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## Success of English Language Learners: Barriers and Strategies

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# Success of English Language Learners: Barriers and Strategies

An Action Research Report

By Brita Bostad, Stephanie Cwikla, & Jacob Kienzle

Success of English Language Learners: Barriers and Strategies

Submitted on Date (e.g., November 8, 2015)

In fulfillment of final requirements for the MAED degree

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### Abstract

For this report, the researchers sought to gather more information on the success of mainstreamed ELL students from both exited students and their content teachers. The researchers' aim was to see how teachers assessed these students' academic needs, how these students felt about the accommodations executed by their teachers, and where these mainstreamed students were finding success. Furthermore, researchers wanted to gain information on the perceptions of the teachers working with these students. Information was gathered at two different high schools within the same district by interviewing and surveying both mainstreamed ELLs and their content teachers. Student transcripts were also utilized to gain more information about mainstreamed ELLs' academic success. Results indicated that some classes, specifically those that required frequent memorization of content, were cited by students as more challenging and were classes in which more students were struggling to demonstrate proficiency, as indicated by their grades. Furthermore, results of teacher surveys and interviews highlighted a lack of comfort in understanding how to communicate with families of these students and how best to meet the academic needs of this population of learners. From these results, researchers drew the need for additional classroom-based and school-wide research.

*Keywords: ELL, sheltered instruction, mainstream, exited*

According to a recent NPR article, “the number of foreign-born residents [in the Fargo-Moorhead area] is slowly rising thanks to the arrival of more than 5,000 refugees from 40-plus countries over the past two decades” (Miller, 2015, para. 2). According to district personnel at the administrative level in schools like those found in the northern Midwest, this influx of new ELL students has already impacted the makeup of the school staff. In the last two years, the number of ELL English teachers has tripled to accommodate the increased numbers. This action research project provides additional information on a particular portion of this growing ELL population, specifically students who have gained a level of English proficiency to exit the sheltered instruction program and who are now enrolled in mainstreamed classes.

The school district in study has implemented an intervention pathway in order to differentiate for students’ needs. However, these interventions have been focused on students with special needs and those who lack environmental support. This means that the needs of students acquiring language proficiency have not been intentionally addressed by these pathways. Students and teachers who participated in this action research project are enrolled in or teaching at the secondary level. All students who participated in this research were at one point provided ELL services.

Barriers, such as lack of parent engagement, teacher experience, and language proficiency, have been shown to limit the success of ELL students and are frequently dissected in the existing professional research. Currently, the literature covers the need for district-wide professional development, collaboration, scaffolding, and teacher self-awareness as strategies to promote ELL student success. Reviewing the literature on these barriers and strategies led to some key findings, including the following: the

importance of cultural awareness on the part of the teacher (Cassity & Harris, 2000; Copeland, 2007; Eberly, Joshi, & Konzal, 2007) as well as the lack of teacher preparation perceived by teachers (Reeves, 2009; Walker-Dalhouse, Sanders, & Dalhouse, 2009). This study recognized the academic needs that exited ELL students and their teachers at the secondary level identify as integral to their success. To accomplish this goal, researchers gathered information from both groups to gain insight into specific needs. Students were asked in a two tiered process, all of which was voluntary. First, they were asked to complete a general survey that measured their comfort in mainstream classes, their academic support needs, and learning preferences. Following this, students were invited to participate in a one-on-one interview in which they had the chance to elaborate on their academic experiences in mainstream classrooms, both positive and negative. Teachers participated in a similar process by first completing an anonymous survey which gauged their cultural awareness, current practices, and finally strengths and concerns when working with this population. For further teacher insight, individual educators from various content areas were invited to participate in follow up interviews. ELL educators were not invited to participate in this step of research since they no longer taught the students the study focused on: mainstreamed ELLs. This research aimed not to provide a solution to current challenges, but instead hoped to provide useful data for future work.

### **Review of Literature**

Nationwide, “42 percent of all public school teachers have at least one Limited English Proficient (LEP) Student in their classes” (Walker-Dalhouse et. al, 2009, p. 338). According to the “English Language Learner Program Handbook” (2014), an estimated

“400 refugees arrive in [the state in which the study occurred] each year” (p. 8). The demographics of this population has changed over the last five years. The two most notable changes were the percentage of Somali speakers increasing from 5.61 percent to 14 percent and Nepali speakers comprising 13 percent of the languages spoken as compared to their classification as “Other” five years prior (“English Language Learner Program Handbook”, 2014). Significant barriers to success exist for this growing and evolving population. Scholars assert that ELL students are occasionally treated as lesser (Lerner, 2012), teachers lack experience working with this population (Walker-Dalhousie et al., 2009), and language barriers serve as a significant challenge (Georgis, Gokiart, Ford, & Ali, 2014; Gomez & Diarrassouba, 2014; Perez & Holmes, 2010). This literature review highlights research on barriers facing ELL students and potential strategies to address these obstacles as noted by various scholars. This review will look specifically at parent engagement, teacher experience, and language barriers as well as documented strategies discovered in the literature to overcome these challenges such as district-wide approaches to professional development, student collaboration, and additional support methods.

### **Barriers to ELL Student Success**

Scholars agree that parent engagement is a challenge with ELL students because of varying cultural beliefs and expectations (Copeland, 2007; De Jong & Harper, 2005; Shim, 2013; Vera et al., 2012). According to Copeland (2007), “Barriers that may prevent involvement of parents of ELLs have been identified as language, cultural differences, work schedules, and lack of transportation” (p. 18). Copeland (2007) then expanded on the aforementioned concept of cultural differences by explaining that, “Parental

involvement in school...is not a universal expectation” (p. 67). Vera et al. (2012) offered an additional explanation for misunderstandings regarding the role of parent involvement due to cultural differences by explaining that many parents do not want “to interfere with how teachers do their jobs” (p. 186) and feel that communication would be disrespectful to the teacher.

Although scholars agreed that parent engagement is a challenge, they provide a variety of reasons to explain this issue. Scholars recognized a lack of resources as a factor but differed in the specific resources that were lacking (Cassity & Harris, 2000; Vera et al., 2012). Cassity and Harris (2000) cited transportation, lack of bilingual personnel, and limited time; however, Vera et al. (2012) noted childcare, money, and parent education as resources these parents lacked. Vera et al. (2012) asserted ELL parents are more apt to have “lower formal education levels” (p. 183) by American standards, despite their education back home. A negative school climate, explicitly negative attitudes towards ELL families, was noted by Araujo (2009) who contended, “School personnel tend to undervalue linguistically diverse families” (p. 120). Parents may feel less inclined to be involved in their child’s school life if they feel the school in which their child is enrolled doesn’t value them. An overall “lack of familiarity with aspects of U.S. schools” (p. 239) was another challenge indicated by Waterman (2008). Finally, Vera et al. (2012) and Waterman (2008) identified lack of English proficiency as an additional challenge that the other scholars did not explicitly state as an inhibitor of parent-teacher communication.

