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HELPING HISPANIC STUDENTS REACH HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS: AN IDEA BOOK

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HELPING HISPANIC STUDENTS REACH HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS: AN IDEA BOOK

Hispanic¹ students represent the fastest growing minority population in the United States. Since the late 1970s, the percentage of Hispanic students in public schools has increased nationwide from 6 percent to 14 percent (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 1998). By 2050, Hispanic Americans are expected to comprise 25 percent of the total school-age population (Bureau of the Census, 1993a). In Texas, California, and Florida, Hispanic students are the majority in many large urban districts (Secada, Chavez-Chavez, Garcia, Munoz, Oakes, Santiago-Santiago, & Slavin, 1998).

The number of students learning English as a second language overall—of which 73 percent are Hispanic—increased substantially between 1990-91 and 1994-95, not only in places that have long had large Hispanic populations, but in states with new and growing populations, such as Arkansas (a 120 percent increase), Oklahoma (a 99 percent increase), and Kansas (a 118 percent increase) (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

Despite their growing number, Hispanic students remain among the most educationally disadvantaged groups in the country:

- Hispanic children are more likely than white children to enter elementary school without the preschool experiences on which academic success depends (NCES, 1998).
- Hispanic students tend to score significantly lower than white students in reading and mathematics on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (U.S. Department of Education, 1997c).²
- The dropout rate among Hispanic students has persisted at about 25 percent, much higher than that of white and black students, whose dropout rates have declined steadily (NCES, 1999).

¹ We use the term "Hispanic" and "Latino" throughout this report to refer to a widely diverse group of students with family origins in Spanish-speaking countries other than Spain. About 64 percent of Hispanic Americans are U.S.-born citizens residing in the United States (Bureau of the Census, 1993a). The vast majority of the Hispanic population five years of age and over who speak Spanish also speak English (Bureau of the Census, 1993b). Although unambiguous definitions of membership in racial and ethnic groups are elusive for a number of reasons, the term is adequately descriptive for our purpose here: to inform efforts to improve education outcomes for a historically underserved student group.

² These scores do not include English language learners (ELLs). ELL students are those whose native language is not English and who come from an environment where English is not the dominant language spoken. They may have been born inside or outside of the United States. ELL students are often referred to as limited English proficient (LEP students), as in Title I and Title VII legislation.

- The supply of teachers qualified to teach English language learners falls far short of the demand; furthermore, the percentage of Hispanic teachers is much lower than the percentage of Hispanic students (Reyes, Scribner, & Scribner, 1999).
- About 40 percent of Hispanic children live in families with incomes below the poverty line, a factor closely associated with lower educational achievement. This percentage has risen from 33 percent in 1985, while the percentage of white children living in poverty declined slightly (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998).
- Hispanic students are more likely than white students to attend schools that lack sufficient educational resources and are segregated (Orfield, 1993; White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 1999).

The likelihood that Hispanic students, like other students, will successfully complete their education rises with family income and parent education levels. *However, significant gaps in Hispanic and non-Hispanic students' high school graduation rates remain even after holding students' social class, English language proficiency, and immigrant status constant.* This is true across the Hispanic population,³ although the odds of completing high school are even lower for Hispanic immigrants and ELLs (Krashen, 1998; NCES, 1998; Reyes et al., 1999; Secada et al., 1998; White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 1999).

Many schools and communities across the country—both those that have long served Hispanic students and those that have new and growing populations—are taking steps to improve the likelihood of Hispanic students reaching the same high standards expected of all students. This Idea Book highlights promising strategies schools and communities are implementing to help Hispanic students succeed as they prepare for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

Title I and Title VII Work Together to Serve Hispanic Students

The 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires states, districts, and schools to hold *all* students—including Hispanic students—to high academic standards. Two major federal education programs within ESEA target the special needs of Hispanic students. **Title I of ESEA** aims to close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers. It helps schools provide opportunities for disadvantaged children to meet the same challenging academic standards as are established for all

³ The Hispanic population, discussed as a whole here, is widely diverse. The largest subgroups include Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. Data are not generally available by subpopulation (NCES, 1995).

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children. Part C of Title I—the Migrant Education Program—addresses the specific needs of migrant children, the vast majority of whom are Hispanic.

Title VII of ESEA, the Bilingual Education Act, assists states, school districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations in developing and implementing high-quality, standards-based instructional programs for students who need help learning English (including those whose native language is Spanish), so that these students, too, can meet the challenging academic standards established for all children.

Title I and Title VII work together and independently to help Hispanic students succeed in school. The 1994 reauthorization set forth a common framework for educational excellence for these two programs. This framework calls for schools and districts that receive Title I and Title VII funds to collaborate in setting common content and performance standards, planning staff development and developing organizational capacity, adopting guidelines for assessing student achievement, evaluating programs, and developing parent involvement policies and plans. Both titles also promote comprehensive school reform by encouraging the implementation of schoolwide programs.

In 1998, Congress authorized funds for the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Program. This program, which encourages schools to approach improvement through whole-school reform models, awarded \$220 million in grants to 2,800 schools in FY2000. About 80 percent of the funding went to schools eligible for Title I programs. Many of these schools serve significant numbers of Hispanic students. While it is a small initiative by federal standards, in combination with Title I and Title VII, CSRD offers another incentive for schools to unify their efforts to serve Hispanic youth.

This Idea Book Helps Educators to Help Hispanic Students Succeed

This Idea Book is for district administrators and curriculum coordinators, school principals and teachers, and other educators who seek to understand how Title I and Title VII help educators to design programs that support Hispanic students and Spanish-speaking ELLs in achieving high standards. It describes promising practices that current research attests to as effective and illustrates how these practices can operate in schools and other community settings that served Hispanic students for many years or that are learning how to best serve a new and growing population. The Idea Book describes how effective Title I and Title VII schools serve Hispanic students through four dimensions of quality:

- **Effective, aligned, standards-based programs.** Effective schools for Hispanic students and ELLs offer standards-based curriculum, appropriate assessment, and

sufficient time for all students to learn. Teaching, curricula, materials, tests, and instructional schedules are aligned and mutually reinforcing. Whatever the language of instruction, all students have a chance to learn what schools are supposed to teach them.

- **Enhanced professional and organizational capacity.** Effective schools for Hispanic students develop the organizational capacity to meet the needs of their students. They offer professional development geared to new demands on faculty skills and knowledge, adopt governance structures that enhance collective learning, acquire the equipment and materials they need to implement their programs, and adjust the school environment to support their work. To the general knowledge and skills that might have worked with other students in other settings, faculty members regularly add new competencies specifically geared to Hispanic students' needs.
- **Engaged family and community resources.** Effective schools for Hispanic students bring the resources of families and the broader community to bear on student success. They create conditions where Hispanic students and their families feel welcome and can achieve success. Strategies for collaboration surmount barriers posed by differences in language, culture, and social class.
- **Sturdy foundations for postsecondary options.** Effective schools for Hispanic students keep paths to postsecondary options visible, attainable, and inviting. They help Hispanic students and their families see the long-term personal, social, and economic benefits of high academic achievement.

Each section of the Idea Book ends with a checklist that educators can use to see how their schools and districts are addressing the needs of Hispanic students. The Idea Book concludes with lists of resources. These include: information on relevant demographics, federal funding, program components, evidence of success, and contact information for the schools, districts, and programs we describe in this Idea Book; related publications for further research and reading; and organizations specializing in serving Hispanic families and students.

IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE, ALIGNED, STANDARDS-BASED PROGRAMS

Learning occurs through guidance, practice, and experience. Effective school programs provide the kinds of guidance, practice, and experience that enable Hispanic students to absorb their schools' curriculum and to demonstrate their learning on tests designed for that purpose. Different types of learners may need different opportunities to master the same curriculum. For example, a beginning reader who has little experience with books needs to be guided through the basics—how to hold a book, where to find the first page, and how the pictures and words fit together. A beginning reader who is familiar with books may already know this. Similarly, different types of learners may need different tests to demonstrate the same mastery. A preschooler who comes to school speaking only Spanish may well be able to demonstrate academic readiness skills such as retelling a familiar story, elaborating on the plot and characters, or counting to 10—but not in English. Appropriate practice and experience for learning vary according to the learners, even when the learning goals are the same for all.

Classroom Instruction Is Aligned with Standards and Assessments

During the late 1980s and through the 1990s, efforts to improve student achievement led to widespread adoption of state standards and development of related assessment systems and, in many cases, curriculum frameworks. As communities fleshed out the details of these ambitious agendas, districts and schools began to change what they taught and tested to reflect their overarching standards for achievement.

Translating standards into classroom teaching strategies has posed a major challenge, both for schools that have long served Hispanic populations and those just beginning to do so. Faced with students who lack the requisite skills to complete a standards-based lesson, teachers may opt for an easier lesson at which students might succeed; or they may intend to teach to the standards but do not have the training to do it successfully. The tale often told in studies of compensatory education is about the curriculum that never gets covered. Furthermore, some conventional methods of teaching unprepared students that have appeal on other grounds—for example, extended skill drills and engaged but unfocused conversation—may not efficiently lead to achieving standards.⁴

⁴ Oakes has written extensively about the nature and impact of different opportunities to learn offered to students viewed as academically able and those viewed otherwise; see, for example, Jeannie Oakes' *Keeping Track* (1985).

Programs that are successful in helping Hispanic students achieve high standards provide students with lessons that take into account not only students' starting points but also the finish line. Effective schools that accommodate differences in culture and language do not dilute or defer academic experiences but enrich opportunities to learn by building a bridge between what students know and what they need to know. Successful programs for Hispanic students share some key features with successful programs for other students, but they are distinct in a few ways:

- They provide curriculum and instruction that lead to mastery of standards set for all students in forms that accommodate the particular resources and needs of Hispanic students.
- They offer special support for Hispanic students who are *English language learners*.
- Programs serving migrant students tailor their services to enhance continuity and progress in the educational experience.

Planning for Success: Florida's Curriculum Planning Tool

The Florida Department of Education and partner districts have created an online Curriculum Planning Tool (CPT) that enables teachers to easily access and share classroom activities that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT). Each activity in the CPT consists of a lesson plan and classroom assessment that are identified by benchmarks derived directly from the state standards. Through the Florida Department of Education's website (www.firn.edu/doe/curric/preK12/ECPT), educators select CPT lesson plans keyed to specific state standards.

Beginning in 1996, nine participating districts each assumed responsibility for creating and evaluating CPT activities in designated content areas and grade levels. Each summer, teams of teachers spend time being trained, agreeing on expectations for the product and process, developing and evaluating activities, and submitting them to the state department of education. Pasco County, for example, creates lesson plans for science (K-12) and health (6-12). Each lesson plan provides information for teachers on how to modify the activity for students with limited proficiency in English. ELL experts from the district assess all the lesson plans and their modifications for quality and usability.

Helping Teachers Focus on Instructional Objectives

Two teachers discovered differences between the way they aimed to teach and the way they actually taught as part of a long-term study of a two-way bilingual program in Texas (Calderón & Carreón, forthcoming). The teachers had participated in extensive, state-of-the-art professional development to learn new skills in teaching, how to analyze professional performance, and how to use peer coaching. Their goal was to offer their shared class—15 English-dominant and 15 Spanish-dominant students—a learning experience that valued and used English and Spanish equally and engaged students actively in a literacy-focused curriculum. Early in the project, they observed each other's lessons, kept careful notes on activities, and critiqued what they saw. In one 90-minute literacy lesson, they clocked only 78 minutes spent on academics. Of this stretch, students spent only two minutes actually reading. None of the activities addressed the standards that the teachers had explicitly designed the lesson to address. The teachers learned that they had not been fulfilling their intent to focus on particular learning objectives, as they had assumed they were. Their continued participation in the project eventually helped them meet their goal of challenging and engaging students.

Creating Challenging, Aligned Local Standards

Corpus Christi Independent School District's (CCISD) Real World Academic Standards are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge Skills (TEKS) and have been implemented in core curricular areas for four years. CCISD has developed both content and performance standards. Academic performance standards define students' expected level of performance in the attainment of content standards. For instance, at the sixth-grade level, the content standard for listening, viewing, and speaking is "Develop skills in listening, interpreting what others say, and making presentations." The performance standards for this content standard are "After listening to a presentation, analyze the content including main idea, purpose, and speaker's bias; evaluate messages delivered through visual media" and "Give a 10-minute presentation as part of a group using visual images created with computer technology or other media." Academic standards are disseminated to parents, students, and teachers, and are posted in every classroom.

To help teachers implement the standards in language arts, the district developed an extensive curriculum book written in both Spanish and English, *Celebrating Literacy*. The book provides K-12 lessons and assessments that are aligned with the district's standards. According to one Corpus Christi educator, "*Celebrating Literacy* offers supplements to every bit of reading instruction. *Celebrating Literacy* is a great tool kit." Teams of teachers were involved in its creation and teachers were trained to teach other teachers about the new reading curriculum.

Curricula Are Challenging and Literacy-Focused

Curricula that help Hispanic students succeed academically close the gap between (1) conventional assumptions about students' resources for learning and demonstrating mastery, and (2) students' actual cognitive, social, and cultural resources. These curricula are based on sound research on how best to stimulate student learning and are closely tied to the standards of achievement. Literacy is a priority because it underlies mastery of all other academic subjects.

Serving an Emerging Population in Georgia

Roan Elementary School, a Title I schoolwide program, has seen a drastic increase in Hispanic students in the last 10 years, from 14 percent in 1989-90 to about 80 percent in 1999-2000. Roan is located in rural Dalton Public Schools in northwest Georgia, where carpet and poultry industries have attracted many former migrant workers, and they, in turn, have brought their families to the area from Mexico. The district's school enrollment has increased overall from 3,876 in 1989-90 to 5,027 in 1999-2000, mainly due to the rapid influx of Hispanic families. In 1998-99, Roan served 743 students in grades preK-2, 74 percent of whom were Hispanic, 10 percent of whom were white, 13 percent of whom were African American, and 3 percent of whom were multiracial. About 25 percent of Roan students are ELLs, and 81 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Roan students receive at least three hours per day of reading instruction, about half of which is integrated into the content areas. All instruction is aligned with Georgia's state standards and curriculum. Roan, like other elementary schools in Dalton, uses Direct Instruction (a CSRD model). Direct Instruction is a highly structured, phonics-based program that emphasizes decoding skills, language development, and comprehension skills. Teachers assess students continuously so that students can proceed at their own pace in small instructional groups. Students participate in Direct Instruction for one hour each day. Both teachers and paraprofessionals receive intensive training to implement and support Direct Instruction. To ensure that students also have experience with literature, Roan uses Accelerated Reader, a computer-based program that assesses children's reading skills, recommends appropriate books, and tests students' comprehension of those books before they move on to another text.

ESL instruction is well integrated at Roan. ELLs participate in Roan's regular reading program and, based on their individual needs, also receive assistance from the school's ESL teachers. ESL teachers partner with classroom teachers, often during Direct Instruction, to coordinate instruction. Students who need more intensive assistance attend ESL classes. Roan (like all schools in Dalton) also uses reading and math software from the Computer Curriculum Corporation. Included is an ESL component for students who need it.

Dalton has implemented a systemwide elementary Spanish foreign language program for all students. Roan uses commercially available programs, *Estrellita* and *Estrellota*. The programs incorporate language skills, reading strategies, and native language literature. ELLs whose native language is Spanish can move through the program at an accelerated pace. Roan students participate in Spanish instruction for about 30 minutes each day.

To serve its growing Hispanic student population, Roan has actively recruited certified teachers who are bilingual as well as well-qualified bilingual paraprofessionals. Three paraprofessionals at Roan are funded under a systemwide Title VII grant to recruit graduates of Monterrey University in Mexico to serve as paraprofessionals in Dalton. Several of these paraprofessionals have gone on to earn Georgia teaching credentials. Local funds have made it possible for some Dalton teachers to spend up to a month during the summer learning about Mexican culture at Monterrey University.

In May 2000, 87 percent of Roan first-graders were reading at or above grade level in English. Of the 61 kindergartners who had attended Roan's preK program and participated in Direct Instruction, 85 percent were reading at or above grade level.

Effective and Flexible Program Models

Evidence suggests that schools have found many ways to engage Hispanic students in learning. Some schools take advantage of resources and conditions that are specific to a school, district, or

region. Other schools have assembled strategies with widely documented effectiveness, including those that have been disseminated nationally.

