

Navigating the Special Education ELL Highway:

Collaborative Identification and Support for Special Needs ELLs

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Contributors



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Objectives

- ❖ **Describe the development of building-level Special Ed-ELL collaboration**
- ❖ **Define the role of ELL teacher in pre-referral and identification process**
- ❖ **Describe support services for Special Needs ELLs**

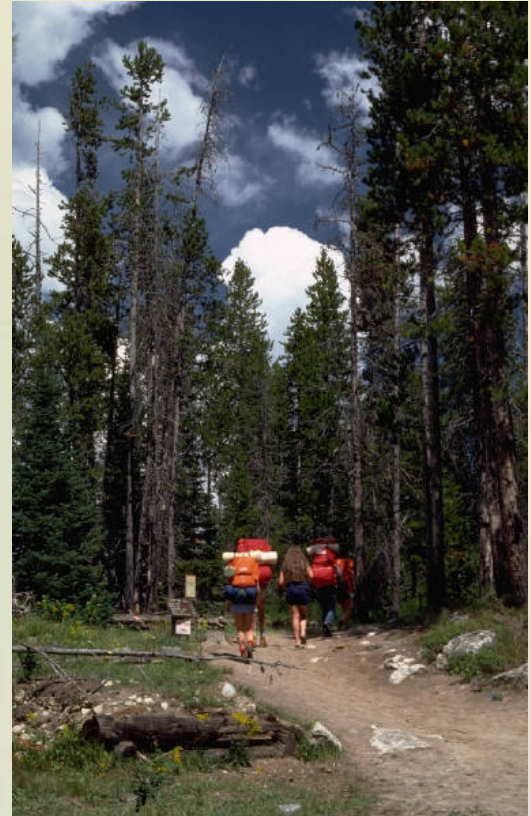
Demographics and Programming

Shawnee Mission School District

- **Large, suburban, middle class district**
- **Johnson County, KS (KC Metro Area)**
- **ELL population is new, fast growing**
- **ELLs bussed to Centers**
- **ELL: Pull-out model, 2 hours/day**
- **Special Ed: Multi-categorical resource room**
- **Para support**

Trailblazers

- **Medical or genetic involvement**
- **Learning affected**

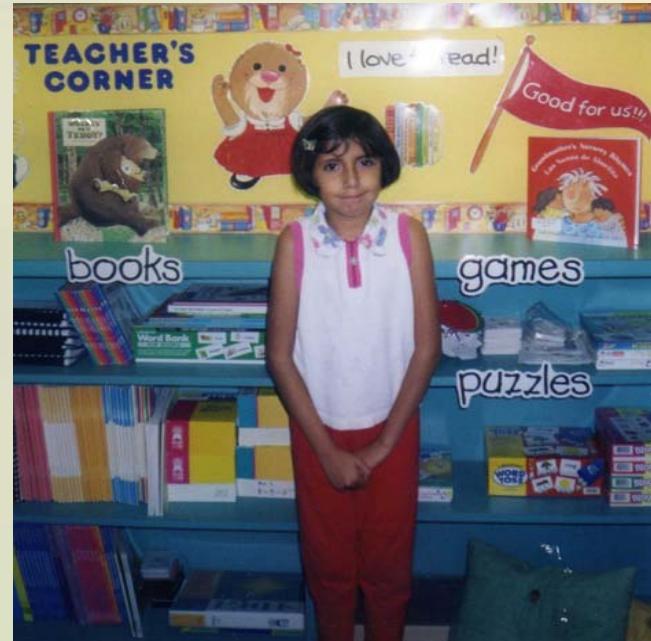


Jasmine



- 5th grade
- Intermediate fluency
- Neurofibromatosis II (brain tumors)
- Impacted academics

Maria



- 2nd grade
- Intermediate fluency
- Marfan's syndrome
- Vision impaired
- Reading and math impacted

Development Of Collaborative Process

- ❖ **Individual concerns**
- ❖ **Met as a team**
- ❖ **School philosophy**
- ❖ **Willingness to take risks**
- ❖ **Began pre-referral
and intervention process**



Referral Process for Student Support

- ◉ **STAR teams**
- ◉ **General Education Intervention (GEI)**
- ◉ **Levels 1-4**
- ◉ **Kansas uses comparative data
(rather than discrepancy formula
or standardized testing)**
- ◉ **Referral to special education:
Five Questions**

Components of Evaluation: Data Collection Phase

- ⊗ **General Education Interventions**
- ⊗ **Review of Records**
- ⊗ **Interviews**
- ⊗ **Observations**
- ⊗ **Testing**

