School of Education Student Capstone Projects   School of Education

Summer 8-31-2020

Creating an English as a Second Language Program Model That Caters to Junior High Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education

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CREATING AN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM MODEL THAT

CATERS TO JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS WITH LIMITED OR INTERRUPTED

FORMAL EDUCATION

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Teaching.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

August 2020

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DEDICATION

To my loving husband who was the first person to encourage me to start this process. You have been my cheerleader and emotional support during the pursuit of my Master's and license, I love you. A special thank you to my family, especially my mother, for encouraging me many years ago to become a teacher (even if I didn't listen to her right away). To my students, I see you, I support you and I advocate for you, this work is for you! Lastly a big thank you to my colleagues, school administration, Capstone Committee and friends for your mentoring, guidance, support, and belief in my abilities.

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CHAPTER ONE

Guiding Question

Introduction

Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling account for about 10-20% of English Language Learners but their unique needs can often overwhelm and challenge districts, administrators and teachers (SupportED, 2017). The purpose of this capstone project is to answer the question *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* This will be done in the form of a website geared at proposing a new program model for our SLIFE students. Chapter One of my capstone project will describe to you my personal journey of how I came to be here writing this paper, and the journey I went on to find my passion of teaching ESL. It further goes on to describe the current situation at the school I teach in including information on why I want to pursue this particular topic. This information is then followed up with further anecdotes about my personal and professional reasons for implementing this capstone project. Chapter one ends with an overview of the rest of my capstone.

Personal Journey

When I was younger, in high school and early college, my mother constantly tried to get me to go to college to become a teacher. I would adamantly refuse to consider this option as "I did not want to be a teacher", instead, I chose to get a B.A.S Degree in Communication Science and Disorders. While I learned a lot about language disorders and thoroughly enjoyed this major and all it had to offer, it turned out it was not meant to be my career. I jumped around to a few jobs for a few years trying to find a passion,

nothing stuck until I started working as an English as a Second Language paraprofessional.

The school in which I worked for was located in a rural community. While this provided many positives like knowing kids on a first name basis, and having a great sense of pride and unity, it was also difficult to retain teachers. Before I got there, it was a rotating door of paraprofessionals and teachers and unfortunately in the two years I served as an ESL para we went through three ESL teachers. I was the only consistency these students had known and that made me even more diligent in my duties. The students finally felt like they had someone who cared about them and would be there to support them in their schooling and English language acquisition.

Those students were the reason I went to school every day with a smile on my face excited and passionate about my work and with having so many teachers in and out, many of their duties fell on me to carry out. While this proved challenging, I saw these setbacks as an opportunity to step up and provide consistency to our students. I watched them continue to grow, progress and learn with the consistency that I was able to provide them. I helped create student schedules, modify tests and was constantly working with others and collaborating about students and their needs. I generated and implemented lesson plans for classes when needed and was always facilitating and promoting learning in our classroom and around the building. Persistence was key and I felt that with diligence, organization and collaboration with other professionals and students, my students and I were growing and evolving.

I worked this way for 2 years and then decided it was time for me to go back to school to obtain a license in teaching ESL, as well as a Master's degree. This was the

hardest decision I had ever had to make because it meant that I would have to leave the students I worked so hard to give consistency to, and that broke my heart. They were all very excited for me and I was lucky enough to obtain a teaching position in the same district while getting my license so I was still able to keep in contact with these students and attend all of their graduations (I am also happy to say that the revolving door of teachers and paras has stopped).

Besides some issues with staffing, one of the biggest hurdles I have noticed during my time as an ESL paraprofessional and in my new position as a K-8 ESL teacher, is the lack of programming we had that benefit our Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE). This is why my project focuses on determining what the best program model for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education is, and presenting that as a website to guide administration, teachers, and even families to ensure students are receiving equitable services. Calderon (2008) describes SLIFE as Newcomers with two or more years of education interrupted in their native country and had some time in which they did not attend school.

School Demographics

Education in Minnesota has come a long way in their quest for equitable education for all students, and while they have made many strides there are still some questions that need to be answered. Such as: *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* This is true for the district and school that I work in. It is a rural district in Southern Minnesota, and over the last decade has seen an increase in the population of Latinx and Hispanic English Language Learners (ELLs).

Right now, our district (three elementary/middle schools and one high school) is made up of 14% Hispanic students with 8% of students receiving ELL services. However, in the particular school that I work in 29% of students are Latinx/Hispanic and 19% of students receive ELL services (MDE Report Card, 2020). Among these ELL students, there has also been a steady increase of SLIFE. For many years, the program model we have been working under has been efficient for providing services to our English Language Learners. Although, we are finding that it is not well suited for our students who come in with little knowledge of Westernized Educational backgrounds. SLIFE students bring a unique skill set, as well as, often have different needs than your "typical" ELL student. Some SLIFE are preliterate or not literate in their home language, or have had very little exposure to speaking, reading, and writing in academic settings, while others may have had more language instruction. This can lead to a variety of academic and social gaps. Regardless of their background, these students have their own diverse stories, situations, assets and abilities to be used to inform our practices and programs as they transition to an unfamiliar academic setting. Many of these students have also experienced trauma and been exposed to war or conflict, this can lead to a feeling of being overwhelmed and anxious about the new language and environment (Trujillo & Raducanu, 2021).

Significance Personally and Professionally

Currently, our program model is a mixture of pull out, push in, and collaboration with teachers allowing most students thirty minutes of ELL time, however, newcomers who come to our school who have a background in education receive about an hour of services each day. We are finding that our SLIFE need additional time to learn the skills required in order to participate fully and be best supported in their classrooms. The

reason my district needs to update their program model is because, as of right now, it is not well equipped to handle the new types of students (SLIFE) we are seeing enter our district. These students have many assets and wonderful backgrounds to share and bring into our community so we need to be supporting them in the best way possible during the educational journey and beyond.

I view myself as a person who cares about others and cares about equitability inside and outside of school, consequently seeking to right injustices drives my personal and professional practices. I have always been a person who wants to help others and a person who makes connections with people easily. I am often told that I am a warm person and I make people feel comfortable, and even from a young age have advocated for others and set out to make sure they are getting the support that they need to thrive. I cannot stand by and see others being marginalized, excluded, or treated inequitably. That is why I feel the need to attend to this issue in our programming as my capstone project.

