a model program would enlighten the bilingual and ESL community of the effective strategies and approaches with these learners.

Limitations

This case study examined the contextual factors that influenced the implementation of a model bilingual program. Generalizing findings was not possible with only one district and one model program. This impacted the ability to transfer the findings to other settings. In addition, the study only examined a transitional bilingual

program in an urban setting and did not investigate other variations of bilingual or ESL program designs.

The two main informants experienced significant life events in the time span of the study which lengthened the amount of time originally planned and affected the sequence of interviews. Gonzalez was appointed to a new position while Jones experienced a minor health issue and was contemplating retirement at the same time. These events may have impacted the information shared.

Another limitation of the study is the process for model program status. In 2006, the West Park district based bilingual program had been recognized as a model site by the New Jersey Department of Education through a layered process which included a self-nominated paper application, a screening process and an on-site visit. Only seven programs in the state were selected which severely limited the pool of model programs. Since the process begins with a self-nomination, other districts may have model programs but for a multitude of reasons did not apply.

Conclusion

The political landscape affected educators at every level. Federal legislation strongly influenced district and school practices in West Park. The accountability measures of NCLB (2002) raised expectations and prompted major changes within the district. The district context however mitigated some of the impact by working in concert to support the efforts of the school leaders and teachers by providing human and capital resources and building the relational and structural connections.

Having a central administration that focused on instructional leadership and the infrastructure to sustain that focus provided the framework for a model bilingual program

(Johnson & Chrispeels, 2010; Honig, et al., 2010). The framework began with aligning content standards and developing common curriculum for all learners which provided access to the content and academic language needed to succeed. Then central administration coordinated district initiatives and the professional development opportunities through sustained, ongoing, embedded support, which ensured a common vocabulary and similar educational practices. Once the curriculum and instruction were in place, supervisors created benchmark assessments in both English and Spanish. These quarterly assessments provided the opportunity to monitor the progress of all learners in their language of instruction.

Many factors contributed to the students' successful transition from Spanish to English. A bilingual director dedicated to the needs of the English learners maintained the philosophical integrity of the program. With a staff of specialists, the bilingual personnel were able to integrate all components of the district-wide system: levelized classes, *Viaje* program, parental involvement, language arts literacy, assessment, allocation of resources and personnel (Griego-Jones, 1995).

It is evident that having a background in bilingual education was not a prerequisite to being an effective leader in a school with a significant bilingual population. However, being culturally responsive, having an open mind to new ideas and possessing a collaborative leadership style were instructional leadership factors which contributed to the success of the English learners... Both North Street and South Street schools had strong instructional leadership albeit with different styles. However, the district supervisors in all content areas and central administration were the anchors who united and supported administrators, teachers and learners. Accordingly, the general

education administrators assumed ownership for specific features of the bilingual program while the bilingual personnel expanded their responsibilities to all district-wide initiatives. This is the equation for a model bilingual program.

Afterword

Many dramatic changes occurred in West Park once this case study was completed. As previously stated, Gonzalez was appointed as principal of one of the middle schools. Jones retired that September and in keeping with tradition Jimenez became principal of North Street School while Vasquez became the principal of South Street School. Both the bilingual director and supervisor retired and the bilingual literacy coach was named the new director. An outside candidate became the new bilingual supervisor. The cuts did impact the bilingual office as the bilingual literacy coach position was eliminated along with two bilingual resource specialists.

Most astounding was the retirement of the superintendent who was consequently replaced by an outside candidate with no ties to West Park. The new superintendent brought with her new initiatives. One of her first actions was to move from a district-based perspective to a school-based one by eliminating the content supervisory positions and announcing that the principals had total autonomy. Her goal is to transform the elementary schools into “specialized” schools and allow parents to choose which elementary school to attend. What is not clear from this distance is what will happen to the structures and relationships which had been built over the years and what will become of the model district-wide bilingual program design.

REFERENCES

- Aguilar, J. (1979). The building principal's role in a bilingual education program. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 30(3), 26-28.
- Aird, C. L. (2002). *Leadership, community, and the role of the elementary principal in two performing bilingual schools: A comparative case study*. Ed. D. dissertation, Northern Illinois University, United States -- Illinois. Retrieved March 2, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 3073148).
- Alva, S. A. & de los Reyes, R. (1999). Psychosocial stress, internalized symptoms, and the academic achievement of Hispanic adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 14(3), 343-358.
- Anstrom, K., DiCerbo, P., Butler, F., Katz, A., Millet, J. & Rivera, C. (2010). *A review of the literature on academic English: Implications of English language learners*. Arlington, VA: George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education.
- August, D. & Hakuta, K. (Eds.) (1998). *Educating language minority children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Baker, K. (1998). Structured English immersion: Breakthrough in teaching limited English proficient students. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(3), 199-204.
- Blase, J. & Blase, J. (2000) Effective instructional leadership: Teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 38(2), 130-141.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Calderon, M., Slavin, R., & Sanchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *Future of Children*. Princeton, NJ: Brookings Institution and Princeton University.
- Calderon, M.R. & Minaya-Rowe, L. (2003). *Designing and implementing two-way bilingual programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- California Department of Education (1991). Los Angeles Unified achieves excellence with bilingual approach. *Bilingual Office Outreach*, 2(2), 12-13, 15.
- Carpenter-Huffman, P., & Samulon, M. (1981). *A Rand note: Case studies of delivery and cost of bilingual education*. Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation.

