

Policy Advances & Levers Related to DLLs in PreK-3rd grade

Ellen Frede

Alexandra Figueras-Daniel

A paper prepared for the National Research Summit on the Early Care and Education of Dual Language Learners, October 13 and 14, 2014

The field of early childhood education is amassing a body of research to inform policy and practice for preschool through 3rd grade children who are learning two languages (or dual language learners (DLL)). However, there are still many holes in the information base which seriously impairs stakeholders from making data-based decisions. Thus, using the information being generated in the current policy context requires going beyond research to analyzing promising approaches and practices. In this paper, we summarize the research literature and promising practices that have direct utility for understanding the policy levers and policies that may enhance or impede services to young DLLs. We make recommendations for investments and potential policy approaches at the local, state and federal level and for further policy research. We organize the body of information into the following three major categories of policy and practice: 1) access to P-3 services, 2) quality of those services, and 3) standards and assessment. Each of these areas is clearly multifaceted and they are interconnected and overlapping.

The P-3 Landscape: Access to Services for DLLs

Early childhood care and education is a complex and varied jigsaw puzzle of funding streams, state and local policies, and program standards. Policies and practices for young DLLs is no exception to this, and, partly as a result of this disparate mixture, there are many holes in our knowledge base. In this section we review what we do know about access and participation rates that may inform policy development and that may have a direct or indirect effect on access to and participation in educational services for young DLLs.

DLL Access to and Participation in State-Funded, Head Start and Other Center-based Preschool

Since 2002, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) has collected information on state-funded preschool program policies. In recent years, they have added what information the states could provide on service to DLLs. Of the 53 state-funded preschool programs in 40 states and Washington, DC, only 22 collect data on the number of dual language learners served (Barnett, et al,

2013). Unfortunately, many of the states that are lacking this information have a large percentage of parents with low English proficiency; for example, California, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, and Oklahoma are among the states that at the time of the 2013 Yearbook did not collect information on home language of participating children. Thus, doing an analysis of access and attendance in state pre-k for DLLs is not possible.

The Office of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR, 2014) reports on ethnicity and home language of children served. In the most recent report for 2013-2014, 36% of the children served in Head Start and 99% of the children served in Migrant Head Start are identified as being Hispanic/Latino in ethnicity. Spanish as a primary language is reported for 23% of Head Start enrollees contrasted with 84% English home language. The majority of Migrant Head Start participants speak Spanish. Home languages other than English or Spanish amount to the remaining 5% with no single language over 1% of the population served.

Recent analyses of national data on access and participation in early childhood center based programs more broadly, including publicly supported child care and other private providers, reveal that Latino 3 and 4 year olds are less likely to participate in center based programs than any other ethnic group (Nores & Barnett, 2014). Though there have been many hypotheses about why Hispanic and Spanish-language dominant children in particular are less likely to enroll in preschool programs, it seems likely that lack of access to quality programs is at least as important as factors such as income, parental education, and other family characteristics (Power-Pac, 2009; Barnett & Yarosz, 2007; Nores, Barnett, Epstein, & Curenton, 2011; Karoly & Gonzalez, 2011; Gee & Joseph, 2014).

Though not specifically focused on families with a home language other than English, a recent study in Chicago found that parents reported the following reasons to explain their lack of participation in pre-K programs: Cost, transportation issues, misalignment of school hours with work hours, no

availability in their community, lack of awareness of the importance of preschool education, lack of information about preschool options, and worries regarding documentation requirements.

These barriers for parents, generally, are exacerbated for families with limited English proficiency and especially those who are recent immigrants (Nores, Barnett & Curenton, 2003; Crosnoe, 2013). Geographic variations in participation also support the contention that lack of access is a factor in DLL participation rates given that state policies on eligibility vary greatly (Barnett & Yarosz, 2007; Nores & Barnett, 2014). When high quality preschool is offered to all children as in Oklahoma and in New Jersey's "Abbott" pre-k, there are near universal enrollment rates (Barnett, et al, 2013). In addition, there is no evidence supporting the contention that Latino cultural views on preschool vs. home result in lower participation (García & Gonzalez, 2006). Public education starts at 4 in Mexico and preschool is prevalent throughout Latin America (Choi, 2004).

