WORKING WITH HISPANIC LEARNERS:
INFORMATION AND STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

By

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Abstract

The overall Hispanic population in the U.S. has been and is projected to continue to increase. In line with this population trend, U.S. schools are also seeing increases in Hispanic students. National test scores indicate there is a long standing achievement gap between Whites and Hispanics. This achievement gap shows that the academic needs of Hispanics are different from their peers of other ethnicities. This capstone has sought to answer the question: what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving? The result is a series of professional development (PD) sessions that seek to meet the unique academic needs of Hispanic students, so that they can increase their academic achievement.
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background

Hola, bienvenido a las escuelas de América - hello, welcome to America’s schools. An astounding 20 percent of our nation’s public school population is made up of Hispanic students. Also, according to the U.S. Census Bureau approximately 18 percent of our nation is made up of Hispanic people (2018). Hispanic ethnicity includes individuals from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, etc. Thus, the term Hispanic is broad and is used for people from various places in our world. Not only are Hispanic families originating from various places, they are also experientially, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse.

It is not surprising that the Hispanic school age population is expected to continue to increase. The U.S Census Bureau is projecting that by 2050 there will be approximately 28 million Hispanic students (2018). At that time, there will be more school-age Hispanic children than non-hispanic White students. Like all minorities and disadvantaged groups, Hispanics’ academic performance will continue to be measured and compared to their White peers, as they historically have been.

The federal government advocates for the U.S. Hispanic population and other disadvantaged groups, so much so, that they have made laws aimed at assisting these populations. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the famous No Child Left Behind Act and was created by the U.S. Department of education. ESSA has a commitment to creating equal opportunities for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). According to
the ESSA organization’s website: "The purpose of this title is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps" (2015, p.2). This government mandated policy is intended to keep schools accountable. States now hold schools and districts responsible for advancing equity and holding all students to high academic standards to better prepare them for college and life after high school. Superintendents, principals, teachers, specialists, and all school personnel share the task of increasing all student achievement and narrowing the gap between White students and other marginalized groups.

One measure that can determine how students are performing is through assessments. Across the U.S., students in fourth, eighth and twelfth grade may take the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This assessment allows teachers, government officials, and the public to compare students across the U.S. with the same measure. NAEP has been testing students for many years and data is compared across student groups back to 1990. The results of this test indicate that both White and Hispanic students are making gains. However, the 2010 publication released by NAEP shared an alarming issue: there is roughly a stubborn 25 point achievement gap between fourth and eighth grade White and Hispanic students in both math and reading that has remained the same from previous years (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011). The question remains, what can educators do to narrow the gap? Ever since I began teaching and administering the challenging NAEP in 2006, I have continued to wrestle with, are there specific strategies, interventions or school practices educators can use with Hispanic students to increase their achievement? The following section presents background information on my professional experience and how the capstone project came to life.

Professional Experience
It all began when the bell rang at 7:25 am on September 5, 2006 as I walked into my very own classroom for the first time. I was an eager, enthusiastic 22 year old who had just finished student teaching. My lunch was packed, my lesson plan book all filled out, and I felt I was unstoppable. I could not believe that out of the hundreds of applicants, I had landed the fourth grade mainstream teaching job in this inner ring, suburban school just outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Like me, eager to begin the new school year, “Alejandra,” “Michael,” “Sofía,” “Mariana,” “Mohammed,” “Jesús,” “Vada,” “Iman,” “Lisa,” “Juan,” “Anika,” “Mateo,” “Eric,” “Katerine” and 11 other students walked into my 4th grade classroom. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the first fourteen listed are like the 4.9 million other students across the United States who are a part of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs aimed at improving students’ English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing (de Bray, et al., 2019). For me, there was something very special about those first 14 students listed. Some were boys, some were girls, they came from different socioeconomic backgrounds, different neighborhoods, different cultures, and spoke different home languages. They were special because those first 14 students are what began my incredible passion and love for working with English language learners.

Fast forward to 2019. Many things have changed in my personal and professional life during the last thirteen years but my passion and calling to working with English Learners (EL) has remained. During my teaching career I have been privileged to work with countless ELs from all around the world. They have come from many different places like Mexico, Somalia, China, Afghanistan, Russia, Tibet, and Vietnam to name a few. Whether in my mainstream
teacher role, or in my current position, I have spent all of these years learning with, learning from, learning about, and implementing best practices for working with ELs. If you were to look at me you would see I am a freckled, pale skinned, curly red haired, millennial woman. The most common question I get when talking to others about my career is, “Oh wow, what languages do you speak?” Many people are surprised to hear me respond with only English. Their question does seem fitting because currently I am working as an elementary ESL teacher in Minnesota’s largest school district where about 10 percent of our elementary-aged students are identified as ELs. The next section will share details about my role working as an ESL teacher.

Mainstream, special education, specialist, and intervention teachers work to have all of their students be successful, grow, and achieve. Like all other teachers, I of course strive for those same things for the EL students I serve. A challenge I find in my role as an ESL teacher is that I have to wear many different hats. I am a mother, a nurse, a learner, a therapist, an educator, etc. My most important role, though, is to be an advocate for my EL students. Merriam Webster’s (2019) dictionary defines an advocate as one who supports or promotes the interests of a cause or a group. Achievement data, historic education trends, and my personal teaching experiences have demonstrated that Hispanic students are one particular group of ELs that urgently needs more advocacy to help them be successful, grow and achieve.

In my role, I am often called into team meetings regarding students whom I serve. These meetings are a part of our schools process to support teachers by providing interventions and identifying students who may need special education. Teachers ask to meet about specific students because of their lack of academic progress or their behavioral challenges. When I take part in these meetings, I am there to advocate and to represent the ESL lense. If an ESL student
is brought up at a meeting I am asked to compare them to their peers. I am also asked about their English language development and progress. ESL teachers want to make sure that students’ struggles are not related to their English language development needs. It is crucial that I am advocating for what I professionally feel the student needs. Often, I need to educate mainstream teachers on the language acquisition process and development. Teachers will think that a student’s lack of progress means they need special education where, in fact can be due to their English language development.

In the last few months I have attended several student academic achievement meetings where I started to sense a pattern forming during these meetings. I have noticed that I have needed to advocate and represent more Hispanic students during these meetings than any other population. I do not have significantly more Hispanic students on my caseload than other populations, so why was I getting called to more meetings for them? I could not just live with this disturbing fact. I needed to do more digging and learn more about the Hispanic population in my building. I spent some time learning more about their cultures, personal lives, peer relationships, and their academic records.

While I was learning more about the Hispanic students in my elementary building, I spent time analyzing their academic testing data. There is a very useful tool that is available to the public on the Minnesota Department of Education’s website (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018). In correlation with ESSA, the Minnesota Department of Education creates school report card pages that include a tremendous amount of data about each individual school. The purpose of the report card is to inform communities about their schools. Recently I spent some time looking into my elementary school’s report. It sickened me to learn that the Ernestos
and Julias in the school where I teach are performing like the rest of the nation. The Hispanic children in my building are severely underachieving. Sadly, there was a 47.2 percent overall gap between the number of third to fifth grade White and Hispanic students proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA’s) in reading during the 2017-18 school year (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018). The overall achievement gap between third to fifth grade White and Hispanics is also concerning in math. On the 2017-18 math MCA’s, there was 37.5 percent gap (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018). Spending time on my school’s report card on the Minnesota Department of Education’s website affirmed my call to action in advocating for Hispanic learners through this important capstone project.

My goal for this project is to advocate for Hispanic students by providing teachers with data, specific second language acquisition strategies, school models, and intervention strategies that will help Hispanic students achieve. During the 2019-2020 school year I will use a hybrid approach of professional development (PD) and professional learning communities (PLC’s) to disseminate my research. In the eight sessions I will validate the need for reaching our Hispanic learners, then I will provide teachers with researched based methods to meet the needs of Hispanic students.

**Guiding Question**

The guiding question for my research is: *what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?*

**Summary**

As soon as I began my teaching career my desire to work with ESL students was developed. My passion has continued to remain the same throughout the years, but the skills
necessary to effectively reach and educate the EL population is evolving. An ESL teacher has many, many roles, but one of utmost importance is our advocacy work.

One population of EL students that urgently needs our attention and advocacy is our Hispanic students. They make up about three-quarters of the nationwide ESL population and their numbers will continue to multiply. The achievement gap between White and Hispanic students is alarming and needs some focused attention.

The purpose of this capstone is to research the Hispanic population and their academic achievement trends. I also explore the home lives of Hispanics and what implications that could mean for educators. Finally, I investigate useful second language acquisition strategies or interventions and school practices to help decrease the achievement gap between Hispanics and their White peers.