Another reason why I chose this topic in particular is due to the fact that I have not learned a lot about SLIFE during my educational path. I think that Hamline University has been an excellent place for me to receive my EL license, and Masters, and what I have learned here is indispensable. However, in all of the classes that I have taken there has not been much information on SLIFE in general, and even when asked many professors still know little about this group. I was slated to attend the SLIFE conference at Hamline this spring, however, with the COVID-19 pandemic, this event was canceled. I was excited to see what information was going to be presented and how this could support my capstone. In order to be the most well rounded EL teacher I can, and in order

to have a well-rounded EL program that benefits all students I must delve deeper into the research on this group of students in particular.

Conclusion

I have chosen this capstone for personal and professional reasons. I care deeply for my students, especially when I see systemic obstacles in front of them that need fixing. This goes hand in hand with my professional reasons for tackling this project, as I am currently an EL teacher and an advocate for their needs when I see disparities in their learning, as I do with our program model. This capstone project will examine how schools can create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Students with Limited and/or Interrupted Schooling. By completing this capstone, I will be able to inform my administration, supervisors, EL coordinator and colleagues on the best practices for designing our program model for SLIFE. The ultimate goal of this capstone project will be the reworking of our EL program in order to create a model that will benefit our SLIFE with their unique backgrounds.

Chapter Overview

Chapter One explained the guiding question of this capstone project: *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and/or Interrupted Schooling*, as well as the importance of this question to me in both a professional and personal way. Chapter Two focuses on a literature review that discusses who SLIFE are, important research on best practices aspects of ESL programs, strategies and curriculum for EL students giving special consideration to literacy and second language acquisition, as well as student needs especially students who have been through trauma. Chapter Three will go on to discuss

my capstone project in detail, and Chapter four is a reflection on the process of creating

and developing this capstone project.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Overview of Chapter Two

Zacarian and Haynes (2012) reminded us that the population of English Language learners in the public school system throughout the United States continues to grow at a very rapid and steady rate, this growth happens to be coinciding with an unchanging number of students in the total population of the system resulting in schools being more and more comprised of English language Learners. This is reiterated by Maxwell (2012) who states that Newcomer students make up a small portion of the nation's more than 5.3 million English learners, which is the fastest growing population of learners in public schools. More and more these students are relocating to areas where districts have had little to no experience with working with these students. This shows us a serious need for programming, as Conan and Honigsfeld also pointed out the "United States population progression for 2005-2050, close to one in five Americans will be immigrants in 2050" (2017 p. 168).

Fenner from SupportEd (2017) stated that while Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education represent a small proportion of English language Learners, somewhere between 10 and 20 percent, their unique needs can overwhelm districts, administrators, and teachers alike posing many challenges. Many schools have seen dramatic increases in the number and percentage of SLIFE, but their resources and programs have not kept up, this unexpected rise in SLIFE has ramifications as the districts or schools may not have policies and practices in place to best support SLIFE

and their unique academic and socioemotional needs that often extend beyond ELs need to acquire English.

Chapter Two reviews the literature surrounding Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE), discussing first what SLIFE is and then going on to discuss best practices for program models including a look at state guidelines and a definition of strategies. There will also be a focus on what the curriculum should look like in these programs as well as looking at the student as a whole to understand their unique needs as learners. The purpose for this chapter is to establish evidence to support the questions *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* This chapter will then end with a conclusion and brief look at Chapter Three.

Definition of Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

English language learners are a diverse group of learners, in an effort to distinguish these groups from each other various labels and definitions have been used (DeCapua & Marshall, 2010). DeCapua and Marshall (2015b) defined Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) as not having the opportunity to participate in formal education previously or have experienced significant time gaps in schooling due to being unable to attend, they are also generally two grade levels below their peers in content knowledge, have low or no literacy or numeracy skills and are (with some exceptions) members of collectivist cultures. This mirrors how World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) defined SLIFE as well, which is important due to the fact that Minnesota is a WIDA consortium member. A WIDA focus on SLIFE

article (2018) described Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education in the following manner, using the definition from Freeman and Freeman (2002):

> Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) is an umbrella term used to describe a diverse subset of the English language learner population who share several unifying characteristics. SLIFE usually are new to the U.S. school system and have had interrupted or limited schooling opportunities in their native country. They have limited backgrounds in reading and writing in their native language(s) and are below grade level in most academic skills. Students who have these characteristics could be refugees, migrant students, or any student who experienced limited or interrupted access to school for a variety of reasons, such as poverty, isolated geographic locales, limited transportation options, societal expectations for school attendance, a need to enter the workforce and contribute to the family income, natural disasters, war, or civil strife (p. 1).

Fenner (2017) echoed this sentiment, stating that SLIFE generally come from a home in which they speak a language other than English and have gaps in their education from their home country, often being behind in reading and mathematics. These students also generally have little or no home language literacy and have needs beyond traditional English Learners (including but not limited to socioemotional challenges, poverty, poor health, post-traumatic stress disorder, family separation/reunification and changes in family/culture roles in the U.S.) Fenner (2017) then went on to point out that many states and districts have their own unique definitions of SLIFE. Here in Minnesota, under guidance of the Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success Act, in order for a student to be qualified as a Student with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education they

must meet three of the following five requirements as stated on the Minnesota

Department of Education (MDE) SLIFE webpage (2019):

1. Comes from a home where the language usually spoken is other than
   English, or who usually speaks a language other than English.

2. Enters the United States after grade 6

3. Has at least two years less schooling than the English learner's peers.

4. Functions at least two years below expected grade level in reading and
   mathematics.

5. May be preliterate in the English learner's native language.

While this does not seem an all encompassing definition it does help give districts criteria

to follow when identifying SLIFE, and in recent years was edited to state only 3 of the

requirements needed to be met vs. in 2016 when all requirements were needed to qualify

as SLIFE. All these definitions and terms have common language to identify SLIFE

"regardless of ethnicity, country or origin, or native language. These characteristics are: a

lack of English language proficiency; limited or no native language literacy; and limited

or no formal education. (Hickey, p.81 2015). Zacarian and Haynes (2012) acknowledged

the fact that English Learners are varied with their unique set of needs, specifically when

looking at SLIFE. They feel that beginning language learners can benefit from working

with other EL's who have a range of abilities in an ESL class but that they also recognize

the need for direct instruction in a class that is designed specifically for them with their

unique needs. These definitions and background information on SLIFE will be utilized in

my capstone project to inform my administration about the importance for creating a new

program model for SLIFE to adhere to their unique needs. The next section will focus on

the different types of program models available for ESL paying close attention to the differences that are needed for SLIFE programs.