Nevertheless, some parents do fail to recognize the value of quality preschool education. Lopez (2005) found that the young children farthest behind were those whose parents spoke only Spanish at home and held beliefs that language learning occurs incidentally and that academic skills are best taught in schools. Crosnoe found in Central Texas that in recent immigrant families knowledge of the pre-k program was influenced by district outreach efforts and information sharing among families. In particular, strong immigrant networks were more likely to lead to awareness and thus participation. Clearly, parent beliefs coupled with lack of access to quality pre-K contribute to perpetuating gaps that can be found in low-income and DLL children before the start of kindergarten (Burchinal et al., 2011).

One policy lever for increasing access is to specify in eligibility requirements that children who are DLL have preference for slots. Currently, the majority of state pre-k programs either allow access to all children or if the program is targeted, DLL status is often an explicit eligibility criterion. Unfortunately, very few states provide enough funding to actually serve a major proportion of their population regardless of eligibility policies. The exception to this is Oklahoma where virtually all 4 year olds attend

state-funded pre-k or Head Start and Florida where almost all children attend the VPK program but the program standards are not high (Barnett, et al, 2013).

At the federal level, the lack of data is again an impediment to policy development. In Head Start, family language can be used as a factor in eligibility such that a family that meets the income guidelines and who speak a language other than English at home could receive priority over another family. However, we could find no data on how many agencies use home language in their selection criteria. The Early Learning Challenge Grant specifies a focus on “children with high needs” which includes home language as a risk factor. However, states are allowed to develop their own definition and currently there is no information on how states define high needs.

DLL Access Issues in K-3

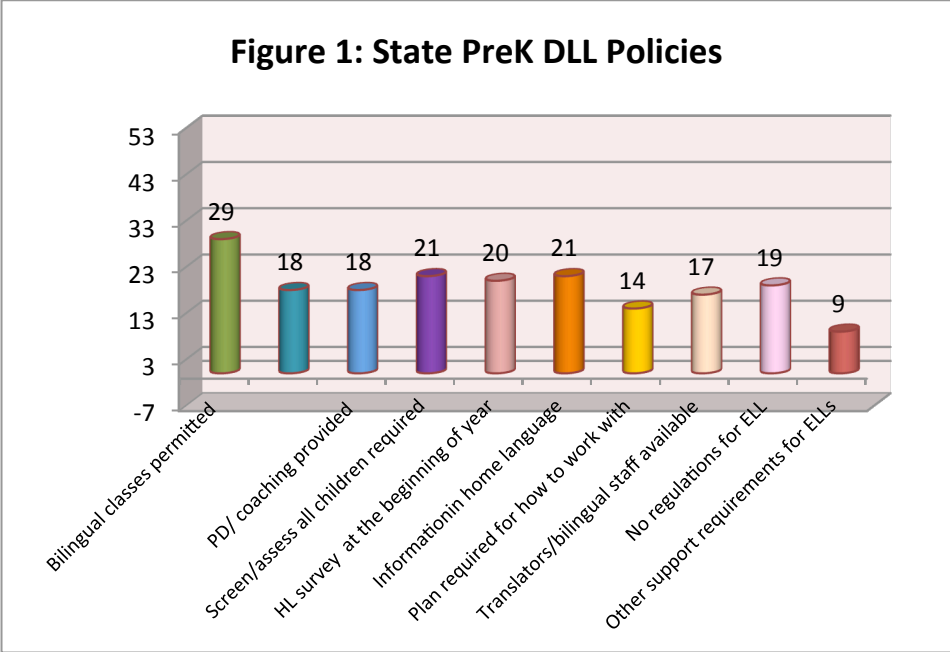
Given the near universal nature of kindergarten and the fact that compulsory schooling begins at age 6, access to school in K-3 grades for DLLs is a not typically a matter of availability, rather it is an issue of whether the services to which they have access are appropriate. This issue has been identified by many (see Castro, Garcia & Markos, nd) and very carefully described in a recent publication of the New America Foundation (Williams, 2014). As with many practices, identification for placement in program options varies not only from state to state but from district to district. In some cases, even when the identification methods are the same, the services available to children with the same profiles will vary among the schools within the district. Thus, although K-3 DLLs almost all have access to schooling, what they experience in terms of support for English acquisition, content learning and improvement in home language is inconsistent. These common practices in identification and program options are predominantly not research-based and are particularly damaging to students who experience transience and therefore are directly affected by the inconsistency (Williams, 2014).

