

PETALLs

A Partnership between the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the Lawrence Public Schools. Funded by the U.S. DOE (T365Z120232)

Vol. 8
Spring 2014

Preparing Excellent Teachers for All Language Learners

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Tapping into the Potential of Paraprofessionals

On Thursday February 6, 2014, a group of LPS teachers from various schools attended a two-hour professional development (PD) workshop held at the Parthum Middle School Library. The teachers had the opportunity to interact with each other, the PETALLs staff, and PD facilitators, learning some useful tips and strategies to use with their classroom paraprofessionals.

PD facilitators led discussions with small groups of teachers using the following guiding questions:

- * How much do you value the support of your paraprofessional provides?
- * What is one challenge you encounter when you are working with your paraprofessional?
- * What one thing would you like your paraprofessional to be able to do?
- * How comfortable are you communicating your expectations with your paraprofessional?

A brief report out of each group's findings revealed some common themes:

- * Lack of planning time between teachers and paraprofessionals
- * Lack of consistent schedules for some paraprofessionals
- * Paraprofessionals pulled from the classroom frequently
- * Paraprofessionals need to use their time effectively, listen to the teacher's instruction and take over the classroom when necessary.
- * Paraprofessionals need continuing professional development

PD facilitators provided teachers with copies of the ParaTELL 2.0 PD manual and reviewed this with the teachers.

The ParaTELL 2.0 consists of five modules:

1. The Role of the Paraprofessional
2. How ELLs Learn English for Academics and How Paraprofessionals Support that Learning
3. Supporting ELLs' Understanding and Acquisition of Academic Language
4. Vocabulary Strategies That Paraprofessionals Can Use with ELLs
5. Assessing ELLs' Learning Based on Proficiency Levels

The PETALLs team will conduct a follow-up focus group with teachers who participated in this workshop to examine the impact of the ParaTELL 2.0.

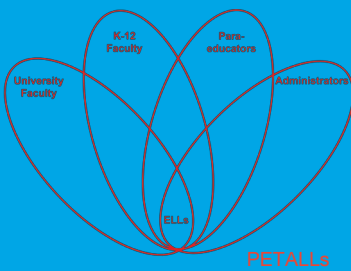
A second workshop for teachers was held on Thursday March 13, 2014 at the Lawrence High School and a third workshop is planned for April 30.

PETALLs at TESOL 2014

The PETALLs project team attended the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) 2014 International Convention in Portland, Oregon, March 26 – 29, and presented "Tapping the Potential of ELL Paraprofessionals: Providing Effective Professional Development." They shared the findings from ParaTELL 1.0, focusing on the learning outcomes and perceptions of both paraprofessionals and PD facilitators. They also presented an overview of the ongoing ParaTELL 2.0 so that other districts can implement this training. This was the only conference session about paraprofessionals. Audience members from as far away as Hawaii requested more information about the ParaTELL 2.0 PD series.

The LPS ELL Director Kinnon McCall and PETALLs Project Liaison Laurie Hartwick also attended the Convention and are preparing a presentation submission for next year's conference.

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INFORMATION

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Laurie Hartwick contributed to the content of this newsletter.



ResourceTELL Updates

The first cohort of Lawrence teachers recently completed Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) PD. RETELL completers have begun submitting their capstone lesson plans as well as information about how they are implementing SEI strategies to support ELLs in their classrooms. These lessons and strategies will be valuable assets for educators across the district, who will benefit from the sharing of best practices and the distribution of useful resources. As of March 1, 2014, 23 LPS teachers have submitted lessons and strategies. These will be published on the PETALLs Wikispace (pending activation). We look forward to additional contributions from participants in the spring RETELL courses. It is particularly exciting to see how one type of strategy can be adapted and utilized in a range of settings from a Kindergarten classroom to a high school level course. These lesson plans and examples of the implementation of strategies truly highlight the exceptional work of Lawrence's creative and dedicated teachers.

An email invitation will be sent out by Ms. Emily Robichaud to join the Wikispace.

Lawrence Faculty Present at UMass Graduate School of Education

On February 24, 2014, Ms. Emily Robichaud presented to a group of secondary pre-service teachers during a session of *Teaching English Language Learners*, a three-credit graduate course taught by Dr. Michaela Colombo. Ms. Robichaud shared her dedication to teaching LPS students. She explained the importance of believing that ELLs can meet high academic standards as well the importance of getting to know each student. Dr. Colombo's students had many questions for Ms. Robichaud, including the process for identifying and placing ELLs, choosing appropriate instructional materials, and providing instruction that is differentiated by English proficiency level. UML students appreciated the opportunity to learn from Ms. Robichaud.

Administrators Plan for Capacity Building in Monthly Breakfast Meetings

Approximately once a month 21 administrators from Lawrence High School meet to discuss the best ways to build capacity to provide effective instruction to ELLs and to explore ways to sustain and extend the SEI PD for teachers and administrators. These meetings are facilitated by Laurie Hartwick with support from Michaela Colombo.

PETALLs Advisory Board

In 2011 an advisory board was formed to guide the PETALLs project. Board members include LPS Central Office staff and administrators, UML Graduate School of Education (GSE) faculty, PETALLs project staff and an outside evaluator. Since fall 2012, the Advisory Board has met on a monthly basis to review and provide input for PETALLs project goals, activities, and outcomes, both at Lawrence and at UML. The Advisory Board ensures that grant activities are aligned with project goals and that these activities are tailored specifically for LPS teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and ELL students as well as for students and faculty at the GSE. The collaborative planning of the Advisory Board has resulted in a cycle of continuous improvement for PETALLs activities with the goal of ultimately improving instruction for ELLs.

Members of PETALLs Advisory Board:

- * Michaela Colombo, PETALLs Project Director, Associate Professor, Leadership in Schooling, UML
- * Dale Libkin, LPS Assistant Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness
- * Judith Boccia, PETALLs Co-Principal Investigator, GSE Faculty, UML
- * Kinnon McCall, LPS ELL Director
- * Qing Zhao, PETALLs Project Coordinator, UML
- * Laurie Hartwick, LPS ESOL-HHS, Grant Liaison
- * Cynthia Bent, PETALLs Project Manager, UML
- * Patricia Fontaine, UML Practicum Coordinator, Clinical Assistant Professor
- * Susan Henderson, Project Evaluator