



University of Colorado  
Denver

**DPS Exemplary Schools Case Study:  
Goldrick Elementary School**

*WORKING DRAFT 2*

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## DPS UCD ELA Exemplary Schools Case Study Overview

The Denver Public Schools (DPS) University of Colorado Denver (UCD) English Language Acquisition (ELA) Exemplary Schools Case Studies investigated DPS schools with a high density of learners of English as a second or additional language and high levels of students who qualified for a free or reduced price lunch that were experiencing the most success with English language learners (ELL students). The study was conducted by the DPS UCD Research Collaborative between December 2010 and March 2011. The purpose of the study was to identify school-wide practices that have been successful in supporting the achievement of these students. Six schools (two elementary, two middle, and two high schools) were identified on the basis of five criteria: (1) an open enrollment policy, (2) at least 40% of total enrollment consisting of ELL students, and at least 100 English language learners enrolled, (3) a total School Performance Framework (SPF) rating greater than 49% for elementary schools, and greater than 45% for middle schools and high schools, (4) at least 50% of students in the school qualified for a free or reduced price lunch, and (5) high gains on the CSAP and CELA tests for the past three years relative to other schools serving the same grade levels. Two additional elementary schools, which did not meet all criteria, but have good reputations among area educators were also studied. Goldrick was one of the reputational schools. The case studies involved three sources of data: 1) photographs providing environmental scans of the language resources and supports for ELL students in the schools; 2) documents and public information (e.g., websites) as well as student performance data; and 3) interviews with school leaders, teachers, and other support personnel. This report will detail the practices uncovered at Goldrick Elementary School.

NOTE: This case study of Goldrick Elementary is ongoing. These preliminary assertions and explanations are based on 6-12 interviews with staff members, photographic inventories, and archived data collected between December 2010 and March 2011 only. We anticipate that further study, e.g., observations in classrooms and additional interviews, will expand our understanding of the school's practices.

The following assertions emerged as key components contributing to the success of Goldrick Elementary in working with English language learners:

- *Culture of high academic expectations for English learners*
- *Culture of professional learning among all levels of faculty regarding English learners*
- *Culture of administrative-supported, shared leadership to provide academic support for English learners*
- *Culture of reciprocal respect for professionalism that enhances support for English learners*
- *Culture of respect for and engagement of the Parent Community.*

The following sections of this report will include a more in-depth explanation of the study, a brief history and demographic description of the school, and a more detailed narrative of the case study

assertions and how the described practices are facilitating academic growth for ELL students at Goldrick Elementary (to be found beginning on page 6).

## DPS Exemplary Schools Case Study: Context and Purpose of the Study

As of October 1, 2010, there were 26,761 identified English language learners (non-exited ELL students in grades ECE-12) enrolled in Denver Public Schools. Of these students, 17,544 received ELA services at a designated ELA program school. Spanish was the primary language for 15,246 (87%) of these students, while other common languages included Vietnamese, Arabic, Somali, Nepali and Karen/Burmese <http://ela.dpsk12.org/>

Denver Public Schools and University of Colorado Denver are working in collaboration on the DPS ELA Exemplary Schools Study to examine practices within DPS schools in which learners of English as a second (or additional) language are outperforming their peers in similar schools. The purpose of the study is to provide guidance to DPS and other districts in improving the educational performance of English language learners by describing practices currently used in DPS schools in which English language learners are experiencing the most academic success. Due to its positive reputation among area educators, MSLA was included as a reputational school in the study. The primary research question addressed by this study is:

- *What are the school-wide practices of schools that are successfully serving a high number of English language learners?*

This study was formulated in accordance with the Department of Justice Court Order, which provides guidance to and approval of the DPS English Acquisition program, and includes guidance regarding research on the effectiveness of DPS ELA programs. One goal of this study is to identify practices that have been successful across different school contexts. This report focuses on the practices at Goldrick Elementary School.

## Study Design and School Selection Criteria

This study of school practices involved three sources of data: 1) observations/photographs of language resources in the school environment; 2) documents and public information (e.g., school websites, newsletters) as well as aggregate data on student performance; and 3) multiple interviews with school leaders, teachers, and other support personnel. In this preliminary phase, the study did *not* include students as participants.

A three-step process was used to select high performing schools for English language learners in DPS. For the purposes of this study, English language learners at DPS were defined as those students who were currently receiving ELA services, opted out of services, or exited from ELA services.

Step 1: In order to select the case study schools, schools were identified at the elementary, middle, and high school level, which met four criteria:

- 1) at least 40% of the school's total enrollment consisted of English language learners,
- 2) at least 100 ELL students were enrolled at the school,
- 3) at least 50% of students at the school qualified for a free or reduced price lunch, and
- 4) the school received a School Performance Framework (SPF) rating greater than 49 for elementary schools, and greater than 45 for middle schools and high schools.

For the SPF, every school in DPS that contains at least one grade that takes CSAP (grades 3-10) is assigned one of the following accreditation ratings every September using data collected during the previous three school years: Distinguished, Meets Expectations, Accredited on Watch, Accredited on Priority Watch (added in 2010) or Accredited on Probation. Ratings then relate to how much autonomy schools are given, the support needed, corrective action taken and compensation earned by principals, assistant principals and teachers. For this study, the SPF rating was used to ensure that the schools chosen were not on probation and were meeting expectations or nearly meeting expectations (for all students, not only ELL students).