From syntheses of thousands of studies, researchers at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) at the University of California at Santa Cruz have identified five principles to govern programs intended to help Hispanic students achieve high standards (Rueda, 1998; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988):

- **Joint productive activity.** Teaching and learning are social activities, and learning takes place when students collaborate to solve problems. Joint activities, such as cooperative learning, generate the kinds of engagement and conversation that promote learning. Among learners with different levels of skill or knowledge, novices' questions elicit explanations from more advanced fellow students that extend the learning of the novices while consolidating the learning of explainers.
- **Reading and language development is embedded in the curriculum.** Good programs stimulate growth in students' reading and language skills in all instructional settings. Language proficiency at the level needed to succeed academically is one key to success in all subjects (Collier, 1985). Whether the focus of a given lesson is science, math, or any other core subject, one theme is reading and language development.
- **Connections to everyday life.** Good programs root their explanations of new concepts and skills in students' everyday experiences. Using familiar language, concepts, materials, and examples enables students to extend what they know to new directions. Making families and communities teaching partners can lead to learning that endures.
- **Challenging expectations.** Good programs expect great things of all students. All students need cognitive challenges, regardless of their primary language or cultural background. Analyzing and evaluating are essential skills for learners, even those who need to spend time memorizing basic skills as well. Effective lessons take into account both the limitations of students' existing knowledge and skill and the potential inherent in their general intelligence.
- **Instructional conversations.** Good programs engage students in instructional conversations. These conversations help them relate formal school knowledge to the knowledge they share with family and community. They go beyond the conventional strategy of recitation, when teachers ask questions for the purpose of hearing students report what they have learned in a lesson. In "instructional conversations," teachers stimulate students to describe how they think and what they know so that teachers can link new knowledge with the familiar.

Programs that promote the academic success of Hispanic students will show the influence of these principles in appropriate ways.

Nationally disseminated models. Nationally disseminated programs that have demonstrated success in helping Hispanic students meet high standards have several characteristics in common (Fashola, Slavin, Calderón, & Durán, 1997). The methods and materials in these models connect explicitly to the goals of instruction. Teachers measure students' progress toward those goals regularly and use the results to adapt instruction to student needs. Furthermore, these models have well-defined program components, including plans and materials for professional development. And, equally important, the group responsible for disseminating the model focuses on the quality of implementation.

Among those programs that have successfully designed parallel models to serve both English and Spanish speakers are Success for All/*Éxito Para Todos*, Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline/*Disciplina Consistente y Cooperativa*, and Reading Recovery/*Descubriendo La Lectura*. Carefully controlled, extended studies have documented significant academic gains on state assessments and other measures among students who participated in these programs (Fashola et al., 1997).

Success for All/*Éxito Para Todos*, the most widely adopted CSRD model, provides a comprehensive pre-K-6 curriculum in reading, writing, and language arts. Students across grade levels form small homogeneous instructional groups for 90 minutes every day. During this time they engage in direct instruction in phonics and comprehension, reading silently and in pairs, group discussion of comprehension and vocabulary, and individual and small group writing. Cooperative learning strategies promote critical thinking and language development. Tutoring by highly trained staff speeds up the lowest achievers' progress. Regular, program-specific testing ensures that each student is working at the appropriate instructional level. A program support person serves as project manager and coach, and a family support team provides a kind of "triage" for troubled students, solving some problems and referring others to appropriate specialists. The Spanish version of Success for All is not simply a translation, but an adaptation that reflects the influence of language and culture on content and materials. A third version, adapted for use with ELLs in multilingual, high-poverty schools, is also producing large gains in student literacy.

Promoting “Success for All” through CIRC/BCIRC

Developed by Dr. Margarita Calderón in conjunction with the originators of Success for All, BCIRC is a Spanish bilingual adaptation of Johns Hopkins University’s Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) curriculum. Schools, including those using CSRD and Title I schoolwide program funds, can choose to implement CIRC and BCIRC in grades 2-8 without becoming Success for All schools. CIRC and BCIRC have become the reading and writing components of Success for All for programs implementing bilingual and ELL models.

CIRC and BCIRC draw on instructional practices designed to develop social, academic, and communication skills. The CIRC and BCIRC programs contain three principal elements: direct instruction in reading comprehension, “treasure hunt” activities, and integrated language arts and writing. In all of these activities, students work in heterogeneous teams of four. All activities follow a series of steps that involve teacher presentation, team practice, independent practice, peer pre-assessment, additional practice, and testing.

BCIRC helps students succeed in reading their home language, Spanish, and then in making a successful transition to reading English. Success for All and BCIRC are aligned to the standards of the states where they operate. The activities and recommendations in the program’s teacher manuals help teachers teach students to achieve those standards. Teacher manuals give teachers everything they need to present their lessons.

BCIRC integrates students’ experiences with literature and with reading and writing. As students begin to move from Spanish to English reading, teachers use an adaptation of CIRC. The ELL CIRC curriculum makes the language more comprehensible to students who are still learning English. The combined sequence of activities offers students rich language experiences that integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing and focuses on students’ cultural backgrounds as much as possible. Because students learn strategies in Spanish first, they can transfer these strategies to the English-language context. As students begin reading in English, they know the routines and their role and function within each instructional event.

During CIRC/BCIRC’s 90-minute reading blocks, students first build the background and vocabulary they need to understand the lesson, make predictions, and read a selection. Teachers ask students to read alone silently and with partners aloud.

After partner reading, pairs—who are carefully selected by reading ability—discuss key elements of the narrative: characters, setting, plot, problem/solutions. Teams of four then map the story, retell the stories to partners within their teams, and do writing activities related to the story. About 10 words found throughout the story become a word bank that students use throughout the week orally and in their writing.

To assess their own progress, partners initial a student assessment form indicating that they have completed the task and achieved its criterion based on a list of activities that they are expected to complete at their own pace. Partners have a vested interest in making sure all students complete their work correctly because individual students’ scores become the team’s score. At the end of three class periods, students are assessed on what they have learned.

Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline/*Disciplina Consistente y Cooperativa* (CMCD) is a schoolwide program, and also a CSRD model, that has generated measurable improvements in learning environments and student achievement. The latter is attributed to significant increases in academic learning time. The program emphasizes students’ and staff’s shared

responsibility for making and keeping rules that maintain safety and order, largely through a framework that emphasizes caring, prevention, cooperation, organization, and a sense of community. Staff assess school needs in the spring, participate in summer workshops conducted by local and national program trainers, and continue meeting throughout the school year to improve the program's implementation. School staff, eventually in cooperation with students, write explicit behavior expectations grounded in their own school's needs. Students and staff, including support staff such as office aides and custodians, enforce the rules. Evaluations document dramatic reductions in rates of serious and minor misbehavior (Freiberg, 1996), and teachers report having up to 40 minutes a day longer to invest in academics (Opuni, 1998).

Reading Recovery/*Descubriendo La Lectura* is a tutoring program. A specially trained teacher works 30 minutes a day individually with the lowest-achieving first-grade readers. Tutoring focuses on helping students use effective strategies for reading and writing. Sessions include reading familiar stories together, writing stories, re-assembling cut-up sentences, and reading new stories. Teacher training focuses on diagnosing students' literacy problems and teaching students coping strategies. It features "behind the glass" sessions in which one teacher works with a student while others observe from another room, followed by a collaborative analysis of the lesson and its applications of the program's principles. Studies conducted by program developers and others show substantial, enduring effects on reading performance in both the English and Spanish versions (Fashola et al., 1997).

"Made to order" models. Many schools and districts find it efficient to adopt programs created close to home or to invent programs specifically tailored to their community's population and resources. Because these often have the advantage of local appeal and ownership, they may elicit more thoughtful and whole-hearted implementation. These models differ considerably in format and approach, but their effectiveness arises from the aforementioned key principles of good practice. Like national models, they all expect schools to conduct ongoing analyses of students' performance to ensure that they are achieving to high standards. For example, to serve its large and growing Hispanic population, the El Paso Collaborative in Texas has created its own CSRD-approved literacy model, Literacy in Action.

Creating a Locally Relevant Curriculum

Lennox Middle School in Lennox, California, serves about 2,000 sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders through a Title I schoolwide program. Nearly all of its students are Hispanic, and almost 70 percent are Spanish-speaking ELLs. Ninety-six percent of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches.

Teams of three to five teachers work with groups of 90 to 130 students on a locally developed curriculum that transcends specific subjects. Each team consists of a math/science teacher, a language arts teacher, a physical education teacher, an exploratory teacher (for classes once called "electives"), and sometimes a special education teacher. Teachers often follow their students from grade to grade to maintain a link.

Lennox's curriculum, aligned with state standards, emphasizes justice, peace, and tolerance. Since it also emphasizes reading, teachers work hard to find culturally appropriate and motivational literature for Latino children and books by Latino writers.

Between 1998 and 1999, on the Stanford Achievement Test, on average, Lennox students' scores in reading, language, spelling, and mathematics, increased or remained stable, as did the number of students achieving at or above the 50th percentile. ELLs' reading scores in several grades also increased.

Support for English Language Learners

For English language learners, lessons presented in English can pose particular challenges. Students may be ready to learn the next step of a math equation, a new science concept, or the principles espoused in the U.S. Constitution, but unable to grasp information given in English. When instruction neglects the strengths and weaknesses of a student's skills, it severely restricts the student's opportunity to learn. Without proper language support, these students may not grasp the curriculum and may fall behind academically, putting them at high risk for dropping out of school (Faltis & Wolfe, 1999). Some studies suggest that it takes students an average of five to seven years to learn enough English to succeed academically in a regular English classroom (Genessee, 1999; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1997). Communities cannot afford to wait for students' English skills to catch up with those of native English speakers before providing them with the same challenging academic curriculum. The social and the economic costs of school failure are too high.

Learning the Same Curriculum

Teachers at H.D. Hilley Elementary School, a Title I schoolwide program in Texas' Socorro Independent School District, take pride in offering the same curriculum to ELL and English-proficient students. Hilley serves 766 students in grades pre-K-5; virtually all its students are Hispanic and 24 percent are Spanish-speaking ELLs. Ninety percent of students receive free or reduced-price lunches.

All students participate in the same curriculum structure and complete similar challenging assignments; teachers modify their instructional practices to help ELLs grasp the curriculum, using Spanish and sheltered instructional techniques. Hilley's method eases the transition of ELLs—all of whom speak Spanish—into the monolingual English classroom. Students are used to the instructional routine. "They need to do the problem of the day using the Problem Solving Plan structure. They need to write in their journal. They need to read a book and do their reader's response," explained a third-grade teacher. "The curriculum and the instructional methods [of the ELL and English-language activities] are as similar as they can be."

English language learners and Title I and Title VII. ELLs can receive services under both Title I and Title VII. Title I supplements opportunities to learn for all eligible students enrolled in Title I schools, whether they speak English or another language. Districts' Title I plans describe how they will coordinate and integrate education services, including those for ELLs. Federal law encourages districts to integrate Title I and Title VII services, for example, by strengthening parent involvement or professional development efforts.

Title VII, the Bilingual Education Act, specifically serves ELLs. The purpose of Title VII is to educate limited English proficient children and youth to meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children and youth, including state content standards and challenging state performance standards. Title VII awards four types of grants to districts and states:

- Three-year development and implementation grants to initiate new programs
- Two-year enhancement grants to improve existing programs
- Five-year comprehensive school grants to implement whole-school reform with a focus on improving services to ELLs throughout the school program
- Five-year systemwide improvement grants for districtwide projects in districts serving high concentrations of ELLs

These programs—both together and independently—support schools as they employ strategies to help Spanish-speaking and other ELLs.

ELLs and strategies for reaching high standards. Schools that serve long-established ELL populations and schools that are just beginning to serve Spanish-speaking ELLs can use varied strategies to support students with special language needs. Sheltered instruction, English as a second language (ESL) classes, developmental and transitional bilingual education, and two-way bilingual education programs are all options to consider. While ESL and sheltered instruction are approaches for teaching English, bilingual education and dual-immersion bilingual programs build skills in both Spanish and English and may include ESL and sheltered instruction. In addition to these approaches, tailored specifically for ELLs, schools can use cooperative learning strategies to promote student interactions that advance the achievement of all students while supporting English acquisition (Fashola et al., 1997).

English as a Second Language (ESL). Typical ESL programs build students' English grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills. Research has shown that a content-based approach to teaching students English is more effective than isolating language skills from academic content (Genessee, 1999). **Content-based ESL** is structured around academic content rather than isolated English-language skills. Students usually move through successive levels of ESL before exiting the program.

Learning English through Content

Rio Grande High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, promotes literacy in both English and Spanish by offering its ELL students four levels of content-based ESL programs as well as separate classes to improve their Spanish literacy skills, all with the state content standards in mind. Funded in part by Title VII, the school serves more than 2,000 students in grades 9-12; 85 percent of the students are Hispanic and 69 percent are Spanish-speaking ELLs. On the Gates-MacGintie assessment, ELL students' reading scores showed improvement as they moved through grades 9-12.

The school uses the Language Assessment Scales (LAS), a commercially available English-language assessment, to determine when students are ready to move from one level of the program to the next. Level IV—the final ESL level at Rio Grande—helps students make the transition to an English-based program.

(continued)

Learning English through Content (Continued)

Rio Grande's four ESL levels enroll students in all grade levels. Levels are as follows:

ESL Course	Prerequisites	Course Description
Level I: Transitional ESL	Very limited or no knowledge of English	Opportunity to learn English in a no-stress environment. Students participate physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and linguistically in meaningful situations as they acculturate to the school environment and the community. Skills taught include listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as cultural understanding.
Level II: English Language Enrichment	Transitional, enrichment, or teacher- and/or test-recommended	Continues process of acculturation and helps students understand and produce more complex oral and written language. Teachers integrate language development with science, art, and other subjects. Students are able to function better in content area classes. The course reinforces skills in listening, comprehension, oral production, reading, and writing, as well as cultural understanding.
Level III: ESL	Transitional, enrichment, or teacher- and/or test-recommended	For students who have mastered listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills learned at previous two levels. Designed to incorporate second language with content in different subject areas. Emphasizes study skills and cultural understanding.
Level IV: ESL	Completion of levels I, II, and III and /or teacher recommendation	For students who have mastered listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and study skills presented in previous levels. Usually taught simultaneously with a regular English class; designed to provide advanced language support for a mainstreamed limited English speaker. Level IV ESL also helps students develop independent learning behavior so that they can cope with different learning situations.

Igniting Learning for Gifted ELLs in Louisiana

Project IGNITE (IGNITE stands for "Identifying Gifted LEP students In and Through ESOL") offers ELLs in the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools a "pregifted program" as a stepping stone to gifted and talented education. The program is funded by Title VII and local funds. Because ELL students are often underidentified and underrepresented in gifted programs, Project IGNITE works with educators in three schools to identify potentially gifted students who are not yet proficient in English. Students are identified through multiple measures, including some that are not language dependent. Identified students participate in three hours of Project IGNITE each week during the regular school day for up to two years. About 15 percent of East Baton Rouge students served are Hispanic.

Project IGNITE is modeled on Project GOTCHA, first developed in 1987 as a U.S. Department of Education Office of Bilingual and Minority Education (OBEMLA) Academic Excellence Project in Broward County, Florida. Project IGNITE uses the Project GOTCHA curriculum, which is aligned with Louisiana standards and the standards advocated by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The curriculum takes a multicultural, thematic approach that meshes language objectives and ELL teaching strategies with authentic, content-based tasks. Since Project GOTCHA in Broward County ended in 1996, its developers have consulted and worked with districts, including East Baton Rouge, to develop new projects like IGNITE. The consultants help districts to write Title VII grants to fund implementation. So far, three Florida districts, in addition to East Baton Rouge, have received Title VII grants to implement GOTCHA-based programs.

Project IGNITE activities focus on developing students' critical thinking skills. For example, to make their family trees, students study real trees from both the United States and their native countries, learning science, geography, and new vocabulary. They then choose the tree they feel best represents their family. The specially trained and certified Project IGNITE teacher encourages students to place their relatives on whatever tree "branches" they feel make the most sense, to allow room for nontraditional family structures. Project IGNITE also trains all teachers in the elementary schools in which it operates to provide continuity between the regular and IGNITE classrooms and to ensure that all students in the school benefit from the project.

In 1999-2000, the first year of Project IGNITE in East Baton Rouge, five of the 67 students served have so far entered the regular district gifted program, and many more are expected to follow next year. Data from Project GLITTER, a very similar, longer-running GOTCHA-based program in Broward County, indicate that participating students increased their scores on the SAT-9 by nearly 5 percent, while scores of nonparticipating students in a comparison group decreased by nearly 3 percent.

Sheltered instruction. Sheltered instructional techniques help ELLs grasp subject-specific content through instruction in English. These techniques are less language-dependent than other teaching methods, relying more on hands-on activities to convey the lesson to students. For example, teachers might use supplementary materials such as graphs, models, visual aids, and manipulatives. Text can be either outlined or rewritten in more understandable language or graphically depicted. Content objectives in a sheltered algebra or physics course, for example, are exactly the same as their mainstream English counterparts, but the teacher constantly monitors and adjusts instructional methods and complexity of English used according to students' developmental language needs. Sheltered instruction, conducted in English, may be used specifically to teach students to read, write and speak in, and listen to, English (i.e., ESL) or can be used as an instructional method for teaching the content

areas (e.g., sheltered algebra, sheltered biology). ESL and bilingual education teachers can incorporate sheltered instructional techniques into those models as well.