Program Models and Instruction

This section discusses best practices for ELL programs (paying close attention to SLIFE), as well as state statutes, and information from my school and others about resources/their programs. This section analyzes the information in order to design a program model that meets all the best practices for SLIFE. Zacarian and Haynes (2012) discussed the different program models that are available for teaching ESL, these include bilingual/biliteracy programs, transitional bilingual programs, and structured immersion. Each model is decidedly different but includes two of the same key components: English language development and academic content learning in math, science, and social studies. Within these models we also see three common types of ESLinstruction: pull-out, push in/collaborative and co-teaching. Murphy et al. (2019) expanded on Zacarian and Haynes thoughts on programs models stating that structured immersion is broken down into three different categories: ESL self-contained, ESL pull out, and ESL push in along with the bilingual and transitional models. For the purpose of this literature review, I will define and discuss each program model as well as best practices for SLIFE.

Bilingual/Biliteracy/Dual language

In this type of program English Learners continue to learn both their home language and English receiving instruction in both. These programs are for students to develop high levels of oral and written proficiency in English and a partner language, academic content knowledge, and cross-cultural competence (Sugarman, 2018, p. 4). This is done in a multitude of ways but generally begins with a 90/10 approach. Students

begin by receiving 90% or their academics in their home language and 10% in English. This number is adjusted over time until each language is at 50%. Optimal bilingual programs include both English learners and native English speakers (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012, p. 40). The dual language classroom serves both English Learners and native English speakers, thus ensuring that the explicit goal of this program is to also teach a language other than English to native English speakers, while also teaching English, this is done by alternating the core instruction in both languages in an on-going process. The students in these bilingual/dual language settings become bilingual, biliterate and bicultural often out performing students taught in English only programs on standardized tests (Murphy et al, 2019, p. 404).

Bilingual Transitional

This type of program is designed where English Learners are receiving instruction in classrooms without native English speakers, thus they receive their core academics taught in the home language with periods of English instruction. The goal of these programs are to increase English used for core academic instruction and transition students over to general education classrooms with English only instruction (Murphy et al., 2019, p. 41). In comparison to bilingual/dual language programs, transitional bilingual programs usually use the native/partner language for 50 to 90 percent of the instruction during the first you and gradually transition to 100% instruction in English in later years (Sugarman, 2018). Generally, there are two types of transitional bilingual education programs, late exit and early exit.

In an early exit program, English learners are taught as quickly as possible to move from their home language to learning English, this is often done with younger

students. This is also characterized by beginning in Kindergarten and having students transition to English only instruction after one to three years (Sugarman, 2018).

Late exit models are when students continue to acquire their home language after they have become proficient in English (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012, p. 403). Another reason this is referred to as 'late exit' if students transition after four or more years (Sugarman, 2018). While this kind of program does generally have a quick transition to all English classes, a premature transition may not allow English learners to catch up to native English speakers in both academics and English skills (Murphy et al., 2019).

Zacarian and Haynes also noted that it is also important to note that both Bilingual and Bilingual transitional programs require a specific number of English Learners to speak the same language in order to be implemented, and often have state regulations that govern their structure, their professional opinion is that if you are looking to go this route they would recommend a bilingual biliterate model to the bilingual transitional program (2012).

Structured Immersion (including self-contained, pull out, push in and collaborative-teaching)

These models often include instruction for students to learn English while also learning content, these are sometimes referred to sheltered instruction/immersion, ESL, or content-based ESL (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). Generally, these programs focus solely on English language development, and few use students' native languages in any systematic way (Sugarman, 2018). As an additive, these programs sometimes but not always include bilingual support or clarification in a students native language (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). English-only instruction is the default approach to EL instruction in

most states, as they can be made up of a variety of English Learners at any grade level and with any native language, who score below proficient on English language proficiency assessments (Sugarman, 2018).

Within structured immersion other program models are used, such as self-contained, pull out, push in, collaborative teaching, and newcomer, because of this it may be impossible to identify one dominant model of instruction and it is common for English Learner programs to use a variety of models (Sugarman, 2018). Self-contained or sheltered instruction is designed to make grade level content comprehensible to EL students. The instruction is centered around integrating language and content instruction. Oftentimes, sheltered content courses must be taught by a teacher who is dually certified in ESL and the content or general education (Sugarman, 2018). Echevarria et al. (2006) pointed out that some important characteristics of sheltered instruction are the focus on targeted vocabulary, scaffolded/differentiated/adapted instruction/materials, connections to student experiences, student collaboration, the use of visuals and demonstrations as well clearly enunciated speech performed at a slower rate. Pull out or content based is when a specialist pulls a small group of ELs from the general education classes and instruction is focused on developing English skills and English language development but draws on themes and standards from core content classes (Sugarman, 2018). Push in refers to the ESL teacher or specialist coming into the general education classroom to help small groups of English learners (Sugarman, 2018). Collaborative-teaching is when a specialist and general education teacher plan lessons and implement them together. This ensures that lessons and activities are appropriate for English learners. These classes are

generally made up of both English learners and native English speakers (Sugarman, 2018).

SLIFE

There are many different subgroups of immigrants who are new to the United States and are often referred to as newcomers, it is important to note that not all newcomers are considered SLIFE, and are often placed in school based on their school transcripts (Cohan & Honigsfeld, 2017). Sometimes SLIFE may be placed in newcomer instruction programs that are designed for newly arrived English Learners, where they often focus on basic English and math skills and can also include grade level academic content. Some newcomer programs also include instruction in the native language (Sugarman, 2018).

Cohan and Honigsfeld (2017) conducted research into actionable practices for SLIFE students vs traditional English Learners and other newcomers. They found that instruction delivery was most successful when there was district wide buy in with support from teachers and administration alike, specifically finding that the most effective programs had administrators that took an active role in the design of the program and services administered to SLIFE. It was also noted that the most effective programs had built-in English support before they were put into classes that measured growth based on standardized tests ensuring that students did not have to deal with unfair evaluation practices, they were also given recognition for attendance and participation without receiving any failing grades (p. 170).

