

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: February 14, 2018

SUBJECT: Education Development Center (EDC) Work in Connecticut and Updates from the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI)

Executive Summary

Purpose

This presentation will address the valuable partnership between Connecticut and Education Development Center (EDC) in addressing barriers to student success. The English learner –focused efforts will be emphasized, including a discussion of effective models for meeting the needs of the diverse population of students who are English learners. Additionally, background on the EDC’s Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI) will be provided.

Background Information

EDC is a global nonprofit that advances solutions to improve education, promote health, and expand economic opportunity. Since 1958, the organization has been a leader in designing, implementing, and evaluating innovative programs in more than 80 countries around the world. With expertise in areas such as suicide prevention, early childhood development and learning, and youth workforce development, EDC collaborates with public and private partners to create, deliver, and evaluate programs, services and products.

Through a contract with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), EDC administers the REL-NEI, which is one of ten Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) across the country. The RELs are charged with three main activities: (1) conduct applied research that seeks to solve practical problems and advances fundamental understandings of education problems and processes; (2) facilitate the flow of actionable, credible, up-to-date research evidence; and (3) provide technical assistance related to application and use of scientifically-valid research through extensive, ongoing, or customized support to meet the needs of particular stakeholders.

Since 2006, EDC has fostered collaboration among researchers and educators in New England, New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands through the REL-NEI partnership at EDC. Working with the region’s educators and policymakers, REL-NEI researchers have studied early childhood education, English learners, STEM education, rural schools, urban schools, and students’ preparation for college and careers, helping to inform policy and bridge the gap between research and practice at the local and regional levels. Commissioner Dianna Wentzell currently serves as the chair of the REL-NEI Governing Board.

Specifically in Connecticut, the English Learner Research partnership serves to support the research needs and evidence-based practice to inform the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and district decision-makers as they consider how best to meet the diverse needs of English learners throughout the state. EDC has long-standing relationships with CSDE, with districts throughout the state, and with professional associations such as the CT Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL). In addition, as part of Connecticut’s Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER) initiative, EDC is developing a series of policy briefs on promising practices for assessing and instructing English learners to guide the state’s systems change efforts. EDC leads the Literacy and

Academic Success for English Learners through Science (LASerS) project to support teachers in enhancing English learners' science and literacy learning. EDC has also evaluated Connecticut's Algebra I curriculum (2010-2013) and its English Language Learners Pilot Program (2016-2017).

Follow-up Activities

The State Board of Education's Five-year Comprehensive Plan, 2016–21, *Ensuring Equity and Excellence for All Connecticut Students*, has identified supporting implementation of effective English learner programming and supports under the goal of high expectations for every student. The CSDE appreciates the SBE's continued engagement in this area and will continue to provide update on progress and outcomes made in addressing the needs of English learners. The CSDE will also continue to engage EDC as thought partner in evidence-base practices around other priority areas.

Prepared by: _____
Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer



A Shared Commitment to Students

In Connecticut and across the United States, far too many students face steep barriers to success. EDC works in partnership with the Constitution State's educators, leaders, and policymakers to tackle these obstacles. We deepen knowledge of effective interventions and incubate innovation so that all of the state's students are ready to power forward to bright futures.

For decades, Connecticut has been a valued and visionary partner in EDC's work to create new pathways to success for students. With state leaders, we design, study, and scale up strategies that give all students a running start to enthusiastic lifelong learning.

EDC brings expertise in all aspects of strengthening PreKindergarten (PreK) to Grade 12 systems, policies, and practices. In Connecticut and nationwide, however, our work has a special focus on advancing efforts to improve services for English learners. A few examples of our work in Connecticut follows.



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Closing Opportunity Gaps

In the **Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER)** initiative, EDC, Yale University, and Cooperative Educational Services

are producing actionable findings to guide Connecticut leaders in enhancing services to positively affect the lives of young children. In Phase 1, we identified teacher- and school-level factors that contribute to PreK and Kindergarten performance. We also examined how children's preschool outcomes predict Kindergarten outcomes. Now, with funding from The Spencer Foundation, EDC is developing a series of PEER policy briefs that summarize research on promising practices for assessing and instructing English learners to guide the state's systems change efforts.

With local families, teachers, district and state leaders, the Connecticut Science Center, and private foundations, EDC is carrying out **Literacy and Academic Success for English Learners through Science (LASERs)** with a goal to scale up the initiative statewide.



