



# **Successful Bilingual Schools**

*Six Effective Programs in California*



**SAN DIEGO COUNTY**  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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## Successful Bilingual Schools

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**Learning from Success**

*Our most underutilized opportunity to continue improving EL performance may lie in fostering ways for schools and districts to learn from one another. Current state accountability methods identify schools that are underperforming or failing in some way.*

*We believe it is important for the state to place equal, if not greater, emphasis on districts and schools that are realizing authentic, lasting success with their ELs. To do this, the state will need to establish criteria for identifying successful districts and schools in regard to EL performance, publicly acknowledge them, and create vehicles for disseminating what is occurring in these successful sites to others.*

**Effects of the Implementation of Proposition 227 on the Education of English Learners, K–12 Findings from a Five-Year Evaluation**  
Parrish, et al., 2006, p. VII-3

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this study was to identify schools with successful bilingual education programs, and to document their success. It is not a comparative study, and was not intended to support or refute competing claims about the relative effectiveness of bilingual education compared to other approaches. Instead, the goal was to illustrate that bilingual schools are capable of providing opportunities for students to achieve and sustain high levels of academic excellence even when faced with challenges such as poverty and a lack of students' English proficiency upon entering school.

The report contains six case studies. Each describes the bilingual program of a successful elementary school in California. Located in San Diego, Los Angeles and Ventura counties, all schools enrolled large numbers of Spanish-speaking English learners. The case studies were prepared over a two-year period. Achievement data was taken from state and local databases, and information was gathered from telephone interviews with principals and brief site visits. The studies describe each school and summarize demographic and achievement data. General analysis identified key implementation strategies and notable instructional and organizational features, including elements of leadership, the climate of accountability, teacher qualifications and professional development. Each school profile was compared to a summary of key organizational and instructional features identified by the research as contributing to school success.

## I. Introduction

California's programs for English learners (ELs) have been subjected to intense scrutiny since the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998. California law allows schools to provide bilingual education, but only when parents have requested and been granted a waiver of programs that are otherwise to be provided only or nearly all in English.

Bilingual education remains controversial, in spite of a substantial number of studies demonstrating that students in bilingual programs learn and succeed academically in English at least as well as, or better than, programs conducted only in English.<sup>1</sup> One recent analysis examined the effect sizes of previous research and concluded that, "Study after study has reported that children in bilingual programs typically outperform their counterparts in all-English programs on tests of academic achievement in English. Or, at worst, they do just as well."<sup>2</sup>

A recent five-year evaluation of the effects of the implementation of Proposition 227 concluded that there, "...is no clear evidence to support an argument of the superiority of one EL instructional approach over another."<sup>3</sup> That study and others document that widely-reported claims of the superiority of English immersion over bilingual education are unwarranted.<sup>4</sup> Other studies, most recently the work of the National Literacy Panel for Language Minority Children and Youth document the superiority of bilingual education. That study reported:

*...research indicates that instructional programs work when they provide opportunities for students to develop proficiency in their first language. Studies that compare bilingual instruction with English-only instruction demonstrate that language-minority students instructed in their native language as well as in English perform better, on average, on measures of English reading proficiency than language-minority students instructed only in English<sup>5</sup>.*

The challenge for parents, policy makers and school administrators is to sort through the competing claims about bilingual education, and to implement the very best programs for their students, based on solid evidence.

This project responded to the need for better information about successful bilingual education. To this end, the study identified and described six successful bilingual schools. These schools serve as inspiration and as models to guide implementation of effective programs. The audience for this report includes policy makers and educators, as well as parents who seek evidence that well-implemented bilingual education programs can ensure English mastery, meet grade-level academic standards in English, and, in addition, ensure literacy in the primary language.

Schools were identified using measures that the general public considers criteria for success. To be judged successful, a school needed clear data from the state and federal accountability systems, recognized indicators of success for English learners. The schools needed to provide bilingual instruction for a substantial portion of their English learners, and enroll mainly – but not exclusively – students from

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<sup>1</sup> Greene, 1998; Ramirez et al., 1991; Rolstad, Mahoney, and Glass, 2005; Slavin and Cheung, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Krashen, S. and G. McField, 2005, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> Parrish et al., 2006, p. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Grissom, 2004, 2005, Thompson et al., 2002.

<sup>5</sup> August and Shanahan, 2006, executive summary, p. 5



Spanish-speaking homes with relatively low socioeconomic status.<sup>6</sup> Such schools represent the largest educational challenges in California today, regardless of the type of instructional program provided.<sup>7</sup>

## II. Background

### Student Characteristics

There are 1.6 million English learners in California, with a wide range of language and academic needs. Most English learners enroll in kindergarten or Grade one. Some students speak only a non-English language while others have been exposed to English as well as the home language since birth. It is often the case that younger siblings develop some proficiency in English before they enter school, due to the influences of older children, television and other media.

Some students enroll in school after traumatic immigration journeys, having left their homes and familiar surroundings to begin a new life in a new land. Many demonstrate gaps in schooling, due to patterns of migration or disruptions in their local communities. Some arrive with very strong prior schooling and are quickly able to meet grade-level standards in all academic areas.

Given these differences, there is no one single bilingual approach or program capable of meeting the needs of every English learner. Successful schools have a capacity to respond thoughtfully to individual student needs, regardless of the type of program or program label.

Since Proposition 227 changed the procedures for enrolling students in bilingual education, over 92 percent of English learners have been enrolled in programs taught overwhelmingly in English. Students with little proficiency in English are enrolled in Structured English Immersion until they achieve a “good working knowledge” of English. Then, they are enrolled in mainstream classrooms that, by law, must include advanced English language development and sufficient support to ensure that students, “...acquire full proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible,” and “...meet state standards for academic achievement.”<sup>8</sup>

Under state law, parents may request a waiver for an *alternative course of study* that is not taught overwhelmingly in English.<sup>9</sup> Waivers allow English learners to participate in programs where the primary language and English are used in some form of bilingual instruction. In 2005, 120,849 English learners, or 7.6 percent of the total English learner population, were enrolled in an alternative course of study in California. The six bilingual schools profiled in this study represented three counties. Los Angeles County enrolled 5.6 percent of English learners in alternative programs; San Diego County had 17.8 percent, and Ventura County had 22.9 percent (See Table 1).

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<sup>6</sup> Based on standard CDE reporting of parent education and eligibility for the National School Lunch Program.

<sup>7</sup> Callahan and Gandara, 2004, Merickle, et al., 2003, Parrish, et al., 2006.

<sup>8</sup> From federal and state law, including: 20 USC 1703[f], 6892; EC 300[f], 5 CCR 11302[a] and [b].

<sup>9</sup> Education Code Sections 305, 306, 310, 311.

**Table 1: Enrollment of English Learners in Bilingual Instruction  
Selected Counties and California, 2004-05**

Selected Counties and State	Total Number of English Learners	Number of English Learners Enrolled in Bilingual Education	Percent of English Learners Enrolled in Bilingual Education
Los Angeles County	561,571	31,534	5.6%
San Diego County	116,872	20,822	17.8%
Ventura County	30,556	7,010	22.9%
California	1,591,525	120,849	7.6%

SOURCE: CDE. Annual Language Census, R-30LC, 2005

Over 85 percent of all English learners in California speak Spanish, and 98 percent of all state bilingual instruction has been in Spanish. Ninety-three percent of schools providing bilingual education are elementary schools.<sup>10</sup> To date, there has been only limited documentation of the impact of such programs.<sup>11</sup> Bilingual education programs vary in many ways, and the available research indicates that not all types are likely to provide the same positive outcomes (Linguanti, 1999).

### Effective Schools Research and Effective English Learner Program Research

Research that identified the attributes or features of effective schools has assisted educators with the school improvement process for many years. Each of the studies charted below (See Table 2. This is provided in two parts: 2A and 2B) identified important characteristics of effective educational institutions. The first column of Table 2A lists features of effective schools found in research covering general education. The remaining columns of that table, and columns 5-7 of Table 2B summarize features found by researchers looking at effective schools from the perspective of what works well for English learners. The features noted in column 8 in Table 2B come from a study on culturally responsive schools that were supportive of high achievement for Hispanic or Latino students.

The characteristics of effective schools in general mirror those found in effective schools for English learners. However, with the addition of a linguistically complex student population, different knowledge and skills are necessary to address the additional language, academic and cultural needs of students. For example, educators are required to learn additional skills and methodology to earn an appropriate state

<sup>10</sup> Merickle et al., 2003, Ch. II. The AIR/WestEd study found that elementary schools constituted 93 percent of schools providing “Substantial L1 instruction” (i.e., bilingual instruction to at least 25 percent of ELs).

<sup>11</sup> A few studies have described exemplary practices or successes of bilingual education in specific schools: Berman, et al., 1995; Brown University Education Alliance, 2001; Krashen and Biber, 1988; Texas Education Agency, 2000; Quezada, 2005. The Year Three Report on the *Effects of the Implementation of Proposition 227 on the Education of English Learners* (Merickle et al., 2003) reports on five bilingual elementary schools, but does not identify them by name, nor provide extensive outcome data. Three of those schools were considered “effective,” based on an examination of SAT-9 scores as well as school-wide API scores and ranks (1999 – 2001). The Year Five Report includes profiles of six effective schools, two of which provide bilingual instruction. We also identified one of those schools, Cahuenga Elementary, as an example of a successful bilingual school (See Parrish, et al., 2006, Ch. IV).

## Successful Bilingual Schools

authorization to teach English learners. This complex set of attributes, when added to the characteristics of effective schools in general, is related to a higher level of achievement for English learners.

We know of no studies that combine many or most of these factors in a causal model. Such a study may be impossible to do. Nevertheless, many of the features overlap across the reported studies. The features found to be correlated with effective schools and effective programs for English learners are also logically connected to the outcomes sought for English learners: high levels of proficiency in academic language across all domains (speaking, listening, reading, writing), optimal levels of academic achievement, and the attainment of multicultural proficiency that will empower these students to apply their skills and knowledge effectively in their future studies, work, and their lives as productive citizens in a world of diverse languages and cultures.

This project set out to identify successful bilingual schools, and to learn about their characteristics in order to provide guidance to other schools. The features identified by previous research were examined in the course of the study of the six schools, and the project team informally used these features to reflect on the data collected through observations and interviews.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The reader is referred to the extensive literature cited as sources for Tables 2A and 2B for in-depth treatment of the features of effective schools and effective programs for English learners.

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**Table 2A: Features of Effective Schools from Selected Studies**

General Effective Schools Literature <sup>13</sup>	Educating Language Minority Children – NRC <sup>14</sup>	Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy CREDE <sup>15</sup>	Exemplary Practices for LEP Students <sup>16</sup>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A positive and academically focused school climate	Supportive school wide climate	Joint productive activity: Teacher and students produce together.	A comprehensive school-wide vision
Shared goals within a professional community	Strong school leadership	Development of language and literacy across the curriculum	Effective language development strategies adapted to local conditions ensure access to the core curriculum
Consistent monitoring of students’ academic progress to inform instruction	Differentiated learning environment	Making meaning: Connections between school and students’ lives	High quality learning environment with instructional strategies that engage students in meaningful, in-depth learning across content areas
Parent involvement	Articulation and coordination within and between schools	Opportunities for complex thinking	Trained and qualified staff.
Strong instructional leadership	Use of native language and culture in instruction	Teaching through conversation	Innovative instructional strategies emphasize collaboration and hands-on activities.
	A balanced curriculum.		A school wide effort to build a positive teaching and learning environment by restructuring teaching units, use of time, decision-making, and external relations
	Explicit skill instruction.		External partners with a direct influence on education program
	Opportunities for student-directed activities.		Districts play a critical role in supporting quality education for ELs.
	Use of instructional strategies that enhance understanding.		
	Opportunities to practice new learning		
	Systematic student Assessment.		
	Staff development		
	Home and parent involvement.		

<sup>13</sup> Various sources, cited in Parrish, et al., 2006, p. IV-3

<sup>14</sup> August & Hakuta, 1997

<sup>15</sup> Tharp and Gallimore, 1988 as cited in Merickel et al, 2003, p.-16

<sup>16</sup> Berman et al., 1995, 10.2 - 10.6

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**Table 2B: Features of Effective Schools from Selected Studies (Continued)**

Effective EL Schooling Typology AIR/ WestEd <sup>17</sup> (5)	Effective EL School Principals <sup>18</sup> and others <sup>19</sup> AIR/ WestEd (6)	ELLs in U.S. Schools <sup>20</sup> (7)	High Performing Hispanic Schools <sup>21</sup> (8)
Clear plan for standards-based instruction responsive to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds	Staff with capacity to address EL needs, including experience, qualifications, characteristics, collaboration, professional development, leadership	A positive school environment	Cross-curricular thematic units of study
New learning embedded in meaningful context with links to prior knowledge	Curriculum and instruction: School-wide focus on English Language Development and standards-based instruction	A meaningful, academically challenging curriculum that incorporates higher order thinking	Respect for ethnic diversity
Promotion of language and literacy through opportunities for challenging, facilitated learning	Shared vision with shared priorities and expectations for ELs	A program model grounded in sound theory and best practices associated with an enriched, not remedial, instructional model	Student knowledge and language determine instructional strategies
High expectations for students with attention to skills needed to meet those expectations and ongoing assessment to inform instruction	Clear, coherent instructional plan in a supportive school/ district climate	Teachers subscribe to the goals and rationale for the school model	Bilingual/bicultural teachers and staff
School wide accountability for EL language development and academic achievement.	Systematic, ongoing assessment and data-driven decision-making	Teacher understanding of bilingual theory, methodology, and second language development.	Meaningful involvement for parents and the community
Strong leadership and well-prepared staff.	District support of EL instruction	Cooperative learning with high-quality exchanges between teachers and pupils	Systematic assessment of student progress
District, school and community support provide a foundation on which other effective practices can be built, sustained, and continuously renewed.	School and classroom organization supports EL progress		After-school and weekend programs for students and parents
	Community outreach to increase EL family involvement and external partnerships		Academic team includes teachers, administrators, parents, and other relevant community members

<sup>17</sup> Parrish et al., 2006, p. IV-3, and Merickel, et al., 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Merickel, et al., 2003

<sup>19</sup> Parrish, et al., 2006, IV-18, IV-19.