Involving Students in a Study of American Culture

At Liberty High School, a newcomer school and Title I schoolwide program in New York City, students in the bilingual program have the opportunity to participate in Multicultural House, a program for students from several primary language groups. Liberty serves 525 students, all of whom are new immigrant ELLs and about a third of whom speak Spanish. Students in this program take their ESL courses together. The curriculum for these combined classes includes topics such as the immigrant experience, the contributions of different ethnic groups in America, discrimination, cultural clashes, getting a job, and survival skills. Students also complete two interdisciplinary projects: "Names and Naming Customs," and "Gender Roles in Different Cultures." Students use a teacher-created student workbook, based on the state standards, and written in three languages. Teachers used sheltered instructional techniques to help students grasp content while they build their English skills. Title VII helps support Liberty's programs.

Districts can develop sheltered curricula based on state and local standards, aligned assessments (including alternative assessments such as portfolios and ongoing teacher assessments), and professional development to help teachers implement sheltered instructional techniques for ELLs.

Bilingual education. Bilingual education is another option for serving ELL students. In bilingual education programs, students learn academic content in their native language while they learn English. Transitional bilingual education, development bilingual education/maintenance programs, and two-way bilingual immersion models are by far the three most common types of bilingual education programs, with transitional programs constituting the majority of bilingual education programs overall.

Although most Spanish-speaking students are not enrolled in bilingual programs, the majority of bilingual education programs do serve Spanish-speaking students (Genessee, 1999). Title VII requires that funding priority be given to programs that promote bilingual proficiency in English and another language for all students participating in the program.

When implemented properly, a bilingual education program can help students meet high standards and achieve proficiency in English. Evidence also suggests that bilingual education lowers dropout rates and enhances student achievement by signaling to students that the school values their language and culture (Krashen, 1998). Students transfer content and skills learned in Spanish to those later learned in English. For example, students who study algebra in Spanish do not need to study the same concepts again in English, but continue on to the next math course in whatever language they can handle.

Earning Bilingual Seals for Graduation

Rio Grande High School is one of two schools in the nation where students may earn a bilingual seal on their high school diplomas. The bilingual seal program is supported at the school by Title VII. To earn this distinction, which shows that students are proficient in both Spanish and English, students must complete Level IV of Spanish-language instruction with a "C" or better. They also must complete a college preparatory program with a minimum of four academic classes each in mathematics, science, social studies, and English, as well as two electives.

Students apply for the bilingual seal during their senior year. A committee of teachers, administrators, counselors, and bilingual staff reviews applications and tests students' Spanish and English listening and speaking skills using a locally developed performance assessment, and their reading, and writing skills in both Spanish and English with the Language Assessment Scales. Students must pass all sections of the exam with a 70 percent score or better to earn the bilingual seal.

In 1999, 40 Rio Grande students received the bilingual seal on their diplomas. In 1997 and 1998, 30 students received the seal each year.

Transitional bilingual education (TBE) is the most common type of bilingual education for ELLs in the United States (Genessee, 1999). The goal of TBE programs is not to maintain students' native language literacy while learning English, but to use those skills for grade-level instruction in the content areas until students develop the English skills for them to move to an English-based instructional program. Students enrolled in TBE programs learn English while studying grade-level academic content in their native languages. Teachers sometimes also use sheltered instructional techniques to teach content as students make the transition from native language to English instruction.

TBE programs often begin in kindergarten or first grade and usually seek basic English proficiency within two years. Students exit the program within three years, at which point they may or may not have learned enough English to succeed on their own in mainstream English classrooms. Students' transition to English-only instruction often begins with English-taught (and perhaps sheltered) mathematics and progresses from the least to the most language-dependent subjects, ending with social studies. Because Hispanic students learn much content in Spanish, especially in the first year, the program requires fully bilingual teachers well trained in TBE methodology.

Besides the usual requirements for good instruction, effective TBE programs for Hispanic students feature:

- High-quality English- and Spanish-language instruction aligned with standards

- Ongoing oral English development
- Support for students struggling in the early grades
- Effective transitions to English instruction
- Well-trained bilingual teachers (Genessee, 1999)

Implementing TBE at Liberty High School

Liberty High School offers Spanish-speakers several types of TBE programs. The curriculum of each, however, is aligned with the new content standards set by the New York State Education Department and the academic performance expectations of the New York City Board of Education.

Students lacking literacy in both Spanish and English enroll in the minischool, a self-contained program that develops Spanish and English literacy skills as well as the academic skills necessary to succeed in an American classroom. Minischool teachers base the curriculum on practical themes, relying heavily on “hands-on” instruction. Minischool students take two Spanish language classes at one of two levels, ESL classes at one of nine levels, global skills and math in Spanish, and science (taught in English).

Students who are literate in Spanish typically take three periods of ESL, content courses in Spanish, and one period of Spanish language arts. In this way, students earn content course credit that they may not have otherwise earned because of their limited proficiency in English. The native language arts course curriculum reflects students’ Spanish-literacy level. For example, some less advanced students write friendly letters in Spanish, while more advanced students read *Don Quixote*.

Title VII supports some bilingual education programs that preserve and develop students’ native language skills while helping students master English. In **developmental bilingual education** programs (DBE), also called maintenance programs, Hispanic ELLs learn content in both English and Spanish and achieve academic proficiency in both languages. Students add English to their language repertoire rather than subtract Spanish. DBE programs often begin in kindergarten or first grade and ideally continue through secondary school. Most DBE programs in the United States are for Spanish-speakers. Research on DBE shows that such programs, after four to seven years of participation, help students to achieve at grade level in English and narrow achievement gaps between students who are fluent in English and ELLs (Genessee, 1999). DBE environments value students’ native language, closely tied to culture, thus keeping students’ self-esteem high, a factor linked with success (Calderón & Carreón, forthcoming; Genessee, 1999).

High-quality DBE features:

- Varied, appropriate teaching strategies to enhance English and content learning
- Separate English and Spanish instruction, each aligned with standards
- Heterogeneous grouping
- Instruction that extends at least through elementary school and sometimes through secondary school
- Equal status accorded to English and Spanish
- Well-trained bilingual teachers (Genessee, 1999)

Two-way bilingual education. Two-way bilingual programs provide standards-based integrated language and academic instruction for both native English-speakers and ELLs. All students learn a second language, develop first-language proficiency, and deepen cross-cultural understanding. Two-way bilingual education differs from DBE in that most DBE students are English-language learners, while two-way programs serve both language minority and native English-speaking students.

Teachers teach students some subjects in English and some in a second language, most often Spanish. Most programs begin in kindergarten and span the elementary grades. Usually, each class is divided equally between native English-speakers and native Spanish-speakers. In the early grades, teachers may provide about 90 percent of instruction in Spanish and 10 percent in English, working up to roughly equal time for both languages as students gain proficiency. In others, instructional time may be more equally divided from the start. The time spent learning in each language often depends on school resources and teacher capacity (Calderón & Carreón, forthcoming).

A well-implemented two-way bilingual program features:

- Use of appropriate strategies for teaching and learning language and content aligned with standards
- Separate use of Spanish and English by teachers and students
- A four- to six-year program (at minimum)
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Equal status accorded to both languages

- Well-trained bilingual teachers
- Appropriate bilingual materials (Genessee, 1999)

Producing Bilingual, Biliterate, Bicultural Students

Coral Way Elementary School in Miami serves 1,375 students in grades pre-K-5. Eighty-nine percent of these students are Hispanic and 25 percent are Spanish-speaking ELLs. About 70 percent of students in this Title I schoolwide program receive free or reduced-price lunches. Title I helps the two-way bilingual education school support small-group instruction, low student-teacher ratios, and a parent coordinator. Coral Way's objective is "to help students become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural."

Coral Way prides itself on using the CORE knowledge curriculum, developed by E.D. Hirsch. It is the only school in the Miami-Dade district to implement the program in both Spanish and English. There is also a bilingual curriculum in pre-kindergarten. The CORE knowledge curriculum uses a cooperative approach to learning, includes technology in its teaching, and focuses on literature. The school links the thematic units recommended by the CORE curriculum to language arts, science, and social studies and aligns these with district standards, which in turn align with Florida's Sunshine State Standards. At Coral Way, 95 percent of students read at grade level by second grade.

Immersing Students in Spanish and English at Key Elementary School

Francis Scott Key Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia, a Title I targeted assistance school, serves 575 students in a Spanish-English two-way bilingual education program. Fifty-nine percent of students are Hispanic, 33 percent are white, 7 percent are African American, and less than 1 percent are Asian American. About half the students are ELLs, virtually all Spanish speakers.

All students at Key study Arlington County's elementary curriculum, aligned in both Spanish and English with Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOLs). Students learn social studies and language arts in English, and mathematics and science in Spanish. Students are also taught art, music, and physical education in English. The program is designed to teach English- and Spanish-speaking children a second language through content instruction and everyday conversation.

Each group of approximately 50 students has two teachers. One teacher teaches in Spanish and the other in English. Students are divided into two heterogeneous groups, each with approximately 12 Spanish-speaking students and 12 English-speaking students each. One group spends its mornings with the English-speaking teacher while the other group is with the Spanish-speaking teacher. In the afternoon the groups switch teachers.

The Key School is one of only three schools in Arlington that met the state's achievement expectations on the SOL test in 1998. Only 7 percent of schools across the state earned this distinction.

Cooperative learning strategies. Two key conditions characterize cooperative learning strategies that have demonstrated their effectiveness in accelerating student achievement. First, teams work toward a common goal, such as earning recognition by performing well. Second, team success depends on individual learning. For example, a team of students with diverse abilities can earn

recognition for achievement when the sum of students' improvement scores reach a pre-set high standard. In a typical cooperative learning lesson, the teacher presents new information at the appropriate level of challenge, and then students work in teams on assignments designed to lead to mastery. Depending on the subject, students may be working on the same or different assignments, but everyone is expected to offer encouragement and support to teammates. Students take mastery tests individually, to demonstrate whether each has attained the lesson objective, but their individual performance becomes part of a team improvement score that establishes eligibility for recognition (Leighton, 1999).

Well-structured cooperative learning activities provide opportunities for elaborated, on-task conversation among students with different language strengths and needs. When teams include English language learners at different stages of English acquisition, the task structure engages students in helping each other complete assignments, offering explanations and assistance in the available shared language (Cohen, Lotan, & Holthuis, 1995). In studies of Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC), for example, students emerged with greater mastery of reading and writing in both English and Spanish by the end of two years (Calderón, 1994).

Implementing Complex Instruction

Complex Instruction (CI) is a research-based, cooperative learning approach designed for academically and linguistically diverse classrooms. The model, grounded in educational and sociological theory, is used in hundreds of elementary and middle schools serving Hispanic students. Designed by Dr. Elizabeth Cohen at Stanford University in 1979, it features carefully crafted groupwork that provides all students access to engaging, higher-order learning activities. This is accomplished in part through "multiple ability curricula" that require use of a wide array of intellectual abilities so that students at different levels of academic achievement and with different strengths can successfully work together to complete a group project. For example, the completion of a group activity on the Maya Indians could require students to use visual skills, musical or dramatic abilities, analytical reasoning, or other academic skills.

Creating equitable classrooms is at the heart of CI. All students participate in groupwork, regardless of their academic status. To ensure that all students have a chance to work to meet the same standards, CI students learn the norms of cooperation, and the importance of everyone contributing their skills to a group task. In addition, teachers receive extensive training in all aspects of the program, including how to use "status treatments" to broaden students' perceptions of what it means to be smart and how to delegate authority to encourage students to talk and work together to solve group assignments (CI also trains preservice teachers in the California State University system). Research has consistently shown that the more students talk and work together on CI's multiple ability tasks, the more they learn.

CI's approach to groupwork is ideal for classrooms serving Hispanic students. CI offers all Hispanic students culturally relevant, intellectually challenging curriculum. Also, ELLs comprehend better and are more engaged in a task when graphs, diagrams, or other visual aids are used, as they are in CI's approach of engaging students' different learning strengths. CI also offers ELLs valuable "practice time" for language development as they talk and work together with fluent English speakers and each other on group products. At the elementary level, research on the model has found that the more frequently Spanish-speaking ELLs talked about a group task, the larger their gains in the English language. The multiple ability curriculum also offers a variety of ways for ELLs to show their "smarts," raising their status in the classroom and increasing their participation in groupwork. Bilingual students are viewed as valuable resources because they translate for ELLs in their group and support ELLs' language development. CI's approach to groupwork has also been shown to improve low-achieving, disengaged readers' reading and writing skills because students practice these skills for a "real" purpose: to communicate, contribute, and understand.

Newcomer programs. Some districts have implemented newcomer programs for newly arrived secondary school students, most of whom speak Spanish and many of whom have limited English and/or native language literacy skills, along with little formal education of any kind (Short, 1998). Newcomer programs offer intensive language development and other studies to help students—who have typically been in the United States for one year or less—adjust to their new country both academically and culturally. Typically, they serve students for an adjustment period of 6-18 months before transitioning them to academic and ESL classes in regular schools.

Welcoming New Immigrants

Liberty High School, a newcomer program in New York City, came into being in 1986, after the New York City Board of Education decided to dedicate a school to students who arrive during the semester instead of trying to place these students in other schools. Upon noting that most of these students were new immigrants, the board decided that the new school should focus on immigrants. Four members of the staff (including the principal and assistant principal) have been at Liberty since its inception. Liberty offers a one-year transitional program for students who are between the ages of 14.5 and 19 and have less than eight years of schooling.

Typically, newcomer programs offer instructional activities that meet older students' special educational needs, including sheltered content instruction in English and academic instruction in students' native languages (TBE). Many programs offer native language literacy instruction as well. About half of newcomer programs receive Title I funds (Short, 1998). Many of the programs reach out to parents, offering parent orientation and adult ESL classes.

Newcomer programs take several forms. Some are in schools near where the majority of newcomers live. They may offer full or part-day programs where students also participate in electives with their English-speaking peers. Others are free-standing programs. Some districts operate short-term newcomer programs at the district's intake center, where all new ELLs must come for placement before entering a regular school.

To determine when students are ready to move from the newcomer program to another school program, schools usually assess students' language capacities. Programs often support student transfers, pairing newcomers with more experienced ELL students, arranging for students to sit in on classes before they enroll in them, and tracking students' progress for the first few months after the transition (Short, 1998).

Migrant Students' Requirements

Migrant students are among the most educationally and economically disadvantaged groups in the nation (Gonzales, Stief, Fiester, Goldstein, Waiters, & Weiner, 1998). Because they move frequently, their reading and mathematics achievement tends to be lower than that of other students (U.S. Government Accounting Office, 1994). More than two-thirds of migrant children live in households of the working poor (Anstron & Kindler, 1996). More than 80 percent of the country's 580,000 migrant students are Hispanic, and about half are English language learners (Henderson, Daft, & Fong, 1998; Strang & von Glatz, 1999). Migrant students tend to begin school with fewer academic skills and at an older age than the general school-age population; they test below the national average

on basic skills and drop out of school at a higher rate than other students (Gonzales et al., 1998). Because of interruptions in their schooling, migrant students need special supplemental services to help them succeed. Students who have moved with migrant parents within the last three years are eligible for federal Migrant Education Program services.

Because migrant students move across local and state boundaries, and because no single school district—and, in many cases, no single state—is responsible for their education, these students often need extra support to help them overcome the effects of poverty, mobility, and limited English proficiency. Some districts have developed flexible programs that follow migrant students from district to district without seriously interrupting their studies. There are also follow-up techniques for students whose families often travel in “streams” to the same districts year after year.

Part C of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the Migrant Education Program (MEP)—provides funding to coordinate services for migrant children across states and districts so that there will be continuity in their educational experiences. Schools using MEP funds give priority to recent arrivals who have the highest risk of academic failure. These students often have special needs not only in academic and language development, but also for dental, nutritional, medical, and social services. MEP funds address these latter needs as well. Like other students, migrant students may receive services coordinated under Title I, Part A, Title VII, and other federal, state, and local programs. Educators can also offer extended-time programs during the summer to help migrant students catch up on school work they may have missed while moving.

Identifying and Tracking Migrant Students

Since 1997, using MEP funds (about \$400,000 per year for five years), ESTRELLA (Encouraging Students through Technology to Reach High Expectations in Learning, Lifeskills, and Achievement) has used technology to help migrant students earn the credits they need to graduate from high school. Students—all of whom are Hispanic—come from six Texas school districts that average 96 percent Hispanic enrollment and an 85 percent poverty rate. In 1999-2000, the program served about 50 students. All ESTRELLA students have at least a functional understanding of English, although their levels of proficiency vary.

