



El Noticiero

Newsletter of the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education

www.nmabe.net

Vol. 38 No. 2

Winter: January 2014



The New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education
Annual Bilingual Educators' Institute
February 1, 2014 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Buffalo Thunder Resort

The Value Added Model

(Title I, Title II or Title III funds can be used for this professional development opportunity.)
Morning Breakfast 7:30 - 8:30

The Pluses and Minuses of Value Added Models and Things to Think

About with English Learners

Dr. H. Gary Cook, Associate Research Scientist
Wisconsin Center for Education Research at WIDA

Whose Values?

Mr. David Rogers, Executive Director
Dual Language Education of New Mexico

The Public Education Department of New Mexico (NMPED) began implementing a Value Added Model (VAM) as part of the School Grading system, under the NCLB waiver granted to the state by the U. S. Education Department. VAM is also part of the new teacher evaluation system which the NMPED authorized under administrative rule.

What is the VAM and what do these models purport to do? How did this model come about in the United States? What is New Mexico's Value Added Model? What does it mean for English learners and participants in Bilingual Education programs? Dr. Cook will address these issues and help participants with questions they should be asking regarding the VAM.

What is missing in the New Mexico Public Education Department's Value Added approach? How can we educate policy makers on how best to serve the linguistically and culturally rich students in our classrooms? David Rogers will explore the disconnect between educational reform policy and New Mexico's multilingual, multicultural values.

The Institute will host several break out sessions with timely topics of interest to New Mexico's Bilingual Education programs. One session will present the revised NM TEACH observation tool. The State Bilingual Advisory Council has amended the tool to include indicators for observation done in any classroom with ELL students as well as in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The Council will share the instrument and discuss next steps.

REGISTRATION: \$150 ON-SITE REGISTRATION: \$165

Registration for the Institute is exclusively online at <http://www.regonline.com/nmabeinstitute>

HOTEL: Buffalo Thunder Resort -- 20 Buffalo Thunder Train -- Santa Fe, NM 87506
(State Highways 84/285 north)

ROOM RATES Single or Double \$88; Triple \$108; Quad \$128

RESERVATION METHOD: Hotel reservations must be received no later than January 9, 2014. Please ask for the "NMABE Institute Group Rate" to receive the discount. Reserve on-line by going to www.hilton.com and answer the question, "Where are you going?" with Santa Fe, NM, enter the dates of your stay, and then click on "Add special rate code". Type in "nmabe" in the group code box and then click on "Find It". Select the "Hilton Santa Fe Buffalo Thunder" and reserve your room. Make your reservations now!

Common Core From a Tribal Perspective

As first appeared in "Education Week", on December 3, 2013. Reprinted with permission from the author, Kevin Shendo. (The Pueblo of Jemez authored the article in partnership with the National Indian Education Association which worked with Ed Week to produce a series of articles on Indian Education for November's Native American Heritage month.)

As most states in this country move toward implementing the Common Core State Standards, it is important to honor our nation's diversity and recognize the rich learning opportunities our children can receive through a multilingual, multicultural education.

Our journey at the Pueblo of Jemez began 14 years ago, as we initiated efforts to take ownership of the education of our children. We continued this journey with the development of Jemez education standards, rooted in the Jemez language and culture, and aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

The Pueblo of Jemez is located in north-central New Mexico. We have a tribal membership of approximately 3,700. Jemez is a very traditional pueblo (Native community) and has maintained its cultural and religious practices. We are the only tribe in which Towa, an unwritten language, is spoken.

"We are, in essence, developing an indigenous pedagogy that best meets the academic needs of our student population."

Through a community-wide strategic-planning process, Jemez asserted its authority and desire to determine what is most important for the education of our tribal citizens. Priority is placed on the Jemez language and culture, which is the heart of how, where, and what we teach our children to ensure the survival and advancement of our Jemez people.

The Jemez Department of Education was redesigned to reflect a comprehensive approach to education, beginning with the tribe's most precious resource—our infants—and working up to our college students and adult learners. Additionally, our Jemez education standards provide a template for bringing the Common Core State Standards to life in a meaningful way for our people.

A critical first step for our pueblo was the tribe's decision to transition our Walatowa Head Start program from English to the Towa language for instruction. This supported the tribe in implementing transition programs with the feeder schools in Jemez and reinforced the importance of grounding the children in their home language.

The move sets a strong precedent, as it makes Jemez one of the first Continued on Page 3

A Case Study in Misalignment: Dual Language Learners and Teacher Evaluations in Chicago

By Dr. Conor P. Williams

Originally published by New America's Early Education Initiative at "EdCentral.org."

During a recent visit to Chicago, I had an unsettling conversation with a Kindergarten teacher. She explained that recent changes to the district's teacher evaluation system are shaping her pedagogical and instructional decisions in frustrating ways. Specifically, she worried that required Third-Grade English literacy assessments make it difficult to justify research-based approaches to supporting her Spanish-speaking dual language learners (DLLs). While it's easy to think of this as a unique problem, it illuminates broader implementation and alignment problems that serious education reformers should be aware of.