- Carranza, T. (2010). *Principals' ethical and social justice leadership in serving English language learners: English as a second language and Bilingual teachers' perceptions*. Ed. D. dissertation, Edgewood College, United States - Wisconsin. Retrieved October 7, 2011, from Dissertations & Theses: A&I. (Publication No. AAT 3427289).
- Carter, T. P. & Chatfield, M. L. (1986). Effective bilingual schools: Implications for policy and practice. *American Journal of Education*, 95(1), 200-234.
- Carter, T. P. & Maestas, L. C. (1982). *Bilingual education that works: Effective schools for Spanish speaking children*. Report submitted to California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA.
- Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981). [648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir., 1981)]
- Christian, D. (1994). *Two-way bilingual education: Students learning through two languages*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Cloud, N., Genesee, F., & Hamayan, E. (2009). *Literacy instruction for English Language learners: A teacher's guide to research based practices*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E. Q., Hobson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A. M., Weinfield, F. D., & York, R. L. (1966). *Equality and educational opportunity*. Washington, DC: Office of Education, US Department of Health, Education and Welfare.
- Collier, V. & Thomas, W. (2004). The astounding effectiveness of dual language education for all. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 2(1), 1-20.
- Cook, G. & Boals, T., & Lundberg, T. (2011). Academic achievement for English learners: What can we reasonably expect? *Kappan*, 93(3), 66-69.
- Crawford, J. (1999). *Bilingual education: History, politics, theory, and practice* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Bilingual Educational Services.
- Cresswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cresswell, J. W. & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 124-130.
- Cummins, J. (1984). Wanted: A theoretical framework for relating language proficiency to academic achievement among bilingual students. In C. Rivera (Ed.), *Language proficiency and academic achievement* (pp.79-90). Clevedon England: Multilingual Matters.

- Cummins, J. (2002). Reading and the ESL student. *Orbit*, 33(1), 19-22.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hightower, A. M., Husbands, J. L., LaFors, J. R., Young, V. M., & Christopher, C. (2006). Building instructional quality: “Inside-out” and “outside-in” perspectives on San Diego’s school reform. In A. Harris & J. Chrispeels (Eds.), *Improving schools and educational systems: International perspectives* (pp. 241-273). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Datnow, A., Lasky, S., Stringfield, S., & Teddlie, C. (2005). Systemic integration for educational reform in racially and linguistically diverse contexts: A summary of the evidence. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 10(4), 441-453.
- Davis, S., Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., & Meyerson, D. (2005). *School leadership study: Developing successful principals*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.
- Dufour, R. (2004). What is a professional learning community? *Educational Leadership*, 64(8), 6-11
- Dubrin, A. J. (2004). *Leadership: Research findings, practice, and skills*. New York: Houghton.
- Echevarría, J., Vogt, M., Short, D. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol model*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Edmonds, R. R. (1982). Programs of school improvement: An overview. *Educational Leadership*, 40(3), 4-11.
- Edmonds R. R., Lezotte, L. & Ratner, (1977). *Search for effective schools: The identification and analysis of city schools that are instructionally effective for poor children*. [Report] ERIC ED142610
- Ellis, R. (1994). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. New York: Albert Shanker Institute.
- Epstein, J. L. (2007). Improving family and community involvement in secondary schools. *Principal Leadership*, 8, 16-22.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd Ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Farrington v. Tokushige, 273 U.S. 284 (1927).

Ferguson, R. F. (1998). Teachers' perceptions and expectations and the black-white test score gap. In C. Jencks and M. Phillips (Eds.), *The black-white test score gap* (pp. 273-317). Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.

Firestone, W. A., Schorr, R. Y., & Monfils, L. (2004). *The ambiguity of teaching to the test*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.

Fradd, S. & Tikunoff, W. (1987) (Eds). *Bilingual education and bilingual special education: a guide for administrators*. Boston: Little Brown.

Fullan, M. (1994). *The challenge of school change*. Arlington, IL: IRI/Skylight Training and Publishing.

Gamoran, A., Anderson, C. W., Quiroz, P. A., Secada, W. G., Williams, T., & Ashman, S. (2003). *Transforming teaching in math and science: How schools and districts support change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gándara, P. & Maxwell-Jolly, J. (2006). Critical issues for developing the teacher corps for English learners. In K. Téllez & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Preparing quality educators for English language learners: Research, policies and practices* (pp. 99-120). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

García, G. (2003) (Ed.). *English learners: Reaching the highest level of English literacy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

García, G. & Beltrán, D. (2003). Revisioning the blueprint : Building for the academic success of English learners. In G. Garcia (Ed.) *English learners: Reaching the highest level of English literacy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Genesee, F. (1999). *Program alternatives for linguistically diverse students*. Educational Practice Report No. 1, Santa Cruz, CA & Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, W. M., & Christian, D. (2006). *Educating English language learners: A synthesis of research evidence*. NYC: Cambridge University Press.

Gold, N. (2006). *Successful bilingual schools: Six effective programs in California*. A report completed by San Diego: San Diego County Office of Education.

Greene, J.P. (1997). A meta-analysis of the Rossell and Baker review of bilingual education research. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 21, 103-122.