ESL programs that are already in place can be used as a foundation for reaching SLIFE but must also recognize that due to these learners limited academic experiences

along with their need for accelerated core instruction must lead to a purposeful design that takes their needs into consideration (Cohan & Honigsfeld, 2017, p. 171). Zacarian and Haynes (2012) agreed with this statement, they felt that SLIFE needed programs that teach basic reading and life skills that are designed for their English development needs. SLIFE cannot just be placed in a Language Arts program designed for English learners to read an adapted version of a book, nor can they be placed solely in a literacy oriented program for beginning English learners, these students will also not do well in ESL programs where they are mixed with intermediate or advanced English learners.

Zacarian and Haynes also believed that specialized academic environments, like newcomer programs, would benefit SLIFE in order to help them catch up to their peers by providing not only English language development, basic literacy instruction but also providing them with other basic skills and information like social services and school culture (p. 104). Short and Boyson (2012) mirrored these sentiments and based on their research include the following guidelines for effective newcomer models:

- Flexible scheduling of courses and students

- Careful staffing plus targeted professional development

- Basic literacy development materials for adolescents with reading adaptations targeted specifically for English learners

- Content area instruction to fill gaps in education

- Extended time for instruction and support (e.g. after school, Saturday and summer programming)

- Connections with families and social services

- Diagnostics and monitoring of student data

- Transition measure to ease newcomers into regular school or beyond high school (p. viii).

Others agree and expand on Short and Boyson's findings, Zacarian and Haynes (2012) list the following minimum requirements for ESL programs for beginning English Learners:

- ESL instruction for at least 90 minutes or two class periods every day that is targeted to the unique language development needs of EL beginners.

- Grouping English Learners by grade and proficiency level; classes should not span more than two grades.

- A limit of two schools per EL teacher

- Instructional space that is comparable to the general education settings in the building with similar size student populations

- Schedules that allow ESL teachers time to meet and collaborate with general education teachers, child study teams and parents.

- Professional development in second language acquisition and methods for teaching EL's listening, speaking, reading and writing (p. 45).

As you can see this list is not extensive, but when combined with Short and Boyson's findings, give basic guiding principles into creating a program model that is designed to meet SLIFE unique needs. While planning a program it is great to have research backing up the model you have chosen but you must also adhere to state guidelines, the next section will provide an overview of state guidelines

State Guidelines and Program Minutes

The Minnesota State Guidelines and Requirements for ESL programs are as follows:

124D.61 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAMS.

(1) identification and reclassification criteria for English learners and program entrance and exit criteria for English learners must be documented by the district, applied uniformly to English learners, and made available to parents and other stakeholders upon request;

(2) a written plan of services that describes programming by English proficiency level made available to parents upon request. The plan must articulate the amount and scope of service offered to English learners through an educational program for English learners;

(3) professional development opportunities for ESL, bilingual education, mainstream, and all staff working with English learners which are: (i) coordinated with the district's professional development activities; (ii) related to the needs of English learners; and (iii) ongoing;

(4) to the extent possible, avoid isolating English learners for a substantial part of the school day; and

(5) in predominantly nonverbal subjects, such as art, music, and physical education, permit English learners to participate fully and on an equal basis with their contemporaries in public school classes provided for these subjects. To the extent possible, the district must assure pupils enrolled in a program for English

learners an equal and meaningful opportunity to participate fully with other pupils in all extracurricular activities. (Minnesota Legislature, 2019 Minnesota Statutes).

When it comes to program minutes there is some guidance out there that districts and schools might want to follow. Zacarian and Haynes (2012) suggested the following minimum requirements for ESL programs of beginning learner's, ESL instruction for at least 90 minutes or two class periods every day that are targeted to the unique language development needs of El beginners. Minnesota's English Learner Language Instruction Educational Program Plan Desk-Review Procedures (2018) cite the following information:

Amount of instruction refers to the intensity or time a student receives English language development (ELD) instruction in a language instruction educational program on a regular basis...The amount and scope of service (instruction) must be relative to previous formal schooling and should be based on guiding principles and current research on such programming's effectiveness (p.4).

These guidelines are also needed when looking to create a program model, while they are slightly vague and do not provide any specifics on time, they do discuss some best practices. This includes making sure not to segregate English Learners from their peers and to avoid keeping them isolated for most of their day. This will be important information to look back to when focusing on a desired model for SLIFE students, taking into consideration both minutes of service but also the well-being of the child and the social and emotional ramifications a model could impart on students.

Current Resources

The number of students requiring services helps to determine the number of teachers schools will hire, this is because many schools are staffed based on teacher-to-student ratios. If there are a small number of English learners in a school or district, they may not be able to hire a full time ESL teacher, or hire more if numbers do not increase above the ratio threshold. Another issue comes in the availability of qualified teachers rather than student numbers can limit the type of models that can be used. For example, if an area lacks bilingual teachers it would be difficult to implement a bilingual/dual language program (Sugarman, 2018, p. 11). The district I teach in is currently in this predicament, we do not have enough English learners in our school to increase the number of teachers and this is the same across other schools in our district. Our teachers, while highly qualified and trained to teach ESL, and many of us speak and understand a second or third language, are not bilingual enough to teach in that language. Therefore, a bilingual program would not be effective in our district. Assessing the types of programs available as well as the teachers available in our district will be especially important when creating my program model project.

EL Focus and Curriculum

This section will focus on curriculum and strategies that are best for SLIFE students, and why they benefit these students, it pays special attention to the needs of SLIFE literacy development, English language development standards, the four modalities of English (reading, speaking, reading and writing) and other skills and strategies to assist students that are performing grades below their peers.

Focus and Curriculum

English Learner education cannot only be about learning to understand and speak English. In order to be successful students do need to learn to communicate in English but they also need to learn to communicate with academic English, as there is quite the distinction between conventional English and academic English (Echevarria et al. 2006). DeCapua and Marshall (2010) expanded on these ideas stating that SLIFE needed more than English language instruction alone, and they needed specifically designed programs to meet their language, literacy, and academic needs. Studies of key instructional support found that ideal programs had features that included small group instruction, collaborative work, differentiated instruction, scaffolding, theme based, sheltered content courses and academically challenging curriculum with language modifications (p. 160).

Short and Boyson (2012) took a further look at the goals and objectives of a newcomer program including:

- Help student acquire beginning English skills

- Provide some instruction in core content areas

- Guide students acclimating to the school system in the United States

- Develop or strengthen student's native literacy skills (p. vii).

These goals and objectives create a base for what a SLIFE program might look like, but we also need to take into consideration state regulations.

