

WHAT LEADS TO ENGLISH LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

In California...

- **1 in 4**, or 1.6 million, public school students are English Learners
- **2 teachers for every 100 English Learners** are fully credentialed
- **25%** of English Learners are reading at grade level
- There is a **40-percentage point achievement gap** in literacy between English Learners and White students in San Jose and San Francisco's public schools



Sources: Public Policy Institute of California and California Department of Education

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

“After requiring bilingual education in the 1970s, California’s educational policy changed dramatically with the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998. The ramifications of this law, requiring that English Learner (EL) instruction be delivered ‘overwhelmingly in English,’ and several other educational reforms that occurred during this period are still being studied and evaluated. Proposition 227 implementation in individual schools and classrooms varies widely, and current research has found no conclusive evidence that the proposition has boosted EL achievement.”¹

Everyday, more English Learners go to school with a daunting task ahead of them: to learn a new language at the same time as a broad foundation of skills and academic content. The speed with which they reach higher levels of English proficiency and the quality of instruction and support they get are absolutely critical to their growth and success. Unfortunately, today, we continue to see a widening gap in literacy and academic performance between English Learners and their English-speaking peers.

The most powerful lever for improving all students’ achievement is effective teaching. English Learners are not only statistically more likely to have an under-prepared teacher, but the teachers of English Learners have insufficient access to high quality professional development.² In schools with a majority of English Learners, less than half of the teachers are fully credentialed or adequately trained in systematic language instruction to English Learners.³ Where there is teacher professional development, training is provided through infrequent workshops of varying quality with limited “real world” application and follow-up coaching. After extensive conversations with educators, researchers and professional developers, the problem is clear: **research-based teaching practices for English Learners are not penetrating the classroom.**

¹ Jepson, Christopher and Shelly de Alth. “English Learners in California Schools.” Public Policy Institute of California, 2005, p. 34.

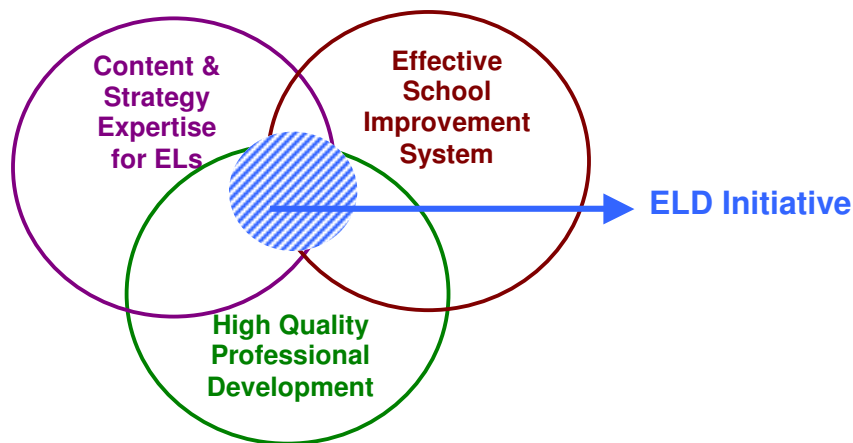
² UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education and Access.

³ “The Status of the Teaching Profession.” Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, 2005.

PARTNERS IN SCHOOL INNOVATION/E.L. ACHIEVE'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

With the generous support of the S.H. Cowell Foundation, the Morgan Family Foundation and the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, Partners in School Innovation's English Language Development Initiative addresses the current gap in high-quality English Learner education in San Jose and San Francisco. As part of this initiative, PartnersSI has partnered with leading English Language Development expert, Susana Dutro, to enhance our intensive, on-site teacher professional development work. Susana Dutro and her organization, E.L. Achieve, bring deep expertise in English Language Development theory and teacher professional development focused on teaching English Learners. PartnersSI brings a proven, documented approach to school improvement that builds the systems and structures for ongoing leadership and instructional improvement. By integrating our respective areas of expertise, we are developing a holistic approach to transform the quality of instruction for English Learners in urban low-performing schools in the Bay Area.

To effectively meet the needs of English Learners, schools need to take a comprehensive approach that involves language arts instruction in the primary language and in English, as well as a specific focus on English Language Development. An explicit focus on ELD is newer to the field and PartnersSI is doing the research and development needed to help our schools and districts employ an effective approach for ELs. Our aim is three-fold: 1) to develop a high quality approach to preparing teachers to teach English Learners, 2) to develop practical examples of high quality professional development for teachers to learn from, apply and refine systematic language instruction to English Learners in the context of their own classrooms, and 3) to embed these practices into an effective and sustainable school improvement system.



WHAT WE WANT TO CREATE AND ACHIEVE BY 2009

- **A LIBRARY OF IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES** available by internet to disseminate practical strategies for teachers and leaders, including classroom videos from teachers getting results, case studies, benchmark assessments, and tools and links to research.
- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODULES** for principals and teacher leaders aimed at transforming low-performing schools by using PartnersSI's Results-Oriented Cycle of Inquiry approach focused on English Language Development.
- **INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.** Our goal is to significantly increase the percentage of proficient English Learners (by 5 or more percentage points) on the California Standards Test and to support ELs in our schools to increase by 1 language proficiency level each year on the California English Language Development Test.
- **INCREASED CAPACITY** for PartnersSI to provide high quality professional development, leadership development and follow-up coaching to dramatically reduce the achievement gap for additional schools and districts with significant populations of English Learners.