Step 2: Performance data for English Language Learners on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) Reading, CSAP Writing, CSAP Math and the Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA) were analyzed for each school for the past three years. Schools from the initial list, which were making the largest gains were identified, weighting gains in 2010 the highest, 2009 second highest, and 2008 third. Data presented in Table 1 below show the three-year weighted averages of the CSAP median growth percentiles for each school and average gain (Z score) on CELA. Based on these criteria, three schools at each educational level, for a total of nine schools, were identified as candidates for the case study.

Step 3: The student recruitment and retention policies at the nine schools were investigated to determine whether the schools had policies for admittance or dismissal related to performance, special education needs, or behavioral problems. In narrowing the selected schools to six, researchers agreed that at least one school at each level should be a comprehensive neighborhood school, as opposed to a charter school or magnet school. The six schools included Bryant Webster Dual Language ECE-8 (study focused on the elementary grades), Force Elementary, Merrill Middle, West Denver Preparatory Charter – Federal Campus (a middle school), Abraham Lincoln High, and Bruce Randolph High.

Once the schools had been narrowed to six high performing schools, two additional elementary schools of interest were selected based on a combination of their relatively high performance and reputation among educators in the district. Both schools added additional characteristics to the pool of schools, including learners of English from diverse linguistic backgrounds and concentration on math and science. These two additional "reputational" schools were Goldrick Elementary and the Math and Science Leadership Academy (K-3). Goldrick, while not meeting the growth criteria described above, did make AYP and is Meeting Expectations on the district SPF. Additionally, Goldrick's learners of English as an additional language include native speakers of Khmer and

Vietnamese (14% of ELLs), which, in combination with its strong reputation among educators, made it a school of interest to researchers.

## History of Goldrick Elementary School

Goldrick Elementary School, neighborhood school located at South Zuni Street and West Mississippi Avenue in southwest Denver, serves students in Early Childhood Education (ECE) through fifth grade. Maria Uribe is the currently principal at Goldrick. Goldrick is designated as a Transitional Native Language Instruction (TNLI) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Resource school. The mission of Goldrick is to “provide the most effective social, emotional and academic learning environment for linguistically and culturally diverse students as a result of a collaborative process that involves a community partnership” (<http://goldrick.dpsk12.org/about>).

## Demographic Overview of Goldrick Elementary School

In the 2009-10 school year (the school year based on which schools were selected for the study), there were 618 students enrolled in ECE through fifth grade at Goldrick Elementary. Of these students, 554 were in grades K-5. Eighty-six percent of the students at Goldrick were Hispanic/Latino and 62% spoke Spanish; 3% of students spoke Vietnamese, and 1% spoke Khmer. Among the student body, 93% qualified for free and reduced price lunch. In the 2009-10 school year, Goldrick received an SPF rating of 61%, indicating that they were meeting expectations. Last year, Goldrick met AYP (Annual Yearly Progress).

Of the students enrolled in Goldrick Elementary in the 2009-10 school year, 69% (383) were English language learners (including students currently receiving ELA services, students opted out of services, and students who have exited from ELA services). Among the ELL students at the school, 373 were designated as enrolled in ELA services, 8 as opted out of services, and 2 as exited from ELA program services. The large majority of the ELL students at Goldrick spoke Spanish.

AMAO 1 (Annual Measurable Achievement Objective) is an indicator of English language acquisition. It represents the number of students who are making progress on the CELA exam. In 2010, 56% of ELL students at Goldrick Elementary were making progress. Further, the three-year (2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10) weighted average gain (Z score) on the CELA for ELL students at Goldrick was 0.20 standard deviations above the mean, meaning they showed slightly higher than average growth; this is compared to a state-wide gain of 0. Three year weighted averages are included here as these data are less subject to year-to-year fluctuations.

The three-year weighted averages of the CSAP median growth percentiles for English language learners (median growth percentiles indicate how well these students are growing in comparison with other students) were 49.8 in Reading, 54 in Writing, and 64 in Math, compared to the state average of 50. The median student growth percentile is the middle score if the individual student growth percentiles are ranked from highest to lowest. A “typical” school would have a median student growth percentile of 50.

The charts below (beginning on page 17) display student demographics (including primary home languages and ethnicities of students throughout the school), the CSAP and CELA growth scores of ELL students at the school, and the proficiency levels of Goldrick students on the CELA and CSAP. All non-exited ELL students (who include students who are opted out of services) take the CELA exam, which test students on four domains – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Students in grades 3 through 10 take the CSAP exam.

## Summary of Findings from Case Study

### Overview

Goldrick Elementary serves a culturally and linguistically diverse population of students. Over the past several years the faculty has worked to focus their attention on student needs in ways that are positive and constructive. Due to the high number of English learners (13 languages are currently represented in the school), the collaborative work faculty engage in is directly related to supporting the needs of English learners. Designing instruction for English learners is not an add-on; it is the central focus of vertical team and grade level team conversations.

This year the school leadership is encouraging and supporting teachers as they explore how to effectively teach about academic language and how to be explicit with students regarding intended learnings for both content and language. Work in these areas is directed toward helping English learners and native speakers acquire academic language as they progress through the grades.