Minnesota prescribes to the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium which uses the consortium five levels of English proficiency to help teachers determine what students are capable of. These levels are Entering (level 1), Beginning (level 2), Developing (level 3), Expanding (level 4) and Bridging (level 5). At

each of these levels the skills are then broken down into the four modalities of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These charts are referred to as 'Can Do Descriptors' (Wright, 2015). WIDA also provides guidance on the English language development standards that programs who are in the consortium must adhere to. These five standards are: Standard 1- Social and Instructional language; Standard 2- the language of Language Arts; Standard 3- the language of Mathematics; Standard 4- the language of Science and Standard 5- the language of Social Studies (WIDA 2012).

Besides focusing on ELD standards and the four modalities of English, DeCapua and Marshall (2015a) discuss a culturally relevant way of teaching called the Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm (MALP). Culturally relevant or responsive teaching should be used with SLIFE in order to create an instructional model that reduces cultural dissonance in order to prompt classroom engagement and achievement (DeCapua & Marshall, 2015b). This type of teaching entails looking at the best practices designed for traditional English learners and modifies them in a culturally responsive way to make it relevant for SLIFE. The MALP model consists of three basic components which are then broken down into sub groups. These are conditions broken down to include interconnectedness and immediate relevance; Processes -broken down to combine oral and written communication and shared responsibility and individual accountability; and lastly activities. MALP is also considered a positive instructional model for SLIFE because it takes into consideration and builds upon the collectivist cultural orientation, while also helping to close the achievement gap these students are prone to by transitioning them to the demands and requirements in a mainstream U.S. education (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011). This type of design model would also fit with MDE's ESL

guidelines (2019) for best practices for English learners, their evidence based practices resource specifically references the use of culturally relevant pedagogy to encourage educators to facilitate settings where students can be academically successful while developing a critical consciousness, retaining, and building their cultural identity. It is imperative to teach both academics, language skills while also retaining students' cultural identity, but it is also imperative to teach SLIFE about expectations and skills pertaining to schools as many have either had limited or no formal schooling there is much to learn about the U.S. education system.

DeCapua (2016) mentioned that due to the limited or lack of schooling SLIFE have experienced they not only lack literacy skills and content knowledge, but they also may not know 'how to do school', lacking skills from basics like knowing how to use a notebook to how to participate in academic tasks. Zacarian and Haynes (2012) discussed some essential basics that should be taught to beginning English learners in order to navigate their way through school, these include:

- Where the bathrooms, lockers, nurse's office, guidance office, main office, cafeteria, art room, music room, gym, library, bus areas, and other classrooms are located.
- How to buy lunch, tell the school nurse when they are sick, find the school bathrooms, and ask for directions/help.
- The names of teachers, the school nurse, the school secretary, guidance counselors, the principal, and custodians.

- Orientation to school procedures: hall passes, planners, late passes,

  behavior in hallways and classes, rules for the cafeteria and playground,

  clothes for gym, and raising your hand in class

- School life vocabulary (p.73).

While this list is not expansive it does give some great ideas for first lessons or additional

skills to include in a program curriculum. Falchetta et al. (n.d.) described these skills as

survival skills and believe that with consistent modeling and teaching, can be readily

acquired, their list expands on the list above:

Interpersonal/Social	Classroom
● Accepting criticism	● Adjusting to a school setting
● Agreeing/disagreeing	● Completing homework
● Apologizing	● Following directions
● Asking for assistance	● Keeping a notebook
● Collaborating	● Reading school/street signs and other environmental print
● Expressing feelings	
● Getting someone's attention	● Recognizing numbers
● Greeting others	● Recognizing/writing date of birth, address, telephone number
● Interpreting non-verbal cues	
● Maintaining health/hygiene	● Spelling/writing one's name
● Making friends	● Telling time
● Making requests	● Understanding classroom routines
● Passing in hallways	● Using a calculator

- Reporting a problem
- Requesting clarification
- Resolving conflict
- Showing empathy
- Taking turns

- Using a calendar
- Using a map
- Using a pencil/pen
- Using a ruler

The section below goes into further detail on why it is so important to build a program that focuses on multiple facets of a learner. When creating my capstone project, not only will it be important for me to focus on what a program should look like but also what curriculum and instruction SLIFE will need in order to be successful. The information in the section above will help in guiding decisions made on the curriculum and scope for SLIFE.

Student Needs

This section will focus on students' social, emotional and behavioral needs when it comes to their learning. It will also touch on students with traumatic backgrounds (as we often see this in SLIFE). Another focus of this section will be how students identify themselves in society while learning a second, third or fourth language.

Social Emotional Learning and School Culture

Learning a new language and culture can be challenging, especially when you add attending a new school (or school for the first time). This experience can often lead to English learners experiencing trauma of a new culture often referred to as culture shock (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). This is important to keep in mind, and understand that this is a normal process students will flow through generally there are four stages of culture shock: Stage one- the honeymoon or euphoric stage, Stage two- the rejection or cultural

shock stage, Stage three- integration stage and Stage four- assimilation or adaption stage (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). It is important to build strong relationships with students with limited or interrupted formal education in order to help them traverse their new learning, it must be an interpersonal relationship that is well established for students to learn directly from another person (Hickey, 2015). Another area that challenges SLIFE when dealing with culture is adapting to the individualist orientation of U.S. education. Many SLIFE come from backgrounds where their self-identity and well-being come from the sharing of reciprocal obligations and commitments to a group, generally extending family, this is in direct contrast to the U.S. with roots in individualist culture, where one's identity is based on personal accomplishments and ones one traits and well-being (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011). This mismatch can cause what is known as cultural dissonance, which causes feelings of isolation, disengagement, confusion, and inadequacy when students enter the U.S. education system (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011).

