

Application for a professional development opportunity focused on young English Language Learners in Early Childhood Special Education and Early Intervention

Dear Colleague,

It is our pleasure to announce that **The Utah Office of Education Special Education** is offering a professional development opportunity focused on evidence-based practices with young English Language Learners in Early Intervention (EI), Head Start (HS) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). All training and technical assistance will be provided by Dr. Lillian Durán from the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation at Utah State University. To better serve the growing population of culturally and linguistically diverse children and families in our state we are offering a year- long training opportunity to willing school districts. The purpose of this project is to extend the regional trainings that were completed in 2010-2011. Dr. Durán will work intensively with six school districts that will be selected through a competitive application process to develop ECSE/ ELL specialist teams. These teams will be provided training to conduct fair and unbiased assessments of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) populations and to design evidence-based instructional/intervention practices with English Language Learners (ELL).

The training will include:

1. A full day workshop on fair and unbiased evaluation procedures for special education eligibility determination and evidence-based intervention strategies with ELLs.
2. Year-long technical assistance with your ECSE/EI team members who conduct evaluations. One evaluation team will be mentored through one ELL evaluation from referral to completion of the evaluation report and IFSP/IEP, if the child qualifies for services.
3. Preschool teams involved in the project will also receive on-site coaching in their classrooms to help them learn teaching strategies that will meet the needs of young ELLs.
4. The selection of districts will be by the total of points awarded in each question. A balance between urban and rural districts. With the highest criteria being the need of the district to implement procedures for determining eligibility of ELL students.

Participating school districts will be expected to:

1. Release ECSE/EI staff to participate in the full day workshop in person.
2. Identify the members of one evaluation team that will receive the mentoring, which will be available through video conferencing media.
3. Allow observations in preschool classrooms which will include videotaping for the purposes of teacher self-evaluation and meeting grant objectives. (These will not be returned and may be used in future trainings).
4. Allow for coaching meetings to be scheduled as necessary at a minimum will be 1time monthly.
5. Allow participating staff to implement new practices that comply with state and district policies as necessary.

6. Complete an evaluation of the project.

Participating staff will be willing to:

1. Implement new practices in teaching and assessment as recommended.
2. Demonstrate a commitment to improving services to culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
3. Be videotaped for educational purposes. Videos will only be viewed by the teacher and Dr. Durán to enhance and increase coaching opportunities.
4. Be self-reflective in their practice and be open to changes based on evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of their current approaches.
5. Read assigned readings during coaching to gain more background information to inform their practice.

This is an exciting opportunity for practitioners to enhance their skills through practice. Dr. Lillian Durán is a national expert on serving young culturally and linguistically diverse children and their families and has significant interest and expertise in designing early childhood programs that best support children who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

3. Please indicate what challenges you currently face in serving culturally and linguistically diverse families who have young children with disabilities. Are there any specific areas in which you need support and technical assistance? (For instance, understanding developmental milestones of other cultures, culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment tools, parental involvement and communication difficulties, how to promote equity and diversity, and/or understanding the cultural norms of populations represented in Utah.)

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4. Why do you think your district would benefit from this training? What goals would you have for participating staff?

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5. Explain briefly your current process if an ELL child is referred for special education testing?

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6. Explain how you will disseminate this information to other staff.

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Evaluation

1. How will you measure the impact of this training on the number of ELLs that qualify that qualify for ECSE services? (e.g. How many preschool-aged students were found eligible for special education and are ELLs compared to last year)

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Thanks for your time in completing this application. You will be notified of the status of your application by September 30th.