- Griego-Jones, T. (1995). *Implementing bilingual programs is everybody's business*. Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education. Washington DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.
- Growe, R., Schmersal, K., Perry, R. & Henry R. (2002). A knowledge base for cultural diversity in administrator training. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 29 (3), 205-12.
- Hallinger, P. (1992). The evolving role of American principals: From managerial to instructional to transformational leader. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 30(3), 35-48.
- Hallinger, P. (1996). Reassessing the principal's role in school effectiveness: A review of empirical research, 1980-1985. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 32(1), 5-44.
- Hallinger, P. & Heck, R. (1998). Exploring the principal's contribution to school effectiveness: 1980-1995. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 9(2), 157-191.
- Hamayan, E., Marler, B., Sanchez-Lopez, C., & Damico, J., (2007). *Special education considerations for English language learners: Delivering a continuum of services*. Philadelphia: Caslon publishing
- Heller, M. & Firestone, W. (1995). Who's in charge here? Sources of leadership change in eight schools. *Elementary School Journal*, 96(1), 65-87.
- Herrity, V. A. (1997). *An exploratory study of the knowledge, practices, cognitive processes and perceptions of expert principals relative to the administration of educational programs for linguistically and culturally diverse students*. Unpublished dissertation. University of California, Santa Barbara (No. 9823403).
- Honig, M.I., Copland, M., Rainey, L., Lorton, J.A., & Newton, M. (2010). *Central office transformation for district-wide teaching and learning improvement*. University of Washington: The Wallace Foundation.
- Howard, E.R., & Sugarman, J. (2001). *Two-way immersion programs: Features and statistics*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Jencks, C., & Phillips, M. (1998). The black-white test score gap: An introduction. In C. Jencks and M. Phillips (Eds.), *The black-white test score gap* (pp. 1-51). Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.
- Johnson, M. (2004). *A philosophy of second language acquisition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Johnson, P.E. & Chrispeels, J.H. (2010). Linking the central office and its schools for reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 46(5), 738-775.
- Keefe, J. W. & Howard, E. R. (1997). *Redesigning schools for the new century: A systems approach*. Reston, VA: National Association of secondary School Principals.
- Kindler, A. (2002). *How many school-aged limited English proficient students are there in the U.S.?* National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs. (citing National Center for Bilingual Education Survey of the States' Limited Proficient Students and available Educational Programs and Services, 1999-2000 Summary Report).
- Knapp, M. S., Copland, M. A., & Talbert, J. E. 2003; *Leading for learning: Reflective tools for school and district leaders* (Research report) Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. New York: Pergamon Press
- Krashen, S. (1998). *Bilingual education and the dropout argument*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
- Krashen, S. & Terrel, T. (1983). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Oxford, England: Pergamon Press
- Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974).
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning* (paper commissioned by the Wallace Foundation). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Leithwood, K., Riedlinger, B., Bauer, S., & Jantzi, D. (2003). Leadership program effects on student learning: The case of the Greater New Orleans School Leadership Center, *Journal of School Leadership*, 13(6), 707-738.
- Levykh, Michael G. (2008). The affective establishment and maintenance Of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. *Educational Theory*, 58 (1), 83-101.
- Lezotte, L. & Bancroft, B.A. (1985). School improvement based on effective schools research: A promising approach for economically disadvantaged minority students. *Journal of Negro Education*, 54, 301-312.
- Lezotte, L. (1998). *Effective schools needs assessment questions*. Okemos, MI: Effective Schools Products.

- Lindholm-Leary, K. (2001). *Dual language education*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Littleton, R. H. (2003). *Concerns of principals regarding English language learner instruction*. Dissertation UMI3132317. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information and Learning Company
- Lucas, T. (1992). *Applying elements of effective schooling for language minority students: A tool for reflection and stimulus to change*. NCBE Program Information Guide - Series 14. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.
- Lucas, T. (2000) Facilitating the transitions of secondary English language learners: Priorities for principals. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin* (84) 619: 2-16.
- Lucas T., Henze, R., & Donato, R. (1990). Promoting the success of Latino language minority students: An exploratory study of six high schools. *Harvard Educational Review*, 60(3), 315-340.
- Ma, J. (2002). *What works for children? What we know and don't know about bilingual education*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Marzano, R. (2010). *Teaching basic and advanced vocabulary: A framework for direct instruction*. Boston, MA: Heinle.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Meara, N. M. & Schmidt, L. D. (1991). The ethics of researching counseling/therapy processes. In C. E. Watkins, Jr. & L. J. Schneider (Eds.), *Research in counseling* (pp. 237-259). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Menchaca-Ochoa, V.D. (2006). A judicial and legislative perspective of bilingual education. *Catalyst for Change*, 34, 49-58.
- Merriam, S. (1998). Being a careful observer. In *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (pp. 94-111). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. (1998). Mining data from documents. In *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (pp. 112 - 133). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Drawing valid meaning from qualitative data: Toward a shared craft. *Educational researcher*, 13(5), 20-30.
- Miramontes, O. B., Nadeau, A., & Commins N. L. (1997). *Restructuring schools for linguistic diversity: Linking decision making to effective programs*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Murphy, J., Elliott, S. N., Goldring, E. & Porter, A. C. (2006). *Learning-centered leadership: A conceptual foundation*. Report prepared for the Wallace Foundation, Grant on leadership Assessment.
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (2004). *Long term trend assessment*. US Department of Education. Retrieved November 13, 2007 from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>.
- National Center for Educational Statistics (2001). *Teacher preparation and professional development 2000*. Retrieved November 13, 2007 from <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss/publications/2001088/>.
- National Title I Association (2011). On National Title I Association, Distinguished Schools. Retrieved from <http://www.nationaltitleiassociation.org/?page=DS>.
- Necochea, J. & Cline, Z. (1993). Bridging the gap for language minority students. *The Educational Forum*, 57(4), 402-412.
- Nelson, B. S. (1998). Lenses on learning: Administrators' views on reform and the professional development of teachers. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 1(2), 191-215.
- New Jersey Department of Education (2011). *Eligibility Guidelines for NJASK 3-8 Spanish Language Assessment*. Retrieved from https://www.measinc.com/nj/Downloads/NJASK/NJASK_Spanish_Eligibility_Guidelines.pdf
- No Child Left Behind Act* (2002). P. L. 107-110. §3001, 115 Stat. 1689.
- Office of Civil Rights (1999) Retrieved on February 5, 2012, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/index.html>.
- Ogbu, J. U. (1994). Racial stratification and education in the United States: Why inequality persists. *Teachers College Record*, 96, 264-298. Retrieved November 13, 2007 from www.tcrecord.org.
- Olsen, L., & Jaramillo, A. (1999). *Turning the tides of exclusion: A guide for educators and advocates for immigrant students*. Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow.