Craig (2008) and Yoshikaawa (2011) acknowledged the need for creating an environment that is sensitive to the needs of English learners who are experiencing/have experienced trauma and/or violence. They feel that the environment must take on an empathetic approach; collaboration with students to ensure they feel safe, trusted, and welcome; have policies and routines that parallel student's needs; and finally should provide support in accessing public community-based programming and services that are targeted to the needs of this population (as cited by Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). Beyond the building of relationships and a safe environment SLIFE must also experience Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

Elias et al. (1997) stated that social and emotional competence is the ability to understand, manage, and express the social and emotional aspects of one's life in ways that enable the successful management of tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems, and adapting to the complex demands of growth and development. When it pertains specifically to SLIFE, Payton et al. (2008) listed key learnings for SLIFE and SEL:

- Self--Awareness
    - Identifying one's feelings and their causation
- Self--Regulation
    - Verbalizing and coping with anxiety, stress, anger, culture shock
- Self--Monitoring and Performance
    - On task behaviors
    - Setting short-term and long-term goals
    - Modifying behavior based on feedback
    - Working toward optimal performance in school
- Empathy and Perspective Taking
    - Becoming a good listener
    - Understanding other perspectives, feelings
- Social Skills
    - Harmonizing diverse viewpoints
    - Exercising assertiveness, persuasion and leadership in socially acceptable ways
    - Working collaboratively

○　Exercising decision making and problem-solving skills

Taking time to develop relationships with SLIFE and create a welcome and open

environment for learning is of the utmost importance with deciding on a program model

for these students. It is also imperative to include a focus on SEL for these students due to

the stressors that coming into a new school can place on a learner, in particular trauma.

Incorporating SEL and fostering an open and welcoming environment for SLIFE will be

a main target of the program model and curriculum I create; it will be woven into the

very fabric of the program.

Conclusion

The information provided in this literature review touched several topics to help

answer the question *how can schools create an English as a Second Language program*

model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted

Schooling? These topics included information on the different program models that are

currently in use in the U.S. with a heavy focus on best practices for SLIFE programming.

It also went on to discuss curriculum and instructional strategies that are delegated by the

state and others that are specifically recommended for SLIFE students. This chapter

ended with a look into the difficulties SLIFE face when entering a new school culture. To

conclude, it is important to provide SLIFE with the skills they need to be successful in

and out of the classroom, it is not enough just to focus on conventional English, academic

English, or literacy alone. They need specific skills taught to them in all facets of

education and life in order to participate effectively in the United States education

system, this takes more time and planning than needed for traditional English learners.

Chapter Three will focus on the project design and rationale for answering the question of

this capstone.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

When I began my journey into the world of English as a Second Language in 2015 as a para in a rural Southern Minnesota school district, my eyes were opened to a whole new group of learners. The passion, quest for knowledge, and best practices I had then has continued as I have grown in my career, now a teacher in the same district. In looking at our district I can see how far we have come in our programing and EL model but also where we need to go in order to meet the needs of all of our ELL students, specifically students we have not been thus equipped to provide services for, Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education. That leads me to the purpose of this capstone project and to answer the question, *how can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* Chapter Three's purpose is to describe and explain the website project to be completed this summer, this chapter will include an overview of the project including the description, setting, audience and timeline. It will also include a section on the context of why this particular project was chosen as well as a section dedicated to the project framework and research theory behind this project. Chapter Three will conclude with a summary of the key points of this chapter and an introduction to Chapter Four.

Overview

Project Description

This project will consist of developing a Google Website for districts, administrators, EL coordinators and supervisors as well as other EL staff to use to answer the research question *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* Following the implementation of this website I would like to share it with my administration team as well as other districts in Minnesota, while continuing to update it with relevant information.

Setting

This project is geared toward use at the school I teach at in rural southern Minnesota. Our district is comprised of about 1600 students, 14% of these students are Hispanic or Latinx and 8 % of students receive EL services. This district has 3 elementary/middle schools and one high school. Currently the EL population for the district sits at about 8%, but in the elementary/middle school I work in it is about 19%, and growing. At this school we have 2 ESL teachers, and 1.5 paras to service 100 students. Throughout the district we have 2 other ESL teachers, one of whom is also our ESL coordinator. This website project will specifically target the elementary/middle school as it has the highest population of EL's (approximately 100 students with 7 of these being SLIFE), and is in dire need of a model that best supports these students.

Audience

All administration, the Special Services Director, EL Coordinator, EL Supervisor, and EL staff will be shown this website in order to help inform how SLIFE

programming could look in their building. The goal is to provide administration and the staff that create the program models with best practices in a format that will not be lost, or forgotten with time. After the implementation of these structures and models in our buildings I would hope that I could take this information and share it with other districts as well.

Timeline

I plan to begin the website project described in this capstone in early June of 2020, with the hope that it will be finished by August 2020. With this timeline I will thus ensure it can be utilized and implemented for the planning of the EL program model for the year 2020-2021. My goal as stated before is to continue to update this website with the best practice for SLIFE programming in order to continue best practices into the future school years. (this will be added to as the project begins)

Context

When thinking about how I wanted to present this information to my district and administrators many ideas ran through my head. Initially, I thought that a PowerPoint presentation could be ideal, or perhaps a brochure. The problem with the PowerPoint I thought was that once my administrators heard the information, they may quickly forget it, and even if the power point was shared with them not all the information that you discuss is included on your PowerPoint. I also liked the idea of a brochure initially as they are concise and visual, however I was worried that these could easily get lost and forgotten. Another new obstacle to traverse is how to best provide this information to my administrators in the height of a pandemic when we cannot be in the same physical space as one another. That is when it occurred to me that perhaps I should do a website.

Websites are never lost, and can easily be shared with others, and can be used during this time of digital/distance teaching. Websites take some of the great aspects of brochures, they are very visual and that of in person PowerPoint presentations, they contain a depth of knowledge without being cumbersome. Ultimately creating a website will be the most efficient way to get the information into the hands of my administrators. This website could then be shared with others quickly and efficiently and could be readily available to many people.

Vision for the website

When I think of how best to set up my website I think of simplicity, functionality and aesthetics. On the first page of the website there will be an overview of SLIFE, the purpose of the website in general, as well as the intended audience for this website. There will also be a drop down menu with sections including MDE guidelines for EL Programs, the current Program model our program has, and the new proposed model for our SLIFE students at the K-8. Beyond this there will also be a section on what types of services and curriculum our SLIFE will get access to in order to best support them in their transition to a school in the U. S.

Framework and Research

One of the most important aspects of this capstone project will be usability as well as how well this project will function on multiple different kinds of devices. The International Standardized Organization (ISO) define usability as the extent to which users can achieve desired tasks (e.g., access desired information or place a purchase) with effectiveness (completeness and accuracy of the task), efficiency (time spent on the task), and satisfaction (user experience) within a system. This is an important framework as to

not waste the districts and administrations time when building program models, the information should be readily available and easy to find.