The program, a collaborative effort of Illinois, Montana, New York, and Texas educators, brings technology into the lives of migrant farmworker youth (and their families) who are in middle school, high school, earning GEDs, or out of school. ESTRELLA helps students transition to higher education and the workforce. The project targets students who travel between home base school districts in the Rio Grande Valley (La Joya, Mercedes, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo, and Weslaco) and Winter Garden (Eagle Pass and San Felipe-Dei Rio) areas of Texas and 12 receiving school districts in Illinois, Montana, and New York. The Illinois Migrant Council in Chicago administers ESTRELLA, with a field office in Weslaco, Texas.

ESTRELLA uses the New Generation System (NGS), a multi-state electronic information system funded in part with states' federal Migrant Education Program allocations that maintains current education and health records on migrant students to identify students who migrate among the participating communities. The selection process begins in the receiving states, where the state's ESTRELLA coordinator consults with local project directors and secondary teachers to select students who meet the program's criteria. The project's Interstate Student Coordinator (ISC) reviews the lists of recommended students with the appropriate Texas home base school district personnel, especially high school counselors. The ISC then contacts these students and their families to explain the program and explore their interest in participating.

For each participating student, the program develops an ESTRELLA Student Profile. The profile contains basic demographic information about students, their plans beyond high school, their exposure to computers, and their hobbies and interests. The profile also includes information on the family's planned migrations, interest of other family members in project involvement, and family contacts in both Texas and receiving states. Guidance counselors from home districts collect data on the students' current academic status, including credits earned to date, partial credits, incomplete or failed courses, and performance on the state proficiency test, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). For each student, counselors recommend specific courses and TAAS preparation needs for the upcoming summer.

The Interstate Student Coordinator keeps in touch with students while they are away, assisting them through toll-free telephone and pager numbers. The coordinator works with the Texas home districts and receiving districts to ensure that all necessary information is exchanged and students have the materials and equipment needed to pursue their studies.

Extending Time for Migrant Students to Learn during the Summer

The Miami-Dade County Migrant Education Program sponsors Title I-funded summer programs. Community Resource Centers at two migrant camps, staffed by two full-time teachers, two full-time paraprofessionals, and two part-time paraprofessionals, provide migrant students with tutorial services in reading and math. Students work on appropriate reading and mathematics objectives (between 5 and 10 in each subject) from the district's curriculum and earn regular credits toward promotion and graduation. MEP staff base their assessments of students' achievement on teachers' observations, students' performance on mastery tests, and student portfolios. For migrant students in grades 6-12 participating in summer school, MEP sponsors a summer counseling/advocacy program as well.

Sometimes it is difficult for migrant students to accrue the proper academic credits to keep up with their peers. They may miss school to work in the fields or to care for younger siblings while parents work. In these instances, some programs rely on technology to keep migrant students' studies up to date.

Supporting Academic Progress

ESTRELLA students use laptop computers equipped with modems, web-based, standards-based Texas curricula, and software applications to keep up with their studies while they are away from their home schools. College students, trained as "cyber mentors," serve as role models, encourage ESTRELLA students to stay in school, and increase students' awareness of postsecondary options. Students and cyber mentors meet face to face at an annual workshop held on the mentors' university campus. Participating staff receive online and face-to-face professional development. Students use the laptops and a toll-free number to help them complete coursework to meet graduation requirements.

Counselors from each of the home districts assess students' needs for graduation or promotion to the next grade and then select district-required courses from NovaNET's network of course offerings. NovaNET, the online curriculum used by ESTRELLA and students' home base schools, offers thousands of hours of instruction in more than 100 subject areas, including reading, writing, and math; ESL; GED preparation; middle and high school subjects; life skills; study skills; career development; and keyboarding. It also provides students opportunities to prepare for the ACT, SAT, and the TAAS. Because each district has approved the NovaNET curriculum, which is aligned with Texas' curriculum standards, all coursework and credits earned are recognized and accepted by students' homebase schools.

Lighting an Academic Fire for Migrant Students

Miami-Dade County Schools' Migrant Education Consortium for Higher Achievement Program (MECHA) ["flame" in Spanish] is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Migrant Education Program. MECHA is a collaboration between Barry University, Dade County Public Schools Migrant Education Program, public television, telecommunications and software publishing industry partners, and school districts. The program serves migrant children and youth in five states along the migrant stream of the eastern coast of the United States. MECHA is a comprehensive model that promotes greater continuity of instruction for migrant students as they are served in different school districts and assists migrant students in achieving high academic standards through innovative uses of technology. MECHA provides about 200 migrant students with WebTV so they can use the Internet to continue learning and keep in touch with a teacher as they move about. Before receiving the WebTV hardware, students complete a checklist that shows they know how to use the machine.

Key program elements include:

- Individualized learning plans (ILPs)
- Teachers who monitor and support the same group of students over the school year via technology
- Instruction independent of time or place
- Educational growth opportunities for parents
- Barry University students who monitor and support students online during the year
- A 1-800 homework hotline for students and parents

Students sign onto a website that provides the MECHA-developed curriculum; the curriculum combines competencies for each grade level from the Miami-Dade County Competency-Based Curriculum and the Sunshine State Standards. Students receive the support of one of five MECHA teachers. When a MECHA student moves, the MECHA teacher contacts the new school and the student's new teacher via the Internet to inform them that they can access the student's ILP and progress reports online.

According to program staff, MECHA students show an increased interest in school and careers, low-performing students have improved their skills, and the program has enhanced communication among parents, teachers, and school administrators.

Assessment Is Appropriate and Informative

Assessment is a powerful tool for ensuring that Hispanic students meet high standards. Effective assessment systems have certain essential qualities and use numerous strategies to gather information about students' progress over time. To promote high-quality, standards-based instruction, Title I and Title VII programs mandate certain kinds of assessment.

Qualities of Effective Assessment

Good assessment provides sound information about what students know and can do. It gives educators reliable evidence with which to decide about further instruction and gives communities reliable evidence to determine their school systems' accountability. Four traits characterize effective assessment (Evaluation Assistance Center East, 1996; Linn & Herman, 1997; White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 1999):

- ***Alignment with standards and curriculum:*** The assessment measures the knowledge and skills set out in the relevant standards and conveyed by the curriculum.
- ***Capacity to measure different types of students equally well:*** Students' ethnicity, gender, race, primary language, and economic status do not influence assessment outcomes. Assessments should be free of bias.
- ***Stimulating items:*** The assessment engages students in complex thinking and problem solving, not simply recitation of facts.
- ***Generation of evidence for determining professional development and instructional improvement:*** Teachers use the assessments to determine how to improve their own performance and focus their instruction on learning opportunities for students.

Measuring Students' Progress toward District Standards

Students at each grade level are required to meet Corpus Christi, Texas', standards, which are more rigorous than the state standards, for promotion to the next grade and for graduation. The district has an official policy banning social promotion. The district employs standards-driven grading processes to determine whether students should be promoted to the next grade.

The district also issues individual report cards that list the standards by grade and subject area and show each student's progress toward the goal. At the elementary and middle school level, students receive six progress reports and six report cards each year. High school students receive a minimum of four progress reports and four report cards. Progress reports indicate if students have a failing average or are borderline failing for a particular performance standard.

To be promoted in grades 1-3, students must achieve each performance standard with a grade of 70 or above in language, reading, and mathematics. To be promoted in grades 4 and 5, students need to achieve each performance standard with a grade of 70 or above in language, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. In order to receive course credit in grades 6-8, students must attain a composite average of 70 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, students have to earn a grade of 70 or above in all performance standards in language arts (English/reading), mathematics, science, and social studies, and must meet attendance guidelines. In order to receive course credit in grades 9-12, students must achieve the district performance standards and/or state standards with a grade of 70 or above in each course taken, and meet attendance guidelines.

Since the Real World Academic Standards have been in place, Corpus Christi students have scored significantly higher on the TAAS. From 1994 to 1999, the percent of students in the district who achieved a score that was academically acceptable on all TAAS subtests rose from 51 percent to 76 percent. During the same period, the reading passing rate rose from 75 percent to 85 percent and from 56 to 83 percent in math. The districts' passing rate of students taking the TAAS in Spanish is significantly higher than the statewide average.

Types of Tests

Teachers, schools, districts, and states use different kinds of assessments to measure Hispanic students' progress:

- **Criterion-referenced tests** assess students' mastery of specified content. Teachers use criterion-referenced tests to measure students' progress in learning instructional objectives. Many states use criterion-referenced tests to measure students' progress toward standards.
- **Norm-referenced tests** compare students with each other. They provide educators and parents with information on how students perform compared with their peers in other districts and states.
- **Language proficiency assessments** measure students' ability to read, write, speak, and listen in a target language—e.g., Spanish or English. They are often used to place students in instructional programs. Language proficiency tests are criterion-referenced, and the criteria are standards that indicate mastery of given skills.
- **Tests of academic achievement** measure students' mastery of the curriculum. Teachers often use such information to monitor and adjust instruction and make ongoing placement decisions. The results of these tests may be used to compare students, to determine an appropriate instructional level, or to measure progress toward a standard.
- **Performance assessments** ask students to demonstrate their knowledge of particular curricular material in ways that reflect real-world contexts. These demonstrations may include writing essays, constructing extended responses to open-ended math or science problems, creating works of art, assembling portfolios of work, and making oral presentation, among other things. Teachers use performance assessments to measure students' progress on an ongoing basis. Some states use performance assessments to help measure students' progress toward standards.

Ongoing Student Assessment

Half of the 730 students enrolled at Montview Elementary School in Aurora, Colorado, are Hispanics with limited English proficiency. To keep instruction focused on goals at this Title I schoolwide program, educators measure student performance through: teacher-administered formative assessments that drive instruction and help inform planning; summative, standardized assessments required by the district and state; and writing and mathematics assessments developed specifically for the school.

Teachers administer the district-wide Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) several times during the school year to determine students' progress in learning English. Teachers also continually assess students using class work, writing samples, and running records that document skill in literacy. Teachers hold frequent conferences (weekly or biweekly) with their students to discuss and assess students' progress in writing. Teachers keep a log of what students know and the desired next steps for the students' instruction. Classroom teachers and the principal meet quarterly to discuss the assessment results and to make decisions about future instruction.

Title I, Title VII, and Assessment

Title I mandates that by the 2000-2001 school year, all states adopt or develop statewide student assessment systems that are aligned with their standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics. Title I also requires multiple assessments of student achievement. While Title I requires states to use the same assessments to measure the performance of all children to the maximum extent possible, particularly in reading/language arts and mathematics, it also requires states to assess ELLs in the language and form most likely to yield accurate and reliable information on what these students know and can do to determine students' mastery of skills in subjects other than English. States are required to make efforts to develop appropriate assessments for ELLs if they are not currently available. Title VII requires programs aimed at developing proficiency in two languages to report student gains in English and in the other language, as well as in academic content.

Supporting Success on Assessments

Assessment contributes to teaching, learning, and accountability systems only if it produces valid outcomes; that is, students' scores bear the intended relationship to their learning. Student test scores should not be a misleading consequence of factors that interfere with students demonstrating their learning, such as their lack of language proficiency or cultural differences. When students are unable to show what they have learned on a given measure or at a given time or circumstance, they can often demonstrate their learning through other means.

Preparing for Assessment

Like other California students, students in the Calexico Unified School District in California take the SAT-9. Calexico serves about 7,000 students, of whom 98 percent are Hispanic, 80 percent are ELLs, 30 percent are migrants, and virtually all receive free or reduced-price lunches. The district uses a commercial computer program, TUDOR, to create quarterly district tests that are aligned to the SAT-9 and that prepare students for taking the test. Teachers use the tests as benchmarks to measure students' progress throughout the year on skills needed to pass the SAT-9. Teachers had input on what skills should be tested, and they received training on using TUDOR to create tests.

At the district level, Calexico's dropout rate is significantly below the California average: 2.7 percent vs. 3.3 percent. Furthermore, Calexico's class of 1997 sent 69 percent of its students to four-year schools and local community colleges.

Multiple test-taking opportunities. Students who are unfamiliar with the format and structure of tests may fail because of their inexperience with test-taking rather than their lack of learning. These students may need extra opportunities to develop test-taking skills.

Supporting Students Most at Risk of Failure

Schools in Corpus Christi, Texas, intervene to help students who are not progressing to meet district standards. Intervention strategies vary: one school manipulated its schedule so teachers have more time to work individually with academically needy students; another school has recruited military personnel from nearby bases to provide tutoring to failing students. Other interventions include peer tutoring, Saturday School, a “zero period” before school begins, after-school tutoring programs, and a Saturday Drama program at Title I schools. The Saturday Drama program, which students are encouraged to attend, emphasizes reading and language arts standards.

Tutoring to Reflect Success

In addition to assessing students with the SAT-9, over the course of three years the Lennox, California, Schools’ curriculum committee has created district-level language arts/writing and mathematics standards, which are aligned with state standards. Lennox administers the district’s language arts assessment three times a year to track student progress. It gives the math test once a year.

The district disaggregates assessment results for both ELLs and students fluent in English. These data guide the instructional program. Assessments are scored and discussed by teacher teams rather than the teacher of that subject alone. This enables the team to “know the student’s strengths and weaknesses.” Teachers then adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate students’ learning needs. Title I funds staff development activities to develop these teaching strategies.

Between spring 1998 and 1999, students’ scores on the SAT-9 improved in virtually all areas of reading, language, math, and spelling. Seventh-graders’ language scores increased by 10 percentage points; reading scores increased by 5 percentage points. Seventh- and eighth-graders’ mathematics scores increased by 5 percentage points.

Multiple measures. Title I requires that educators use multiple measures to assess students’ progress toward standards. Using multiple measures increases opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Managing different forms of assessment for instructional improvement requires the systematic aggregation, sorting, and streamlining of many different kinds of information. Teachers can use work samples, portfolios, or other forms of data for this purpose.

Options for assessing ELLs. ELLs need opportunities to demonstrate their ongoing mastery of content and progress so that teachers can guide their instruction. A checklist or rubric designed around the responses expected at different proficiency levels is a useful tool for assessing students’ language

proficiency and making instructional accommodations. Other forms of alternative assessment useful in defining student strengths and needs include:

- Oral presentations
- Models or constructed figures
- Exhibitions or demonstrations
- Results of experiments or procedures
- Text retelling
- Anecdotal records
- Observations
- Peer assessments
- Student self-rating scales

Using Multiple Measures: Success for All and CIRC/BCIRC

In El Paso, Texas, Success for All schools (including those implementing BCIRC)—four of which receive CSRD funds—assess students every eight weeks. The assessment measures the same skills tested by the state, so the eight-week tests serve as indicators of how students are progressing toward the state standards. The test is a composite of tests that students have taken after every three or four lessons. Teachers also look at students' attendance patterns when making instructional decisions as well as ongoing student performance and daily assessment results. BCIRC uses two tests in addition to the other measures of student performance: students' scores on the Spanish and English TAAS, which assess reading, writing, and mathematics.

Teachers use the results of these multiple measures to assign appropriate students to tutoring, suggest alternative teaching strategies in the regular classroom, and adjust reading group placement, family support interventions, or other means of meeting students' needs.

In a 1998 study of CIRC and BCIRC in the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas, CIRC students scored marginally higher than comparison students on the TAAS reading scale and significantly higher on the TAAS writing scale. On the NAPT reading scale, BCIRC students also scored higher than comparison students. Students who were in the program for two years scored better in reading than did students in the program for one year, who in turn scored significantly better than students in a control group.

At the end of third grade, Ysleta students could exit bilingual education if they score above the 40th percentile on NAPT reading and language tests in English. In reading, four times more BCIRC students than comparison students met the exit criterion. In language, twice as many BCIRC as comparison students met the exit criterion.

Some content measures are available in languages other than English. Generally, though, the development of these measures—particularly in aligning the assessments with standards—has lagged behind other types of assessments. To make assessments fairer to participating ELLs, there are several accommodations educators can make (Butler & Stevens, 1997; Elmore & Rothman, 1999):

- Make decisions based on multiple measures, not the results of a single test
- Allow ELLs extra time to complete the tests
- Repeat directions, having a familiar person administer the test and/or reading the directions orally
- Change response formats (i.e., let students respond to English items in their native language)
- Modify the test's linguistic complexity
- Add visual supports
- Provide glossaries in Spanish and/or English

States can create more valid measures for Hispanic ELLs by not only translating tests into Spanish, but also modifying the tests to ensure that they have the same degree of difficulty in Spanish or English and are culturally and psychometrically appropriate. Simply translating a test can produce a culturally and linguistically inappropriate assessment. Oregon, for instance, created a Spanish-language test with questions that matched the psychometric properties of the English version, rather than translating the English test into Spanish.

It is important for educators to modify tests carefully. Inappropriate modifications can render test results invalid. Even when the modifications are made with care, caution is the watchword in comparing ELL students' test scores to those of native speakers. The inappropriate placement of Hispanic and ELL students in special education classes because of the misuse of test results is unfortunately a common occurrence (U.S. Department of Education, 1995b).