Quality of Services to the P-3 DLL Population

It is clear that there are cognitive and social benefits for children who attend high quality preschool (see Barnett, 2011 for a review of the research on preschool efficacy) and growing evidence indicates that DLLs benefit more than others from effective preschool education (Gormley, 2007; Karoly & Gonzales, 2011). Factors influencing effectiveness of early education include class size, intensity and duration of the intervention, teacher qualifications and interactions, curriculum and fidelity of implementation, parental engagement and educational leadership. Contrary to earlier findings, recent analyses of national data show that the quality of preschool classrooms that DLLs attend does not differ from those attended by English only children (Nores and Barnett, 2014). The educational circumstances once children enroll in kindergarten change and are similar to educational settings for other children with low family income which are characterized by low state proficiency scores. Fry (2011) finds some hope for the quality of schooling received for Hispanics in the effect of their diaspora. As opposed to the traditional schools, the schools in the new settlement areas of Hispanic immigrants “tend to be smaller, are less likely to be high poverty schools (as measured by Title I status), and have smaller pupil-to-teacher ratios.” (p. 15, Fry, 2011). It is reasonable to assume that quality factors are likely more important for DLLs given the task of learning a second language compounded with potential cultural differences and family characteristics that are associated with lower achievement.

The State Preschool Yearbook (Barnett, et al, 2013) reports on a number of state policies regarding quality of services for DLLs in state-funded pre-k. As can be seen in Figure 1, of the 53 state-funded programs, 19 have no regulations specific to services for DLLs which at the least means that dual language of instruction is not prohibited but state guidance is also missing that might directly support specific services. The majority of state programs expressly support/allow bilingual instruction and 19 allow monolingual home language instruction. No state policies require English-only instruction. State policies for 20 of the programs require that a home language survey be administered but only 14

programs have policies that require that programs develop a systematic, written plan for how they will serve DLLs. Twenty-one programs require that information to parents be available in the home language and 17 require that bilingual staff be provided if children’s home language is not English.



Many state pre-k programs require adherence with Head Start Performance Standards rather than having an additional set of standards specific to the state program. This adds to the population of DLL children who are receiving at least the minimal standards in Head Start. These standards include a requirement that the child development and education services support and respect the home language and culture of the child; that classrooms in which a majority of children speak the same language, have at least one teaching staff member who speaks that language; and that classroom staff and home visitors must be able to communicate with families directly or through a translator and be familiar with the ethnic background of the families. However, the standards do not specify classroom approaches to language of instruction, methods for determining primary language, or ways to determine countries of origin with which families may identify.

Teacher and Leadership Qualifications

Regardless of other quality factors, access to teachers who speak the home language and to programs with dual language of instruction is sporadic. There is clearly a shortage of teachers who speak the home language of the children (Espinosa, 2010; Frede, Jung, Barnett, Lamy, & Figueras, 2007; Karoly, Ghosh-Dastidar, Zellman, Perlman, & Fernyhough, 2008) and teachers are rarely prepared with strategies to support dual language acquisition (Espinosa, 2013; Freedson, 2010). The recent decision by the Illinois State Board of Education to delay the requirement for preschool teachers of DLLs to hold a bilingual or ESL endorsement was based on school district reports that they could not find teachers that met the requirement (Sanchez, 2014). Only about 15 percent of early childhood teachers in public preschool programs report speaking Spanish, while 78 percent report speaking English only (Barnett, Carolan, Fitzgerald, & Squires, 2011). The most recent PIR indicates that of the total teaching staff (lead and assistant teachers) in Head Start, 27% are bilingual with 24% speaking Spanish and in Migrant Head Start virtually all of the teachers are bilingual. According to Skorton and Altshuler (2012) 25 percent of elementary schools report a shortage of qualified foreign language teachers. Unfortunately, the data on teacher qualifications are not reported by percentage of DLL children served so it is not possible to know how many DLL children are in classrooms with a teacher who speaks their home language or whether a dual language approach is being provided.

