2022 Thought Leader Conversation Series
Pursuing Equity at the Intersection of Language, Culture, and Disability
Research-Informed Practice
Welcome to this session on Research-Informed Practice

“Work that does not carefully engage cultural variation easily participates in the perpetuation of a science based in White middle-class norms projected as universalist claims.”

-National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2022
Welcome & Introduction to NCSI

The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) supports states to transform systems to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
Welcome & Introduction to NCSI continued(1)

We are committed to helping state agencies and their stakeholders understand the intersection of language, culture, and disability in education in order to resolve inequities that disadvantage students designated as English learners with disabilities or those who may be identified as needing special education services.
Session Agenda

• Introducing our Thought Leaders
• Session Objectives
• Session Framing
• Considerations for the Critical Use of Research Evidence
• Research of Identification, Assessment, and Instruction
• MTSS and English Learners
• Panel
Introducing Our Thought Leaders
Today’s Thought Leaders

Dr. Alfredo Artiles, Graduate School of Education, Stanford University

Dr. Julie Esparza Brown, Special Education, Portland State University

Ximena Hurtado, Lee County School District

Dr. Claudia Rinaldi, Education Programs, Lasell University

Dr. John Hoover, Equity, Bilingualism, & Literacy, University of Colorado, Boulder
Session Objectives

1. Identify biases within research-informed practice pertaining to students designated as English learners with disabilities
2. Recognize the importance in considering the intersecting identities of language, culture, and disability when making decisions about research-informed practice for students designated as English learners with disabilities
3. Examine ways to move toward more equitable research-informed practice to improve outcomes for students designated as English learners with disabilities
Research-informed practice for students designated as English learners with disabilities are often siloed in their approaches and do not consider the intersecting needs of this population. This session will highlight the importance of these intersecting needs through the use of research-informed frameworks that honor students’ language, culture, and ability.
Considerations for the Critical Use of Research Evidence
Current Research on Students Identified as English Learners with Disabilities

Education research is entrenched in a system of deep systemic bias perpetuating deficit perspectives of cultural communities, in which whiteness is the norm reference (NASEM, 2022)

A great amount of research of students designated as English learners with disabilities is recent and descriptive in nature, with varied studies across disability categories (NASEM, 2017)
Current Research on Students Identified as English Learners with Disabilities continued (1)

- Findings based on inequalities explained by deficit ideologies
- Often a focus on disproportionality
- Pervasiveness of color evasiveness in special education research practices

Research on English learners with disabilities
Reimagining Research

Race

Disability

Language
NCSI’s Three Circles of Evidence-Based Decision Making to Support Students with Disabilities
Equitable Research Practices

Best available research evidence

- Discuss what counts as research
- Redefine what counts as research
- Consider practices that are unique to dually identified students

Family and student wisdom and values

- Take into consideration the sampling included in studies and who is being sampled
- Are students of color and/or students designated as English learners with disabilities used within studies to determine if these practices work for all students?

Professional wisdom and values

- Critically examine the ontologies and epistemologies of those that have historically positioned white dominant culture’s knowledge and knowing over that of others
Equitable Research Practices continued (1)

As a companion to the Three Circles of Evidence, the FAIR test also applies to practices for English learners with disabilities, examining:
Research on Identification, Assessment, and Instruction for Students Designated as English Learners with Disabilities
Students are identified for specific disabilities to receive access to educational programs and mental health interventions (NASEM, 2017)

Latino and other students from immigrant backgrounds disproportionately do not receive educational or mental health services, leading to a high prevalence of a variety of disorders that may have been avoided if students were provided challenging educational opportunities through quality instruction or intensive services from the onset (NASEM, 2017)

States, districts, and schools play an important role in providing the appropriate services, such as professional development specific to the needs of English learners with disabilities and interventions for students identified as English learners to avoid the over- or underrepresentation of English learners with disabilities
Assessment

Culturally responsive referral and special education evaluation should:

- Move away from discrepancy formula and move to a culturally and linguistically responsive individualized assessment plan
- Include in-depth culturally and linguistically responsive parent interview in the native language as
- Include observation in different contexts such as general education Tier 1 classroom, ESL support time, Tier 2 small group intervention
**Assessment continued (1)**

