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The University of San Francisco

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND STRATEGIC SCHOOLING FOR ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNER STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

A Dissertation Presented
to
The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies
Organization and Leadership Program

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by

Silvia Ramirez

San Francisco
May 2009

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I dedicate this dissertation to Father John Griffin. Without the spiritual guidance bestowed upon me, it would not have been possible to complete this work. It is also, with great honor, that I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Damaso Ramirez and my mother, Marta Saravia. They were my inspiration for doing this project. After their arrival to the United States, I realized how much they worked to become successful in the United States without having had formal education. They learned to speak English and kept the hope of the American dream alive not only for themselves, but also for my four brothers, Jose, Eduardo, Roberto, David, and me. I also would like to thank all of my aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and grandchild Giovanni.

In addition to my father and mother, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my immediate family – my loving husband Art, Nati, Ricky, Vicky, Shawn, and Giovanni. They were very patient and loving during all of my trips to San Francisco, long nights on the computer, and stressful moments. They have inspired me to be a better human being.

The work on this dissertation would not have been possible without the assistance of each of my former teachers and former students. In all of my years of education, the spirit of their wisdom has motivated me to become a better educator, even when I doubted myself. This dissertation is dedicated to all of the people who have believed that someday they could learn English and make changes for themselves.

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

Tactical interventions to improve the education and academic achievement of English Language Learners continue to be an ongoing necessity within school systems. Since the passage of Proposition 227, the English only movement, in California in 1996, the challenge to effectively educate English Language Learners has become a focal point among researchers, policymakers and stakeholders who aim to increase the academic skills of all students and reduce the achievement gap between minority and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts. Prior to Proposition 227, the research had been focused primarily on second language learners and language minority students (Linguanti, 2004).

As a result of the on-going research on English Language Learners, the Strategic Schooling Model (Parker, 2006a), is one of the tactical interventions being applied to improve the academic performance of English Language Learner students. Due to the growing numbers of English Language Learners in California, use of the Strategic Schooling Model could prove beneficial in improving Academic Performance Index scores. The Strategic Schooling Model has shown that a school system can substantively improve student achievement through collaboration, targeted goals, feedback, and data-driven decisions. Little research has been done, to date, on the Strategic Schooling Model. The focus of this study is entirely on that model.

The challenge of improving the achievement level of English Language Learners is best addressed with the findings of current research, sound policy implementation, and

inclusion of the voices of both teachers and parents. To date, many of the reform efforts have not yielded the results expected by many stakeholders. Educational reform movements necessitate that both teachers and parents maximize their collaborative efforts in educating children.

The Strategic Schooling Model has been “responsible for higher than average gains in student achievement as measured by annual state assessments in California” (Parker, 2006a, p. 1). The Strategic Schooling Model is organized into four domains. The four areas are: (1) target, (2) feedback, (3) know-how, and (4) context. The four areas are universal elements in educational organizations. The Strategic Schooling Model suggests methods to improve both school and classroom targets, maximize feedback, increase know-how and create “a more supportive, functional context in which to operate” (Parker, 2006a, p. 1).

The concepts of the Strategic Schooling Model can be defined as: (1) targets – identifying students who are at risk, (2) feedback - providing feedback both to the students through test-chats and to the teachers with observation checklists, (3) know-how – acknowledging the expertise of both students and teachers, and (4) context – identifying the curricular areas which need to be addressed in order to improve academic skills.

It is important to examine several perspectives when utilizing the Strategic Schooling Model. The research shows a deficit model and points to an array of gaps, recommended strategies, and failed implementation attempts (Marzano, 2005; Reeves, 2004; Shope, 2008). There is a dearth of research available on the implementation, effectiveness, and evaluation of the Strategic Schooling Model. This is the reason why this study is useful to administrators and policymakers. The study is useful to researchers,

policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parent groups who are working to improve schools and eliminate the achievement gap between minority and low income disadvantaged students and their white counterparts.

For the past twenty years, there has been a continuum of intervention change strategies in school reform efforts. These intervention strategies have included comprehensive staff development with teacher initiated reforms, a team approach to committee and grade level work, managing by memo, and finally, the professional learning community approach using data-driven decisions and standards-based curriculums. The intervention focus is now for in-school, rather than out-of-school and after-school options. Interventions are set up for students who are at risk of failing the curriculum. However, many of these interventions lack a systematic format (Rothstein, 2007).

The leading researchers in the area of educational organizational change have a series of steps which must be followed to obtain a systemic change. Marzano (2005), Reeves (2004), and Shupe (2008) are the foremost authorities on the theories of educational change, assuming that teachers will collaborate naturally. The need for collaboration is essential in future reform efforts. It is important that educational organizations, in seeking effectual change, look at structured models which focus on improving the effectiveness of the overall organization.

Statement of the Problem

The dilemma of how to most effectively improve the quality of education for English language learners has been on-going since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, in 2002. No Child Left Behind requires the need to look at assessment in improving test scores for students. Although there have been statistical gains in achievement, test scores have suggested that as of 2008, an achievement gap still exists between minority and disadvantaged low-income students and their white counterparts. (Spellings, 2002) The more encompassing quandary of improving the quality of education for English Language Learners is not unique to California. Other states throughout the nation are struggling to meet the needs of English Language Learners by looking at a range of variables, such as increased time on task, collaboration, and increased test preparation (Knox Education, 2007).

A model of intervention has been developed by Dennis Parker (2006b). This case study examined the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model by assessing the perceptions of teacher and parent stakeholders within the affected educational institution. This study was needed in order to document the attempts on one elementary school campus where the Strategic Schooling Model was implemented.

Spanning almost a decade (from 2001 – 2009) Parker compiled his research in schools throughout California. From the Oregon border to Southern California, including the San Francisco Bay Area, school districts employing Parker's Strategic Schooling Model indicated an API growth ranging from 27 to 189 points (Knox Education, 2007). Some of the districts included in Parker's study were: Berkeley Unified School District,

Fresno USD, Kings Canyon USD, Oakland USD, Redwood City USD, San Jose USD, and Turlock USD.

In establishing the importance of the Strategic Schooling Model, Parker (2006b) states,

Beginning in the year 2000, the ‘Strategic Schooling’ model of educational reform has been used in dozens of schools with high percentages of low income and minority students. It is responsible for higher than average gains in student achievement as measured by annual state assessments in California (pg. 1).

Strategic Schooling is an important strategy for today’s educational organizations that are striving to close the achievement gap between English Language Learners and other students who are competing using the same requirements for graduation in today’s age of accountability. Strategic Schooling provides a model for this important management reform effort, spotlighting the accountability of English Language Learners’ educational achievement in general. The Strategic Schooling Model incorporates *targets*, *know-how*, and *feedback* – the three elements, required to support services within the existing educational structures developed by the organization.

Background and Need for the Study

Throughout California, teachers, administrators and parents have been called to utilize effective classroom practices in educating English Language Learners. As a primary source of contact between the school and the students, teachers play an essential role in ensuring student success. To emphasize the importance of teacher quality, a recently published report focused on the quality of teacher training as a predictor of student success (California Department of Education, 2007).

Not only is it important that teachers are thoroughly prepared, but organizational practices must ensure that changes are made in a collaborative way (Bolman & Deal,

2003). One effective way for organizations to do this is by developing systems to reflect the best research and best practices for English Language Learners. Best practice studies have indicated that teacher preparation is an essential component of academic success (Springboard Schools, 2007).

Every year, thousands of English Language Learners arrive in the United States. There are 1.6 million English Language Learners in the state of California (California Department of Education, 2007). Counties throughout California continue to struggle with the academic success of English Language Learners in the areas of language arts and English proficiency.

The academic progress of English Language Learners is crucial to closing the achievement gap. The No Child Left Behind legislation requires schools to focus directly on the academic progress of English Language Learners. Critics of the No Child Left Behind Act have indicated a need to reform the legislation and work from the bottom-up.

...we can't just label schools inadequate. We must help them improve. States and localities need to initiate and support school improvement. Part of the act's promise was that greater accountability would be accompanied by greater support. We knew that federal resources would be critical to achieving the goals...Yet year after year, the federal government has failed to provide the resources that states and school districts need to improve struggling schools. Assessment and accountability without the funding needed to implement change is a recipe for failure. (Kennedy, 2007)

What is the No Child Left Behind Act? The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and expands on major reforms, particularly in the areas of state academic standards, assessment, accountability, and school improvement. The new federal law requires states to develop assessments linked to these standards for all students. The largest single program in NCLB is Title I, Part A, which provides local educational agencies (LEAs),

or school districts, with additional resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools and ensure that poor and English Language Learner children have the same opportunity as other children to meet challenging California State academic standards (California Department of Education, 2007).

Recent studies from the California Department of Education (CDE) continue to focus on the growing need to close the achievement gap for English Language Learners. Policymakers, teachers, administrators, students, and parents will benefit from this study in considering future implementation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of teachers, parents and administration associated with the Strategic Schooling Model targeted at improving the skills of English Language Learners. Additionally, this study examined the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model involving the *target, context, know-how, and feedback* necessary to change an educational organization's focus. Lastly, this study examined what has worked and what has not work as an intervention for English Language Learners in a school where the Strategic Schooling Model has been implemented. The focus was on the Strategic Schooling Model as it pertains to the performance levels of English Language Learners.

Due to the fact that literature reviews on the effectiveness of Parker's Strategic Schooling model was limited, it was imperative that the researcher examined the effectiveness of the model at a site where it had been implemented. It was important that both teacher and parent voices were heard in the process of change. As the findings of the case study were analyzed, the generative themes that arose were added to the body of

knowledge needed to close the achievement gap for English Language Learner students.

Since Parker's Strategic Schooling model provided a framework for change, it was important that the researcher examined the efficacy of the model. By conducting interviews, observing, and completing the *Strategic Schooling: Best Organization and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary* (which throughout this study will be referred to as the On-Target Checklist-Elementary), the researcher gained new insights as to whether or not the model was effective in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students.

Research Questions

The following three over-arching research questions guided this study.

Research Question # 1: To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

Research Question # 2: How do teachers and an administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model? Research Question #3: How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children's academic success?

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundations of this study include Cummins' (1986) theory of empowerment and Freire's premise of praxis. Freire's proposed method implies two distinct and sequential levels of reflection. The first involves becoming conscious of the reality that the individual lives as an oppressed being subject to the decisions that the oppressors impose. Freire does not believe that the lived situation consists only of a simple awareness of reality. Instead, he believes that the individual has a historical need

to fight the status that dwells within him. The efforts of the oppressed become focused and concrete through the type of learning that school really should give them, instead of encouraging them to adapt to their reality as the oppressors themselves do. Freire's theory proposes that a *conscious reality* must be experienced by individuals who have impositions placed upon them by *oppressors*. In the case of this study, teachers who are asked to implement changes in their practices should be "conscious of this reality" through the reflection process. The instructional best practices used by teachers should be reflected upon for a better understanding of how these practices affect student achievement. The second level of reflection should be to allow the participants to transform themselves into levels of reflection to make systemic changes which will benefit all students. Freire states that the reality should not only involve simple awareness, but also involve efforts to increase heightened awareness from the perspective of the oppressor. In fact, one can view some of the existing legislation for English Language Learners as ways of changing the status that exists within them.

Each theorist, Cummins and Freire, lays a solid foundation to be used as building blocs for an analysis of existing ideas surrounding how to view change in society. The big ideas these researchers provide are essential in analyzing the theory of change in society which must include a variety of perspectives.

These researchers, in their own right, realize the importance of considering all perspectives in the process of change. To extract each concept in isolation allows for the process of change to be viewed as an evolving, shifting cycle of the past, present, and future. The cycle of change can include elements of the Strategic Schooling Model as a springboard for change.

According to Collins (2000) Paulo Freire states that “Authentic praxis seeks permanent transformation of the social structure” (p. 224). In the descriptions of the qualitative research that was conducted, the researcher interpreted what she read, heard, and observed. The ongoing and multiple questions were asked of the participants within the research setting to provide descriptions of the context where targets, know-how and feedback were identified (Parker, 2006).

Freire also states that “dialogue is the value-means indispensable for praxis” (Collins, p. 226). The interviews in this study allowed for the role of dialogue to occur in a focused way to “engage in cultural action” (p. 226) which allowed for organizational change to occur. As teachers and parents reflected on their roles in the change process, perhaps their voices allowed for communication, rather than to simply “be conveyers of messages” (p. 227).

In an attempt to change educational organizational structures, it is important that educators consider “change as a process that arises from the re-creation of previous actions” (Collins, p. 224). By examining how organizational theory applies itself to the educational institution, perhaps we can discover how parental involvement and teacher collaboration can improve educational practices, through increasing the level of empowerment perceived by the stakeholders within the educational organization. The process of change can move towards heightened levels of awareness.

The theory of empowerment is significant, since it directly relates to the issue of empowering teachers to become aware of their practices. Freire states that his theory also empowers parents by making them become aware of their importance in the

organizational change process. Freire has laid the groundwork for developing literacy and empowerment among illiterate groups of people (Freire, 1999).

Cummins (1986) indicates that an empowerment framework is needed to serve as a catalyst for change. Not only did the researcher's dialogues with parents and teachers allow for a team effort to occur, but the scaffold model provided the basis to exhibit increased awareness and reflections on current instructional and organizational practices. The qualitative research sought to answer the important questions that allowed for communication with the stakeholders within the organization to occur through dialogues.

Cummins (1986b) has developed Freire's ideas into the *Empowerment Model* which incorporates all of the stakeholders to move forward in transforming the organization towards empowerment through dialogue. Cummins' *Empowerment Model* is outlined as follows:

1. Minority students' language and culture are incorporated into the school program
2. Minority community participation is encouraged as an integrate component of children's education
3. The pedagogy promotes intrinsic motivation on the part of the students to use language actively in order to generate their own knowledge
4. Professionals involved in assessment become advocates for minority students rather than legitimizing the location of the problem in the students (Cummins, 1986b)

In this case study there was a two-fold set of theories which guided the study. Freire (1999) has been instrumental in providing the empowerment theory needed to develop literacy in low literate communities.

From the patterns in the literature, the researcher identified the variables connected to the thesis that organizational change requires all stakeholders to revisit their existing ways of conducting business, thus requiring new forms of collaborative efforts to create change. Not only will the change be needed from an organizational standpoint, but it will also require an examination of the current instructional practices within the organization. The strength of Freire's argument for transforming members within the organization to empower themselves with information, became a focal point for the research questions provided.

Since Freire (1999) has established this theoretical framework, Cummins (1986) has applied this theoretical framework to the *empowerment model*. This model includes the cycle of educators, parents and administrators who move to a higher level of empowerment by working as team members.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been operationalized for this study. The terms are used to provide a common language with which to consider and comprehend this study.

Although the terms may be consistently found throughout research, the precise meanings here rendered are specific to this research study.

Achievement Gap: In this study, the achievement gap means the discrepancy between the California State Test scores in English Language Arts of English Language Learners and their white counterparts.

Best Practices: Instructional and organizational practices used in developing the student achievement of English Language Learners. Several best practices have been identified by researchers including Kinsella (2007), Marzano (2005), and Mintrop and Trujillo

(2005). Best practices involve two tiers, one in the classroom and the other at the organizational administrative level. In this study, best practices will mean classroom and organizational strategies which improve the achievement of English Language Learners.

BCLAD: Bilingual Cross-cultural Language Academic Development certification.

Closing the Gap: Steps to reduce the discrepancies among the California Standards Test results from Far Below Basic, Below Basic, Basic, Proficient or Advanced Levels as defined through the No Child Left Behind legislation (Spellings, 2002). The existing achievement gap reflects a practice where the minority language group does not perform at or reach the same levels of performance as the majority. In this case, the English Language Learners are considered the minority, even though in California there are over 1.6 million English Language Learners (California Department of Education, 2007). In this study, closing the gap will mean reducing the separation between English Language Learners' and mainstream students' scores on standardized tests.

Cooperative Groupings: This strategy allows groups of students to be matched with students who have similar or higher cognitive and/or language abilities (Collier, 1989).

Cooperative groupings mean how students are grouped to achieve maximum educational performance.

CLAD: Cross-Cultural Language Academic Development certification.

English Language Learners: Students whose language is not primarily English.

According to Williams, Hakuta, Hartel, et al. (2007), an English Language Learner is a K-12 student who has not been "reclassified" by the school district to mainstream English status. Unlike the majority, minorities generally do not enjoy the same levels of performance as the majority, e.g., education, health, income, legal experiences, etc.

(CDE, 2007) English Language Learners means students who are still learning English and do not use English as their primary language.

Illiterate groups: UNESCO defines illiterate groups as adults who cannot read a newspaper.

Instructional Best Practices: Strategies used by teachers to develop student achievement.

Low-literacy rates: The School Accountability Report Card states that, the literacy rates of the research population are low in comparison to the general population. For purposes of this study, low-literacy rates will refer to the literacy rates of the parents who are identified in the School Accountability Report Card.

Organizational Best Practices: The overall organization to make school-wide changes consistent throughout the school, in order to improve the achievement of all students. Several best practices have been identified by researchers including Kinsella (2007), Marzano (2005), and Mintrop and Trujillo (2005).

Program Improvement: “In California, Program Improvement is the formal designation for Title I-funded schools and Local Educational Agencies that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years according to the No Child Left Behind Act.” (Spellings, 2002)

Stakeholders: For purposes of this study, stakeholders will refer to teachers, parents, and students.

Strategic Schooling Model: Parker (2006a) The Strategic Schooling Model provides a framework for change within the educational organization. Strategic Schooling Model means a systematic method to improve both organizational and classroom practices.

Systemic Change: Systemic change refers to the reshaping of basic operational and cultural elements that determine how the educational organization shapes meaning, values, purpose, work, and behavioral norms (Kotter, 1996; Reeves, 2006). In this study, systemic change refers to the overall practices in the organization which are consistently used throughout the organization.

Limitations

The limitations of this study in no way adversely affect the research findings and conclusions. The researcher is aware of the limitations and endeavored to control those factors which might in any way have negatively impacted the findings. These limitations might well be considered in implementing additional studies on the Strategic Schooling Model.

Some limitations of this study included the researcher's bias due to working within the community, the research site, and the size of the sample population. The researcher has worked as an Immersion Teacher, site and district mentor, and coordinator for several years. The research site was a newly developed school site with grades three through five. The size of the sample population included ten teachers, ten parents, and one administrator. This study was not quantitative and did not provide a longitudinal view of the number of years the Strategic Schooling Model had been in effect. It did not provide the number of years the achievement gap had been reduced or the margin of error in the reduction of the achievement gap between English Language Learners and their white counterparts.