<sup>20</sup> Genesee et al., 2005: p. 377

<sup>21</sup> Reyes, P., Scribner, J. D., & Paredes Scribner, A. (Eds.). (1999).

### Types of Bilingual Education

In California, parents may use a waiver option to select an alternative to programs taught nearly all in English. Various types of bilingual education can be considered alternative courses of study. This study considered all recognized models of Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), Developmental Bilingual Education (DBE), or Dual Language Immersion (DLI)<sup>22</sup> (See Baker, 2001, Crawford, 2004, Linquanti, 1999; Merickel et al., 2003). These programs differ somewhat in the amount and emphasis on the primary language, the number of years that the primary language is used for instruction, and participant eligibility. Most Transitional and Developmental Bilingual Education programs enroll only English learners, while Dual Language Immersion programs enroll both English learners and native-English speakers. The programs also differ in their expectations for the development of literacy and academic achievement in the primary language.

### Definition of a Bilingual School

There is no widely accepted definition of a “bilingual school” in published research in this country, nor in state or federal law. Bilingual schools are frequently found in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, and they are widely understood to be schools that promote bilingualism and literacy in two (or more) languages as goals for all students (Baker, 2001, Crawford, 2004).

For the purposes of this study, a school was considered to be bilingual when the primary language of language minority students was used for instruction for at least three years. In these schools, some form of bilingual education comprised a substantial strand for most English learners. English was used for instruction throughout the grades and was taught as a language. The use of two languages was considered to be among the defining characteristics of the site by the school community.

### Definition and Assessment of Success

For this report, a school was considered successful when evidence showed that English learners achieved proficiency in English and that English learners and Latino students met grade-level standards in language arts and mathematics in proportions similar to or greater than state averages. If the bilingual program had bi-literacy goals, there was evidence that students achieved proficiency in the primary language.<sup>23</sup>

Student outcomes were examined for English language development and for language arts and mathematics, both in English and Spanish. Measures included the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), the STAR tests (California Standards Tests and the CAT/6 Survey), as well as the SABE/2. These assessments are discussed below.

**CELDT and Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO):** One of the central aims of all programs for English learners is for students to acquire full academic proficiency in the English language. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) has been administered since 2001 for this purpose. It assesses listening and speaking in kindergarten and Grade 1, and listening, speaking, reading and writing, from Grade 2 through Grade 12. Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) determine progress and ultimate attainment of proficiency on the CELDT in response to the requirements of Title III of NCLB. The selected schools met or exceeded AMAO targets for 2004-05.

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<sup>22</sup> Dual Language Immersion is often referred to as Two-way Bilingual Education.

<sup>23</sup> A successful bilingual school should also provide evidence of the multi-cultural proficiency of ELs. This has proven more difficult to demonstrate and document than the language and academic outcomes. (For approaches to assessing multi-cultural proficiency, see: Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell, 2003).

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**STAR Tests and the Academic Performance Index (API).** The general public expects schools to show substantial and sustained growth over time on measures of academic achievement, and ultimate attainment of grade level standards in English. The Academic Performance Index serves as the measure for all California schools. It is comprised mainly of scores from the STAR tests, including the California Standards Tests (CST) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics (math), and a decreasing component from a standardized, norm referenced achievement test, the CAT/6 Survey.<sup>24</sup> The API is calculated for the school as a whole, and for significant subgroups.<sup>i</sup>

In these schools – unlike many others – the Hispanic subgroup performance on API is a reasonable metric for examining the performance of those students who begin their enrollment in school as English learners. In the six schools documented here, Spanish speaking English learners were 60 – 88 % of Hispanic enrollments. The API is one of the only available common metrics, and it uses an improvement orientation, rather than the absolute status targets of Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) mandated by the federal NCLB accountability system (see below).

**Annual Yearly Progress (AYP).** Since 2004, the CDE has reported data showing the extent to which English learners and reclassified former English learners score at the proficient level or above on the CSTs in English language arts and mathematics. For the most part, the selected schools met or exceeded the AYP targets. Due to the limited applicability of these targets for English learners, the AYP cannot be considered the central criterion for success in these schools.<sup>25</sup>

**Spanish Achievement, SABE/2 and Aprenda.** California schools are required to assess the reading, language arts and mathematics achievement of English learners who speak Spanish, and have been enrolled in California schools for 12 months or less. The SABE/2 is the state's designated instrument for these assessments. Bilingual schools often invest in Spanish achievement testing beyond the first year of enrollment. One of the sample schools used standardized a measure of achievement in Spanish, the Aprenda, and another used the SABE/2 beyond the first year of enrollment.

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<sup>24</sup> These are the assessments used in elementary schools. There are major concerns about the appropriateness of the STAR assessments for English learners in the state and federal accountability systems, and nine school districts are currently suing the California Department of Education regarding the failure of the state to follow the NCLB guidance to use assessments that are valid and reliable for all students (Coachella et al v. Schwarzenegger et al.). Nevertheless, these are the state designated assessments, and are currently the only measures that can provide a common yardstick of student and school-wide achievement.

<sup>25</sup> There is considerable controversy about using this status model for accountability (All students are expected to score at the proficient level or above within a fixed period of time), rather than a growth, or progress, model. Furthermore, for English learners, who – by definition – do not have the academic proficiency in the English language to participate successfully in undifferentiated mainstream instruction or assessments in English, the federal NCLB accountability targets are absurd (Gold, in preparation, 2006). NCLB has appropriately focused a spotlight of concern on English learners, but the AYP standards, if unmodified, will result in most schools enrolling significant numbers of these students to be designated for Program Improvement.

### III. Procedures

Brief case studies were developed to document six successful elementary schools implementing bilingual programs. Once selected, the characteristics of each school were examined by means of interviews, review of documents and brief visits. Data so collected was analyzed and compared to the attributes of effective schools and effective bilingual schools identified by the research. Attributes common to all schools that were consistent with research-identified characteristics for high achieving schools were identified and summarized.

#### The Selection Process

Several sources of information were consulted, including both national and state reviews of exemplary programs for English learners.<sup>26</sup> State and regional educational leaders were interviewed and state academic performance and language census databases were reviewed for the school years from 1999-2000 through 2004-05.<sup>27</sup>

From an initial pool of over 125 schools, 45 were identified with API comparison deciles ranging from 7 to 10. This list was narrowed to 18 schools of high interest, based on the primary screening factors (see below, and Table A-1). Telephone interviews were conducted with principals in the fall of 2004. From December 2004 through February 2005, on-site visits took place in nine schools, each lasting four to five hours. Program design and participation was confirmed, as well as classroom practices. Additional materials regarding notable instructional features, leadership, accountability, and staffing were collected at the same time. Additional statewide data posted between July 2005 and August 2006,<sup>28</sup> was reviewed and follow-up telephone interviews were made. Educators with many years experience in evaluating English learner programs conducted the interviews and site visits.

Each case provided four to five years of data from state sources to describe the English and academic performance of English learners and former English learners reclassified as fluent in English. Only schools demonstrating three to five years of above-average performance were included.

#### Selection Criteria

Four primary factors, and eight screening criteria were used to select schools that were bilingual and successful. Elementary schools enrolling the largest numbers of English learners were of interest. In general, these are large schools, usually with over 700 total enrollment, that enroll mostly Spanish-speaking English learners. Parents have limited higher education and fewer economic resources. Educators and the general public often see these schools as presenting substantial challenges. The summary data for these screening factors are presented in the Appendix, Table A-1.

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<sup>26</sup> Brown University, 2001; Texas Education Agency, 2000; Gold, 2001; Quezada, 2005

<sup>27</sup> Merickel, et al. identified 727 elementary schools that provided "Substantial L1 instruction" during the 2001-02 school year, 487 of these enrolling a high proportion (over 60 percent) of ELs (2003, II-5). An interesting follow-up to the present study would be to conduct a systematic and detailed examination of all these schools. We were not able to obtain access to the identification tool developed by AIR and WestEd for their study.

<sup>28</sup> See: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>



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Primary selection criteria included the following:

1. **High Proportion of Spanish-Speaking English Learners:** Each identified school enrolled between 245 to 768 Spanish-speaking English learners. With one exception, over 50 percent of all students at each school were English learners, with a range from 31 to 69 percent.
2. **High Proportion of English Learners Enrolled in Bilingual Instruction:** A substantial proportion of Spanish-speaking English learners in each identified school were enrolled in bilingual instruction. The initial screen was set at 40 percent. In the end, the identified schools enrolled between 37 to 60 percent of all Spanish-speaking English learners in bilingual classes in the 2004-05 school year.<sup>29</sup>
3. **Hispanic API Gains:** Spanish-speaking English learners together with former English learners, or reclassified fluent English proficient students,<sup>30</sup> were the overwhelming majority of the Hispanic students at the sample schools. Since the API did not report scores for the combined English learners and reclassified students' subgroup during the period of this study, the Hispanic API was selected as the only feasible proxy for the performance of these students.<sup>31</sup> The API for the subgroup of Hispanics was used as one indicator of success. Schools with at least three years of growth above annual targets were selected. The six selected schools showed average API gains ranging from 31.2 to 49.6 over a five-year period (2000 – 2005).
4. **School-wide API:** School-wide API was another indicator of success. Schools with comparison school ranks of at least seven were selected, indicating performance on STAR tests as well as or better than the top forty percent of similar schools.

Other important criteria played a role in school selection, as follows:

1. **Low Socioeconomic Status and Poverty:** Schools were selected that tended to enroll a large proportion of students from homes where parents lacked a college education and with a high proportion of students eligible for the free or reduced lunch program (43 to 100 percent),
2. **Size:** Large schools, ranging in total enrollment from 775 to almost 1,400, were selected.
2. **Hispanic Enrollment:** All sites enrolled large proportions of Hispanic students, ranging from 43 to 100 percent.
3. **Mobility:** Mobility was considered to assure that student scores and performance data could be attributed to students who had the benefit of a consistent program offered at the school over time. Mobility is defined as the percentage of students who first attended the school in the current year and was taken from the 2005 STAR Program student answer document. In the six sample schools, mobility ranged from 5 to 18 percent.

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<sup>29</sup> This is consistent with the state-wide Proposition 227 study. Merickel et al. initially set 25 percent enrolled in primary language instruction as indicating “substantial L1” instruction, and conducted later analyses based on schools with 50 percent or more of ELs in primary language instruction (2003, p. II-4-5). See discussion below.

<sup>30</sup> Most data reporting from the state disaggregates test scores for ELs, but only by including all students who ever were English learner (current ELs plus all those reclassified as RFEP) can there be full accountability for the performance of the original English learner group.

<sup>31</sup> Such a proxy may be inaccurate in other schools. ELs can be of any language background or of any ethnicity.

### Limitations of the Project

All studies have limitations, due to the resources available, including the quality of data, and the procedures employed. This study was both limited and purposefully delimited.

The study was limited by the lack of valid and reliable measures for student achievement in the state accountability system. Most educational researchers and psychometricians criticize California's STAR testing program as inappropriate for many English learners, since the tests are given solely in English with few or no accommodations. The tests' norming population was markedly different from the student enrollment in California and results were never intended to make high stakes decisions for students. In addition, no tests in languages other than English are used for accountability purposes. With rare exception, Spanish-speaking newcomers are assessed in Spanish only within the first year of enrollment.

The research team set limits to ensure that this work could inform readers about schools that have successfully implemented bilingual education and have maintained a track record of success over several years. This is not a comparative study, nor does the methodology used lend itself to supporting or refuting competing claims about the relative effectiveness of bilingual education versus other approaches. Few studies have the resources to do such comparative analysis, and there is evidence that the more important questions to study revolve around the identification of best practices for the wide variety of language and academic needs that students have.<sup>32</sup>

The study was limited by a small budget for data collection and analysis, and the lack of data for the group of English learners and former English learners, now reclassified as fluent, who participated in bilingual instruction. Given the limits of time and space, it was only possible to provide a brief glimpse at some of the key features that appear to contribute to the success of these schools. References are offered for the reader to explore additional research on effective schooling for English learners.

Due to these limitations, it cannot be claimed that the selected schools are representative of all bilingual schools. Nor can it be claimed that these are the best bilingual schools. They were schools that provided bilingual instruction for a substantial proportion of their English learners, and they were successful according to measures that are widely recognized by educators and the general public.

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<sup>32</sup> Parrish, et al., 2006,

## IV. Results: The Case Studies

### Breeze Hill Elementary School, Vista USD

#### The Setting

Breeze Hill Elementary School was located on a hill in Vista, a Northern San Diego County community, 42 miles from downtown San Diego. Sea breezes rustled the palm trees and unfurled the flags in front of the school, including the 2004 Distinguished School banner that proclaimed the successes of Breeze Hill Elementary. The grounds were planted with ornamental gardens located at various spots on the campus, a joint effort of school staff and both Spanish- and English-speaking parents who volunteered time to ensure that the site is attractive.<sup>33</sup>



#### Bilingual Education Program

Breeze Hill had implemented a substantial bilingual program for fourteen years. From about 1999 through 2005 about 75 percent of Spanish-speaking English learners enrolled in bilingual instruction. The program design followed a 70:30 model. In kindergarten and first grade, approximately 70 percent of instruction was in Spanish. In second grade, the proportion began to change progressively and by the time students were in fourth and fifth grade most instruction was in English. There were fewer bilingual classes in the 2005-06 school year than in previous years. The site provided Structured English Immersion and Mainstream settings, also. The school had experienced such success that parents sought to assure that their children remained in the program, even after moving to another attendance area.