- Ovando, C. J., Collier, V. P. & Combs, M.C. (2003). *Bilingual & ESL classrooms: Teaching in multicultural contexts* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Pachon, H., Tornatzky, L. G., & Torres, C. (2003). *Closing achievement gaps: Improving educational outcomes for Hispanic children*. The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute: Center for Latino Educational Excellence.
- Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative education and research methods* (3rd Ed). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Perspectives on a population: English language learners in American schools* (2009). Bethesda, MD: Quality Counts Report from Editorial Projects in Education, Education Week
- Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1981).
- Ramirez, J.D., Yuen, S.D., Ramey, D.R. & Pasta, D.J. (1991). *Final report: Longitudinal study of structured English immersion strategy, early exit and late-exit transitional bilingual education programs for language minority children*. San Mateo, CA: Aguirre International.
- Rethinking Schools Online retrieved October 25, 2009 from http://www.rethinkingschools.org/special_reports/bilingual/langhst.shtml
- Reyes, A. (2006). Reculturing principal as leaders for cultural and linguistic diversity. In K. Téllez, & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Preparing quality educators for English language learners: Research, policies and practices* (pp. 145-165). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Rossell, C. (2000). *Different questions, different answers*. Sterling, VA: READ Institute.
- Rossell, C. & Baker, K. (1996). *Bilingual education in Massachusetts: The emperor has no clothes*. Boston, MA: The Pioneer Institute.
- Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools: Using social, economic and educational reform to close the black-white achievement gap*. NYC: Teachers College Press.
- San Miguel, Jr., G. (2005). The impact of *Brown* on Mexican American desegregation litigation, 1950s to 1980s. *Journal of Latinos and Education* 4(4), 221-236.
- School Funding Reform Act of 2008. *P.L. 2007, c 260, 18A:7F-44k § 1-21*. Retrieved from <http://lis.njleg.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/> on February 5, 2012.

- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1984). Leadership and excellence in schooling. *Educational Leadership*, 40(3), 64-69.
- Short, D. (1991). *How to integrate language and content instruction: A training manual*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Short, D. (1999). *Secondary Newcomer Programs: Helping Recent Immigrants Prepare for School Success*. Online digest Center for Applied Linguistics.
<http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/short001.html>
- Short, D. (2000). What principals should know about sheltered instruction for English language learners? *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin* (84), 619, 17-27.
- Short, D., Vogt, M. E., & Echevarria, J. (2008). *SIOP model for administrators*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Smith, L. (2008). *Schools that change: Evidence-based improvement and effective change leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Smiley, P. & Salsberry, T. (2007). *Effective schooling for English language learners: What elementary principals should know and do*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Smylie, M. A. & Denny, J. W. (1990). Teacher leadership: tensions and ambiguities in organizational perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 26 (3), 235-259.
- Soltero, S. W. (2011). *Schoolwide approaches to educating ELLs: Creating linguistically And culturally responsive K-12 schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a theory of leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1), 3-34.
- Texas Education Agency (1990). *Bilingual/ESL education success stories: A case study of bilingual/ESL education*. Final Program Evaluation.
- Thomas, W.P., & Collier, V.P. (1996). *School effectiveness for language minority students*. (NCBE School Collection Series, No. 9). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition.

- Thomas, W.P. & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, University of California – Santa Cruz.
- Tikunoff, W. J. (1983a). *An emerging description of successful bilingual instruction: Executive summary of part I of the SBIF study*. San Francisco, CA: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development.
- Tikunoff, W. J., Ward, B. J., Van Brockhuizen, L. D., Romero, M., Castañeda, L. V., & Katz, A. (1991). *A descriptive study of significant features of exemplary special alternative programs*. Los Alamitos, CA: The Southwest Regional Educational Board.
- Torres, N. L. (2006). Administrative support for English language learners: How the SIOP model empowers teachers, administrators and English language learners. *Dissertation, University of Connecticut*. UMI 321250. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Tucker, M. & Coddling (2002). *The principal challenge*. Sacramento, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Vanderheyden, H. (2011). Technical adequacy of response to intervention decisions. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 77 (3), 335-350.
- Vandervelde Woodfork, M. R. (2001). *Multicultural educational leadership: A case study*. Ed. D. dissertation, University of Washington, United States -- Washington. Retrieved March 2, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 3036536).
- Van Patten, B & Williams, J. (2007). *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Wilson, M. A. (1997). *The influence of formal educational training in second language acquisition, bilingual education and SDAIE on the beliefs and practices of school site administrators: SDAIE and the teacher evaluation process*. Ed. D. dissertation, University of California, Davis, United States -- California. Retrieved March 2, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 9812097).
- Wolf, M. K., Kao, J. C., Herman, J. L., Bachman, L. F., Bailey, A. L., Bachman, P. L., Farnsworth, T. & Chang, S.M. (2008). *Issues in assessing English language learners: English language proficiency measures and accommodation uses— Literature review*. CRESST Report 731. National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), University of California, Los Angeles