**Chapter Overviews**

In chapter one I have introduced my capstone topic on Hispanic achievement and the reasoning behind my focusing on this topic. I have also introduced myself, my background and my connection to the study. A description of the rising Hispanic population and how they are performing in school was discussed to reinforce the need for advocacy. In chapter two I will review literature relevant to this capstone. Areas that will be reviewed are: Hispanic population trends, academic achievement data, practices at Hispanic homes, second language acquisition strategies, and school resources and interventions needed to best service our Hispanic student population. Chapter three includes a project overview on the PD series I created for my school. There is a rationale for the project, reasoning for the design, a description of the context, and an explanation of project components. In chapter four I conclude with a reflection of my project.
Included in the reflection there will be thoughts on what I have learned, possible limitations and implications of my project, and the benefits of the project.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The goal of this capstone is to investigate what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk or underachieving? “The achievement gap is a disparity that exists between academic performance of Hispanic students and their White peers” (Dorfman, 2014, p.12). The following chapter examines literature regarding strategies that teachers and schools can use with Hispanic students to increase academic achievement. The first section included investigates literature about population and educational achievement data trends seen within the Hispanic community. This section was included so teachers can develop an understanding of the scope of this issue. Following the data section are sections on home life, second language acquisition strategies, and school practices and interventions. The literature reviewed paints a picture of pedagogy and practices that can be successful in helping Hispanics achieve. Combined, this information helps to answer the question, what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?

Data

This section examines data as it relates to the population of Hispanics in the U.S. Next, an investigation of how Hispanic students are performing in schooling is included. Finally, a discussion of possible reasons why there have been educational underachievement trends seen with the Hispanic population.
Fifty eight point nine million. This number represents the number of Hispanic people in the U. S. as of July 1, 2017 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (2018). This number characterizes a tremendously diverse group of people. Hispanics can vary by race, ethnicity, and country of origin. People of Hispanic descent in the U.S. may have originated from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, United States, or Venezuela. The largest populations are from Mexican, Dominican, and Salvadoran origins (Fry & Gonzales, 2008).

The U.S. Census Bureau population projections conclude whether U.S. or foreign born Hispanics are, and will continue to be the fastest growing ethnic group in the country (Fry, & Gonzalez, 2008). The U.S. school-aged Hispanic population percentage almost doubled from 11 to 21 percent of all students from 1987-2007 (Gandara, 2010). The U.S. Census Bureau is predicting that by 2021 one in four students will be Hispanic (Gandara, 2010). This means that in schools across the country, mainstream teachers are often working with Hispanic boys and girls. Many of these students are ELs and are receiving services from an ESL teacher at some point during their school day. In fact, in 2015 there were 3.8 million Hispanic school-aged children who were English language learners (de Brey, Musu, & McFarland, 2019). A serious issue with Hispanic students is they not only make up the greatest population of ELs, they are also the largest group of long term English learners (Sahakyan & Ryan, 2018). In order to be considered a long term learner, a student must remain in an English language program for longer than six years. Long term learners remain in English language programs because they have yet to be proficient in their English language development.
“They’re the fastest-growing ethnic group but the most poorly educated” (Gandara, 2010, p. 24). Every year Hispanic students, whether ELs or not, are monitored on their proficiency towards meeting grade level academic achievement standards in English. Hispanics, similar to other marginalized groups such as Blacks and Asians, are compared to their White peers on academic assessments.

**Academics.** Throughout their educational careers, Hispanic students, on average, perform far below most of their peers (Gandara, 2010). The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) is a valuable tool that has been used across the country since 1990 to measure student achievement (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011). The NAEP test is unique because it is nationally normed and allows for comparison in the achievement of students in different demographic groups such as, grade level, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity, state by state, or across the country. Students in all 50 states, in 4th and 8th grades may be selected to take both a math and reading test. Hence, the reason it is also referred to as the nation’s report card (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011).

The trends found by the NAEP assessment are alarming. Assessment data from 1990 was compared to results of 2009 testing session. Overall in math, national scores increased for all students tested, however the achievement gap between White and Hispanic students did not change significantly - the gap between 4th graders was 21 points and the gap between 8th graders was 26 points (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011).

Sadly, the same achievement gap trends were true for reading when comparing the data from 1990 with the data from 2009. Reading achievement has gone up significantly since 1992 for all demographics. Unfortunately, the gap between White and Hispanic students has not
narrowed. In looking at reading achievement, there was a 25 point gap between Whites and Hispanics in 4th grade and 24 point gap between 8th graders (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011). This achievement gap stagnation is upsetting.

When researching Hispanic students and their educational data, it is also important to study their graduation rates. Having or not having a high school diploma significantly impacts a person’s future. Hispanics’ low academic achievement, family needs, or personal need to pursue work earlier could all be part of the reason why Hispanic students have the highest high school dropout rate in the nation (Allen, 2011). The U.S. Department of Education found in 2016 that the dropout rate for Hispanics is around 9 percent which is greater than the 4.5 percent of White and 7 percent Black peers (de Bray, et al., 2019). More than 50 percent of dropouts have less than a 10th grade education (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). Like academic achievement data, the dropout rate statistics are very frightening.

**Causes.** Why are so many of our nation’s Hispanic students on this path to underachievement? There is not one easy answer. However, researchers have found a few factors, including the rate of poverty, education history, and segregation.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Education found that 26 percent of Hispanic students under the age of 18 lived in poverty in 2016 (de Bray, et al., 2019). Living in poverty affects children socially, emotionally and academically. Children who live in poverty do not have access to the same necessities as their peers. Gandara reported that access to health care and social services is an acute problem (2010). Many Hispanic students come to school without their basic needs being met. Their teeth may hurt, their stomachs may be hungry, and their illnesses left untreated. Hispanic people who live in poverty often live in larger household sizes,
smaller residential units and more crowded conditions than non-Hispanic children (Alvarez de Davila, & Michaels, 2016). Poverty contributes to the academic challenges seen in Hispanic students.

Hispanic students are often behind their White peers even from their first days of kindergarten (Gandara, 2010). Preschool is a place where many children develop their social skills in sharing, cooperating, listening, and developing friendships. Academically, students are also introduced to letters, numbers, shapes, colors, along with other foundational skills. Hispanic children are attending center-based care less than any other demographic group and are receiving parental care more than any other group (de Bray, et al., 2019). “Only 52 percent of those ages 3 to 6 attend or have attended a preschool program, compared with an average of 61 percent for all children” (Gandara, 2017, p. 5). Lack of preschool education could be part of the puzzle as to the achievement gap seen in students as they enter elementary school and continue on.

Another possible educational cause is the hypersegregation of some schools and districts across the country. Hypersegregation is defined as when 90 to 100 percent of the student population is non-White. Across the U.S., 39.5 percent of Hispanics attend hypersegregated schools (Gandara, 2010). Typically, these schools are not only isolated by race but also by socioeconomic status. When children attend schools that are hypersegregated they have less exposure to mainstream U.S. culture and to the norms and expectations of broader society (Gandara, 2010).

An immense about of data is available on the increase of the Hispanic population in the United States. Research, assessments, and observations have provided the data on the educational achievement gap between White and Hispanic students, which has lasted for many,
many years. While studying the Hispanic population researchers have found some causes for the
gap. Still, the big question looms for legislators, educators, and parents: how can the academic
gap be narrowed? Hence this capstone aims to answer the question: what specific home, school,
and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic
students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?

In order to better answer this question there is a need to have a clearer sense of Hispanic
students’ home life. Teachers may find it easier to make connections, build relationships and be
more effective with their students if they have an understanding of where their students are
coming from.

Home Life

The average student in the U.S. spend about 1,000 of their approximately 6,000 waking
hours per year in school (Hull & Newmort, 2011). The 5,000 hour difference could be the reason
teachers hear the similar phrase, we can’t change what happens outside of school. We can only
control what happens during their time in school with us. While this phrase may be true, in order
to make the best use of time at school educators need to get a sense of what home life is like for
Hispanic students.

Familism. A cultural value that is an important characteristic of Hispanic students is
familism (Peters, 2018). “Familism is a cultural value that emphasizes warm, close, supportive
family relationships and that family be prioritized over self” (Campos, Ullman, Aguilera, &
Dunkel Schetter, 2014, p.191). The cultural value of familism may have an impact on students’
motivation and achievement.
Hispanic students may spend less time or less emphasis may be placed on education than their White peers because of family responsibilities like caring for siblings, household chores and/or economic contributions (Peters, 2018). Students may be motivated to work hard and to please their parents by following their advice to respect elders. Unfortunately, motivation and attitude alone does not help students with the required skills and strategies needed to be academically successful (Peters, 2018).

**Physical activity.** Another factor in the home lives of Hispanic students that needs to be examined is physical activity. In children and adults alike, physical activity is linked to better physical and mental health (Basch, 2011). According to Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health, “in Minnesota only 25% of Hispanic children aged 6-11 reported being physically active everyday compared to 35% of White children” (2019, p.1). If a person were to walk through the halls of schools nationwide undoubtedly, the rate of childhood obesity would be noticeable. “Overweight and obesity are the highest among minority female children, adolescents and among Mexican-American boys” (Basch, 2011, p. 627). The lack of physical activity and the rate of obesity could indicate that Hispanic children are not going home and playing outside, that they are not walking or riding their bikes to school and that they are not participating in sports outside of school day.