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<tr>
<th>Additional assessment considerations include:</th>
<th>Using native language assessments and oral language assessments in native language and English</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Use of MTSS data should be used in the special education evaluation</td>
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<td>A pre-referral process must address culture and language</td>
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<td>IEP needs to address language needs to meet IEP goals and academic standards</td>
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<td>Monitoring progress of language and looking for patterns of stagnation and regression as students get older and monitor the rates of drop out</td>
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Instruction continued (1)

• There is a variety of research addressing instruction for students designated as English learners and a variety of research addressing instruction for students with disabilities, but little research has been conducted on promising practices for students designated as English learners with disabilities (NASEM, 2017).

• Research informing instruction for students who lie at the intersection of English learners and students with disabilities is often conducted in the content area of reading and for students with specific learning disabilities (NASEM, 2017).

• While many aspects of instruction on intervention have shown to have positive impacts based on research, many of these outcomes have not been proven true for students designated as English learners with disabilities.
Instruction continued (2)

Effective Practices for Students Identified as English Learners with Disabilities (NASEM, 2017)

• Provide explicit instruction in literacy components
• ESL and bilingual practices incorporated into literacy instruction
• Develop academic language during content area instruction
• Provide visual and verbal supports to make core content comprehensible
Instruction continued (3)

Effective Practices for Students Identified as English Learners with Disabilities (NASEM, 2017)

- Encourage peer-assisted learning opportunities
- Capitalize on students’ home language, knowledge, and cultural assets
- Screen for language and literacy challenges and monitor progress
- Provide small-group support in literacy and English language development for English learners who need additional support
Instruction continued (4)

- High quality instruction is critical for students designated as English learners with disabilities to ensure favorable academic outcomes
- Projects/papers of students' culture and home languages on school walls and surroundings
- Classroom walls with illustrations and vocabulary in student home languages and English
- Materials supportive of diverse cultures
MTSS and English Learners (ELs)

Summary of two OSEP funded Model Demonstration Projects
OSEP Funded Model Demonstration Projects for ELs

From 2012 through 2020, OSEP funded two rounds of Model Demonstration Projects designed to improve the education of English learners (ELs) in grades K-5 through improved multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).

**Project 1: MTSS for ELs**
Examined the effectiveness of MTSS on the language development, reading abilities, and referrals of ELs in grades K-3 in rural community schools.

**Project 2: Improve Literacy Outcomes for ELs with Disabilities**
Designed to improve literacy outcomes for ELSWDs within a MTSS framework using culturally responsive principles implemented by educators and sustained in general and special education settings in grades 3-5.
Project 1: MTSS of EL

- Multi-Level Instruction
- Research-Based Core Literacy Instruction
- Ecological Decision Making
- Multiple Levels of Assessment and Data Sources
- Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) Practice
MTSS Model Criteria (Examples)

1. Multi-Level Instruction

Criterion 1: Schoolwide multi-level model is in place and includes **Tiers 1, 2, and 3 or 4.**

Criterion 2: General class educators, special educators, and bilingual/ESL specialists are involved in implementing **Tiers 1 and 2 instruction.**

2. Research-Based Core Literacy Instruction

Criterion 1: Equitable access (e.g., accessing prior knowledge, building background knowledge) to the literacy curriculum exists for all ELs emphasizing **listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**

Criterion 2: Literacy instruction develops **both first and second language** oral proficiency, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

3. Culturally/Linguistically Sustaining Practice

Criterion 1: Instruction incorporates diverse cultural heritage, **values, and norms** of students.

Criterion 2: Instruction reflects educator knowledge and application of **first and second language** acquisition stages and strategies.
4. Multiple Levels of Assessment and Data Sources

Criterion 1: Process exists *linking assessment with instruction* through use of curriculum-based measurement materials/procedures.

Criterion 2: A variety of *authentic assessment measures* are used to best determine learner progress toward intermediate and outcome benchmarks/objectives.

5. Ecological Decision Making

Criterion 1: Three interrelated ecological factors (i.e., learner, classroom, home/community) are considered in program planning, interpretation of assessment results, and selection of interventions.