This teacher—let's call her "Ms. Jones"—explained that Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) new Recognizing Educators Advancing Chicago's Students (REACH) system incorporates student academic growth in her evaluation each year. In other grades, student growth is measured on standardized assessments, but since Kindergarten is an untested year, this element of her evaluation partially depends on schoolwide English literacy (standardized literacy assessment begins in Third Grade). (For more on the pros and cons of this accountability strategy, see Laura Bornfreund's section on "Shared Attribution" in her recent policy paper, "Oceans of Unknowns: Risks and Opportunities in Using Student Data to Evaluate PreK-3rd Grade Teachers".) Thus, though she teaches just one of her school's many Kindergarten classrooms, Jones is still incentivized to prioritize English acquisition above all other considerations for her DLL students.

Taken in isolation, we might not see anything wrong with emphasizing English acquisition for DLLs. English is the language of commerce and power in the United States—and globally. Every school system in the United States should strive to be sure that its graduates are proficient in English. Shouldn't we cheer efforts to immerse students in as much English as soon as possible?

Research suggests otherwise. In a 2005 "synthesis" of studies on DLL reading instruction, researchers Robert E. Slavin and Alan Cheung found that 12 out of 17 recent studies "found effects favoring Bilingual Education and 5 found no difference. None of the studies found results favoring English immersion."

Fully immersing DLLs in English before they are developmentally ready can undermine their broader linguistic development and negatively influence their long-term academic success. In the early years, children learn both the content of their first language Continued on Page 3



El Noticiero

El Noticiero is published monthly by *Language Magazine* and provides information on current affairs concerning the education of language minority persons in New Mexico and the United States.

P. O. Box 5190
Clovis, New Mexico 88102-5190
www.nmabe.net

Editor Mary Jean López
maryjeanhl@msn.com

Copy Editor Dr. Kathryn Sherlock
kcsherlock43@yahoo.com

2013- 2014 NMABE BOARD

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Dr. Gladys Herrera Gurulé | <i>President</i> |
| Nana Encinias | <i>President Elect</i> |
| Florence Acque | <i>Past President</i> |
| Michael Chávez | <i>Vice President</i> |
| Dilia Manzanares | <i>Secretary</i> |
| Javier Arellano | <i>Treasurer</i> |
| Dr. Icela Pelayo | <i>NMPED Rep</i> |
| Mercedes Sandoval | <i>Parent Rep.</i> |
| Jesse Winter | <i>Dual Language Ed. of NM Rep.</i> |
| Rosalinda Carreón Altamirano | <i>So. Consortium</i> |
| Vernon Jaramillo | <i>No. Consortium</i> |
| Teri Frazier | <i>Pueblo Rep.</i> |
| Louise Benally | <i>Navajo Rep.</i> |
| Maureen Olson | <i>Apache Rep.</i> |

STAFF

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| David Briseño | <i>Executive Director</i> |
| Mary Jean H. López | <i>Associate Director</i> |

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

No. 38:1 Fall 2013: October
(Back to School Edition)

No. 38:2 Winter 2014: January
(Board News, Bilingual Education Day,
Call to Action)

No. 38:3 Spring 2014: April
(Spring Conference Edition)

No. 38:4 Summer 2014: July
(Summer Activities)

Continued from Page 2 - Misalignment and how to use it. As they learn words' definitions, the structure of verb tenses, etc., they are also learning how language (in the broadest sense) functions. They build an increasingly complex system of language concepts to fit their linguistic development. Programs that immerse young students in an unfamiliar language can interrupt this process and slow their linguistic and academic growth.

Thus, young language learners need support in continuing to develop their native language, even as they begin to learn English. The consensus on this, by the way, is the reason that many researchers prefer the term "dual language learner" to "English language learner". This allows them to develop the complex language system they have been building in their native language even as they build a new, parallel system for English. In the long run, it's not just better for DLLs' language development—it's better for their academic success as well.

The research is clear, the consensus is substantial—but the incentives aren't so simple for DLLs' teachers. Dual immersion programs that slowly phase in English over time usually take between five and seven years to bring students to full academic English proficiency. Jones doesn't quite have that window. Her evaluations depend upon her students' English proficiency in Third Grade. And, while research shows that they will be better off in the long run if she uses the dual immersion approach, many of the benefits of this approach would not be evident by Third Grade.

Linda Espinosa puts it clearly in a recent paper for the Foundation for Child Development, "It may take DLL children longer to respond to language tasks that require word retrieval, and they may not know as many words in each language." These are, of course, precisely the sorts of skills that an assessment measuring English literacy (in this case the NWEA MAP) would require.

Espinosa notes that dual immersion approaches offer other benefits, even in the short-term, such as "increased cognitive control and executive function skills." But these are harder to measure, and the Third Grade test is focused on English literacy.

As a result, Ms. Jones teaches her DLL students in English. While this may not be best for them in the long run, she reasons, it may be the best she can offer them to prepare for the MAP in Third Grade. Two other factors make her choice of instructional language (and approach) even more difficult.