An additional limitation of this study is that it was limited to one elementary research site. Due to the voluntary nature of participation of the research contributors,

the information and identities of the participants was kept confidential and was only limited to the perceptions of the staff within the organization and the parents' and administrations' perceptions and cannot be generalized to a larger population. All of the data was compiled and reviewed to describe the perceptions of the teachers, parents, and administrator who have been part of the Strategic Schooling Model.

Significance of the Study

This study described the instructional practices being utilized on an elementary school site. It provided critical information on teachers' and parents' perspectives since they are the vital stakeholders in student success. Finally, this study provided additional steps in the search for organizational and instructional practices that had been changed with the No Child Left Behind legislation regarding English Language Learners.

Through the examination of organizational teaching practices at this research site, many important lessons were learned regarding overall resources that can impact the learning environment for English Language Learners. These practices, both in the classroom and at organizational levels, made a significant difference in student progress obtained by the English Language Learners. A team approach was recommended as a best organizational practice. This requires a change in working relationships.

The uniqueness of this particular study was that it was not quantitative in nature. Instead, it provided the perceptions of some of the major stakeholders in education – teachers, students and parents. The collaboration between the teachers and parents was an essential component in the quest towards closing the achievement gap. The lack of teacher and parent perspectives was the void in the current literature on the subject of

school reform measures. As a result of this study, the perspectives of teachers and parents have been added to the body of research.

This study contributed to educational policy in the following ways:

- 1) It provided a framework for organizations to systematically implement change.
- 2) It improved policy practices for implementation by documenting the phases of a transformative organization.
- 3) It added to scholarly research and literature in the field by highlighting key studies on organizational change, parents' and teachers' perspectives.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of teachers, parents, and administration associated with a Strategic Schooling Model targeted at improving the skills of English Language Learners. Additionally, this study examined the effectiveness of the model involving the various targets, data driven feedback, know-how exhibited by the expertise of teachers and parents, and the context, i.e. environment of the educational institution observed. All of these principles are necessary to change an educational organization's focus. Lastly, this study attempted to add to the existing body of knowledge and effective interventions for English Language Learners.

This chapter gave a statement of the research problem and the purpose of the study. It indicated the research questions and gave the background and need for the research study. The theoretical framework, based on the theories of Collins, Freire, and Cummins was examined, analyzed, and discussed. In the next three chapters, the

researcher will cover the review of the literature, the methodology utilized for the study, discussion, conclusions, implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Overview

The review of literature is important as it acquaints the reader with the background and theories that drive the case study. More importantly, it focuses on existing studies relative to what has been found, who has done the work, when and where the latest research studies were completed, and what approaches were followed. After reading this section, the reader will be aware of the most current literature and have a clear understanding of the theoretical framework upon which the researcher conducted the study.

The review of literature focused on the following topics: (1) Strategic Schooling Model, (2) Best Practices for Classroom Effectiveness, (3) Closing the Achievement Gap, and (4) Organizational School Reform. The review of the literature provided a critical analysis of best practices and effective teaching strategies as they apply to closing the achievement gap for low achieving students. A review of the literature on policies and organizational change as it relates to English Language Learners was examined.

Strategic Schooling Model

Parker (2006b) developed the Strategic Schooling Model which includes the elements of *targets, feedback, know-how, and context*. Many organizational theories use a feedback model to promote change within the organization. This is not to say that a

potential for resistance to change can not occur (Brown, Campione, & Dapy, 1981). The overall organization can expect certain characteristics to appear in the process of change.

The Strategic Schooling Model of Parker (2006a) indicates that,

Strategic Schooling is organized into four interacting, cybernetic domains, all working together to produce optimal performance: 1. Targets: achievement targets, student targets, content targets 2. Feedback: data and examples of student work directly related to the targets 3. Know-how: the application of organizational, classroom, and personal expertise by educators, students, and parents in an effort to hit the targets 4. Context: the environment in which students, class content, and educational expertise, intersect. (Parker, 2006a, p. 3)

The Strategic Schooling Model provides a framework for change within the educational organization. Strategic Schooling Model means a systematic method to improve both organizational and classroom practices.

From a transformational perspective, one can assert that the organizational change process which has been researched over 40 years, has a set of collective beliefs that change can be examined from the organizational level, as well as a global level, to work in ways that are more effective (Adams, 1984). To date, many of the reform efforts have not been effective in producing higher achievement levels for English Language Learners (Linguanti, 2004). The Strategic Schooling Model provides the framework for these discussions to occur.

Best practices in the Strategic Schooling Model are listed in the open ended On-Target Checklist-Elementary that was administered to the teachers. Teachers selected which best practices they implement the most frequently.

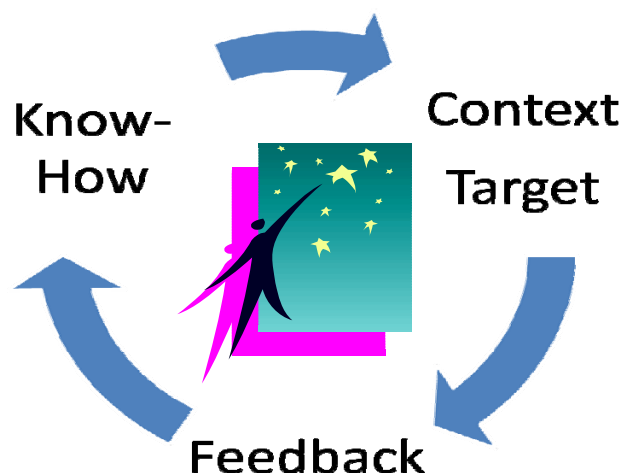
The Strategic Schooling Model, (Parker, 2006b) is a systems thinking approach to reform efforts. This model has provided a framework which can allow practical implementation of change within educational organizations while simultaneously

providing for a feedback loop which can promote less resistance and conflict. This model can be used as a springboard for change in instructional best practices, and organizational best practices and improve communication among and between staff members in the organization.

Figure 1.

The Strategic Schooling Model:

“Achieving Optimal Human Performance in Education”



Source: Parker, D. (2006b) Strategic Schooling Model

Parker (2006b), a 20 year veteran and former consultant for the California Department of Education, states the importance of using Strategic Schooling as a best organizational and classroom practice which focuses on achievement targets, content target and student targets. His work with high schools throughout California indicates the need to focus on the education of English Learners in a more focused and systematic way. He also addresses the need to focus on the teaching strategies used with ELL

students. His work is an exemplary model for educational organizations considering a strategic model by which to improve ELL teaching effectiveness.

Best Practices for Classroom Effectiveness

The best practices section in the literature review includes a variety of research-based strategies for English Language Learners developed since the passage of Proposition 227, the English only movement in California. The following best practices are used with English Language Learners to increase their English speaking abilities and increase their student achievement in both English language arts and mathematics.

Best Practices for English Language Learner (ELL) instruction can be found both at the organizational level and the classroom levels. Varlas (2002) refers to Marzano's best classroom practices which include: (a) identifying similarities and differences, (b) summarizing and note-taking, (c) reinforcing effort and providing recognition, (d) homework and practice, (e) nonlinguistic representations, (f) cooperative learning, (g) setting objectives and providing feedback, (h) generating and testing hypothesis, and (i) questions and advanced organizers (pg.1).

Many of the methods described in this review of the literature are examples of the best practices used in the instruction of English Language Learners, as a result of school-wide instructional practices. In answering the question "What are the best practices used to instruct English Language Learner subgroups under the No Child Left Behind accountability system?" research by the Springboard School Leadership Network (2004) shows that collaboration and strong school-wide systems are included in the list of best practices. The best practices include ones that require a "sophisticated school improvement infrastructure of high quality that comprehensively 'moves on all fronts'

and goes beyond incentives, sanctions, and even additional grants for capacity building” (Mintrop and Trujillo, 2005, p. 5). There is a need to set up systematic school-wide leadership to ensure that each area of instruction is addressed, including the instructional improvement strategies for English Language Learners.

Fresno Unified School District (2001) developed a set of recommended strategies for comprehensive English Language Development. In accordance with the Strategic School Model, the Fresno Unified School District developed a comprehensive list of strategic English Language Development practices to improve the skills of English Language Learners. These strategies include facilitation of English Language Development, a K-6 matrix of leveled ELD strategies for making input comprehensible, and thirty different strategies with definitions that make implementing these strategies user-friendly and effective (Fresno Unified School District, 2001).

Dutro and Moran (2003) present resources for approaching the development of English Language instruction in order to reach higher levels of English literacy. The researchers focus on the *brick* and *mortar* vocabulary words in English, which are the essential building blocks to a scaffold approach to teaching language. Their approach is valuable for teachers to consider in the development of stronger English Language Development programs. The practical guidelines will be helpful to educators who work with English Language Learners in a systematic way.

All of the guidelines, instructional practices, and focus on English Language Learners have contributed to organizational and instructional best practices, even though the question becomes why have these practices not yet closed the achievement gap for English Language Learners? Linquanti (2004) refers to the need to “reclassify” English

Language Learners into mainstream English status. The number of reclassified students could contribute to overall student progress. Setting aside the findings of Linqanti, the overall number of reclassified students remains at a minimum.

Kepper-Mora (2002) reports on the importance of planning instruction for English Language Development. She has set up a website with publications and articles that address the issue of English Language Development as it pertains to context. The context is part of the school culture. According to Kepper-Mora, many school practices established with the organization, can create awareness and a sense of urgency to build a common understanding of the need for increasing student achievement.

Based on Kepper-Mora's findings (2002), policy discussions must refer to research in best practices in order to help solve the major dilemmas for school districts. Kepper-Mora offers a variety of important resources for the general teacher practitioner. Kepper-Mora (2002), also offers frameworks and study guides for teachers who are taking some of the professional development required by the state of California. Her research provides critical guideline on effective strategies in working with English Language Learners. One of the most complete websites developed in the area of best practices for English Language Learners has been developed by Kepper-Mora.

A case study developed by the Springboard School Leadership Network (2004) provides a strategic model of implementation of many of the best practices and strategies for English Language Learners. Garfield High School, within the Long Beach Unified School District, is part of a Springboard case study where teachers, administrators, and the leadership team have established the Garfield Academy of Professional Development. Many workshops are mandatory and targeted extra sessions are offered to new teachers.

According to the critical research findings of the Springboard School Leadership Network, educators, teachers and administrators gain familiarity with the current best teaching practices necessary to improve the academic skills and close the achievement gap of English Language Learners.

Marzano (2005) provides five steps to ensuring best practices. The first step is to set up and maintain a leadership team. Step two involves strategically distributing responsibilities throughout the leadership team. The team should then select the most critical work upon which to focus. The leadership team identifies the order of magnitude implied by the selected work. The final step is to match the management style to the order of magnitude of the change initiative.

In contrast, Reeves (2006) presents an argument for transforming research into action, by creating a leadership map to improve schools for better results. Reeves suggests the importance of collaboration in a social context. Reeves proposes his ideas by keeping his thesis of collaboration in the forefront and systematically setting up steps for organizational change which explicitly states how the organizational change should occur. Reeves provides information on transforming research into action. He creates a leadership map to improve schools for better results. Reeves offers concrete suggestions for educational organizations to move towards more collaborative forms of conducting business. Reeves' perspective summarizes the steps in the leadership of the organization, leading to change in both organizational and instructional practices. Reeves proposes a broad focus, and the nature of his ideas uses evidence which helps him make a strong case to examine the issue of organizational change in a larger context.

On the other hand, Goldenberg (2007) notes that existing research does not indicate which specific instructional accommodations have the most impact. Nonetheless, the ability to support improved learning for English Language Learners is a needed element in closing achievement gaps. The challenge facing teachers is how to adjust their instruction to maximize English Language Learners' academic success (Sonoma County Office of Education, 2007). Goldenberg discusses systemic alternatives; however he shows more of a connection between English Language Learners' instructional practices which can create focused changes for the students. He focuses more on the instructional best practices as opposed to the overall organizational best practices, thus isolating the problem through an instructional lens.

Closing The Achievement Gap

English Language Learners in California are victims of an achievement gap in alarming rates (California Department of Education, 2007). In response to the urgent focus on the achievement gap of English Language Learners in California, it is important to evaluate and examine the many options that have been suggested as solutions to this issue.

Throughout every level of academia, educators are searching for solutions to an ever-increasing need to develop answers from both an organizational perspective, as well as a teacher perspective. The "Getting Down to Facts" study (Institute for Research on Education Policy & Practice, 2007) suggests that the school reform movements should be viewed from fiscal as well as budgetary perspectives. The No Child Left Behind legislation requires schools to focus directly on the academic progress of English

Language Learners. A dichotomy exists between fiscal management and school reform implementation for greater success of student progress.

Other researchers, including Reeves (2006) and Marzano (2005) have proposed many of the best approaches available to address school wide reform efforts. They have laid out specific ways in which the overall organization can implement changes. In reviewing the data, each study offers a series of steps that can be attached to the recommendations provided by these researchers. Teachers and administrators need a consistent use of best practices to empower the communities that need to learn English. A list of recommendations are presented by Freeman and Freeman (2000), and Herrell and Jordan (2004) with a series of broad assumptions requiring a much needed framework to analyze the existing problem of poor student achievement.

According to Rothstein (2007), there are reforms that could narrow the achievement gap. He suggests that the main focus be placed on the areas of pre-school, health care, and after-school and summer collaboration for improving the services to all students. Rothstein believes that the focus for other areas of the reform efforts is wrong. Rothstein's opinion is based on several factors surrounding economic disparities, teacher morale, and using higher wages to attract teachers. Rothstein discounts the major elements that continue to move the educational machine – the teachers' perspectives and the parents' perspectives.

Effective teaching strategies in developing the English language skills of English Language Learners (ELLs) are an essential element in the quest for closing the achievement gap (CDE, 2007). A growing body of research on English learner achievement continues to appear on the educational scene (Goldenberg, 2007). While

effective teaching strategies assist in promoting higher gains on test scores, the No Child Left Behind legislation turns the spotlight on the achievement gaps of ELLs. Goldenberg states that effective instructional practices include: clear goals and objectives, well-designed instructional routines, active engagement and participation, opportunities to apply new learning, periodic review and practice, interaction with other students, and frequent assessments with re-teaching as needed.

It appears that by examining the real experience in English Language Development (ELD) classes, one can begin to understand why the achievement gap may exist. The No Child Left Behind legislation states,

...the purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. (Spellings, 2002, p. 1)

By observing teachers who work with ELL students, the reality of what is happening in the classroom becomes the area where the focus needs to be concentrated. The themes of organizational and classroom practices are the important areas that need attention. For example, the fact that the co-op meetings had become the place where teachers could discuss the data for the progress of their students is a change from past practices. Prior to using the Strategic Schooling Model, teachers were the sole keepers of the data provided by their students or by the District. Opportunities to share and reflect on the data had not been provided to the extent that the co-ops currently allow. The next step is to focus the discussion in order to gain maximum benefit from the data which has been generated or provided by the students to close the achievement gap.

Many empirical studies have focused their attention on English Learners, (Sonoma County Office of Education, 2007). However, there are numerous deficiencies

in studies related to the organizational and instructional best practices surrounding English Language Learners. Recent research done by Angelo (2005), examined the role that leadership plays in the era of high-stakes testing. High stakes testing is the current trend in education, based on recent evidence in scholarly journals, dissertations and studies commissioned by the Department of Education.

For example, Shope (2008) points out that the optimum plan for any school improvement must include the following levels of intervention: (a) a foundation for administrators of teachers in current cognitive psychology research linking education and language acquisition, (b) teachers trained thoroughly in scientifically tested models, (c) interactive and reflective peer observations, and (d) collaborations. Shope proposes new ways of working together. These new ways of working together involve changing the way the organizational structure conducts its daily activities. These new ways of working together involve more mutual interactions among the workers who are forced into new relationships to achieve a common goal. There may be advantages and disadvantages to consider in this reorganization of the workforce. Evidence suggests that the methods of change require new ways of working collaboratively and do not include an analysis of how these new ways affect the role of the teachers or the parents.

A major contribution by Jaekyung (2003) provides a Meta-Analytic Synthesis of multiple measures in students in the states of Maine and Kentucky. In this study, Jaekyung examined similarities and discrepancies between the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and each state's math assessment results, with a focus on three major academic performance indicators: proficiency level, achievement gap, and achievement gain. Using meta-analytic techniques, the study synthesized multiple

measures from the states of Maine and Kentucky over the periods of 1992-1996, and 2000-2003. The research pinpointed the areas and degrees of discrepancies and explored contributing factors, helping him to make a strong case for external factors affecting student achievement. In exploring these factors, Jaekyung's evidence used data in promoting student achievement. The nature of Jaekyung's proposed thesis strengthens the argument for new ways of working together. Jaekyung provides a landmark study which contributes to the common goal of increasing student achievement.

Teacher Training

Teacher training and staff development programs have been shown to be important components in closing the achievement gap. For the past 25 years, researchers have investigated the connection between effective teacher training and improved student achievement. Researchers have also investigated the relationship between effective teacher training and its impact on organizational change.

Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, and Vasquez-Heilig (2005) address the importance of critical teacher training in their research studies. Darling-Hammond et al emphasizes the importance of staff development programs in the quest to raise student achievement. Currently, Darling-Hammond continues to focus her research in the area of staff development. She provides an in-depth view of the degree of connection that staff development has in impacting student achievement rates. Her study is a landmark study which examines the role that staff development plays on the total organizational performance.

Wright (1987) also reviews previous research studies pertaining to the importance of staff development and the impact on teachers and their students. In spite of over 20 years of research exploring the area of staff development, it continues to be an ever-changing phenomenon impacting student achievement. The evidence provided by Wright continues to support the need for professional development for transforming the educational organization.

Lawless and Pellegrino (2007) have focused on the professional development for teachers and have revealed that there is a gap in understanding methods of effective practice with respect to the various impacts of activities related to teaching and learning. They also reviewed the No Child Left Behind Act's impact on professional development for in-service teachers as a vehicle for changing teachers' practice and improving student achievement. Their argument continues to support the need for strategic and effective professional development to transform an organization.