Assessing ELL Students in Texas

To determine whether Texas students should take the Spanish or English version of the TAAS or should be exempted because of low literacy skills in both languages, schools convene their language-proficiency assessment committees (these committees are required in schools that serve ELLs). The committees consist of a school administrator, a bilingual educator or ELL educator, and a parent whose ELL child currently attends the school. Once the committee has decided that a child should not be exempted from TAAS, it uses six criteria to determine in which language a student should take the test:

- Literacy in English and/or Spanish
- Oral-language proficiency in English and/or Spanish
- Academic program participation
- Language of instruction and planned language of assessments
- Number of years continuously enrolled in school; previous testing history
- Level of academic achievement

Based on these criteria, the committee determines whether a student should take the English-language TAAS or the Spanish-language TAAS. In addition, all ELLs, including those exempted from TAAS, take the state's newly developed Reading Proficiency Test in English, a criterion-referenced test developed specifically for ELLs.

Accommodations for migrant students. Assessing migrant students for placement, instruction, and accountability purposes presents special problems. Because students often move from state to state or even out of the country several times during a single school year, it is sometimes difficult to determine where to place them in a program and judge their achievement in a given school. Many districts use technology to help track students as they migrate.

Tracking Migrant Students' Progress Online

ESTRELLA student progress on NovaNET is tracked online. Student reports, which are accessible by teachers, include time spent online, lessons completed, and test scores. All student data are stored on the central NovaNET system and can be viewed online, printed, or downloaded by project staff for immediate access. The Interstate Student Coordinator generates biweekly reports that are shared with instructional staff in the receiving states to help keep everyone apprised of each student's progress.

Once students return to Texas, the Interstate Student Coordinator meets with each student and their parents to discuss student progress and educational needs. The Coordinator also meets with the student's guidance counselor to discuss course completion and progress to date. Together they determine the students' placement needs. When a student completes a course, the ISC produces a grade report and works with the counselor to ensure that the student receives proper credit.

Assessing Migrant Students in Miami-Dade County

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools assess migrant students in the Migrant Education Program both informally and formally. Informally, a teacher may note how fluently a younger student writes sentences or how well an older student can read complex paragraphs or respond in writing to a story. On the more formal side, migrant students complete a writing assignment at the beginning of every year that teachers assess according to Florida Writes' writing rubric. At the end of the year, students complete another writing assessment. Students also take the state assessment and the Stanford Achievement tests. Additionally, to graduate, students must pass the High School Competency Test.

Equitable tests. Educators have worked hard in recent years to ensure that tests administered to Hispanic students are equitable. Such tests have the following characteristics (Linn & Gronlund, 2000):

- **Absence of bias:** Tests are fair when scores cannot be predicted on the basis of students' demographic characteristics (race, ethnicity, gender, poverty level, primary language, etc.).
- **Procedural fairness:** Test-takers have equal opportunities to show what they know and are able to do; raters grade subjective measures (such as essays) according to an objective rubric.
- **Opportunity to learn:** Test-takers have had equal or adequate opportunity to learn the material tested.

Historically, standardized tests often emphasized values and content more familiar to white, middle-class students than to others, including Hispanic students, and particularly those from lower SES homes. Many test publishers and states now control for forms of bias to the maximum extent they can. Reviews of language bias are not common. Still, no test is without some bias. It is important to keep the issue of bias in mind, particularly when using assessments for high-stakes decisionmaking in matters such as promotion and graduation. Examining multiple measures for data-driven decisionmaking helps minimize the effects of cultural bias in testing (Linn & Gronlund, 2000).

Reporting and Using Data

Different stakeholders in education use assessment data for different purposes. However, some uses of assessment are common across all stakeholder groups. At the classroom level, assessment allows students, teachers, and parents to determine students' ongoing progress and to plan and improve instruction.

Using Data to Improve Student Achievement

Like other Texas students, all students at H.D. Hilley Elementary School, a Title I schoolwide program, take the TAAS. ELLs take this examination in Spanish. To measure students' progress toward the standards, Hilley students take two pre-TAAS tests each year. Hilley's mathematics and literacy support specialists analyze the data from test results and create individual student reports as well as a summary score chart for each class and each grade level. Hilley encourages teachers whose students do not perform well on certain objectives to pair with teachers whose students excel in order to share instructional strategies. Hilley uses its overall test results to modify its yearly standards-based goals and long-term campus action plan. Between 1996 and 1997, the percent of students at H.D. Hilley passing the reading component increased 7 percentage points to 81 percent, and between 1995 and 1997, the percentage of third-graders mastering all objectives on the test increased by 18 percentage points, to 48 percent.

At the district level, administrators, parents, and the community can use assessment results to determine which students have met standards, guide teachers' professional development, evaluate program effectiveness, and review assessment policies. States use assessment data to measure students' learning toward state standards, report information to the public, shape policy, and assist districts improve (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1998).

Using Data to Collaborate to Achieve Academic Excellence

Since 1991, the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence has worked with civic, education (both K-12 and higher education), and business leaders to improve the city's educational system, in part through helping all stakeholders use data, as well as through intensive professional development.

El Paso districts serve a very large—and growing—Hispanic student population. The city's population is 74 percent Hispanic and 21 percent white. The city's poverty rate is about 29 percent, higher than the state average, and about 43 percent of children in El Paso live in poverty. El Paso's three largest school systems enroll about 134,000 students, 82 percent of whom are Hispanic; other smaller districts in El Paso serve populations that are more than 95 percent Hispanic.

Based at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), and working with the El Paso, Ysleta, and Socorro Independent School Districts, the Collaborative's three overarching goals include: (1) promoting students' academic success from kindergarten through college; (2) ensuring that all students who graduate from area high schools are prepared to enter and succeed in a four-year college or university; and (3) narrowing the achievement gap between minority and poor students and their more privileged peers. To achieve these goals, the Collaborative focuses its efforts on entire schools and whole school systems. All of the Collaborative's efforts are based on a set of academic standards developed locally that are grounded in national and state standards and aligned with TAAS and local assessments. Using data to improve instruction is one key strategy the Collaborative employs to achieve its goals.

The Collaborative helps schools and systems to improve student achievement by collecting and using data, much of which are part of the Texas accountability system aligned with TAAS, including student assessment data, data on college enrollment and success, achievement test scores, and college entrance rates. Where appropriate, data are disaggregated by ethnicity, grade, and subject area. Through its Teams process, the Collaborative has worked with most schools in the city to bring together school teams of 7 to 10 teachers and administrators to learn how to examine data on their schools' classroom progress toward the standards, explore the process of school change, and determine what is working and what needs improvement. Based on the information gleaned from the data, the Collaborative works with the school teams to draft action plans that include instructional and policy changes as well as professional development and plans for sharing the skills and information learned through the program with the rest of the school staff. The Collaborative also uses data to inform professional development in the areas of mathematics, science, and literacy. In addition, the Collaborative works with superintendents and administrators, as well as parents, to help each of these groups learn to understand and use data appropriately.

The Collaborative's efforts are reflected in the city's growing student success. In 1998-99, 82 percent of El Paso Hispanic students passed the TAAS mathematics test, and 84 percent passed the reading test. The number of all students passing all portions of the TAAS mathematics test in grades 3 to 8 and 10 has doubled since 1993. The percentage of ninth-graders enrolled in Algebra I is now 100 percent, compared with only 62 percent in 1993, and the number of freshmen entering UTEP who test into remedial mathematics classes has decreased by 25 percent.

Students benefit most when educators use assessments for the purpose for which they were intended. For example, data from language placement tests serve specific diagnostic purposes; they are not indicators of content knowledge. Similarly, tests that measure English-language proficiency are different from those that measure English language arts, and the two cannot be used for the same purpose. The purpose of proficiency tests is to aid in making placement decisions and to measure students' progress in learning the English language, while tests of English-language arts measure what students have learned in the language arts content area.

Assessing for Placement and Measuring Progress

At Liberty High School, teachers used Title VII funds to develop a set of student performance indicators aligned with state and city expectations. Teachers developed pre- and post-tests in ESL and content areas, measures for tracking the percentage of students passing each course as well as the percentage of students passing the New York State Regents Examinations. Students also complete a multicultural awareness survey and a self-esteem survey.

When students are first assigned to Liberty and before they leave, they take assessments of English-language proficiency, math, multiculturalism, and self-esteem. Liberty places students who score between the first and fourth grades on the native language reading component of the school's placement exams in native language literacy classes. Students take tests to move from one ESL level to the next.

In math, science, social studies, and native language arts, teachers have created tests aligned with New York State's New Standards. All students who have completed at least 140 days in the program must take the tests in the subjects they are studying, and are expected to show statistically significant gains on their test scores. Students studying biology also can take a test to identify who needs help preparing for the Regents biology exam.

Assessing Migrant Students InTIME

The Oregon Department of Education, with a consortium of partners including the University of Oregon, the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB), RMC Research Corporation, Willamette Education Service District, Ontario School District, Forest Grove School District, Salem-Keizer School District, and Capital Community Television, is using \$3 million of Title I Part C funds from 1997 to 2002 to develop Integrating Technology into Migrant Education (InTIME).

Due to their transitory circumstances, migrant students are often exempted from testing. The absence of assessment data makes it a challenge to evaluate students' academic performance. To facilitate the appropriate placement of migrant students, the InTIME project is developing academic placement instruments through the NWEA. The placement instrument is a computerized, adaptive test that customizes the assessment to each student's achievement level.

The placement instrument, which is currently being field-tested, will facilitate timely and accurate placement of migrant students in mathematics. Students take pre- and post-tests to determine appropriate instructional levels and measure their academic growth. Using a unique identification number, an InTIME database tracks students as they move from school to school. Teachers receive training to generate and interpret reports that target students' academic needs.

More than 1,000 migrant students in a dozen districts in Oregon have participated in field-testing the assessment. At least 300 students must respond to each item before it is incorporated into the test. When InTIME began, NWEA had already developed third- through tenth-grade placement tests aligned with Oregon's state mathematics performance standards. NWEA is developing a pencil and paper version for grades 3-10 in Spanish and converting the math placement assessments to an online Computerized Adaptive Test (CAT). The pencil and paper version is scheduled to be piloted in April or May 2000, and the CAT is expected to be available by fall 2000.

Assessing ELLs in the School District of Philadelphia

Philadelphia's shift to a standards-based education system has promoted changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The SAT-9, which is a component of the district's assessment system, is believed by Philadelphia educators to reflect the district's standards and to assess students' higher-order thinking skills in reading, mathematics, and science.

The district recognizes that ELLs in ESL and bilingual programs may require testing accommodations. Philadelphia has approved 18 accommodation strategies to provide ELLs opportunities to more accurately demonstrate their knowledge of content. The accommodations help to mitigate the fact that standardized tests written in English are to some extent testing knowledge of the English language as well as the content areas. Some accommodations used in Philadelphia include:

- Extension of allotted time per test by 50 percent
- Use of multiple shortened test periods (e.g., tests can be administered over several periods or days, or breaks can be built in after sections)
- Simplified directions, developed by ESL teachers
- Reading questions aloud for the math and science tests only
- Translating words or phrases—but without interpretation or explanation
- Testing in a separate room or in a small group setting

ELLs enrolled in bilingual education programs who have little or no knowledge of English may take the *Apreda*, the Spanish version of the SAT-9. In 1996, 56 percent of all ELL students took the SAT-9; in 1999 this number rose to 82 percent. In 1996 only 19 percent of ELLs who took the test scored at or above the "basic" proficiency level. This rose to 34 percent in 1999. The district attributes improvements among ELLs to the availability of the various accommodations, as well as to the fact that the district worked with the SAT-9 and *Apredas*' developers to review and adjust test items for cultural bias and language accessibility (e.g., idioms that might confuse some students were removed.)

Learning Time Extends beyond the School Day When Necessary

The traditional school day consumes only a small part of students' time. In fact, children spend the majority of their waking hours outside of school. To take advantage of students' time beyond the regular school day, schools and communities can work together to extend the time that Hispanic children have to develop the skills that lead to success in school and beyond. Many program planners and instructors in before- and after-school, summer, Saturday, and intersession programs are linking their activities to children's school experiences, particularly by directing them toward high academic and behavioral standards (U.S. Department of Education, 1995a).

Recent research on effective schools has found that many schools use extended learning time to improve achievement in reading and mathematics (U.S. Department of Education, 1999b). For example:

- Researchers studying higher-success and lower-success elementary schools in Maryland found that the more successful schools reported consistent academic gains as a result of extended-day programs (Hawley, Changer, Hultgren, Abrams, Lewis, & Ferrara, 1997).
- A study of high-performing, high-poverty schools revealed that 78 percent of these schools provided extended learning time that emphasizes core academic subjects, especially reading and math. In addition, the extra time devoted to making sure the students in these schools were proficient in the basics translated into high academic achievement for students (The Education Trust, 1999).

Through ESEA, Congress encourages schools to increase the amount and quality of instructional time for disadvantaged students. Recent data indicate that extended-time programs have increased substantially in Title I schools since the last reauthorization. For example, the percentage of Title I elementary schools offering summer school programs rose from 15 percent in 1991-92 to 41 percent in 1997-98. Likewise, the percentage with before- or after-school programs grew from 9 percent in 1991-92 to 39 percent in 1997-98 (Heid & Webber, 1999; Millsap, Moss, & Gamse, 1993). The U.S. Department of Education encourages Title I schools to operate extended learning time programs to reinforce student learning. In addition to the ESEA focus on extending learning time, Congress appropriated \$200 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers after-school programs (targeted to rural and inner-city schools) in FY 1999, an increase from the FY 1998 level of \$40 million. As policy makers and other school staff implement extended-time programs for Hispanic students, they need to ensure that the added time is used effectively.

Many different settings offer opportunities to provide Hispanic students with more learning time—among them, schools, YMCAs, public libraries, and museums. Recent reviews of promising practices stress that, whatever the setting, extended-time programs that help students most are culturally sensitive and incorporate challenging curricula tied to what students learn during the regular school day (U.S. Department of Education, 1995a).

Appropriately Challenging Curricula

Successful extended-time curricula challenge but do not overwhelm students (U.S. Department of Education, 1995a). Research indicates that a challenging curriculum accommodates individual student needs and is coordinated with other instruction. In addition, the extra time focuses on more

than remedial instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 1995a). Top-performing, high-poverty schools are moving away from low-level instruction, such as filling out ditto sheets, and toward developing higher-order skills by creating more time for students to discuss subject matter (The Education Trust, 1999).

Helping Failing Students through Summer Program Tied to Standards

The Corpus Christi Independent School District in Texas serves 39,844 students, of whom 69 percent are Hispanic and 53 percent are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches. The district offers two summer school programs to students who do not meet the district's standards for promotion to the next grade. One of the programs focuses on students achieving standards they have not met. In this program, funded in part by Title I, using a curriculum that promotes acceleration rather than remediation, carefully selected Corpus Christi teachers work with students who have been assigned to classes by grade level, subject area, and the standards they need to meet. Students are deemed to have successfully completed summer school when they achieve the standards necessary to be promoted. In this way, as classes become smaller, teachers have the opportunity to work more intensely with students who need to make the most progress. The majority of students pass to the next grade level after attending summer school.

Extending Learning Time for Migrant Students

The Miami-Dade County Migrant Education Program—funded through Title I, federal Migrant Education Program funds, and state migrant education funds—serves about 3,500 students in grades K-12 each year, most of whom are Hispanic and all of whom are migrants. The project is part of a state program that serves about 45,000 migrant students each year, 15 percent of whom are ELLs.

Each quarter, Migrant Education Program staff develop writing and language arts/reading checklists for each student. They give the checklists to regular program teachers, who check off the reading and writing objectives (aligned with district and state standards) that they want the Migrant Education Program teachers to work on with the students. The language arts/reading checklist, designed for different grade levels and semesters, lists various objectives, the correlation between the objectives and standards, and room for migrant program staff to comment on students' progress.

The Migrant Achievement Resource program serves elementary school students. This program offers migrant students supplemental academic instruction, homework assistance, guidance support, tutorials during and after school, computer training and access, and recreational and cultural activities. The program operates through the schools that have the greatest number of migrant students and Neighborhood Learning Centers at two of the main Migrant Housing Centers. Staff have flexible schedules to meet migrant students' scheduling needs.

Between 1996-97 and 1997-98, 81 percent of K-5 students who received at least 40 hours of tutoring/supplemental instruction through the Migrant Education Program mastered 80 percent or more of the language arts/reading objectives assigned by their classroom teachers, and 90 percent of students mastered at least 80 percent of their mathematics objectives. Eighty-six percent of these students improved one letter grade or more in subject areas where they had received tutoring.