Lack of physical activity can lead to a multitude of problems for Hispanic students while physical activity has many benefits. There are social, cognitive and physical benefits for students who are more physically active. Mental health and overall well-being can be improved which may lead to more connectedness with peers and teachers at school (Basch, 2011). Students develop interpersonal skills like cooperation and teamwork when they are on teams.
Another reason for students to get involved in interscholastic sports is they have lower high school dropout rates (Basch, 2011). Students are required to use their cognitive skills daily at school. There are cognitive benefits to children who are physically active. Physical activity has been found to improve cognitive functioning which can lead to better concentration and academic achievement (Basch, 2011). Some added health benefits of physical activity are stronger bones, a healthier heart and a reduced risk of becoming obese (Lynch, 2018).

The Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health reported in the 2016 National Survey of Children’s Health that Hispanic children are not as physically active as their White peers (2019). The benefits of physical education programs, walking or biking to and from school and an active recess could add to Hispanic students’ overall health and cognitive abilities. Therefore, the home life factor of physical activity should be considered when determining strategies or interventions in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving.

**Parental involvement.** An additional factor in the home lives of Hispanic students that warrants examination is parental involvement. Dorfman noted that Hispanic parental involvement may be lower than non-Hispanic parents involvement in education (2014). Some reasons that Hispanic parents may be less involved is because of limited education, lack of knowledge about the U.S. school system, limited English abilities, and lack of time in their busy work schedules. Hispanic families may encourage their children to do well in school; however, the parents don’t always know ways to assist their children or the ways that they are involved are not the typical or expected ways (Dorfman, 2014). Another barrier or explanation for lack of parental involvement could be the difference in educational philosophy between White and
Hispanic parents. Some Hispanic parents do not believe that they need to be directly involved in their children’s education. They leave the teaching to the teachers at school (Dorfman, 2014).

Hispanic parents find providing help with math homework challenging and even more frustrating as their children get older (Dorfman, 2014). The educational methods, tools, and approaches are vastly different than what parents may have experienced. The language barrier that may exist also causes difficulties for some parents. Students may not always be able to translate academic language to their parents, or parents may have some English skills, but lack in their academic language abilities. Needless to say, Hispanic parents may need tools and training to get involved in their children’s math homework.

Research has found the most influential factor in parental involvement is reading. It is done by reading to children, listening to kids read, buying educational toys and giving kids choice in reading material. If these circumstances are there, students achieve at higher rates (Dorfman, 2014). The challenge for Hispanic parents is that they do not always have the background knowledge to be able to help.

**Implications for educators.** Academic underachievement of Hispanic students is prevalent. One cause of the achievement gap between Whites and Hispanics may be the differences in home life. Hispanic students’ home lives may differ in their value of family over self, their lack of physical activity and the rate at which their parents are involved. Although home life impacts students’ lives, educators can make pedagogical changes to help aide in closing the gap.

When educators are aware that familism is an important value for Hispanic students then changes can be made to teaching practices. An approach that teachers should employ in
classrooms is the funds of knowledge theory. A funds of knowledge approach acknowledges that there is potential that students’ knowledge has developed because of their participation in multi-generational households and/or community activities (Little & Chesworth, 2017). This type of approach tries to make learning real by connecting what students already know, to what they need to know, while personalizing their learning in order to develop their ideas (Little & Chesworth, 2017).

Schools and teachers can aid in combating the obesity problem that is facing Hispanic children. Promoting physical activity is an easy task teachers can do. Teachers are role models who can demonstrate that making healthy food choices and taking part in physical activity throughout the day may have a big impact on their students. Many school districts have teachers out supervising recess. Teachers should be cognizant of the fact that Hispanic and minority students are often less physically active than their White peers (Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative 2019). During recess teachers could organize, and if possible, take part in activities that would allow for more physical activity.

One more area of Hispanic students’ home life where educators can make pedagogical changes to help aide in closing the gap is parental involvement. There are notable differences seen in parental involvement with Hispanic parents. Educators need to do their part in educating families. Hispanic parents do not always know the best ways to help. Teachers can be understanding of this fact and provide parents with instruction. Parents should be aware of the effects of their involvement. If parents struggle with language, teachers should be mindful and use translators to help guide parents. Another useful tool schools and teachers can use to help with parental involvement is to make parents aware of community resources that are available.
This capstone investigates Hispanic home life because teachers need to have an understanding of differences between Hispanic and White children. The capstone aims to make teachers aware of differences, so they can modify their approach to meet the needs of their Hispanic learners and to answer the question: *what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?* When schools, families, and communities come together to reach children, great things happen. The following portion of the capstone gives background on second language acquisition strategies.

**Second Language Acquisition Strategies**

Stephen Krashen, a well known expert in the field of linguistics and renowned for his theories on language acquisition, once said in an interview with John Fotheringham at 2009’s Annual Conference on Applied Linguistics,, “We do not acquire language by producing it; only by understanding it” (Fotheringham, 2009, p.5). Krashen’s theories on second language learning and acquisition have influenced many educators (Fotheringham, 2009). From his theories many teaching methods and practices have evolved. The extraordinary thing about what has come from Krashen’s work is that teachers can use the methods and practices with all learners. In fact, best practices for second language acquisition can be applied in all classrooms and teaching practices are beneficial for all students (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002). This is great news for the achievement gap crisis that is occurring across the nation. Implementing second language acquisition strategies could give Hispanic learners the tools they need to achieve. The following paragraphs highlight some useful strategies or teaching methods.
Cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a multidisciplinary, student-centered, instructional strategy where students work in small groups to complete a common task. In some cases students are given specific roles in order to complete assigned activities or tasks. The collaborative strategy allows students to develop their social skills and inter-group relations needed for academic success (Padron, Y., Waxman, H., & Rivera, H., 2002).

There are several different cooperative learning strategies that teachers could use in their classrooms. The purpose of the strategy selected is to help students develop their content knowledge and concepts in subject matter. When looking at strategies teachers should consider what ones would best suit the subject matter they are teaching and the group of students they have before them. Colorin Colorado is a premier, national, website that provides teachers, ESL teachers and families research-based information, activities and advice. The following strategies are adapted from an American Federation of Teachers (2015) Colorin Colorado article.

Round Robin. In this strategy the teacher presents a category and students take turns sharing the name of something that fits into the category (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).

Roundtable. A category is presented and students take turns writing something that fits into the category (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).

Writearound. This strategy works well when summarizing. Teachers give sentence starters to the students and ask them to complete the sentence, then students pass their papers to the right. Students read the paper they received and then add to it. This process repeats itself at least four times to produce a summary (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).
**Numbered Heads.** Students are put together in teams of four. Students then number off one to four. A question is posed to the class and groups discuss their answer. The teacher randomly calls a number and that student needs to share their team's answer (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).

**Team Jigsaw.** Students are assigned a specific portion of a text to read. For example if four students are working together they are assigned one-fourth of the text. They are the expert on their assigned reading and are expected to teach the rest of their group so they are able to put together a team product (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).

**Tea Party.** The students are split into two groups. The groups form concentric circles facing each other. A question is posed to the group and students discuss the answer with the person facing them. After a designated amount of time the outer circle moves to the right so that students have new partners. Then pose a new question or have students discuss the same one. Repeat the process over and over (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4).

The strategies listed above are just a few ideas of what cooperative learning may look like in a classroom. Small group cooperative learning strategies have the following benefits for Hispanic students:

- They provide opportunities for students to communicate with each other.
- Students can develop their social, academic and communication skills.
- Decreased anxiety and boosted self-esteem and self-confidence through individual contributions and achievement of the group.
● Developing English proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing through rich language experiences.

● Provides skills necessary to function in real-life situations like using the context to figure out meaning, seeking support of others, and comparing verbal and nonverbal cues.

(Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002, p.1)

Cooperative learning is included in this capstone because it maybe one second language acquisition strategy that is successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving. The following section includes information on the second language acquisition strategy of translanguaging.

**Translanguaging.** Translanguaging is a strategic, bilingual, communication strategy or linguistic approach. This strategy allows students or teachers to use whichever language or combination of languages best support student learning and/or support teaching (Ackmerman & Tazi, 2015). Typically, the choice of language is determined based on language proficiency in speaking, comprehension, reading and writing of the individuals communicating (Ackmerman & Tazi, 2015). This strategy is aimed at enhancing students’ learning and optimizing learning opportunities. Translanguaging allows students to use their home language to strengthen their learning (Hesson, Seltzer, & Woodley, 2014). It allows students to select the language they are most proficient in to make sense of new concepts, ask questions, discuss, record and convey what they know. Translanguaging can be implemented in the classroom during peer interactions, through the use of dual language graphic organizers, dual language word walls, during independent reading, etc (Ackmerman & Tazi, 2015). As a result, when translanguaging is
implemented there are benefits for both monolingual and bilingual students (Ackmerman & Tazi, 2015). In the upcoming section there are details provided on vocabulary development.