Effective Teaching Strategies

A recent California Department of Education policy report on, "Closing the Achievement Gap" (2008), states that the major areas of focus for closing the gap are: (1) access to a rigorous K-12 curriculum, (2) culture and climate (3) having a sense of belonging for parents, teachers and students, (4) fostering high expectations, and (5) promoting effective strategies to close the achievement gap. These goals are vast and vague. The implementation is a continued challenge, especially in educational organizations that have experimented with a wide variety of reform efforts that have not proven effective.

There is a lot of collaborative activity in every worksite-informally, if not formally. People are jointly discussing, solving problems and making decisions all of

the time. Leaders deliberately and systematically develop and support collaborative activity. As a result, they fail to build one of the key resources in the company—the collective ability of the organization to solve problems. (Beyerlein, Freedman, McGee, Moran, 2003, p. 68).

According to Haycock (1998), there are four areas where the achievement gap needs to be addressed: (a) the need to establish standards, (b) ensure that all students are engaged in a challenging curriculum with standards, (c) provide extra help for students who need it, and (d) provide access to highly qualified teachers. These are the areas which need to be included in a successful infrastructure for the organizational practices to be changed. The need for change is required if the existing infrastructures do not have these essential elements as a focus for student progress.

Haycock (1998) considers the implications of teacher expertise in the content areas as a positive measure in closing the achievement gap. She examines this relationship by using data from nation-wide data in the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988. Haycock finds a perfect match between the expertise of the teachers and student performance. She continues to investigate these implications by exploring the amount of deep content knowledge that teachers have. She also analyzes the importance of “deep content knowledge and strong verbal skills to serve as a foundation for immediate action” (p. 6). In her conclusions, Haycock states the importance of setting standards for entry into the teaching profession. She concludes that there should be stronger accountability measures for colleges and universities that prepare teachers.

Haycock makes a strong case for increased professional development for current teachers and the need for “assurances that poor and minority children have teachers that are at least as qualified as those who teach other students” (p. 12). Haycock is concerned

about the “Parent Right to Know” policies which should be available to parents. She emphasizes the importance of recruitment and rewards to attract the best professionals into the teaching profession. The research of Haycock outlines some of the solutions to the multi-dimensional problems in educating students, particularly English Language Learners.

Unlike Haycock who emphasizes the need to establish standards and engage students in a challenging curriculum, Singham (2003), states that the achievement gap requires good teaching, active learning, and sound pedagogical content knowledge. Although the two researchers are examining the relationship between good teaching and sound learning, their focus in closing the achievement gap differs. There is a need to come to a common agreement among policymakers to determine the causes of the achievement gap. Perhaps consensus among empirical researchers as to the roots of the problem in closing the achievement gap will create further investigations in examining the issue from a variety of perspectives.

The differing approaches between Haycock (1998) and Singham (2003), focusing on solutions to closing the achievement gap, require a greater need to come to a common agreement among policymakers as to the true area of focus which must be addressed in improving the skills of underachieving students. The lack of consensus among empirical researchers in pinpointing the dilemma creates a need for further investigation as to the root of the cause for the achievement gap between English Language Learners and their academic counterparts.

According to Spellings (2002), recent studies in educational reform movements such as the No Child Left Behind Act have failed to include the necessary steps to close

the academic achievement gap for English Language Learners. The voices of English Learners' parents and teachers, reflecting on their best practices, have been ignored. Empirical research studies have focused on a variety of steps for organizational change, without consistency in their overall, collective approaches (Goldenberg, 2007; Marzano, 2005; Reeves, 2006).

One of the few studies highlighting the voices and participation of parents in closing the achievement gap was Wilson (1985). Wilson used a questionnaire to measure the affects of parent participation on academic achievement in the Eureka public schools of northern California. He concluded that active participation of parents through classroom activities and PTA events enhanced the academic outcomes of their children. Additionally, parent participation often resulted in increased motivation on the part of students and improved educational practices on the part of the school. Therefore, parents who participated in their child's school should be viewed as community assets in closing the achievement gap.

Challenges for English Language Learner Students

According to Abedi (2004), assessment accommodations for English Language Learners have implications for policy-based empirical research. He focuses on factors that contribute to the performance gap between subgroups and mainstream students which deserve special attention. Since different subgroups are faced with different sets of challenges, understanding and controlling for factors that lead to the performance gap between subgroups and mainstream students becomes an important focus in understanding the issues of particular subgroups. It is important to clearly understand the

issues specific to each subgroup. Abedi (2006) states the situation most succinctly when he states,

... research focuses on assessment and performance issues for English Language Learner (ELL) students as a subgroup. Identifying factors affecting the performance gap between ELL and non-ELL students may help stakeholders in gaining insights into assessment issues for other subgroups of students as well as strengthen assessments for English Learners. (p. 1)

The literature review examined and evaluated some of the literature that focused on short-term solutions to long-term problems, involving best practices within school reform efforts. Since there is no single solution to such a complex issue, several resources were examined to provide an adequate view of the options available as potential sources of policy and organizational alternatives. The claims, evidence, and information provided offers additional perspectives on a problem that reoccurs in many educational organizations that are under pressure to improve the student achievement rates of their students, specifically English Language Learners.

As the Proposition 227 study recommends to California state, district and school leaders, educational stakeholders need to ensure that their plan of instruction for English Language Learners is “carefully articulated across classes within grades, across grades within schools and across schools within the district” (American Institute of Research and West Ed., 2005).

Organizational School Reform

Elmore (2007) presents practical approaches to school improvement phases. The phases are broken down into component parts such as: problem recognition, low-hanging fruit, stagnation, and external help. Basically, this approach is useful in promoting change within the educational organizational structure. It is a useful technique which

outlines the step-by-step transforming guidelines for an educational organization seeking to change and address performance-based accountability. The recommendations are made for governors and other policymakers.

Mintrop, H. and Trujillo, T.M. (2005) examined the experiences of states that implemented NCLB-like accountability systems before 2001. The researchers compared the experiences of smaller states to larger states and two school districts. They analyzed reports and documents, and interviewed researchers and state officials. They streamlined the material into eight categories. The categories determine that there is no single universal successful strategy and there are various levels of transformation which must be experienced for true embracement of change to occur.

The Institute for Research on Education Policy & Practice (2007) provides an extensive analysis of survey findings associated with correlations between high and low performing schools. They have found the practices which have led to successful school-reform by prioritizing student achievement, implementing a coherent, standards-based curriculum and instructional program, using assessment data to improve student achievement and instruction, and ensuring availability of instructional resources. The report is a basis for policymakers to consider in the development of educational policies.

School Reform

Researchers such as Reeves (2006) and Marzano (2005) offer reform efforts for schools to improve student access to the curriculum. Teachers and administrators must exercise consistent use of effective practices to empower their communities who need to learn English. A laundry list of recommendations exists in studies analyzing teacher practices. Freeman and Freeman (2000) and Herrell and Jordan (1994) provide an

analysis of frameworks for the problem of poor student achievement among English Language Learners.

The American Institute of Research and West Ed (2005) address the issues of staff capacity for English Language Learners' needs. This means that it is essential for the entire school staff to become involved with improving the education of ELLs. The researchers also suggest a school-wide focus on ELD and standards-based instruction. The American Institute of Research and West Ed report on the importance of shared priorities and expectations in regard to educating ELLs and they stress the importance of systematic, ongoing assessment and data-driven decision making.

No Child Left Behind (2002) legislation mandates that growth areas for English Language Learners must include language and achievement. The legislation does not include the teacher's perspective on what works for them in the classroom. Instead, additional accountability requirements have been made to improve the student achievement of ELL students without considering the existing teaching strategies that are currently being used in classrooms.

Organizational Change

Over the past 40 years, organizational change theories have demonstrated a paradigm shift that calls for educators to let go of habitual patterns of self "preoccupied functioning" while moving towards a "conscious alignment" for a larger purpose of the entity (Banner, 1995). In reviewing the literature, more qualitative data was found to determine this model, as opposed to quantitative or empirical studies. In reviewing the case studies related to organizational change, information supporting this paradigm shift

became evident. Organizational change resulting from a change in leadership may be a critical component in affecting the achievement gap for English Language Learners. If the culture of a school is to be transformed, it may require the administration of a transformational leader (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978).

Transformational Leadership describes a leadership approach where leaders engage followers around issues of values, beliefs, purpose, and vision. Through dialogue and strong levels of interaction, there is an ongoing shaping and reshaping of mutual focus and direction (Reeves, 2004). Reeves provides evidence for ongoing problem solving. He examines the consequences of a transformational leader. This is one of the common approaches to examining organizational change. The transformational leader uses influence, strategies, and techniques so that the followers can enhance their self-efficacy and change their values, norms, and attitudes to be consistent with the vision developed by the leader (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

In the transformation of an organization towards implementing effective organizational practices, Porterfield and Holleran (2006) examine the need to identify both individual and organizational factors that facilitate or impede transformational change. The researchers' descriptive case study portrays the process and context of changed educational practices in one rural, western Pennsylvania school district as a microcosm of the systemic change with which school districts nationwide are struggling.

In addition to reviewing various research studies, the local efforts by the Sonoma County grass-roots movements towards closing the achievement gap became an example of highlighting the importance of finding a solution to the problem of closing the achievement gap at the county-wide level (Sonoma County Office of Education, 2007).

For example, the Sonoma County Office of Education has taken strides to bring in several renowned national researchers to share their research findings, in the hopes of closing the achievement gap. Researchers, including, Marzano, (2005), Reeves (2005) and Goldenberg (2007) have provided guidance for the priorities directing school districts' focus on student achievement. Typically, these findings have promoted working in the curricular areas of both language arts and mathematics.

Summary

The review of the literature on organizational reform provides the necessary background to frame the Strategic Schooling Model into a larger context. The literature regarding English Language Learner challenges provides background into where student deficiencies exist. The School Reform literature shows steps that are already being taken to close the achievement gap. The best practices literature provides examples of best organizational and classroom practices needed in school reform efforts.

The teacher training references provide the needed evidence that teachers are using best practices that have been learned by teachers. By examining the teacher training literature, it is evident that there is a disparity between the focus on the curricular areas, and the approaches to achieve the ultimate goal of providing either mentorship or self-evaluative methods of training. English Language Learner strategies are set up in a format that can be easily implemented by incorporating the strategies into daily lesson plans.

In addition, teachers' perspectives support the fidelity of implementation of both organizational and instructional best practices. Each of these perspectives can be used to demonstrate the need for consensual team approaches versus independent contractor

practices that isolates teachers from each other's best practices. The parents' perspectives provides the key to determining if the best practices are being experienced by their children and if they feel empowered to use these practices with their children. Studies have shown that parents are the key to influencing their children's academic success in school (Wilson, 1985).

Each of these perspectives can be used to demonstrate the need for consensual team approaches versus independent contractor practices that isolates teachers from each others' best practices. With parent education, many of the strategies used by teachers can assist parents to work with their children. Closing the achievement gap continues to be a problem beyond the classroom. It requires strategies in addition to the basic listening, speaking, reading and writing skills used on a daily basis. This requires administrative support, parent and student advocates, mentors for teachers, and collaboration among and between departments and schools. For the achievement gap to be truly closed, the focus needs to be on faculty members becoming more productive in working with each other and "de-privatizing" their practice in terms of what works and what does not work for students.

In recent times, many questions have arisen as to what is the best delivery of educational services for the English Language Learner population in California, a population which is continuously under scrutiny to improve test scores. The critical state of low test scores for this population has required an overhaul in improving the tactics utilized by organizations to deal with this issue.

While the achievement gap remains open (cost efficiency), this should be sufficient cause to study how organizations have implemented interventions (cost

effectiveness). The Strategic Schooling Model is a step in restructuring school reform efforts in order to create a team approach in a challenging environment. The Strategic Schooling Model creates a target, feedback and know-how cycle which can be utilized administratively, and allows for teachers and parents to become part of the cycle of change.

With so many failed school reform efforts that have been attempted in the public schools, there is skepticism as to whether or not theory can be turned into practice. This study is one of the few exceptions to the rule of implementing change within an educational organization. It is timely because the process of change continues to evolve in an organization focused on improving the academic skills of English Language Learner students. The unique features of this study include the often left-out voices of the teachers and the parents.

Included in this study are the various elements required in reforming an educational organization. In addition, this study contributes to the literature on various educational reform efforts, both in the classroom as well as at the school-wide level. This study examined many of the potential areas for increasing the success of English Language Learners, through a case study lens. The review of the literature demonstrates that effective strategies are being implemented. This study will look at a model that is incorporating these strategies tactically and more effectively so that parents, educators, and educational organizations can further learn how to more efficiently support English Language Learner students school-wide.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Purpose

The purpose of this research was to examine the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model in a rural, elementary school in Northern California, from the perspectives of the administration, teachers and parents. The administration was represented by one principal of a rural elementary school in Northern California. Ten teachers voluntarily participated and ten parents are also included in the study.

By using the Strategic Schooling Model as a basis for departure for working together as a team, this study aimed to determine the degree of implementation of the model and the lasting effects of the model which have changed the organizational and instructional practices at the elementary school campus research site.

Research Design and Methodology

This research utilized a case study framework to investigate the implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model on a rural, Northern California campus. This site was selected due to its low Academic Performance Index (API) scores for the past three years. In documenting the change process involved with the implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model, the achievement gap continued to exist at this school site. Patton (2002) refers to case studies as essential in describing organizations, programs, or communities. Creswell (2003) states that case studies can explore individuals, processes, actions, events, or programs in-depth. The researcher interviewed parents, teachers and administration using questions and the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary.

Yin (2003) states, “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Within the scope of this case study, the researcher utilized the methods proposed by Yin “to collect sources of evidence through documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation and physical artifacts” (p.16).

The specific procedure of inquiry that was used was the open-ended Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary.

The validity had been demonstrated through previous administrations of this instrument in several different educational organizations. The instrument was developed by Parker (2006b). The researcher received written permission to utilize the instrument. (See Appendix B for permission and Appendix C for the instrument.)

The research approach was qualitative in nature. For example, the research was conducted through open-ended interviewing (Creswell, 2003) and the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary.

Yin suggests that “descriptive data should be included” (p.157). In this case study, three important procedures were used. The first procedure was the descriptive details as they related to the research site and participants. The second procedure was to keep the identities of the participants confidential. The third procedure “describes a review procedure for constructing validity for the case study” (p. 155). This review

procedure was completed by having participants read the transcribed versions of the interviews conducted by the researcher.

Research Setting

The research for this case study was conducted at a rural campus in northern California. This was an elementary site with approximately 470 students in a lower middle class rural setting. The site had 17 teachers ranging from 3rd to 5th grade. Four resource teachers are included in the organization. The school had been using the Strategic Schooling Model since the beginning of the 2006 academic school year.

Currently, the school is undergoing Program Improvement status where the State of California is scrutinizing the strategies, student interactions, and availability of state standards in every classroom. The school has been under Program Improvement status for the past three years. The California Department of Education website, defines

Program Improvement as:

All schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) are identified for PI under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The NCLB Act requires all states to implement statewide accountability systems based on challenging state standards in reading and mathematics, annual testing for all students in grades 3-8, and annual statewide progress objectives ensuring that all groups of students reach proficiency within 12 years. Assessment results are disaggregated by socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no group is left behind. Local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward statewide proficiency goals are subject to improvement and corrective action measures. In California, Program Improvement (PI) is the formal designation for Title I-funded schools and LEAs that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years. The research site has been under Program Improvement status for the last three years. (p. 1)

Population and Sample

Ten teachers, ten parents, and one administrator were interviewed and surveyed to obtain information in determining which organizational practices are more common in

the low-performing school that contribute to English Language Learners' success.

Teachers were voluntarily self-selected for their participation. They received a gift certificate towards their classroom libraries for their participation.

The site administrator and parents were voluntary participants and received no financial incentive for their contribution to the study. The parents are immigrants, who are non-working, economically low-income, and have low-literacy rates based on the School Accountability Report Card (CDE, 2007). The parent participants volunteered to participate in the study as part of a focus group. The site administrator was selected based on her administrative experience at the elementary school level and her familiarity with the implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model.

Demographics of Teachers Interviewed

Table 1

Name	Number of years teaching	Grade Level	Subject	Credential	Ethnicity
Pal	20 +	Third	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian
Franchesca	20+	Third/Fourth	Multiple Subjects	BCLAD	Caucasian
Lady Humphrey	20+	Fourth/Fifth	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian
Kim	20+	Fourth	Multiple Subjects	BCLAD	Caucasian
Sarita	18	Fourth	Multiple Subjects	BCLAD	Latina
Monica	17	Fifth	Multiple Subjects	BCLAD	Latina
Renee	16	Third	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian

Victoria	20+	Third/Fourth/Fifth	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian
Karen	15	Fourth	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian
Sadie	15	Fourth/Fifth	Multiple Subjects	CLAD	Caucasian

Source: California Basic Educational Data Systems

The subjects for this study include ten teachers, ten parents, and one administrator from the case study site located in a Northern California elementary school. The community is comprised of migrant workers and middle to upper class residents. The main industry in the community is the production of wine and lumber. Several small businesses comprise the economy. The teachers in the study include third, fourth and fifth grade teachers. All of the teachers are CLAD or BCLAD certified. There are two Latina teachers and eight Caucasian teachers.

The parents of the students in this study are typically immigrants, who are economically lower-middle class, or non-working parents of Latino students. Some of them were employed in the service industry and others were self-employed. Some of the parents were also classroom volunteers. The parents were part of a focus group for this study.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for collecting data was the *Strategic Schooling: Best Organization and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary*. For the teacher observations, a *Classroom Demo's Checklist* was used as teachers demonstrated their classroom practices. The Strategic Schooling: Best Organization and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary addressed three components in the area of innovation: (1) achievement targets, (2) content targets, and (3) student targets. The instrument developed by Parker (2004) in this research design was not meant to be an

evaluative instrument but rather an instrument to serve as a focal point for the dialogues, participants' perceptions, and as a springboard to moving forward, and changing the way the organization served students.

The Strategic Schooling: Best Organization and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary allowed an additional perspective to indicate how effectively parents view the implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model. The Strategic Schooling: Best Organization and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary was implemented by teachers, parents, and the site administrator. This instrument had a section on, the area of innovation to be implemented, actions that have been taken to date, and action that will be taken if not implemented or observed (See Appendix C). The data generated from the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary provided the documentation necessary to summarize the research findings of this study.