#### Instructional Features

The program was designed to develop literacy in English and Spanish. Students progressed through the Houghton-Mifflin *Lectura* and *Matemáticas* programs in Spanish through the second grade, when they transitioned to English program materials. In kindergarten through grade 2, they received English language development using the program *Into English* with many supplemental materials (K-2). The *Avenues* program was used in grades 3-5.

Teachers teamed across the grades daily to teach English language development to English learners in the structured English immersion classes as well as those in bilingual classes. This ensured that leveled ELD instruction was driven by ELD standards. ELD instruction was linked to vocabulary and language structures drawn from the core content areas (math, science, social science). Daily team teaching and integration of English learners with native English speakers for library, P.E., science lab, and field trips was so pervasive that partner classes sat for one combined class picture. The *Accelerated Reader Program* was implemented using classroom and library books, and incorporated materials in both Spanish and English.

<sup>33</sup> Photo: EDUARDO CONTRERAS, [San Diego Union-Tribune](#), 9-9-04.

## Successful Bilingual Schools

Multicultural education was fostered through individual teacher efforts and a school-wide commitment to respect various languages and cultures. Unlike many California elementary schools, Breeze Hill maintained a commitment to the arts and all students benefited from SRA, *Art Connections* materials. Teachers used the materials to make direct connections with the arts of other countries and cultures.

Beginning in 1992, native English speakers received about 30 minutes of daily Spanish language instruction, usually at the time English learners received ELD instruction. While this did not constitute a two-way bilingual program, the entire school community demonstrated a substantial commitment to both languages. Teachers reported many examples of integration and noted that inter-group conflict on the campus is rare.

### Leadership

The principal, Cher Lecours, had been with the school district for about 15 years. She was a teacher at Breeze Hill, became an Assistant Principal at the school in 1997 and principal in 2003. Ms. Lecours had detailed knowledge of the major features of the program for English learners, and was able to provide support and direction to the staff. She visited classrooms frequently and made it possible for teachers and parents to foster a positive learning community. Lacking a federal Title VII grant to support the bilingual program, the school relied on some categorical funds (Title I, EIA, ELAP, Title III). They also benefited from a school foundation that raised about \$30,000 per year. The active ELAC met one to two times each month, and Breeze Hill parents were active in the District English learner Advisory Committee.

### Accountability Climate

In addition to state assessments, the school used district ELD profiles to chart students' English language progress. Each teacher met with a team three times a year to discuss the progress and interventions for three to five English learners of concern. A catch-up or intervention plan resulted to address the needs of students having difficulties. In addition to these meetings, teams of teachers received four full days a year to coordinate and plan. Much of this time was used for reflection on student progress. The district funded the use of SABE assessment in Spanish beyond the first year so that schools with bilingual programs were able to measure academic progress in Spanish through at least the fourth grade.

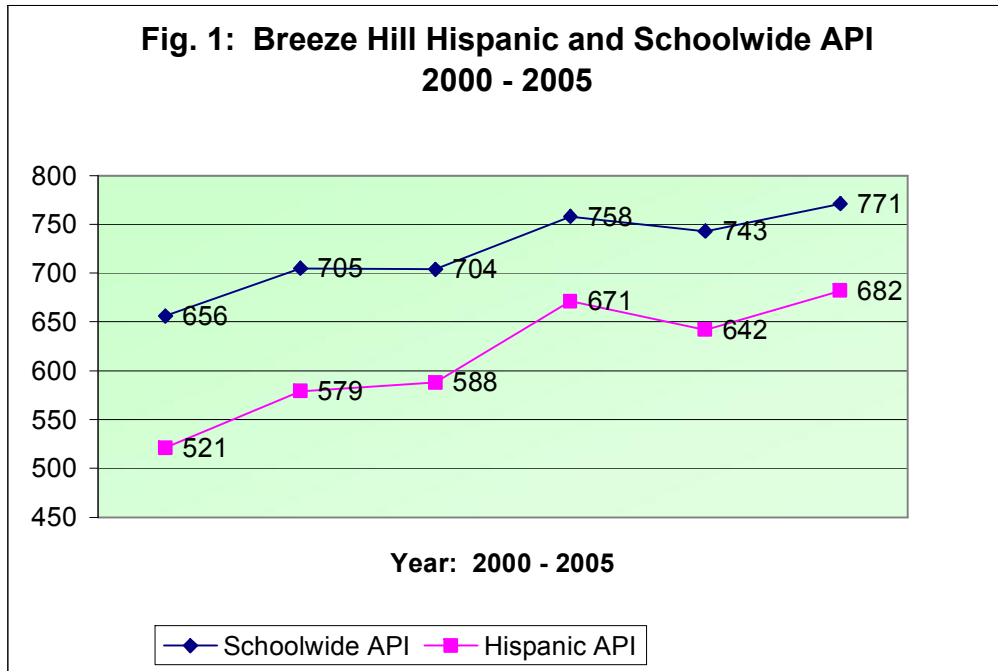
### Teachers and Professional Development

All teachers in the school held either BCLAD or CLAD authorizations. Teachers with BCLAD authorizations provided Spanish instruction and both an English-model and Spanish-model teacher shared responsibilities for bilingual instruction. The 36 teachers on campus averaged 14.7 years in the profession. One off-norm teacher provided demonstration lessons, and substituted for others, so they might observe demonstration lessons conducted by their peers. The school had the advantage of a full-time bilingual Resource Specialist teacher who provided special education services in both Spanish and English.

### English Language Development and Academic Results

English learners at Breeze Hill exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English and for attainment of English proficiency. Breeze Hill students met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in 2004, and all except English learners met the target for English Language Arts in 2005 (See Tables 3 and 4, below, and Summary Tables A-1 and A-2 in the Appendix). The school as a whole and the subgroup of Hispanics showed steady progress on the state's Academic Performance Index (API). The Hispanic API increased by 161 points since the year 2000, and the gap between Hispanic and school-wide performance has narrowed from 135 to 89 points (See Figure 1).

## Successful Bilingual Schools



### Summary

Breeze Hill Elementary was a bilingual school in practice and spirit. Its staff was experienced and scheduled collaboration on a regular basis. Teamwork was evident throughout the school. Parent committees met more regularly than in many other schools, and the leadership team provided many avenues for parent participation and engagement. The school was recognized in 2000 and 2004 as a distinguished school, and recent performance data confirmed continued success. The principal and teachers maintained high expectations for future student achievement.

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 3: Breeze Hill Elementary Demographics, 2004-05**

<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>790</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as English learners	72%
Percent of English learners in Bilingual Education	59 %
Parent Education index (PEI)	2.75 32% college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	43%
Percent Mobility for 2001 through 2005)	18%, 22%, 12%, 16%, 18%

**Table 4: Breeze Hill Elementary Achievement Data  
2003-04 and 2004-05**

<b>Title III, 2004-05 English Proficiency</b>	Targets: AMAO 1 51.5% School: 61.9%	AMAO 2 30.7% 36.4%
<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
	<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>
Targets	13.6%	16.0%
	24.4%	26.5%
<b>Subgroups:</b>		
Hispanic	17.2%	36.7%
Low SES	17.5%	35.5%
EL	11.2%	31.1%
	20.6%	40.0%
<b>School API*</b>	743	771
<b>State/ comparison decile ranks</b>	6 / 7	6 / 6
<b>Hispanic API**</b>	642	682
<b>Spanish:</b>		
SABE/2 - 2005 Reference Percentile Ranks		Gr. 2: 65 Reading / 68 Math Gr. 3: 71 Reading / 77 Math Gr. 4: 73 Reading / 80 Math

**Notes:**

\* AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.

\*\* 2004 Base API, 2005 Growth API

Hispanic API grew by 161 points from 1999-2000 to 04-05. See Fig. 1.

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

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**Contact Breeze Hill Elementary School**

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**FAX** 760 – 945-8259

**Address** 1111 Melrose Way  
Vista, CA 92083-6505

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## Cahuenga Elementary School, Los Angeles USD

### The Setting

**Cahuenga Elementary School** was located 4.5 miles west of downtown Los Angeles, in a congested area that has attracted Korean and Latino immigrants for many years. The school opened almost a hundred years ago and grew around the original building. Cahuenga was a most uncommon school among the 721 sites in Los Angeles USD (LAUSD). Institutional beige was accented with teal doors, window trim and accessories. An innovatively designed new wing enhanced the environment. A few portables crowded the play yard. As enrollment grew, 1,300 students were accommodated on a three-track, year-round schedule, while another 1,300 were bussed to other sites.



The high-rise office buildings along Wilshire Boulevard, five blocks south, could be seen from the third story walkways. The immediate neighborhood was identified gang turf. The yard was covered with blacktop, but the grounds boasted a small garden and a number of large round planters for bushes and small trees. The second-floor, tile-covered patio, complete with a small fountain and several round tables with umbrellas, offered shelter for students to meet in small groups to read and discuss.

Due in large measure to its overall high performance and prospering Korean-English and Spanish-English bilingual programs, the school maintained a very positive reputation. Because the site was unable to accommodate all neighborhood students, parents lined up early in the morning three to four days in advance to register children for kindergarten.

### Bilingual Education Program

The Spanish-English Bilingual Program was one bilingual strand at the school. Other programs accommodated Korean-speaking English learners in the first full K-5 Korean Dual Language Program implemented in LAUSD and a transitional bilingual program. The languages and cultures of the school were supported in a variety of ways.

The Spanish-English program employed a 50:50 model from kindergarten through Grade 2. Both languages were used about equally. There were six Spanish bilingual classes at each grade level, each with a full class set of Houghton-Mifflin *Lectura* materials in Spanish and in English, including teacher support material. Math, science and social science were presented mainly in English. In kindergarten and first grade, language arts was presented mainly in Spanish, and the reading texts in two languages were used in a flexible manner to promote English acquisition. Teachers presented the unique features of English, using language arts instruction in Spanish to scaffold English phonics, transitional skills, vocabulary and idioms.

Instruction in English language development was an eclectic mix of approaches and materials combined in a unique way. Influenced by the successful methodology of dual-language programs, ELA materials were used to individualize classroom instruction and build students' English language proficiency linked to curriculum and instruction in the primary language.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Support programs, such as [Thinking Maps](#) and [Write From the Beginning](#) are incorporated into the writing program, K-5, in English, Spanish, and Korean.



## Successful Bilingual Schools



Rather than employing a separate multi-cultural component, or designating single events with an Asian or Latino focus, the school integrated and supported the languages and cultures of its students and others thoroughly. All school materials were provided for parents in English, Spanish and Korean and most teachers were bilingual or multilingual. Music and art instructional components were drawn from various cultures of the world; the classrooms and library were stocked with materials in Spanish and Korean as well as English, and there was a school-wide culture of respect for diversity.

The Spanish bilingual program encouraged the active development and use of literacy in both languages. Both Spanish and English were treated as important, high-status routes to knowledge. The overall commitment to school wide literacy in two languages was practiced in a fluid way beginning in kindergarten. Some bilingual students with fluency in English as well as Spanish, Tagalog or other language, were enrolled in the Korean Dual Language program, adding a third language.

### Instructional Features

“Success begins in kindergarten,” was a motto at Cahuenga. Staff paid close attention to building a strong language and academic foundation and students were encouraged to become independent learners. For example, students were taught to use rubrics early in their school careers to rate their own writing. They periodically reviewed their progress and planned strategic goals for improvement in specific areas.

In contrast with many California elementary schools today, this school featured a complete elementary education. There was time for science and social science in addition to language arts and math. Children took part in dance lessons and learned the folk dances of Rumania, the Philippines, Mexico and Korea, building language proficiency through music and movement. (One particularly proficient group of dancers had performed at the Los Angeles Music Center and in Korea.) The school had applied for and received a grant to provide art experiences, and maintained a school orchestra.

Due to the strong holding power of the school, student cohorts formed in kindergarten, and remained together through the fifth grade. By establishing close student relationships within classrooms, students and their families forged relationships in the community, creating a sense of security, belonging, and family spirit that connected them to the school and community.

### Leadership

The school benefited from continuous leadership over two decades. Mr. Lloyd Houske had been the principal at Cahuenga since the mid-1980s, and had over thirty years of prior experience as an educator in LAUSD. He and the assistant principal, Adeline Shoji, with 20 years at Cahuenga, could be credited with guiding this school and faculty to success. Mr. Houske set the instructional tone and could be heard telling visitors, “Every child here is above average.” It was his habit to greet all students by name and remember their particular talents. With high expectations, he could be found teaching a class from time to time, to

## Successful Bilingual Schools

demonstrate a technique for a teacher. Teachers commented that Mr. Houske and everyone on the campus was a learner.

Cahuenga is a learning community that paid close attention to research on effective schools and programs for English learners. Important influences included the research and writings of Jim Cummins, Virginia Collier, James Stigler, Todd Whitaker,<sup>35</sup> and others. The instructional materials, *Thinking Maps*, were used school-wide to support language and cognitive development. These program materials provided a common visual language for organizing learning within and across disciplines.<sup>36</sup>



The leadership's approach to parent engagement was unique. Families who obtained a spot for their child at Cahuenga were expected to attend a meeting with the principal and the teacher. Not the typical "open house" or "back to school night," these meetings were scheduled separately for each class at 8:00 a.m. This was the time for parents to hear directly from the principal and teacher about the school program, about work the children would do during the year, about high expectations for everyone, and about the necessary collaboration between the family and the school.

There was a culture of listening and questioning at the school. Ms. Shoji commented: "It is very safe to question here... We listen to teachers... and work together to find solutions to problems." Administrators confirmed that they did not have a written profile of the key features of the school or a script to give to each new teacher. Instead, the more experienced teachers mentored and coached each new teacher. Mr. Houske commented: "My vision

for the school is that this should be a safe environment, where everyone should be happy and everyone is a learner – students, staff, parents – everyone!"

### Accountability Climate

During the school year, teachers examined their own and other teachers' results, and discussed these in grade-level meetings. There was friendly competition among classes and programs that did not threaten teachers or students. Instead it caused experimentation with new approaches with shared results in a safe professional environment.