In regards to teacher experience as a barrier, many patterns appeared in the literature. To begin, many scholars in the research agree that content teachers lack the



training on cultural awareness and understanding to best instruct ELL students. In their study of teacher perceptions, Gomez and Diarrassouba (2014) found that “cultural awareness training did not adequately prepare [content teachers] to integrate cultural elements in their daily instructional practices” (p. 1). Teachers felt attempts to increase cultural awareness were not successful, which other scholars argue has created a deficit in instruction for ELL students in content courses. For instance, Lerner (2012) argues that “discriminatory practices on the part of teachers and peers [regardless of intention] increase the refugee students’ isolation [and that]...discrimination often stems from a lack of accurate information and from cultural misunderstanding” (Lerner, 2012, p. 13). Therefore, the research agrees that teacher experience, or lack of experience with culturally diverse students, contributes to lower levels of ELL student success.

Similarly, multiple scholars recognized that teachers lack the requisite knowledge of the language acquisition process. Batt (2008) who studied teachers in their approach to accommodating ELLs found that most felt ill prepared for the task (p. 1). Part of this perception comes from the limited amount of time invested in preparing teachers to meet the needs of this unique population. In fact, Reeves (2009) found that “12.5% of U.S. teachers have received 8 or more hours of recent training to teach students of limited English proficiency” (p. 131). With little instruction in how to accommodate these students, teachers found they were not confident in how to best teach ELLs. Reeves also said that teachers possess an unrealistic view of secondary, or even tertiary, language acquisition. Collier and Thomas (1989) elaborate on the time variations of language acquisition stating the language acquisition process takes a “number of years” (p. 35) and “depends on the student’s level of cognitive maturity in first language and subject

mastery in first language schooling” (p. 35). In Reeves’ (2009) study, data revealed that “71.7% teachers agreed that ESL students should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools” (p. 132). Many ELL instructors would argue meeting this expectation varies by the student depending on their L1 (native language) proficiency. Bialystok’s (1991) findings align with this belief, noting that some language learners experience a higher transference of academic and language skills if they received education in their L1. This discrepancy demonstrates how limited teacher experience and knowledge of the literature can create misconceptions about the language acquisition process.

Scholars, however, disagree on teacher perceptions of accommodating ELL students. While some research defended teacher interest in learning more about better instructing ELLs, other scholars believed teachers were more apathetic about the subject. For instance, Batt (2008) argued that the survey he completed on teacher perceptions showed that if given professional development on ELL, not many teachers desired information on “parent involvement (30 percent); ESL curriculum development (29 percent); Spanish language class (28 percent); first and second language literacy methods (26 percent); sheltered English instruction (25 percent); ESL methods (24 percent); and how to establish a newcomer center (24 percent)” (p. 5). Similarly, Walker-Dalhouse et al. (2009) and Reeves (2009) found that teachers were resistant to this type of professional development in general. Despite citing a lack of training, “nearly half of the teachers surveyed [by Reeves (2009)] were uninterested in receiving [ELL] training” (Reeves, 2009, p. 136). Similarly, Reeves (2009) also noted an “ambivalence toward professional development” attributed to: belief that ELL educators should be “primarily

responsible for educating ELLs,” general cynicism towards professional development initiatives, and the idea that “differentiated instruction for ELLs is inappropriate or ineffective” (p. 135). Walker-Dalhouse et al. (2009) agreed, stating that “while teachers demonstrated several misconceptions about the process of learning second languages and lacked adequate training to work with ELLs, almost half of the teachers indicated a lack of interest in receiving professional development in this area” (p. 338). Thus, while few teachers noted wanting more in terms of preparation for teaching ELL students, their overall interest in such development was inconsistent.

Numerous scholars cited language as another prominent barrier for both students and parents (Perez & Holmes, 2010; Georgis et al., 2014; Gomez & Diarrassouba, 2014).

For students, Perez and Holmes (2010) noted the importance of the “linguistic dimension” (p. 2) in a child’s success, meaning the level of English acquisition for each student impacts their success within the classroom. Georgis et al. (2014) acknowledged language as one of three primary barriers to parents being involved in schools.

Additionally, Gomez and Diarrassouba (2014) asserted the interconnectedness of language and culture, suggesting that these language barriers are also cultural barriers. In their study, Gomez and Diarrassouba (2014) identified language as one of five aspects of culture that may serve as a barrier to ELLs.

Scholars offered differing opinions on the complexity of this language barrier and ELL students’ acquisition of language (Lerner, 2012; Perez & Holmes, 2010; Rubinstein-Ávila & Fink, 2013). Rubinstein-Ávila and Fink (2013) believe that ELL students may acquire conversational skills quickly, but they still lack academic language proficiency that puts them at a disadvantage. A student may appear proficient because they can

participate in conversations, but their lack of academic proficiency hinders them from interacting meaningfully with the school curriculum. On the other hand, Lerner (2012) cited an additional social implication of a student's language acquisition stating that "children acquire language faster, they often become translators for their parents, and thus a role reversal can take place" (p. 10). In short, as a child reduces the language barrier at school, a different type of barrier may form at home.

### **Strategies for Building ELL Student Success**

Scholars vary on whether or not district-wide professional development is a beneficial strategy for building ELL student success. Batt (2008) argues the importance of professional development for teachers in resolving the insufficiencies recognized in supporting ELL students (p. 1). In order to build cultural awareness and understanding, Batt (2008) states that district-wide professional development methods are necessary to increase ELL success. Gomez and Diarrassouba (2014) disagree, based on their survey of teachers. They argue that their survey of teachers showed that most did not feel cultural awareness training was beneficial to their instruction of ELLs (p. 1). Again, teacher apathy limited the value of professional development in this regard. This disagreement in the research shows how professional development as a strategy is a contested issue overall.

Multiple sources cited the importance of collaboration among ELL students and native speakers as a device for language acquisition. Case (2015) found that students interacted and communicated in "often a creative, situated, and multidirectional process" (p. 12) when asked to collaborate. This collaboration between ELL students and their non-ELL peers promoted a dynamic learning experience for these students. Perez and

Holmes (2010) agreed that collaboration can also be used to improve language proficiency by suggesting “strategically designed grouping configurations. For instance, pairing a CLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) student with a more proficient English speaker often supports the CLD students in more fully participating in the understanding” (p. 33). By pairing ELL students with a more fluent or proficient peer, teachers can expect a deeper language understanding and greater participation of the ELL students. Finally, Walker-Dalhouse et al. (2009) went even further to suggest fostering “native literacy by encouraging collaborative grouping with other speakers of their native language” (p. 338). In other words, by pairing students with those of the same native language, teachers can promote collaboration in a more directed, beneficial way that is supported by the findings of Collier and Thomas (1989), who stressed the positive impact of L1 literacy on L2 acquisition. Through such collaborative methods, language acquisition can be more efficiently accomplished.