First of all, the rest of the student growth portion of her evaluation depends on a performance task. At the beginning of the year, she chooses a task and has her students attempt it. She offers it again at the end of the year so that they can demonstrate progress.

Sound simple? Here's the challenging part: Jones must also select the language in which she will administer the task. If she chooses Spanish (the native language of 100% of her DLLs), her students will have the benefit of completing the task in the language with which they are most familiar—even by the end of Kindergarten. If she chooses English, they'll have the benefit of completing the task in the language she will be teaching them that year.

Which choice would best measure the students' abilities? Which would best highlight her "value-add" as a teacher?

The second factor is perhaps even more consequential. Jones is one of only a few bilingual teachers at her school. What's more, she's one of an even smaller group that has formal training in teaching a dual immersion program. In other words, whatever she does in her classroom this year, it's unlikely that her students will continue to be supported in Spanish. If she offers a dual immersion program, she will be pedagogically misaligned with her students' first (and second, and third, etc.) grade teachers.

Unlike many teachers of DLLs, Jones hasn't made this decision because of her own limits. She is well aware of the growing research consensus about how to best serve DLLs. She is capable of teaching a dual immersion program and knows that it would probably be best for the students, but her incentives around this choice aren't just misaligned—they're chaotic.

Karen Nemeth, an expert on DLLs, notes that the problem isn't confined to Chicago. "It's a big problem and everybody knows it. Every researcher knows that assessment has to assess these kids in multiple languages. Otherwise you're not assessing literacy, you're just assessing English literacy."

The larger lesson here is that it's much easier to design reform initiatives than to make them work. While there are good reasons to rework teacher evaluation systems and include DLLs in standardized assessments, it's important to ensure that these reforms actually live up to their billing in practice. And nothing undercuts reform efforts like sloppy implementation of well-intended initiatives, no matter how necessary they were in the first place.

About the Author: Dr. Conor P. Williams is a senior researcher in the Early Education Initiative at the New America Foundation. Before joining New America, he taught First Grade in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Dr. Williams holds a Ph.D. in Government from Georgetown University. Follow Conor Williams on Twitter or Google.

Continued from Page 2 - Jemez federally funded Head Start programs to move its instruction from English to the home language of the community. Through this work, we hope to have opened opportunities and set the stage for other tribal—as well as minority and migrant communities—to do the same and develop the home languages of their children through the education provided in their local Head Start programs.

The transition of our tribal Head Start to a full Jemez language-immersion program affects the transitions, curriculum, vertical alignment, and practices of all our Jemez feeder schools. It also directly led to a focused professional-development and training effort on the effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards while honoring local languages and cultures.

As with most reservations, our children are affected by several often-competing education systems (the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education, the state, and the tribe). To ensure that our Common-Core implementation would be effective across all school systems, we gathered our stakeholders and began the development of mutual education priorities and a coordinated professional-development plan. The priorities are topics that influence language, culture, community-based learning, and experiential learning, as well as state and federal education policies. The work that we are doing together is the first of its kind nationally!

Jemez also entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the state of New Mexico to support certification for tribally approved specialists in Jemez language and culture. Jemez will determine which tribal members can be vetted as certified Native-language instructors. In turn, the state will recognize the tribe's authority and grant alternative certification for the recommended individuals to teach within the public schools.

The tribe's direct involvement with schools has resulted in the integration of our tribal language, culture, and priorities directly into the curriculum. We are, in essence, developing an indigenous pedagogy that best meets the academic needs of our student population.

The Common Core State Standards has only opened the door to opportunities that exist in challenging our teachers to make the diverse communities within the Jemez Valley Corridor an extension of their classrooms. For Jemez Pueblo, our focus is to make education relevant to our communities and include the outside experiences of our children in the classroom.

The Common Core standards are what we are challenging our children to learn, but how can we expect them to master the content if it has little relevance to their life experiences and communities? Through the ways we implement the standards, as educators and leaders, we have the opportunity to honor the rich history of this country and the diversity which makes us all unique.

Kevin Shendo (Pueblo of Jemez) has served as the Education Director for the Pueblo of Jemez, in north-central New Mexico, since 2001. He oversees the Jemez Early Childhood Program, the Jemez Community Library, the Education Services Center, and school operations, and maintains collaborative working relationships between the tribe and San Diego Riverside Charter School (Grades K-8) and Walatowa Charter High School (9-12), both of which are in the Pueblo of Jemez.



The New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education

NMABE 2014 State Bilingual Education Conference

April 23-26, 2014

Embassy Suites Hotel, Albuquerque, NM

Bilingual Education: Common to Our Core



Keynote Speakers

Karen Beeman and Cheryl Urow

Authors

Teaching for Biliteracy

Strengthening Bridges between Languages

Radmilla A. Cody

Award-Winning Singer, Navajo Model and Domestic Violence Advocate and Activist

Registration

Admission to all conference events:

\$299

Early Bird

200

Presenter

225

One-Day Only

75

Student

Register online at: www.regonline.com/nmabconference2014