- Wong-Fillmore, L. & Snow, C. (2000). What teachers need to know about language. In C. T. Adger, C. Snow, & D. Christian (Eds.) *What teachers need to learn about language* (pp. 7-54). ERIC ED 482994.
- Working Group on ELL Policy (2010). Report on: *Improving educational outcomes for English language learners: Recommendations for the reauthorization of the elementary and secondary education act*. Retrieved April 9, 2010 from <http://ellpolicy.org/>.
- Wright, W. (2006). A catch-22 for language learners. *Educational Leadership*, 64(3), 22-27
- Yarborough, R. (1994). Perspectives on the first national bilingual education act. In R. Rodriguez, N. Ramos, & J. A. Ruiz-Escalante (Eds.) *Compendium of readings in bilingual education: Issues and practices* (pp. 291-293). San Antonio: Texas Association for Bilingual Education.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods*, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yoshikawa, H., Godfrey, E. B., & Rivera, A. C. (2008). Access to institutional resources as a measure of social exclusion: Relations with family process and cognitive development in the context of immigration. In H. Yoshikawa & N. Way (Eds.), *Beyond the family: Contexts of immigrant children's development*. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 121, 63–86.

APPENDIX A

Second Language Regional Model Programs

Bilingual/Bicultural Education

DISTRICT APPLICATION FORM 2008-2010

Districts that are eligible to apply are those that have met the State's objectives for student progress in learning English and exiting Bilingual/ESL programs.

SECTION I

Name of District: _____ County _____

Name of School: _____
(If school is being nominated)

Language(s) of Instruction _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

District Contact/Person responsible for completing application: _____

E-mail: _____

District or school Configuration (i.e, K-4; 5-8; 9, K-12) _____

Chief School Administrator: _____

Signature: _____

SECTION II

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

A. Teacher Certification/Staffing Model

1. Number of bilingual teachers holding the bilingual education endorsement certification only: _____
2. Number of ESL teachers holding the English as a Second Language certification: _____
3. Number of teachers holding both bilingual and ESL certification: _____
4. What steps has your district taken to hire adequate numbers of bilingual and ESL-certified staff? (Please explain on a separate sheet of paper).

SECTION III PLEASE COMPLETE ALL ITEMS AND PROVIDE COMMENTS WHERE SPECIFIED. USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

**3-Meets Criteria 2- Partially Meets Criteria 1-Does Not Yet Meet Criteria
N/A-Not Applicable**

Comments may be provided to explain any of the statements below.

B. CURRICULUM

Briefly describe the curriculum for bilingual classes. Include copies of district bilingual curriculum adaptations. Please attach a copy of the bilingual curriculum.

3	2	1	N/A	1. Has specific goals for the bilingual program that reflect the district philosophy.
3	2	1	N/A	2. Contains a language policy which articulates how the native language and English are to be used for instruction and is aligned with current bilingual education research.
3	2	1	N/A	3. Includes guidelines for making decisions regarding how and when content instruction in English should be initiated.
3	2	1	N/A	4. Includes guidelines for making decisions regarding reading level placement when making a transition to the English Language Arts program.
3	2	1	N/A	5. Is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and contains clear learning objectives.
3	2	1	N/A	6. Contains a separate English as a Second Language curriculum which is aligned to the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Standards.
3	2	1	N/A	7. Includes developmental language arts instruction in the students' native language with objectives specific to that language.
3	2	1	N/A	8. Has a systematic process in place for monitoring, evaluating, and renewing the curriculum that reflects a commitment to continuous improvement.
3	2	1	N/A	9. Is developed through a shared vision worked out by bilingual, ESL, and content area teachers.

D. INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

3	2	1	N/A	10. Student assessment data on language proficiency are used in determining the language of instruction.
3	2	1	N/A	11. Students' cultural backgrounds are reflected in the strategies and activities used in the classroom so as to create a successful academic experience.
3	2	1	N/A	12. The district has an articulated philosophy regarding the