A literature review conducted by Garett, Chiu, Zhang, and Young (2016) found that there were seven web design elements that made a website popular and increased user engagement. These elements included navigation, graphical representation, organization, content utility, purpose, simplicity, and readability. To break these down further Garett et al. states that effective navigation is the presence of consistent menu/navigation bars, aids for navigation (e.g., visible links), search features, and easy access to pages. Graphical presentation entails images of proper size and resolution, multimedia, proper color, font and size of text, effective use of white space, attractive visual layout and color scheme as well as the use of logos and icons.

When looking into what characteristics organization includes Garett et al. (2016) discovered that organization needed to include to be logical, understandable, and have a hierarchical structure for information arrangement and categorization, and meaningful labels/headings/titles. Content utility was determined by a sufficient amount of information to attract repeat visitors, arousal/ motivation (keeps visitors interested and motivates users to continue exploring the site), content quality, information relevant to the purpose of the site, and perceived utility based on user needs/requirements. The purpose of a website is clear when it establishes a unique and visible identity, addresses visitors' intended purpose and expectations for visiting the site, and provides information about the organization and/or services. Simplicity is achieved by using simple subject headings, transparency of information to reduce search time, website design optimized for computer screens, uncluttered layout, consistency in design throughout the website,

ease of use, and minimize redundant features. Readability is optimized by content that is well-written at appropriate reading levels therefore making it understandable, visually appealing and easy to read (preferably presented in readable blocks), and grammatically correct (Garett et al., 2016).

Based on this information I will make sure that my website adheres to these seven principles, as well as making sure that the website works across many different modalities, such as laptops, chromebooks, tablets and phones (iPhone and android) as well as individual browsers like chrome, Firefox, and internet explorer. This way I know that people will be able to review the information no matter what device or browser they may be using.

Conclusion

Chapter Three discussed the overview of this capstone project including its description, setting, audience, and timeline; in order to answer the question *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?* This chapter also gave an in depth look at the context of this website project and why this format was chosen as the best method to relay information to the audience, as well as provided research and frameworks to justify the design. Chapter Four includes a reflective statement about what was learned through the capstone process, important aspects of the literature review, implications of this project as well as limitations and finally recommendations on further research related to this project.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions

Introduction

During my years as an EL paraprofessional and as an EL teacher in rural Minnesota, I have seen a growing population of EL students in our rural area, in particular the growth of our Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) population. DeCapua and Marshall (2015b) defined SLIFE as not having the opportunity to participate in formal education previously or have experienced significant time gaps in schooling due to being unable to attend, they are also generally two grade levels below their peers in content knowledge, have low or no literacy or numeracy skills and are (with some exceptions) members of collectivist cultures.

Currently, the EL population for the district sits at about 8%, but in the elementary/middle school I work in it is about 19%, our Middle School/Junior High EL population sits at approximately 28 students with 7 of these being SLIFE. While our Junior High model has been effective thus far for our other EL's and newcomers I began seeing that our SLIFE were falling behind and not receiving all the skills and services the needed in just 60 minutes a day, this lead to my capstone project question *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?*

I began researching SLIFE and EL program models and came to find that this is an area that definitely needs to be explored further. While there was great research to be found it was limited in quantity and often many of the same researchers are the ones doing the studies. As I sifted through the research and had a direction of where my

capstone project was heading, I started reflecting on how I should best approach the creation of my research project. I finally decided to build a website that could inform others about SLIFE, as well as guide my administration and district to create a program model that would benefit SLIFE in our district. The website platform was also chosen so that the information would be easily accessible, and would not be forgotten or lost like a verbal presentation or powerpoint might be.

Chapter Four focuses on reflections on the capstone process, where I will reflect and discuss decisions that were made and key learnings that were taken away from this process. Furthermore, it will revisit the importance of the literature review and what I found to be the most crucial and beneficial research to my project. Chapter Four then goes on to discuss the implications and limitations of this project, (who will this project benefit and how? How will it help inform decision makers? Were there any limitations to the project?). Chapter Four ends with a discussion for future capstone research/projects, how this project will be beneficial to others and how it will get shared out, as well as a conclusion to wrap up the project.

Reflections on the Capstone Process

The capstone process for me has been an interesting journey, filled with joy, frustration, passion, knowledge and excitement. When I started this program I knew that I would eventually be here working on my capstone (at the time I had not decided between research or a project). I started thinking about what topics in the ESL world I was passionate about, and how my capstone could be the most beneficial to not only me but my district and maybe other districts as well. Around this time is also when our district started seeing more SLIFE entering EL programs and I noticed how their needs far

surpassed those of our other EL students and newcomers. It was also clear to me that although our program worked well for our current EL's this new population was falling through the cracks as our program did not account for this new type of student. That is when I decided that my capstone would focus on SLIFE, in particular looking for program models that would best support these students, specifically at the Junior High level I teach in. Throughout this process I learned many things about myself especially in regards to my role as a learner, researcher, and writer.

In the Spring of 2020, I began my capstone writing class, and came in with a strong focus. It still took some time to think about the exact question, but I felt good knowing there was something I was passionate about and that I had a direction. I have always prided myself on being a lifelong learner and feel best when I am furthering my mind and education, this process was no different and I learned some new things about myself that will help me in the future. During this last year there have been many ups and downs personally, as well as, globally/locally. Much has changed and been asked of us during this global pandemic and at the same time our lives do not stop and other cataclysmic personal events do not cease to exist. The darkness and uncertainty of these times took a toll on my mental and physical health but I did my best to keep up with my research and the capstone process at hand. It showed me how strong I can be and that even in the darkest of times I will pull through and be a survivor. In knowing this, I can now prepare myself for tackling whatever may come my way, even if initially it knocks me down, I will get back up and put in the level of excellence I know I am capable of. This process has taught me that I am stronger and more resilient than I thought I was as a learner.

Along with gaining a better understanding of my resiliency and strength as a learner, I also gained more knowledge about myself as a researcher. This knowledge really came about while I was writing my Chapter 2 Literature Review. I had written a few of these for grad classes before, but this was my first in depth literature review with over 30 references. The amount of research was overwhelming at first, but also seemed quite limited. It really showed me that there needs to be further research into the field of SLIFE, as many of the same researchers are doing the research. While a lot of the initial research I found did not directly correlate to SLIFE programming, there was a lot of important research out there about SLIFE in general that needed to be included in the literature review. Although the amount of research I began with was overwhelming I enjoyed sifting through this information and forming connections between researchers and others research. This synthesizing and merging of information was probably my favorite part, and while daunting at first I found that it came very naturally to me and the connections almost jumped off the page. At the beginning of this process I might have said I was most nervous for this portion of the capstone project, but now I can confidently say that this was one of the aspects I enjoyed the most and look forward to doing in the future. Beyond seeing the need for further research into SLIFE, and discovering my own passion for forming connections between research literature I also gained much insight into my writing style and process.