The Classroom Demo's Checklist (Parker, 2004) was used an instrument for observing the best practices used by the classroom teachers at the research site. The major strategies identified on the Classroom Demo's Checklist included: (a) relationships, (b) metacognition, (c) say it! – choral, small group, and individual, (d) see it! – doodling, body language, graphics, props, and circumstances, (e) alternatives to calling on students one at a time, and (f) emotion – interest, playfulness, and personal meaning. The teachers provided additional strategies and those strategies were not on the Classroom Demo's Checklist.

The following three over-arching research questions, along with questions to guide the dialogue, guided this study. All participant groups responded to questions that guided the dialogue to extrapolate the major themes for each of the three research questions.

Research Question # 1: To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

1. What components of the Strategic Schooling Model do you most often use?
2. For the components you most often use, why do you find them most functional?
3. How do you measure short range student success (each semester)?
4. How do you measure long range student success (each year)?
5. What for you will determine that the Strategic Schooling Model is an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for your student?

Research Question # 2: How do teachers and administrators involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model?

1. How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why?
2. What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model?
3. To what extent are these strategies effective and why?
4. To what extent are some strategies used as opposed to other ones and why?
5. What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your students?
6. What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your students and why?

7. What do you consider to be the most effective practices for working with identified “intervention” students?

Research Question # 3: How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children’s academic success?

1. How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why?
2. What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model?
3. To what extent are these strategies effective and why?
4. What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your child?
5. What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your child and why?
6. What type of parent training do you feel has benefitted your child the most?

Data Collection

Potential teacher participants and a site administrator were invited to participate in this study with a letter (See Appendix C). Upon a signed agreement by participants, the researcher scheduled a timeline to determine mutually agreeable times to conduct field observations. The researcher sent reminder notices to the participants to confirm date and time. The observations and interviews were one hour or more per participant.

The parents participated in a focus group to answer the same questions provided to the teachers and administrator. The parents' questions were translated into Spanish to access the information. The parents also signed a confidentiality agreement in order to be participants in this case study. This information is provided in the findings of the study.

The data collection included the completion of Parker's Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary, teacher and administrator observations, and parent, teacher, and administrator interviews. Each of the ten teachers and one administrator were given the instrument to complete and interviewed individually. Each of the ten teachers had an interview and a 30-minute classroom observation. The interviews were taped on a digital voice recorder and transcribed. The transcriptions were then sent to each teacher and the administrator to be checked for accuracy.

Each of the ten parents was given the instrument together in a group and interviewed together as a focus group. Working in a focus group, the instrument was explained in Spanish to parents. Each parent then completed it. After the completion, a 90-minute Spanish interview was conducted with the parent focus group. The interview was taped

on a digital voice recorder and transcribed into English. Transcriptions were sent to each parent interviewee to check for accuracy.

The Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary, interviews, and observations provided the data to reflect on the current state of the Strategic Schooling Model allowing the researcher to develop alternative theories and interpretations. Additional data was obtained by using the Classroom Demo's Checklist instrument, school organizational documents, minutes, board meeting agendas and newspaper clippings. The interpretations of all data were related back to the theory of empowerment espoused by Freire (1999) and Cummins (1986).

Data Analysis

The researcher organized the data for analysis into three major categories of interviews, field observation notes, and documents. First, the interviews were conducted, recorded and transcribed. Secondly, the documents were collected from the organization. Thirdly, documentation of themes and ideas were reviewed by the researcher. A thorough analysis of the data included coding the data to establish themes for analysis. The themes indicated included: (a) increased speaking abilities for English Language Learner students, (b) improved Academic Performance Index scores, (c) improved student reclassification rates, and (d) teacher use of whiteboards as an interactive strategy. Finally, the themes were determined and correlated to the research questions and literature.

In reviewing the documentation collected, the researcher determined whether there were any contributing factors related to the implementation of Parker's Strategic

Schooling Model, which may give information as to its efficiency and effectiveness. This information was essential in describing the implementation process. The information was useful in order for the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model.

As the information from parents and teachers was compared, it was important to look for similar trends in the information relating to the Strategic Schooling Model. In contrasting the parent and teacher interview information, the research determined the salient points that each group member identified through the guided dialogues. This information allowed for the next steps in future research and for practices to be considered for further implementation.

The generative themes from the interviews were related back to the literature by revisiting the Cummins (1986) Empowerment Model. The Freire (1999) literature was related to the dialogues and to the information generated from the interviews. The theme of *empowerment* was a guiding theme throughout the interviews. Each interview allowed for reflection through dialogue as to the importance of implementing best practices on both an organizational level, and an instructional level.

Interview Questions

During the data collection, the researcher coded the data and discovered the emerging patterns and themes relevant to the research questions. The following questions guided this study:

Research Question # 1: To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

6. What components of the Strategic Schooling Model do you most often use?

7. For the components you most often use, why do you find them most functional?
8. How do you measure short range student success (each semester)?
9. How do you measure long range student success (each year)?
10. What for you will determine that the Strategic Schooling Model is an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for your student?

Research Question # 2: How do teachers and administrators involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model?

8. How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why?
9. What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model?
10. To what extent are these strategies effective and why?
11. To what extent are some strategies used as opposed to other ones and why?
12. What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your students?
13. What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your students and why?
14. What do you consider to be the most effective practices for working with identified “intervention” students?

Research Question # 3: How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children’s academic success?

7. How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why?
8. What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model?
9. To what extent are these strategies effective and why?

10. What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your child?
11. What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your child and why?
12. What type of parent training do you feel has benefitted your child the most?

Background of the Researcher

During 20 years as an educator, the researcher has witnessed several educational reform efforts and has been on the forefront of many of these efforts. The reform efforts have yet to make extreme gains in test scores for English Language Learners. In 1978, the researcher was part of a multi-cultural reform grant to train teachers in the use of multi-cultural curriculum. This experience was beneficial in sparking the need for change in the educational system.

In 1979-80, the researcher had the experience of living in Sao Paulo, Brazil, as a foreign exchange student. The researcher studied at the University of Sao Paulo and also taught English in the U.S. Brazilian Center. The experience of being a student and a teacher created awareness for assisting second language learners. Upon her arrival to the U.S., the researcher continued student teaching at Santa Cruz High School with second language learners through the University of California Santa Cruz.

During the early 1980s, the researcher worked as a Research Assistant in the Stanford University Graduate Studies Program. It was here that the researcher discovered a passion for research in an effort to create change. The researcher continued her work at Stanford University and obtained her Master of Arts Degree in Administration and Policy Analysis of Education, in 1986. The researcher continued

working in the Chicano Fellows Program at Stanford University and assisted in the overall administration and planning efforts for conferences, university events, and other faculty sponsored events.

In the early 1990s, the researcher obtained her teaching credential and administrative credential at Sonoma State University. Since then, the researcher has worked as a Spanish Immersion teacher, summer school principal, interim principal, Special Projects Intern, Mentor teacher, Bilingual Resource Specialist, and Coordinator in a northern California school district.

All of these experiences included working with English Language Learners K-12. Duties also included monitoring English Learner compliance issues, organizing monthly parent meetings, and training teachers. The researcher also worked as Adjunct Faculty at Sonoma State University in the evenings. The researcher trained teachers at Dominican University as a CLAD trainer on weekends.

The researcher has worked as a Teacher Trainer/Coordinator/Consultant for the Sonoma County Office of Education since 1996. As a teacher trainer, the researcher trained several thousand teachers to obtain their English Learner certification through the Bilingual Teacher Training Program (BTTP). During the past ten years, the researcher has attended and presented at several conferences including the Superintendent's Migrant Summer School conference, where the researcher presented information on Strategic Schooling; the 2006 Hawaii International Conference on Education, where the researcher presented information on Test Preparation; and the University of San Francisco Graduate Student Association, where the researcher presented information on Team Effort.

During the University of San Francisco Doctoral level coursework in the early 2000s, the researcher worked as a Teaching Assistant in the University Of San Francisco School Of Education. Currently, the researcher is working as a Bilingual Resource Specialist in a northern California school district, and is a Doctoral scholar at the University of San Francisco.

Protection of Human Subjects

Signed agreements to voluntarily participate in this research study are included. The University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) approved the proposal to conduct research with human subjects without modifications (See appendix A). The interviewees participated voluntarily and they had the right to withdraw at any time. The participants understood the nature of the research and its impact. The participants followed a protocol that was determined with each individual.

The participants had the right to ask questions and keep their identities confidential. A copy of the research results will be provided to each participant upon request. The participants and the researcher signed confidentiality agreements. The research site school board approved this study. The researcher respected the confidentiality of the participants and the research site. The researcher protected the rights of the participants and all individuals involved in the study (Creswell, 2003).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to examine the perceptions of teachers, parents, and an administrator associated with the Strategic Schooling Model targeted at improving the skills of English Language Learner students. Additionally, this study examined the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model involving the *target*, *context*, *know-how*, and *feedback* necessary to change an educational organization's focus. Lastly, this study examined what has worked and what has not worked as an intervention for English Language Learner students in a school where the Strategic Schooling Model has been implemented. This study used the guidelines proposed by Yin (2003) and collected sources of evidence from interviews, direct observations, documents, and archival records.

Profiles of Teacher Participants

Franchesca has been a teacher for over twenty-five years. She has taught kindergarten through fifth grades. She is Caucasian and speaks Spanish. She has been an Immersion teacher. She has been trained in the Strategic Schooling Model. She teaches recreational activities in addition to her full-time teaching duties.

Karen has been a teacher for twenty years. She is Caucasian and speaks Spanish. She has worked at two sites within the school district. She was trained with the Strategic Schooling Model. She organizes classroom projects to save endangered rainforest animals.

Kim has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Caucasian and speaks Spanish. She transferred from another school district and has been working at the present district for seven years. She has taught several grades. She was trained on the Strategic Schooling Model. She is a community volunteer, in addition to her full-time teaching responsibilities.

Lady Humphrey has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Caucasian. She has worked overseas. She has been an assistant principal and is currently the lead teacher at the research site. She was trained with the Strategic Schooling Model. She is also on several district-wide committees.

Monica has been a teacher for twelve years. She is Latina. She worked at two sites within the school district. She has changed grade levels from early elementary to upper elementary. She was not trained with the Strategic Schooling Model. She volunteers within the community in other educational programs on the weekends.

Pal has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Latina. She has worked at several elementary sites within the school district. She has taught several elementary grades. She was trained in the Strategic Schooling Model. She volunteers outside of the immediate community, in addition to her full-time teaching responsibilities.

Renee has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Caucasian. She has worked in third through sixth grades. She has worked at all of the elementary sites within the school district. She was trained with the Strategic Schooling Model. She volunteers on several district committees, in addition to her full-time teaching duties.

Sadie is a new teacher. She is Caucasian. She recently graduated from the credential program and works in Special Education for third, fourth and fifth graders.

She has not been trained in the Strategic Schooling Model. She volunteers in educational activities outside of the immediate community.

Sarah has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Caucasian and speaks Spanish. She has worked at two sites within the school district. She also attended an overseas teacher exchange program. She is very interested in the Arts. She was not trained in the Strategic Schooling Model. In addition to her full-time teaching responsibilities, she creates many programs for the elementary site.

Sarita has been a teacher for over twenty years. She is Latina. She has worked in grades Kindergarten through fifth grades. She has been a Spanish Immersion teacher and is currently a Bilingual Resource Specialist. She has worked in all of the elementary sites within the school district. She was not trained with Strategic Schooling Model. She is very committed to working with English Language Learners in the community.

Victoria has been a teacher for thirty years. She is Caucasian. She is currently a Resource Specialist, Literacy Coach, and teaches grades 3, 4 and 5. She works very long hours and is involved with the Leadership Team and other district-wide committees.

Profile of the Administrator

The administrator has worked at research site B for three years. Previous experience within the school district includes being a site administrator for two years at another elementary school, site A. The site administrator was trained on the Strategic Schooling Model during her administration at site A. The administrator is a Latina female.

At the original site A, where the Strategic Schooling Model was implemented, the ownership was strong. After the school closure and re-opening of the new site B, the

ownership of the Strategic Schooling Model decreased. The organizational change included new staff members who were added to the site B team. Not only has the staff undergone an organizational change in administration at site B, with the absence of the current principal, but new staff members have been added to the re-configured school.

A new question surfaced as to whether or not the administrator felt that she supported the Strategic Schooling model, since the current site B is in its fourth year of being a program improvement school which is currently being reviewed by the State of California.

Profiles of Parent Participants

By interviewing the parents it was evident those who were more familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model and those who were not. The parents who came to school events, parent meetings, and who worked in the classroom were very familiar with the practices delivered by the teachers. The parents who were far removed or not as involved in school related activities, needed more information in order to understand the methodologies teachers were using with the Strategic Schooling Model.

Demographics of Parents Interviewed

Table 2

Name	Number of Children	Attends Parenting Classes	Occupation	Volunteers at School Site
Mrs. B	4	Yes	Self-Employed	Yes
Mrs. C	2	Yes	School Employee	Yes
Mr. C	2	Yes	Self-Employed	Yes
Mrs. F	2	Yes	Self-Employed	Yes
Mrs. G	1	Yes	Self-Employed	Yes
Mrs. H	1	Yes	Field Worker	No

Mrs. P	1	Yes	School Volunteer	Yes
Mr. H	1	Yes	Field Worker	No
Mrs. V	8	Yes	Homemaker	No

Mrs. B is Latina and has four children. She used to volunteer in her children's classroom, but felt that after fourth grade, her child did not want her to be as active in the classroom as when he was younger. She was familiar with many of the Strategic Schooling Model practices and had observed the teacher using these practices.

Mrs. C. is Latina and has two daughters. She attended the school parent meetings on a regular basis. She had observed the teachers using many of the strategies in the Strategic Schooling Model, but did not know that the Model existed as a formal strategy.

Mr. C. is Latino and has two children, a son and a daughter. He attended some parent meetings, but spent his time developing his business. He admitted that the information on the Classroom Demo's Checklist was new to him and felt that it was important that the communication between the school and the parents should be increased. He was familiar with certain components of the Strategic Schooling Model; however, he felt the need to know more information about the Model and was appreciative to have been informed about the Model.

Mrs. F. is Latina and was very aware of the practices used in the Strategic Schooling Model, since she volunteered in her son's classroom. She has two sons and works in the younger son's classroom. She is very proud to be working in her son's classroom and was very willing to share her knowledge about how the Strategic Schooling Model practices were demonstrated in her younger son's classroom.

Mrs. G. is Latina and was not aware of the Strategic Schooling Model per se; however, she was very aware of how the Model worked in her son's classroom by the questions that she checked off on the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary. She did not know that the practices were part of the Strategic Schooling Model.

Mrs. H. is Latina and was well aware of the Strategic Schooling Model and its affect on the students. Mr. H. is Latino and was not well aware of the effects of the Strategic Schooling Model.

Mrs. P. is Latina and was aware of the practices demonstrated by the Strategic Schooling Model, but did not know the formal name that the Model had. She was familiar with many of the practices of the model in her son's classroom.

Mrs. V. is Latina and has eight children. She was very familiar with practices of the Strategic Schooling Model in her children's education. She was "an expert" in informing the rest of the parents about how the Model worked and how the teachers' practices helped her own children become successful in their years within the school system. She was extremely supportive of the teachers and how they helped each one of her children. She mentioned each one of her children by name and who each child's teacher was. Mrs. V. credited the teachers for their supportive roles in the lives of her children. She told stories about how successful her children were.

There were three main research questions for this study. For each of the three questions, there were questions to guide the dialogue. Critical responses of participants to questions to guide the dialogue are reflected within each of the research questions.

Research Question One

To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

In responding to research question one, it was instrumental for allowing teachers to self-reflect on the best practices they use on a daily basis with their students. Through face-to-face interviews, the researcher gained the perspectives of teachers who were familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model (SSM) and examined the effectiveness of the Model in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learners. Each of the ten teacher participants felt that there were elements of the SSM which were part of their daily routine practices, which in turn increased effectiveness with English Language Learners by making students more aware of the expectations required of them by the State of California in terms of standards, test preparation, and test taking skills.

Interview Question 1 of 5 for Research Question One

What components of the Strategic Schooling Model do you most often use? In describing the components of the Strategic Schooling Model that were used most often, the majority of the teachers referred to their most frequently used strategies including the test preparation strategies, the test chats, use of whiteboards, increased focus on vocabulary development, and development of reading comprehension strategies. As for the components that were used most often, the reading, vocabulary, and test preparation were top on the list. Victoria stated, "I created my own cards to focus on unit growth for essential skills in Reading Lions Assessments –fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and writing."

The Administrator participant expressed a desire to have every teacher use every component of the Strategic Schooling Model. For her, having every teacher, with every student, working daily on all components of the Model was critical to attaining the highest level of student academic achievement and to closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students. Maintaining a high level of active engagement strategies and persisting in higher expectations for all students were, for her, the top priorities. She expressed her satisfaction with the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model as a valuable instrument in closing the Achievement Gap as she stated,

One of our campaigns has been to use more active engagement strategies so many teachers are using white boards, thumbs up, choral response, and cloze reading strategies. I see more student engagement. Higher expectations for all students are ongoing. That has been the most rewarding and obvious for teachers to understand.

Interview Question 2 of 5

For the components you most often use, why do you find them most functional? In describing the components of the Strategic Schooling Model that were used most often, the majority of the teachers referred to their most frequently used strategies including the test preparation strategies, the test chats, use of whiteboards, increased focus on vocabulary development, and development of reading comprehension strategies.

As for the components that were used most often, the reading, vocabulary, and test preparation were top on the list. There were three reasons the teachers found these strategies most functional. They were (a) the instant feedback through whiteboard use, (b) increased vocabulary development for the various English levels of proficiency in the classroom, and (c) attention to reading comprehension strategies. These three areas focused on checking for understanding, interactive student engagement and increased time on task, because the tasks were identified clearly through the articulation of the

standards being taught. The standards were no longer a mystery for the student or for the teacher.

Teachers felt that Test Prep prepared the students for test taking. With test preparation, all students, especially English Language Learner students, developed self-confidence in their abilities because they learned strategies that allowed them to be successful when taking multiple-choice tests or quizzes. The Reading Campaign developed the English Language Learner students' reading skills by supporting daily reading. The research showed that all students should read daily in order to develop vocabulary and knowledge needed to progress academically. The Academic Vocabulary component of the model allowed English Language Learner students to increase the academic vocabulary necessary to access the curriculum that was taught.