General Education Interventions

- ◉ **Teacher and parent**
- ◉ **Teacher and additional staff member**
- ◉ **STAR Team designs formal intervention plan**
- ◉ **Record data on effectiveness of interventions**

Review of Records: ELL

- ❖ **Non-traditional probing of files**
- ❖ **Construct timeline of medical, family and educational history**
- ❖ **Educational experience**
(language of instruction, educational setting)
- ❖ **Identify inconsistencies, gaps, questions**
- ❖ **Effects of culture**

Interview: ELL

- ❖ **Establish relationship with family**
- ❖ **Construct questions from review of records**
- ❖ **Use home language during interview**
- ❖ **Explore gaps in student's history**
- ❖ **Strive to develop complete medical, family and educational history**
- ❖ **Include input from student's community**
- ❖ **Address issues beyond culture shock (behavior/affective/psychological)**

Observations

- ❖ **Gather data from formal observations in various settings**
- ❖ **Note behaviors during instruction**
- ❖ **Compare to ELL PEERS**



Testing

- ❖ **Kansas: Curriculum based measures**
- ❖ **Comparative data**
- ❖ **Deemphasize formal testing of ELLs to reduce bias**
- ❖ **If normed tests required,**
 - **Do in primary language if feasible**
 - **Use a non-verbal assessment**

Five Questions

To Determine Appropriate Referral to Special Ed.

- 1. Does the student's response to general education interventions indicate the need for intense and/or sustained resources?**
- 2. Are the resources needed to support the student so that he can participate and make progress in the general education setting beyond those available through general education?**
- 3. Is there evidence of a severe discrepancy between the performance of the student and his ELL peers?**
- 4. Is the presence of an exceptionality substantiated by convergent data from multiple sources over a period of time?**
- 5. Does the student's difficulty NOT appear to be the sole result of cultural, linguistic, environmental and/or socio-economic factors?**

Summary of Pre-referral and Identification Process

- ❖ **Most challenging type of eval for school teams**
- ❖ **Every component of eval should be considered carefully and in-depth to avoid over-representation of ELLs in special education**
- ❖ **Representation of ELLs in special education should be proportionate to the representation of non-ELLs (e.g. for LD, 10-12%)**

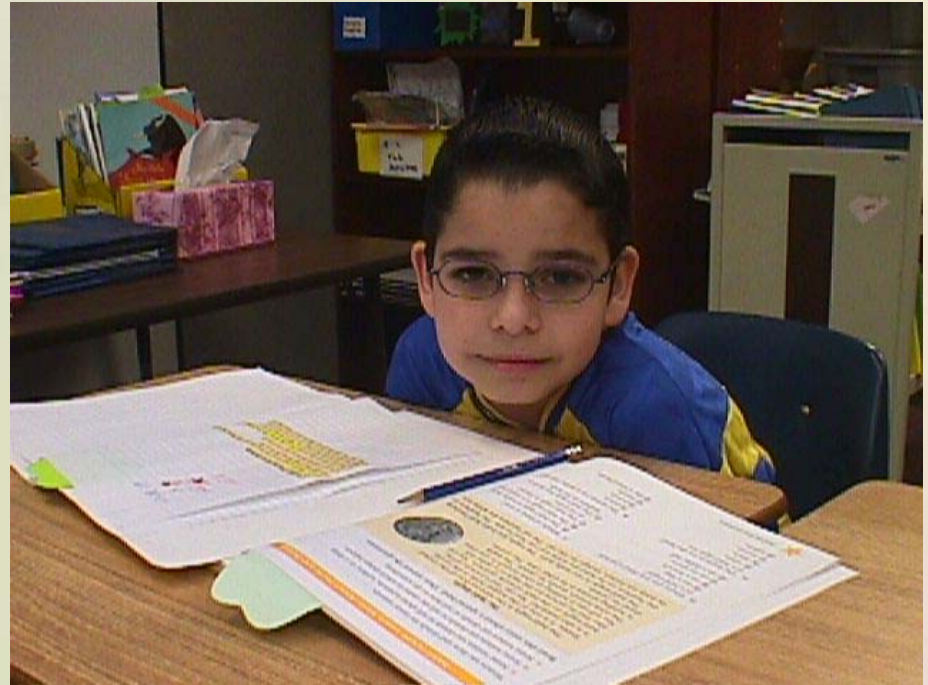
Implementation of IEP

- **Look at goals/needs as defined in IEP**
- **Address medical and sensory issues**



Implementation of IEP

- **Address academic concerns**
- **Resource matching:**
personnel, materials,
time
- **No exclusivity in programs**



Implementation of IEP

- **Balance Special Ed and ELL programs**
- **“Co-case managers”
Continuing collaboration as program develops**



Together We Shine!

