

# ELs in Education

Summer, 2013 # 5

Training for All Teachers Program @ SCSU

## What School Leadership Can Do To Improve the Education of English Learners

During 2008 to 2010, the Training for All Teachers Program of Southern Connecticut State University provided professional development to over 225 public school educators throughout the state. In the culminating activity of these trainings – a gallery walk to process Aida Walqui's (2000) "Ten Priorities to Consider When Designing Instruction for Immigrant Students" – participants recorded what they could do in their own classrooms and what they needed from their school and district administration to support these steps. The recordings were analyzed, synthesized, and categorized, resulting in six clear, concise recommendations for administrators.

**Providing much needed support systems for EL students** emerged as one of the most pressing areas for improvement, in which five specific needs were identified. Two of these needs are shared in the teachers' voices below.

### Incorporate student's culture into the classroom & curriculum

"Recognize and validate their culture. Embrace it, reciprocate and use it as learning opportunities for other students."

"Respect and highlight cultures. Make culture of students a celebration Value students' background district-wide."

"Should be district priority to provide cultural sensitivity training."

"Don't stereotype students!"

### Ensure necessary ESL Instructional support

"District needs tell me level of students, so I can see how much help is needed."

"Districts need to stop repeating 'past practices' and analyze the needs of our ELs."

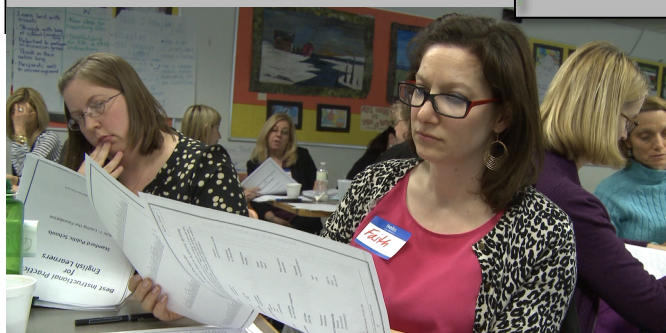
"Good teaching is good teaching—We should provide it to all students; and yet, there is still something more that ELs need that mainstream kids don't necessarily need."



## Coffee Q & A with the Experts

Does your leadership team have questions about how to best serve your EL students? Concerns about program types? Assessments? Appropriate texts? Southern Connecticut State University's Training for All Teachers Program invites you to meet informally at your school with SCSU's EL experts for a personal Q&A. You bring the questions. We'll bring the coffee.

**To schedule a meeting, call Marisa Ferraro at 203.392.5162 or e-mail: FerraroM4@SouthernCT.edu.**



Don't miss the next issue when we share teachers' voices that address:

- Ensure systemic inclusion of ELs; create a safe environment.
- Increase language awareness and allow the use of L1.
- Educate ELs and their families about the norms of school culture.

## Best Practices From the Classroom







First grade teacher Kimberly Volkens modified her lesson to make the subject matter more comprehensible. By pre-teaching the emotion vocabulary to her ELs using the emotion cards below, they were able to both identify the emotions and discuss what emotions the main character of the book was feeling. Subsequently, her ELs discussed various feelings they experienced in relationships within their families. Students were able to retell the story using those same emotion vocabulary words, thereby linking emoticons to words and phrases from the story in the book to personal relationships (text-to-self connections). ELs can experience success in the classroom, achieving the same content objectives as other students in order to deepen understanding of the text, regardless of language proficiency level.

Developing (Level 3), Emerging (Level 2), Preproduction (Level 1)

### Word Bank



### Phrase Bank

- surprised  
- sees the new puppy.
- sad  
- no one was petting him.
  - the puppy was playing with his favorite ball.
- happy  
- the puppy played with him.
  - the puppy slept next to him.

Retell of *Boomer's Big Surprise* (level 1 & 2)



First, Boomer was surprised.



Next, Boomer was sad. Only, the puppy had food.



Then, Boomer was still sad. The puppy had his ball.



Then, Boomer was happy.  
The puppy gave Boomer his ball back.



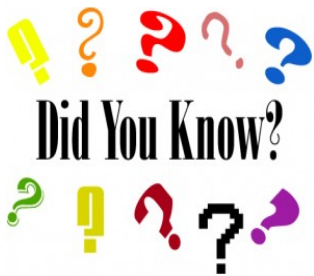
Last, Boomer was happy. The puppy was sleeping with him.

## Quick Facts About Connecticut's English Learners

### In the 2011-2012 School Year...

- Connecticut received \$4.7 million in Title III funds for English language services.
- CSDE's 2011 fall hiring survey found that 8 of the 18 bilingual positions remained vacant, while only three of the 34 TESOL positions were not filled.
- 43.9% of public school ELs who completed the LAS Links achieved overall English proficiency, and 81.6% of those who took the LAS Links for at least two years made progress, as they increased their overall test scores.

*(CSDE, Division of Assessment, Research & Technology Data Bulletin, June, 2012)*



### What the Training for All Teachers Program offers educators in Connecticut:

- 1) Scholarships for New Haven and Hamden educators: MS in Bilingual Education & TESOL and a cross endorsement in TESOL or Bilingual Education. Application process is currently closed.
- 2) **Scholarships for one graduate course**, TSL 518, Sheltered Content Instruction for ELs. Teachers learn how to modify mainstream course materials and instructional strategies so that English language learning students can engage in course content while simultaneously developing their new language. Spring 2014
- 3) Professional development: 6-10 hour workshops with a focus on math and science for ELs.

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Visit our website for more information: <http://www.southernct.edu/groups/tat/>