Criterion 2: Information and input gathered from *different environmental settings* using culturally sustaining assessment measures, processes, observations, and interviews are included in grade or school-level team discussions about learners.
Immediate and Sustainable Findings

Instructional and Literacy Findings During Model Demonstration Project Delivery

– *Increase in daily use of literacy* best practices for teaching ELs
– Percent of *ELs at benchmark increased* to a significant degree during each project year
– Three years of model exposure showed *promising reading score growth* trajectories over those with fewer years of exposure.
– *Gap* in DRA scores between ELs to Non-ELs *narrowed significantly*
Immediate and Sustainable Findings continued (1)

EL Referral Practices Evident Resulting from Model Demonstration Project

- Districtwide adoption of a new 10-item culturally/linguistically responsive referral tool
- EL referrals became more comprehensive framed by research-to-practice literature
- Reduction in numbers of inappropriate referrals (30%) (i.e., reflected increased CLR material)
- ELs’ proficiency levels and rate of progress were now compared with true peers’ performances
Immediate and Sustainable Findings continued (2)

Sustained Features One Year Following Project Delivery

- Literacy practices **embedded** in daily instruction -no longer an add-on
- Supplemental (Tier 2) more **purposefully aligned** with Tier 1
- Trained teachers are **supporting/training** other teachers
- Learning activities **modeled** for parents rather than telling them what to do
- Use of **multiple** assessments; assessment in both languages
- Decision-making more **culturally/ecologically** responsive (student, school, family)

**Overall:** Each school was adhering to established **Policies** for implementing the MTSS components
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Multi-tiered support systems (CLR-MTSS)

- Tier 3: Meet the needs of 5% of each student group
- Tier 2: Meet the needs of 15-20% of each student group
- Tier 1: Students with disabilities receive services at all levels depending on need
- Meet the needs of 80% of each student group

Beginning, Oral Language Proficiency Levels, PLUSS Framework, Fluent
Project Lee Model Components

- Evaluation/Findings
- Dissemination
- Sustainability
- Family Engagement
- Self-Assessment
- School Leadership & Model Development
- Implementation of CLR MTSS
- Job-Embedded PD

Improve Literacy for ELs with Disabilities: Gr. 3 - 5/6
## PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLUSS Component</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Research Evidence</th>
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<td>Pre-teach critical language and prime background knowledge</td>
<td>Language support includes explicit instruction in all components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) at the word- and sentence-level to understand a passage or unit of instruction. Building background knowledge is critical for reading comprehension.</td>
<td>August et al., 2021; Beck et al., 2002; Cho et al., 2019; Echevarria, Vogt, &amp; Short, 2008; Lesaux et al., 2012; Linan-Thompson &amp; Vaughn, 2007; Nagy &amp; Hiebert, 2010; Silverman et al., 2020</td>
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<td>Language modeling and opportunities for practice</td>
<td>Teacher models appropriate use of academic language, then provides structured opportunities for students to practice using the language in meaningful contexts.</td>
<td>Battle &amp; Pastrana, 2007; Dutro &amp; Moran, 2003; Gibbons, 2009; Lopez et al., 2015; Morales &amp; Saenz, 2007; Scarcella, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use visuals and graphic organizers</td>
<td>Use pictures, graphic organizers, gestures, real objects, and other visual prompts to make critical language, concepts, and strategies more comprehensible to learners.</td>
<td>Brechta, 2001; Eshet-Alkalai &amp; Chajut, 2007; Goldberg, 2008; Haager &amp; Klingner, 2005; Linan-Thompson &amp; Vaughn, 2007; Yang &amp; Kim, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systematic and explicit instruction</td>
<td>Explain, model, provide guided practice with feedback and opportunities for independent practice in content and concepts (I do, we do, you do).</td>
<td>Archer &amp; Hughes, 2011; Calderón, 2007; Chiappe et al., 2002; Fien et al., 2011; Kamps et al., 2008; Klingner &amp; Vaughn, 2000; Richards-Tutor et al., 2016; Roberts et al, 2022; Weingarten et al., 2018</td>
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<td>Strategic use of native language and teach for transfer</td>
<td>Identify concepts and content students already know in their native language and culture to explicitly explain, define, and bridge to new language and concepts in English. Use translanguaging strategies.</td>
<td>August &amp; Shanahan, 2006; Baker et al., 2014; Carlo et al., 2004; Cheung, 2005; Durán, 2016; Durgunoglu, 2002; Genesee et al., 2006; Linan-Thompson et al., 2007; Slavin &amp; Farver et al., 2013</td>
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PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012 continued (1))

Pluss Component: Pre-teach critical language and prime background knowledge.