**Vocabulary development.** Vocabulary development is one of the main areas where teachers should focus their attention when trying to narrow the achievement gap (Gibson, 2016). Vocabulary is so important because it is related to all modalities of the English language. Educators should strive for their students to have an understanding of key terms used in class, which can be done by teachers developing a connection for students between the content material and its personal relevance (Coates, 2016). There is not a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to vocabulary instruction. Each learner and class will have different needs. However, word play activities, reading to children, using multimedia and contextual vocabulary teaching are effective methods for teachers to use when developing students’ vocabulary. (Gibson, 2016).

When teaching vocabulary in context, teachers should employ a variety of methods. Teachers can combine using realia, visuals (pictures), verbal, and print cues to make meaning using a variety of modalities (Rubinstein-Avila, 2006).

Another form of vocabulary development that can be used with Hispanic bilingual students is the use of cognates. Cognates are known as pairs of words in two languages that are similar in meaning, spelling and pronunciation (Rubenstein-Avila, 2006). Cognates are seen more often in science and social studies texts, and as students move up in grades, due to the increase of words with Latinate roots (Green, 2004). There are over 20,000 English-Spanish cognates that could be used to teach students vocabulary at a fast pace (Gibson, 2016). Teachers could implement cognate teaching while thinking aloud during read alouds or when teaching content vocabulary. It may be beneficial to create English-Spanish cognate word sorts or to have
a cognate of the day. Many teachers have word walls in their classrooms, so adding cognates to the wall, where possible, could assist Hispanic learners. Whatever method and/or teaching approach is chosen, cognate instruction could be a bridge to English vocabulary development. Vocabulary development, in turn, could aide in academic achievement.

Cooperative learning, translanguage, and vocabulary development are second language acquisition strategies included in this capstone project to help answer the question: what specific strategies are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk or underachieving? The next section will identify effective school based practices aimed at Hispanic student achievement.

**Schools**

Hispanics constitute 25 percent of the school age (5-17 year olds) population in America (de Brey, Musu, & McFarland, 2018). The duty of schools is to help Hispanics and all other student groups achieve academically. Teachers, principals, support staff, and district personnel have a direct impact on student achievement (De La Torre-Rubalcava, 2011). The following paragraphs provide an insight on theories, practices and interventions in schools, which have been found to be associated with Hispanic student achievement.

**Cultural deficit thinking.** One theory in student achievement is cultural deficit thinking. “Cultural deficit theory blames the child’s social, cultural, or economic environment as the root cause for the child’s failure to achieve in school (Bruton, & Robles-Pina, 2009, p.42).” This type of thinking takes the blame off of teachers and schools for underachievement and places it on the students and their families. This method of thinking is damaging to Hispanic students because it limits their accomplishments and perpetuates stereotypes (Bruton, & Robles-Pina, 2009).
Cultural deficit theory “claims that persistent poverty creates cognitive deprivation, ignorance and low aspirations” (Riojas-Cortez, 2000, p. 225). As a result, teachers have reduced expectations for minority students. Bruton and Robles-Pina claimed that minority students are discouraged knowing that teachers see them having limited potential (2009). The attitudes, actions, and teaching practices in schools may intimidate minority students which could greatly impact their academic success.

**Staff development.** Thankfully, the cultural deficit way of thinking is being challenged across our nation. Teachers are learning to recognize the cultural differences between minority students and themselves. “It is critical that teachers are guided to recognize their mental models or personal beliefs and how these will influence their instructional decisions” (Bruton, & Robles-Pina, 2009, p. 46). School districts across the U.S. are doing just this with staff development sessions focused on teachers, principals and district personnel recognizing their deficit thinking. The Critical Race Theory (CRT) is being included in some preservice teachers’ preparation and in school districts nationwide. CRT is a way of examining racism and deficit thinking and how this impacts minority students. This model provides teachers with an avenue to acknowledge strengths within minority populations (Solorzano, & Yasso, 2001).

There are other staff development happenings and school models that are being used to combat student underachievement and the achievement gap seen between White students and minorities. School districts are working hard to bring their staff to the realization that opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of their students directly correlate to student success (Flores, 2010). Once employees have come to this understanding, then transformation can occur. In school buildings
where the achievement gap is narrowing, common denominators are: high expectations, analysis of student achievement data and collaboration (De La Torre-Rubalcava, 2011).

**High expectations.** High expectations for all students has been linked to student achievement (Flores, 2010). In high expectation classrooms, students understand what is expected of them with regard to their behaviors, attention, and attitudes towards the teacher and peers. Teachers who hold high expectations for all learners also insist on high academic performance on grade-level, standards-based curriculum. In these classrooms learners are empowered in lessons that present deep conceptual knowledge by explicitly teaching metacognitive skills (Flores, 2010). These are just a few of the reasons why high expectations are important to the success of Hispanic students.

**Collaborative processes.** Collaborative analysis of student achievement data is a key practice associated with student performance. In this practice, student data is analyzed honestly and transparently, by a team of classroom teachers, administrators, and specialists to inform instruction, modify curriculum and determine interventions. This practice is beneficial because teachers have an increased knowledge of student’s skills levels and teachers are able to discuss strategies to meet their learners needs (Flores, 2010). In collaborative meetings when students are struggling, teachers neglect to place blame on the students. Instead, teachers look within themselves and their teams to find solutions.

“Collaboration is the key that unlocks student success” (Boyd, 2007, p.116)

Collaboration is a regularly scheduled meeting time for teams of teachers to get together (Flores, 2010). During this time teachers discuss students, their teaching methods, and best practice strategies. Specific goals are set for students and their academic progress (Boyd, 2007).
Frequent collaboration allows teachers to be constantly learning and refining their craft to best meet the students in front of them.

**Interventions.** Interventions are another avenue that are being used in response to the achievement gap between Hispanics and their White peers. Extended day is one model that some school districts are using. Extended day is a theoretical framework whose goal is to increase learning time to improve test scores and increase achievement that will close the achievement gap (Alexander, 2018). Students in this intervention are engaged in extra time, beyond the school day, devoted to math and literacy instruction. Some school districts across the nation have found that extended day has had a positive impact on Hispanic student achievement (Alexander, 2018). However, this intervention will not meet the needs of everyone, therefore, other intervention options need to be in place.

“For some students the school library may be their only way to access books” (Hunsinger, 2015, p.E12). Both the school library and the librarian are another avenue of intervention or support for Hispanic students. Scores on reading assessments are such high stakes for schools that library and librarian access for students should be a top priority (Hunsinger, 2015). In fact, schools that have full-time certified librarians tend to have higher reading scores and at-risk children benefit more than the student population as a whole (Lance & Kachel, 2018).

Nelson found in her research that the content of books found in a library may be more important than the number of books (2009). A question school librarians need to be asking themselves is: can students find multiple texts in their library that are windows and mirrors (Everett, 2009)? Everett defined a mirror as a text where students see expressions of their life
and their identity and a window as a text that teaches us about others experiences (2009). When students are able to see themselves in mirror texts they are getting the message that their story matters and there is not only one perspective. Hispanic students need meaningful window and mirrors texts available at their school library. Fleming insisted, “Kids do have a different kind of connection when they see a character that looks like them or they experience a plot or a theme that relates to something they’ve experienced in their lives,” (as cited in Rich, 2012, p.6). Students who read more become better readers (Krashen, 2011). Mirror texts could be the key to unlocking Hispanic readers.

In order for libraries to be successful in unlocking Hispanic readers, Hispanic students need more than the traditional eurocentric book collection. The following list of library collection recommendations is adapted from Nelson’s 2009 investigation on the impact of the library on student achievement.

- Print materials should support multicultural perspectives (Nelson, 2009, p. 91).
- Literature options should be available in Spanish (Nelson, 2009, p. 91).
- Entry level English materials should be available (Nelson, 2009, p. 91).
- Print versions of magazines should be available because their picture rich format helps students understand the content (Nelson, 2009, p. 91).
- High interest, illustration rich, culturally relevant, content accessible books should be available to increase their cultural and language fluency (Nelson, 2009, p. 90).

Students need to feel a connection to their school library. “School librarians have an advantage over teachers; we can monitor student progress over many years (Hunsinger, 2015, p. E11). Librarians can foster a relationship with the students in their school by providing books
talks and mini-lessons (Nelson, 2009). The librarian can encourage students to visit with changing book displays, games, contests, decorations, and special events. There are many factors to Hispanic student achievement. School libraries and librarians could be the place to change the trajectory for underachieving Hispanic students.

Summary

This literature review addressed the research in answering the question: *what specific home, second language acquisition, school and interventions strategies are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk or underachieving?* The goal of this capstone is to create professional development sessions to share the findings with teachers.