In addition to teachers using the components of the Strategic Schooling Model with which they felt most comfortable and which were most effective for them, the Administrator participant felt that first impressions were important. She was strong in her explanation of the importance of being systematic, doing it right the first time, and making a strong impression on meeting the needs of students. She explained, "When I think about being very systematic in meeting the needs of all students, assessing the needs, and creating an intervention quality instruction, good first teaching is important. She felt that the onus of the learning process rested not only with the teacher, but also with the student. Her stance was, "active engagement, accountability, and student ownership... there is no way they are not going to be learning. That is what we are all about."

Interview Question 3 of 5

How do you measure short-range student success (each semester)? The Administrator participant spoke of measuring short-range student success in terms of immediate feedback. She again referred to the importance of employing active engagement strategies to measure student success. She stated, “Using active engagement strategies is important. It is a quick, nice assessment. I love whiteboards and asking students to respond and see who needs intervention.”

In reference to measuring short-range student success each semester, all of the teachers referred to in-class formal and informal assessments including end of chapter tests and weekly assessments in fluency and comprehension. For Language Arts, short-range student success was measured with classroom discussions, daily work, quizzes, writing assignments, Reading Lions Unit Tests, spelling tests, and word knowledge quizzes. For Math proficiency, short range success was measured with classroom discussions, daily work, daily lesson quizzes, chapter tests, and individual tests in multiplication and division.

The fact that the organizational practice was established to create grade- level opportunities for teachers to discuss individual student progress was an essential part of the Strategic Schooling Model that was being used. Victoria was quite animated when she smiled and stated, “Teachers talk about success and dilemmas often; we’ve had lots of excellent professional development but need to check in more often to keep a strategy going.” As a result of a need to collaborate more often to discuss student success and progress, “co-ops” were created. The co-ops were established from the need to create awareness towards increasing teacher collaboration. The co-op time was viewed as

sacred time used to discuss student data, student progress, and strategies that were working in closing the achievement gap for the English Language Learners.

In reviewing the data on the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist Elementary, it was evident that the ten teachers and administrator who completed the information on the instrument were aware of the need for full implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model in order for it to be more effective in closing the achievement gap.

There were three main research questions for this study. For each of the three questions, there were questions to guide the dialogue. Critical responses of participants to questions to guide the dialogue are reflected within each of the research questions. The salient features of this area of innovation included the Standards being posted in the classrooms. However, not all of the teachers followed through on the commitment to post and publicize the achievement targets school-wide.

Interview Question 4 of 5

How do you measure long-range student success (each year)? The Administrator participant expounded on measuring student success in terms of Formative Assessment and Summative Assessment. The school site found it useful to have a database with student information based on both assessments. The Formative Assessment was used for a short term, quick measure of student success and the Summative Assessment was used to show student proficiency over a long range.

Teacher participants explained that in the area of Language Arts, success was measured with statewide testing – California Standards Test (CST) and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Math progress was measured by the

California Standards Test (CST). The goal of each teacher was annual student improvement. Using these standardized tests, teachers were able to track students' performance in all areas tested.

Interview Question 5 of 5

What for you will determine that the Strategic Schooling Model is an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for your student? In response to this question, teachers were very responsive in terms of sharing the strategies that worked for them to close the achievement gap. From the dialogue, emerged the reference to constantly monitoring student data, which is an essential component of the Strategic Schooling Model.

It was clear that the teachers involved with the model, were using data to drive their decisions and were focused on the strategies that needed to be used as effective instruments in closing the achievement gap for their students. Monica stated, "I feel the model is effective when I see a year's growth for a year's instruction as measured by the CST and the CELDT tests." As the researcher compared information from the teachers' self-reflecting On-Target Checklist-Elementary with the researcher's observations indicated on the Classroom Demo's Checklist, evidence was clear that strategies from the Strategic Schooling Model were being effectively used.

Research question one sought to understand the impact that the Strategic Schooling Model had on an organizational level as well as an instructional level. Two Checklists were used to obtain data on the strategies used in closing the achievement gap. First, the On-Target Checklist-Elementary provided information on the overall implementation of the model on an organizational level. Secondly, the Classroom

Demo's Checklist provided information to the researcher as she observed the strategies in action. The findings were consistent between both Checklists, indicating that all of the teachers observed, implemented each strategy to some degree.

A synopsis of these ten observations described the fact that 9 of the 10 teachers observed, utilized all of the elements in the Classroom Demo's Checklist during the classroom observation. The evidence that these strategies were on going was demonstrated in the classroom routines established by each teacher. For example, Pal, a third grade teacher, used all of the strategies and additional ones such as total physical response and acting out the concepts with the students. This was an exemplary practice and the students demonstrated their understanding of a complex concept during their math class. Not only did Pal use the strategies on the Classroom Demo's Checklist, but she also used strategies from previous training for working with English Language Learner students.

Franchesca, a fourth grade teacher used many of the strategies from the Classroom Demo's Checklist, yet the focus for the students was more on grammatical structures which are acquired in a fairly predictable order, which is part of the Natural Order Hypothesis developed by Krashen (1988). The focus in this classroom was on getting the message across and providing a rich language background. Although all of the strategies on the Classroom Demo's Checklist were not observed, Franchesca provided a language rich environment for the English Language Learner students.

Lady Humphrey, a fourth/fifth grade teacher used all of the strategies and promoted reading in English for her English Language Learner students. She promoted English reading, integrated a variety of strategies that addressed listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The advantage was that she was flexible in accommodating small

numbers of English Language Learners. The disadvantage was that the student's first language is not nourished in school.

Kim, a fourth grade teacher allowed for the Classroom Demo's Checklist strategies to become part of her daily routine. She interwove the utilization of the whiteboards effectively into her lessons. The choral reading and heads together strategies allowed for active student engagement. She utilized grade appropriate content instruction and followed the frameworks systematically.

Sarita, a fourth grade teacher, utilized all of the strategies on the Classroom Demo's Checklist for her lowest performing English Language Learners. Her students were actively engaged and she made the content comprehensible by using visual and contextual clues at the appropriate levels of her students' competence. The use of thumbs up and thumbs down combined with the use of whiteboards, actively engaged her students and allowed them to speak and be actively engaged.

Monica, a fifth grade teacher, also utilized all of the Classroom Demo's Checklist strategies described by Parker (2004). Monica maintained a highly structured setting, which allowed for effective use of time, focus on content, and knowing the rules by which to work. She incorporated the Classroom Demo's Checklist strategies effectively into her lessons.

Victoria, a resource specialist teaching third, fourth, and fifth grade, was an exemplary teacher who reinforced all of the elements within the Classroom Demo's Checklist and provided guidance to other teachers who needed to use the Classroom Demo's Checklist strategies in their daily routines. The impact that Victoria's teaching

style had on the organization was strong. Her teaching style was an advantage to all students and teachers who received her training.

Karen, a fourth grade teacher, fully engaged the students in a grammar lesson on editing sentences. Although she used several of the Classroom Demo's Checklist items, there was room for using alternatives to calling on students one at a time by using a simpler method with the use of each student's name on a stick, as opposed to calling on students whose hands were not raised. This small change in the use of the strategy, allowed for additional active student engagement. Through the use of this strategy, more students were included in the lesson. The use of this strategy allowed students to participate on a variety of levels.

Sadie's use of all of the Classroom Demo's Checklist strategies allowed each of her fourth grade students to access the core curriculum in a multiplicity of ways. In addition to using all elements on the Classroom Demo's Checklist, her students, who were very low performing, were actively engaged in the teacher/student exchange of ideas and concepts. Using the elements of the Classroom Demo's Checklist allowed for more active student engagement.

The researcher was also able to observe the strategies being demonstrated by each of the ten teacher participants. The findings indicated that each strategy had contributed to increased reclassification rates for English Language Learner students, and had institutionalized school-wide practices. The findings also indicated one year's growth on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) as evidenced by the California Department of Education CELDT website.

Overall, the most effective use of the Classroom Demo's Checklist was observed when teachers were implementing all elements of the Classroom Demo's Checklist. When teachers implemented all of the strategies of the Classroom Demo's Checklist, there was maximum effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. When some of the strategies were implemented, while others were not, the results did not make the necessary impact in closing the achievement gap. The use of the Classroom Demo's Checklist is a guide in observing whether or not the strategies are being used and to what extent those strategies are effective in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students. Based on the researcher's ten classroom observations, strict adherence to those strategies demonstrated another step in leveling the playing field for English Language Learner students.

The fact that parents also needed to become more informed of the Strategic Schooling Model was an indicator of the need to involve parents as part of the loop in the overall organizational change process. The need for parent education as to what the goals of the organization were became a critical component necessary in the overall organizational reform process. Without this piece in place, many of the stakeholders did not feel the impact of the Strategic Schooling Model as a process for educational reform. This section will also include parent perspectives on what is working and not working in the Strategic Schooling Model as a reform tool.

Research Question Two

How do teachers and an administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model?

In answering this question, the ten teachers who were interviewed and observed identified the specific areas within the Strategic Schooling Model which worked for them in teaching English Language Learner students. The fact that many of the components of the Strategic Schooling Model were being implemented demonstrated the effectiveness of each area of innovation indicated on the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist Elementary. For example, the Achievement Target being posted was a major consistent practice utilized throughout the school. Although all of the achievement targets were not fully implemented according to the Strategic Schooling Model, the most salient ones such as Standards Blueprints posted and with weekly check marks seemed to be a consistent school-wide practice. As a result, the perception is that consistent use of the Standards Blueprints creates an area of effectiveness in the use of the Strategic Schooling Model.

The feedback element of the Strategic Schooling Model addressed school-wide data, classroom data and individual student data. This component allowed the most opportunity for organizational change in terms of how business was conducted on a daily basis. The opportunity to post student data can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, many teachers felt that the posting of data could motivate students to increase academic performance. On the other hand, posting achievement data on the school walls or the classroom walls became a challenge for some teachers. Since the organization began grouping the students according to their proficiency levels, the need to post student

data on the walls did not appear to be a consistent practice. The manner in which the student data posting was addressed became part of an organizational change resulting in monthly co-op meetings as opposed to a public display of student data.

Interview Question 1 of 7 for Research Question Two

How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why? In answering this question, the researcher found that the areas which received the highest level of participation according to the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary were the test preparation/deconstruction, reading campaign, vocabulary campaign, and writing campaign. The researcher found that the ten teachers interviewed agreed on the importance of having a model to follow. Lady Humphrey held strong feelings regarding the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model.

I find it to be very effective as I have seen real growth in my students since I adopted the model four years ago. Both my English Language Learner students and my English Only students have shown academic growth. They feel more confident and comfortable with test taking as well.

Each teacher selected a different component of the model which she felt comfortable implementing. For Karen, teaching the vocabulary and use of the Whiteboards for feedback were critical strategies.

The idea that all students respond to every question is excellent...The idea of teaching the vocabulary of the test is vital – the feedback is vital. Whiteboards, giving them the feedback on how they did with the test, working on vocabulary, are the tools that I really use.

Victoria's years in the classroom gave her a focal point from which to compare. She used most of the components of the Strategic Schooling Model extensively, including

vocabulary, Writing Rubric, Classroom Data Wall, student recognition, and Standards Blueprints. She noted that administrators are taking a deeper interest in the Model.

It's been more effective than other past models. Some teachers are more excited about teaching and see the successes that have been achieved with the Model. Administrators see its possibilities but have only recently been able to regularly revisit each part of the model to keep it "pure".

The researcher observed each of the teachers in the classroom and noted the evidence of their implementation of the strategies and the effectiveness of the strategies in engaging students in the learning process. Pal stated, "It is very effective given that kids are actively engaged. It eliminates daydreaming. They have to be right with you. For instance pair share gives them thinking time."

Teachers felt the Strategic Schooling Model was most effective when teachers throughout the school site consistently used the Model with English Language Learner students. To the degree the strategies in the Model were consistently used, student academic progress was indicated. Sadie indicated, "I think the Strategic Schooling Model is very effective, especially when the whole school is working as a team to put it in place and communicating and supporting one another." Franchesca concurred with Sadie as she said, "I think it can be effective if it is implemented consistently."

Interview Question 2 of 7

What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model? In answering this question, the researcher was able to identify the salient strategies and best practices utilized within the Strategic Schooling Model by the teachers at the research site. The areas from the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary which received high marks were the test preparation, the

use of engagement strategies, and the grade level co-op meetings to discuss student progress.

Teachers felt that test preparation was crucial in helping students to reach their peak level of performance. Knowing how to take tests – process of eliminating wrong answers and selecting the best choice in multiple choice questions required ongoing practice. Teachers felt it was important to teach students how to deconstruct math problems and Language Arts problems. Students needed practice in deconstruction strategies. Lady Humphrey found this element of the Strategic Schooling Model to be a critical component.

The Model teaches students routines and methods to address multiple-choice test questions. Students are taught to eliminate obvious wrong answers and not to select the best answer. A routine is used to attack vocabulary used to access the core curriculum by English Language Learner students. Students learn strategies that allow them to develop an ever widening vocabulary in English.

The use of Engagement Strategies for students was a high priority for each of the teacher participants. Some of the strategies they felt important were asking questions, posting achievement targets, monitoring and clarifying, giving individual help when language was a barrier, and teacher feedback. Student engagement was a high priority for students. Overall, they felt that when students were engaged, they were excited about learning and when students are excited about learning, their performance level increases. According to Lady Humphrey, “... their state test scores improve and therefore the achievement gap is diminished.”

One teacher was quite resolute in the ubiquitous strategy she most often employed. Sadie affirmed,

... the component I use most often is creating a positive environment for the students to encourage learning and to allow them to feel comfortable enough to

make mistakes and communicate what they are understanding as well as what they are not understanding from my lessons. If we as teachers do not create a positive environment with encouragement, support, and really look at what our students need to be successful, what is the point of teaching?

Interview Question 3 of 7

To what extent are these strategies effective and why? The ten teachers responding to this question were able to discuss the use of their most frequently used strategies and their effectiveness with their English Language Learner students. The impact of this question guided the researcher into clarifying how the teachers were able to use the strategies to improve student achievement in math and Language Arts. Monica clearly articulated her experience.

I find success with the Reading Campaign...a school-wide reading movement that supports daily reading. Reading logs, wall reading charts, recording books read, a wide variety of reading materials, and time to read are the strategies used here. Using the Academic Vocabulary Development...a routine is used to attack vocabulary used to access the core curriculum by English Language Learner students. Students learn strategies that allow them to develop an ever widening vocabulary in English.

Victoria expressed that the strategies proved effective not only for her English Language Learner students but also for her English only students.

Each of these strategies provides English Language Learner students and English Only students the ability to access the core curriculum, develop confidence in test taking, and expand their vocabulary and background knowledge. Thus their state test scores improve and therefore the achievement gap is diminished.

The researcher was able to determine the justification for using the selected strategies. Additionally, the researcher was able to determine the effectiveness of the selected strategies and the reasons teachers used some strategies as opposed to others. Teachers appeared clear-minded in their choices of strategies.

Interview Question 4 of 7

To what extent are some strategies used as opposed to other ones and why? The researcher was attempting to discover the core elements as to which strategies of the Strategic Schooling Model teachers used most frequently, which ones were preferred over others, and which strategies worked most effectively with English Language Learner students. In responding to this question, the teachers were able to express their thoughts on their most frequently used strategy and justify the reasons they used some strategies as opposed to others. As substantiated by the teacher interviews, the researcher was able to identify the teacher preferences and their use of a variety of strategies. One participant, Lady Humphrey, indicated using all of the strategies. She stated, “I use all the strategies outlined. I feel all are important to develop literacy in English Language Learner students and English Only students.”

Interview Question 5 of 7

What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your students? The researcher asked this question to provide information on closing the achievement gap for students through using direct instruction and the Strategic Schooling Model. Sadie indicated both measurable and observable evidence that her selected strategies of the Strategic Schooling Model made a difference. She stated, “I see increased confidence, improved academic performance, and improved test scores in my students. I believe these improvements are due to the use of the model in my instructional practice.”

Interview Question 6 of 7

What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your students and why? This question was asked of participants in order to get to the heart of closing the achievement gap. Each of the ten teacher participants indicated that they considered Test Prep to be the most beneficial strategy for their students. Franchesca may have expressed the participants' views best when she said,

I feel the use of the Test Prep strategies are probably the most beneficial. The students can use these strategies on their yearly state tests as well as their daily and weekly tests. Test Prep also promotes problem solving skills.

This question captured the teacher – student interaction which is essential in looking at the factors contributing to the achievement gap.

Interview Question 7 of 7

What do you consider to be the most effective practices for working with identified “intervention” students? Responding to this question gave teachers and the administrator the opportunity to self-reflect on their best practices. A consistent theme for Sadie was “going deep. She indicated, “Going deep and being able to re-teach and make sure that students really have an understanding of the information is important.” For Victoria, guided practice and frontloading were her most effective practice for working with identified “intervention” students. She said,

Make it fun, collaborative, and non-threatening – frontloading with lots of visuals and introduction of vocabulary. Use multiple ways of practicing many times. These students usually need a tremendous amount of practice (orally, aurally; visually, kinesthetically). Break tasks down into small pieces and teach in small groups daily. Groups of three to five are best for Far Below Basic (FBB) students. This gives the teacher more opportunity to interact with each student. You should give corrective feedback immediately and often, in a friendly way.

Each teacher participant identified the effective practices used with her “intervention” students. The following identified practices indicate the strategies which had the most impact on identified “intervention” students, as perceived by the teachers who were interviewed. The effective practices included: (a) direct instruction, (b) good first teaching, (c) modeling, (d) frontloading, (e) whiteboards, (f) guided practice, (g) teacher feedback, (h) scaffolding, and (i) one on one. Lady Humphrey was succinct in her statement.

All the aforementioned strategies are effective with intervention students. Most intervention students lack the skills to address learning and by teaching them strategies to address developing vocabulary, reading practice, and test taking, we give the students skills to make them successful learners.

The researcher observed that the perspective of the Administrator participant was based on her overall, combined experiences of working with all of the teachers at the research site. Having had the benefit of seeing each of the site teachers work with their identified “intervention” students, she was able to identify best practices. Her indications were that identified “intervention” students required quality, one on one teaching with active engagement and modeling. She stated,

Intervention students need direct instruction. It is important that they have good first teaching. The quality of good first teaching is needed before intervention. It will drop additional time needed for re-teaching. It is really valuable to have lots of modeling and scaffolding to the point of intervention.