Definition: Language support includes explicit instruction in all components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) at the word- and sentence-level to understand a passage or unit of instruction. Building background knowledge is critical for reading comprehension.

Research Evidence: August et al., Beck et al., 2002; Cho et al., 2019; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Lesaux et al., 2012; Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; Nagy & Hiebert, 2010; Silverman et al., 2010
PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012 continued (2))

**Pluss Component:** Language modeling and opportunities for practice.

**Definition:** Teacher models appropriate use of academic language, then provides structured opportunities for students to practice using the language in meaningful context.

**Research Evidence:** Battle & Pastrana, 2007; Dutro & Moran, 2003; Gibbons 2009; Lopez et al., 2015; Morales & Saenz, 2007; Scarcella, 2003
OSEP Funded Model PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012 continued (3))

**Pluss Component:** Use visuals and graphic organizers

**Definition:** Use pictures, graphic organizers, gestured, real objects, and other visual prompts to make critical language, concepts, and strategies more comprehensible to learners.

OSEP Funded Model PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012 continued (4))

**Pluss Component:** Systemic and explicit instruction

**Definition:** Explain, model provide guided practice with feedback and opportunities for independent practice in content and concepts (I do, we do, you do).

**Research Evidence:** Archer & Hughes, 2011; Calderon, 2007; Chiappe et al., 2002; Fien et al., 2011; Kamps et al., 2008; Klingner & Vaughn, 2000; Richards-Tutor et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2022; Weingarten et al., 2018;
OSEP Funded Model PLUSS Framework (Sanford et al., 2012 continued (5))

**Pluss Component:** Strategic use of native language and teach transfer

**Definition:** Identify content and concepts students already know in their native language and culture to explicitly explain, define, and bridge to a new language and concepts in English. Use translanguaging strategies.

**Research Evidence:** August & Shanahan, 2006; Baker et al., 2014; Carlo et al., 2004; Cheung, 2005; Duran, 2016; Durgunoglu, 2002; Genesee et al., 2016; Linan-Thompson et al., 2007; Slavin & Farver et al., 2013
Research to Practice Briefs: 10 Briefs Developed

https://www.mtss4els.org/resources/briefs
Panel Session
Question 1

What are some of the misconceptions you would like to address around research-informed practice concerning students designated as English learners with disabilities?
Question 2

How can state departments consider the needs of students designated as English learners with disabilities when making decisions for them using research-informed practice?
Question 3

Issues of disproportionality for students designated as English learners with disabilities are prevalent within education. When thinking about research around issues of compliance and disproportionality, what cautions should be taken based on findings within the field?
Session Evaluation

• We appreciate your feedback on our session today so we can continuously improve.
• Link to the evaluation is in the chat box or use the QR code presented.
• The evaluation link will also be emailed to registrants.

https://meadowscenter.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d5zsv5368ifg7AO
Thought leader Conversation Series

Systems Coherence – November 30, 2022
1pm-2:30pm ET
Where to Find TLC Information

Materials including the PowerPoint and recording from today’s session will be posted to the NCSI website under “News & Events.”

ncsi.wested.org
Where to Find TLC Information continued (1)

Registration information for future sessions will be posted to ncsi.wested.org

Please sign up for our mailing list to receive emails about future TLC sessions and registration details: ncsi@wested.org
Gratitude

Thank you to our Thought Leaders for initiating and framing this important conversation.

Thank you to all of you for your commitment to creating inclusive, equitable systems that support all students to succeed and thrive.
Thank you

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WestEd is the lead organization for NCSI. For more information about the work of WestEd, NCSI, and their partners, please visit www.ncsi.wested.org and www.wested.org

NCSI includes staff from the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center and Regional Parent TA Centers and the OESE funded Statewide Family Engagement Centers.