Data collected for this report came from observations, interviews and documents that were collected from the leadership team, vertical team, and grade level meetings. The leadership team consists of instructional coaches and lead teachers across literacy, math, science and technology. This team meets weekly to plan for vertical team meetings and address the business of student placement and professional development. The weekly vertical team meetings include teachers across grade levels who are divided into subgroups targeted to literacy, math and science respectively. Teachers have chosen which of these target areas on which they wish to focus for the year; the team meetings are facilitated by members of the leadership team. Vertical teams engage in a book study using professional literature directly related to the target area and academic language. They also choose a strategy from the book to implement with students during the week and bring the results back to the group for further discussion. Approximately once a month the grade level groups meet so that vertical team members can share their learnings from the past weeks. All of these meetings occur on a regular schedule; teachers discuss, plan and conduct their own professional development. In addition, the leadership team meetings provide coaches with additional resources to assist them in supporting the vertical team meetings.

All faculty involved in the interviews and data collection for this report gave signed permission for their names to be used in the report.

Maria Uribe -	Principal	Judith Witten -	Science Facilitator
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Martha Torres -	AP	Denise Saiz -	Reading Interventionist
Tania Hogan -	Site Coordinator UCD	Nicola Hodkowski -	Fourth Grade Teacher
Katy Hoops -	Literacy Facilitator	Alma Guardiola -	Second Grade Teacher
Patricia Pluta -	Math/GT Facilitator	Maribel Villanueva -	First Grade Teacher

### School-wide practices that support the success of learners of English as a second language at Goldrick:

- Culture of high academic expectations for English learners
- Culture of professional learning among all levels of faculty regarding English learners
- Culture of administrative-supported, shared leadership to provide academic support for English learners
- Culture of reciprocal respect for professionalism that enhances support for English learners
- Culture of respect for and engagement of the Parent Community

### Culture of high academic expectations for English learners

At Goldrick there is a pervasive culture of high academic expectations for English learners in particular and for all students more globally. Goldrick has a school-wide implementation of the Response to Intervention (RtI) model, which emphasizes universal instruction (high level, highly effective instruction for all students) with more targeted instruction being provided across the tiers for students who are struggling academically. In particular, Goldrick has a strong emphasis on literacy and math with full implementation of RtI in these two areas. For example, during the two hour literacy block, students at each grade level are grouped according to both language and literacy proficiencies. In this way teachers are able to provide students with instruction that directly targets both their language and reading/writing needs at age appropriate levels. Classes with students who are performing below grade level (RtI groups) have more interventionists during literacy to allow for targeted instruction in smaller groups aimed at supporting grade level work. Classes that are performing at or above grade level (Benchmark groups) receive instruction that supports and challenges their academic proficiencies. In the lower grades, children receiving instruction in Spanish also receive English Language Development and English literacy instruction in reading and writing. In the upper grades, English learners are provided the support they need to work at grade level in English.

#### *Interview evidence on language instruction*

*Maribel:* Awareness teachers have of 2<sup>nd</sup> language learners, perspectives of how to help them become academically successful, passion teachers have for students to succeed, not to believe that just because a student doesn't speak English, cannot be successful. We use whatever resources the students bring and use them to further their academic knowledge.

*Maribel:* Work with students is directed toward not only to developing the communication skills,

but also to develop foundations for academics, like in the case of social studies and science, we give them background knowledge in Spanish, and the instruction in English also. That creates all the skills they need, not just playground, also in the classroom starting in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they are given the tools to have that foundation with academic success. It's not only, let's teach them how to communicate with their peers, it's let's give them the content that they need to be successful in the future.

*Alma:* More each year, the focus is on how to begin in ECE [Early Childhood Education, 4 year olds] of thinking ahead to prepare kids for college. What do they need all along the way in terms of knowledge and skills and conversational skills and all of the pieces that work together to get them ready to be successful in higher education?

*Nicola:* For non-Spanish English learners: I teach mostly those students, for me, I've really tried to learn the backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, study the languages from the countries of the students that I have in my classrooms so that, going back to the connections, I can make the connections for what is going on at home, talking to them about it, maybe it is something that I don't know, but I'm encouraging them to make connections to what they're hearing at home, to understand that its appreciated that they have this knowledge and how can we share that with the class so that the class is not only seeing maybe the language at home and the English language in the school, but they're seeing that there are other languages also and other cultural backgrounds, that they are becoming aware of.

### *Observation Evidence*

- Book study: Teachers are reading and discussing a variety of books: Gibbons *English Learners*, *Academic Literacy*, and *Thinking*, Thompson, *Mathematical Thinking*, Klentschy, *Using Science Notebooks* in order to provide students with high level instruction
- WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design & Assessment, [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)) training from ELA Department – Christina Bernal
- Teachers continuously look at data to find trends and information to help them “see” what is going on with student achievements: CELA, Benchmark, DRA, ongoing formative classroom assessments
- Data analysis has led to an emerging realization of the needs of other populations in the school (non-Spanish speaking ELL, low SES *native English speakers*, and students in special education programs, lack of academic orientation of many families)
- Math is going well, but they know they need to continue to work on literacy (reading/writing) and science
- School-wide implementation of RtI model, grouping by both reading and language proficiency for literacy instruction.
- Students performing above grade level in both language and literacy are grouped in ways that they can be supported appropriately.