The Administrator participant expanded on two additional effective practices for working with identified “intervention” students. The most effective practices for her were the use of data to guide instruction and reclassification. She shared with the researcher that when identified “intervention” students were reclassified and advanced on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and on the California

Standards Test (CST), success had been reached. She felt that pertinent data must be used to guide the instruction for identified “intervention” students. She indicated,

... Bottom line, reclassification – advanced on CELDT and on CST. If we are effective, it will happen or we will not be getting the results that we want to see. We should use data to guide instruction to reclassify students. We should not have English Language Lifers.

Research Question # 2 sought to understand how teachers and an administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceived the effectiveness of the Model. The findings indicated that when teachers consistently used the strategies within the Strategic Schooling Model, it resulted in increased student engagement and improved academic language development for English Language Learner students. Based on teacher and administrator feedback, the most utilized strategies employed by teachers and the administrator do in fact prove effective in advancing student learning and closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students. The most utilized strategies include the use of whiteboards for quick assessment, checking for understanding, and consistent school-wide practices such as use of data driven instruction.

There were three areas of concern in the findings as perceived by the research participants. The first concern was that teachers at the research site felt they needed to develop more familiarity with the strategies of the Strategic Schooling Model in order to feel comfortable prior to using the strategies with their English Language Learner students. Teachers felt a need for more staff training time to familiarize them and allow for a professional comfort level with the multiple strategies in the Model. Kim voiced her opinion when she stated, “A lot of it depends on the comfort zone of the teacher.” Monica indicated, “Some strategies may be used more frequently because we had more staff training or more staff development or information is embedded in the teacher’s

manuals. Some teachers might not be comfortable using them.” Victoria’s view was somewhat strident although she seemed comfortable with her own use of the strategies.

Their implementation is connected to each teacher’s interest and willingness to make the effort necessary. If the strategy is easy to access (observation and materials) teachers will generally use it. Some teachers wait for administration to bring everything on a platter. They wait until they’re paid for planning time while others plan together often without extra pay because it makes their teaching more effective, successful, and rewarding. Strategies that require more practice to be carried out effectively are left in a binder. Some strategies are tied more closely to personalities. Some teachers are naturally gruff, while others are usually positive, energetic, and personable. Some strategies require principal involvement to make them happen e.g. after-school tutorial... That requires careful planning which some aren’t willing to do.

The second concern was a direct result of the first concern. Teachers felt they needed more time to collaborate on effective use of the strategies and student progress. As part of de-privatizing the practice of teaching, increased teamwork and collaboration is required. The third concern was that there were many standards to cover and teachers expressed a need to synthesize the learning into a systematic method of instruction.

Research Question Three

How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children’s academic success?

This research question sought to understand how parents perceived the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. In answering this question, ten parents who were interviewed in a focus group, identified the specific strategies within the Strategic Schooling Model which proved most effective to the progress of their children’s academic success. The ten parent participants were asked to complete the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Check List-Elementary as a measure of the effectiveness of the Model in closing the achievement

gap for their children. The researcher observed that parent participants ranged in their familiarity with the Strategic Schooling Model. Many were familiar with the outcomes in terms of what their children were doing in the classroom but they did not know the terminology used in the Strategic Schooling Model.

Interview Question 1 of 6 for Research Question Three

How effective is the Strategic Schooling Model and why? The perception of the parent participants was that the Strategic Schooling Model was effective in familiarizing them with student outcomes in terms of expectations for their children in the classroom. Parents felt the Model was effective because of its precision in indicating strategies teachers were using in the classroom and letting parents know what to reinforce at home when working with their children on academics. Parents who worked in their child's classroom were more familiar with the Model than parents who only attended parent meetings. Mrs. P. stated, "I have seen many strategies implemented because I work in the classroom."

The parents who completed the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary ranged in their familiarity with the Strategic Schooling Model. Although only three of the parents were intimately familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model, all parent participants felt the strategies in the Model contributed to the academic success of their children. Their responses support the finding. Mr. C. stated,

I am glad that you have asked me this question. I need to become more familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model. It is important that we as parents keep the lines of communication open with the teachers. I am not familiar with the strategies but my child has progressed in her reading level and English Language Arts class.

The other parents who completed the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary were not familiar with the Strategic Schooling model and therefore were not able to respond to interview question one for research question three.

Interview Question 2 of 6

What are the strategies used with the Strategic Schooling Model? Many of the parents were familiar with the outcomes of the Strategic Schooling Model in terms of what their children were doing in the classroom however; they did not know the terminology surrounding the Strategic Schooling Model. Mrs. C. commented,

The strategies that my child's teacher uses include the tutorial after-school intervention math. The teacher uses games and songs to teach the concepts. I help in the classroom and tutor in math. I am familiar with the strategies because I have seen them in action.

Mrs. V. stated,

All of my children have had success with the strategies that the teachers use. The teachers use these strategies with my children during tutorial after-school. I have seen them use them in the math tutorial. My children are doing well in school.

Mrs. B. indicated, "I have witnessed these strategies because I work with my son in his classroom. He pays attention and he is not shy." Mrs. P. stated, "The teacher makes modifications in Language Arts and Math."

Interview Question 3 of 6

To what extent are these strategies effective and why? Many of the parents saw the value of working on these strategies with their children but they also wanted guidance as to how to help their children at home. Mrs. G. stated, "It is important for parents to be informed about these strategies so that they may assist their children at home." To this

end, the researcher produced a parent education DVD to assist parents in helping their children at home, with their school work.

Mrs. V. indicated,

I have seen these strategies work with all of my children. They have been here at this school and at all of the schools. These strategies help all of the children. My children have gone through all of the teachers and they get compliments for their schoolwork.

Mr. C. and Mrs. C. were specific in the progress they observed in their child's math and reading skills. Mr. C. stated, "My daughter has improved in her reading motivation and in her English class." Mrs. C. expanded on Mr. C.'s statement. "These strategies are effective" she states, "because my daughter is benefiting from them by increasing her math test scores. My daughter participates more in class discussions and she is not shy."

Interview Question 4 of 6

What evidence do you have that these strategies are making a difference for your child? The evidence that the parents had in ensuring that the strategies were making a difference was improvement on test scores and placement of their children in the various performance level groupings created by the school. This was an organizational change in delivering the instruction to the students. Mrs. C. indicated, "My daughter is improving her test scores in math. The teacher gives her lots of attention and she has improved in English Language Arts and in math." Mrs. V. stated, "All of my children are in the upper grades and they have good study habits."

Other evidence that the strategies made a difference was voiced by Mrs. B who stated, "I appreciate the parent meetings. These meetings help me help my child." Mr. G. stated, "It is important for the teachers to get to know the students. This way they are

able to understand the child better and will see the child instead of his file.” Responses from the parent participants indicated that the Strategic Schooling Model was making a positive, measurable difference not only for their children but also for them, the parents.

Interview Question 5 of 6

What are the strategies that you consider to be the most beneficial for your child and why? The parents stated their need to work as partners with the teachers to support the education of their children. It was important for the parents to feel that the school included their interests in educating their children. At the parent meetings, the parents were able to provide input as to the topics which would benefit them the most. Mr. C. stated, “I want to keep the lines of communication open with the teachers so that I can help my child in school.”

The strategies of early intervention and continuous progress were also important to parents. Mrs. C. stated,

The strategy that is most beneficial to me is the math intervention. The teacher explains all of the missed work. Mrs. R., Mrs. P., and Mrs. U-R work to develop my child’s self-confidence. I notice that my daughter participates more in school.

Mr. C and Mrs. V. concurred by adding that their children were more motivated, reading better, and participated more in school.

Interview Question 6 of 6

What type of parent training do you feel has benefited your child the most? Four findings emerged from this question. (a) Parents are willing to assist in the education of their children when they are provided with explicit information such as how to help with homework. (b) In order to more effectively support teachers and form partnerships with them, parents need more information regarding school reform efforts. (c) There is a need

for improved communication between the school and parents. (d) Communication plans must be set up to increase parent involvement in the school.

The parents realized the importance of attending the parent meetings to be informed about the school goals. They also appreciated the outreach with the parent education trainings used to support them with additional strategies on raising their children through positive discipline, anger management, and conflict resolution. Parents appreciated the outreach in assisting them with helping their children with homework. This was an organizational change used to support parents with their children's education.

Parents felt that improved communication would lead to improved parent participation. Parents indicated that they would like to become an integral part of their child's educational process and need ways to feel included in the schooling process. With improved communication and more information, parents would be able to increase their involvement and participation in the school.

Conclusions of the Findings

Through the use of the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary (Parker, 2004) the four components of the Model were examined, observed, questioned, and proven through teacher, administrator and parent interviews. The four components of the Strategic Schooling Model are: 1) Achievement Targets, 2) Feedback, 3) Know-How and 4) Context. Each of these components is essential in the development of the entire Strategic Schooling Model. The Strategic Schooling Model provided the framework from which to analyze the working educational components within the organization. Based on the previous literature review,

each component of the Strategic Schooling Model was effective and allowed for areas of innovation and improvement.

In this section, the researcher will be reporting on the generative themes based on the participant responses to each of the questions guiding the dialogue concerning the specific overarching Research Questions. The following chapter will include the findings for the three research questions posed at the onset of this case study. Ten teachers, ten parents, and one administrator were interviewed. The teachers were interviewed one-on-one, the parents were interviewed in a focus group and one-on-one, and the administrator was interviewed one-on-one.

There were four stages to this case study research. First, the researcher piloted a similar study in two high school English Language Development classes. The researcher gathered data about each classroom and information regarding each teacher's best practices used with English Language Learners. The researcher continued to investigate the best practices used by teachers at a recently reconfigured school with staff members from two different elementary sites. An essential component of this research case study was to continue to look at the best practices which proved to be effective for working with English Language Learner students.

The second stage was having the teacher and parent participants complete their Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary. This process was essential in gathering the necessary data needed for the case study. The information generated the themes and salient features which emerged.

The third stage included the interviews. This was the most beneficial phase of the study. In the interviews, the dialogue led to ways to empower both parents and

teachers with self-reflection, dialogue, and information for the next steps in improving the actions that had already been taken and guidance for the actions to be taken

The fourth phase included the classroom observations. The classroom observations were essential methods for gathering the necessary data to be analyzed. The researcher continued to develop these methods by reaching out to parents who are important stakeholders in their children's education.

According to Glesne,

Participant observation often places research in the lives of others in a self-consciously instrumental way. Participant observers are not merely visiting with the hope to see the sights, have a good time, and in passing, learn a little about how locals live. Researchers have ends-in-view, purposes-however incipient-that underlie their presence in particular settings and direct their behavior while there. The inescapable truth is that researchers are not merely present as they would be in other ordinary circumstances of their lives. They shape their behavior throughout the study in a way that optimizes data collection. (p. 74)

In examining the data from this case study of an elementary school site in the North Bay, several important and interesting findings emerged.

Research Question One

To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

The findings include responses from the ten teacher participants at the research site. The teacher participants who answered this question were asked to complete an Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary which prompted the responses provided as data for this research question. Many of the research responses were based on the teachers' familiarity with the Strategic Schooling Model, while other responses were based on the uses of the strategies within the Model, without prior knowledge of the Model's existence.

As a result of the teachers' responses, it was evident which participants were familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model and which were not. Since there was a transition involved with the closure of a school and the reopening of a new school and staff, the familiarity of the Strategic Schooling Model was wide-ranged, however, many of the components within the Model were being used by the teachers at the new elementary school site.

Although many of the teachers were familiar with the Strategic Schooling Model at the former elementary site, it was evident that newly created staff members of the research site were using the components of the model unbeknown to them. There were certain faculty members who were not part of the original staff who were trained on the Strategic Schooling Model, yet there was a heightened awareness of the use of the components of the Model.

During the dialogue with some of the teachers, new questions surfaced such as, "Are we supposed to be using all of these techniques?" "Where can we find the time?" As a result of using the Strategic Schooling Model, many of the components were in place, however, there was a need to fully implement all of the components in order to have the model fully implemented and produce maximum outcomes for student success. This demonstrated the need for fidelity of implementation and a need to use consistent school-wide practices.

In the observations, many of the teachers were observed using the consistent practices of a reading campaign, a vocabulary campaign, use of whiteboards, and use of test preparation and test de-construction.

In reviewing the strategies being used to close the achievement gap for English Learner students, the ten teachers in the study were utilizing elements from the Strategic Schooling Model which maximized the abilities of their English Learner students. From the observations and the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary, the teachers were using the strategies that they checked off of the list and during the classroom observation they demonstrated the use of the strategies. This indicates the internalization of the strategy for routine use. This is an important element in developing a consistent school-wide practice in both instructional and organizational implementation.

This research question sought to understand the impact that the Strategic Schooling Model had on both an organizational level and an instructional level. Two checklists were used to obtain data on the strategies used in closing the achievement gap. First, the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary provided information on the overall implementation of the model on an organizational level. Secondly, the Classroom Demo's Checklist provided information to the researcher by observing these strategies in action.

The findings were consistent between both checklists, indicating that all of the teachers observed, implemented each strategy to some degree. Also, the researcher was able to observe the strategies being demonstrated by each of the ten teacher participants. The findings indicate that each strategy had contributed to increased reclassification rates for English Language Learner students, institutionalized school-wide practices, and one year's growth on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), as evidenced by the California Department of Education CELDT website.

Research Question Two

How do teachers and an administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model?

The perceptions of the teachers included the fact that many of the teachers needed to feel ownership of the strategies in order to make them become part of their daily routine. Throughout the interviews, there was evidence that each teacher was very committed to improving the education of their English Language Learner students. The way that each individual teacher responded to this question was based on the experience that each teacher had in using or implementing school-wide practices such as the test preparation, active engagement strategies, or the use of whiteboards.

Each teacher's perception could be categorized into four sections in relation to the Strategic Schooling Model: the know-how, the target, the context, and the feedback. The teachers had common attributes in all of these four areas. The bilingualism, years of experience, and participation in professional development activities demonstrated increased abilities in "know-how." The focus on the target—English Language learners demonstrated the instructional skills needed by teachers in order to serve their students better. The context was the classrooms focusing specifically on Language Arts and Mathematics as curricular areas necessary for improvement. The feedback was the area teachers felt needed to be encouraged more by each teacher participant. Each teacher said that they would like to do that more, but needed time for planning.

This research question sought to understand how teachers and an administrator perceived the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. The findings indicate that

if teachers use the strategies within the Model, there will be increased student engagement, and improved academic language development. The findings also pointed to a need for increased onsite teamwork and collaboration. As a component of de-privatizing the practice of teaching, increased teamwork and collaboration is required.

The perception by teachers on the Strategic Schooling Model was that they needed to develop more familiarity with the strategies, in order to feel comfortable before they began using them. Another perception was that there were many standards to cover and there was a need to synthesize the learning into a systematic method. Many of the top strategies used did increase student engagement and improved the development of English. Those top strategies included the use of whiteboards for quick assessments, checking for understanding, and consistent school-wide practices such as test preparation and test chats.

From reviewing the data from the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary and the answers provided by the ten teacher participants, it appeared that fidelity of implementation and consistent use of practices would support the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. Throughout the classroom observations, it was evident that the teachers emphasized the elements of the Strategic Schooling Model which had the greatest impact on their English Learner students. The consistent practice of using whiteboards, student engagement strategies, and test preparation skills allowed for maximum implementation of the model.

When interviewed, the teachers emphasized the importance of having the time to implement these strategies in order to allow for maximum effectiveness in utilizing all of the strategies efficiently on a daily basis. Teachers needed more time to implement the

strategies and make them become part of their daily routine use. The teachers who took the time to use the recommended strategies within the Strategic Schooling Model were very clear on the impact the strategies had on the academic success of their English Learner students. For example, teachers who used the test chat strategy, noticed a more focused approach in student test taking abilities. In other words, the teachers who used the strategies the most frequently were able to reap the benefits of the model by increasing their student successes in Language Arts and Mathematics. Not only was the teacher a full partner in the education of their English Language learner students, but there was recognition that language was not isolated from learning in other content areas.

Given the constant of change, both on an organizational and instructional level, the Strategic Schooling Model provides a catalyst for systemic change on both levels. Overall, the findings include the necessity of attention in building school-wide consistent practices on an organizational level. On an instructional level, the findings include attention to building more collaborative teams, where teachers can share their best practices with each other in a low anxiety setting. Proof that the Strategic Schooling Model was working began with organizational change, which had not occurred prior to implementation of the Model.

The element of cost effectiveness was maximized by working as team members within the school rather than attending outside professional development off-site meetings or having an outside consultant provide training within the organization. By involving all stakeholders in the change process, the implementation of school reform efforts became more effective.

When consistently observed, the school-wide use of these strategies allowed for full implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model. A heightened awareness of the use of these strategies was the result of the questions answered.

Research Question Three

How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children's academic success?

As the researcher had the opportunity to discuss the Strategic Schooling Model with the parents, it was evident that the parents were familiar with the practices demonstrated within the model. On the other hand, they would have liked to have had more information on how the entire Model was organized. They were familiar with bits and pieces, but did not know about the overall organization of the model. This could stem from a lack of communication as to how the Strategic Schooling Model was presented to the parents by either the teachers or the administrator.

The three main themes that developed from these interviews were (1) the need for further information regarding the description of the Strategic Schooling Model, (2) communication regarding how the Strategic Schooling Model pertained to the parents' understanding of how the school was organized for instruction, and (3) the importance of the Strategic Schooling Model in their understanding of how it affects their children's education.

This research question was asked in order to ascertain how parents perceived the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. As parents were interviewed, a major reoccurring theme was their need to feel they were partners with the teachers in developing the academic achievement of their children. It was essential that they were

included in the dialogue to improve the education of their children by understanding what the Strategic Schooling Model was about. They felt the need to support the teachers, but needed to know specifically, how they could assist their children to maximize their children's academic abilities. As a result of these answers, the researcher was inspired to develop a DVD which gave parents specifics on how they could assist their children with their educational endeavors.

The findings indicated that parents were willing to assist in the education of their children when they were provided with explicit methods of how to assist their children with homework. Another finding was that parents needed more information in the area of school reform efforts in order to more effectively support teachers. A third finding was that more effective avenues of communication must be set up to increase parent involvement in the school. Many parents would like to become a part of the education process and needed ways to feel included in the education process. With improved communication and information, parents would be able to increase their involvement and participation in the school.

What Works: Actions to Date

Teachers attest to the fact that standards are upfront and that students are no longer in the dark about what they are expected to learn. Though using the recommended strategies, a heightened awareness of the use of best instructional strategies became evident. The most commonly referred to strategies mentioned in the interviews were the use of white boards, student engagement strategies, checking for understanding, and opportunities for students to talk with a partner to solidify understandings of concepts.