Culturally Sensitive Activities

Cultural sensitivity is one of the characteristics that, according to research, promotes successful extended-time programs. Fostering cultural awareness and appreciation should be a goal in all student and staff development programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1995a).

Enriching Schools and Communities through Culturally Relevant Activities

The ASPIRA Association, Inc., is a national nonprofit association devoted to education and leadership development for Puerto Rican and other Latino youth. ASPIRA has statewide offices in six states and Puerto Rico and an annual budget of \$16 million. Roughly 350 full-time staff and more than 1,000 volunteers serve 25,000 youth and their families each year. ASPIRA operates the ASPIRA Clubs Federation, a national network of school-based clubs, to help students improve academic and leadership skills, learn to work together, and improve self-esteem through pride in their cultural heritage. In addition, ASPIRA provides after-school and summer activities.

In Connecticut, the ASPIRA Lighthouse project provides K-8 Puerto Rican/Latino students with after-school activities such as prevention programs, homework help, field trips, computer familiarization, the arts, and math and science tutoring—all enhanced by a focus on cultural enrichment. For example, at Luis Muñoz Marin School, a Title I schoolwide program in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the Light House after-school program serves about 225 students five days a week, from 3 to 6 p.m. Instructors who are certified teachers, student interns, Title I paraprofessionals, and local volunteer college students provide instruction and activities to groups of about 25 students. The academic portion of the afternoon lasts for about one hour and 15 minutes and focuses directly on what students learn during the regular school day through homework help and tutoring. To keep things interesting and promote cultural pride and self-esteem, the theater teacher instructs three days a week, using poetry and song to celebrate the different Latino cultural traditions.

Because of the high demand for ASPIRA services, ASPIRA requires school districts to provide some funding. However, with the approval of the district, ASPIRA and other similar academically oriented, community-based programs can use federal Title I and/or Title VII funding to help Hispanic students reach the same high standards expected of all students.

The arts are a popular way that educators are fostering cultural awareness and appreciation—and at the same time developing Latino students' academic skills. Recent research has explored how young people and professional artists in economically disadvantaged communities can contribute to students' learning through community-based organizations devoted to production of and performance in the arts. This research found that engaging in arts activities helps students to test and develop ideas, explicate processes, and build scenarios of the future—skills that any educator would agree are necessary to school success (Fiske, no date).

Drawing on the Arts to Extend Learning for Hispanic Students

The El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, a Title I-funded high school in Brooklyn, New York, sponsors a daily after-school Arts and Cultural Center program. This extended learning time program is reportedly producing educated artists and community leaders who may go on to rewarding careers in the arts. About 130 El Puente students and 100 students from other public schools ages 12 to 21 can take courses in such areas as: music and video production; band; Latin percussion; creative writing; hip hop, jazz, and Latin dance; drama; fashion illustration; graphic design; and women's literature. They also receive homework help, SAT preparation, computer training, and tutorial assistance. Most days the activities are offered from about 3:00 p.m. until 7:30 or 8:00 p.m. On Tuesdays, El Puente instructors participate in regular staff development after school, and the activities are offered from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.. The student-to-instructor ratio is no greater than 15:1, although the homework help and tutorial assistance often take place in smaller clusters or even one-on-one.

The academic instruction students receive after school is closely tied to their regular school day experiences. For example, teachers whose students attend the after-school program often visit their students there to tutor them and help with homework. In addition, the El Puente after-school staff—called facilitators—monitor students' grades in the regular school program and attend weekly meetings with the principal and guidance counselors. The El Puente after-school parent coordinator contacts parents regularly about students' absences, or to let them know about adult programs and/or family cultural events, such as poetry readings.

In 1998-99, 100 percent of El Puente graduates were accepted into colleges. All students who took the New York Regents examinations in English and mathematics that year passed the exams.

Checklist for Implementing Effective, Aligned, Standards-Based Programs

Have we aligned classroom instruction with standards and assessments, so that daily lessons:

- ✓ Accommodate differences in culture and language, enriching opportunities to learn by building a bridge between what students know and what they need to know?
- ✓ Lead to mastery of standards set for all students in forms that accommodate the particular resources and needs of Hispanic students?
- ✓ Offer special support for Hispanic students who are English-language learners?
- ✓ Enhance continuity and progress in migrant students' educational experience?

Does our curriculum challenge Hispanic students, especially in literacy, by:

- ✓ Closing the gaps between conventional assumptions about students' resources for learning and demonstrating mastery and students' actual cognitive, social, and cultural resources?
- ✓ Making use of proven, effective, flexible program models that:
 - Engage students productively in academics?
 - Promote high achievement?
 - Embed reading and language development in the curriculum?
 - Connect to everyday life?
 - Provide challenging expectations?
 - Engage students in instructional conversations that help them relate formal school knowledge to the knowledge they share with family and community?
 - Support English Language Learners through:
 - Services under both Title I and Title VII?
- ✓ Foster strategies for reaching high standards, including:
 - Sheltered instruction?
 - English as a second language (ESL) classes that address objectives for both language and content?
 - Developmental, transitional, and/or two-way bilingual education programs?
 - Use of cooperative learning strategies?
 - Newcomer programs?
- ✓ Meet migrant students' requirements through:
 - Flexible programs that follow migrant students from district to district?
 - Techniques to help teachers minimize the interruptions in students' educational programs?
 - Appropriate use of Migrant Education Program (MEP) funds?
 - Provision of students' dental, nutritional, medical, and social services?
 - Extended-time programs during the summer?
 - Technology that helps students stay on track?

To ensure that it is appropriate and informative, does our assessment system:

- ✓ Align with standards and curriculum?
- ✓ Have the capacity to measure different types of students equally well?
- ✓ Contain stimulating items?
- ✓ Generate evidence useful in determining directions for professional development and instructional improvement?
- ✓ Support students' success by providing:
 - Multiple test-taking opportunities?
 - Multiple measures?
 - Flexible, valid options for assessing ELLs and migrant students?
 - Equitable tests?
- ✓ Report and use data effectively:
 - At the classroom level, to determine students' ongoing progress and to plan and improve instruction?
 - At the district level, to determine which students have met standards, guide teachers' professional development, evaluate program effectiveness, and review assessment policies?
 - At the state level, to measure progress in students' learning based on state standards, report information to the public, shape policy, and assist districts?
 - At all levels, to achieve the purposes for which the system was designed?

Do we provide learning time beyond the school day when necessary, so that students who need extra time have some school options available:

- ✓ After school?
- ✓ On Saturdays?
- ✓ On weekends?
- ✓ During the summer?
- ✓ During inter-sessions?

Do our extended-time programs make the best use of the extra time by:

- ✓ Connecting with the regular school day?
- ✓ Helping students meet high academic standards?
- ✓ Including culturally relevant enrichment activities?
- ✓ Challenging students with effective curricula and enrichment activities that engage higher-order thinking skills?

Can our students take advantage of effective programs that are offered elsewhere in the community, including:

- ✓ YMCAs or YWCAs?
- ✓ Boys & Girls Clubs?
- ✓ Public libraries?
- ✓ Museums?
- ✓ Zoos?

BUILDING TEACHER AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO SERVE HISPANIC STUDENTS

"Probably nothing within a school has more impact on students in terms of skill development, self-confidence, or classroom behavior than the personal and professional growth of the teacher."

Barth, 1990

High-quality instruction and student achievement depend on well-educated, reflective teachers and administrators who have the support they need to grow professionally (Elmore & Burney, 1997; Rueda, 1998). Leaders in educational research have suggested that "each dollar spent on improving teachers' qualifications nets greater gains in student learning than another use of an education dollar" (Darling-Hammond & Rustique-Forrester, 1997).

Recent studies, including those on implementing standards-based reforms, demonstrate that effective professional development is multidimensional. It begins in preservice programs, where aspiring teachers acquire the substantive foundations of curriculum content and pedagogy as well as professional values. It continues in schools, which support teachers' learning in many formal and informal ways. Additions to and changes in practice that improve student learning come from ongoing professional development experiences and involve teacher teams and whole school communities. Such experiences include not only courses and workshops—traditional fare—but also opportunities for teachers to reflect on teaching practice, discuss students' work, and address issues relevant to the immediate school context (Calderón, 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Little, 1993, 1996; Reyes et al., 1999).

Teachers in schools serving large numbers of Hispanic students, both those who are fluent in English and those who are learning it, in particular benefit from a purposeful and comprehensive approach to professional development (August & Hakuta, 1997; Calderón, 1999; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995; Reyes et al., 1999). Professional development is essential for all educators, but can be especially important in schools and districts that have not traditionally served large numbers of—or any—Hispanic students, but are now seeing an influx of such students. Hispanic students share the basic educational needs of all students, but they may also face unique challenges. These may require additional teacher skills in areas such as the following:

- Strengthening and adding to students' language and cultural repertoires
- Bridging gaps in language and culture between school and home
- Overcoming disadvantages associated with poverty and a low level of family literacy

Hispanic students constitute a significant subset of the migrant student population, which sometimes introduces another set of educational and sociocultural factors that must be addressed to ensure academic success. Families with distinctive cultural identities, home languages other than English, and working conditions different from middle-class norms provide their children with resources that may not be well-matched to school expectations. Helping students and their families harness these resources for academic success and providing experiences that lead to learning call for special professional skills and ongoing critical reflection about how best to apply them.

Enhancing professional competence requires restructuring organizational arrangements in schools. Teacher learning occurs not simply as the result of a workshop or a course, but through a process of developing judgment about how to apply new skills and knowledge in particular situations. Effective support for professional development is evident in scheduling and staffing that permit coaching, conversation, and individual and collective reflection on how to make recommended practices serve students better.

Title I and Title VII Support High-Quality Professional Development

Title I and Title VII of ESEA advocate comprehensive approaches to professional development and coordinated, programmatic efforts in education reform, including those serving Hispanic students and English-language learners. Under the law, Title I and Title VII programs are expected to organize their activities to serve students efficiently and effectively. Title VII funds can be combined with Title I resources to support schoolwide programs, which may increase in-class collaboration among mainstream, ESL, and bilingual teachers. Title VII provisions stress the importance of training *all* educators to serve ELL students effectively.

Professional Development Offers Essential Substantive Lessons

In teaching, as in other professions, effectiveness stems, in significant part, from mastering the skills and knowledge to get started on the job and becoming a lifelong learner. Preservice education imparts the basic structures of and information about the core subjects and begins to establish understanding of human development, cognition, and pedagogy. Inservice education adds to this foundation and addresses the challenges of particular situations or school contexts. Preparation to be an effective teacher of Hispanic students begins with preservice education and continues as teachers move through induction and into work as full-fledged professionals.

A Solid Preservice Education

Institutions that provide preservice education have a dual role in improving the quality of the teacher workforce: they identify strategies that attract well-qualified candidates and prepare those candidates to meet high standards of professional competence.

Candidate recruiting and retention. For teachers of Hispanic students, familiarity with students' culture can be a matchless asset. Furthermore, Hispanic students who are just learning English gain special benefits from having teachers who are fluent in students' home language. Such teachers can provide support for learning that is not available in any other way, even if the language of formal instruction is English. However, despite the growing number of Spanish-speaking students, teachers who can communicate fluently in Spanish and English are in short supply. In a recent survey of about three-fourths of the districts in the Council of Great City Schools, about two-thirds reported an immediate need for teachers skilled in bilingual education or teaching English as a second language (Recruiting New Teachers, Council of Great City Schools, & Council of Great City Colleges, 2000). Increasing the pool of teacher candidates who are functionally bilingual can be accomplished by:

- Recruiting bilingual Hispanic students and community members into teaching
- Fostering bilingual Hispanic students' early interest in teaching
- Providing support for Hispanic students' enrollment in teacher education programs (Leighton, Hightower, & Wrigley, 1995)

Targeting recruitment to bilingual Hispanic candidates offers two benefits. First, it helps rectify the problem of underrepresentation of Hispanics in the teacher population and potentially increases the visibility of teaching as a career option in the Hispanic community. Second, it takes advantage of a language resource that is relatively scarce in the U.S. population and that many Hispanic candidates possess.

Fostering early interest in education as a career can help Hispanic high school students develop attitudes and ambitions that encourage high school completion and success in college. Activities such as those sponsored by "Future Teachers of America" give Hispanic students a chance to sample the satisfactions of teaching. It also provides younger students with tutors and mentors who have a cultural heritage similar to their own.

Recruiting Bilingual Paraprofessionals to Become Certified Teachers

The Los Angeles, California, Unified School District (LAUSD), local campuses of California State University, and the Service Employees International Union have created the "Paraeducators' Career Ladder" to support teaching assistants in their aspirations to become teachers. The program is open to paraeducators employed by the city, and more than 5,000 annually have participated since it began in 1994. Candidates enroll in courses at the university and move through a five-stage process toward certification. At each stage, they address one or more state standards for teacher preparation with a combination of formal study, peer and mentor coaching sessions, and field experiences based in their own work as classroom assistants. The institutional partners use funds from several sources to provide scholarships and grants. LAUSD has structured an employment category especially for the candidates: they work three hours a day at a school, and their supervisors adjust the work schedule to accommodate coursetaking.

Of the nearly 1,400 who have finished the program and achieved certification, almost 85 percent are minority and 65 percent are bilingual. In contrast to teachers who enter LAUSD other ways and transfer to other districts within a short time, 95 percent of career ladder graduates remain in the district. In the 2000-2001 school year, the program will expand, offering special after-school courses that will be more accessible to all potential participants. The career ladder has a steady, improving effect on the overall qualifications of the paraprofessional and teacher workforce.

Albuquerque, New Mexico, Public Schools (APS), the University of New Mexico, and the local paraprofessional affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers collaborate on the Career Development Program. The program offers scholarships to aides who have worked at least three years in APS and want to become teachers. More than half of the participants are Hispanic, and many enroll in the bilingual and special education teacher preparation programs. In return for support during their teacher education programs, graduates return to teach in APS classrooms, many in the communities where their families have lived for generations.

Supporting Hispanic students' enrollment in teacher education programs is especially important when candidates come from families or communities with little or no college experience. Research in several sites has shown that attrition in bilingual teacher education programs can stem partly from candidates' competing loyalties and responsibilities. Managing coursework, housework, jobs, and families often stretches candidates too far. Sometimes older family members view studying as less important in the short run than working to support the family. To sustain enrollment through college graduation and certification, Hispanic candidates' projects can take special steps. They can offer financial support to offset the costs of higher education and the lost earnings, and they can inform extended families about the long-term benefits of college education (Leighton et al., 1995). These strategies can bring greater harmony to candidates and their families and sustain their commitment to completing their education programs.

Including Families in Supporting Teacher Candidates

The University of Southern California Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project (LLMTP) is sponsored by a partnership that includes several school districts and postsecondary institutions in Los Angeles. Funded by Title VII, the project aims to improve the quality of the teaching force in Los Angeles by helping members of the community who work in the schools as paraeducators to become teachers. In addition to scholarships, faculty mentors, activities to support college enrollment, and regular coursework, LLMTP provides regular opportunities for participants' families to meet and celebrate participants' progress. Families with no prior experience of sending a member to college expressed interest in learning how better to support their beginning teachers. LLMTP initiates family celebrations that feature progress reports, advice on how to help, and awards. With their families backing their work, teacher aspirants are able to persevere and make their education and cultural background a resource for the whole community.

Enriched teacher preparation. Recruitment efforts sometimes identify prospective candidates who have an array of talents—including cultural and linguistic fluency—but who need to strengthen some aspects of their qualifications in order to undertake higher education successfully. For example, candidates may have initial deficits in some academic area. This is because elementary and secondary educational opportunities are often more limited for students who live in minority communities, do not speak English fluently, or are poor or migrant. Schools with high concentrations of such students may have fewer qualified faculty and less rigorous curricula than others, for example. These students' preparation for teaching must include studies that equip them to succeed in postsecondary courses—studies that other candidates cover in their K-12 experiences.

The preparation of teachers for Hispanic students—including those with limited English proficiency—should promote teachers' high attainment in core disciplines and include language studies in English and Spanish, as well as pedagogy (Leighton et al., 1995). Teaching to states' new high standards requires greater competence in academic subjects than was expected of earlier generations of public school teachers. Many states' certification rules demand that teachers demonstrate knowledge and skill on standardized tests of content and a college major in one discipline, in addition to the knowledge and skills involved in teaching. Furthermore, teachers of students whose personal resources for learning are not the same as those assumed by conventional curricula require more pedagogical skill and knowledge than that required from other teachers. Among the competencies they need at a higher level are analysis, assessment, curriculum development, and communication. For example, bilingual education teachers should be prepared to teach reading and language arts in both Spanish and English and to use sheltered instructional techniques in content areas. These are special skills not required of all teachers.