				appropriate use of the native language and English which is reflected in instruction.
3	2	1	N/A	13. Learning occurs in meaningful, communicative contexts that are relevant to students.
3	2	1	N/A	14. Instructional practices use effective questioning techniques and a variety of approaches that are scientifically based and address all levels of thinking skills, including higher order cognitive skills.
3	2	1	N/A	15. The same or comparable material is used in both the native language and English language instruction.
3	2	1	N/A	16. English Language Learners are held to the same high standards expected of other students.
3	2	1	N/A	17. Instructional practices support students in their process of acculturation to the school.
3	2	1	N/A	18. Instruction is initiated in the first language and builds on students' native language proficiency to assure that concepts are well-developed and then transferred to English. Literacy in the native language is used as the basis for developing language arts skills in English
3	2	1	N/A	19. Materials are appropriate to the needs of the students and sufficient to provide enriched content.
3	2	1	N/A	20. Clear statements are made to students about accurate completion of the learning tasks and level of mastery expected from them.
3	2	1	N/A	21. Bilingual, ESL, and mainstream teachers collaborate regularly to plan instruction and design evaluation to improve achievement of language minority students.
3	2	1	N/A	22. The level of English used by the teacher is based on student needs.
3	2	1	N/A	23. Specific portions of content area lessons are designed for practicing English.
3	2	1	N/A	24. Instruction integrates language and content objectives as recommended by sheltered instruction methodology.
3	2	1	N/A	25. The learning environment provides Bilingual/ESL program students with multiple opportunities to use English, interact with others as part of a challenging educational program, and receive feedback on their language acquisition and content knowledge.

E. IDENTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

3	2	1	N/A	26. The district has a written policy which outlines procedures for the identification, screening, placement, mainstreaming, and exit of English Language Learners. (Attach policy)
3	2	1	N/A	27. Rubrics are used to measure student performance when using performance-based tasks.

3	2	1	N/A	28. Ongoing assessment practices match academic and linguistic characteristics of the learner and are an ongoing part of the learning process.
3	2	1	N/A	29. Students are being prepared for state assessments in all benchmark grades by using materials aligned with the NJCCS.
3	2	1	N/A	30. Students are involved in the assessment of their own progress and that of their peers.
3	2	1	N/A	31. Native language proficiency is assessed on intake and annually for purposes of program placement and instructional planning.

F. ESL PROGRAM

3	2	1	N/A	32. There is an atmosphere that encourages students' confidence in their ability to use English.
3	2	1	N/A	33. ESL activities incorporate opportunities for authentic communicative interaction.
3	2	1	N/A	34. Teachers provide opportunities for meaningful practice in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing and incorporate the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards.
3	2	1	N/A	35. Teachers provide ongoing feedback to students, are judicious in correcting and analyzing errors in order to determine patterns and focus instruction accordingly.
3	2	1	N/A	36. Students' engagement in their learning is maximized by emphasizing both essential knowledge and higher order thinking skills.
3	2	1	N/A	37. The ESL teachers collaborate with bilingual and mainstream teachers to ensure that ELLs acquire the English skills they need in content-area classes.

G. PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Include evidence of parent communication

3	2	1	N/A	38. There is a bilingual parent advisory committee in the district. What is its role?
3	2	1	N/A	39. Parents/guardians are informed in their native language of their child's progress in learning English and learning core subjects.
3	2	1	N/A	40. Parent input is considered in the selection and design of a bilingual/ESL program that is consistent with the characteristics of the ELL population. (Specify)
3	2	1	N/A	41. Parent/community publications are disseminated on a regular basis in English and the language(s) of the

				bilingual program(s). (Please provide samples).
3	2	1	N/A	42. Parents/guardians of bilingual students and native-speaking members of the community are involved in the bilingual education program so as to enhance the educational experience of students.
3	2	1	N/A	43. Consistent efforts are made to “showcase” the bilingual/ESL education program within the district and the community.
3	2	1	N/A	44. Efforts are made to develop cultural competence among district staff about the types of schooling and classroom practices common in the societies bilingual students represent and to recognize the funds of knowledge represented by parents’ and families’ cultural heritage.
3	2	1	N/A	45. Parents understand policies regarding bilingual students and the program options available.
3	2	1	N/A	46. Workshops are provided for bilingual parents and families. (Provide examples).
3	2	1	N/A	47. School documents are translated.

H. RESOURCES/SUPPORT

3	2	1	N/A	48. The bilingual/ESL program receives resources comparable to the mainstream program.
3	2	1	N/A	49. The district provides ELLs with equitable access to all school programs and services (including gifted and talented, special services for classified students, counseling, speech, athletic activities, fine arts, school plays, extra-curricular activities, etc.).
3	2	1	N/A	50. School administrators demonstrate consistent support for the program in the areas of advocacy, planning, staffing, staff development, and multicultural issues.

I. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3	2	1	N/A	51. Bilingual/ESL staff is provided opportunities for professional development comparable to the mainstream program.
3	2	1	N/A	52. The school provides professional development for all staff members to assist them in learning about their students’ cultures and languages and ways to appropriately communicate with students, parents/guardians, and community members.
3	2	1	N/A	53. The school or district’s professional development program helps administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals attain and develop the content

				knowledge and pedagogical skills necessary to design and deliver high-quality curricula for bilingual/ESL program students.
3	2	1	N/A	54. Professional development activities are based on scientific research, effective in improving participants' understanding of the use of curricula, assessment measures, and instructional strategies for ELLs and are of sufficient intensity and duration to have a lasting impact on teachers' classroom performance.

J. OUTCOMES

3	2	1	N/A	55. The district can demonstrate evidence of significant progress in the English language acquisition of the Bilingual students as a result of bilingual/ESL instruction. (e.g. test results, portfolios, observation, etc.). (Specify)
3	2	1	N/A	56. The district can demonstrate that exited bilingual students have performed at a proficient level on state, classroom, and standardized tests.
3	2	1	N/A	57. The district can substantiate a high retention (as opposed to dropout) rate for ELLs (high school level). (Specify)

SECTION IV

What makes your program a model program? (Please attach a narrative which describes the aspects of your program design and the practices and outcomes that you consider exemplary).