- Literacy Block model places students in groups which address their language and literacy needs directly. Instruction and materials are provided at grade level for students in RtI groups.
  - Language and literacy support for grade level work is given through flexible groupings that provide targeted instruction.
  - Goldrick does not use published programs for literacy instruction: 1) students' language needs are very different from the commercial program's targets; 2) students' needs are so different, they are grouped according to language/literacy needs in the same category; 3) phonics and pronunciation is not a priority, comprehension and academic language are the focus.
  - Literacy focus is on cognitive functioning, listening comprehension and reading independently. There is some focus on fluency in RtI.
- Math Program
  - *Investigations* is used (most elementary schools do not use this program). Goldrick teachers believe this program provides a higher level of critical thinking for students than other math programs.
  - Math focus is on content. Students with varying language abilities are included.
  - Math GT (Gifted & Talented) program has more Spanish speaking students than others
  - Math time is split between *Investigations* curriculum (60 minutes) and small group instruction to meet students' actual math needs (30 minutes).
  - Math time is 90 minutes as opposed to most elementary schools which is 75 minutes.
- Science Program uses *Tracks*. Science time is split between *Tracks* curriculum and Science Lab experiences to meet students' actual science needs.
- Literacy and Math use flexible groupings both across classrooms and within classrooms.
- Benchmark vs. RtI
  - Benchmark groups have students who are at grade level proficiency.
  - RtI groups have students who are below grade level. Instruction is more intense and strategic and there are more adults in the room.
  - Most students are in RtI classrooms for only one year. Most of the students in RtI classrooms have less time at Goldrick than students in the benchmark (grade level) groups.
  - 4<sup>th</sup> grade RtI includes identified SPED students who have been at the school for less than 2 years.
  - The Benchmark group comprised of students who have been at the school for more than 5 years.

## Culture of professional learning among all levels of faculty regarding English learners

The culture of professional learning regarding working with English learners is prevalent among all levels of faculty at Goldrick. Monthly meetings are held for vertical teams in math, literacy, science and technology where teachers across grade levels collaborate to share resources and problem solve ways to appropriately and effectively foster academic language in their targeted content area. The materials and lessons, which are the outcomes of these discussions, are then shared at

regularly scheduled grade level meetings where teachers within a grade level provide information and resources for implementation. Additionally, the leadership team works closely with the teachers and administration to identify key resources needed for the school and the continued professional development of the staff.

- Background on teachers in the building: Goldrick has been a PDS for 17 years. They have a critical mass of teachers who have worked with UCD and many who have gone through UCD's licensing and MA programs. During the past 17 years the principal, Dr. Uribe has been in the school and working with teachers in various capacities: first grade teacher, site coordinator for UCD, literacy and science facilitator, assistant principal, principal.
- Tania reported that PD initiative came from UCD internship rubric, the focus on language and content objectives
- Dr. Uribe reported that the faculty takes PD and reading research seriously – Goldrick is one of few DPS schools to have been on track with DPS modules in the fall of 2010.

### *Observation evidence*

An ELA Professional Development provider mentioned that Goldrick is the only school so far to be receiving WIDA Professional Development and to be working on academic language.

### *Interview evidence*

*Maribel:* Faculty and leadership take the time to research the research-based practices, shown to be effective with English learners, the partnership with the university, positive energy, finding the newest ideas for lessons and instruction and ways to address the needs of English learners, the leadership and knowledge.

*Denise:* As an Interventionist we do a lot of reading assessment, being aware of different language differences for each of the different languages that are spoken in the building is helpful to know which types of things when they have miscues in their reading are because they don't hear the sounds or because it's not something they're used to in their language. For example, in Vietnamese I understand that there are no plural forms of words, so I've noticed a pattern of Vietnamese speakers leaving "s"es off of words and endings of words, and they say everything in present tense. So that to me is not a true miscue, it's more of an English language learner type of thing that is specific to their language so that's always informative to have a background of their language to inform how we're interpreting assessments

Multiple observations of Leadership and Vertical Team meetings demonstrated the relevance of the PD to the teachers: all participants were on task and highly engaged in the work and conversations. Teachers came prepared for the work, having done the readings and brought either lesson plans they were prepared to teach or that they had already taught (depending on goal for that week).

**Observation evidence:** Goldrick Leadership Team planning for Vertical Team (content based) meetings

**SCIENCE**

- Working on engaging all members in conversations
- Reading Klentschy *Using Science Notebooks* and connecting to Gibbons *English Learners, Academic Literacy, and Thinking*

**Next Steps:**

- Look at science notebook proficiency at each grade level and create grade level expectations
- Look at academic language in the scope and sequence of the grade level expectations

**MATH**

- Working on writing quality word problems with academic language
- Reading Thompson, *Mathematical Literacy*

**Next Steps:**

- Creating a list of crucial vocabulary and varying ways those word may be written

**LITERACY**

- Holding teachers accountable for participation by taking notes about who is sharing and exit slips
- Reading Gibbons, *English Learners, Academic Literacy and Thinking*
- Creating menu/list of academic language that can be addressed (from pronouns to adverbial clauses)
- Created groups: 1. Looking at definitions and examples of menu items 2. A.L lesson reflection 3. Looking at understanding A.L. deeper.

Expectations are clear that Grade level Leaders will inform their team about lesson study expectations

Teachers are encouraged to bring resources to supplement the PD; resources are shared and used by others.

