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Partners in Early Learning

The California Department of Education (CDE) was given the authority in the 2021 Budget Bill to revise the Preschool Learning Foundations which will now be known as the *California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations* (PTKLF). The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is developing implementation materials and professional development. This partnership benefits all children regardless of funding sources.



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Preschool English Learners: Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning—A Resource Guide (Second Edition)

Chapter 2: Preschool English Learners, Their Families and Their Communities



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Our Assumptions: We Value More Than One Language

"Being exposed to two or more languages at a young age is a gift. It is a gift because children who are able to learn through two or more languages benefit cognitively, socially, and emotionally."

Source: CDE, California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1, 2010, 224

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Training Outcomes

- Become familiar with English learner demographics and the impact on early childhood education
- Heighten awareness of the immigrant experience
- Become familiar with "language registers"
- Begin to think about ways to connect home and school languages

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Multilingual Learner

A multilingual learner is a child learning two or more languages at the same time or a child who is learning English while continuing to develop their home language. The term "multilingual learner" can overlap or be inclusive of other frequently used terms, such as English learner (EL) or dual language learner (DLL).



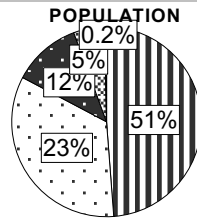
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Demographics of Children in California

- Hispanic
- White
- Asian American
- ▣ Black or African American



Source: CA PTKLF Introduction, 2024, 13

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Four-Year-Olds in CA

- 11% enrolled in federally funded Head Start
- 17% enrolled in State-Funded Preschool
- Nearly 40% of those enrolled in Head Start or State-Funded Preschool are English learners

Source: CDE, California's Best Practices for Young Dual Language Learners: Research Overview Papers, CDE, 2013, 91)

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The Newcomer Experience

- Turn to pg. 14 in the Preschool English Learners (PEL): A Resource Guide and read The Diversity of the Immigrant Experience section.
- After reading, share your thoughts and questions with your tablemates.

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Fostering Communication Is Critical

Authentic, reciprocal communication between teachers and families fosters a strong home-school connection. Because children may demonstrate their language development in any languages or language varieties they speak—including languages or varieties their teacher may not know or use—communication with families is necessary if teachers and family members are to understand and support children's development.



Source: CDE, *California's Best Practices for Young Dual Language Learners: Research Overview Papers*, 2013, 121)

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Opportunities for Home Connections

- Establish partnerships with families that are built on mutual respect, trust, and two-way communication.
- Learn from families about children's language environments at home and the language goals families have for their children
- Learn from families about what a child knows and is able to do.
- Communicate with families about culturally relevant storytelling, books, or games from home that can be integrated into the classroom environment and literacy activities
- Collaborate with families to promote continued development of the home language.

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Connecting School and the Home Language

- Families are at differing levels of awareness about English language acquisition.
- Some families are addressing children's disabilities in addition to English language acquisition.
- Teachers foster communication between home and school by helping children develop a working vocabulary in the home language to talk about school activities.

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Language Registers

A Child's World

- Parents
- Siblings
- Friends
- Other relatives
- Teacher
- Specialist
- Visitors



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Formal Language Register

The formal register is used by children to speak to parents, elders, and teachers.




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Informal Language Register

The informal register is used by children on the playground, with siblings and friends, at home, and in the neighborhood.



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Academic English—The Language of School



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Let's Practice

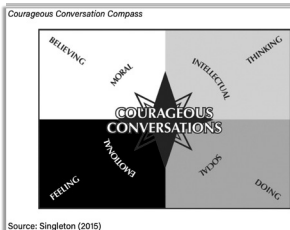
- Leah wants a turn to paint.
- How might she ask her cousin at home for a turn using an “informal language register”?
- How might she ask a teacher at school for a turn using a “formal language register”?
- At your table, come up with one more example of informal language and one more example of formal language.
 - Be ready to share out.

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Activity: Courageous Conversation Compass



Source: Singleton (2015)

Source: CDE, 2022, *Creating Equitable Early Learning Environments for Young Boys of Color*

1. Find the Courageous Conversation Compass activity.
2. Read each of the statements and identify where you initially located yourself on the compass for each phrase.
3. Share at your table group and then discuss whether you noticed a change of position on the compass for any of the topics.

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Summary

- Children and adults use different forms of language every day (formal, informal, social, and academic).
- Young English learners are learning when and with whom to use the appropriate language registers.

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Who is Johnny?

- Consider that names of children and family members are important ways of making connections to children and their families.
- Discuss with an elbow partner one of the following topics:
 - The origin of your name, its significance, or how it was chosen
 - How you chose names for your children

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Principle 1—The Practices

At your table, create a chart of the ways you already implement the practices listed in the PEL Resource Guide, page 16.

Or

Review the practices on page 16. Place a checkmark next to those things you already do, a question mark next to practices you want to learn more about, and a plus sign next to the things you consider to be current program strengths.

PRINCIPLE 1
The education of English learners is enhanced when preschool programs and families form meaningful partnerships.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Family (parent) involvement and participation are improved when families are valued contributors as planners, listeners, and evaluators of their children's educational programs. Teachers should recognize and respect families' language beliefs and practices to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language development of English learners.

PRACTICES

- Determine how language learning, home language support, and communication goals will be addressed in your setting for all students, including students with disabilities.
- Acknowledge the many responsibilities that parents and families discharge daily.
- Highlight the many ways in which families are already involved in their children's education.
- Provide options for home-based activities that can support what children are learning at school.
- Share and model the belief that the involvement of parents in their children's education, accompanied by high educational expectations, results in better long-term academic and social-emotional development.
- Provide opportunities for parents and family members to share their skills with staff, the children in the program, and other families.
- Allow family members to determine how they would like to be supported and generate ideas for ways in which they can both lead and implement these supports.
- Provide specific information regarding program expectations, academic standards, and traditions to the program.
- Hold an open house or potluck dinner for families in the program.

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Cultural Context of Learning



When the culture of the school and the culture of the family come into contact with each other, they influence and change each other...optimal learning for DLLs occurs when there is a strong, harmonious partnership between DLL families and ECE programs, which includes the consideration and incorporation of the DLL culture and language in program planning.

Source: CDE, *California's Best Practices for Young Dual Language Learners: Research Overview Papers*, 2013,129

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Key Points



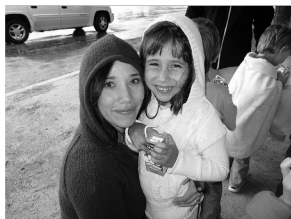
- Demographic trends impact practices at the preschool level.
- Teachers should be sensitive to the diversity of the immigration experience.

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Key Points (2)



- Families are valued contributors to their child's education.
- Teachers should recognize and respect families' language beliefs and practices.

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Key Points (3)



Children's language-rich environments might include the home language (formal and informal registers) and English.

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Reflection

Turn to page 18 in the PEL Resource Guide and take the time to answer question 4 on the Reflection handout:

- How do I show the children and their families that I value their home language?

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Thank you!



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