Even if the teacher or assistant teacher speaks the home language of the child in p-3 settings there is rarely, if ever, an assessment of the teacher proficiency and the quality of teacher language interactions in the classroom. We could find no references in local or state preschool policies that require such assessment. In the 11 state study of pre-k from the early 2000s, researchers found that 25% of the children received no instruction in Spanish and that for half the percentage of instruction in Spanish was only 25% (Burchinal, Field, Lopez, Howes, & Pianta, 2012). They found that amount and quality of instruction in Spanish were related to child growth in Spanish and English. Some more recent

evidence can be gleaned from a statewide study of classroom quality in the New Jersey pre-k program (formerly known as the Abbott Preschool Program) in which the quantity and quality of teacher and assistant teacher use of home language interactions were assessed using the Classroom Assessment of Supports for Emergent Bilingual Acquisition (CASEBA; Freedson, Figueras-Daniel & Frede, 2008). Even in classrooms with a bilingual teacher or assistant teacher, the amount and quality of home language use were low with scores averaging between 2 and 3 on a scale of 1 - 7 (Frede & Figueras-Daniel, unpublished analyses). Given that quality of support for language learning in English in early childhood settings is generally found to be less than adequate (Dickinson & Porche, 2011; Piesner-Fienberg, Buyse, Fuligini, Bruchinal, Espinosa, Halle, & Castro, 2014; Pianta, Belsky, Houts, Morrison, and NICHD-ECCRN, 2007; Seplocha & Strasser, 2008), it follows that use of home language in instruction is not high quality.

A recent study found that in states with specialized DLL teacher certification and training requirements, DLLs performed better in NAEP scores at fourth grade than in states without specific DLL teaching requirements (López, Scanlan & Gundrum, 2013). Teachers themselves report feeling unprepared to work with DLLs (Ray, Bowman & Robbins, 2006; Ryan, Ackerman & Song, 2005) and are reluctant to seek additional certifications (Bridges & Dagys, 2012).

Generally research has shown that professionals have not received sufficient training in best practices to help DLLs acquire English in spite of recommendations from high-profile groups (Maxwell, Lim & Early, 2006). Surveys further reflect that there is a lack of offerings at two- and four-year degree granting institutions for students to enroll in courses about cultural and linguistic diversity (Early & Winton, 2001).

Training and preparation should focus on tailoring instruction to the needs of children with varying levels of both English and Spanish proficiency (Zepeda, Castro & Cronin, 2011). In addition, teachers need prepare their classrooms with materials that are challenging as well as reflective of the

cultures from which children come. Teachers also must understand both how children acquire language as well as the implications that varying levels of English proficiency have for their practices. Currently, there is no data to suggest how much teachers know about language acquisition or dual language acquisition processes.

The field is acknowledging more and more the importance of educational leadership in assuring efficacy in P-3 (Goffin & Washington, 2008). However, we have very little information about current qualifications or practices of building and program administrators. The power of coaching in improving practice is beginning to emerge as a critical component of effective programs. We have seen in our work with school districts and Head Start programs that a coach who does not speak the language of instruction is obviously hampered in providing appropriate guidance and support and when they do not have the knowledge and skills listed above as critical for teachers it again hampers improvement.