Prospective teachers of Hispanic students—like all teachers—should engage in extended field experiences that offer opportunities for reflection in the company of a mentor. They should also have

increasing responsibility for independent teaching (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). By observing and analyzing experts' teaching at the beginning of their studies, prospective teachers see how their coursework applies to real-life teaching. Later practice gives them the chance to test hypotheses, refine their skills, and develop approaches to teaching that are well-founded professionally and personally. Many teacher education programs sponsor professional development schools in which candidates participate in a community of learners that includes not only children but colleagues at all stages of their careers. These schools, usually partnerships of universities and school districts, demonstrate to candidates how seasoned teachers implement programs that value language, culture, and other individual and family resources.

Finally, a good professional preparation program inculcates the value of continuous professional development. Emerging demands and expectations for schools and teachers often call for new approaches and programs along with new knowledge and skills. Teachers should complete preservice training with the clear notion that continuous learning will characterize their professional lives.

Inservice Education for Complex Needs

Research on schools with a high number of Hispanic and immigrant youth—whether those schools have served Hispanic students for years or only have begun to serve them recently—repeatedly affirms the importance of professional development that promotes collaboration and reflection and cultivates the image of teacher as learner (Calderón, 1999; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995; Reyes et al., 1999; Rueda, 1998). Because of the complexity of needs that Hispanic students bring to the classroom, teachers must be able to work together to acquire the special knowledge and pedagogical skills they need. Moreover, studies stress that improving students' educational experiences requires attention to the whole school as an organization (August & Hakuta, 1997; Calderón & Carreón, forthcoming). According to Title I and Title VII, educational excellence for Hispanic students and the segment of the population who are English-language learners must be part of the entire school mission. It follows, then, that professional development must be a schoolwide venture that creates the time and the structures that unify the school as a community, striving for excellence.

Teacher Learning Communities Support Success for All

In addition to three days of late-summer training, all teachers in El Paso *Success for All* schools participate regularly in gatherings they call “teacher learning communities” (TLCs), which resemble “study groups” or “communities of practice” in other reform models. While they normally meet in grade groups with co-workers, TLCs sometimes also include teachers from their “extended professional family” across the border in Juarez, Mexico, where bilingual *Success for All* is also being implemented. TLCs were born in 1989 out of the need to adapt a promising instructional model for use in schools with differing needs and characteristics. In TLCs, teachers discuss their problems, get feedback, and share ideas with colleagues. They may also develop new curriculum or a new assessment process; learn, apply, and evaluate an instructional practice; adopt or adapt a new program; or work on school restructuring. It is an opportunity for teachers to examine, question, experiment, implement, change, and evaluate their practice collaboratively.

Collaborative, continuous, schoolwide professional development. Research on effective professional development stresses the need to involve everyone at the school in learning activities: principals, teachers, secretaries, support staff, paraprofessionals, and parents (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995). Furthermore, studies show the importance of building positive and effective collaborative structures (Calderón, 1999; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; Joyce, Wolf, & Calhoun, 1993). Placing staff members in teams does not by itself ensure high-quality professional discourse and better practice; teachers and others need to establish norms for cooperation and working efficiently as a team (Calderón, 1999). Team-building exercises improve staff communication, increase awareness that all students—regardless of cultural and language differences—can reach high academic standards, and promote more effective implementation of reform efforts (Calderón, 1999; Wagstaff & Fusarrelli in Reyes et. al., 1999). Rather than simply picking workshop topics, educators must carefully consider who should participate in professional development activities and how they can most effectively collaborate as a team.

Effective professional development offers teachers follow-up observations, support, and opportunities for continuous reflection and improvement. If a school's professional development program is to have a real impact on classroom practice and student achievement of high academic standards, continuing support must be provided to teachers to strengthen and sustain new practices (Calderón, 1994).

Comprehensive professional development is especially important in schools with large numbers of Hispanic students. Open communication and teamwork are essential for teachers faced with complex educational issues such as English-language development, cultural diversity, and the educational challenges associated with family poverty and immigration. Comprehensive professional development that involves *all* teachers and staff not only unifies the school and coordinates program services, but also helps ensure essential collaboration between mainstream and bilingual/ESL teachers. The ESEA

emphasis on coordination between Title I and Title VII supports the current research recommending that all teachers who share responsibility for the same students participate in the same professional development activities (August & Hakuta, 1997; Calderón, 1999; Wagstaff & Fusarelli in Reyes et al., 1999).

Marshall Middle School Provides Comprehensive Professional Learning

At Chicago's Thurgood Marshall Middle School, which serves a 70 percent Hispanic population, a faculty committee establishes priorities for professional development, based on the school's academic goals. One teacher from each of the school's teams—clusters of students who share the same faculty and suite of classrooms—sits on a committee that administers the Title I schoolwide program. This committee conducts an annual faculty survey to set the priorities for professional development and then presents the resulting plan to the teams for approval. The committee subsequently implements the plan, engaging both professional and paraprofessional staff. In 1998-99, the school focused on implementing an inclusion model for special education students, teaching classes with a broad range of abilities represented, and incorporating technology into classroom instruction.

Teachers are encouraged to attend professional development activities to learn about emerging middle-school philosophies and to stay abreast of recent developments in their fields of instruction, in order to incorporate best practices in the curriculum. Marshall provides them with numerous opportunities to work with each other and to pursue professional growth. The principal requires that every teacher attend at least one middle-school conference each year at the state or national level. The school also pays for teachers to attend subject-area conferences, using both federal Title I and state Chapter 1 funds.

Enhancing teachers' capacity to accommodate diversity. Many veteran teachers have not had the advanced professional training needed to serve students who are Hispanic, immigrant, and/or English-language learners most effectively. Although more teacher education programs are beginning to address these issues, even new teachers may enter the workforce without adequate training in this area. They may feel ill-prepared to meet the academic, language, and cultural needs of America's increasingly diverse student population (Gray, Cahalab, Hein, Litman, Severynse, Warren, Wisan, & Stowe, 1993). Schools can use Title I and Title VII funds (among other federal funds) on activities that improve teachers' knowledge of curriculum content and state standards so they may better help Hispanic students to succeed.

Providing Standards-Based Professional Development in Philadelphia

Most schools in Philadelphia are included in one of 22 "clusters"—groups of schools that share students from kindergarten through grade 12. Each cluster organizes and implements its own professional development and training for school staff, within the broad, standards-based framework of the district. In addition, two Title VII grants support districtwide professional development for teachers serving English-language learners, in areas such as portfolio assessment, implementation of standards, and balanced literacy. The central office ensures that all professional development meets the district's expectations for quality and inclusion (e.g., follow-up training is available, various perspectives and approaches are emphasized).

Among the skills that teachers need to support ELL students' learning across the curriculum are those involved in using sheltered instruction. Sheltered instruction integrates content objectives with language development objectives. When it is done properly, students with limited English-language skills have opportunities to learn core subject material at grade level—using strategies that rely more on demonstrations and modeling than simply on words to communicate facts and ideas. For example, in a class of fluent English-speakers, a ninth-grade algebra teacher will typically blend talk and demonstration, but the lesson will be richer on the language side, alluding to shared experiences to illustrate concepts and procedures. In a class that includes English-language learners with the prerequisite mathematics skills to learn algebra, the teacher would rely on sheltered instruction, that is, a blend of communication strategies that relies much more heavily on illustration, modeling, and demonstration to convey information. Students who are English-speakers but not primarily verbal learners may also benefit from this approach. However, using this method of instruction demands a much more carefully articulated understanding of mathematics—there can be no chatty, culturally embedded short-cuts—and probably a much greater reliance on nonverbal communication than standard teacher education imparts.

“Bridging Cultures” to Support Student Learning

The Bridging Cultures Project introduces elementary school teachers to strategies for becoming more alert to and articulate about culture and thereby more effective in serving Hispanic students.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Educational Research and Improvement, the Language and Cultural Diversity program at WestEd has sponsored the Bridging Cultures Project since 1996, in conjunction with partners from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and California State University at Northridge. Project staff are currently working with seven elementary teachers from six predominantly Hispanic schools in the Los Angeles Unified, Ocean View, and Los Nietos School Districts to design and field-test professional development materials and workshops. Bridging Cultures has also developed university course modules for preservice teachers.

Bridging Cultures operates on the principle that in order to develop strategies to help children accommodate the sometimes differing expectations of school and home, teachers must first recognize how the different belief systems at school and home operate. The public education system reflects an individualistic orientation, emphasizing individual achievement and experience, while some immigrant cultures—including those of some Hispanic students—tend to hold more cooperative perspectives, emphasizing group harmony and contributions to the group.

The project facilitates understanding of different cultural perspectives and opens the way for better communication between parents and teachers. For instance, Hispanic parents may have different expectations about the social dimensions of their child's educational experience. When teachers recognize and address parents' concerns, they build continuity of support for the child. A project staffer noted that Bridging Cultures is not a prescriptive program, but one that promotes cultural understanding. The teachers themselves tackle the task of determining its implications for the classrooms. The project challenges teachers to become more aware of the ways that the cultural expectations of their Hispanic students (and their families) may differ from the previously unexamined expectations of school.

The effort has sparked enthusiastic responses among participating teachers. Bridging Cultures project staff have documented successful strategies that participating teachers have used to address crosscultural conflicts experienced by Hispanic students in their classrooms. The project has incorporated these problems and solutions into vignettes that are included in professional development materials. These lessons are included in professional development materials.

Organizational Arrangements Support Teacher Learning

In addition to opportunities for formal and informal study of new material and ideas, teacher learning requires organizational supports and structures. These include:

- Effective and knowledgeable principal leadership
- Time and infrastructure for professional development
- Resources and materials adequate for program support

The promising practices described below offer insights into how these organizational supports strengthen teachers' abilities to help Hispanic students succeed academically.

Principal Leadership

In all schools, the principal's leadership plays a critical role in creating a dynamic organization founded on clear and common goals for academic achievement. Principals promote academic excellence by setting priorities and establishing a clear vision for the school. Principals who see professional growth as central to student achievement develop the supports and structures that promote professional development and therefore good teaching (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995; Wagstaff & Fusarelli in Reyes et al., 1999). Schools that function as learning communities have powerful leaders with special skills. They cultivate new instructional practices, reform organizational structures to foster teacher collaboration, use resources to create time for collaboration, model collegiality, and instill a climate of genuine respect for teachers and students (Calderón, 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995).

The presence of strong, knowledgeable principals is especially important in culturally diverse schools and schools that serve large numbers of Hispanics (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995; Wagstaff & Fusarelli in Reyes et al., 1999). The principal makes Hispanic students' and English-language learners' achievement just as important as the achievement of other students, provides ongoing instructional and curricular direction and leadership, engages a talented staff, and involves the entire school in reform. Principals in effective schools view themselves as facilitators or coaches charged with acquiring resources and educational opportunities for teachers and students. They empower staff with decision-making and leadership opportunities.

Building Horizontal and Vertical Integration

In its Title I schoolwide program, H.D. Hilley Elementary School in Socorro (Texas) Independent School District uses vertical and horizontal teaming to coordinate curriculum within and across grade levels and align it with state standards.

Vertical teams meet monthly by subject area across grades to discuss articulation of grade-level goals, instructional alignment, cross-grade strategies, and new materials and Internet resources. The school has three vertical teams: the communications team, the math/science team, and the fine arts/social studies team. They monitor the progress of the schoolwide initiatives and coordinate curriculum goals in the K-5 instructional programs. The vertical teams also serve as an accountability check for all grade levels. For example, fourth-grade teachers can share with the third-grade teachers what students should know before they are promoted. Each vertical team has a representative from each grade level. The lower grade level teachers, who teach all subjects, decide among themselves who will represent their grade on each vertical team. One teacher from each vertical team serves as a teacher representative to Hilley's School Improvement Team.

Horizontal Teams engage teachers at each grade level in discussions of teaching strategies, resources, and feedback on campus activities. Scheduled weekly during their common lunch period, these conversations encourage teachers to share ideas and to visit each other's classrooms. For example, during one horizontal team meeting, a teacher expressed concern that her students had not scored well on a state assessment practice exam and asked for help. Another teacher whose students had been successful shared the strategy she used.

Both the vertical and the horizontal teams implement and assess the professional development related to their areas.

Hilley received "Recognized" status from the Texas Education Agency for three consecutive school years (1995-1998), based on students' attendance and performance on statewide tests.

Time and Structures for Professional Development

Time is an essential element in teachers' professional growth. Teachers need time within and outside of the school day to collaborate with other teachers, follow up, reflect, and plan. More and more schools are creatively restructuring school schedules to allocate more time for coordinated planning and discussion. Team teaching arrangements and special-focus teams support teacher collaboration and curriculum development. Observing and mentoring peers are other ways teachers can share and learn from each other. Professional development outside of school, offered through teacher networks, conferences, and university partnerships, is also a valuable use of teacher release time.

Elementary, middle, and high school structures (e.g., middle and high school departmentalization) often impede high-quality professional development. As more educators realize

this, they are rethinking school structures and practices once considered immutable and restructuring the workday to permit more professional interaction.

Making Time for Teachers to Meet

Faculty members at Marshall Middle School in Chicago meet twice weekly. Students and teachers are grouped into teams that create a small-school environment; state Chapter 1 funds support two additional "exploratory" teachers so that all students in a team can attend elective classes (e.g., art, computers, physical education) during the same period. This provides the time for team meetings of teachers. Curriculum planning, particularly for the interdisciplinary units crucial to Marshall's curriculum, takes place during another block that the school has set aside for teachers. The school day would normally run from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., but Marshall begins classes daily at 7:50, "banking" the extra 10 minutes of instructional time so that once a month the school can dismiss students early and teachers can spend a half day on professional development. These early release days are used for team planning, departmental meetings, schoolwide workshops related to professional development priorities, and work on the school improvement plan. Having an early start time required a waiver from the teachers' contract, which the union granted at the teachers' request.

Resources and Materials for Adequate Program Support

Teachers need resources and materials to implement the ideas and instructional strategies they learn through professional development. Teachers of English-language learners need curriculum materials and books suitable for implementing sheltered instruction or other strategies. Teachers also need adequate bilingual reading materials, culturally relevant curricula, visual tools, graphic organizers, and manipulatives in order to put recommended teaching methods into practice.

Implementing effective practices also demands additional human resources. For example, a program may need a reading specialist or literacy coordinator to observe instruction and offer feedback, help develop an ongoing assessment system (e.g., portfolios) for students, or gather materials for new strategies. Teaching assistants and volunteers may also help, under teachers' supervision.

Knowledgeable bilingual/ESL staff are especially important resources in schools serving a large population of Hispanic students who are learning English. Well-qualified bilingual or ESL staff offer essential knowledge of English language development and serve as important partners to mainstream teachers. In schools that legitimize collaboration, both sets of teachers offer important resources to one another as they work together on literacy development, cooperative learning strategies, sheltered and bilingual instruction techniques, and creation of curriculum that is equitable and accessible to English-language learners (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1995).

Checklist for Building Teacher and Organizational Capacity

Does our preservice teacher education program ensure that teachers who will serve Hispanic students begin with a solid foundation of knowledge in the core subjects, pedagogy, and language development by:

- ✓ Targeting recruitment and retention efforts on bilingual and Hispanic community members, both adults and high school students, whose existing language and cultural resources will be valuable assets?
- ✓ Providing support for Hispanic candidates' continued enrollment and success in teacher preparation programs?
- ✓ Enriching teacher preparation to enable candidates to achieve high professional standards in core subjects as well as pedagogy?

Does our inservice education support teachers' development of skill to meet students' complex needs by:

- ✓ Making professional development collaborative, continuous, and schoolwide?
- ✓ Designing professional development specifically to enhance teachers' ability to accommodate and make good use of diverse student resources?
- ✓ Ensuring that all teachers of English-language learners are skilled in strategies that promote language development as well as achievement in the core subjects?

Do our organizational arrangements support teacher learning by:

- ✓ Focusing principal leadership on teacher learning that supports achievement of all students, including Hispanic students?
- ✓ Scheduling the day and week to allow time and space for teachers' professional development?
- ✓ Providing resources and materials for adequate program support?

ENGAGING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Families and the communities in which they live are powerful resources in improving Hispanic students' learning. Studies show that what the family does to develop language, motivate children, monitor homework, and limit television watching is more important to student success than family income or education (de Kanter, Ginsburg, & Milne, 1987; Henderson & Berla, 1994). And a recent study of promising practices in top-performing, high-poverty schools suggests that when schools focus on involving parents in helping students meet standards, students do well academically. In these schools, traditional roles for parents, such as fundraising and playground duty, take second place to activities that address their children's academic lives more directly (The Education Trust, 1999). For these reasons, nurturing and sustaining strong partnerships between schools and Hispanic families and community members are vital goals for educators.

