

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEAMS OF EDUCATORS TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Silvana Watson, Alla Zareva, Tara Donahue, & Maria Serpa  
*Old Dominion University (USA)*

## Abstract

Through the support of a federal grant, we developed a professional development project to address the needs of multilingual learners (ML) with and without disabilities. We created four hybrid graduate courses for in-service educators teaching in elementary schools with high enrollment of multilingual learners. The curricula were developed based on the most recent evidence-based practice guides and tool kits published by the National Center for English Language Acquisition, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, U.S. Department of Education, WIDA, and the report of Burr and colleagues (2015). Using a longitudinal quasi-experimental approach, our external evaluator assessed the effectiveness of the project completed by 64 educators through pre/post surveys, focus groups, family engagement events, and course performance. The surveys cover many different topics including understanding regulations related to ELs and students with disabilities; knowing and applying the principles of language learning and teaching; identifying and applying evidence-based strategies to address the learning of all ELs; instructional knowledge and practices; content knowledge; and family involvement. The participants were recruited in teams of educators from the same school to foster collaboration and consistency in the delivery of services. This was important because to appropriately address the needs of ML with and without disabilities a team of educators with diverse expertise (e.g., administrators, teachers) is recommended (Krasnoff, 2016; Piazza et al., 2015). Results showed significant difference between the pre- and post-surveys. The poster will display the growth knowledge of participants as well as challenges of implementing the project.

**Keywords:** *Multilingual learners, professional development, disability, elementary schools, collaboration.*

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