DLLs, their families and school engagement

The importance of parental engagement with schools is not unique to DLL populations. However, the convergence of several factors common to many Hispanic families are worthy of special attention as they relate closely to the later achievement. These factors include low levels of educational attainment, low levels of English proficiency, low paying and inconsistent employment, and poverty (Figueras-Daniel, 2013). Hispanic families do also have characteristics which can be used as powerful resources (Gillanders, Iruka, Ritchie & Cobb, 2013) such as strong “familialism” and high incidence of two-parent or extended family situations (Garcia, 2013). Still, studies have found that for language minority parents, negative effects of a lack of parental engagement persist through the end of kindergarten and that when DLLs have the benefit of parental engagement in their education, they fare better (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014).

Findings from one study showed that the young children farthest behind their school peers academically, were those whose parents spoke only Spanish at home and whose parents held beliefs

that language learning occurs incidentally and academic skills are best taught in schools (Lopez, 2005). Opportunities such as programs to learn English, parenting skills and child development can further aid parents in developing awareness as well as about resources that can in turn increase outcomes for their children (Park & McHugh, 2014; Kaushal, 2014).

Parental engagement can be hampered by specific “determinants”: “parents’ beliefs regarding the support roles they have in their children’s education, the extent to which they believe that they possess the knowledge and tools they need as educators and third is their perceptions of schools willingness to have them participate.” (Garcia & Kleifgan, 2010; p.g. 93). Hispanic immigrant groups score lowest on measures of both school and home involvement (Crosnoe, 2013). Barriers include low English proficiency and functional literacy, a lack of public funding to support language acquisition, cultural access or other immigrant family specific needs, a lack of alignment between efforts in ECE and K-12 leading to parent alienation after preschool, and variability in attitudes towards immigrants across communities and districts (Park & McHugh, 2014). Barbarin, Downer, Odom, Head-Reeves (2010) found that preschools are effective when both the parent and teacher had child-centered and supportive beliefs about children (Barbarin, Downer, Odom, & Head-Reeves, 2010).

Since 2001, federal policy has acknowledged research findings that highlight the benefits of parental engagement. The inclusion of section 1118 of NCLB included specific provisions that school districts receiving more than \$500,000 in Title I funds must set aside at least one percent for parental involvement activities and distribute at least 95 percent of those funds to Title I schools. Regulations emphasized the shared responsibilities between schools and homes for increased student achievement but also to ensure that schools are also accountable for engaging parents on various levels.

Despite federal efforts, state and local practices are not always designed to promote parental engagement. Many studies point to the stigmatization of DLL parents by schools where because of their lack of English proficiency or low educational attainment they are viewed from a deficit perspective. This

in turn affects parental engagement by prompting parents to feel inadequate as partners in their children's education (Garcia & Kliefgen, 2010). Parents feel further marginalized by the exclusion of the home language from settings of instruction, sending the message that home languages are not valued or important (Lopez, 2005). Garcia and Klifgen (2010) also point out that because schools are at the foreground of parental engagement that funding to prepare educators appropriately is particularly important. Clearly, there is an important dynamic present when school personnel are culturally matched to the community with whom they work and that if this is not the case, specialized training in cultural competence is necessary.

Landscape of Standards and Assessment for DLLs in P-3

Perhaps the biggest push towards an agenda of well-aligned and beneficial experiences for DLLs is the existence of an infrastructure that uniformly guides best practices and accountability. Levers here include well developed standards and assessment practices that adequately and validly measure progress and inform practice. In addition a compilation of information that also encompasses both policy and relevant resources could be helpful for systemic decision making. What currently exists however is a set of well-intentioned, but disjointed policies, each regulating different aspects of the landscape with little guidance on delivery for states.

Standards

Standards pertaining to general academic progress for young DLLs fall into three major separate categories. These include individually developed state early learning standards, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and for Head Start, the Child Development and Early Learning Standards. The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (NCCLR) analyzed how state preschool standards address DLLs and found that only 3 states (CA, KY, MA) have guidelines specifically for DLLs, 9 states have sections for addressing DLLs within their guidelines and 8 states at least mention DLLs in the Language and Literacy areas of their guidelines (NCCLR, 2014). The Common Core State Standards

(CCSS), which are now adopted by 43 states excludes any specific standards for DLLs and instead includes guidelines for applying the standards to DLLs that basically describes DLLs as a heterogeneous group who should receive individualize “diagnosis” and instruction. They advise teachers to “recognize that it is possible to achieve the standards for reading and literature, writing & research, language development and speaking & listening without manifesting native-like control of conventions and vocabulary” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, CCSSO, 2010).