The review highlighted population and educational achievement data surrounding the Hispanic population. This information informs teachers of the magnitude of the Hispanic population and their educational needs. The review went on to explain the unique differences in home lives of Hispanic students and how teachers can use the information to capitalize on achievement. A brief introduction to second language acquisition strategies was included to provide teachers with exposure to this method of meeting Hispanic learners. Finally, an examination of successful school systems and interventions that have been used to reduce the achievement gap between White and Hispanic was also included.

Chapter three explains the series of professional development sessions that were created based on the above information. The purpose is for educators to get to know the Hispanic population better and to have the tools necessary to help eradicate the achievement problems.
CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

As an ESL teacher I feel my most crucial role is to advocate for the students I serve. Due to my teaching experiences and the achievement gap trends seen within my school, I have felt a calling to advocate for the Hispanic population. In the literature review my goal was to better understand multiple aspects of the Hispanic population so I can more effectively advocate for them. The following chapter details the project I created, in order to help educators answer the research question: What specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk, or underachieving? This project gives school personnel a background on Hispanic educational achievement trends, information on Hispanic students’ home lives, and provides some strategies to help Hispanics achieve.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the project. Next, I include a rationale for the project so readers can understand the reasoning for the methods I have chosen and the accessibility of the project for my intended audience. Then, I describe the context of the project including the setting, audience, timeline, and project description. The project components are explicitly outlined, in order to highlight the potential impact of the project on all the stakeholders - educators, students, parents, and school communities. Finally, I end the chapter with a summary.

Overview
As stated in chapter one, the Hispanic children in my building are severely underachieving. Sadly, within my elementary building, there was a 47.2 percent gap between the number of Whites and Hispanic students proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCAs) in reading during the 2017-18 school year (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019). The achievement gap between Whites and Hispanics is also concerning in math. On the 2017-18 math MCAs there was 37.5 percent gap (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019).

The math and reading achievement gaps reveal the Hispanic population needs attention due to their academic challenges. Therefore, in order to raise awareness within my building, I decided to design a series of hybrid professional development (PD) and professional learning community (PLC) sessions, spread throughout the 2019-2020 school year, focusing on the Hispanic population. The following is a breakdown of the timeline for the 19-20’ school year:

**September or October:** The first PD session paints a picture of who the Hispanic students are in our building, how they are performing, and what educational trends are seen around the U.S. for Hispanic learners. This session will be the longest because of the amount of information covered.

**November:** This month’s session will focus on cooperative learning strategies. In PLCs teachers will learn what cooperative learning strategies are and some strategy ideas to implement in their classrooms.

**December:** During this session, PLCs will discuss the importance of vocabulary instruction. Teachers will learn some best practices for their instruction.
**January:** In this PLC session, teachers will learn about the second language acquisition strategy of cognates and how they could implement using them in their practice to better meet the needs of Hispanic learners.

**February:** Throughout this PLC session, teachers will learn about translanguaging. Staff will hear about opportunities where translanguaging could help their Hispanic students.

**March:** During this PLC session, teachers will be made aware of school practices that are proven to be effective in helping narrow the achievement gap with Hispanic students. There will be a discussion of how to refine the building’s work to better serve the students.

**April:** This PLC session will follow-up with cooperative learning strategies again. We will quickly review their purpose and learn a few more strategies that teachers could implement in their rooms.

**May:** The final PLC session of the year will be a reflection. At this point in the year MCA data should be available to determine if the year’s work was effective in increasing Hispanic student achievement.

The goal of the professional learning series is intended to equip school personnel with the tools needed to answer the question: *What specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?* The following paragraphs provide more detailed information about all of the project’s components and the rationale for developing my project in this manner.

**Context**
I designed the content of my project for educators and school personnel, within my building, where I have a personal investment. Our building lies in the upper Midwest in the state’s largest school district. The building’s demographics include over 700 students, 10 percent of which are ELs (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019). The students within the building speak a variety of languages including English, Hmong, Vietnamese, Spanish, Russian, Oromo, Arabic and many others. Roughly 32.5 percent of students in our school qualify for free and reduced lunches (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019). As an educator in this building, I participate in weekly collaboration meetings with staff. I am also involved with the small CRT committee in my building. The scholarly research I conducted pointed out the fact that weekly collaboration and a CRT committee is not enough to help Hispanic students achieve. Due to my discoveries in reviewing the current literature, I designed my capstone project around the needs and current practices of my building. My intent is that the project will positively impact our schools’ practices and pedagogy with Hispanics, which in turn, could lead to increased academic achievement and cross-cultural understanding.

**Professional Development**

Teachers are faced with new academic and behavioral challenges daily and they are expected to refine their craft to ensure student success (Walker, 2013). One way teachers can refine or develop their craft is through PD. “Professional learning produces changes in educator practice and student learning when it sustains implementation support over time” (Roy, 2013, p.27). In addition, a direct link has been found between teacher learning and student learning (Condon et al., 2016). Therefore, I have decided to create ongoing professional learning experiences for my colleagues during the 2019-20’ school year.
Schools are transforming their PD to PLCs (Stewart, 2014). Traditional PD has previously looked more like one outside “expert” lecturing to an audience for hours and then expecting the audience to take the information and apply it. Whereas, PLCs are groups of teachers from the same school who support each other and select their learning objectives (Stewart, 2014). One component of traditional PD that teachers have complained about is that the “experts” are not invested in the schools they are educating (Walker, 2013). My school uses a mix of PD and PLCs throughout the school year. To get the best of both training methods I will be creating a hybrid platform of PD and PLCs for my project. The first session offered will be in a PD format with all staff present and myself doing most of the leading. The remaining seven sessions will be conducted in smaller PLCs. In all eight sessions I plan to incorporate the researched benefits found in Osmond-Johnson on teacher-led professional learning: “teachers extend their own individual skills, learn from and with each other, and use their collective expertise to lead the learning of their peers” (2017, p. 39). In order to motivate and engage staff, I plan to utilize Knight’s (2011) partnership principles for group learning environments, as a guide, as I develop my project. Knight describes that teachers should have choice and equality when it comes to the planning and attendance of PD (2011). PD Sessions should be designed in a manner where the teacher's voices are respected and empowered (Knight, 2011). PD should be designed so teachers can have real-life practice (Knight, 2011). Knight discusses that reciprocity in PD means that everyone is expected to participate along with offering and receiving feedback (2011). The final principle Knight discusses is reflection. Reflection should be an integral component of learning for all participants. The following section will summarize the capstone
project that was created with Knight and Osmond-Johnson’s research on PD integrated throughout the series.

**Project Summary**

The researched benefits in Knight’s (2011) work has lead me to create an optional professional development series. Staff will be sent an anonymous Google Form questionnaire (See Appendix C). The form includes a brief outline of what I plan to discuss in regards to Hispanic students. On this form, I plan to ask staff what their preference of time would be for our meetings: Would you be more likely to attend a before or after school session? Another question would be: Is there a day of the week you prefer to meet or a day you prefer not to meet on? Finally, on the form I will ask staff if there is anything regarding Hispanic students they would like to see discussed during our learning series. I am creating the Google Form to make sure I am giving all involved choice and allowing their voices to be heard while planning. Another reason I am creating the form is to create equality on the decision making of what gets covered during our time together. My hope is that allowing for choice and equality during this project will create an excitement about the learning series.

**Interaction.** Malcom Knowles, known for his expertise on adult education, once said, “the educative quality of a large meeting is directly a function of the quantity and quality of interaction in the meeting” (1992, p. 11). I plan to keep this premise in mind when designing my materials and space needed for the sessions. Interaction will come in many different forms throughout my presentations. I will be creating presentations using Google Slides, so the audience will be interacting with the platform. I plan to also design opportunities for interaction amongst themselves and with myself. In order for this to occur, our learning space will need to
be designed accordingly. The active participation will be done through activities like word sorts, group sharing, etc. My rationale for using interaction throughout my professional learning series is to increase active participation, engagement and create learning opportunities amongst peers (Knowles, 1992).

**Multiple speakers.** Another way I plan to heighten engagement is to video interview Hispanic students and our district’s cultural liaison. Knowles suggested that maximum connection can occur when multiple speakers are on the platform (1992). Therefore, I think it is beneficial and powerful to allow our students to share about their home lives. I would like staff to learn more about what it is like when our Hispanic students get home from school and what parental involvement looks like at their houses. When interviewing the cultural liaison it will be powerful to hear where she sees our families struggle and what kinds of resources they are coming to her for. Teachers will gain insight and build their background from the experts on what Hispanic home lives are like and where they have challenges.