While the scholars all agree on the value of collaboration, there is variation in methodology. The research presents many different ways that collaboration can be integrated in the classroom to promote ELL student success. For instance, Hui-Yin (2009) completed a blogging study with ELLs, which determined that collaboration with pre-service teachers through writing was a valuable language acquisition tool. The author found that the pre-service teachers felt more confident about resolving “issues related to diversity in the classroom after participating” (p.5). In addition, Case (2015) had students create a video project through collaboration. She explored “how a group of refugee and immigrant high school students (ELLs and students who had exited ELL) negotiated their interaction while collaboratively creating a digital video” (p. 1). Additionally, Perez and

Holmes (2010) recommended utilizing students' native languages, suggesting that teachers "scaffold content-based academic vocabulary by pairing students who share a common native language so that academic terms can be translated when needed to support understanding" (p. 33). As these scholars show, the method of collaboration can vary from students blogging to how they are paired with others for vocabulary activities, demonstrating just how many methodologies are already in practice.

Some authors identified cultural scaffolding as being paramount for ELL student success in the classroom (De Jong and Harper, 2005; Perez & Holmes 2010). For example, Perez and Holmes (2010) believe that an ELL student's literacy is influenced by how the teacher builds on existing skills, cultural knowledge, and literacy levels (p. 3). Therefore, it is crucial for a teacher to learn what ELL students are capable of, what they already know of the new culture, and what the students are capable of learning.

Furthermore, De Jong & Harper (2005) explain that ELL students may have participated in their native countries' school classrooms differently than in their new educational setting. Therefore, it is important for teachers to scaffold "classroom participation" (p.109) for ELL students to ease into a new way of participating.

Along with cultural scaffolding, content scaffolding is also useful for helping ELL students, according to Rubinstein-Ávila and Fink (2013). Some content scaffolding strategies listed by Rubinstein-Ávila and Fink (2013) are: increased wait time, think-pair-share strategies, graphic organizers, visual aids and supports, as well as synonyms for content-specific words (p.32), and use of total physical response. Teachers who use content scaffolding strategies in their classroom will be able to help ELL students along with non-ELL students.

Scholars are in agreement that increasing awareness of cultures and personal biases is a pivotal step towards effective collaboration with ELL students and families (Cassity & Harris, 2000; Copeland, 2007; Eberly et al., 2007). Eberly et al. (2007) contend that effective relationships are built on “mutual trust and respect” (p. 7) for individuals and their cultures, which can be developed through cultural celebrations and blending norms (Cassity & Harris, 2000). Finally, Ester and Candace (2005) state, “Teachers must understand their own cultural identity and the cultural assumptions that underlie their instruction as well as those of their students and their families” (p. 109). This reflection on personal bias is essential to the success of ELL students (Copeland, 2007).

### **Discussion**

Through this review of the literature on ELL student success, the authors isolated some key findings. One such finding was that cultural awareness on the part of the teacher is essential to supporting ELL student success. Cassity and Harris (2000), Copeland (2007), and Eberly et al. (2007) all argued that by not understanding and appreciating a student’s culture, teachers limit their success. Additionally, the authors found that many teachers feel ill-equipped to support ELL students due to lack of training, resources, or interest. In their research, both Walker-Dalhouse et al. (2009) and Reeves (2009) agreed that teachers often feel inadequately trained or supported when it comes to accommodating ELL students. These key findings are essential in conducting further research on the topic.

The key barriers identified in the literature review served as starting points for areas of focus for the research project. For example, since multiple scholars cited the

cultural awareness of teachers as integral to the success of ELLs (Walker-Dalhouse et al., 2009; Reeves 2009), the cultural awareness of teachers was assessed through a survey and one-on-one interviews. Similarly, since teacher awareness of second language acquisition was cited as limited (Batt, 2008; Reeves, 2009; Walker-Dalhouse, 2009), the pre-existing knowledge of this process was also assessed in a focus group. Finally, since language was a significant barrier (Georgis et. al, 2014; Gomez & Diarrassouba, 2014; Perez & Holmes, 2010), student and teacher interviews were conducted to gauge student and teacher perceptions of the impact of language as a barrier to students' academic success.

### **Methodology**

The process of identifying the perceived academic needs of mainstreamed English Language Learners and their teachers required several steps. The time span during which these steps were conducted consisted of a six-week data collection process. The primary methods of research consisted of surveys administered to both educators and students, one-on-one interviews with students, follow up interviews with educators from each of the core (mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts) content areas, as well as documentation of student participants' prior letter grades in mainstream courses.

The student participants chosen for this study were from two secondary schools in the Upper Midwest. The students who participated in the study had previously received sheltered instruction from educators qualified to teach ELL students, but at the time of this study were no longer receiving sheltered instruction as a result of their increased English proficiency. These students were considered proficient in English as determined by their scores on the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-



State (ACCESS) test—the state-approved test used to measure the English proficiency of English language learners. Their grade levels varied from 9-12<sup>th</sup> grades, and their participation in the study was voluntary. (See Appendix A and B.)

The adult participants in the study were educators within the same two secondary schools as the students interviewed, and their participation was voluntary as well. (See Appendix C.) The adults surveyed were educators in core (mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts) and elective (physical education, music, art, family and consumer sciences, special education, and career and technical education) content areas. The survey was distributed to educators regardless of the number of years they had taught.

The first data collection tool consisted of two preliminary surveys that were disseminated simultaneously to educators and students. Although student and teacher data was collected concurrently, the data collection methods used for the adult participants are described first. During the first month of school, researchers electronically mailed a seventeen-question survey (see Appendix D) to educators at two secondary schools. The purpose of the educator survey was to gauge educators' confidence in working with and supporting exited English language learners as well as assess educators' cultural knowledge of the student populations.

The dissemination of the student survey differed from that of the educator survey. Students were contacted in person by researchers and given a paper survey. The eight-question student survey (see Appendix E) used student-friendly language and was voluntary. Student surveys were administered in person to allow students to clarify their understanding of the research goal and process with the researchers before providing

consent. The purpose of the student survey was to gauge students' confidence in mainstream classes, to determine their perceived areas of academic strengths and weaknesses, identify learning preferences, and ascertain knowledge they want their educators to possess.

Upon completion of the survey, educators of core classes and students were asked if they were interested in participating in an interview regarding the research. Educators who were asked to participate in the interviews were selected based on content area and their interest in further discussing the research topic. Researchers wanted the core content areas to be represented within the study to ensure more comprehensive results. Educators indicated their interest in participating in interviews via email communication with the researchers. Educators were told about the interviews in [an email upon completion of the survey](#). [If students expressed interest, they were given an active consent form. \(See Appendix A.\)](#) [A passive consent form was sent to the parents/guardians of student participants. \(See Appendix B.\)](#) If educators expressed interest, they were given [a consent form. \(See Appendix C.\)](#) The active and passive consent forms given to students were written in simplified English to ensure that students and their parents/guardians understood the information being communicated. Students and educators were asked to return consent forms within two days of their dissemination. If participants consented, they provided their availability to the investigator at their school. Once all forms were received, the investigators communicated interview times to the participants.