**Document and observation evidence**

- Document folder contains handouts and readings brought by teachers to the Vertical Team meetings
- Evidence at grade level meetings: teachers bring in lessons, graphic organizers, professional books, ideas they have read about or heard about

**Culture of administrative-supported, shared leadership to provide academic support for English learners**

The culture of shared leadership in providing appropriate academic support to English learners is highly evident, not only through administrative support, but also through the processes in place to enable

teachers to take leadership in their own professional development, to collaborate with colleagues across a variety of meeting structures and to problem-solve through students’ voiced concerns. The principal, Dr. Uribe, is viewed as an instructional leader of the school and works collaboratively with the leadership team to provide direct support to teachers and specialist faculty. Although Dr. Uribe is a very hands-on leader (she participates in vertical team and grade level team meetings), she also trusts the faculty to lead themselves and make good decisions.

- Infrastructure (data gathered from observations):
  - Principal as an instructional leader (pedagogue): Dr. Uribe has a vision for the school; she creates the agenda for the Leadership Team and provides in-class support for teachers through planning and observation. Dr. Uribe attends all Leadership Team meetings; she joins the Vertical Team and Grade Level Team meetings, as a participant, on a rotating schedule (known in advance for the entire year).

**Interview evidence**

*Nicola: (4<sup>th</sup> grade)* I was observed on Monday. I preplanned with Maria [principal], we had it all planned out. As a native English speaker, it is helpful to have guidance from the leader of the school who has hands on experience and is able to communicate the struggles that may be seen from students who are English learners, and maybe we can zone in on how to make those struggles, strengths.

- Leadership Team shares responsibility for organizing, supporting and leading the Vertical Team meetings.
- Coaching model: some Leadership Team members provide in-class support to teachers.
- Vertical Teams are grouped by discipline across grade levels to collaboratively target instructional topics. This year they are working on Academic Language and Content/Language Intended Learnings (“intended learnings” is their term for content and language objectives).

**Observation evidence**

**SCIENCE VERTICAL TEAM MEETING**

*Judith (team leader):* I’m wondering how much of this is coming from my lack of understanding of what a second language learner goes through. Is it easier for a second language learner, like Maribel, to come up with language objectives because she knows what they need?

*Teacher:* aren’t language objectives for all students?

*Judith:* it is, but to transfer it to something that is accessible to kids, something real that kids need to do, that’s harder for me to see. I wouldn’t have guessed that “take each of one thing” would be difficult.

**MATH VERTICAL TEAM**

The upper grades worked independently as Patricia (team leader) was working with the lower-grades sub-group the entire time. The upper grade teachers were focused and engaged on the task of designing instruction to get at academic language embedded in the math word problems.

- Grade Level Teams: Content groups (math, science, literacy) share their work as “experts” to provide PD to the rest of the team and then receive back from the other content “experts.” Everyone is provided materials to help them try out the ideas that have been shared.

### *Observation evidence*

#### GOLDRICK TEAM SHARING - FIRST GRADE

Maribel (first grade bilingual teacher) runs this sharing meeting. She gives an overview of the goal for the morning, reporting out what each Vertical Team has been working on.

## **Culture of reciprocal respect for professionalism that enhances support for English learners**

The culture in Goldrick is one of reciprocity among the teachers, coaches and administration. The teachers are not afraid to speak up and voice their views, even if they don't agree with the principal. Dr. Uribe conveys the message that she is looking for teachers who think and are active in their work with children. Problems she has with any teacher (usually only 1 or 2 a year, tends not to be the long-term teachers) is when they are not actively engaged in high level instruction with their students and the students are not progressing.

### *Observation evidence*

There was discussion about using the term “record” in the Intended Learning objectives. If the intended learning is to “record,” what does that mean? Principal (Dr. Uribe) says the term is too broad, that they need to put a more specific term into the objective. A teacher questions Dr. Uribe’s point in an attempt to understand the difference between using the term “record” and other terms such as “interpret, paraphrase, etc.” Dr. Uribe explains that record seems to be just writing down exactly what they hear. Through their back and forth discussion they come to the agreement that the word “record” can be used if there are also more specifics about what the students are doing. e.g. “I will record the details that I understand from the video.” They decide that this is not a verbatim “recording” but a student’s understanding of what was seen/heard.

- Evidence of strong collaboration
  - Leadership team meets as a group across disciplines once a week
  - Vertical teams meet once a week across disciplines to work on content: math, science, literacy

- Grade level teams meet once a month to share what has been done in the vertical teams
- Regular schedule to share and communicate across these levels
- Teachers are engaged in determining PD and also bringing in resources to add to the PD.
  - Although there are group leaders (Tania, Katie, Judith, Patricia), they create agendas based on each group's input
  - Leaders help to organize, but teachers bring in the ideas, work, and resources, to share with each other
  - Conversations may begin with a leader prompt but quickly move to teachers sharing what they know and need to know
  - Everyone works together to get the needed resources
  - Not exclusively a top-down nor bottom-up model, highly shared and cyclical
  - Principal and teacher interactions are respectful, personal, humorous and affirming
- There is a high standard among faculty for life-long learning. In addition to pursuing advanced degrees and professional development, teachers are also interested in improving their own multi-lingual skills.

### *Interview evidence*

*Maribel:* Throughout the school there are a lot of teachers who are not Spanish speakers, they have been acquiring a lot of skills and becoming bilingual as well. Making the effort to value the majority language in the school.

*Alma:* Teachers who are not bilingual in Spanish, make efforts to learn acquire some of the language, that makes the kids more comfortable when they see their teachers saying something to them in their own language

*Nicola:* Even a word or two, even if they say, "that's a language to language word," students get excited

## **Culture of Respect for and Engagement of the Parent Community**

Including parents in the school lives of their children is a high priority at Goldrick. The faculty believes that parent engagement is crucial to the success of Goldrick students and that good communication between parents and teachers is essential. Teachers call parents with good news, send home newsletters, spend time talking with parents before and after school, all to help create strong relationships between home and school communities.