When it comes to writing I can say that I have always enjoyed putting my thoughts down on paper, however I often like to do this all at once then go back and revise, revise, revise. The writing process for the capstone project was a very different process for me and took some getting used to. The fact that certain sections were due at

certain times, and often just parts or drafts first, was new and somewhat unfamiliar. This was challenging for me as I like to write everything down at once then go back and revise and add detail as needed. It was interesting to try a new way of doing things, and I saw why this was necessary especially as it pertained to the literature review. Which I came to see could not just be written all at once and needed to be broken down into manageable sections and topics. Over all the writing process of the capstone was eye opening and really led to a better understanding of my project. A large part of the writing process that truly helped me, and my capstone paper was the use of peer reviewers, content reviewers and my facilitator's reviews. Having multiple people look over capstone provided me with many different insights and constructive criticism that I could use to better hone my paper. To me this was one of the best parts of the writing process.

Revisiting the Literature

When revisiting the literature from Chapter Two there are several key researchers and references that played a role in the creation of this project. Some of the most beneficial research was provided by DeCapua (multiple years) and DeCapua and Marshall (multiple years). When researching SLIFE these researchers were found on many different studies and provided a breadth of topics on SLIFE. They were also referenced by many other researchers as leaders in the field of SLIFE. The articles and research provided by Decapua and DeCapua and Marshall provided helpful insight into the background of SLIFE, as well as into best practices in regards to learning and curriculum for these students. While they did not always specify specific guidelines for program models several other researchers provided detailed information on best practices in this regard.

The articles by Zacarian and Haynes (2012) *The Essential Guide for Educating Beginning English Learners*, Short and Boyson (2012) *Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary School and Beyond* and the information provided by the Minnesota Department of Education and their guidelines governing EL services (n.d), played an integral role in the foundation of my project's program model. These researchers and sites provided guidelines on state requirements as well as best practices for SLIFE programming (such as minutes served, skills needing to be taught, additional ways to get students minutes, and the importance of not segregating students from their peers for the entire day).

SLIFE is an up and coming topic in the world of ESL and I feel that as the years go by more and more research will be done to improve the quality of education for these students. I know I will be continuing my education and knowledge about these students in order to best serve them, and keep abreast of the new research out there. With this being such a new topic and there being little depth in the research, I have hope that projects like mine will open the door to further investigation and research into this group of students.

Implications

In regards to this project I feel there are many positive implications. One implication I can think of is that this website will inform decision makers in the future, specifically for my district and our administration. The goal of this project is to convince our administration to make changes in our own program model to better serve SLIFE in our district. The model that I created for our Junior High Students could also be used to help transform our secondary and possibly primary programs as well. In response to these

changes the implications it would have for our SLIFE would be a more equitable education and a focus on skills and services that meet their needs.

Further implications of this project could be future guidelines and policies made by the state of Minnesota in particular to SLIFE programming and funding. Currently there are no hard and fast rules governing the number of minutes or type of program that should be implemented for EL's or SLIFE, so a website like this could help inform further regulations and guidelines.

Beyond these implications, there could be implications for other schools and districts in Minnesota to develop more equitable SLIFE programming models. Using this website as a template could help guide their own program remodel as the website provides a lot of background information and best practices for SLIFE when it comes to program models and curriculum.

Limitations

As with many other new initiatives, updates and expansions in schools there are two big limitations that must be addressed, these are funding and staffing. These two limitations go hand in hand as without the funding, programs can not be made or updated and new teachers can not be hired. Currently in the school I work, we have 2 ESL teachers, and 1.5 paras to service 100 students. This roughly breaks down to 45 students K-3, and 55 students 4-8 (30 of these are Junior High Students with 7 of the 30 being SLIFE). With the increased time and skills that SLIFE need in order to receive an equitable education it would be necessary to increase the amount of EL teachers in the school. This would be necessary in order to be able to provide the additional time, while also ensuring that the other EL' and newcomers are receiving the services they need to be

successful. Many times, this limits the programming that is available as schools do not have the budget to hire more teachers. Another limitation that goes hand in hand with the hiring of new teachers is the fluctuation of SLIFE students year to year, and even within a year. It is not uncommon to have ten or more SLIFE one year and the next only have three, or to even have several students move mid-year. This inconsistency in student numbers does pose a difficult task for districts and administrators in staffing a program effectively.

Future Plans

In the future, this project will be used as described in Chapter Three, to help inform administration of a proposed Junior High EL program model for SLIFE. After I have met with and presented my program model website, I am hoping the administration team will take all this information into consideration and work to create such a model to better serve SLIFE and provide them with an equitable education. Beyond that this website will be used to inform other schools what our SLIFE program looks like as well as providing the research that backs it up, in order to help others create programs that work for SLIFE in their district.

In addition, this website will be updated as research and MN regulations change in order to keep up with current best practices and guidelines. It will also be important to update the website as our EL and SLIFE populations grow and change. Program models are not meant to be stagnant and should change as new research is discovered and as populations of students in our districts grow. I also plan on tracking the change of the program model along with student achievement and growth. This will help determine the value and effectiveness of the program change. This information could then be used in

further research of my own to discuss policy changes and recommendations for SLIFE programming.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this capstone process has been a long and arduous, but also exciting and passionate project for me. Chapter Four allowed me to reflect not only personally but professionally on what I have learned about myself as a learner, researcher and writer. It also allowed me to reflect on the literature that was most beneficial to my project in regards to SLIFE and SLIFE programming, and think about further research needed in the field.

Chapter Four not only allowed me to think about the process as a whole, and the role the literature plays but it also allowed me to reflect on the implications and limitations of my project. While there may be some limitations when it comes to staffing and funding, I feel that the positive implications of this project far outweigh these drawbacks. In developing my website, I believe that I have created a tool that my administration can use to create a SLIFE program model that will ensure our students are getting the best education possible.

Crafting Chapter Four and the project as a whole has continued the passion that I have SLIFE and fueled a desire to delve deeper into the literature on SLIFE, with the possibility of further research on my own.

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