Another set of standards are those mandated by Title III for identification and intervention for English proficiency. Lack of cohesive standards for assessment of English proficiency is compounded by incoherent and at times ineffective reclassification assessments to determine accurately who DLLs are and when they are ready to exit support programs. Federal policy dictates through Title III that states develop or adopt English language proficiency standards and that an annual test of English proficiency be administered. As part of its accountability provisions the updated ESEA requires that states define criteria about progress in English, create English proficiency standards for performance and set annually increasing performance targets for the population of DLLs meeting the criteria (CITATION). The US Department of Education released the *National Evaluation of Title III Implementation supplemental Report- Exploring Approaches to Setting English Language Proficiency Performance Criteria and Monitoring English Learner Progress* in 2012 as means of support to state policy-makers in their efforts to generate empirically based standards and assessments to meet the Title III requirements (US Department of Education, 2012). In large part, the release of this paper acknowledges a gap between the goals of the legislation and states capacity to adequately meet its provisions.

The World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium has begun to disentangle this problem by outlining standards, performance definitions, guiding principles for grades K-12, with preK standards soon to come. Though the WIDA website reports that 36 states are currently members, it remains largely unclear how states are incorporating the resources created by the

consortium (Williams, 2014).. New Jersey for example utilizes the *2012 Amplification of the English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten-Grade 12* as its mandatory code under N.J.A.C. 6A:15, BILINGUAL EDUCATION in districts receiving Title III funds. For purposes of identification, New Jersey allows all districts to select proficiency tests from an approved list, which may or not mean that districts select the WIDA developed entry tests to identify DLL children in need of support services. Further, in non-Title III funded districts, though the WIDA 2012 Amplification standards are mandatory, exit assessments are the choice of the districts from an approved list.

Another major issue in assessment for DLLs is that of language of assessment for the understanding of progress in content knowledge. If the purpose of the assessment is to measure child knowledge and the language of instruction is not the child's home language then measuring in either the home language or English will be unlikely to capture what the child knows across the two languages. Even if valid instruments were available for each subject area across the age spans the capacity of p-3 providers to administer the tests is unlikely to be great (Espinosa, 2010).

Potential Policy Levers to Enhance Access and Quality in P-3 Education for DLLs

Based on our review of current policies and practices and our own experience as researcher, policy maker, and practitioner, we developed recommendations for improving participation and quality in early education P-3 for young DLLs at the national/federal, state and local program level. We recommend one major lever from which many other levers follow. We also include smattering of smaller scale but never-the-less possibly influential endeavors. In some cases, we note where further research is needed or where the recommendation itself should be evaluated if implemented. However, most of the national and federal recommendations are actually enacted or aimed at state and local policies and practices although the scope is national.

One major initiative that would link to a number of other strategies is to sponsor an intensive expert working group or council to develop **Standards of Best Practice for Young Dual Language Learners** modeled after other related successful national initiatives: 1) the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s Developmentally Appropriate Practices (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009), 2) NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria & Guidance for Assessment (NAEYC, 2008), 3) Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children’s Recommended Practices (DEC, 2014) and 4) the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education’s Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions (NCATE, 2008). The research base is strong enough now to come to consensus on best practices for DLLs at the program and classroom level as well as for teacher preparation. In addition, this expert group could develop a common definition of DLL and of “highly qualified teacher” for DLLs. Developing and publishing these best practices can lead the field to improve as it has for the standards mentioned above. Obviously, as research leads to better understanding of effective practices the standards would need to be revised.