*References:

English Language Learners at School: A Guide for Administrators (2006). Library of Congress. Editors – Else Hamayan, Rebecca Freeman.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards English as a New Language Standards (1998).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 Title III: language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students(2002).

Program Evaluation: English as a Second Language, A Comprehensive Guide for Standards-based Program_Evaluation for Schools Committed to Continuous Improvement_(2002). National Study of School Evaluation, 1699 Woodfield Road, Schaumburg, IL.

APPENDIX B

Initials _____

ATTACHMENT 4

Appendix C

Consent Form

Non-clinical, Minimum Risk Study

A Comparative Case Study of Two Elementary Schools Principal in Schools with a Model program for English Language Learners

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Elizabeth J. Franks, who is an Ed. D. candidate in the Educational Administration Department at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to determine the attributes and practices of principals in schools with model programs for English Language Learners (ELLs).

The staff and principal from two elementary schools will participate in the study. Approximately 18-22 hours of observation and interviews will occur over a four month period. The study procedures include completion of three interviews with the principal; one interview with each of the following staff members: bilingual/ESL supervisor, vice-principal, bilingual resource teacher, a focus group of bilingual/ESL and general education teachers; observations of two staff meetings and two grade level meetings; and additional hours of observing the interactions between the principal, parents and staff.

- The principal will participate in three one-hour interviews with six week intervals that will be digitally audio recorded.
- Multiple hours of direct observations will occur throughout the day, between interviews and before and after meetings.
- Two after school staff meetings at each school will be observed.
- Two grade level meetings at each school will be observed
- Documents, such as meeting agendas, memos, newsletters and electronic communication will be collected and analyzed.
- The final phase will consist of a closing interview with the principal to verify data collected. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes and will be digitally audio recorded.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. Benefits include the identification of common characteristics and practices of principals that contribute to the success of ELLs that can be shared with other principals in similar settings.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you, such as demographic information about your school, and your background and experience. I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be

APPROVED
Date: 02/25/10

EXPIRES
FEB 24 2011

Approved by the
Rutgers IRR

required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated, unless you have agreed otherwise.

If you have any questions about the study procedures, you may contact the Principal Investigator:

Ms. Elizabeth Franks
191 Davis Avenue
Piscataway, NJ 08854
732-841-7225
ejf24bb@aol.com

or the Co-investigator:

Dr. Catherine Lugg
Rutgers University
Educational Theory, Policy and Administration
Graduate School of Education
10 Seminary Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
732-932-7496
catherine.lugg@gse.rutgers.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Sponsored Programs Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 732-932-0150 ext. 2104
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Subject _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator _____ Date _____

Sign below if you agree to be digitally audio-taped for the interviews.

Subject _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator _____ Date _____

APPROVED

Date: 02/25/10

EXPIRES

FEB 24 2011

Approved by _____
Rutgers IRB

APPENDIX C—

Interview Protocols

Interview #1 Protocol for Principal

These questions are based on ISLLC Standards 1 and 5 (CCSSO, 2008).

1: Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

5: Act with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner

Time of interview: _____ Date: _____

Place: _____ Interviewer: Elizabeth Franks

Interviewee: _____

Questions:

1. How did you become involved with the bilingual program? What did you do in response to that? (What background knowledge, experience and training have you obtained in relation to bilingual/ESL education?)
2. In your opinion, why was this district chosen as a model bilingual program?
3. What is your vision for the school? How do you communicate your vision to all stakeholders? (*probe for vision of ELL student outcomes*)
4. What is the program design for ELLs? How was the decision made to utilize this design? What kind of input do you have in that decision?
5. In your opinion, what are the necessary elements for an effective program for ELs?
6. How do you stay current on recent research and best practices in bilingual/ESL education?
7. In what ways do you promote a culture for continued school improvement? How do you obtain resources for that improvement? How do you promote and/or maintain practices that improve learning for ELs?
8. If I spoke to the teachers or parents, what would they say about the way in which you advocate for all learners in your school?

Interview #2 Protocol for Principal

Project: Contextual factors which influence Principal's Practices in Model Programs
for ELLs

Time of interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: Elizabeth Franks

Interviewee: _____

Questions:

These questions are based on ISLLC Standard 2 (CCSSO, 2008).

2: Advocate, nurture and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth

1. To what extent are you able to practice shared leadership? If so, how? If not, what are the constraints?
2. What instructional approaches are used to foster bi-literacy development and content acquisition?
3. How do you create an environment that values cultural and linguistic diversity?
4. How do you ensure that parents receive information?
5. How do you promote and monitor effective teaching and learning for ELLs?
6. In what ways have you created and sustained a professional learning community with staff?
7. What types of professional development are provided for all staff?
8. What professional development activities have you engaged in?
9. What structures exist that support the delivery of high quality instruction?
10. How do you feel your core curriculum addresses the needs of ELLs?
11. How is the language and academic achievement of ELLs monitored?
12. What are the procedures for data collection on formative assessment and how do teachers access that information in order to inform instructional decisions?
13. How do you provide feedback to teachers to assist them in meeting the educational goals for student achievement? Probe for all students and all teachers.

Interview #3 Protocol for Principal

Project: Contextual factors which influence Principal's Practices in Model Programs for ELs

Time of interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: Elizabeth Franks

Interviewee: _____

These questions are based on ISLLC Standards 3, 4 and 6 (CCSSO, 2008).