After receiving consent from both educators and students, the second data collection tool was implemented. Researchers used one-on-one interviews with both

educators and students to gain more insight into the needs of both students and their educators. One-on-one interviews with educators took about fifteen minutes and consisted of five general questions to guide the interview. (See Appendix F.) Educators were asked follow-up questions that were not pre-planned if their responses required further explanation or elaboration. The interviews lasted 15-30 minutes, depending on the need for follow-up questions.

Student interviews were similar to educator interviews in that they took about fifteen minutes in length; ranging in length from twenty to thirty minutes, and were comprised of nine questions. (See Appendix G.) Researchers facilitating each interview were selected based on relationships with the student. One researcher was present for each interview. For example, if a researcher was currently the teacher for one of the students, they did not facilitate said student's interview. After a student consented to participate, they were given the name of their facilitator. Students were given the option to request a different facilitator if they chose. Although researchers initially planned to audio record student interviews, students repeatedly cited discomfort with the audio recording, so researchers chose to write student answers as the interviews occurred. Some interviews were not recorded using audio due to subject preference.

The final data collection tool utilized in this study was a grade tracking form (see Appendix H). Students who consented to participate in the interviews gave permission to researchers to access their academic transcripts and record the grades received in mainstream classes (taught by educators not endorsed to teach English Language Learners but who have a license to teach regular content classes such as English, science, math, history, etc. with ELL students who have exited structured ELL classrooms). The

grades were recorded with a tally system, and the document in no way indicated which tallies were representative of which participants to ensure anonymity.

After six weeks of research and data collection, researchers compiled all data with the shared purpose of identifying and analyzing key findings and trends within the data. Researchers were then able to formulate a summary of their findings and common trends amongst student and adult participants.

### **Analysis of Data**

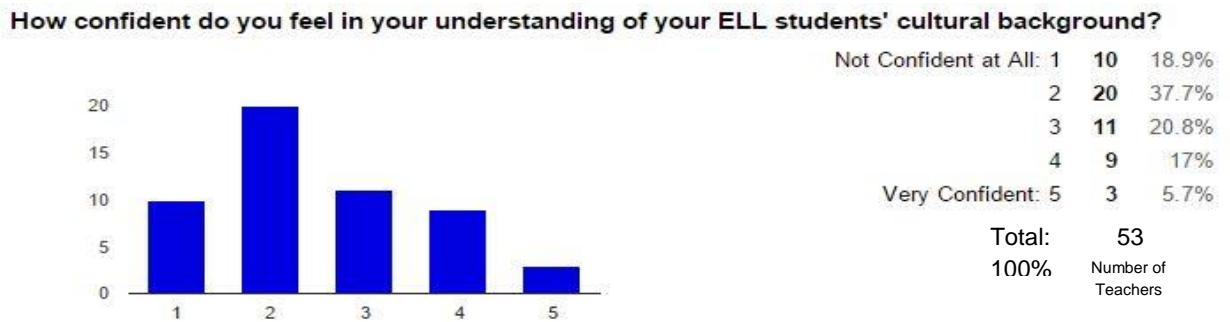
Our collected data is primarily built on two groups of focus: students and teachers. In order to gather information from both perspectives, we used a variety of methods, beginning with a survey sent to 149 teachers in both high schools within the district. Fifty-four teachers responded to the survey. After reviewing the results from this survey, we pursued follow up interviews with five veteran teachers of different content areas for further information. To gather information from students, we distributed surveys to students and then explained the option of additional participation in our research. Thirty-two surveys were distributed and seven surveys were completed. After the surveys, we conducted one-on-one interviews with eight students in which students were asked questions about their experiences after being mainstreamed. We supplemented this data with high-school transcripts for each student. Using these methods, we gathered information about a wide range of needs and opinions.

### **Results of Educator Surveys**

The survey aimed to gather information on teacher's familiarity with ELL populations as well as the methods of accommodation. Teachers were asked to consider what they know about their ELL students' cultural backgrounds, how they support them

through accommodations, and what challenges they face in helping ELL students find success. From this data, different patterns emerged.

In regards to teachers’ understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds, a clear deficit emerged. When asked “How confident do you feel in your understanding of your ELL students’ cultural backgrounds?” over 50% of responders felt they were in the 1-3 range, on a 5-point scale with 1 denoting “Not Confident At All” and 5 denoting “Very Confident” (Figure 1). This response shows that while a small number of teachers feel competent in their students’ background, at large, the surveyed group felt they lacked understanding. In order to clarify and quantify this pattern, we also asked how familiar teachers were with different cultural concepts commonly attributed to ELL students.



*Figure 1. Teacher understanding of ELL students' cultural background.*

This aspect of the survey (Figure 2) narrowed down the generalization of “cultural background” to key concepts. The list consisted of religious terminology and practices, holidays, and traditions. Educators were asked to check the box of any concept they felt they possessed enough understanding of to explain to a colleague. These data revealed that teachers who were surveyed did, in fact, lack information or understanding on a variety of topics. For example, the only concept that garnered more than 50% recognition

from the pool of teachers was the dietary needs of Muslim students. These teachers’ ability to recognize terms only decreased for the rest of the list. Responses that were less than 50% included: 45.5% for Ramadan, 39.4% for prayer times, 39.4% for kosher, 36.4% for hijab, 21.2% for general understanding of events that led to Somali relocation in the U.S., 15.2% for general understanding of events that led to Nepali relocation in the U.S., 15.2% for halal, 9.1% for Eid, 9.1% for Diwali, and 3% for tika. This finding reinforced the teachers’ perception that they lacked understanding and also identified particular areas of weakness. For instance, Eid, a holiday which recently led to the postponement of a soccer game out of respect for Muslim athletes, was only recognized by three of the teachers surveyed. It is clear that teachers not only feel ill equipped to deeply understand ELL students’ background, but they lack knowledge of key cultural terms and concepts.