**Reflection.** The teachers and myself will be given adequate time in each PLC session to reflect on our own students and teaching practices. As teachers and myself reflect, I would like us to orally share what new learning occurred, as a result of the session they attended. One way teachers will be asked to cogitate is by orally sharing their grows and glows since the previous month’s PLC session. “When people have the opportunity to learn by taking some initiative and perceiving the learning in the context of their own life situations, they will internalize more quickly, retain more permanently, and apply more confidently” (Knowles, 1992, p. 11). The hope for this important capstone work is for teachers to leave the PD/PLC sessions with both new knowledge, new practices, or ways to refine current practices to aid in student achievement.
Assessment

I will assess the success of my project in two different ways. First, the effectiveness of my project will be informally assessed continuously as teachers are orally sharing their monthly grows and glows of implementation. If teachers are able to share how implementation went for them since the previous month’s PLC I will know they are implementing the interventions and strategies discussed. If teachers are not sharing I will need to find new ways to motivate, excite and engage staff. The second way my project will be assessed is through formal assessment. Formal assessment of the effectiveness of my project will occur after we have spring 2020 MCA data. Once MCA data is received I will be able to evaluate the academic achievement of Hispanics and compare their performance to Whites. My project will be considered effective if there is increased Hispanic achievement.

Summary

I felt the calling to advocate for the Hispanic population because of my experiences and educational achievement data within my building and around the U.S. This project was created with a desire to inform teachers and school personnel about the Hispanic population. I plan to create these sessions in a manner where equality, choice, voice, reflection, praxis and reciprocity are encouraged in an ongoing manner throughout the content.

This chapter has shown how an ongoing, engaging, research based, hybrid PD PLC platform has been mindfully created for the staff at a building in the state’s largest school district. Through strategic planning for ongoing implementation, the staff within this building will get a sense of the data on Hispanics in the building and nationwide. Interactive, reflective, sessions were created where attendees will learn about the home lives of students within the
building, second language acquisition strategies and interventions to use, along with school wide practices to increase success. The intent of the capstone is after the 2019-20’ school year teachers will be better equipped to answer the question: *what specific strategies are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk or underachieving?*

Chapter four is a reflection of the project. Included in the reflection there will be thoughts on what I have learned, possible limitations and implications of my project, and the benefits of the project.
CHAPTER FOUR

Critical Reflection

Introduction

The years of teaching both in the mainstream classroom and now as an ESL teacher have allowed me to work with countless Hispanic children. Unfortunately, I was seeing a trend in academic underachievement with Hispanics. In my current teaching role the number one job as an ESL teacher is to advocate for students and families. This capstone has given me the opportunity to expand my knowledge on my ESL Hispanic population and their academic needs. Through my work I have become better equipped to expand my advocacy work because I have developed some possible solutions to answer the question: what specific strategies are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk or underachieving? Thus, I’ve created an eight session professional learning series to be implemented during the 2019-20’ school year.

The final chapter of this capstone is a reflection of my learning. I begin by sharing what I have learned throughout the capstone process. Next, I revisit the literature to summarize the key findings. Then, I provide an overview of the PD series, that has been created as a result of my findings in the literature review. Following the project description, I discuss the possible implications of the PD that I have developed. After that I discuss the limitations of the project. Finally, I conclude with the personal plans for the project.

Reflection

The past six months have been a major period of growth for myself. I have refined my researching, writing, time management, and creative thinking skills throughout the process of
creating this capstone project. I have also gained an immense amount of knowledge on the Hispanic population. As a teacher, I have been aware of the academic achievement gap, but did not know all the facts, or the severity of the disparities between White and Hispanic students. The research I conducted gave me the information and the tools to create an important PD series for the staff in my building. After the countless hours I have spent I feel confident starting the 2019-20’ school as an impactful advocate for Hispanic students and their families. The following section provides details on the research I conducted and the literature I found to be most valuable.

Revisiting the Literature

I found many enlightening literature sources as I developed my capstone project but some proved to be more beneficial than others. All along the way of researching my goal was to be able to answer the question: what specific strategies are successful in helping Hispanic students perform, so that they are not at risk or underachieving?

In order to successfully answer my guiding question I needed to build my background knowledge on the Hispanic population. The research done by de Bray, et al., in 2019 provided valuable information on the status of Hispanics in the U.S. education system. I learned facts about Hispanics graduation rates, poverty rates, numbers of ELLs and many other useful pieces of information that shaped my project.

The data shows the Hispanic population and EL Hispanics in schools across the country will continue to rise (Gandara, 2010). Teachers should be aware of the large number of Hispanics living in poverty, the low participation in preschool programming and the high rate of high school dropouts (de Bray, et al., 2019). These could be contributing factors to the long
standing achievement gap between Whites and Hispanics (Hemphill, Rahman, & Vannerman, 2011).

Another factor I researched was home life influences. Students’ values, physical activity and parental involvement are all contributing factors to student success. Familism is a common trait of the Hispanic culture and it could impact students’ education (Peter, 2018). Hispanic students are less physically active than their White peers, which may influence their academics (Basch, 2011). Finally, there are several reasons why parental involvement looks different for Hispanics (Dorfman, 2014). Teachers should give consideration to home life details when planning their programming.

The researcher Patricia Gandara has done a tremendous amount of advocacy work for the Hispanic population. As she stated about Hispanics, “They’re the fastest-growing ethnic group but the most poorly educated” (Gandara, 2010, p. 24). Her work revealed copious data on Hispanics and viable explanations for their academic underachievement. Her work became a springboard for researching interventions and strategies to meet the needs of Hispanics.

Second language acquisition strategies are best practices to use with EL students, in fact they can be applied in all classrooms and are beneficial for all students (Padron, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002). The collaborative strategy is one second language acquisition strategy that allows students to develop their social skills and inter-group relations needed for academic success (Padron, Y., Waxman, H., & Rivera, H., 2002). Another beneficial tool is translanguaging, it is a strategic, bilingual, communication strategy or linguistic approach that allows students or teachers to use whichever language or combination of languages best support student learning and/or support teaching (Ackmerman & Tuzi, 2015). Vocabulary development is one of the main
areas where teachers should focus their attention when trying to narrow the achievement gap (Gibson, 2016). My research showed that second language acquisition strategies are one practice that teachers should implement to increase Hispanic academic achievement.

The final area of literature I investigated involved the practices of school personnel. The attitudes, actions, and teaching practices in schools may intimidate minority students which could greatly impact their academic success. School districts are working hard to bring their staff to the realization that opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of their students directly correlate to student success (Flores, 2009). CRT, high expectations and collaboration are all practices schools have implemented to increase Hispanic student achievement.

Having the facts on the Hispanic population and possible reasons for their academic underachievement lead me to the heart of my research on ways to meet the academic needs of Hispanics. Home life, second language acquisition and school intervention and strategies evolved from my search. The research process was long and tiring but it all developed into a valuable project.

Implications of Project

For my project, I created an eight session PD series to advocate for the Hispanic population. There will be a hybrid PD PLC format for the project to be shared during the 2019-20’ school year with the staff in my building. The first session offered will be in a PD format with all staff present and myself doing most of the leading. The remaining seven sessions will be conducted in smaller more intimate PLCs. The first session provides staff background information and data on the Hispanic population, in hopes of creating an urgency to reform current pedagogy. The monthly sessions that follow continue research-based strategies and
interventions that meet the needs of Hispanics. Monthly sessions were created to provide continuous support, carry on with learning and implementing strategies or interventions throughout the school year (Roy, 2013).

The continuous support and dialogue I am facilitating with staff is intended to motivate and provide the tools the staff need to refine their pedagogy. The strategies provided allow teachers to differentiate for their Hispanic students however, other students also benefit. After implementing strategies, I believe the Hispanic population will be more likely to have their unique academic needs met. The effectiveness of my project will be informally assessed continuously as teachers are sharing their monthly grows and glows of implementation. Formal assessment of my project will occur after we have spring 2020 MCA data. My intent is the deliberate and focused work should increase Hispanic academic achievement, in turn narrowing the achievement gap seen between White and Hispanic students.

**Limitations of Project**

There are some possible limitations of this project. The success of this project is ultimately dependent on teachers buying in to refining their pedagogy. I predict there may be some push back from staff because they will be learning and implementing a new math curriculum simultaneously to these PD sessions. I will be using these same academic strategies and interventions with the groups that I service in some of the mainstream classrooms. My hope is that the teachers whose rooms I push into notice the engagement and attainment. As teachers begin to hear about implementation, I hope their curiosity is sparked enough to also try some new methods. However, things may not go as I intend, so it will be important to be prepared with new and creative ways each month to create buy-in.
An additional limitation of my project is the resources used. My project was designed with the structure and the curriculum my district uses in mind. Some of the PLC sessions are based off of current practices within our building. I designed the project to be very useful for myself however, other educators would find it difficult to implement exactly as written. My intent is other teachers would adapt the project to fit the structures and resources found within their building or district.

Another possible constraint of my project is time. Teachers in my building are always talking about not having enough time to accomplish what is expected of them during their English language arts and math blocks. There is a pressure to keep at a perky pace throughout the entire day. It may take some convincing for teachers to realize that this is not adding another thing to their plate, rather it is making what they are teaching more accessible to their learners. It may also be challenging for me to have time for my day to day ESL teacher role and be able to support classroom teachers in their learning and implementation.

