

**Notes from the Idaho Elementary and Secondary Education Act Conference
April 15-17, 2015 Boise, Idaho**

Sessions: Five Best Practices for Academic Success for Newcomers

Thursday Afternoon 4/16/15 and Friday Morning 4/17/15

Presenters: Judith B. O'Loughlin and Brenda Custodio

Email: joeslteach@aol.com and custodio.1@osu.edu

Introducing Five Best Practices:

- **ONE:** Collaboration among school professionals to create a program specifically to meet the unique needs of new arrivals.
- **TWO:** Provide intensive literacy, numeracy, and content area support, especially for SIFE students.
- **THREE:** Develop a ladder of supports to enable students to access grade level standards.
- **FOUR:** Train school personnel to provide non-academic support and help students build resilience.
- **FIVE:** Work with families to support students outside of school environment.

Getting Started Questions?

- Who are the new arrivals?
- Common acronyms
- Definition of “limited formal schooling”
- Demographic data
- Why do newcomers need specialized programs?

Who are these new arrivals?

- Students with a grade level education in their home country who may have varied levels of English
- Students who have a gap in their education because of situations in their home country or not able to attend school while moving
- Students with little or no formal educational experiences before coming to the US

Common Acronyms

- Students with Interrupted Formal Educations, or SIFE. This acronym is popular in the New York area and most areas of the East Coast.
- Students with limited formal education (LFS), an acronym used in the Midwest and West

Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education, SLIFE. An acronym that seems to combine both of the previous ones.

Definition of Limited Formal Schooling:

David and Yvonne Freeman, well-known experts in the field of limited formal schooling, use this definition of LFS in their book: ***Closing the Achievement Gap: How to Reach Limited-Formal-Schooling and Long-Term English Learners.***

–Recent arrivals

- Interrupted or limited schooling in native country
- Limited native-language literacy
- Below grade level in math
- Poor academic achievement

Causes of Limited Formal Schooling:

- Little or no formal schooling in home country due to war or economic situation
- Missing years of education because of frequent moves after arriving in the US
- Limited educational progress because of lack of English proficiency, not benefiting from instruction
- Poor quality of education in native country
- Students who chose work over attending school

Demographic Data:

- Immigrants from Mexico and Central America who come from rural areas or whose poverty prevented consistent schooling (about 500,000 a year total immigration from this area, 60,000 as unaccompanied minors)
- Refugees who have spent years in refugee camps with limited access to educational services (about 70,000 a year enter the US, another 25,000 requested and were granted asylum)

Educational Expectations and Realities in Latin America

- Many Latin American countries, including Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic only have 8-9 years of compulsory education
- Often families must pay for uniforms and textbooks, even though schooling is free
- Rural areas often have poor facilities, inadequately trained teachers, and little enforcement of school attendance rules

Best Practice One: Ideal Academic Programs for New Arrivals

- Basic English language development** is critical, with native-language support available, if possible
- Basic literacy skills** introduced and developed
- Basic numeracy skills** introduced and developed if needed
- Most critical component of working with LFS students is **literacy development**
- Some LFS have little or no experience with the basic components of reading
 - Sound/word correlation and word spacing
 - Directionality
 - Matching pictures to text
 - Story elements

Best Practice 2: Collaboration

Literacy Programs – homogeneous classes

- Fluid movement as skills develop
- Appropriate reading materials
- Build Background Knowledge

- Use multimedia, realia, pictures, etc.
- **Math instruction** needs to consider differences in calculation, representation of answers, organization of dates, time, differences between metric and base ten calculations.
- Include sheltered instruction lesson planning; review SIOP protocol for planning sheltered lessons.

Best Practice 3: Ladder of Support

Triangulation of instruction: Learning to use English, Learning How English Works, and Learning Content through English.

- **Resources for creating lessons:**
 - Can Do Descriptors by grade-level clusters - WIDA
 - Performance Definitions: Receptive and Productive - WIDA
 - Supports for learning – See Figures 3G, 3H, and 3J in the 2007 version of the WIDA Standards online at www.wida.us.
 - A-Z charts for building vocabulary (attached separately) from Freeman and Freeman, *Closing the Achievement Gap*, (2002) Heinemann.
- **Assessment:** minute-by-minute; daily; weekly; unit; quarterly; annually.

Best Practice 4: Resilience

Factors impacting the need for resilience

•Environmental Factors	•Educational Factors
-Poverty	-Peer pressure
-Societal violence	-Academic rigor
-Domestic violence	-Language barrier
-Drugs	-Grades
-Immigration status	-Test scores
-Bullying	-Graduation requirements
-Homelessness	-Motivation
-Self-esteem	

Three Stances to Help Newcomers Develop Resilience

- **I Have** – Resources and people available to offer support.
- **I Am** – Positive characteristics the newcomer sees in himself.
- **I Can** – Learned skills the newcomer possesses to deal with social interactions, such as solving problems.

Resilience Resources:

- “Havens of Resilience,” *Education Leadership*, September, 2013, Vol. 71, No. 1, p. 25. www.ascd.org
- Henderson, N. (2012) “The Resiliency Workbook: Bounce Back Stronger, Smarter with Real Self Esteem,” *Resiliency in Action*, Solvang, CA.

Best Practice 5 – Involving Parents and Families

- **Three points** - about parental involvement every teacher should know.
- **Two ideas** - for getting parents into the school
- **One suggestion** - for increasing parent involvement at your school.