Each teacher maintained binders with student data regarding language arts and math progress, using the database support *EduSoft*. Reports were color-coded to signify achievement at or above benchmark levels, and identify students in need of strategic or intensive interventions.

Accountability for achievement in Spanish language arts was important for this bilingual program as well as the others at the school. Separate testing in Spanish was done annually at additional cost to the school.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Whitaker is a former principal and author, whose emphasis is on respecting the people (teachers, administrators, counselors) who do the direct work in schools. He speaks of the role of respect, of working on behavior, of basing decisions on the best teachers, and seeking to maximize excellent teaching. See details at: <http://www.toddwhitaker.com/>

<sup>36</sup> See details at: <http://www.thinkingmaps.com/index.htm>

<sup>37</sup> The Korean bi-literacy and Dual Language Immersion programs use separate assessments of Korean.

## Successful Bilingual Schools

Testing in the primary language was required during the first year of enrollment in a California school using the SABE/2. Cahuenga employed the more rigorous *Aprénda* test in Spanish each year that students participated in Spanish instruction. Average student achievement was above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile in Spanish reading and math in both first and second grades.

### Teachers and Professional Development

All but one of the 67 teachers were hired, mentored, trained and coached by the principal, the assistant principal and other staff members. Ninety percent had been hired during the previous ten years. Teachers averaged seven years of teaching experience, compared to the district average of 11 years, but had more extensive educational preparation (a masters degree or beyond), than the district average (31 percent vs. 28 percent). Several were working on administrative credentials. Men composed 37 percent of the faculty, a higher proportion than in most K-5 schools.

Demonstration lessons played an important role in professional development. Administrators, literacy and math coaches were always on the lookout for teachers able to model successful strategies and raise students to higher levels of expectations. By showcasing the academic strengths at the school, teachers and students came to understand the meaning of rigor and high expectations. This approach included a great deal of peer coaching and building of site expertise. The principal periodically arranged for teachers to have substitutes for an hour or more so they could observe another teacher in action. He noted that, "Rigor and high expectations are simply words. They are meaningless unless there are models to exemplify their meaning. Good is never good enough. We are always looking for the best and refining techniques to obtain higher levels of achievement."

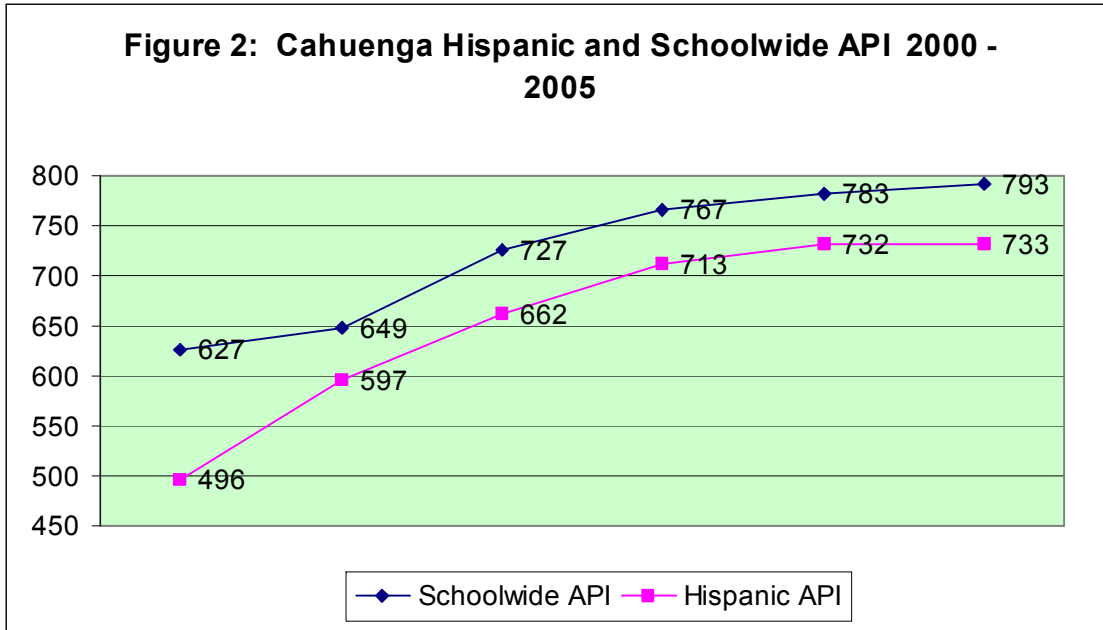
Many schools have adopted the theme, "Everyone a learner!" But the people at this school actually practiced it. All professional development was designed to provide teachers with concrete tools and practices. Math and literacy coaches highlighted positive practices in selected classrooms using a periodic newsletter. Teachers learned from each other when they observed a colleague's particularly effective lesson.

Mr. Houske indicated that he constantly looked for staff with the language and cultural competence to work with Korean and Latino students and their families. The teaching staff was classified as Asian (52.2%), Latino (34.3%), White (7.5%), and Filipino (4.5%).

### English Language Development and Academic Results

English Learners exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English, and for attainment of English proficiency. Cahuenga met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in 2004 and 2005 (See Table 6, below, and Summary Table A-2 in the Appendix). The school has shown steady and substantial progress on the state's Academic Performance Index (API), both for the school as a whole, and for the Hispanic subgroup. The Hispanic API has increased by 237 points since the year 2000, and the gap between Hispanic and school-wide performance has narrowed from 131 to 60 points (See Figure 2).

Successful Bilingual Schools



**Summary**

Cahuenga Elementary was a thoroughly multilingual and multicultural school. Its staff had a cohesiveness of mission and practice that appeared to stem from long-term consistent leadership and commitment to collaborative teamwork. It had been recognized for many years as a successful school (New Mexico Highlands, 1999; Parrish, et al., 2006). Teachers and administrators operated as a learning community, and the school provided a balanced curriculum that had resulted in strong academic achievement.

**Table 5: Cahuenga Elementary Demographics 2004-05**

<b>Total K-5 Enrollment</b>	<b>1,345</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as English learners	88 %
Percent of Spanish ELs in bilingual instruction	47 %
Percent of Spanish English learners K-2 in bilingual instruction	90 %
Parent Education Index (PEI)	2.40 25 % college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	89 %
Mobility for 2000 through 2005	25%, 24%, 4%, 8%, 11%, 11%

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 6: Cahuenga Elementary School Achievement Data  
2003-04 and 2004-05**

<b>Title III, 2004-05 English Proficiency</b>	<b>Targets: <u>AMAO 1 51.5%</u>    <u>AMAO 2 30.7%</u></b>			
	School:		68.4%	48.6%
<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
Targets:	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>
<b>Subgroups:</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
Hispanic	26.0%	57.0%	29.4%	64.2%
Low SES	34.8%	63.7%	39.8%	70.5%
ELs:	34.0%	64.1%	36.4%	70.0%
<b>School API**</b>	778		793	
<b>State / Comparison decile ranks</b>	Deciles 7 / 10		Deciles 7 / 10	
<b>Hispanic API*</b>	728		733	
<b>Spanish</b> APRENDA data available for K, 1, 2.	Second grade scores: 80 <sup>th</sup> %tile Reading, 87 <sup>th</sup> %tile math (2005).			

**Notes:**

\* AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.

\*\* 2004 Base, 2005 Growth

Hispanic API up by + 237 points from 1999-2000 to 04-05 (4 yrs).

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**Contact Cahuenga Elementary School**

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**FAX**                                213-387-7010

**Address**                         220 South Hobart Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90004

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## Gascon Elementary School, Montebello USD

### The Setting

**Joseph Gascon Elementary School**, named for a former principal, was located seven miles east of downtown Los Angeles in a residential neighborhood consisting mostly of individual homes. All students lived in the immediate community and most walked to school. The population of the school attendance area was almost entirely Hispanic and enrollment was quite stable. All students qualified for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. Five percent of parents completed a 4-year college program. Graduates of Gascon Elementary enroll in Eastmont Intermediate School (Grades 5-8), next door. East Los Angeles College and CSU-Los Angeles were both nearby. Montebello USD, one of the largest districts in Los Angeles County, enrolled more than 35,000 K-12 students and 30,000 adult learners in eighteen elementary schools, six intermediate schools, four high schools and four adult schools.

### Bilingual Education

Gascon designated bilingual classes from kindergarten through Grade 3. There were 11 classes at each K-3 grade level, and four classes in each grade provided bilingual instruction. The school enrolled about one-half of all English learners in bilingual education. Most kindergarten instruction began in Spanish. Math was taught in Spanish in grades K – 1, and in English beginning in Grade 2, using the Harcourt Math Program and some supplementary materials. In grades two and three, students had access to both the Spanish and English versions of the Houghton-Mifflin reading program. Teachers demonstrated high levels of Spanish language proficiency in bilingual classes. Instruction was delivered in Spanish, without mixing languages.

The local board adopted *the Estándares de Lecto-Escritura en Español* (Lavadenz et al., 2001) to guide Spanish language arts instruction. The school had a full complement of texts and support workbooks for each student. Some Spanish support was provided in third and fourth grades, but transition began at the end of second grade and there was very little Spanish used for direct instruction in third grade. There was support for independent reading in both Spanish and English at all grades.

*Transition: A Process Beyond Curriculum*, a district-created guide, supported transition to full mainstream English language arts instruction. This guide was followed whether the English learners were taught in a bilingual, SEI, transitional or English-only classroom. Most fourth-grade teachers who taught SEI or transition classes held bilingual certifications and could provide direct support in Spanish to students as well as communicate with parents. These classes were run as a natural extension of the bilingual program, and the parallel SEI program. CELDT data from 2005 indicated that fewer than ten newcomers enrolled at any grade after kindergarten and there were bilingual teachers at all grades able to support students who arrived with very limited English proficiency.

### Instructional Features

Gascon used the Houghton-Mifflin *Lectura* reading program to teach language arts in Spanish. Classroom libraries were plentiful in both languages. Textbooks were up to date and appeared in very good condition.

One hour was devoted to ELD instruction daily. This was a district-wide initiative, and was an increase over prior practice. Gascon used the Hampton Brown program, *Avenues for* K-4 ELD instruction. This ELD program had been used in all grades since 2003, and was reported to have made a substantial impact. There was a commitment to leveled instruction at a common time for each grade. ELD instruction mixed

## Successful Bilingual Schools

students in both the bilingual and SEI classes, providing greater likelihood that instruction met the language needs of students. Teachers make use of assessments from *Avenues* to group students, and mark progress.

Montebello contracted with Action Learning Systems to raise the level of instruction throughout the district. The district was reported to be one of the best in supporting district-wide implementation of the ALS components of a high-achieving school. Components included the implementation of reciprocal teaching in all classrooms – a proven strategy. It also included a strong data support system, administrative coaching, and especially, a long-term professional development program to assure implementation of research-based strategies

### Leadership

During the January 2005 visit, Thomas Donfrio was Principal and had directed the school for ten years. He had previously worked as Assistant Principal at another Montebello school for four years. On the day of our observation, we noted that Mr. Donfrio was engaged with parents and students. Staff reported an active parent-training program that taught parents how to support learning. Parent groups were very active. The principal, bilingual coordinator and literacy coaches worked together to support classroom instruction. They reported having benefited from an external evaluator who helped the team improve management procedures and the flow of information. A new Principal, Jerry Nerio, was appointed in the fall of 2005.

### Accountability Climate

The Montebello grade-level content area standards are posted in every classroom in both Spanish and English. Staff provides support to classroom teachers to track student progress. The district's data system and professional development supported teacher accountability for student results. The school's bilingual resource teacher coordinated the flow of accountability data.

### Teachers and Professional Development

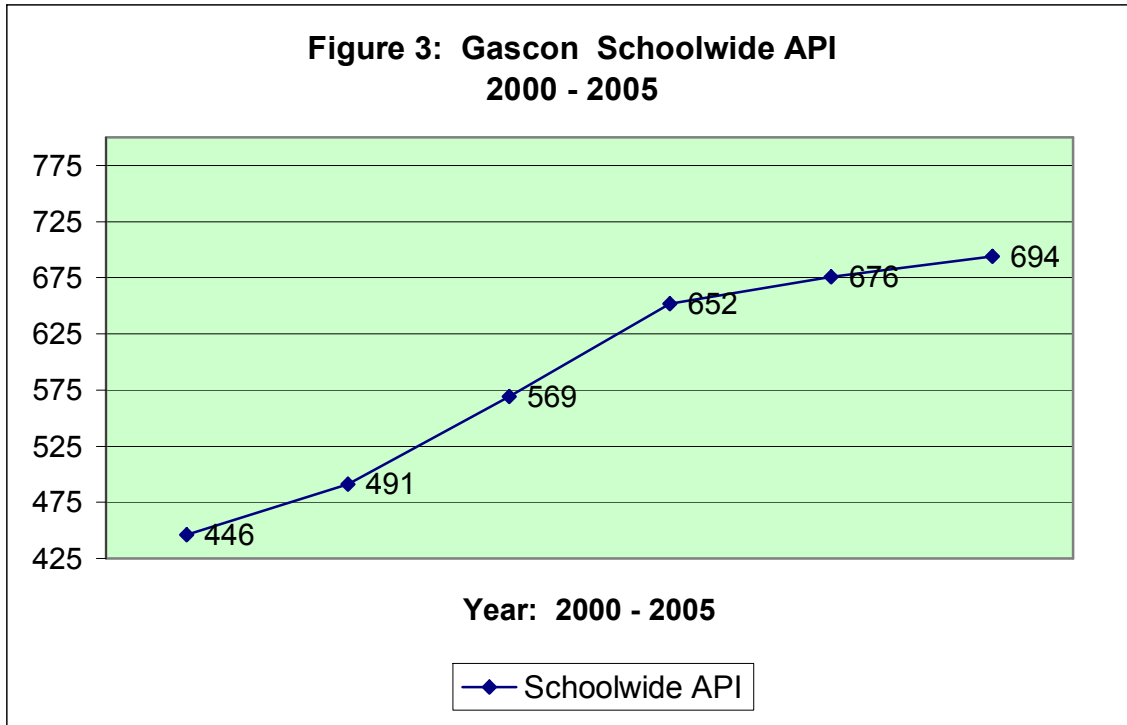
There were 53 credentialed teachers at the campus, reflecting the background of students at the school: 83% Hispanic, 11.3% White, and 1.9% Asian. Four of the teachers had grown up in the immediate neighborhood and were former students of Gascon. The 2005 language census reported that 15 teachers provided primarily bilingual instruction and 33 provided some combination of SDAIE and ELD instruction, or structured English immersion. Forty-three of the teachers held CLAD or BCLAD authorizations.