LASERs is based on research that shows that children’s language, literacy, and cognitive development accelerate when they engage in science learning in and beyond school. Nearly 20% of Hartford students are English learners, and leaders have identified significant gaps in opportunity and achievement for these students. LASERs builds the capacity of PreK, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 teachers and coaches to enhance English learners’ science and literacy learning and engage families in supporting children’s science learning at home. In 2017, we were invited by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials to present LASERs findings at their annual conference.

In accordance with 10-17n of the Connecticut General State Statutes, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has contracted with EDC to lead an evaluation of the **English Language Learners Pilot Program** in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Windham. Using surveys and interviews, our researchers are providing insights into the districts’ efficacy in working with the CSDE and experts to design and implement

research-based language acquisition plans tailored to meet the needs of the English learners each district serves.

Since 2006, EDC’s **Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI)** has supported the research needs of the CSDE and has provided tools, findings, and analytic support to guide district decision-makers as they consider how to best meet the needs of English learners. Drawing on EDC’s significant expertise in continuous improvement (CI), our REL-NEI team supported **Windham Public Schools** in using CI to promote co-teaching between English as a Second Language staff and English language arts teachers who were struggling with the approach. Based on our consultation, the district has begun to draw on CI principles and is engaging middle and high school teachers in using a co-teaching planning tool that we helped them adapt.

Two other examples of our work to support Connecticut’s systems change efforts include:

- A survey to help state education departments collect consistent data from principals on the education of English learners to guide policy-making.
- Facilitation of a Data Working Group that provided guidance to revise the state’s Home Language Survey; the CSDE has endorsed and published this guidance.

Currently, EDC’s REL-NEI team is engaged in a **Connecticut English Learner Student Research Partnership** with the state’s Chief Performance Officer, leaders from the English Language Learner, Accountability, Performance, and Academic Offices, and the Bureau Chief of Special Education. Together, we are working to improve instruction for English learners with and without disabilities.



EDC designs, implements, and evaluates programs to improve education, health, and economic opportunity worldwide. Collaborating with both public and private partners, we strive for a world where all people are empowered to live healthy, productive lives.



EDC PARTNERS WITH CT TO SUPPORT ENGLISH LEARNERS

Presentation to CT State Board of Education

February 14, 2018

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EDC

**Learning
transforms
lives.**

EDC at a Glance

EDC is a nonprofit organization that improves learning and teaching, health and human development, and economic opportunity for people of all ages worldwide. We create, deliver, and evaluate innovative programs, services, products, systems, and policy improvements.



EDC was founded by MIT scholars and researchers.

250 projects managed annually by EDC.

\$162 million FY17 operating budget



EDC has 1,350 employees.

Funders include USAID, NSF, NIH, MasterCard Foundation, DoEd, and SAMHSA

GLOBAL REACH

EDC has worked in more than 60 countries and in all 50 states in the U.S.



REGIONS

- » Africa
- » Asia
- » Europe
- » Latin America and the Caribbean
- » Middle East
- » United States

EDC's current work with English learners in CT

- Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL NEI) English Language Learners Alliance and CT English Learner Partnership
- Evaluation of CT EL Pilot Program
- Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER)
- Literacy and Academic Success for English Learners through Science (LASErS)
- Visual Access to Mathematics (VAM)

Effective models for meeting the needs of the diverse population of students who are ELLs

Program terms used in CSDE

- Transitional bilingual
- Dual language bilingual
- English as a second language (ESL)
 - Pull-out
 - Push-in/co-teaching
- Language transition support services
- Sheltered English instruction

Models

Programs

Services

Strategies...

http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/bilingual/el_program_codes.pdf


Key premises to consider in designing programs and services for English learners

- 1 The role of student's primary language
- 2 Strategies for second language development
- 3 Contexts for second language development
- 4 Parents and community
- 5 Cross-cultural interactions
- 6 Sociocultural and political implications

Resources for effective instructional strategies

EDUCATOR'S PRACTICE GUIDE WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE™

Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School



NCEE 2014-4012
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

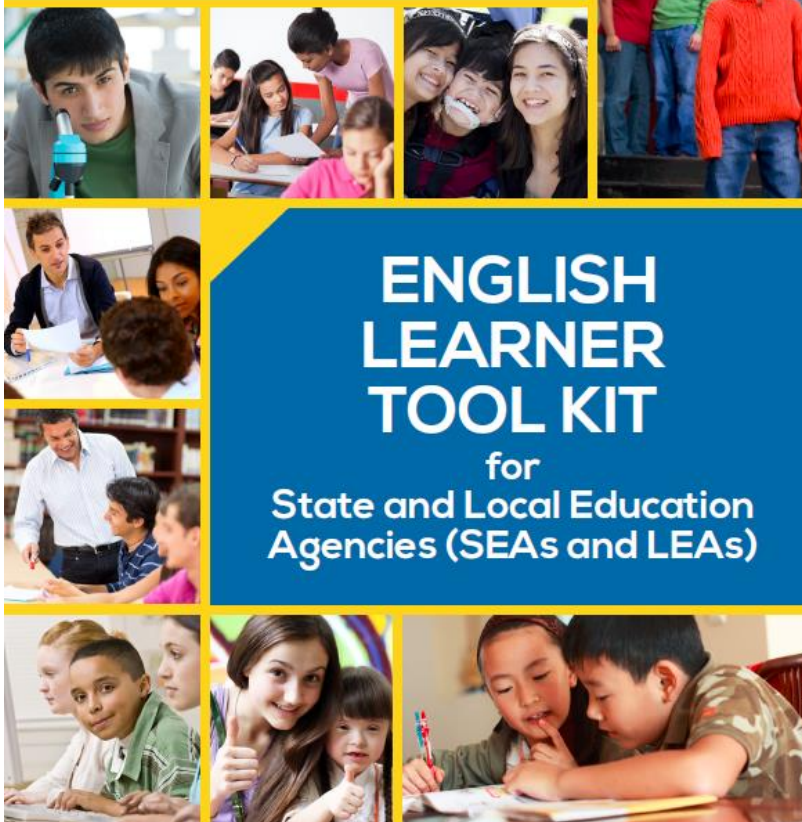
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EDUCATION EVALUATION
AND REGIONAL ASSISTANCE
Institute of Education Sciences

U.S. Department of Education

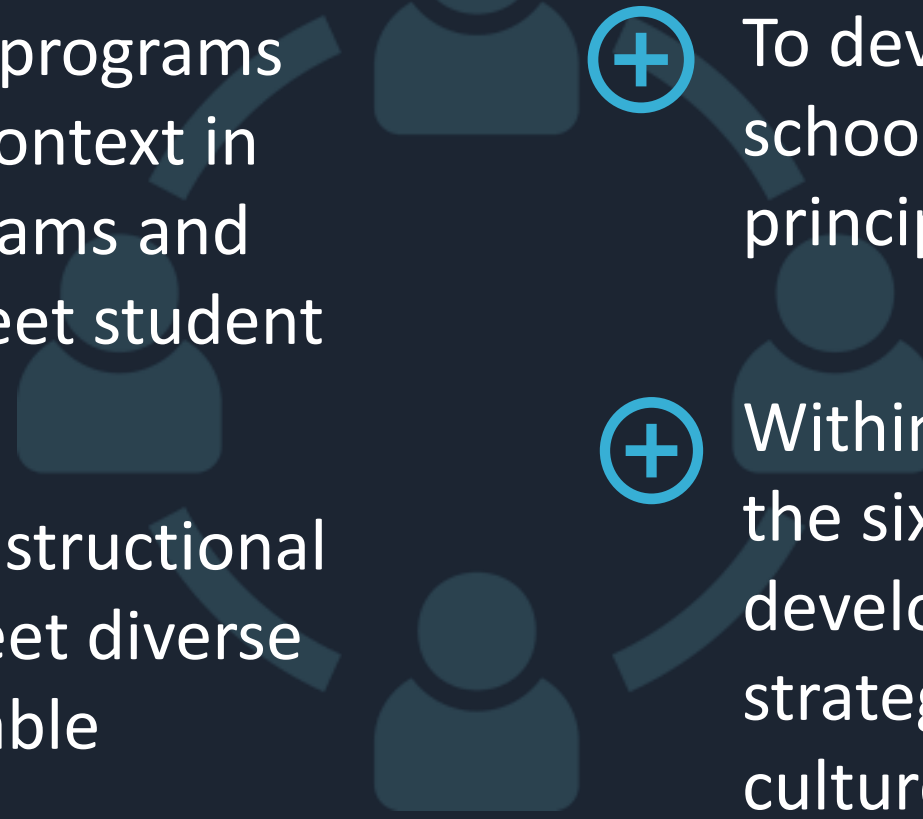
ESSA
UPDATES
INCLUDED

ENGLISH LEARNER TOOL KIT

for
State and Local Education
Agencies (SEAs and LEAs)



Policy and practice implications of considering effective models

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- ⊕ High-quality EL programs consider local context in designing programs and strategies to meet student needs
 - ⊕ Resources for instructional strategies to meet diverse needs are available
 - ⊕ To develop high quality school wide EL instruction, principals need EL training
 - ⊕ Within CSDE's EL program types, the six premises can help develop school wide EL strategies that account for culture, family, community and language