Finally student cooperation and participation are crucial for project success. Unfortunately, students have not been exposed to some of the teaching methods I have included in my project. Therefore, there might be some hesitation. It will be important for teachers to feel comfortable with the teaching practices so they can excite their students. Whether the limitation is teacher buy-in, time constraints, or student participation the projects importance outweigh the possible barriers.

**Personal Plans**

I am looking forward to the 2019-20’ school year to begin. I will be stretched professionally leading my capstone project. My heart and passion is in my important advocacy
work, therefore I plan to persevere through my discomfort. I know I will need to be in close communication with the principal as the project progresses during the school year. We will discuss how the project is progressing and what modifications may need to be made. I am prepared to alter my project and timeline as necessary. At the completion of my project I will evaluate the effectiveness of the PD series and my advocacy work.

My long term plans are to continue my professional advocacy work. After sharing the information with the staff in my building, I plan to disperse my findings with the other elementary ESL teachers in the district. I will set up a meeting with the leader of my ESL department to share the effectiveness of my project. At this point, a plan will be made as to when I can use staff development time to share my project with all elementary ESL staff.

This project developed out of my previous, extensive, mainstream teaching experiences with struggling Hispanic students. Another reason I developed this project is because in my current ESL position I have needed to advocate and represent more Hispanic students during student academic achievement meetings than any other population I service. I do not plan to stop with this project or my Hispanic advocacy work. There are other marginalized populations I serve who are also underachieving academically. In my building the largest population of ELs I serve are Hmong students. I have not spent extensive time researching best practices to meet their specific learning needs. Therefore, it would be beneficial to research data and methods to most effectively serve their scholastic needs, in order to increase their academic achievement.

Summary

Six months ago I started this capstone process. I have had a passion for Hispanic students and increasing their academic achievement for many years. Therefore, I knew what the
big subject of my capstone project was going to be. What I did not realize is the number of hours I would have into researching, reading, writing, editing, revising, creating and fueling my passion for advocacy. The hours of researching and reading about the Hispanic population, their academic needs and best practices to serve them has given me a new confidence to start the 2019-20’ school year. I am prepared with a well developed, important project and I am excited to see the increase in academic achievement, that may come as a result of this hard work!
REFERENCES


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Appendix A

Capstone Project Lesson Plans

Month: September/October

Learning Target: As a result of today’s PD you will be able to describe facts about the Hispanic population.

Location: Large enough to fit all staff (library).

Materials: Laptop, Google Slides, True/False Hispanic facts cut apart, Katie’s school picture

Session Notes:

1. Open up with my first class picture - Asking staff if there is anything they notice about my class picture? Highlight for them the ESL students and lead into how my passion for Hispanic students developed.
2. Briefly share what my capstone project has included
3. Slide 1 Share the learning targets for this session.
4. Slide 2 - Hispanic what kids come to mind? - Allow tables to share with each other
5. Slide 3 - Share who all the Hispanic kids are in the building. “Why is this information important?”
6. Slide 4 - Share about ESSA and what this means for our school
7. Slide 5 - Explain the sorting activity for groups, remind staff that sorting activities are great for students because it gives students an opportunity to talk with peers and listen to other peoples’ ideas.
8. Allow groups time to work and walk around from group to group checking in with staff.
9. Slide 6 - Correctly sort Hispanic facts. When placing facts that are false share what the truth actually is
   a. Hispanic students have the lowest graduation rate. Thankfully the percentage of Hispanic dropouts is decreasing but still almost 10 percent of Hispanics don’t graduate high school.
   b. If you are Hispanic you don’t have to know how to speak Spanish. Unfortunately there are many students who are not strong in English or Spanish.
   c. Only 52% of Hispanic children ages 3-6 attend a preschool. They also receive less center based care and are receiving parental care more than any other ethnic group.
   d. All Hispanic children in our building do NOT receive ESL service. Jump back to slide 3 and point out kids who do not receive service.
   e. There is an achievement gap in our building. Move into next slide
10. Show slide from MDE with achievement gap between Hispanic and White students.
Share my feelings when I saw big of a discrepancy there is. Seeing this information lead me to develop my capstone research question: *what specific home, school, and second language acquisition strategies and interventions are successful in helping Hispanic students perform so that they are not at risk, or underachieving?* As a result of my research I created this PD session along with seven others that will run continuously through this school year.

**Month:** November  
**Learning Target:** As a result of today’s PD you will be able to implement a cooperative learning strategy.  
**Location:** Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room  
**Materials:** Laptop, Google Slides,  
**Session Notes:**

1. Begin by opening up to PLC’s to see if anyone has any burning questions about Hispanics  
2. Slide 8 share the learning target for today’s mini session.  
3. Slide 9 Do you use cooperative learning strategies? They are an instructional strategy where students work in small groups to complete a common task. In some cases students are given a specific role. Do you know the benefits of using these types of activities? Challenges?  
4. We are going to learn about the cooperative learning strategy called round table.  
   A. This strategy would work well with any day one of wonders when you are introducing the new essential question for the week.  
   B. For this strategy each group of students is sitting together.  
   C. They are given one poster or paper to write on for their group.  
   D. The poster or paper is passed around the group and each person writes or draws something depending on their age/ability level.  
   E. If students don’t know something about the topic they can be encouraged to ask a question about the topic  
   F. Teacher decides if each group presents their posters to the class, amongst their groups discuss, have students do a gallery walk, or call on students to share what they added to their poster  
5. Practice this strategy with all PLC members present using Wonders ELD. Use day one opening page with the essential question.  
6. Can you think of other times during your day where this strategy may elicit more participation and discussion amongst your students?  
7. Plan to try this strategy at least once before we have our next session.  
8. When we have our next session next month we are going to share our glows and grows
about implementing this strategy in our class/groups.

**Month:** December  
**Learning Target:** As a result of today’s PD you will be able to describe the vocabulary strategy of realia.  
**Location:** Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.  
**Materials:** Laptop, Wonders theme/essential question for the week, Realia aligning to curriculum, poster paper to record ideas/questions  
**Session Notes:**
1. Open up with grows and glows from cooperative learning strategy.  Share my own personal findings first.  
2. Slide 11 Share the learning targets from this short session.  
3. Slide 12 How do you teach vocabulary?  If teachers don’t have ideas remind them of pictures they use, think alouds, etc.  
4. Show video about realia  
   A. Remind teachers these strategies are good for ALL students  
   B. This strategy helps build background knowledge  
   C. Great to use when you want kids talking  
5. Use current week/day in Wonders to incorporate the use of realia.  Bring in as many “everyday” items that go along with the weekly theme/essential question.  Let teachers know if the items were bought specifically to use with wonders or if they were items from home.  
6. Demonstrate having teachers either share what they know about the realia that was brought in or ask questions about it.  Record their ideas on a circle map.  Remind staff that leaving out the student ideas to refer back to later in the week also helps students make connections.  
7. Plan to try this strategy at least once before we have our next session.  
8. When we have our next session next month we are going to share our glows and grows about implementing this strategy in our class/groups.

**Month:** January  
**Learning Target:** As a result of today’s PD you will be able to describe what cognates are and have an idea of where to implement using cognates.  
**Location:** Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.  
**Materials:** Laptop, Copies of cognate lists for staff, highlighters,  
**Session Notes:**
1. Open up with grows and glows from the vocabulary strategy of using realia.  Share my own personal findings first.  
2. Slide 14 Share the learning target for the short session
3. Question audience if they have heard of cognates?
4. Give the definition - words that exist in two languages that have the same root or origin.
   There are over 20,000 English, Spanish cognates.
5. Slide 15 Handout copies of cognate lists from websites.
6. Allow teachers time to read over lists and highlight words they feel would be important
to use in their practice.
7. Slide 16 Play Youtube video of how to use cognates in the classroom.
8. Discuss how teachers could see themselves using cognates in their rooms. Share some
   ideas that have been helpful like posting with English, during guided reading, slide 17
   may also be helpful when meeting with 3rd-5th grade.
9. Plan to try this strategy at least once before we have our next session.
10. When we have our next session next month we are going to share our glows and grows
    about implementing this strategy in our class/groups.