The district had provided AB 466 trainings in English and in Spanish, as well as training on research-based, exemplary strategies such as reciprocal teaching and the use of thinking maps.

### English Language Development and Academic Results

English Learners exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English, and for attainment of English proficiency. Gascon met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in 2004, and all except the English Language Arts target for English learners in 2005 (See Table 8, below, and Summary Tables A-1 and A-2 in the Appendix). The school had shown substantial and steady progress on the state's Academic Performance Index (API). The Hispanic API had increased by 248 points since the year 2000. Since all students were Hispanic, the school-wide API is presented. (See Figure 3).

Successful Bilingual Schools



Note: Since all students are Hispanic, there is no separate Hispanic API score presented.

**Summary**

Gascon Elementary enjoyed a close relationship with the surrounding community. Its respect for the language and culture of the families and students went beyond the bilingual classrooms. The staff was pleased with the substantial growth in API scores and the fact that the school was ranked in the ninth decile when compared with similar schools. Their investment in resource staff provided a continuous flow of data to better monitor the progress of individual students. They continued to work on raising expectations for all students to meet grade-level standards.

**Table 7: Gascon Elementary Demographics  
2004-05**

<b>Total Enrollment, K-4</b>	<b>1,114</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as Spanish English learners	62.4 %
Percent of Spanish ELs in Bilingual Instruction	45.7 %
Parent Education Index, PEI	1.86 5% college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	100 %
Mobility, Percent, (2000 – 2004)	8%, 8%, 10%, 8%, 8%



**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 8: Gascon Elementary Achievement Data  
2004-05**

<b>Title III, 2004-05 English proficiency</b>	<b>Targets: <u>AMAO 1 51.5%</u> <u>AMAO 2 30.7%</u></b>			
	School:		56.7 %	41.7 %
<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>
<b>Targets:</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
Subgroups:				
Hispanic	20.2	42.4	25.5	44.2
Low SES	20.1	42.3	25.7	44.3
ELs:	17.4	40.7	19.1	42.9
<b>School API**</b>	676		694	
State / Comparison decile ranks	Deciles 3 / 9		Deciles 3 / 6	
<b>Hispanic API*</b>	677		694	

**Notes:**

\* **AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.**

\*\* 2004 Base, 2005 Growth

Hispanic API grew by 248 points from 2000 to 2005.

Spanish Achievement data not available.

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**Contact Gascon Elementary School**

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**FAX** (323) 887-3034

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Los Angeles, CA 90022

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## Larsen Elementary School, Hueneme Elementary SD

### The Setting

Children on the playground of **Ansgar Larsen Elementary School** frequently feel the breezes from the Pacific beaches near Port Hueneme, just three miles away. The school was originally built in 1952 and remodeled in 1999. The Larsen school grounds were well kept. Some walls were decorated with the school's eager roadrunner mascot and other cartoon characters.

Hueneme Elementary District in Oxnard had a total enrollment of about 8,500, with nine elementary and two junior high schools, K-8. Larsen Elementary enrolled about 800 in K-5; 95 percent were Hispanic.

Students who enrolled at Larsen were likely to stay throughout the elementary school years. Two percent of parents had completed a 4-year college degree. Over 90 percent of students qualified for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program.



### Bilingual Education Program

Four kindergarten classes were designated to begin the bilingual program. By the end of third grade most students had made the transition to all-English instruction, but received ongoing support in Spanish from bilingual teachers. Some newcomers were placed in intermediate classes, and received instruction and support in both Spanish and English. The Houghton-Mifflin *Lectura* language arts program was used in K-3, with some English Language Arts instruction beginning in third grade using Houghton Mifflin's English language arts program.

Teachers teamed to teach ELD for grades 1-3. Staff increased the focus on ELD over a two-year period. Both *Into English* and *Phonics and Friends* were used to teach ELD. Students used the *Pearson Success Maker* software program about 90 minutes per week. They began journal writing in ELD in first and second grades. The program teachers benefited from training in the California Reading and Literature Project that promoted a *Focused Approach to Systematic ELD Instruction*.<sup>38</sup>

Fifth grade was considered a "SDAIE grade," where all instruction was provided using specially designed strategies in English and students received ELD according to their needs. There was substantial district support for the development of literacy in English and Spanish, but the major emphasis at Larsen was placed on meeting targets for AYP and API in English. The school attempted to meet grade-level reading comprehension and math standards at about third grade level. They did not have an explicit goal for English learners to obtain full academic language proficiency in Spanish beyond that level.

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<sup>38</sup> The Focused Approach to Systematic ELD by Susana Dutro and Carolyn Ames. California Reading & Literature Project.

### Instructional Features

Mathematics was taught using the Houghton Mifflin *Mathematics* program materials. Houghton Mifflin materials were also used to teach language arts. Other standards-based materials had been adopted by the district, and were available to all students in grades K-5.

*The Accelerated Reader computer program* is ubiquitous throughout the school in both Spanish and English. Each classroom had a computer dedicated to *Accelerated Reader* assessments, and the library has six.<sup>39</sup> Larsen Elementary has an active partnership with the Oxnard Public Library. The library maintains a listing of *Accelerated Reader* titles, and supports the Larsen reading program by identifying the *Accelerated Reader* levels of books in its collection.

About 185 students attended Migrant Education Saturday school, and received instruction in English and Spanish language arts, Math, and ELD. There was some focus on multicultural topics through dance and the arts. Multicultural activities included a culture fair, a PTA-sponsored dinner, and a welcome for Pilipino, Chinese and Latino students.

### Leadership

The Leadership Team was composed of the Principal, Literacy Coordinator, Reading Resource Teacher, and Grade Level Chairpersons. The principal, Elena Coronado, previously had served as an administrator at a junior high school for over five years. With experience as a bilingual teacher, mentor teacher, and adult ELD teacher, she also taught an evening class for student teachers, “Students with Diverse Learning Needs in California Schools: English Learners.” She frequently visited classrooms and monitored children’s progress in academics and English, including student progress in reaching *Accelerated Reader* targets.



The Larsen school leadership and staff shared a respect and support for teachers as professionals. The principal commented that, “We consider this an exceptional place. The best is yet to come!” She praised the commitment and dedication of teachers at the school, noting that, “Teachers expect writing above grade level and the Houghton-Mifflin assessments show that we are making progress towards this goal.”

The library and computer room were open before school and over fifty students attended. The library was open from 7:00 am to 4:30 pm, with a full time librarian and part time library support. The entire school site was kept open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. This was a substantial support for the students and their families and made it possible for students to receive extra tutoring, support and study time.

Ms. Coronado guided professional development toward those activities most necessary to improve learning. She and the leadership team had chosen to invest categorical funds in professional development, materials, technology, and programs before and after school. They had also provided support for parent academies and training that included family literacy, CBET ELD classes twice a week, parenting classes and the use of parent volunteers.

<sup>39</sup> See the school’s webpage for a searchable list (by author, title, difficulty) of materials in English and Spanish. This provides the basis for students and teachers to participate in A.R.: <http://larsen.huensd.k12.ca.us/>

### Accountability Climate

The Leadership Team reviewed data and identified major areas of concern for school-wide focus. Grade-level teams studied grade-level standards and student performance. The principal and staff conducted an ongoing review of data to ensure individual student progress.

Teachers analyzed student data, using a five-step plan devised by the literacy team. The team implemented a research-based language arts program that included professional development, accountability, interventions, family literacy, parent involvement and curriculum calibration. Teachers needing support were given substitute time to free them to observe in other classes.

In addition to the state STAR assessments, the school had compiled data showing the extent to which students scored at or above grade-level on Houghton-Mifflin end-of-year assessments. They scored comparably in both English and Spanish. They had excellent results in writing with more than 90 percent of students at or above grade level in grades 3-5. They had somewhat lower results in reading in the intermediate grades.

All students participated in the Accelerated Reader Program. Teachers reviewed progress and awarded prizes based on the number of points accumulated either in English or Spanish. The California Reading and Literature Project (CRLP) Reading RESULTS program played a role in guiding interventions for students. Staff constructed their own reading assessment, the Larsen Reading Assessments (LRA), to assess items specific to the school needs.

Interventions included an after-school program, a process for directing students to the Student Study Team, if necessary, and the summer PASSport program. Staff monitored attendance closely, and registered the highest attendance record in the district, 96.99 percent. There were very few discipline problems or referrals for discipline. Students received “Road-Runner” tickets when caught doing something positive and there was a weekly drawing for prizes.

### Teachers and Professional Development

Teachers had an average of 12.8 years of educational service and 10.5 years of experience in the district, with little turnover. Forty-six percent of teachers had a master’s degree plus at least 30 credits, and ten teachers were working on administrative credentials. Three new teachers were in their first or second year. Most teachers had a BCLAD. The staff reflected the language and culture of the surrounding community; 78 percent of certificated personnel were Hispanic. The district had a commitment to seek and hire only teachers with a BCLAD authorization, and all teachers in bilingual classrooms had that authorization. A counselor works 2.5 days each week at Larsen and on one day a week, a teacher serves as literacy coach.

Professional development included training for ELD and reading comprehension by experts from WestEd, as well as literacy training by the school’s own literacy team. Other support included curriculum calibration by DataWorks.

### English Language Development and Academic Results

English Learners exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English, and for attainment of English proficiency in English in 2005. Larsen met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in 2004, and exceeded the targets in mathematics, but did not meet

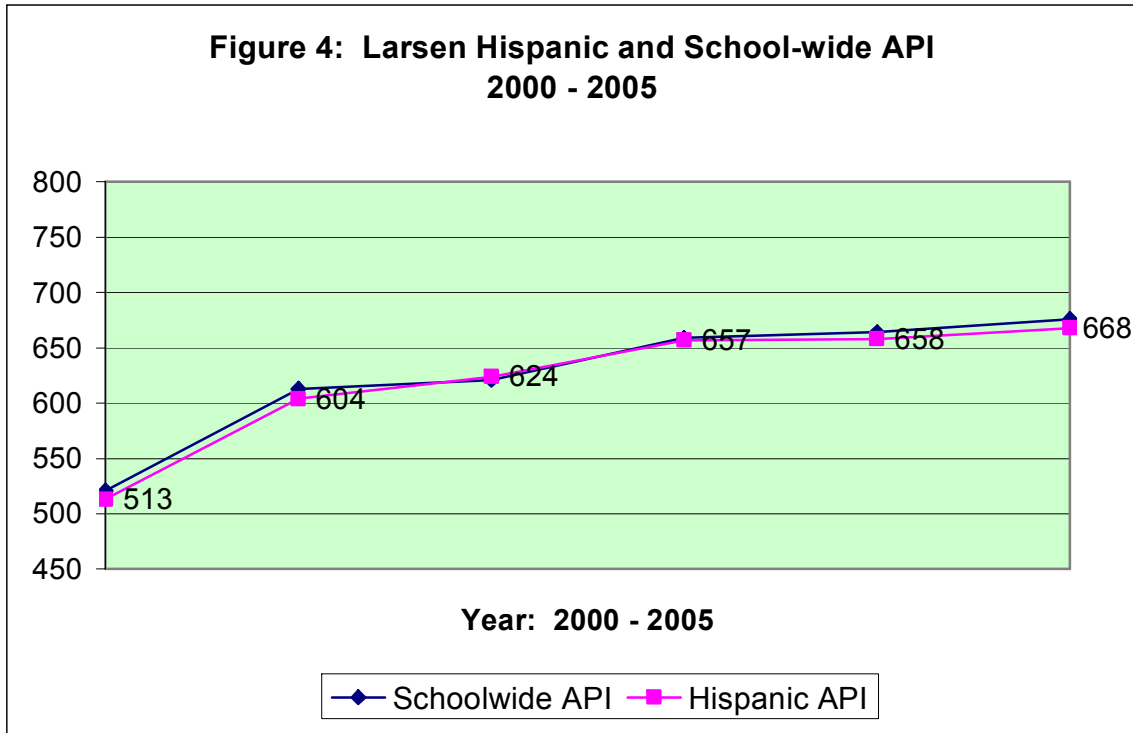
**Successful Bilingual Schools**

the English Language Arts target for English learners, Low SES, or Hispanics in 2005 (See Table 11, below, and Summary Tables A-1 and A-2 in the Appendix). The school had shown steady progress on the state’s Academic Performance Index (API), both the school as a whole and the Hispanic subgroup. The Hispanic API has increased by 155 points since the year 2000 (See Figure 4).

Larsen is one of few schools in the state that have continued testing in Spanish beyond the first year required by state policy. Results on the SABE/2 are not only above average compared to the reference percentile, but compare favorably with state averages. In 2005, Larsen students achieved scores above or near the state averages in reading and math in Grades 2 and 3 as follows:

**Table 9: Spanish SABE/2 Results - Larsen Compared to State Averages**

	Reading		Math	
	Larsen	State Average	Larsen	State Average
Grade 2	84 <sup>th</sup> percentile	68 <sup>th</sup> percentile	88 <sup>th</sup> percentile	74 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Grade 3	74 <sup>th</sup> percentile	72 <sup>nd</sup> percentile	74 <sup>th</sup> percentile	76 <sup>th</sup> percentile



**Summary**

The staff at Larsen Elementary School supported high achievement and valued the language and culture of students. Their focus on helping each and every child reach high standards was played out through frequent reviews and discussions of student data that triggered interventions for those in need of extra support. The school connected with students and their families in many ways, and its commitment to bilingual instruction was a natural extension of the understanding between the school staff and the community. Academic performance on measures in English placed the school at the top of the state’s ranking and in the 9<sup>th</sup> decile of comparison schools. Staff was committed to improving student achievement, and recognized that hard work is needed by teachers, students and families to make additional gains.