An example of EDC at work: EL Pilot Program Evaluation

- Four districts: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Windham
- Two-year pilot (2015-2017)
- District-driven innovation
- Logic model workshops to develop innovation's theory of change
- Evaluation of the Pilot's success in meeting legislative requirements



September 20, 2017



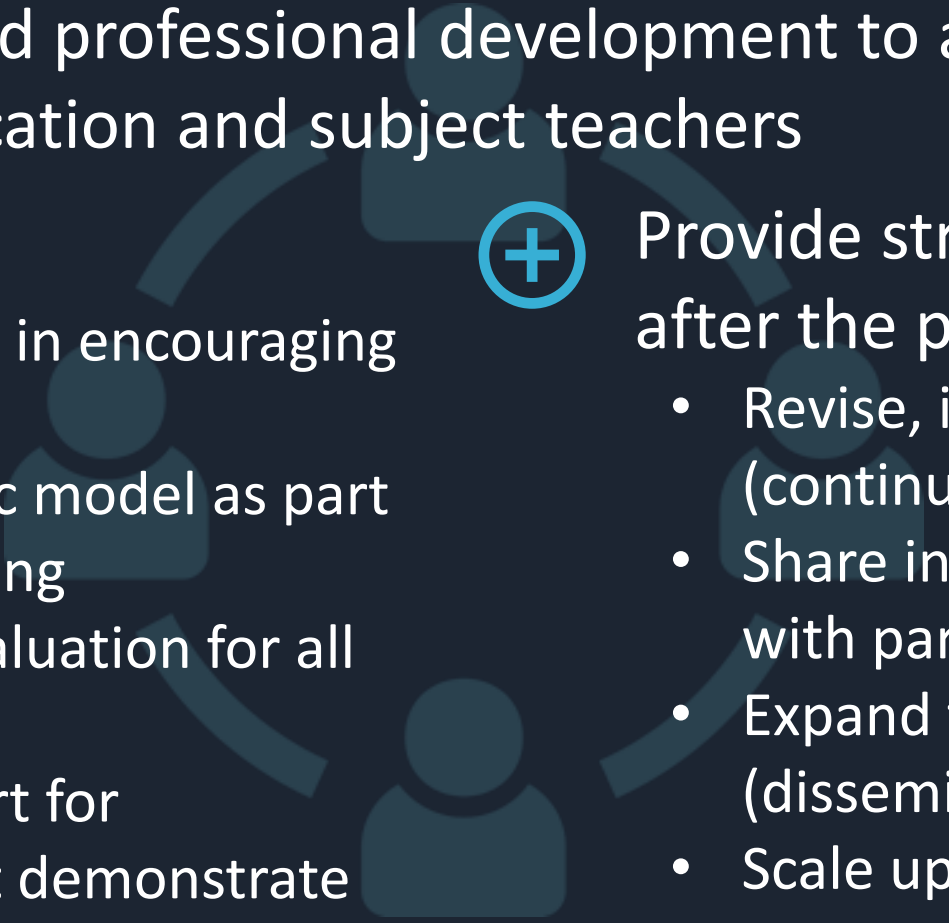
Connecticut English Language Learner Pilot Program

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Shai Fuxman, EdD; Caroline E. Parker, EdD; Maria-Paz Avery, PhD
Education Development Center, Inc.

Education Development Center, Inc. | edc.org

Policy and practice implications of EL Pilot Evaluation

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- ⊕ Provide EL-related professional development to administrators and general education and subject teachers
 - ⊕ Continue to
 - Invest resources in encouraging innovations
 - Incorporate logic model as part of district planning
 - Include local evaluation for all initiatives
 - Maintain support for innovations that demonstrate success
 - ⊕ Provide structured follow-up: life after the pilot
 - Revise, improve, repeat (continuous improvement)
 - Share innovation and findings with parents and community
 - Expand to other districts (disseminate)
 - Scale up and evaluate promising practices

CONCLUSION

- **Consider local context in designing programs and strategies**
- **Access resources for instructional strategies to meet diverse needs**
- **Provide training in ELs to principals and all teachers**
- **Use the six premises to develop school wide EL strategies that account for culture, family, community and language**
- **Promote locally-driven innovation**
- **Allow sufficient time for planning, implementation, evaluation and reflection**
- **Include resources for evaluation of initiatives**
- **Engage EDC as partner!**