Title I and Title VII Encourage Strong Partnerships

Through the re-authorized ESEA, Title I and Title VII programs work together to encourage schools to plan strong school-family-community partnerships that support learning for all students. Both programs require schools to nurture strong partnerships with Hispanic families. For example, Title I emphasizes the family's, the school's, and district's role in promoting high academic performance. Schools receiving Title I funding must:

- Develop and distribute to parents a written parental involvement policy and involve parents in conducting an annual evaluation of its content and effectiveness
- Develop a school-parent compact—a written commitment that indicates how all members of the school community share responsibility for improving student achievement
- Offer full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, including providing information and school profiles in a language and form that these parents understand
- In accordance with provisions of the Migrant Education Program, support advocacy and outreach activities for migrant children and their families, including informing and helping such children and families gain access to other education, health, nutrition, and social services

Schools and districts can use Title VII funds for outreach and parent education programs, as well as parent participation in all aspects of Title VII programming, including assessing needs, planning, implementing, and evaluating.

Schools Promote Parent Involvement

Recent research on family and community involvement in children's education suggests that three key strategies may be especially effective in promoting Hispanic families' participation in school-related activities: (1) bridging language and cultural differences between school and home, (2) moving beyond traditional school-family activities, and (3) providing parent and staff training for effective partnerships (U.S. Department of Education, 1997b). The larger communities in which schools are located also have a role to play in developing partnerships that benefit Hispanic students and their families.

Bridging Language and Cultural Differences

Language and cultural differences are among the challenges that schools may face when they try to communicate with Hispanic families and encourage them to play an active role in their children's academic lives. About 55 percent of Title I schools report that they serve students whose parents speak only limited English. In addition, survey data indicate that parents who do not speak English at home are less likely to participate in school-based activities, and more likely to participate in fewer activities over the course of the school year (U.S. Department of Education, 1997b). And increasingly, educators are discovering that recognizing and valuing the learner's home language and culture can effectively help to guide systemic educational reform (McGroarty, 1998).

To break the language barrier, many schools serving Hispanic students use bilingual parent liaisons, instructional aides, counselors, and parent volunteers to reach out to families and communicate with them about school-related activities and about their children's progress. In addition, some districts and schools conduct bilingual workshops and classes to inform parents on how to reinforce student learning at home (U.S. Department of Education, 1997a).

Reaching Out to Bilingual Parents

The schoolwide program at Hueco Elementary School in the Socorro Independent School District in Texas coordinates Title I and Title VII funds to support parent involvement. This Success for All school serves a 98 percent Hispanic, rural student population of about 620 children enrolled in grades preK-5. Its efforts to draw parents into the life of the school include bilingual home-school communications and parent workshops and activities, all of which are conducted in both Spanish and English. Parent workshops and courses address general parenting skills, including effective nurturing, child development, drug abuse prevention, and health and physical well-being. In addition, ESL courses and a computer course encourage parents to address their personal educational goals. All Hueco families participate in the Super Readers Program, which provides incentives for parents of preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade children to read to their children often and regularly. In addition, about 50 parents attend monthly Parent Communication Council meetings, at which they share their concerns about the school with the principal and vice principal. Finally, teachers receive release time from school to visit families of students doing poorly in school or whose students experience noteworthy success. Parent participation at Hueco has grown beyond fundraising and clerical work to include participation in school decision-making and classroom instruction, advancing their own educational goals, and contributing to students' learning at home. In addition, student attendance averages 96 percent, and as of the 1997-98 school year, on average, students in each grade level scored at or above the 84th percentile on the TAAS.

Advancing Parent Involvement

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college preparation program targets underachieving students, most of whom will be the first in their families to attend college. Nearly half (43 percent) of the participants are Hispanic. AVID staff maintain close contact with parents of participants through quarterly newsletters, regular telephone calls, and a monthly family workshop series. Offered in both Spanish and English, the workshops are designed to help parents understand the increasing academic demands on their children, acclimate them to the idea of their children leaving home to attend college, and provide information about the college application and financial aid processes.

Involving High School Students' Families

At Rio Grande High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the bilingual home-school liaison (funded by Title VII) links students, parents, and the school, and helps parents obtain the services and information they need to participate actively in their children's education. To address low school attendance among students (85 percent of whom are Hispanic), Rio Grande created the liaison position about five years ago. The liaison meets with parents when their students register, and makes home visits when necessary to explain curriculum or address other education-related issues. As the liaison began to visit students' homes and saw that many of the families needed social and health care services to solve problems that often prevent students from attending school regularly, he began making referrals to appropriate agencies. The liaison also ensures that parents stay informed about their children's education by explaining curriculum, serving as a translator at parent-teacher conferences, and helping students study for the ACT and fill out college applications if needed. A recent evaluation report covering 1995-1999 indicates that the senior stability rate—the percent of seniors who enrolled by the 20th school day and graduated in May—has increased by 6 percent during the past four years (to 82 percent).

Building strong school-family-community partnerships with families of different cultures can challenge even the most outgoing and well-meaning school staff and parents (U.S. Department of Education, 1997b). Schools that are serving new or rapidly growing Hispanic populations may face special challenges in learning to bridge the divide. Language minority parents are often reluctant to contact teachers to discuss their children's education; many Hispanic parents, for example, view teachers as the pedagogical experts and do not want to interfere (Flores, Cousin, & Diaz, 1991). One effective way schools can bridge the cultural divide is to promote cultural understanding between school staff and parents.

Promoting Understanding between Teachers and Migrant Families

The Dysart Unified School District Migrant Preschool program in El Mirage, Arizona, trains migrant parents (referred to as parent mentors) to engage other Hispanic families in studying parenting skills and child development. The mentors reportedly boost parent involvement in the program, in large part because the mentors share a common cultural and economic background with participating parents. In the past, when there was a higher percentage of teachers who were unfamiliar with the demands of agricultural labor and the culture of the migrant farmworkers, both the children and their parents experienced frustration in communicating. Some staff said this was perhaps due less to differences in home language than to differences in culture. For example, women in the migrant community—unlike either Anglos or Mexican Americans—show respect to teachers by averting their eyes during conversation. Teachers often misperceived this display of good manners as a lack of openness or interest. In addition, work in the fields sometimes left odors that permeated families' clothing, creating the impression that migrant families had poor hygiene rather than being seen as an inevitable consequence of agricultural work. The training and experience of those hired as mentors enabled them to act as bridges between two groups—parents and teachers—who wanted the best for the children.

In Latino communities, young adults from a range of ethnic backgrounds who work with school-aged children can promote cultural understanding by acting as "cultural brokers." They do this by showing respect for children's home communities. Because many of these young adults have learned to be bicultural themselves, they can pass on their understanding of how to retain community traditions while entering and succeeding in school and beyond (Hurtado, Figueroa, & Garcia, 1996). Some Puente Project schools, for example, operate a Peer Partner Program where eleventh-graders who have completed the Puente Project receive training to mentor ninth-graders and keep them on track for college. These peer mentors learn from a community mentor liaison and a Puente counselor how to be good role models and build leadership skills, as well as how to highlight the importance of culture—through avenues such as Chicano/Latino literature—to a student's identity.

Moving beyond Traditional School-Family Activities

While many schools across the nation hold back-to-school nights and fundraisers, these traditional activities *alone* do not do enough to build strong school-family partnerships around high standards for Hispanic student learning. Activities that focus more on teaching and learning and that bring teachers, parents, and students together will likely go further in establishing meaningful partnerships geared towards high standards for learning (The Education Trust, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 1997a).

Creating Strong Home-School Partnerships for Newcomers

Many immigrant Hispanic parents may face the dilemma of holding high aspirations for their children's school success while lacking the knowledge needed to guide their children through American school systems (Cooper, Denner, & Lopez, 1999). To help build a strong partnership between the home and school, staff at Liberty High School provide parents with a wealth of information about student learning. Hispanic students make up roughly one-third of the Liberty school population. The school recently used some of its Title VII funds to develop a 90-page book—translated into five different languages including Spanish— about resources for parents. The book includes sections on (1) the rights and responsibilities of parents, (2) how to use New York City as a resource, and (3) educational resources.

Moving beyond Traditional Parent Involvement

The Migrant Preschool Program in Dysart Unified School District began in 1985, when most of the families enrolled in the district were full-time migrant agricultural laborers. Today, only a small percentage are full-time migrants, due in part to the decline of agriculture in the area and greater opportunities to work in construction and other occupations. Nevertheless, in a high percentage of households, adults continue to provide some seasonal labor to area growers, which makes their families eligible for Dysart's migrant program. According to the Dysart preschool program staff, "The most important influence in a child's education...is his or her parents and homelife." Their aim is to develop close ties between the child's home and school learning experiences, and they view parents as a valuable resource. Currently serving 80 children with federal migrant education funds, with 10 children on the waiting list, the program builds links between home and school learning in nontraditional and effective ways:

- The program recruits parent mentors from the migrant community and weaves tighter connections between the languages and cultures of home and school. Parent mentors are migrant parents who, after completing their own training, recruit and train parents in the preschool program's curriculum and in child development and parenting skills. They also accompany the classroom teachers on home visits.
- A partnership with a local community college helps migrant parents develop English proficiency, continue their own education, and prepare for paid positions as parent mentors, classroom tutors, and teachers.

The preschool parent component features three strands of training for migrant parents. At least one parent of each child in the program is required to attend 15 hours of parenting classes (Strand 1), taught by two parent mentors, and to help in the classroom for 15 hours (Strand 2) under the supervision of the classroom teachers. Strand 2 includes practicum sessions with their own preschool children in the classroom. Strand 3 offers migrant parents the opportunity to attend a local community college. Program staff help parents identify sources of financial assistance, which may include federal, state, or local resources. Parents who complete Strands 1 and 2 and who develop English proficiency can go on to work as paid elementary classroom tutors. Currently, eight parents work as paid classroom tutors. For Dysart's migrant parents, the program offers a pathway to further education as well as a better school experience for their children. In addition, while no analysis of test score data currently exists, school staff report that anecdotal evidence indicates that participating preschool children enter first grade much better prepared than their peers who have not participated in the program.

Providing Parent and Staff Training for Partnerships

Participants in school-family-community partnerships need to know how to communicate with each other; otherwise, misperceptions and distrust can flourish between parents and school personnel (U.S. Department of Education, 1997b). This is especially true when school staff and families come from different cultural backgrounds and have different expectations for how schools should operate, or when schools are experiencing an unprecedented influx of Hispanic students. Some of the many ways in which schools offer parents training and information include workshops held weekly, monthly, or several times throughout the year or outreach activities such as newsletters, handbooks, and home-

visits. Topics include tips on supporting learning at home, preparing parents to participate in school decision-making, and providing teachers, principals, and school staff with practical advice and strategies for reaching out to parents and working with them as partners (U.S. Department of Education, 1997a).

Supporting Families for Success

The Success for All (SFA) program in the El Paso Independent School District operates in five Title I schoolwide programs, each of which enrolls between 90 and 95 percent Hispanic students. SFA includes regular staff development and principal training, as well as a parent/family support team for outreach to the greater parent body. The team, made up of teachers, a counselor, a community representative, and parents, works with families to ensure student academic success. A family support team manual explains in detail the four premises of the SFA program: attendance, academic intervention, parent involvement, and services integration, and the team meets weekly to discuss issues that may affect student learning such as inadequate sleep or poor attendance, and how to work with parents to meet challenges to student success.

Community Support for Hispanic Students

The larger community in which a school is located contributes to partnerships between home and school (McGroarty, 1998). Community-based organizations support partnerships in many ways.

Building Alliances between Schools and Communities

The Alliance Schools Initiative works to develop strong community-based constituencies of parents, teachers, and community leaders as a strategy for substantially increasing student achievement in low-income areas throughout Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, southern California, Louisiana, and Nebraska. About 200 schools currently use the Alliance model; in 1997-98, 118 schools in Texas alone were Alliance schools.

The Alliance is a partnership between the Interfaith Education Fund (IEF), the Southwest Industrial Areas Foundation (SIAF) Network, state education agencies, and school districts. Most Alliance schools enroll large proportions of students from minority families living in low-income communities. Low student achievement, disunity among school staff, and low levels of parent involvement are initially characteristic of many of these schools. The initiative focuses on restructuring the relationship among stakeholders in school communities, including parents, teachers, school administrators, students, community and business leaders, and public officials in order to increase student learning and student performance overall.

Becoming an Alliance school means that school staff, parents, and other community members learn about education reform and the cultural shifts that are essential for them to facilitate student achievement based on state and local standards. The initiative formalizes the relationships and commitments among stakeholders, each of whom agrees to work with IEF and their local IAF organization to improve the quality and performance of a school. State education agencies provide some flexibility, such as waivers from state guidelines, as well as supplementary funding to schools willing to redesign and reform their entire educational programs.

The process of becoming an Alliance school begins with identifying leaders and key concerns of parents and staff and developing relationships between all partners. A major thrust of the initiative is to implement strategic, targeted training for teachers and administrators and to provide services, education, and training for parents and community leaders as they participate in school reform efforts. Some effective methods Alliance schools use to enact change include:

- Core teams of principals, teachers, parents, and community members receive training to conduct house meetings where community members, parents, and school staff can discuss their concerns and craft a plan of action for improving the school
- Walk for Success, a strategy where parents, teachers, community members, and administrators walk the streets of the community to engage parents in conversations about the school
- Training for parents to help their children with homework and other strategies to engage parents in their children's education
- Other classes based on parents self-identified needs, including, for example, Adult ESL, parenting skills, computer literacy

Between 1997-98, 87 percent of all Texas Alliance schools increased their percentage of students passing all sections of the TAAS. Economically disadvantaged students in the schools showed more improvement than their wealthier peers.

School-linked programs located outside of schools. There are good reasons to locate a school-linked program outside of school. Some family members such as teenagers or parents of young children may be reluctant to come to school and be comfortable in a community setting such as a recreation center or YMCA. In other cases, schools may not have the building space, staff, or other resources to operate some programs they would like to offer.

Linking Families to Technology

The ASPIRA Association, Inc., is currently building four new federally funded Community Technology Centers in Latino neighborhoods within Chicago, Philadelphia, Bridgeport (CT), and Carolina (PR). ASPIRA will expand existing community centers to include computer learning rooms with Internet-connected computers and educational software. With additional assistance from the business community, ASPIRA plans to establish technology centers at all ASPIRA sites. Education Secretary Richard Riley noted that the centers "can help parents and students who don't have computers at home link learning at school with learning anywhere through technology and bring the power of computers and information-age resources to those who have the greatest need" (U.S. Department of Education, 1999a, 6).

Space for family-school-community activities outside of regular school hours and on weekends. El Puente, a comprehensive Latino multi-arts and cultural center located in Brooklyn, New York, operates three sites in two Brooklyn communities (Williamsburg and Bushwick). Two of the sites share space with public schools. At these school centers, the El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice and El Puente at JHS #50, after-school offerings attract between 60 and 300 students five days a week. Afternoon and evening courses offered for the 1999-2000 program include college courses in the humanities, computer training, creative writing, drama, ESL, fine arts, internships, homework help and tutoring, and photojournalism, to name a few. In addition, El Puente offers adults GED preparation, computer training, poetry readings, and intergenerational programs.

Internships and opportunities for service learning to help students develop life and employment-related skills. At Liberty High in New York City, students can participate in the World of Work program, which couples ESL with coursework such as art and design. Students make and sell their products. As part of this curriculum, students participate in community internships that may place them on a community board or in a local city councilman's office.

Developing Communities of Learners to Help Hispanic Students Reach High Academic Standards

In 1989, an effort to increase the number of Hispanic engineers and scientists resulted in the creation of the Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education (CAHSEE), a nonprofit organization. CAHSEE fosters science and engineering education through four different programs, the oldest of which is the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Institute. Nationally, STEM provides about 250 academically promising Hispanic and other minority and economically disadvantaged students with an intensive, five-week summer instructional program. With the goal of creating leaders who are scientists and engineers, the program serves students in grades 7–11 and focuses on mathematics and science instruction, while also emphasizing the development of leadership skills and civic involvement and commitment. Students attend the program from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, with six hours devoted to classroom instruction and two hours to individualized tutoring. Academic instruction includes mathematical topology and pre-calculus, descriptive geometry and mathematical logic, and probability and statistics for engineers and scientists. Plans are underway to extend the program to high school seniors by offering them opportunities to conduct creative research in private and governmental laboratories during the summer months. In Washington, DC, which serves about 100 STEM students, The George Washington University donates office and classroom space to STEM, and 45 to 50 graduate students and undergraduate seniors receive a stipend and free housing and transportation to teach the courses. STEM receives parental donations as well as funding from NASA and various corporations and foundations.

During the nine years that the STEM Institute has been in operation, all program participants have graduated from high school—on average, with a GPA of 3.4 on a 4.0 scale. Forty-five percent of STEM students score over 1200 on the SAT, while 30 percent score over 1300, 15 percent score over 1400, and 10 percent score over 1500. Seventy percent go on to major in science or engineering in college, and 70 percent of those who graduate with science degrees enroll in a graduate program within two years of graduating from college.