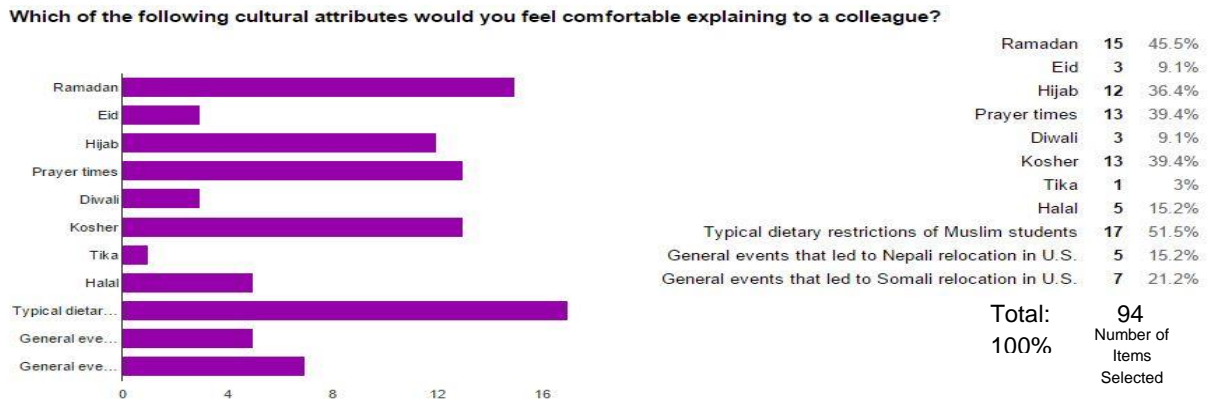
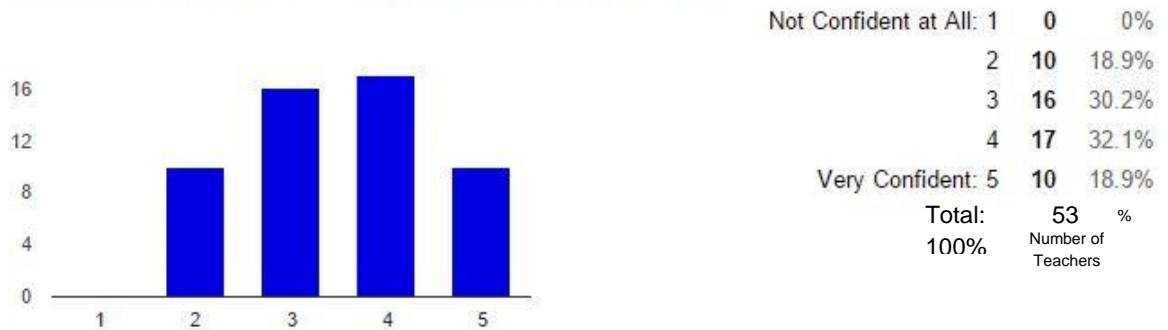


Figure 2. Teacher awareness of cultural practices and terminology.

Our survey showed that teachers felt more comfortable with accommodating for these students. In Figure 3, one can see a clear change from Figure 1. Whereas in Figure 1, 18.9% of teachers surveyed felt they were “Not Confident At All” with their understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds, none of them asserted the same in Figure 3 in regards to their ability to accommodate for ELL students. Furthermore, the

largest group (at 32.1%) placed themselves at level four, showing greater confidence in how they differentiate for ELL students. When asked to define how they make these accommodations, teachers were able to recognize many different ways they adapt curriculum and instruction for their students. For instance, 80% of the teachers practice slowing down and repeating instructions as an accommodation for mainstreamed ELL students. The degree to which teachers felt confident using different accommodations was much greater than their understanding of cultural practices and terminology. By considering these data side-by-side, we recognize that while teachers do not feel confident in their understanding of ELL students’ cultural background, they do feel competent in accommodating for these students.

**How comfortable do you feel accommodating for ELL students?**



*Figure 3. Teacher confidence with accommodating for ELL students.*

Nevertheless, there were still common challenges that teachers found in leading mainstreamed ELL students to success. One challenge that we specifically uncovered in the survey was the engagement of ELL parents. Most teachers felt little confidence in engaging ELL parents in the learning process (Figure 4). Furthermore, fewer teachers placed themselves at elevated levels of confidence. This confirmed the finding that engaging ELL parents presents challenges for the majority of teachers. One solution, the use of translators, was also assessed. The majority of teachers surveyed (55.8%) stated

that they had never utilized a translator as part of their teaching practice to engage ELL parents at parent teacher conferences, calls home to voice concern, or back-to-school orientation night. Therefore, it may be the lack of utilization of resources, such as translators, which limits teachers’ comfort with engaging ELL parents in the education of their children.

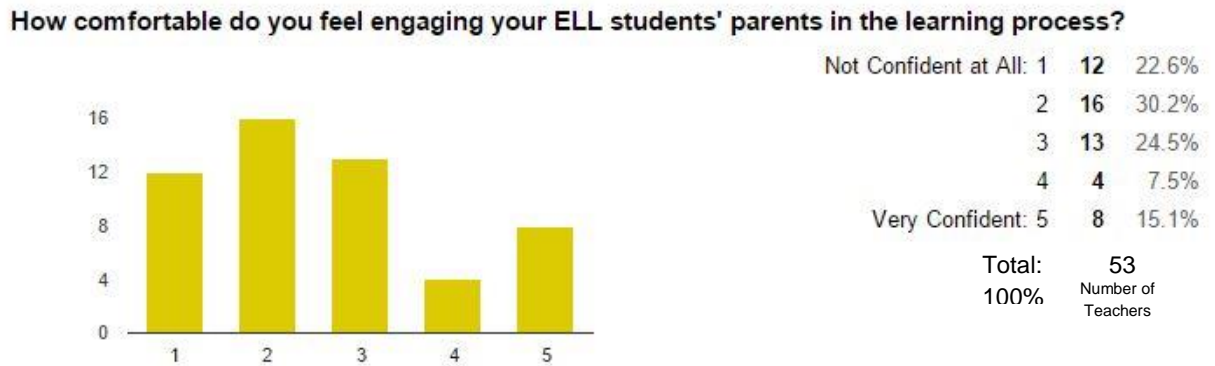


Figure 4. Teacher engagement of ELL parents.

**Results of Educator Interviews**

To deepen our understanding of these results, we also set up individual interviews with five veteran teachers in the district. In these interviews, we learned of a disparity between the two high schools within the district in terms of allocated resources and support for ELL students. Both teachers from the second high school in the district identified a lack of support in their building. Teacher 1, a veteran English teacher in this building, argued that this is detrimental to ELL success, saying, “We [must] develop a strong ELL program here...because I am not trained or experienced enough to fully understand and therefore aide my ELL students. I need the help of trained professionals to guide and assist me.” Another English teacher, Teacher 2, agreed that further support for teachers of ELL students was needed at the second high school. She said that she “would love professional development or a ‘bridge’ person who could show [her] what



the needs are for the ELL population” and added that she feels that the “only teachers truly meeting the needs are those that teach specifically to this group.” In other words, teachers felt a lack of support in how to best accommodate and serve their mainstreamed ELL students. However, responses from the other high school were more confident.

Teacher 3, who teaches history at the first high school, recognized many areas of positive growth in the ELL program and support for students who exited the program. As he put it, the first high school “does a great deal for students exited from the ELL program; students receive both academic and emotional support from the ELL program.” Teacher 5 went on to identify the use of closed study halls and support classes as methods of accommodation for exited ELLs. The different perspective garnered from the two different high schools demonstrates that some challenges might be augmented if a school does not provide proper support.

The follow-up interviews also provided more insight on parent-teacher interaction. As the survey showed, overall most teachers were not engaging parents in the learning process with confidence. When revisiting the topic of parent engagement in the individual interviews, much the same was mirrored. However, teachers were able to describe some of the ways they have tried to engage parents in the past. For instance, Teacher 4 said that his interaction with parents is mostly limited to notes he sends home as positive reinforcement for students. Meanwhile, Teacher 3 and Teacher 1 noted that they engage with parents during parent-teacher conferences. Otherwise, the engagement of parents seems to drop off as every teacher interviewed noted that they have had very little interaction with the parents of their mainstreamed ELL students.