**Table 10: Larsen Elementary School Demographics  
2004-05**

<b>Total K-5 Enrollment</b>	<b>794</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as Spanish English learners	73 %
Percent of Spanish ELs in Bilingual Instruction	56 %
Parent Education Index (PEI)	1.47 2% college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	91%
Percent Mobility (2001 to 2005)	4%, 11%, 13%, 8%, 5%

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 11: Larsen Elementary Achievement Data  
2003-04 and 2004-05**

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<b>Title III, 2003-04 English Proficiency</b>	<b>Targets: <u>AMAO 1 51.5%</u> <u>AMAO 2 30.7%</u></b>			
	School:		52.1%	32.4%

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<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>
<b><u>Targets</u></b>	<b><u>13.6%</u></b>	<b><u>16.0%</u></b>	<b><u>24.4%</u></b>	<b><u>26.5%</u></b>
Hispanic:	18.9	35.6	22.8	44.1
Low SES	18.1	34.7	22.6	44.3
ELs:	16.0	32.5	20.1	43.4

<b>School API**</b>	664	676
State/ Comparison decile ranks	Deciles 3/ 9	3 / 8

<b>Hispanic API**</b>	658	668
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**Spanish:**  
SABE/2 - 2005

Reference Percentile Ranks	Reading	Math
	Second grade: 84 <sup>th</sup> %tile / 88 <sup>th</sup> %tile	
	Third grade: 74 <sup>th</sup> %tile / 74 <sup>th</sup> %tile	

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**Notes:**

- \* AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.
- \*\* API is 2004 Base, 2005 Growth
- Hispanic API grew by 135 points from 2000 to 2005

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**Contact Larsen Elementary School**

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<b>Telephone</b>	805-986-8740
<b>FAX</b>	(805) 986-8781
<b>Address</b>	550 E. Thomas Ave. Oxnard, CA 93033
<b>Web page</b>	<a href="http://larsen.huensd.k12.ca.us/">http://larsen.huensd.k12.ca.us/</a>

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## Olivewood Elementary School, National Elementary SD

### The Setting

**Olivewood Elementary School** was located in an urban area, seven miles from downtown San Diego, 11 miles from the Mexican border, and 1.8 miles from the San Diego Bay. The school was in a residential area, near warehouses and some manufacturing and port facilities. Enrollment was 90 percent Hispanic, six percent Filipino, three percent White, and two percent African American. Ninety three percent of the students qualified for the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program and about 12 percent of parents had completed a 4-year college degree. Olivewood was one of ten schools in the National Elementary School District. The district enrolled over 6,300 students, of who about 4,000 are English learners.



### Bilingual Education Program

Olivewood implemented a bilingual program with three classrooms at each grade from kindergarten through grade three: about sixty students at each grade. Another 34 English learners were in transition at grades four and five.

Most instruction in kindergarten began in Spanish. English was introduced in first and second grade in mathematics, and was provided in all grades through ELD instruction. At grades 4-6, teachers used Spanish to clarify and support instruction. Otherwise all instruction was in English beyond third grade. Teachers continually added English instruction as students increase their proficiency in English. Teachers followed general guidelines for the use of Spanish and English. About 20 percent of instruction in kindergarten was in English, 30 percent in grade 1, 40 percent in grade 2, increasing to 80 or more percent in grade 3.

Older newcomers, enrolling in grades 4 through 6 were bussed to Kimball School, a district newcomer program with two teachers for about 24 students.

There was an overall climate of support for bilingual education at Olivewood School. Both the principal and AP were bilingual, as were language arts specialists at the site. The principal reported that, "Parents are behind us on providing Spanish instruction, and also on providing more English."

The district included a statement of support for bilingual instruction on its web site, noting that, "The National School District is a place where English language learners are a fore-thought, not an after-thought, and where bi-literacy is valued." The Superintendent was bilingual. Every site in the district had a bilingual liaison, and received district support on assessments, reclassification, and accountability for the progress of English learners. Successful bilingual programs appear the norm in this district. In 2006, only one of the eleven elementary schools was in Title 1 Program Improvement status, unusual for a district with similar demographics.



### Instructional Features

Instruction was provided in Spanish with close attention to grade-level standards in K through Grade 2. Core instructional materials included the Houghton Mifflin *Reading / Lectura* program, the McMillan *Mathematics/ Matemáticas* program, and district core materials in Spanish and English for science and social science. The content areas were also integrated into ELD instruction. *Transition to Literacy* was used to support the move from Spanish to English language arts.

In 2004-05, the district adopted the Rigby materials, *On Our Way To English*, as a new ELD curriculum. Previously, they had used the Hampton-Brown series, *Into English*.

The school made use of the *SuccessMaker*, a computer-based program by Pearson Learning, to supplement instruction in language arts, math and ELD, and to manage some assessments. Some computer support was provided before and after school.

Olivewood had aligned curriculum and set up mechanisms for teachers to group students with similar learning needs and coordinate instruction. For example, all fourth grade reading lessons were scheduled at the same time. Math was also coordinated in this way. Most teachers used team teaching for academic subjects by grade level and ELD by ELD level. The ADEPT language assessment was given twice a year, in September and January, to document ongoing progress and to assist with grouping students for ELD. ELD was a major instructional focus for the entire district.

While there was little Spanish used for direct instruction or enrichment in Grades 4-6, some homework was sent home in Spanish, and there was some opportunity to do library work in Spanish. About 25 percent of the entire collection was in Spanish. Many teachers were bilingual.

The principal organized opportunities for students to perform, such as a talent show, poetry reading, reader's theater, winter program, and variety show. Students were given opportunities to showcase their English proficiency on stage. Staff reported that the school is, "...big on motivation theory."

### Leadership

Albert Mendivil was principal at Olivewood for five years after previously serving in another district school. He was appointed to lead another district school in the fall of 2005, when Craig Newman, the previous principal at El Toyon School, was assigned to Olivewood. The leadership team consisted of the principal, the assistant principal, Sonia Ruan, and two language arts specialists. The team emphasized high expectations for staff and students and abundantly rewarded students. They emphasized support of teachers in their work and tried to protect them from distractions.

### Accountability Climate

The principal and staff frequently mentioned that there was a culture of accountability at the school that focused on success for each child. Many schools talked about "data-driven instruction and interventions." At Olivewood there was evidence that the staff and leadership practiced these at all levels. Mr. Mendivil commented, "We are very strategic. We identified every student by name, to find out how they are doing, and what interventions they are getting." Teachers commented that everyone has high expectations for student achievement.

In addition to state tests, they used curriculum-embedded assessments and district tests that were frequently reviewed. Much of this data was entered into a data system, EduSoft, and the staff reported that they "...get

## Successful Bilingual Schools

user-friendly class lists, data on each kid, parent education, Lexile scores, etc.” The staff offered concrete examples showing how they used data to drive instruction and interventions. For example, a review of data showed that boys and English learners in the upper grades needed more support, so specific attention was directed toward identified students.

### **Teachers and Professional Development**

Olivewood’s thirty-six teachers averaged 13.5 years teaching experience and 12.9 years in the district. About two-thirds were Hispanic and 31 held CLAD or BCLAD authorizations. Together with the bilingual office staff, teachers were able to communicate well with students and their families.

In kindergarten through Grade 2 there were special Impact Teachers assigned to support the regular teacher in each classroom. Impact teachers were working toward obtaining full credentials. Some worked part time, while completing state requirements. Some supported work on Spanish Language Arts; others worked in math or ELD. Every classroom received some of this support. With the help of Impact teachers, a classroom could have up to three adults providing direct, small group instruction.

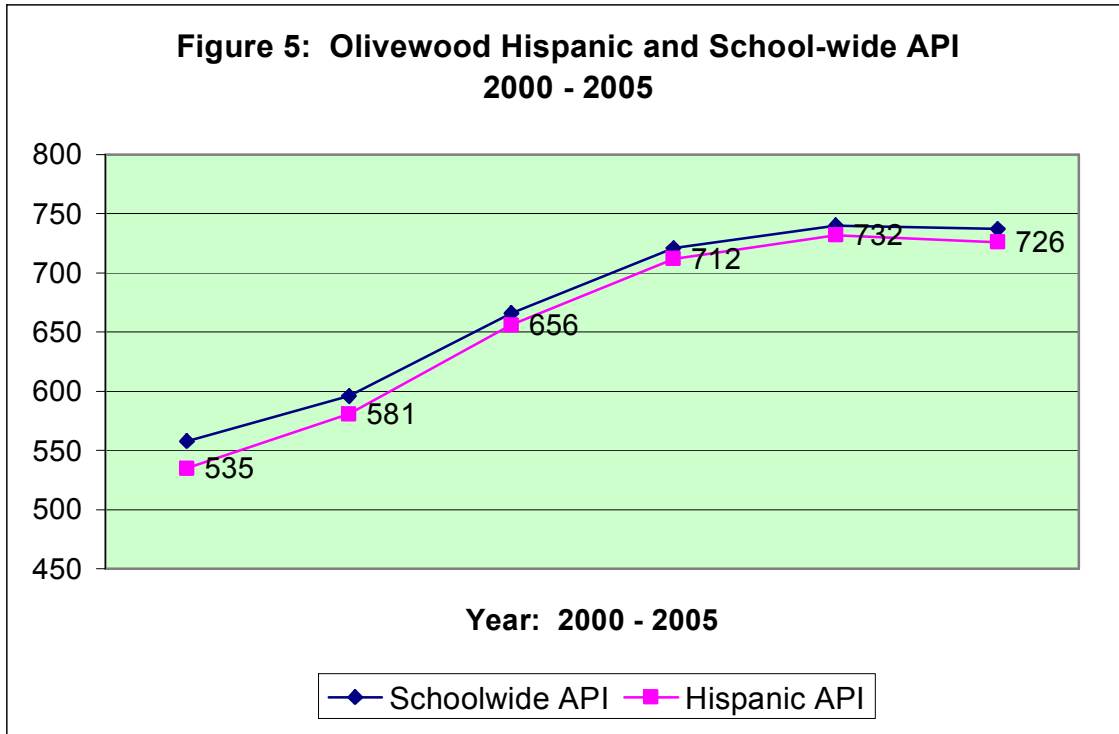
For several years, teachers had participated in professional development that included GLAD and SDAIE. They attended the California Reading and Literature Project (CRLP) “Focused Approach to Strategic ELD Instruction” taught by Susana Dutro. Teachers and administrators used student outcome data to determine professional development needs. For example, when staff noticed that students plateau at the intermediate level on the CELDT, they focused professional development to improve instruction at this level.

### **English Language Development and Academic Results**

English Learners exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English, and for attainment of English proficiency. Olivewood Hispanic students and English learners met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in both 2004 and in 2005 (See Table 13, below, and Summary Tables A-1 and A-2 in the Appendix).

The AYP target for ELA was not met by English learners statewide in 2005, but English learners at Olivewood did meet the target, and 26.2 percent scored proficient or above in English language arts. The school had shown steady progress on the state’s Academic Performance Index (API), both the school as a whole and the Hispanic subgroup. The Hispanic API had increased by 191 points since the year 2000 (from 535 to 726), and the gap between Hispanic and school-wide performance had narrowed from 23 to 11 points (See Figure 5).

Successful Bilingual Schools



**Summary**

Olivewood school received the state’s distinguished school designation in both 1993 and 1998. The progress to date puts the school in the top ten percent of similar schools, but staff was seeking to make even more progress and achieve recognition as a distinguished school again. They were committed to continuing their focus on accountability and professional development, and their focus on each student mastering grade-level standards.

**Table 12: Olivewood Elementary Demographics 2004-05**

<b>Total K-6 Enrollment</b>	<b>802</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as Spanish English learners	61.3 %
Percent of Spanish English learners in Bilingual Instruction	59.8 %
Parent Education Index (PEI)	2.04 12% college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	93%
Percent Mobility (2001 to 2005)	14%, 16%, 17%, 14%, 19%

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 13: Olivewood Elementary Achievement Data  
2003-04 and 2004-05**

<b>Title III, 2004-05 English Proficiency</b>	<b>Targets: <u>AMAO 1 51.5 %</u> <u>AMAO 2 30.7 %</u></b>			
	School:		53.1 %	29.4 %
<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>ELA</u>	<u>Math</u>
<b>Targets</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
Hispanic	30.7	48.9	30.2	52.7
Low SES	32.7	49.8	33.3	54.2
ELs	24.6	50.4	26.2	51.8
<b>School API**</b>			740	737
State/ Comparison decile ranks			6 / 10	5 / 10
<b>Hispanic API**</b>			732	726

**Notes:**

\* AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.

\*\* 2004 Base, 2005 Growth

Hispanic API grew by 191 points from 1999-2000 to 04-05 (4 yrs).

Spanish achievement data not available.

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**Contact Olivewood Elementary School**

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**Address**  
2505 "F" Avenue  
National City, CA 91950

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## San Fernando Elementary School

### The Setting

**San Fernando Elementary School** was located 22 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, in an area that had attracted Latino immigrants for many years. The original building, built in 1915, displayed historic architectural details and a tower with an historic bell from the original structure.



Over time, several classrooms were added to accommodate growing enrollment. The school enrollment of 825, down from a high of almost 1,100 in 1993-94 was 98 percent Hispanic. San Fernando Elementary provided kindergarten through grade five, on a four-track year-round calendar. There was a pre-school program on the campus. All students were eligible for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. Two percent of parents completed a college degree.