### *Interview evidence*

*Alma:* There are different ways that we welcome parents. We chat with them in the hall, invite them into classrooms, we invite them to zumba class (after school exercise class that teachers participate in). There is more we can do, but we put in a lot of effort.

*Nicola:* We have regular communications to home, flyers to help with homework. Parents know they can ask for clarifications. We have open doors.

*Denise:* Intervention documentation is done in Spanish and English. We involve the parents in the meetings. We work with parents on interventions, make parents feel like they are a vital part of the process.

- The school brings parents into the school using cultural activities, especially performances.
  - When grade levels did general “back to school” nights, they would get 50-60 parents. When they did performances, they would get 150 parents.
  - Now, every grade level has one performance per year.
  - After the performance everyone goes back to the students’ classrooms for pizza and some activity to help parents see what they can do at home to support their children
  - This has been so successful they ordered several microphones to use during the performances
- Math night activities, almost 200 people came
  - Two rooms, one for English, one for Spanish; rooms were completely full on these nights
- Parent/Teacher Conference Nights
  - Attendance is low, especially for low achieving students
  - Some students live far away, those parents don’t usually come
  - Teachers would like to know specifically why parents don’t come so they can try to remedy the situation: transportation, fear, knowing they will hear bad news, busy working, etc. Parents are reluctant to tell teachers why they don’t come to conferences.
  - Tania, “I think they are so busy with everything else, just putting food on the table, they are not here with us even if they attend parent conferences. ‘I can’t do this, I can’t take time off from work.’ ”

## **Additional Information from Interviews**

### *School Climate*

- Students are comfortable, safe and happy
- Evidence includes
  - Low level of bullying
  - Student demeanor, happy to be in the school
  - Students moan when the bell rings, they don’t want work time to end
  - Hugs to teachers, state that they miss teachers when they are not in school
  - Student are not “dying” for winter or spring break, happy to return after break

- Students able to focus on instruction in class and be social in the halls or after school, they know the difference
- Students are social with teachers in the halls
- Students know that teachers will support them. They make sure to tell a teacher if they feel something is not “right” (situation in a classroom).
- High participation in after school activities (e.g. Chess Club), students are not in a hurry to go home (teachers volunteer their time for things like homework club after school)

### *Test Preparation*

- There is no preparation for CELA or Benchmark tests. The faculty needs to know the students’ actual language and knowledge/skill levels in order to create appropriate groups and provide appropriate instruction.
- CSAP Math:
  - Use the prep book, discuss vocabulary, target skills, word problems, e.g. area and perimeter in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - GT groups work on writing better answers.
- CSAP Literacy:
  - Use Conrad, *Put Thinking to the Test*: use the activities, comprehension strategies, and how to apply what they know to test taking strategies, for different audiences and purposes
  - Professional development unit: wrote lessons for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> teachers showing how to apply what they have learned in primary school is not totally different
  - Take three passage practice tests in one hour. Tania observes their behaviors and responses as they take the practice tests and then gives them feedback. She has realized they need to pay more attention to the directions. This becomes the basis of instruction.
  - Katy (literacy facilitator) and Tania (site coordinator) change their schedules to work with 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade more intensively as they begin to take CSAP
  - Example: 29 students in one class, Special Ed teacher with SPED students, Tania has 9, Denise has 8, the classroom teacher has the rest. They focus on writing for an hour in four small groups.
  - Those who are trying to score advanced are challenged with higher level questioning, paraphrasing, themes to incorporate into their sentences and giving them more strategies, not using exact text, paraphrase – pushing them to a higher level. Using 6<sup>th</sup> grade level text that helps them to do this, go beyond what is in the text itself. They have observed higher level questioning at other schools, trying to incorporate this.
  - Denver Success after school class last year, and Boot Camps
- CSAP Science:
  - Science packets on Fridays
  - Wall displays are geared toward upper grades science CSAP knowledge
  - Fifth grade scavenger hunt geared toward CSAP prep
  - Practice tests using clickers designed by art teacher to help students with science facts
  - CSAP is more fact based rather than procedural based



## Demographic and Student Performance Data

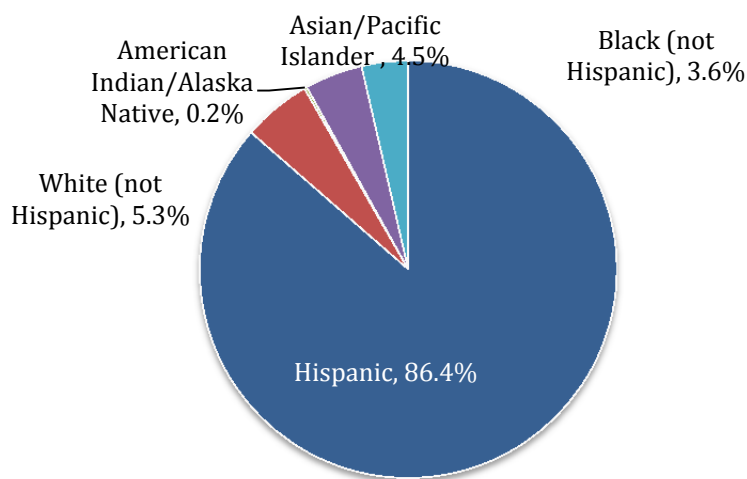
### Primary Home Language Spoken by Goldrick Students

LANGUAGE	
Spanish	61.5%
English	32.2%
Vietnamese	3.3%
Khmer	1.1%
Amharic	0.3%
Chinese, Mandarin	0.3%
Somali	0.3%
Armenian	0.2%
Ewe	0.2%
Farsi	0.2%
Indonesian	0.2%
Maay	0.2%
Tagalog	0.2%
<b>Total (N=636)</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Administrator Portal pulled February 22, 2011 (the Administrator Portal uses data from the 2010-11 DPS October Count, matched with current student enrollment).