Another pattern that arose in the interview data was a shared belief that investing in the child's emotional needs was beneficial with the ELL population. As Teacher 3 has found, "exited students require a strong personal connection to have initial success in the class." Also Teacher 3, a track coach at the first high school, noted that he maintains a personal connection with his athletes, deliberately tending to his ELL students' emotional needs. Teacher 4 shared a similar philosophy, noting how he truly values his exited ELL students, making sure to greet them enthusiastically and treats them like their non-ELL classmates, making sure to visit with them every day. Both teachers, along with Teacher 5, practiced relationship building and invested time in understanding their ELL students' emotional needs in order to best meet the needs of their ELL students. In connection with our student surveys, this approach seems effective.

### **Results of Student Surveys**

The results of ELL student surveys and interviews offered great insight into students' general feelings upon exiting the ELL program. Fourteen students completed the exit surveys. To begin, students seemed to have a sense of understanding in their courses but found they could still use help. When asked if they understand the lessons in their mainstream classes, 83% of students agreed with the statement while 17% strongly agreed. No students disagreed with this statement, which showed a sense of confidence in their own ability, but 100% of students polled said that they would still like help in their mainstream courses with 50% agreeing and 50% strongly agreeing. When given the statement "My English is good, but sometimes it is hard for me to understand everything in class," students ranged from the statement "I am Unsure" to "I Strongly Agree." Here again, we recognized a sense of confidence while students may still struggle.

These surveys also assessed students' perceptions of what teachers do to help them. Students commonly said it was helpful when their teachers explained concepts slowly and thoroughly. At the same time, 87% of students stated that it was hard to learn when teachers spoke quickly or didn't offer additional explanations. In other words, the common thread was that the manner in which information is presented is incredibly impactful on how successful students feel. Similarly, students agreed that they want teachers to show interest in their background and culture.

When asked in an open question format on the survey what students desired in their teachers, six of the eight participants cited the need for teachers to take interest in them and their background. They voiced that they wanted their teachers to show interest in where they are from and the culture they have brought with them. In addition, students wanted their teachers to know that given time, they will understand through hard work. These desires parallel what Teachers 3, 4, and 5 mentioned in their interviews: that developing a connection with ELLs is essential to their success.

The final information in the survey was on the strategies utilized to help students find success, which they identified from a list provided for them. This section of the survey showed that 83% of ELLs wanted to at least try something themselves and 67% enjoyed working in small groups. These findings assert a desire for a certain amount of independence as well as interaction with their peers. In contrast, only 17% felt they learned best when the class read together; 67% preferred to read on their own, a 50% increase in preference for independent reading. Again, this showed that same interest in developing independent skills.

### **Results of Student Interviews**

In order to gain insight into the experience of those exited ELL students, we set up individual interviews with eight students. In these sessions, we talked to students about their strengths and weaknesses as well as the methods used by their teachers in their mainstream classes. There were many commonalities in the students' responses. When asked about the classes these ELLs found most challenging, they responded that those courses which required greater memorization and relied on content-heavy methods were more difficult for them. Student 1 stated the following about her math class: "Sometimes there are a lot of formulas to memorize and I do the homework and study but when I get to the test I struggle and I feel like I forget everything." Every student indicated that those classes requiring more memorization of them were more challenging. For Student 2, it was memorizing the laws for government class. For Student 5, it was recalling facts and dates for World History. Meanwhile, most of them indicated they found more success in elective and math classes where ample practice was offered.

Another area of commonality with students was their tendency to rely on their teachers for support. All but one of the students interviewed, Student 2, stated that they first go to a teacher when they are having trouble. For instance, Student 6 turned to either her primary teacher or her closed study hall teacher. Student 6 and Student 1 also referred to looking to their peers for further instructions or information. Therefore, a reliance on interpersonal means of support was the obvious preference.

Finally, with the student interviews, students noted that effective teachers utilized both audio and visual tools to support instruction. With the acquisition of new language, such methods help reinforce ideas through multiple approaches. Student 1 pointed out that her "math teacher [wrote] on the board in different colors to help.... [and her]

English teacher acts things out.” Similarly, Student 6 identified the use of graphic organizers as beneficial and Student 3 valued the use of powerpoints to support lectures. The common thread in these accommodations was the use of visual tools to support ELLs. Students also noted how the use of audio can be helpful. Student 6 was particularly grateful for the audio provided by her English teacher to assist her in understanding challenging texts. By utilizing visual and audio tools, teacher were able to support ELLs in a way they found valuable. These data, collected through interviews, explained some of the trends we found in their grades.

### **Results of GPA Analysis**

We also reviewed the transcripts of the student participants to gain further insight into their academic achievement once exited. From their transcripts, we collected the number of each letter grade received by those students for all classes once they had exited from the ELL program. The results are shown in Figure 5. When analyzing the different content areas, there seemed to be few commonalities across different courses. Two courses that showed similar results were social studies and science courses. In these classes, student scores were more polarized. In social studies, 47% earned either an A or a B with 39% receiving a D or F. Then in science, 42% received an A or B while 58% earned a D or F. This shows that in these courses students either succeed or fail with near equal amounts at either end of the grading spectrum, which as our student interviews showed, might be the result of the curriculum being heavily dependent on memorization for assessments and conceptual content. These courses ask students to recall specific details such as dates, individual people and their contributions, and content-specific

vocabulary terms, something that multiple students pointed out as a challenge in their one-on-one interviews.

	A	B	C	D	F	SA
Math	9	7	11	5	1	2
Language Arts	1	10	1		1	
Social Studies	6	2	2	1	6	
Science	3	5		5	6	
Electives	21	7	4	5	1	14
Totals	40	31	18	16	15	16

Figure 5. ELL student transcript data.

In the other content areas, patterns were more unique to each course. For instance, in language arts the majority of students (77%) earned Bs. In fact, 92% were at or above proficiency (received A, B, or C) in language arts. Approximately 8% of students were at proficiency and 85% were above (received A or B). Furthermore, in math, excluding two students who received SA (Satisfactory) grades, 48% exceeded proficiency (received A) while 82% were at or above proficiency (received B or C). Therefore, these two courses showed better results with a higher number of students achieving proficiency.

Overall, the data proved to both reinforce our prior perceptions as well as highlight new information. Our data from teachers, in particular, confirmed what we already believed – that teachers feel unsupported in working with ELL students in

regards to staffing and training and also lack the knowledge of many students' cultural background. However, this research also emphasized the importance of getting to know ELL students. Similarly, this idea was expressed in the student surveys. Students appreciated when their teachers would take interest in them and their culture. From the student transcripts and student interviews, we also learned that ELL students struggle with content-driven classes the most. This was a finding that varied from our prior professional observations as we had anticipated similar results from all classes. Collectively, our research offered insightful information into the perceptions of both ELL students and the teachers that serve them.

### **Action Plan**

Researchers aggregated and analyzed data to identify implications for future teaching practice and additional research. These findings are discussed below.