### Bilingual Education Program

The bilingual program at San Fernando was transitional and aimed for proficiency in English while assuring grade-level success in academics. The school goal was for students to achieve the equivalent of grade-level 2.5 in Spanish literacy as they mastered the English curriculum.

The San Fernando bilingual program followed Project MORE guidelines, as this school had been part of the Project MORE network since 1986-87. Project MORE was started to replicate a transition model of bilingual education that had encouraging results in the mid-1980s at the Eastman Elementary School. It was formally adopted in 1988 by the LAUSD School Board, and had provided direction and professional development to over twenty LAUSD schools, and many others around the country (Crawford, 2004, 248-265). The Basic Bilingual Program described in the LAUSD *Master Plan for the Education of English Learners* was adapted from this model.

Students were taught in Spanish beginning in kindergarten. Classrooms were organized initially by language proficiency, and English learners were mixed in classes with fluent English speakers for Art, Music and PE. As students gained English proficiency, instruction in English was increased. Spanish and English were used in approximately the following proportions, K through 5.

**Table 14: Use of Spanish and English in the San Fernando Elementary Bilingual Program**

Grade	K	1	2	3	4-5
Spanish	80 %	70 %	60 %	50% 3 years in program.*	Transitional phase. L1 support .*
English	20 %	30 %	40 %	50 %	100 %

\* Bilingual teachers at Grades 4 and 5 provided support or L1 instruction for newcomers.

## Successful Bilingual Schools

English learners in transition classes were considered part of the bilingual program, but not in the all-English phase: mainstream with sheltering and some ELD.

### Instructional Features

The school used district-adopted standards-based materials. For language arts, SRA's *Foro Abierto/Open Court Reading* had been used since the 2003-04 school year. Most students transitioned completely into the English reading materials by third or fourth grade, and work through a specific transition program: Scholastic *Transitions*.

Spanish language arts was taught through second grade and the majority of English learners made the transition to grade-level English language arts instruction at third grade. By Grade 4, more than 75 percent were instructed in English language arts. However, some elements of *Open Court Reading* were introduced during second grade. San Fernando used the Scott Foresman math program in both Spanish and English. The principal noted that the English version was a more recent adoption than the Spanish version.

Shared ELD time allowed students to be grouped for instruction according to their learning needs. ELD was taught using Hampton Brown's *Into English* and *Phonics And Friends*. Teachers did a systematic ELD assessment three times a year, plus other unit assessments. The *Open Court ELL Handbook* was used during English language arts instructional time to support access to ELA, but teachers did not use this for ELD. In general they started using English sound-spelling cards in second grade. Newcomers at fourth and fifth grade received ELD instruction using *High Point* materials. Each grade level had the same daily schedule to facilitate team teaching for ELD.

### Leadership

Mary Ellen Mendoza had been the principal for seven years. Previously she served as assistant principal at two other sites. Ms. Mendoza initially taught kindergarten at San Fernando. The school had an assistant principal, a bilingual math coach, 1.5 literacy coaches, a coordinator for Title I and EIA, and an ELD resource teacher.

### Accountability Climate

LAUSD provided regular reports for the principal and for teachers for reviewing student progress. The staff reviewed academic progress and monitored ELD growth using the district ELD Portfolio Record Card. Class lists were prepared for teachers with the number of years a student had been an English learner, current ELD level and number of years at that level, as well as CELDT and California Standards Test (CST) scores.

Project MORE provided overall evaluation support to the project schools. The evaluator analyzed data for the entire project and for the schools. Both project and site staff attributed the success of San Fernando to long-term, consistent implementation together with additional professional development and attention to the program.

The site coordinator supported teachers by reviewing the rosters and academic placements of all English learners. The ELD coach and the principal reviewed the ELD portfolios. Teachers held regular grade-level meetings for an hour each Friday and occasionally had an additional hour during the week, in lieu of staff meetings, to work together. Separate meetings were held for bilingual classroom teachers every six weeks. Teachers often met by grade level, and included off-track teachers in their planning. At all meetings, teachers spent time reviewing student work and data, and reflecting on the progress of individual students.

### Teachers and Professional Development

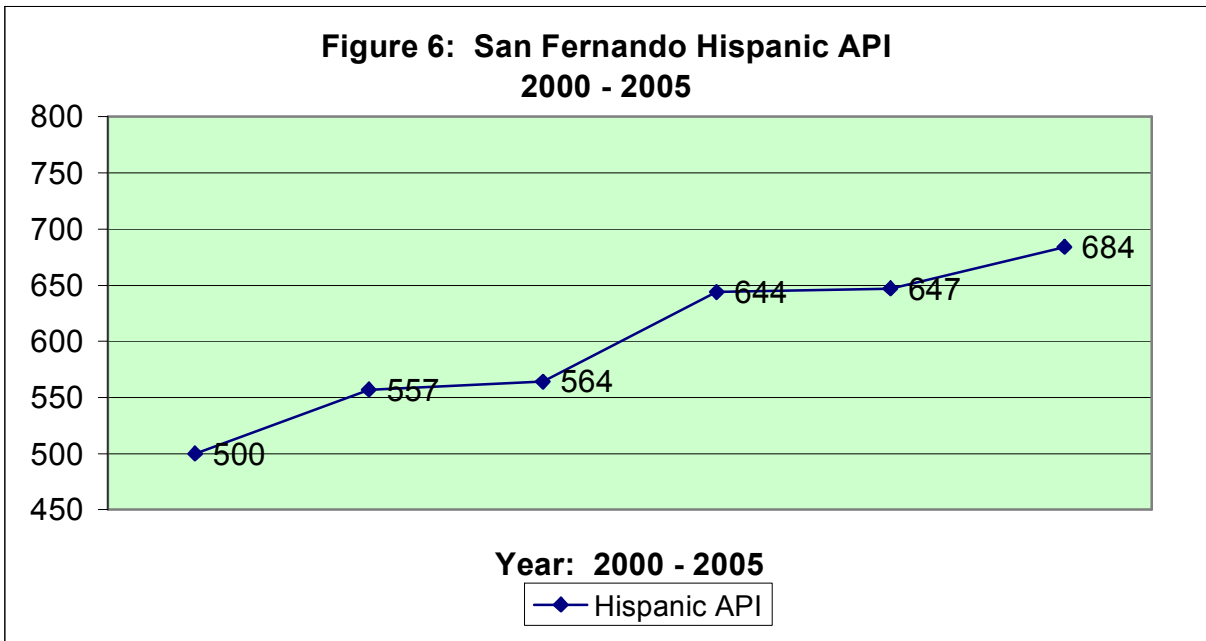
The school had 45 full-time classroom teachers with an average of 10.4 years of teaching experience. Fifty three percent were Hispanic and all but two held BCLAD or CLAD authorizations. The principal and support staff was bilingual. Many teachers began their career at San Fernando and had remained at the school. Some entered teaching credential programs after serving as para-educators.

Project MORE provided training that included program design, theory, and instructional approaches, such as the effective use of mixing time, best practices for sheltering content instruction, and the use the content areas for ELD. The project provided several training strands, including a series for all project school principals, and separate on-site training that focused on ELD/SDAIE, Spanish literacy, family literacy, and other selected topics.

The site had a Title VII grant from 1999 to 2002. Staff was trained with the *Pedagogy for Accelerated Learning Program*, as well as academics, critical thinking, multicultural education, parent involvement and parent training. .

### English Language Development and Academic Results

English Learners exceeded the Title III NCLB Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for progress in learning English, and for attainment of English proficiency. San Fernando met all Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in 2004 and in 2005. It was slightly below the English language arts target for English learners, but met AYP due to the Safe Harbor criteria (See Table 16, below, and Summary Tables A-1 and A-2 in the Appendix). The school had shown steady progress on the state’s Academic Performance Index (API). The Hispanic API had increased by 184 points since the year 2000. This was virtually identical to the school-wide API, since Hispanic students are 98 percent of the school’s enrollment. (See Figure 6).



**Summary**

San Fernando teachers, according to Ms. Mendoza, "... are past blame of parents, community, or resources. They know that it is hard work and up to us as educators to make the difference for students." In addition, she noted that, "There has been little turnover of staff. Teachers are cohesive, enjoy coming to work here [and]... enjoy their colleagues." The staff was dedicated to examining the progress of each student. They often reviewed rosters and student work. They analyzed the work of students who remained more than one year in an ELD level and they devised interventions, one student at a time.

**Table 15: San Fernando Elementary Demographics  
2004-05**

<b>Total K-6 Enrollment</b>	<b>825</b>
Percent of Hispanics reported as Spanish English learners	59.5 %
Percent of Spanish English learners in Bilingual Instruction	36.7%
Parent Education Index (PEI)	1.65 2% college graduates
Poverty (Free or Reduced Lunch Program)	100 %
Percent Mobility (2001 to 2005)	14%, 9%, 13%, 10% 11%, 14%



**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table 16: San Fernando Elementary School Achievement  
2004-05**

<b>Title III, 2004-05 English Proficiency</b>	<b>Targets: <u>AMAO 1 51.5 %</u> <u>AMAO 2 30.7 %</u></b>			
	School:	64.7 %		37.5%
<b>AYP*</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
<b><u>Targets:</u></b>	<b><u>ELA</u></b>	<b><u>Math</u></b>	<b><u>ELA</u></b>	<b><u>Math</u></b>
	<b><u>13.6%</u></b>	<b><u>16.0%</u></b>	<b><u>24.4%</u></b>	<b><u>26.5%</u></b>
Hispanic				
Low SES	19.6	33.9	27.8	40.0
ELs	19.5	33.8	27.3	39.8
	15.9	31.8	22.8 (SH)**	34.8
<b>School API***</b>		647		684
State/ Comparison decile ranks		2 / 8		3 / 9
<b>Hispanic API***</b>		647		684

**Notes:**

Notes:

\* AYP is Annual Yearly Progress. Percent scoring proficient or advanced.

\*\* 2004 Base, 2005 Growth

\*\* SH = Safe Harbor. School meets AYP for this group, due to progress in moving students from scoring at the below proficient level to the proficient level.

\*\*\* 2004 Base, 2005 Growth

Hispanic API up by + 184 points from 1999-2000 to 04-05 (4 yrs).

SABE/2 data not available.

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**Contact San Fernando Elementary School**

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## V. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

### Discussion

In 1995, Berman and others described schools with exemplary practices for instructing English learners. The authors of this landmark project stated: “These cases tell us what is possible, not what is average.”<sup>40</sup> Likewise, the schools documented for this project displayed that it is possible for schools implementing bilingual programs to also excel.

The six schools in this report enrolled from 37 to 60 percent of their Spanish-speaking English learners in bilingual classes during the 2004-05 school year. In all the identified schools, a greater proportion of students participated in a program of bilingual instruction than in comparable schools. For example, 90 percent of Spanish-speaking English learners at Cahuenga Elementary School participated in bilingual instruction during their first three years, and then continued in classes taught in English. At San Fernando Elementary School, 58 percent of Spanish-speaking English learners participated in bilingual instruction in K-2. Unlike the vast majority of California’s schools,<sup>41</sup> the selected schools emphasized the advantages of bilingualism and bi-literacy throughout the grades, and provided opportunities to use Spanish beyond the classrooms, even when formal use of Spanish for direct instruction ended before the fifth or sixth grades.<sup>42</sup>

The present study had an advantage over studies from the previous decade. Common outcome measures for both English language development and academic achievement, however flawed,<sup>43</sup> are now part of California’s regular operating procedures. As a result, the extent to which a student or school meets benchmark performance levels can be compared to the state average for similar students and similar schools.<sup>ii</sup>

The schools featured in this study illustrated that it is feasible to implement successful bilingual education programs in which English learners develop high levels of academic English proficiency. In addition, there was some evidence that students developed academic proficiency in Spanish. The outcomes in English are those valued by state and federal accountability systems, as well as by the parents and local communities that supported the schools.

A wide range of instructional and institutional factors have been shown to lead to improved achievement for all students and for English learners in particular.<sup>44</sup> The various studies cited (See Tables 2A and 2B) provide a constellation of factors that appear to be correlated with improved education for English learners.

The selected bilingual schools shared many features identified in the effective schools literature. They appeared to have a clear mission, set high expectations for success and benefited from strong instructional leadership. The staff monitored student progress and planned learning opportunities accordingly. Students

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<sup>40</sup> Berman, Minicucci, McLaughlin, Nelson, and Woodworth, 1995: p. 10.1

<sup>41</sup> Less than seven percent of all English learners, K-12, are enrolled in any form of bilingual instruction (DataQuest, [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov), 2006).

<sup>42</sup> One of the schools in our sample, Gascon, is a K-4 school. Four include K-5, and one is a K-6 school. See Table A-1.

<sup>43</sup> Gold, 2006, in preparation, Wright, W.E., 2005.

<sup>44</sup> August and Hakuta, 1997; Berman et al., 1995; Genesee, et al., 2005; Merickel et al., 2003; Parrish, et al., 2006, Tharp and Gallimore, 1988. See Tables 2A and 2B. above.

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spent time on task in a safe, orderly environment. Staff and parents enjoyed positive home-school relations.<sup>45</sup>

The successful bilingual schools also shared features identified in the specific research on effective programs for English learners. Staff demonstrated knowledge of language acquisition methodology and the theoretical rationale for instruction in the primary language. They provided high-quality academic instruction initially in the students' home language, without translation. In most cases, literacy was developed first in the students' home language and then in English. Academic instruction in English was made comprehensible using interactive strategies and techniques to build academic vocabulary and knowledge. Instruction to accelerate English language development occurred in a socio-culturally supportive environment.<sup>46</sup>

Programs with these characteristics were located in both large and small school districts, and in urban and less densely-populated settings. Even in the current political climate that discourages bilingual education,<sup>47</sup> a substantial number of well-implemented bilingual programs were found in California.