Note: Data describe students throughout the entire school, not just ELL students; data include students ECE-5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Ethnicity of Students at Goldrick, 2009-10

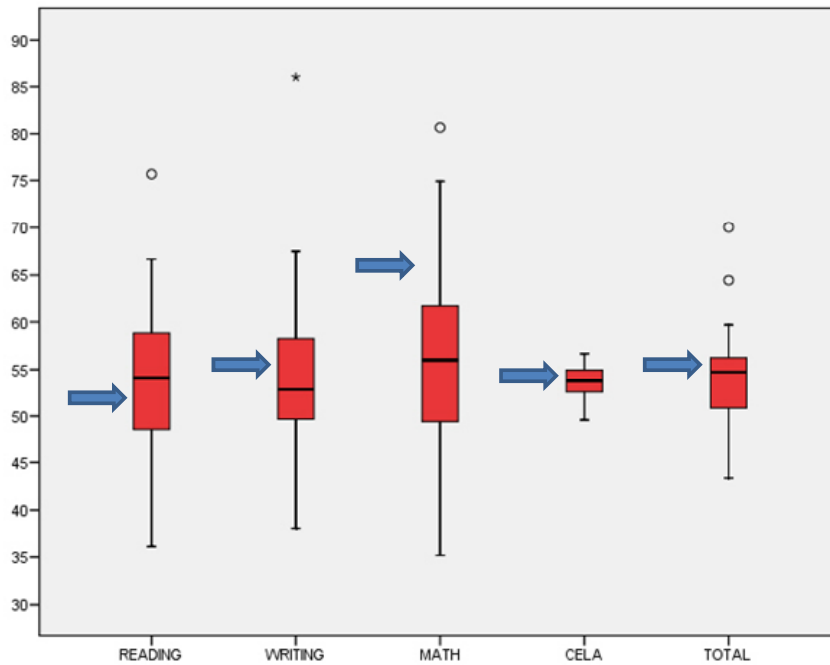


Source: DPS Strategy Department, Count of Student Membership by Ethnicity by School, 2009-10 from October Count 2009.

Note: Data describe students throughout the entire school, not just ELL students; data include students ECE-5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Achievement Growth of English Language Learners 2008, 2009, 2010 (arrows refer to Goldrick Elementary)

Elementary School Achievement Growth of English Language Learners 2008, 2009, 2010



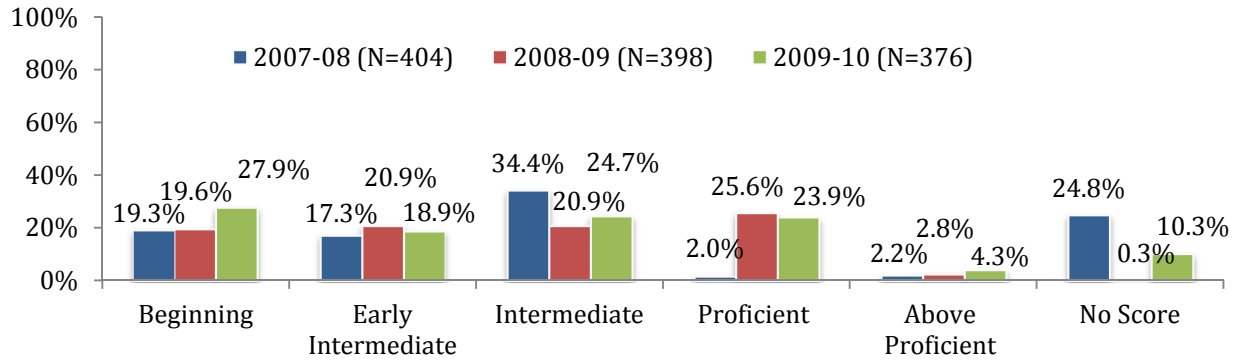
➔ **GOLDRICK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Comparison includes 45 DPS elementary schools with more than 41 English language learners in grades 4 and 5 with CSAP growth percentiles

Source: Developed using data from the DPS AllScores repository.