### **Implications for Practice**

From our research, as described above, multiple implications for the classroom became apparent. After reviewing the student interviews, surveys, and transcript data, we recognize that classes that focus on content and memorization are much more challenging for ELL students. This highlights the importance of prioritizing content so as to not overwhelm mainstreamed ELL students. As Student 3 said in his interview, sometimes it is "just too much to learn for the test." Therefore, it would be prudent to limit vocabulary and facts. Furthermore, using tests which just assess students' ability to recall facts from texts not only limits the depth of the learning, but also adds an additional challenge for mainstreamed ELL students. The method of presenting information can also be modified to better meet the needs of these students.

To reinforce ideas and information, we can use visual and audio tools to better support mainstreamed ELL students. Nearly every student interviewed for this research mentioned something their teacher does to support them which falls under this category. With Student 6, for example, it was the audiobooks provided by her English teacher. As English teachers ourselves, we recognize that this promotes the necessity of such support. As we read different texts in the classroom, we can provide audio versions to help mainstreamed ELLs find more success. While we have recognized the value of audio support through our use of them in our respective classrooms, this research reminds us that such tools should also be provided for shorter texts, and not just novels read in class.

\_\_\_\_\_ The effects of utilizing such tools can be augmented by an investment in getting to know mainstreamed ELL students on an individualized level—for example, inquiring about their experiences prior to coming to America, learning about their interests, or asking about their future career plans. One of our students surveyed put it best when he said that he just wanted his teachers to know “that English is not [his] first or second language, and to [not expect him] to understand every word” that is said in class. The research showed that there is a consistent desire for teachers to know more about their ELL students and their culture. This desire was shown in the exited ELL student survey written responses, shared during some of the student interviews, and reinforced by the teachers’ observations. By investing time into getting to know a mainstreamed ELL student’s background, teachers develop a better relationship between teacher and students. Teachers 3, 4, and 5 all saw the benefit of developing rapport with mainstreamed ELLs, which several students echoed in their survey responses and individual interviews.



We also recognized some larger implications for our schools as a whole. In reviewing the teacher interviews, we found the lack of resources for mainstreamed ELLs to be a common concern with multiple teachers. Teacher 1 identified the issue rather succinctly, saying, “I am not trained or experienced enough to fully understand and therefore aide my ELL students.” Further support for the ELL department in each school would lead to teachers having more confidence when accommodating for mainstreamed ELLs. Teacher 2 even suggested a “bridge person” to really work one-on-one with teachers to help them better support mainstreamed ELLs.

Another common concern among the teachers interviewed was in regards to engaging ELL parents in the learning process. Currently, as confirmed in our research, parent engagement is limited to the occasional note home, as described by Teacher 4, or parent teacher conferences. While this may be sufficient for some students and even some mainstreamed ELL students, those that struggle could utilize more support. In addition, methods of communication with parents could be limited due to language barriers. By making resources, like translators to assist in parent communication, more readily available to teachers, the relationship between parents of mainstreamed ELLs and teachers could greatly improve.

Our research has shown possible implications for course offerings as well. Especially when reviewing the transcript information, we recognized that classes which already had interventions in place (English and math) resulted in higher grades. For instance, 77% of mainstreamed ELL students were at a B or higher in English. In the last few years, English interventions have been offered for all levels of need, with many mainstreamed ELLs getting greater support. Meanwhile, grades in history and science,

two core classes that currently have much more limited interventions, proved to be more challenging for students. Therefore, it would be wise to begin considering interventions for these two content areas. Hopefully, results similar to English and math could be implemented with such efforts.

### **Future Research**

There are several opportunities for further research of this topic. First, as a result of the small scale of available data (less than twenty exited ELLs in both schools), researchers would suggest increasing the data pool of students. Instead of limiting participants to those who have exited the ELL program, students who are currently receiving ELL services, but are enrolled in at least one mainstreamed course could also be surveyed.

Additionally, specific content-area research is recommended, especially in science and social studies since these were the areas in which students reported struggles and student grades reflected these struggles as well. Researchers recommend an action-based approach to further study the needs of exited ELL students in these core content classes. For example, the implementation of vocabulary supports and vocabulary-specific strategies would be recommended since many subjects cited vocabulary memorization as a difficulty. Overall, additional research is necessary to determine the supports needed for the content areas in which many mainstreamed ELL students continue to struggle. Such efforts are essential in the improvement of exited ELL support.

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Appendix A

Focus Group/Interview Consent Form for Students

**Focus Group/Interview Consent Form**

I am a teacher, but I am also a student! I am working on my Master’s degree at St. Catherine’s University. As part of my schoolwork, I am working on a research project, and I would appreciate your help.

I am working with two other teachers to find out how to help all students learn. Since you are now mainstreamed, you have shown that you can communicate in more than one language! Our goal is to make sure that teachers are doing the best they can to support your learning.

If you are reading this form, that means you have already helped us by taking a short survey. We would like to learn more from you by interviewing you and others about your experiences at school. This interview should only take a period of your time, and we will work with your schedule. We will not share your name with others unless you give us permission to do so, which means you can be completely honest. If you chose to help us, your name will be entered into a drawing for free prom tickets for you and a guest!

After the interviews, there will be one more opportunity to help us out. The more you help, the more times your name will be entered to win the prize! We appreciate you taking the time to read this, and we hope that you will help us with our research!

Before you agree to help us, we want to make sure you understand some important information. First, there are few risks involved in helping us. You will lose some of your free time and you may need to talk about a time in class when you weren’t happy; however, helping us will help us make sure that teachers are doing the best they can do! Second, participation in this research study is voluntary. That means it is your choice, and, if you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time. Finally, any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission; your results will be kept confidential.

If you have and questions or concerns, feel free to email me at [bbostad@west-fargo.k12.nd.us](mailto:bbostad@west-fargo.k12.nd.us) or come down to my office in 106G. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739 or [jsschmitt@stkate.edu](mailto:jsschmitt@stkate.edu).

YES, I would like to help by being interviewed.	➡	Thank you! Please sign the bottom of this page!
NO, I do NOT want to help by being interviewed.	➡	That’s okay! You can give this page back or recycle it!

I DO want to be included in this research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Appendix B

Consent Form for Students' Parents or Guardians

Dear Families,

I am a teacher at West Fargo High School, but I am also a student! I am going to school at St. Catherine University to get a Master's degree. As a final project, I am doing research in our school.

I am working with other teachers to study how to best teach students who have EXITED the ELL program. These students have shown they can communicate in more than one language, and we want to make sure they are given the support they need to succeed in school.

We will be interviewing students to learn about their time in class. We want to know what is going well and what they might want more help with. Our goal is to make sure these students succeed! We will use the information they give us to make sure we are supporting all students the best that we can! This will take no more than 2 hours of time with your child. This project has very few risks including: 1) loss of time, 2) loss of confidentiality if the student chooses to have their name used, and/or 3) the stress of talking about difficult classes; however the benefit of this project is that we can use the information from these students to help teachers understand how to help them to succeed.