**Month:** February

**Learning Target:** As a result of today’s PD you will be able to describe what translanguaging
is.

**Location:** Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.

**Materials:** Laptops for all staff present,

**Session Notes:**

1. Open up with grows and glows from implementing the second language acquisition
   strategy of using cognates. Share my own personal findings first.
2. Slide 18 Share the learning target of today’s session.
3. Slide 19 Ask staff if they’ve seen students read, heard students speak or seen students
   write in their home languages in school. Why do you think you do or do not hear them
   using their home language in either reading, writing or speaking?
4. Define translanguaging - is a strategic, bilingual, communication strategy or linguistic
   approach. This strategy allows students or teachers to use whichever language or
   combination of languages best support student learning and/or support teaching
   *(Ackmerman & Tuzi, 2015)*
5. Prezi on translanguaging found on the bottom of slide 19.
6. Slide 20 An easy way to start embracing students’ home language is by incorporating the
   use of Story books Canada.
7. Pass out laptops to everyone and have them navigate to the site.
8. Model finding a few things on the site but then allows teachers time to explore the site.
9. Plan to try this strategy at least once before we have our next session.
10. When we have our next session next month we are going to share our glows and grows
    about implementing this strategy in our class/groups.
Month: March
Learning Target: As a result of today’s PD you will be able to identify school structures we have in place that increase student achievement.
Location: Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.
Materials: Laptop, video interview with cultural liaison, Potential interview with Hispanic students, chart paper or whiteboard marker for notes

Session Notes:
1. Open up with grows and glows from cooperative learning strategy. Share my own personal findings first.
2. Slide 21 Share learning target for our PLC session.
3. Present video interview with cultural liaison, and potential students. Allow staff to share reactions.
4. Slide 22 Question staff as to what practices we currently have in place to increase student achievement? Record staff ideas.
5. Slide 23
   - Cultural deficit theory “claims that persistent poverty creates cognitive deprivation, ignorance and low aspirations” (Riojas-Cortez, 2000, p. 225). Challenged by : CRT and how racism and deficit thinking impact minority students.
   - High expectations increases students’ achievement, empowers students when metacognitive skills are explicitly taught, in high expectation classrooms, students understand what is expected of them with regard to their behaviors, attention, and attitudes towards the teacher and peers.
   - Collaboration in collaborative meetings when students are struggling, teachers neglect to place blame on the students. Instead, teachers look within themselves and their teams to find solutions.
   - Interventions - extended day and the library, interventions we use at this school.
6. What would you like to work or focus on for the following month? Is there something that we are doing that you feel could use refinement? For each group share what I personally would like to work on and with which specific students. Record responses to be able to refer back to at the next month’s session.

Month: April
Learning Target: As a result of today’s PD you will be able to implement the cooperative learning strategies of numbered heads and tea party.
Location: Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.
Materials: Laptop, Notes on what participants wanted to work on from the previous month, Current Wonders curriculum, chart paper

Session Notes:
1. Open up with grows and glows from intentionally focusing on one of the methods our school uses to increase student achievement. Share my own personal findings first.

2. Slide 24 Share our learning target for PLC session - let audience respond with if they’ve heard of these cooperative learning strategies and if so, how they’ve implemented them in their rooms. Also could share if staff is continuing to use the strategy of round table and how that is going.

3. Slide 25 Introduce cooperative learning strategy of **numbered heads**
   - Students are put together in teams of four. Students then number off one to four. A question is posed to the class and groups discuss their answer. The teacher randomly calls a number and that student needs to share their teams answer (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4)).
   - Practice this strategy with current math concept for the grade levels

4. Slide 26 Explain the learning strategy of **tea party**
   - The students are split into two groups. The groups form concentric circles facing each other. A question is posed to the group and students discuss the answer with the person facing them. After a designated amount of time the outer circle moves to the right so that students have new partners. Then pose a new question or have students discuss the same one. Repeat the process over and over (American Federation of Teachers (2015, para. 4)).
   - Practice this strategy with current math concept for the grade levels

5. Discuss how could we see these strategies being used with other content areas.

6. Plan to try these strategies at least once before we have our next session.

7. When we have our next session next month we are going to share our glows and grows about implementing these strategies in our class/groups.

**Month:** May

**Learning Target:** As a result of today’s PD you will be able to discuss the year and if our intentional efforts paid off.

**Location:** Meet with groups in our PLC’s either grade level leads room or conference room.

**Materials:** Laptop, MDE MCA data,

**Session Notes:**

1. Open up with grows and glows from the cooperative learning strategies: tea party and numbered heads. Share my own personal findings first.

2. Slide 27 Share learning target for today’s PLC session.

3. Review preliminary MCA results from 2020. Talk about aspects that went well over the year.

4. Find out from staff areas they would still like support from me on.

5. Challenge staff to see if they can think of a few things they can do the following school year to continue supporting Hispanic students.
Appendix B

True or False Sorting Activity

Hispanics students have the highest graduation rates.

If you are Hispanic you know how to speak Spanish.

Hispanic people originate from many different countries.

They are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U. S.

Many Hispanics, over 25% nationwide live in poverty.

Many Hispanic children attend preschool.

Nationwide Hispanic make up the greatest population of EL’s.

They are the largest group of long-term ELs.

In our building all the Hispanic students receive EL services.

There is not an achievement gap between White and Hispanics in our building.
Appendix C

Google Form Questionnaire

Hi All!

I am currently working on my capstone project. I would like to share with you some of the information, best practices and data I've learned along the way to best meet the needs of Hispanic students.

You have no obligation to attend these voluntary sessions. However, in order to get a sense of what people would prefer for these sessions could you please respond to the following questions:

1. I am interested in being apart of a PLC to learn about best meeting the needs of Hispanic students:
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

2. I prefer meeting:
   ☐ Before school
   ☐ After school

3. If you have a digital day preference or a day of the week preference please let me know.
   ☐ ________________________________
4. Is there anything regarding Hispanic students you would like to see discussed during our learning series?

☐ _________________________________
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

- Describe facts about the Hispanic population.
When I say the word Hispanic is there a student or two who comes to mind?
According to registration information, these are the Hispanic students in our building.

Why is this important?
Every Student SUCCEEDS ACT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True or False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics students have the highest graduation rates.</td>
<td>If you are Hispanic you know how to speak Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic people originate from many different countries.</td>
<td>They are the fastest growing ethnic group in the U. S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many Hispanics, over 25% nationwide live in poverty.</td>
<td>Many Hispanic children attend preschool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationwide Hispanic make up the greatest population of EL’s.</td>
<td>They are the largest group of long-term ELs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In our building all the Hispanic students receive EL services.</td>
<td>There is not an achievement gap between White and Hispanics in our building.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sort with your group if these statements are:

True or False

They are Many Hispanic children long-term attend preschool. This makes up the greatest population of EL’s. They are the ethnic group in the U. S.
Insert current MDE data
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

Implement a cooperative learning strategy.
Cooperative Learning

Do you use them?
Benefits?
Challenges?
Let’s use Wonders to practice a cooperative learning strategy.
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

describe the vocabulary strategy of realia.
How do you find yourself developing vocab? What do you do with Wonders, besides Wonders?
REALIA IN EDUCATION
A Proven Strategy for Teaching ESL, ELL & Bilingual Students
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

- describe what cognates are.
- have an idea of where to implement using cognates.
KEEP CALM AND LOOK FOR COGNATES

https://www.readingrockets.org/article/using-cognates-develop-comprehension
https://myedplus.org/pluginfile.php/9762/mod_resource/content/0/ListOfMathCognates.pdf
https://www.realfastspanish.com/vocabulary/spanish-cognates
HOW TO USE COGNATES IN CONTEXT
# Common Greek and Latin roots that are cognates in English and Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>English examples</th>
<th>Spanish examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aud</td>
<td>hear</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>auditorium, audition</td>
<td>auditorio, audición</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>astr</td>
<td>star</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>astrology, astronaut</td>
<td>astrología, astronauta</td>
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<td>bio</td>
<td>life</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>biography, biology</td>
<td>biografía, biología</td>
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<tr>
<td>dict</td>
<td>speak, tell</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>dictate, dictator</td>
<td>dictar, dictador</td>
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<td>mit, mis</td>
<td>send</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>mission, transmit</td>
<td>misión, transmitir</td>
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<td>foot</td>
<td>Latin</td>
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<td>phon</td>
<td>sound</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>phoneme, microphone</td>
<td>fonema, microfono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>port</td>
<td>carry</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>transport, portable</td>
<td>transporter, portátil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

- describe what translanguaging is
Do you hear students speaking their home languages in your room?

https://prezi.com/myq3fuk9xfyq/translanguaging/
Storybooks Canada

Storybooks Canada is a free open educational resource that promotes literacy and language learning in homes, schools, and communities. It makes 40 stories from the African Storybook available with text and audio in English, French, and the most widely spoken immigrant and refugee languages of Canada. We are also developing Indigenous Storybooks and the Global Storybooks literacy portal. Share and enjoy!

https://www.storybookscanada.ca/
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

- identify school structures we have in place that increase student achievement
Can you think of any practices we have in place aimed at increasing student achievement?
Can you think of any practices we have in place aimed at increasing student achievement?

Cultural Deficit Theory vs. CRT
High Expectations, Collaboration, Interventions
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

- implement cooperative learning strategies
  *numbered heads*
  *tea party*
Numbered Head Together
Tea Party
As a result of today’s PD you will be able to:

Discuss the year.
Has our intentional efforts paid off?