- 3: ensure management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment
- 4: Collaborate with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
- 6. Understand, respond to, and influence the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Questions:

1. What have you done to recruit and retain talented and dedicated staff?
2. How is funding used to support the education of ELLs?
3. How do you collaborate with families and community members? How do you solicit bilingual parents to get involved in school?
4. To what extent is communication to parents is provided in their native languages?
5. What types of programs exist that support parents?
6. How do you support development of family's primary language?
7. How are parents of ELLs involved in decision-making?
8. How have you had to advocate for the ELLs in the school and community?
9. Is there anything else that you would like to share about the bilingual program in your school?

Interview Protocol for Vice-principal, district supervisor, teacher leader and teacher focus group

Project: Contextual factors which influence Principal's Practices in Model Programs for ELLs

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee(s):

Position of interviewee(s):

Questions:

- 1).What is (are) your position(s) at the school?
- 2) What is your role in the delivery of services for ELLs?
- 3) What is the program design for ELLs?
- 4.) How do you feel the core curriculum addresses the needs of ELLs?
- 5.) Why do you think that this district was chosen as a model program?
- 6.) What factors do you think affect the principal's practices in relation to the bilingual program?
- 7.) What do you see is the principal's role in implementation of the bilingual program?
- 8.) How are parents involved?
- 9.) What resources are available to provide services for ELLs?
- 10) Is there anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX D

Direct Observation Protocol

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes
Research Focus: principal's role in: curriculum and instruction; bilingual program design; vision/mission; resources; home/school; high expectations	
Taken at 20 minute intervals	
1.) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions:	
2) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions	
3) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions	
4) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions	
5) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions	
6) Time: Location: Participants: Activities and Interactions	

Direct Observation Interim Summary Sheet

Date	Time frame	Location(s)
# of interactions with staff	# of interactions with students	# of interactions with parents
<u>Overview of Observation</u>		
<u>Main themes</u>		
<u>Concerns</u>		
File name:	Line #s from transcript	

APPENDIX E IRB APPROVAL

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

March 22, 2010

P.I. Name: Franks
Protocol #: 10-367M

Elizabeth J Franks
191 Davis Avenue
Piscataway NJ 08854

Dear Elizabeth Franks: ✓

(Initial / Amendment / Continuation / Continuation w/ Amendment)

Protocol Title: "A Comparative Case Study of Contextual Factors Which Influence Principal's Practices in Two Elementary Schools with Model Bilingual Programs"

This is to advise you that the above-referenced study has been presented to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, and the following action was taken subject to the conditions and explanations provided below:

Approval Date:	2/25/2010	Expiration Date:	2/24/2011
Expedited Category(s):	6,7	Approved # of Subject(s):	10

This approval is based on the assumption that the materials you submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) contain a complete and accurate description of the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research. The following conditions apply:

- **This Approval-**The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted. **This approval is valid ONLY for the dates listed above;**
- **Reporting-**ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications-**Any proposed changes MUST be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form(s)-**Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document, if you are using such documents in your research. The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;
- **Continuing Review-**You should receive a courtesy e-mail renewal notice for a Request for Continuing Review before the expiration of this project's approval. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that an application for continuing review has been submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the expiration date to extend the approval period;

Additional Notes: Expedited Approval per 45 CFR 46.110

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.

Please note that the IRB has the authority to observe, or have a third party observe, the consent process or the research itself. The Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) number for the Rutgers University IRB is FWA00003913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Respectfully yours,



Sheryl Goldberg
Director of Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
egraser@grants.rutgers.edu

cc: Catherine A. Lugg

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

January 24, 2012

P.I. Name: Franks
Protocol #: 10-367Mx

Elizabeth J Franks
 191 Davis Avenue
 Piscataway NJ 08854

Dear Elizabeth Franks:

✓
 (Initial / Amendment / Continuation / Continuation w/ Amendment)

Protocol Title: "A Comparative Case Study of Contextual Factors Which Influence Principal's Practices in Two Elementary Schools with Model Bilingual Programs"

This is to advise you that the above-referenced study has been presented to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, and the following action was taken subject to the conditions and explanations provided below:

Approval Date:	12/15/2011	Expiration Date:	12/14/2012	Expedited Category:	kc
Approved # of Subject(s):	10	Currently Enrolled:	10		

This approval is based on the assumption that the materials you submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) contain a complete and accurate description of the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research. The following conditions apply:

- **This Approval**-The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted. **This approval is valid ONLY for the dates listed above;**
- **Reporting**-ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications**-Any proposed changes **MUST** be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form(s)**-Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document. If you are using such documents in your research, The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;
- **Continuing Review**-You should receive a courtesy e-mail renewal notice for a Request for Continuing Review before the expiration of this project's approval. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that an application for continuing review has been submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to the expiration date to extend the approval period;

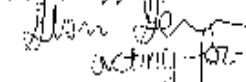
Additional Notes:

- Continuation Expedited Approval per 45 CFR 46.110
- IRB Approval has been provided for data analysis only. PI is to contact the IRB prior to the recruitment of additional subjects or further interactions/interventions with subjects.

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.

Please note that the IRB has the authority to observe, or have a third party observe, the consent process or the research itself. The Federal-wide Assurance (FWA) number for the Rutgers University IRB is FWA00005913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Respectfully yours,



Sheryl Goldberg
 Director of Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
 gshel@grant.rutgers.edu

cc: Catherine A. Luge