This study is voluntary which means your child does not have to participate if they do not want to. Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission; your results will be kept confidential. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739 or [jsschmitt@stkate.edu](mailto:jsschmitt@stkate.edu).

YES, I am okay with my child's data in the study	⇒	Thank you! You do NOT have to sign this form!
NO, I do NOT want my child's data in the study	⇒	That's okay! Sign the bottom of this page and send it back to class!

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [bbostad@west-fargo.k12.nd.us](mailto:bbostad@west-fargo.k12.nd.us) or call me at 701-356-2050.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brita Bostad

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

-----  
I do NOT want my child's data to be included in this study. Only sign this form if you do NOT want your child to be included in this research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix C

## Survey Participation Request for Teachers

Hello All!

I am in the process of completing my masters with Steph Cwikla (Sheyenne High School) and Jake Kienzle (Discovery Middle School). We are doing our final research project on the needs of mainstreamed English Language Learners and their teachers. We want to identify supports that these students and their teachers need to be successful. If you could take 10 minutes to complete the anonymous **survey** below, it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for your help in our research!

If you feel you have additional insight to provide for our research feel free to email me!

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1N545-kFZWXVZe-ZC7DL63iJRd5gxhXZqwt1CDEexOU/viewform?usp=send\\_form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1N545-kFZWXVZe-ZC7DL63iJRd5gxhXZqwt1CDEexOU/viewform?usp=send_form)

**Brita Bostad**

**ELL** English Language Arts

**ELL** Case Manager G-Hh

Junior Class Advisor

West Fargo High School

*~Every child deserves a champion- an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be. ~Rita Pierson*

Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, copy, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

## Appendix D Teacher Survey

### Teaching Recently Mainstreamed ELL Students

Stephanie Cwikla (SHS), Jacob Kienzle (Discovery MS), and Brita Bostad (WFHS) are currently pursuing their Master's degrees at St. Catherine's University. As part of their final research project they are focusing on identifying the needs of mainstreamed English Language Learners and their teachers. The goal of the survey is to supply us with information to increase supports for faculty and students. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and results will remain anonymous. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

\* Required

Do you understand that completion of this survey is voluntary and anonymous? \*

- Yes
- No

What content area do you teach?

- ELA
- Math
- Social Studies
- Science
- Elective
- Physical Education

Describe your teaching status.

- New (0-5 years)
- Experienced (6-15 years)
- Veteran (16 and over)

I have worked, or am working, with mainstreamed ELLs.

- Yes
- No

Off the top of your head, what countries do the ELL students in your classroom come from?

How comfortable do you feel accommodating for ELL students?

1 2 3 4 5

Not Confident at All      Very Confident

Which of the following strategies/modifications have you used to help meet ELL students' learning needs in the last two weeks?

(Check all that apply)

- skeleton notes
- slow down and repeat instructions
- modify linguistic complexity
- add visual support
- small-group instruction
- offer note taking-assistance
- pre-teach, limit and/or simplify vocabulary
- provide copy of teacher notes
- primary language support
- preferential seating
- hands-on activities

Which of the following do you use in assessments?

(Check all that apply)

- Multiple Choice
- Short Answer
- True or False
- Essay
- Matching

!

Other:

How comfortable do you feel engaging your ELL students' parents in the learning process?

1 2 3 4 5

Not Confident at All      Very Confident

How often, if ever, do you use a translator to improve communication with parents of an ELL student?

- Once a week
- Once a month
- Once a year
- Never

What weaknesses or challenges, if any, have you identified as predictable in your ELL students abilities in each of the following areas (reading, writing, understanding oral communication)?

Do you feel your mainstreamed ELL students have the necessary skills to be successful in mainstream classes?

1 2 3 4 5

No      Yes

Which of the following cultural attributes would you feel comfortable explaining to a colleague?

(Check all that apply)

- Ramadan
- Eid
- Hijab
- Prayer times
- Diwali
- Kosher
- Tika
- Halal
- Typical dietary restrictions of Muslim students
- General events that led to Nepali relocation in U.S.
- General events that led to Somali relocation in U.S.

How confident do you feel in your understanding of your ELL students' cultural background?

1 2 3 4 5

Not Confident at All      Very Confident

What do you think mainstreamed ELL students need to achieve academic success?

Have you received any training to meet the needs of English Language Learners?

(How much coursework or PD have you had to meet the needs of ELLS?)

!

Which of the following information resources would be of interest to you regarding the needs of English Language Learners?

(Check all that apply.)

- Professional Development Session
- Book Study
- Web Seminar
- Informational Packet/Brochure
- Tips via Email
- Other:

Appendix E

Exited Student

Survey[r3]

Active Consent: This survey is completely voluntary. You do not have to take this survey. The results of this survey will be used to improve supports for students and teachers. Your survey will be kept confidential unless you give permission for your identity to be released. If you answer the questions below, you are giving consent to the researchers to use your answers as data. If you DO NOT want to have your answers used as data, DO NOT answer the questions below.

**Exited Student Survey**

**Directions:** Answer each question by checking the box for the answer that best matches how you feel about each statement.

	<b>I Strongly Agree</b>	<b>I Agree</b>	<b>I am Unsure</b>	<b>I Disagree</b>	<b>I Strongly Disagree</b>
1. I usually understand the lessons in my mainstream classes.					
2. I would still like help in my mainstream classes.					
3. My English is good, but sometimes it is hard for me to understand everything in class.					

4. The thing my teachers do that makes learning the easiest is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. The thing my teachers do that makes learning the hardest is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. One way the school could help me learn is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. One thing I wish all teachers new about me is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. I learn best when I (check all that you agree with)

- watch a video about the lesson
- work in a small group
- can try something myself
- listen to a lecture (when a teacher talks and students listen/take notes)
- read together with the class
- read on my own
- do an activity online

Appendix F

Teacher Follow-Up Interview Questions

Teacher Follow-Up Interview Questions

1. How are we meeting the needs of exited ELLs?
2. What needs are more difficult to meet?
3. How would you describe your interaction with these students and their families?
4. Do you feel confident in teaching this population?
5. What supports would be beneficial for you when teaching this population?

Appendix G  
Student One-on-One Interview Questions

1. What is your favorite class? What do you like about it?
  
2. What is your most challenging class? What makes it hard?
  
3. How much time do you spend on homework on an average night? Describe what you do with that time?
  
4. When you are confused about something in class, what do you usually do about that? If you don't do that, why don't you?
  
5. Do you find writing challenging in your classes? Explain.
  
6. Do you find reading challenging in your classes? Explain.
  
7. Do you find the information difficult to understand in your classes? Explain.
  
8. How would you describe your relationship with your teachers?
  
9. What are things that your teacher does or could do to help you be successful?



Appendix H  
Grade Tracking Form

MAINSTREAMED GRADE DATA 1

	A	B	C	D	F
<b>Math</b>					
<b>Language Arts</b>					
<b>Social Studies</b>					
<b>Science</b>					
<b>Electives</b>					