## Conclusions

The schools described in this report provided a solid, consistent core of bilingual instruction to most Spanish-speaking English learners at each site. The administrators and teachers had established a climate of accountability that supported high achievement in English, and did so with respect for the Spanish language and home cultures of the students. Several, but not all, schools had established goals to develop literacy in two languages.

All six schools followed an early-to-late transitional or developmental bilingual approach, beginning initial instruction in kindergarten and first grade mostly in Spanish. Some programs moved students along to English reading and academic instruction by third grade, others by fourth or fifth grades.<sup>48</sup>

All six schools enrolled English learners who began school with a markedly lower level of English proficiency than the state average. In general, parents lacked college education and worked in low-paying jobs. Given this linguistic and socioeconomic profile, it is notable that these six schools met or surpassed the overwhelming majority of academic achievement and English language proficiency targets required in California as criteria to determine the success of all students. On most measures, Spanish-speaking English learners and the subgroup of Hispanic students at these six schools, surpassed state averages and were ranked higher on the state scale than groups of identified similar

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<sup>45</sup> See: Table 2A, above, and Texas Education Agency, 2000, Section IV, Lezotte, Learning For All. See also: <http://www.effectiveschools.com/default.asp>

<sup>46</sup> For additional detail on significant features of bilingual programs, see: Krashen and Biber, 1988: p. 25; Thomas and Collier, 1997: pp. 49-52; Merickle et al., 2003, Ch. I; Tharp et al., 2003.

<sup>47</sup> Proposition 227 of 1998 prohibits bilingual education, unless parents request and are granted approval annually for a waiver of the provision that requires that instruction in California schools be provided, "...overwhelmingly in English," (California Education Code, Sections 305-311).

<sup>48</sup> Since we did not conduct an exhaustive study of all California elementary schools, other schools with Developmental Bilingual or Dual Language Immersion schools may demonstrate similar results. A follow-up study that makes use of the AIR/WestEd database of schools that provide "substantial L1" could identify other successful bilingual schools and different program types.

<sup>48</sup> These schools enroll students who were much more likely than the average schools in the state to initially score at the lowest levels on the CELDT (58 to 85 percent scored at levels 1 and 2, compared 50 percent of all Spanish-speaking ELs in California).

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students (See Tables A-1, A-2 and A-3). The six schools demonstrated success using California API and federal AYP requirements, as well as the California English Language Development Test, as follows:

- **Hispanic Subgroup API Growth:** All schools sustained Hispanic API gains of 31 to 50 points each year between 2000 and 2005. During these years, they exceeded the state target of 590, and showed overall API growth ranging from 668 to 733. The lowest scoring school met or exceeded the targets set for 2009-10, and one school had already exceeded the 770 target set for 2012-13.
- **School wide API Comparison Ranks:** All schools received API decile rankings of above average to far above average (ranks 6-10).
- **AYP:** Most schools met AYP targets for English learners in 2005 and scored above their state targets in English language arts and math (See Table A-2).
- **Performance in Spanish:** Three schools reported standardized test scores in Spanish beyond the first year students are enrolled. These scores and local assessments in all the schools demonstrated that participating English learners are acquiring substantial academic proficiency in Spanish. (See Table A-5)
- **CELDT and Title III AMAOs:** Most schools met or exceeded the state averages for ELs at the Early Advanced or higher levels on CELDT at 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. All schools met or exceeded targets for growth in English language; five of the six schools met or exceeded the proficiency target (Tables A-3 and A-4).

Among the features of effective schools and effective programs for English learner found in these six schools were:

- The bilingual programs were a school-wide effort.
- Teachers collaborated and team-taught, particularly for ELD instruction.
- Staff demonstrated extensive language and cultural competence.
- Staff displayed overall support for language and cultural diversity.
- Staff demonstrated a focus on the individual student and differentiated instruction.
- The school culture emphasized consistent monitoring of students' progress and teaching to rigorous academic standards.
- Staff articulated rigorous expectations of staff and students.
- Consistent leadership supported and benefited programs and instruction.
- Staff demonstrated a focus on consistent, coherent program design.

### Recommendations

This study provided a window to prior research on effective schools in general and effective schools with bilingual programs in particular. Six effective elementary schools with bilingual programs were identified and described. Some of their common features were noted.

Rather than continue to battle over which approach is best for all English learners, we should improve schools by working to ensure that programs employ the most effective practices, whether the programs are provided only in English or with some form of bilingual instruction.<sup>49</sup>

While the data presented showed that the schools met or surpassed state benchmarks, and scored above state averages for similar schools on most measures, the limited scale of the project and methodology for analysis did not allow for more specific claims of statistical or educational significance. These examples of successful bilingual schools show us what is possible when programs are well implemented.

The information provided by these six cases and the related research should be discussed with teachers, administrators and other staff members who work or intend to work with English learners. Many variables contribute to student success. It would be useful to examine more closely the attributes of each school described in these case studies as a way to reflect on the characteristics of local schools not performing as well. Staff should be encouraged to identify areas of strength that are already in place at their own school site, and then to decide which features demonstrated by the sample schools might assist their school to better meet the language, academic and multicultural needs of the students in their care.

Additional research should be conducted, making use of the tools developed by the five-year Proposition 227 study (Parish, et al., 2006) to identify other successful schools that enroll similar large proportions of English learners. Additional documentation of successful schools for these students can counterbalance the impact of state and federal accountability systems that more often emphasize the schools that fail to perform to standards. Additional research is likely to document many more successful bilingual schools that can serve as beacons for the hundreds of schools looking for ways to greatly improve the academic and life chances of English learners.

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<sup>49</sup> Parrish et al., 2006, August and Hakuta, 1998.

## Successful Bilingual Schools

### Appendix A Summary Tables for Six Successful Bilingual Schools

**Table A-1: Site Enrollment, Socio Economic Profile, and Academic Performance Index (2004-05)**

	Breeze Hill K-5	Cahuenga K-5	Gascon K-4	Larsen K-5	Olivewood K-6	San Fernando K-5
<b>School Enrollment</b>						
Number of Spanish-speaking English learners	245	768	694	549	443	491
Percent Spanish ELs of total enrollment	31%	57%	62%	69%	55%	60%
Number of Spanish ELs in a bilingual education program	145	360	317	305	*265	180
Percent of ELs in a bilingual education program*	59%	47%	46%	56%	60%	37%
Number of Hispanic or Latino students enrolled	339	874	1,113	752	723	812
Percent of Hispanic or Latino students enrolled	43%	65%	100%	95%	90%	98%
Spanish ELs as percent of Hispanic Enrollment	72%	88%	62%	73%	61%	60%
<b>Socio-economic Profile</b>						
Percent of parents with a BA or higher	32%	25%	5%	2%	12%	2%
Percent of students eligible for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program	43%	89%	100%	91%	93%	100%
Parent Education Index	2.75	2.40	1.86	1.47	2.04	1.65
Mobility	18%	11%	8%	5%	19%	14%
<b>Academic Performance Index (API)</b>						
2005 Hispanic API	682	733	694	668	726	684
Increase from 2000 to 05	161	237	248	155	191	184
2005 School-wide API	771	793	694	676	737	684
2005 State / Comparison Deciles	6 / 6	7 / 10	3 / 6	3 / 8	5 / 10	3 / 9

\* At most schools, a greater proportion of ELs were enrolled in bilingual instruction in the primary grades (up to 90%, K-2).

Successful Bilingual Schools

Table A-2: Bilingual Schools, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 2005

School	AYP 2005- ELA % >= Proficient TARGET = 24.4%		AYP 2005- Math % >= Proficient TARGET = 26.5%	
	Hispanic/ Latino	ELs	Hispanic/ Latino	ELs
Breeze Hill, K-5	29.7	20.9	45.2	40.1
Cahuenga, K-5	29.6	38.9	64.3	71.2
Gascon, K-4	25.5	19.1	44.2	42.9
Larsen, K-5	22.8	20.1	44.1	43.4
Olivewood, K-6	30.2	26.2	52.7	51.8
San Fernando, K-5	27.8	22.8 SH	40.0	34.8
STATE	26.9	21.9	32.6	31.9

Source: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

NOTES:

**Highlighted** cells indicate school met AYP targets for percent of English learners scoring at or above proficient, and achieved above the state average.

ELA – English Language Arts

SH = School received Safe Harbor status on AYP, based on growth from prior year.

Successful Bilingual Schools

**Table A-3: CELDT Annual Assessments  
Spanish Speaking English Learners, Fall 2005**

	4th Grade			5 <sup>th</sup> Grade/6 <sup>th</sup> Grade		
	Percent ≥ Early Advanced	Percent Proficient	Reading Mean Scale Score	Percent ≥ Early Advanced	Percent Proficient	Reading Mean Scale Score
<b>Breeze Hill, K-5</b>	38	36	493.3	<b>63</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>523.0</b>
<b>Cahuenga, K-5 Spanish ELs only</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>505.1</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>520.8</b>
<b>Gascon, K-4</b>	39	34	496.3	NA		
<b>Larsen, K-5</b>	34	31	<b>502.8</b>	55	53	<b>517.4</b>
<b>Olivewood, K-6</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>516.4</b>	<b>56/62</b>	<b>56/62</b>	<b>532.1/549.7</b>
<b>San Fernando, K-5</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>505.2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>528.5</b>
<b>STATE, Spanish ELs only</b>	42	38	496.9	60 / 47	55 / 44	514.3 / 509

Highlighted cells indicate scores at or above the state average for Spanish-speaking ELs.

NOTES: A score of proficient indicated an overall score of 4 or 5, and no sub-skill score below a 3.

The six schools enrolled students who were more likely than the state average to initially score at the lowest levels of 1 or 2 on the CELDT. Fifty eight to 85 percent scored at levels 1 and 2, compared to the state average of 50 percent. There was also an inverse relationship between CELDT scores and reclassification standards. CELDT annual scores were likely to be higher than the state average, indicating higher reclassification standards.



**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table A- 4: Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) – 2005**

School	AMAO 1 K-12 District Target: <b>51.5</b>		AMAO 2 K-12 District Target: <b>30.7</b>	
	Number met / Number tested	Percent met	Number met	Percent met
<b>Breeze Hill, K-5</b>	143 / 231	<b>61.9</b>	40 / 110	<b>36.4</b>
<b>Cahuenga, K-5</b>	532 / 782	<b>68.4</b>	202 / 416	<b>48.6</b>
<b>Gascon, K-4</b>	342 / 603	<b>56.7</b>	139 / 333	<b>41.7</b>
<b>Larsen, K-5</b>	243 / 466	<b>52.1</b>	79 / 244	<b>32.4</b>
<b>Olivewood, K-6</b>	222 / 418	<b>53.1</b>	53 / 180	29.4
<b>San Fernando, K-5</b>	281 / 434	<b>64.7</b>	105 / 280	<b>37.5</b>

Highlighted cell indicates the school met or exceeded 2004-05 targets

\* Title III Accountability and the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) are set at the district level. Caution: these targets were intended for K-12 district accountability. The state publishes school-level results for general information that may not be the most appropriate measures of success for ELs at a single school, depending on grade span, entry-level English proficiency, and other factors.

**Successful Bilingual Schools**

**Table A-5: SABE/2 Results, Spring 2005**  
**Non-Mandated Tests, students enrolled 12 months or more**

Reading / Math  
RPR for Average Student Score\*

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Breeze Hill, K-5</b>	65 / 68	71 / 77	73 / 80	N = 2	N = 0	N: 19, 25, 16 in Grades 2-4
<b>Cahuenga, K-5</b>	N = 1					APRENDA 2005 Grade 2 scores: 80 <sup>th</sup> %tile Reading, 87 <sup>th</sup> %tile math**
<b>Gascon, K-4</b>	N = 2	N = 0	N = 1			
<b>Larsen, K-5</b>	84 / 88	74 / 74	N = 8	N = 8		N: 54 & 65 in Grades 2 & 3.
<b>Olivewood, K-6</b>						No students tested.
<b>San Fernando, K-5</b>						No students tested.
<b>STATE</b>	68 / 74	72 / 76	69 / 76	65 / 75	65 / 72	N: 37,302 in Grades 2-6

**Highlighted cell** indicates the school met or exceeded state average RPR score.

\* RPR = Reference percentile rank. Based on the mean reference NCE score of each group.

-- No scores are calculated for groups of 10 or fewer students.

\*\* Cahuenga tests all ELs in the Spanish bilingual program with APRENDA and maintains scores in reading and mathematics, Grades 1 and 2.

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## END NOTES

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<sup>i</sup> The API was created as a result of the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) in 1998. It is a scale that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000. In elementary schools, the API is currently made up of the scores on the California Standards Tests (CST) and the California Achievement Test (CAT/6) for all students in Grades 2 – 6. Kindergarten and Grade one are not included in the state's testing program.

For more information on the API, consult the California Department of Education web-site: [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov). Individual school reports are available at: <http://api.cde.ca.gov/reports>  
School and district demographic data may be found in DataQuest at: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

<sup>ii</sup> Most educational researchers and psychometricians have criticized California's STAR testing program as inappropriate for many English learners, since the tests are given solely in English with few or no accommodations. The norming population for the tests was markedly different from the student enrollment in California. Test results have been used to make high-stakes decisions, contrary to their intended purpose. Nevertheless, the resultant API scores were required by law, and are being used as the central focus for statewide academic accountability. With these caveats in mind, this report provided insight into how students in the selected schools performed on these measures.

At the time of this study, no tests in languages other than English were used for state accountability purposes. Many school districts and individual schools had developed more comprehensive accountability systems that assessed student growth in English proficiency as well as on performance measures in other areas of the curriculum. Such efforts were important supplements to the limited information provided by the STAR tests, the API and the AYP. When students were tested in their home language, or with accommodations to reduce linguistic complexity, they were often more able to show they had mastered advanced concepts in literacy, mathematics, science and social science that were under-estimated by tests given only in English.





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