These are the strategies which are most functional in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learners students.

In the interviews, teachers stated that the most important strategies which allowed maximum use of student interaction were reflected through increased participation by the beginning level English speaking students. Opportunities for newcomer students (allowing them to speak, read, write, and listen to fellow students) provides the students with a low anxiety environment which can be used to develop oral language and academic skills in English. The opportunities for newly arrived English Language Learners and beginning level students to speak in English provides them with solid skills to continue adding to their linguistic abilities.

In the observations, students were engaged using think-pair-share activities which increase the participation rates and student engagement levels. This important strategy is part of a consistent organizational practice, which started off simply as an instructional practice in some of the classrooms. To reach the point of a consistent school-wide practice, indicates that the teachers have internalized this strategy as part of their consistent or routine. The idea of internalizing a strategy as part of a consistent practice is key to full implementation of strategies that are presented in a workshop, training or as part of professional development. In terms of pinpointing the exact strategies which closed the achievement gap for English Language Learners, there were several strategies which were identified as important contributions to closing the gap.

For example, in Parker's Strategic Schooling Model, the reading campaign works. The teachers who have adopted the reading campaign have witnessed increased reading levels for their students. By recognizing the students who have either completed a

chapter book or by showing a chart with the student's books that have been read, allows students the necessary motivation to continue increasing their reading abilities and skill. Teachers who have seriously engaged their students into some sort of classroom reading campaign have witnessed an overall literacy rate increase.

In the interviews, the teachers were eager to share the ways that they motivate their students to read and increase their literacy rates. Many of their best practices include a reading area, reading charts with the number of books read, pictures of the students who have completed chapter books, a recognition wall with the student's names on it showing who have completed reading a number of books and a daily reading log required parent's signature.

In the observations, students are allowed to access additional books from the school library, classroom library and through using the textbook. Many of the students have access to library cards through their teachers and check out school library books on campus. The classroom libraries reflect leveled reading materials which can be accessible to all students depending on their reading levels.

In collecting the evidence for the Strategic Schooling Model effectiveness, the vocabulary campaign works. Throughout the interviews, teachers mentioned the importance of posting the content vocabulary necessary for reading a story, addressing a new content area or preparing for certain academic discussions.

In the observations, students were prepared to use the vocabulary in their discussions by having the vocabulary accessible in their notebooks, in a particular area on a classroom chart or having had the opportunity to work through the vocabulary in their

glossaries and extend it with skill practice activities. All students were provided with accessibility to books in and out of the classroom.

One of the most effective pieces of the Strategic Schooling Model is the Test Preparation which has been found to work. This is one of the organizational practices which has become an instructional practice to be delivered on a weekly basis. Although the use of this practice may not be accepted generally, the premise that is a best practice is generally accepted. The implementation of this practice varies and is expected to be practiced every Friday. However, due to the limited time of the school day, some teachers may embed this practice into their daily instructional practice.

In the interviews, the general use of test preparation seemed to be one of the best practices which allows the teacher not only to prepare their students for taking tests, but also allows for an organizational practice to become school-wide. If the best practices are implemented fully, then the results will increase student achievement with a significant percentage increase in the overall class performance. The target for each class performance increase has been set to 45% for improving school-wide and 80% of each class needs to reach that target for movement in student achievement school-wide.

In the observations, teachers use state-wide test release questions on the overhead. They do whole class, direct instruction and students are able to highlight the responses within the text and locate the answers to the questions presented in the test. As part of the test preparation, test deconstruction works. In the interviews, the teachers agreed that not only is test preparation an important instructional practice, but the power of test deconstruction allows students to feel more successful in approaching a test. As Kim pointed out,

Using these practices are best when they are part of the curriculum. The strategies will be used best when I can internalized them, rather than being part of an outside entity. These strategies must be part of the regular curriculum that must be used. To say that it will take place on 1:30 on Friday, it's very difficult.

In the observations, student seemed to know the routine of reading the choices before they answered the test question. The use of whiteboards was an essential component of this strategy as students displayed their answer choices to the class and were given acknowledgement of their thinking process. The student voices were all represented with the use of the whiteboard. Kim stated, "I think they use their time better in class. They know what is expected. Less off task behavior, more understand what they are doing."

Test chats were not always used consistently by the teachers. Some found the practice to be useful, while others used the practice faithfully. The teachers who used this practice found it to be beneficial for their students and they indicated that their students were doing better on their in-class assessments. The teachers who did not use this practice indicated that their students did not seem to increase in their classroom performance.

Organizational practices from the Strategic Schooling Model that are now part of the organization include the six week co-ops. In the interviews, the co-ops were a venue for teacher collaboration for monitoring student progress. This was a consistent practice which focused on improving the student performance results. Many teachers found this strategy useful. As Sarita pointed out,

Meeting regularly with the co-ops to discuss student progress and academic gains is important. Co-ops give us the opportunity to place them appropriately at their ability level. We meet and discuss students who aren't making it and reinforce different levels.

The opportunity to discuss student data keeps the conversation on the student performance rather than on how the content is being delivered. The opportunity to focus on content delivery may be a possible next step in this organizational practice.

What is Not Working: Actions to be Taken

De-privatizing practice works in theory, but it is not an organizational practice. Having teachers walk through each other's classrooms is a great idea, however, it was not a part of the institutional practice of the organization. In the interviews, teachers were still not able to step out of their comfort zones to enter each others' classrooms. This was one of the practices which needed to be developed in order to break through the cultural rituals established at the research site. Although, in theory the practice was a sound practice, identified as a best practice, it was still important to work through the barriers which prevented it from becoming part of the organizational culture.

In the interviews, it became evident that teachers would like to have more opportunities to do this, however, time and planning became a factor. Most teachers did not like to take time away from their instructional day. In the observations, only one of the ten teachers interviewed was able to visit other teachers' classrooms due to the nature of her job. The opportunity to do this activity indicated the more teachers would like to do this, but felt that the time away from instructing their students outweighed the time to observe another colleague. As Sarita stated,

Overall if you are doing everything on the action plan and it should be very successful students will learn and teachers will teach. If you are meeting all of the guidelines then you should be able to have a successful school.

Kim held a poignant view on how teachers and the administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceived the effectiveness of the model. She points out,

Making known to them what the goals are. It focuses them so much more and gives them more responsibility. The level of consciousness has increased. Therefore, it is very effective.

Through interviews, observations and dialogues, the teachers and administrator all agreed that full implementation of the model was key to developing the necessary elements needed for organizational change and consistent school-wide instructional practices. Consistency can be established to promote improving student performance results school-wide. Through the use of monitoring student data, such as the co-op meetings every six weeks, which had become an organizational practice at the research site, student monitoring became an essential component to keeping achievement on a steady path towards improving literacy levels.

Upon identifying the need for collaboration as a best practice in meeting the needs of students, there needed to be a school-wide structure in place to support teacher collaboration, whether it was part of the school day and contractual time or after school with a paid stipend. Teacher collaboration was essential in providing educators with the opportunity to develop differentiated groups, new content areas, and materials needed to increase either student success or identify student interventions. The need to re-think how time was spent at staff meetings, grade level meetings, and common planning time needed to be discussed and a consensus reached to allow for better use of collaborative time.

If the strategies identified within the Strategic Schooling Model were used in a consistent and in-depth way, the effectiveness of the model would increase and produce the necessary gains needed towards increasing API and AYP levels. If some parts of the

model were used with fidelity, then the results would not be as long-lasting as if the strategies were used in a random, “hit and miss” fashion.

There is no one-size fits all model, however, there are a variety of ways to improve the student achievement of English Language Learners and close the achievement gap for these students. An essential component is the teacher expertise and knowledge provided by the teacher to challenge students with academic content, strategies for success, and student engagement opportunities to develop language and academic success.

Parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceived its effectiveness as it directly impacted the progress of their children’s academic success? As Mr. C. indicated, “It is very important that the parents know what the school-wide efforts are so we as parents can support the teachers.” There was a deep sense of partnership which was part of the culture of the school community; however, that partnership still needed to be more fully developed.

Summary of Major Findings

The reoccurring themes from the data throughout the findings include the adherence to the Strategic Schooling: Organizational and Instructional Best On-Target Checklist-Elementary which provides steps for teachers to take in order to be part of a school-wide reform effort. Among the salient features identified by the teachers, the use of whiteboards, student engagement activities, test preparation strategies, reading, writing, and vocabulary development seem to be the top strategies used by all of the teachers who were interviewed and observed. It is critical that teachers of English Language Learner students play an inclusive role in creating policies that affect the

delivery of their classroom instruction. These were elements from the Strategic Schooling Model which extended the outreach to parents and allowed them to be empowered while working in collaboration with the teachers to assist their English Language Learner students in developing their academic abilities at home. The new knowledge is that when presented with specific steps in reform efforts, teachers are more likely to embrace changes more readily.

Although teacher collaboration has been a focus, it was a prevalent and reoccurring theme which appeared in the data. The process for increasing collaboration time needs to be revisited based on the number instructional minutes in a school day. By looking at alternative options for increased student engagement or increased teacher collaboration time, educational organizations can offer support for explicit ways to improve student achievement efforts. If teachers are able to self-reflect on the practices they are using, then there will be an opportunity to develop additional methods to support not only English Learner students but also mainstream students.

Lastly, parent information is necessary for parents to feel empowered and part of the school community. Parent education is necessary to allow parents a voice in their children's education. These were elements from the Strategic Schooling Model which extended the outreach to parents and allowed them to be empowered while working in collaboration with the teachers to assist their English Language Learner students in developing their academic abilities at home. The research indicated that if parents are part of the solution, teachers can work together to solve the achievement gap problem. The research indicated that parents were willing to assist teachers but needed guidance in doing so.

In the area of accountability, there is a need for further research to continue searching for the best practices that develop language and academic proficiency. This case study was an example of documenting the change process in an educational organization which will eventually lead to school-wide reform efforts to assist English Language Learner students with specific strategies to make academic achievement gains. This study did not isolate the stakeholders, but documented the need for a team approach in making explicit gains in English Language Arts. Through the recommendations by Dennis Parker, the identification of the targeted students, targeted strategies and a collaborative model, there can be specific steps to follow in the overall organizational change process.

A reoccurring theme was that each teacher selected their preferred strategy to use as an instructional technique to increase vocabulary, literacy, and verbal English skills. This was an essential step in having the teachers increase their awareness of the effectiveness of specific strategies.

Another theme was that parents seemed to have little information on the Strategic Schooling Model, yet the parents who were familiar with the model were very interested in discovering ways to assist their children with specific guidance in reading and math. Parents needed to have more information about the Strategic Schooling model and were very willing to participate in Parent Education meetings.

These themes are reoccurring and multi-layered. Each one of these themes was examined in isolation in order to substantiate the evidence proven to create the change process. This study attempted to solve a complex problem. There was no single solution to the multi-dimensional systemic change issue, especially as the literature demonstrated.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This case study was conducted in order to ascertain the teacher and parent perspectives into strategies that are considered best practices to teach English Language Learners. The process used to analyze this programmatic activity was complex. The process involved 21 participants, examined organizational transitions, utilized a Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary instrument, and determined the most effectual practices to effectively close the achievement gap for English Language Learners. This instrument was administered to ten teachers and one administrator at the elementary research site and ten parents of English Language Learners. The administrator, each of the ten teachers, as well as the ten parents of English Language Learners were interviewed individually. The researcher observed ten classrooms and used the Classroom Demo's Checklist instrument as a note taking template during each observation in the ten classrooms.

This investigation revealed the importance of internalizing strategies used by teachers in order to be more effective in closing the achievement gap. The researcher's observations discovered the importance of using consistent school-wide practices to improve the quality of instruction for English Language Learners. The combination of observations, individual interviews, and classroom documents, contributed to the implications and recommendations for this case study. Each teacher, parent, and administrative participant, provided useful information regarding strategic methods for

closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students. The discussion of the findings for each of the three research questions follows.

Discussion

Research Question #1: To what extent is Parker's Strategic Schooling Model an effective instrument in closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner students?

In answering this question, the researcher was able to ascertain that the teachers who used the Strategic Schooling model appeared to follow the steps outlined by the model. Not only was each teacher observed and documented by the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary, but each teacher was interviewed to ensure her understanding, awareness and self-reflection of the use of each strategy. Each strategy was described and utilized by the teachers at the research site. The advantage of the usage of these strategies was the direct impact on the English Language Learners and their development of the English Language. If more opportunities arose for the teachers to utilize this model, then there would be an opportunity to allow closure for the achievement gap between English only students and English learner students.

Through the use of a concise, checklist format, the model provided guided ways to assist teachers in directly working with English learners to assist them in targeted ways. If the teachers were allowed to *own* these strategies, then the resistance to using these strategies school-wide would decrease. A consistent, school-wide practice is more effective, than isolated attempts to close the achievement gap.

Cost effectiveness can be increased if teachers learn to use the strategies with each other, rather than having outside providers come in or have teachers sent out to attend workshops. On the other hand, some teachers may prefer to attend off-site workshops to increase their professional development.

Opportunities for collaboration are essential elements for allowing the Strategic Schooling Model to be effective. Master schedules with a variety of considerations for increasing collaboration time provide options for school districts to re-think how time is used within the school day and after school. Analyzing the current instructional minutes being used in order to maximize collaboration time within the school day, offers teachers an opportunity to collaborate without having to extend their day with extra duties.

The research indicated that carefully negotiated opportunities of how to spend teacher time will result in increased teacher ownership towards a better use of collaboration time. As Kim states, “It’s only as effective as it is implemented, depending on how far-reaching it can be used.” This negotiated time is necessary to change the educational organization. Details of potential impacts of time must be carefully outlined and proposed to the organization if a successful reform effort is to take place. Overall organizational change is an indicator of successful implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model.

Research Question #2: How do teachers and an administrator involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive the effectiveness of the model?

As stated in the interviews, STAR test results, increased language proficiency levels and re-classification rates are key elements in demonstrating effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model. The time invested in training teachers to use the model,

having teachers observe how to use the model, and the results of proven best practices, are important in the overall perception of a successful model. If teachers are supported by the administration to use the model effectively, then teachers will be able to use all of the elements of the Strategic Schooling Model to a higher degree of implementation and perceived success.

When teachers are able to see results of the invested time in changing organizational practices, then the probability of increased acceptance of change will increase. As documented by the interviews, teachers are the implementers of the change within the educational organization and the administration provides the support for the change to occur. However, the teachers must feel a sense of self-worth for the efforts they make towards implementing a total school reform. As Kim states,

A lot of it depends on the comfort zone of the teacher...Drama class from Wells Fargo, out of my comfort zone. I want to watch her to model in my class. With strategies I use, I feel that I am competent.

The Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary was instrumental in providing the necessary elements for teachers to focus on in the organizational change process. Through adhering to the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary, teachers were able to see specific steps outlined for increasing the way they delivered instructional practices for English Language Learners and their counterparts. As documented by the ten interviews, strict adherence to those strategies demonstrated another step in leveling the playing field for English Language Learner students. As stated by Karen,

In reading, if I could get the child to read books at his level, understand them, enjoy them, even though his level may not increase this year, this may be the foundation for next year to rally take off. That is success.

Research Question # 3: How do parents involved with the Strategic Schooling Model perceive its effectiveness in relationship to the progress of their children's academic success?

As a result of the interviews with the parent participants, it became evident to the researcher, that the parents were not completely aware of the Strategic Schooling Model. However, the more parents were involved with the school activities, the more they seemed to see how the Strategic Schooling Model was effective in terms of their children's academic success.

The research indicated that school communication must be increased to inform the parents of the existence of school reform efforts, in order for the parents to support the school's endeavor for improvements. In all of the interviews, the parents seemed very concerned and willing to assist in wherever needed to help their children succeed.

The fact that parents were interviewed, allowed for another perspective of the Strategic Schooling Model's implementation efforts. Although not all of the parents were familiar with the model, it was imperative that the parents were allowed an opportunity to express their understanding of the model's impact on their child's education. Not only did these interviews form a basis of understanding for the parents, but they also demonstrated that parents are willing stakeholders who want to assist and need the proper dissemination of information in order to have a better understanding of how the model works.

Conclusions

The diversity in the background of participants who were interviewed and observed allowed both teachers and parents an opportunity to voice their concerns and identify the role they played within the Strategic Schooling Model. Not only did the stakeholders have the advantage of being part of the organizational change process, but they also were able to reflect on what was working for them and what was not working for them within the Strategic Schooling Model. In addition, many participants were able to be informed regarding the overall effectiveness of the model in relation to the No Child Left Behind Act.

Acknowledging that the research site stakeholders experienced organizational change from within the organization, it was evident that both teachers and parents were part of a far reaching transitional change process with the outgoing administration of President George W. Bush, the incoming Presidential Administration of Barack Obama, along with a newly appointed school site principal. The research site stakeholders were exemplary participants in the organizational change process. This research study could be beneficial in the planning of future reform efforts for English Language Learner students who enroll in American schools and continue to be part of the educational process in the United States.

The interview process used in the study suggests the need to research materials and methodologies used in the current state standards of English Language Development programs. In this study, all participants were voluntarily selected. One of the key findings of the Strategic Schooling Model was the need for collaboration within the work day. It was evident from this study that the research was needed to bring another lens as

to the role teachers and parents play in the educational process of English Language Learners. In order to be effective, the transitional change needed for the Strategic Schooling Model is dependent upon key factors such as: (a) a transformational leader, (b) full participation of all stakeholders, (c) complete implementation of the Strategic Schooling Model, (d) teacher and parent reflections as to the role they may play, and (e) the on-going need for organizational change based on reflection. The organizational as well as the instructional infrastructures allow for the Strategic Schooling Model to serve as a catalyst for change. The effectiveness of the model was also observed in the classroom practices demonstrated by each classroom visit.

In reflecting on the dialogues with the participant teachers and parents, an area of salient interest was the relationship between the educational organization and the parents. The parents felt the need to become more connected to the school, by allowing the teachers to demystify the educational process through explaining the technicalities of the Strategic Schooling Model. Although the model seemed somewhat far removed from the parents' current reality, the teachers had not truly embraced the completeness of the model and were not able to own all of the elements involved in the implementation of a full model. The teachers felt that they needed the model to become part of their daily routine, before truly implementing the model to its fullest potential.