The **Standards of Best Practice for Young Dual Language Learners** could then form the basis for designing and evaluating a number of program and policy improvements such as the following:

- An **annual report on state policies** to support best practices for DLLs similar to the NIEER Yearbook (Barnett, et al, 2013) which would highlight whether states are adopting effective policies.

Developing the standards for the annual report should be a second charge to the expert working group. The Preschool Yearbook, and other similar efforts such as the Data Quality Campaign, have been highly effective at informing and facilitating improvements in state policy making.

The federal government and private foundations could be encouraged to use the results of the annual report in making differentiated funding decisions by giving priority to high scoring states for expansion of their programs and to low scoring states to enable adoption of the policies.

The young DLL Yearbook might include policies such as the following:

- inclusion of teacher preparation for DLLs in certification requirements.
 - adoption of the CEDS data standards and use of geo-mapping or other methods to ensure access to DLLs.
 - inclusion of home language as an eligibility criterion for state pre-k or offering universal access.
 - using acceptable methods for identifying and placing DLLs based on systematic and valid assessment of home language and English proficiency.
 - implementation of state-sponsored methods to improve teacher and leader professional development regarding best practices for DLLs.
 - program evaluation and monitoring that includes administration of classroom assessments of teacher supports for DLLs that are based on the best practices (see below).
 - inclusion of DLL best practices as criteria in the state QRIS.
 - specific policy guidance aimed to increase dual language instruction in P-3 classrooms.
 - requirement that programs and districts have DLL improvement plans and have developed continuity of education P-3.
 - guidance and regulations that support language minority parents' engagement in their child's learning.
- Design (or adapt an existing) classroom assessment tool and related professional development resources (workshop modules, video exemplars, teacher self assessment and coaching protocols) based on the best practices guidance. Develop and fund an effort similar to that of the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). CSEFEL has developed resources such as those listed above to support implementation of the Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports

to support social emotional development and work with children with challenging behaviors. One target of this initiative should be early childhood education faculty.

- Sponsor a working group of the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) possibly through the federally funded Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) to advise and be informed by the expert group on best practices. NAECS-SDE is an important player in state and federal policy for P-3 since the members typically work in offices that oversee educational policy and practice for this entire age span. In our experience, few of them have expertise in bilingual education. One charge to the working group could be to develop a position statement on serving young DLLs such as *The Power of Kindergarten: 10 Policies Leading to Positive Child Outcomes* (NAECS-SDE, 2013).

We also recommend a number of smaller but possibly influential activities. These include the following:

- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis comparing P-3 dual language classrooms to current practices of providing transitional or bilingual classrooms with ESL push-in and pull-out. One school district did a cursory analysis and found that there were actually cost savings in a fully bilingual approach (Rodriguez, personal communication).
- Work with an organization such as TFA to increase the number of non-traditional bilingual teachers as one way to fill in gaps. Pursue a program of recruiting bilingual college graduates from other countries (particularly Spanish-speaking) to teach in P-3 settings that offer dual language of instruction. Adopt the TFA model of intensive six weeks pre-service training coupled with regular expert coaching. In this case, all of the professional development should be directly relevant to teaching dual language P-3 classrooms.
- Investigate whether replacing “floating teachers” in Head Start centers with “Bilingual resource teachers” improves child outcomes in both languages of instruction. This would require increasing

funding by a modest amount to pay the resource teacher at the highest level. The position would be a combination relief teacher, coach and language specialist who would intentionally plan home language instruction for all children that provides a model for the classroom teachers. The resource teacher would spend one hour in each classroom per day. For half of the time the teacher would be present while the assistant takes a break and for half of the time the assistant would be present. This allows children to receive an hour of high quality home language instruction, more than was found to be effective in one intervention (Farver, Lonigan & Eppe, 2009). At the same time, some modeling of best practice can be achieved if combined with follow-up reflection with the teacher.

We believe that of these recommendations the one that is most critical and likely to have the most impact is the development of the best practices guidance. Many of the other levers flow from this and development of accountability measures at the state, local and classroom levels can be powerful change agents. In addition, individual programs do not have to wait for the state to adopt the practices but will have the guidance they need to move forward and improve.

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