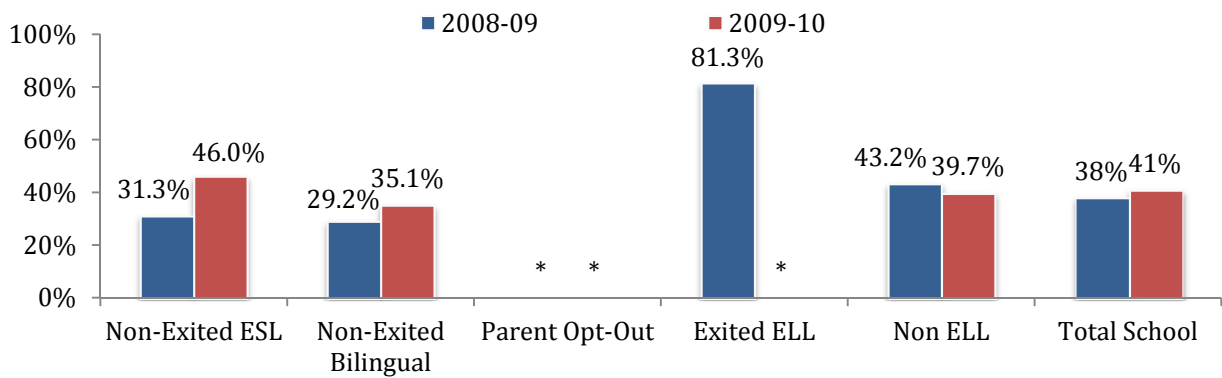
Note: Comparison includes 45 DPS elementary schools with more than 41 English language learners in grades 4 and 5 with CSAP growth percentiles.

### English Language Proficiency Level, CELA Overall



Source: DPS Department of Accountability, Research and Evaluation, CELA Report 2010.

### Percentage of ELL Students Who were Proficient or Above on CSAP Reading



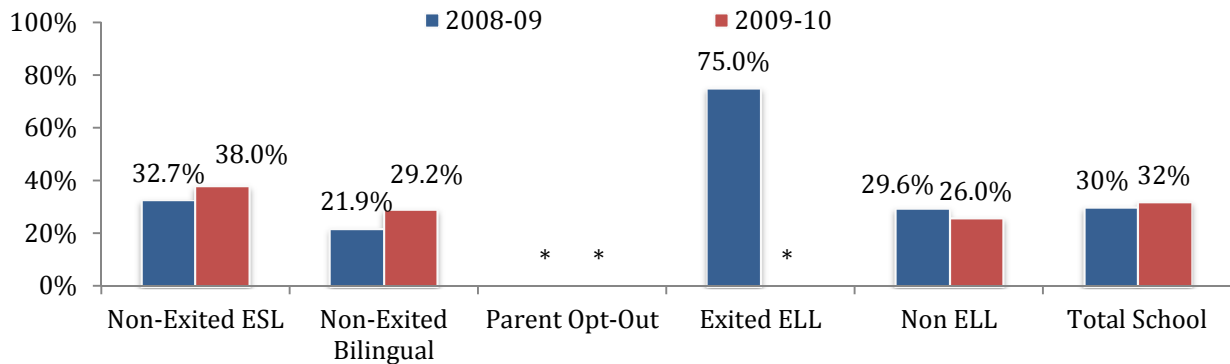
Source: DPS Department of English Language Acquisition, November 2010.

\* Data not available

Note: Data only include the English version of the CSAP.

Sample Sizes: 2009 – Non-Exited ESL N=48; Non-Exited Bilingual N=96; Exited ELL N=16; Non ELL N=81; 2010 – Non-Exited ESL: N=50; Non-Exited Bilingual N=94; Non ELL N=78

**Percentage of ELL Students Who were Proficient or Above on CSAP Writing**



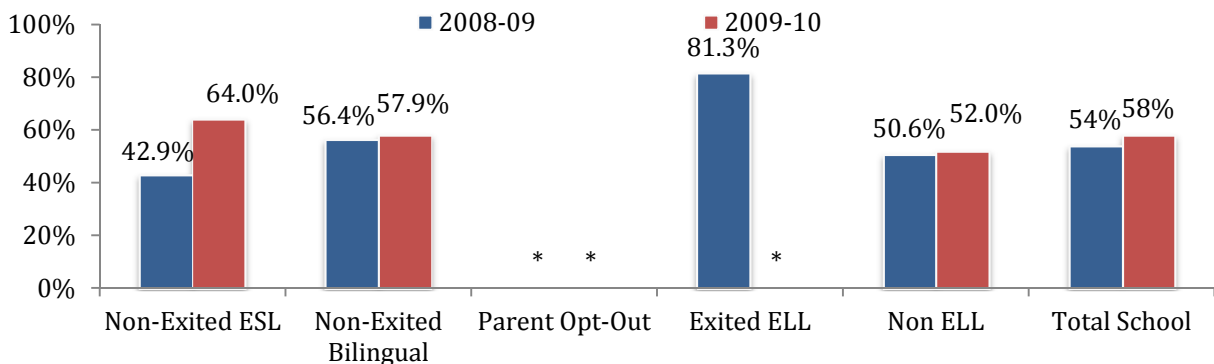
Source: DPS Department of English Language Acquisition, November 2010.

\* Data not available

Note: Data only include the English version of the CSAP.

Sample Sizes: 2009 – Non-Exited ESL N=49; Non-Exited Bilingual N=96; Exited ELL N=16; Non ELL N=81; 2010 – Non-Exited ESL N=50; Non-Exited Bilingual N=96; Non ELL N=77

**Percentage of ELL Students Who were Proficient or Above on CSAP Math**



Source: DPS Department of English Language Acquisition, November 2010.

\* Data not available

Note: Data only include the English version of the CSAP.

Sample Sizes: 2009 – Non-Exited ESL N=49; Non-Exited Bilingual N=126; Exited ELL N=16; Non ELL N=81; 2010 – Non-Exited ESL N=50; Non-Exited Bilingual N=126; Non ELL N=77