The factors which motivated the teachers to accept parts of the Strategic Schooling Model included some of the elements within the target, context, feedback and know-how, but not all of the elements were used to the fullest level of implementation. Perhaps if the teachers were allowed to incorporate all of the elements involved in the target, context, feedback and know-how, there would be another level of implementation

and success for the entire organization, as opposed to some areas becoming an institutional practice, while other areas have not been fully developed.

Full implementation or fidelity of implementation is the key to a successful program as stated by Cummins (1989). If the program is not implemented fully, then the results will be reflected by increases in some areas but not other areas. For example, the most common strategy used by the teachers was the use of whiteboards. This strategy is simple and allows for multiple levels of impact within the curriculum. It also allows for quick assessment of state standards and can be part of the test preparation section of the Strategic Schooling Model. Without fully implementing all parts of the Strategic Schooling Model simultaneously, the outcomes for achievement will become “hit and miss” opportunities for students to successfully access the curriculum. A fundamental question to be researched further could be, “Should the Strategic Schooling Model be implemented to its fullest capacity to become more effective or should a few elements, if done well, suffice and allow for more impactful gains?”

The dialogues with the teachers suggest an area for further research, specifically in the area of policy development and implementation and how this might affect the Strategic Schooling Model. By including the input from teachers in the development of policies and implementation of reform efforts, perhaps there could be more ownership for more effective implementation of strategies. The voices of the teachers are important in the future success of educational reform efforts.

In the area of knowledge contribution, the researcher discovered that there needs to be additional venues, to develop the arts and alternative forms of communication for student achievement, besides the rigorous curriculum prescribed by the state. Through

teacher dialogues, it was evident that teachers were under pressure to produce results, increase test scores, and rethink how they work together. Many of the teacher participants stated how the shift in education has now turned to increasing test scores, without much time left for any additional teaching in the arts, music or other enrichment activities.

The need for additional time for more collaboration and sharing of strategies was also expressed within the interviews. All teacher participants expressed the need for additional planning time with their colleagues. Although collaboration has been a focus, time for planning together with colleagues, was a prevalent reoccurring theme which appeared in the data.

Within the realm of the organizational practices, the new knowledge contributions include a need to develop system-wide consistent practices in the areas of collaboration, strategic development, and school-wide campaigns in reading, writing and vocabulary. An additional research question could include what is the effect of incorporating the arts into the Strategic Schooling Model on the cognitive development of English Language Learners.

Implications

The results of the research conducted in this case study have implications for classroom teachers, parents of English Language Learner students, and educational institutions. Implementations of changes for these three constituent groups were major themes resulting from the research study. Participant feedback on the Strategic Schooling Model and results of the Strategic Schooling: Best Organizational and Classroom Practices On-Target Checklist-Elementary Instrument indicated a need for change in order to enhance effectiveness.

In the area of teacher training, the implications are far reaching, since the strategies used to work with English Language Learners have a direct impact in closing the achievement gap. The strategies used by teachers of English Language Learners need to be consistent and practiced school-wide to improve the quality of instruction. The fidelity of implementation of an organizational model needs to be fully implemented to create consistent academic success for the organization and for the strategies used to improve academic performance. Among the salient features identified by the teachers, the use of whiteboards, student engagement activities, test preparation strategies, reading, writing and vocabulary development seem to be the top strategies used by all of the teachers who were interviewed and observed. It is critical that teachers of English Language Learner students play an inclusive role in creating policies that affect the delivery of their classroom instruction.

Implications for parents evolved around the area of having the necessary skills and tools to assist their students in the education process. The research showed that parents needed more parent education and specifics on strategies to assist their children to become more successful with their academic abilities. A byproduct of this research was a parent DVD/Video which was distributed to parents in parent education classes with techniques outlining how to assist their children with homework, reading, and math. These were elements from the Strategic Schooling Model which extended the outreach to parents and allowed them to be empowered while working in collaboration with the teachers to assist their English Language Learner students in developing their academic abilities at home.

A significant theme resulting from the parent interviews was the necessity for parents to continue to work as partners in their child's education. It was also important for the school to involve parent participation in the development of policies and offer parent education sessions on topics generated by the parents. The research indicated that parents are extremely willing and able to support teachers and the school in a variety of ways including helping with homework, attending school functions, and participating in parent education classes. It is important for parents to have a voice in the development of policies and procedures. Parents must be included as partners, giving voice to determine how they can become academic supporters of their child's education.

In addition to teachers and parents, the findings of the research have implications for principals and administrators of educational institutions. An important element involved in the school reform effort is collaboration between administrators and teachers. Creating the time and place for administrators and teachers to develop and discuss effective strategies for English Language Learner students is a critical component in effecting the Strategic Schooling Model. The use of effective time management is necessary in creating the time for collaboration. It is important to identify the areas of focus in a systematic way in order to improve all areas of the Strategic Schooling Model in a consistent manner. In addition, the curriculum and state standards must be updated yearly to support English Language Learner students' linguistic and academic needs. The research indicated that the role of teachers, parents, and administrators serve as strong links in determining the level of effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model as it relates to closing the achievement gap for English Language Learner Students. Collaboration is an essential component of the Model.

Recommendations for Future Research

As partners in the Strategic Schooling Model process, parent education must be used in developing better practices for working with their children. It is essential that teachers have time to collaborate either paid time after school or embedded as part of their contractual duty. It is also important to incorporate the arts into the model to allow for further expansion of the curriculum to be integrated into English Language Arts and Mathematics. The impact of such suggested program changes could improve the effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model in eliminating the achievement gap for English Language Learner students. These are areas for future research.

The reading, vocabulary, and writing campaigns were evident throughout the curriculum; however, the need for rubrics in each of these areas to focus instruction on the students is essential. Rubrics would allow teachers to gain a more accurate picture of student progress in each curricular area. This is an area to be explored in further detail with additional research.

In terms of compliance to state standards, all of the teachers observed had the standards posted on their walls. The need for a public display of achievement targets needs to be a next step, however, the implications for displaying student data information needs to be worked out with regard to sensitivity and confidentiality. The student data component is a subsequent step that is being considered in the ongoing process for using the Strategic Schooling Model. This step will result in additional organizational change procedures by allowing more time to be devoted to work with student data in various grade level teams.

Recommendations for Professional Practices

The researcher observed the need for consistent school-wide practices in working with English Language Learner students. The teachers who were trained in the Strategic Schooling model were instrumental in creating the organizational change necessary to improve instruction. There is a need for further training in the Strategic Schooling Model for new teachers and teachers who have not been part of the current staff. This training could be done by a mentor teacher or a peer coach to improve the delivery of instruction to English Language Learner students.

In the area of new knowledge to the profession, it was evident that implementation and practices must be internalized before teachers will commit to using suggested practices of the model. Perhaps a subgroup of leadership representatives could pave the way for other teachers to accept the changes being proposed by the administration. Know-how must be developed through professional development provided by the district within the school site.

A partially implemented model will not yield the successes of a fully implemented model. Parents of participants need to be informed as to how they can assist their children in the content areas. Parents would benefit from training on how to help their children become more successful in their educational experience. Even a minimum requirement of establishing basic study habit routines for their children would be beneficial.

The community will gain information as to how the educational system operates if there is adequate communication in the local press regarding changes the school system is making internally. The teachers and parents will gain information as to how to assist

English Language Learners students in better ways to meet their academic and linguistic needs, as well as their social developmental needs. There is a need for heightened awareness of teacher strategies in use for delivery of curriculum in order to become more effective.

In the area of policy, mandated policies must have ownership by the teachers. Policies must support professional development within the school district, as opposed to sending teachers out to workshops. The research findings indicated that it is important for teachers to have access to professional development opportunities that become part of their common planning time. Setting time aside for teacher inservice and training, values the teacher's expertise and time investment.

In the area of practice, practices must be internalized and reviewed to become part of the teacher's daily routine. Organizational practices will become routine if teachers provide feedback to each other on the effectiveness of their practices. Collegial suggestions may improve the current practices demonstrated by teachers. The organizational and instructional practices must be part of an overall on-going planning process to be successful. The instructional practices must be directed at English Language Learners linguistic and academic needs.

Reflections by the Researcher

In the process of interviewing, dialoguing with teachers and parents, and observing the classroom practices, the researcher was able to gain new insights into the world of teaching on a daily basis and into the way that parents would like to act as partners with the teachers to educate their children. The contributions to knowledge, policy and practice were formulated in the Strategic Schooling Model and experienced by

the teachers and parents who either became more familiar with the model or who began to perceive the model in a different way. The Strategic Schooling Model serves as a tool for policymakers to unite the processes necessary to create effective organizational change. The heightened awareness that the teachers demonstrated as a result of how they contributed to the overall effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the Strategic Schooling Model provided valuable information for future implementation of this model.

To increase effectiveness, it is critical that teachers both practice and embrace all components of the Strategic Schooling Model as part of their daily routine. Not only will this be part of the full implementation process for change, but it will also become an internalized practice which will benefit English Language Learner students in the long-run. The need for collaboration is evident for teachers to plan within the school day or after the school day. This collaboration time should be included as part of the contractual day or as additional paid time. This is a practice which must be embedded as part of their contractual day. These are some of the elements of the model which will provide input towards improving the overall organizational practices for increased student achievement.

Parents needed more parent education and specifics on ways to assist their children to become more successful with their academic abilities. A product of this dissertation was a parent DVD/Video which was distributed to parents in parent education classes with strategies outlining how to assist their children with homework, reading, and math. These were elements from the Strategic Schooling Model which extended the outreach to parents and allowed them to be empowered while working in collaboration with the teachers to assist their English Learners students in developing their academic abilities at home.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

IRBPHS University of San Francisco

Subject: **IRB Application # 08-059**

From: **irbphs** <irbphs@usfca.edu>
Date: Sat, Jul 26, 2008 at 11:01 AM
To: sramirez2@usfca.edu
Cc: "mitchellm@usfca.edu" <mitchell@usfca.edu>

July 26, 2008

Dear Ms. Ramirez:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your modification request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your modification application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #08-059). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the dated noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
IRBPHS University of San Francisco
Counseling Psychology Department
Education Building - 017
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080 (415) 422-6091 (Message)

APPENDIX B PERMISSION TO USE INSTRUMENT

Dennis Parker
Education Consultant
Strategic Schooling

11656 County Road 92B
Zamora, CA 95698
dp1018@pacbell.net
(916) 240-0133


April 14, 2008

Silvia Ramirez
4540 Heath Circle
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Dear Silvia:

This letter is to confirm my permission for you to use the menu or checklist of Strategic Schooling strategies as per you request. I would appreciate it if you would not use it for remunerative purposes unless first receiving permission from me. I am honored that you would want to include it in your work on the dissertation. I wish you all the best in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,


Dennis R. Parker
Education Consultant
Faculty (Retired)
School Management Program
UCLA

APPENDIX C

Strategic Schooling On-Target Check Lists

STRATEGIC SCHOOLING:
BEST ORGANIZATIONAL AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES
ON-TARGET CHECK LIST - ELEMENTARY
AREA OF INNOVATION ACTION TO DATE ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Achievement Targets (posted on a school data wall) 1. API - Ambitious 2-5 year target set & publicized, e.g., 30-50 points		
2. AYP - % gain in students scoring "prof - adv" in Language Arts & Math (one-year target set & publicized, e.g., 10% - 15%)		
3. Percent gain in students scoring "4" or "5" on the CELDT (target set & publicized)		
4. Percent gain in students redesignated as FEP (one- year target set & publicized, e.g., 15%+)		
Content Targets 1. Standards Blueprints (posted and with weekly check marks)		
2. CELDT Blueprints and Rubrics (posted in ELD classes and with check marks)		
3. Writing Rubric (4 th grade, others, posted, used by kids)		
4. Monthly "Focus Areas" or "Nemesis Standards" (chosen monthly by grade level teams for extra focus; results posted & discussed monthly)		
St Student Targets ("3's" for in-class mentoring and "1's" & "2's" for after-school interventions; results discussed monthly by grade level teams)		

AREA OF INNOVATION	ACTION TO DATE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
Feedback - School Data Wall (3 or more years of the school's track record on state tests and other measures, e.g., API, reclassification rates, % prof-adv, library collection & use, attendance, referrals, suspensions, etc., as well as current achievement targets, displayed in a prominent public place)		
Feedback - Classroom Data Wall (multiple measures of student and whole- class performance on a variety of measures as well as new achievement targets for the class)		
Feedback - Student Test Chats (to help students set new achievement and content targets and commit to areas of improvement)		
<p>Feedback -Teacher Test Chats</p> <p>(with the principal, to review last year's gainers, stickers, and sliders, reflect, and set new goals)</p>		
<p>Feedback -Awards Ceremony (Formal recognition of students who made gains or scored high on the CST & CELDT)</p>		
Know-How - Test Prep on Friday's ("Test Practice" is not "Test Prep" - Deconstructing one item at a time - 4 Why's - Why right? Why wrong?)		

Know-How - Reading Campaign (1 million or more words/student, 20-30 min/day, monitoring, incentives, rewards, discussions, personal and group targets, etc.)		
Know-How - Vocabulary Campaign ("Grow Lists" of structural & semantic families, meaningful introduction of unrelated words, tiered vocabulary, cognates, idioms, games)		
Know-How - Writing Campaign (1 piece of "publishable, informative" writing per month)		
Know-How - Interactive Classroom Strategies ("Say It," "See It," Four "Alternatives to calling on kids one at a time")		
Know-How - Comprehension Strategies (No cold reads, Textbook-Handling - introducing a new chapter, DRTA, QAR, Anticipation/Reaction Guides, Fluency Practice, Strip Story, Odd Person Out, Reciprocal Teaching, etc.)		
Know-How - "Sacred-Talk-Time" Meetings (first 80% of all teacher meetings focused on teaching strategies & activities, content & student targets, and any related data or student work)		
Know-How - Classroom Walk-Throughs (stealing 1 good idea and/or "focused" walk-throughs, e.g., "feedback," "student engagement," white boards," etc. Visits to other schools.)		
Other - _____		
Other - _____		

Other - _____			
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REFLECTIONS & PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR:

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CLASSROOM DEMO'S CHECKLIST

STRATEGY	OBS	NOT OBS	COMMENTS
<p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Positive acquaintanceship ➤ Get them to do something well 			
<p>METACOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explain to kids why and/or how they're going to do the lesson 			
<p>SAY IT!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Choral ➤ Small group ➤ Individual 			
<p>SEE IT!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Doodling ➤ Body Language ➤ Graphics ➤ Props ➤ Circumstances 			
<p>ALTERNATIVES TO CALLING ON KIDS ONE AT A TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Heads together ➤ Choral response ➤ Thumbs up/down ➤ White boards 			
<p>EMOTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interest ➤ Playfulness ➤ Personal meaning 			
<p>STRATEGY #1</p>			
<p>STRATEGY #2</p>			

APPENDIX D

Letter to Administrator and Teacher Participants

November, 2008

Dear _____

I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation proposal that I will conduct this school year. The project is a requirement in a doctoral course I am taking at the University of San Francisco's School of Education.

As part of this project, I am interested in exploring the instructional practices used in teaching English Language Learners.

Given my area of focus, I am requesting your help in different ways: 1) permission to interview you three times about your views on the instructional practices you use to develop the English language skills of your students; 2) permission to take copies of materials you use in your work, such as worksheets, homework assignments or in-class assignments; and 3) an observation for a checklist.

The interviews will last about 60 minutes for three separate sessions. They will occur at mutually agreeable times and locations. I would like to tape the interviews. This information will be confidential and only for the use of this class. You may withdraw from the project at any time, should that prove necessary.

Part of my course requirement includes writing about and debriefing with about what the instructional practices used to develop the English language skills of students. In doing so, I will protect your identity by using pseudonyms rather than real names. While I will quote directly from interviews, documents, and observational notes, I will be extremely attentive in protecting confidentiality.

I appreciate very much your generosity in facilitating my learning more about the instructional practices used to develop the English language skills of your students. If there are ways I can return your assistance in this endeavor, I hope that you can inform me. I will provide you with a gift certificate for your classroom library. If you would like me to share my findings with you, I am willing to do so.

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to ask them. My phone number is available to you. Please sign the informed consent form if you are willing to participate in this project. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Silvia Ramirez

I, _____ (name of participant), have discussed with Silvia Ramirez her research project, focused on the learning strategies of English Learners, and I agree to participate in it. I understand that Silvia Ramirez will gather documents from my classroom. I also agree to participate in interviews and complete the check off list. I understand that all efforts will be made to protect my identity and confidence. If necessary, I may withdraw from the project at any time.

Participant Signature
October, 2008

APPENDIX E

Letter to Parent Participants

Noviembre 2008

Estimados Padres,

Me gustaría invitarlos a participar en un estudio que estoy trabajando este año escolar. El proyecto es un requisito para un curso que estoy tomando en la Universidad de San Francisco Escuela de Educación.

Estoy interesada en las prácticas educativas que usan para enseñar a sus hijos.

Le agradecería su apoyo en la siguiente manera:

- 1) Permiso para pedir unas preguntas durante una junta general;
- 2) Permiso para recibir documentos recibidos por usted de maestros;

La entrevista será una hora por lo general. Será conducida durante una junta general.

Agradezco su atención en apoyar la educación de sus hijos.

Sinceramente,

Silvia Ramírez
Maestra de Recursos Bilingües

Appendix F

Spanish Release Form for Audio Tapes and Transcripts

Forma de Permisi3n Para Cintas y Copias

Convengo en tener mis di3logos de conversaci3n con la Se1ora Ram3rez grabado y transcrito a forma escrito. Realizo que es la responsabilidad de La Se1ora Ram3rez y de mi, asegurar las exactitudes de las transcripciones.

Adem3s, yo se que las cintas y transcripciones originales estar3n guardados en la casa de la Se1ora Ram3rez por tres anos. Despu3s, ser3n destruidas o no las copias m3os, segun mis deseos.

Firma de Participante

Fecha

Firma de Cient3fica Investigadora

Fecha

Appendix G

English Release Form for Audio Tapes and Transcripts

I agree to have my dialogues with Silvia Ramirez audio taped and transcribed into written form. I realize that it is the responsibility of both Mrs. Ramirez and me to ensure the accuracy of these transcriptions.

I am also aware that the original audiotapes and transcripts will be kept in a safe secure place in Mrs. Ramirez's hours for a period of three years, after which they will be destroyed. The transcribed copies I receive will be destroyed or not at my discretion.

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date