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ABSTRACT

This report presents final (fifth year) results of Project Recurso, a federally funded project which provided 147 Spanish-speaking special education students (grades 3-5) in 12 New York City schools with instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), Native Language Arts (NLA), and bilingual content area subjects. The project also provided staff development and parental involvement activities. Objectives for staff and curriculum development as well as for parental involvement were fully met. The project did not meet the two content area objectives or two of the ESL objectives. Additionally, no data were available to assess two other ESL or three NLA objectives. The program's strengths were its ability to train bilingual special education professionals and offer relevant activities for parental involvement. The report recommends that the project's curriculum materials be disseminated to other bilingual special education programs. (D3)

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OREA Report

PROJECT RECURSO
Grant Number: G008525035
1989-90
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



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8/90

PROJECT RECURSO
1989-90

SUMMARY

- Project Recurso was fully implemented for the 1989-90 school year. Spanish-speaking special education students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and bilingual/E.S.L. content area subjects. The project provided staff development and parental involvement activities.
- Project Recurso met its objectives for staff and curriculum development and parental involvement. The project did not meet the two content area objectives or two of the E.S.L. objectives. No data were available to assess two additional E.S.L. or three N.L.A. objectives.

Project Recurso completed its final year of a two-year extension of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding. Under the supervision of the Office of Bilingual Services in the Division of Special Education, the project served 147 third through fifth grade Spanish-speaking special education students of limited English proficiency (LEP) at 12 schools in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. The project provided students with academic, English, and native language instruction, as well as support services in testing, placement, and referrals.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Disseminate the project's curriculum materials to other bilingual special education programs.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII-funded Project Recurso. Spanish-speaking, special education students of limited English proficiency (LEP) received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and content area subjects taught either bilingually or with an E.S.L. methodology. Project Recurso also offered activities for staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement. The project operated at 12 elementary schools in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

During the year, 147 students participated in the program. These students were mostly from low-income families with limited to no exposure to the English language.

STAFF

Title VII-funded staff included a teacher trainer, a social worker, and an educational evaluator. All staff members held master's degrees and were bilingual in English and Spanish. Non-Title VII-funded staff included the project director (a doctoral candidate), a teacher trainer (with a master's degree), and a psychologist (a doctoral candidate).

II. IMPLEMENTATION

Students who scored at or below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and were certified to receive special education services were eligible for program participation.

Participating students received instruction in E.S.L., N.L.A., and content area subjects taught either bilingually or with an E.S.L. methodology. Classes were self-contained and one teacher taught several subjects. Those teaching bilingually gradually integrated English into classroom instruction in order to foster student transition to English-only special education classes.

The project offered staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement activities.

III. OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTIONAL

English as a Second Language

- Participating students will demonstrate improved English language skills as measured by the Language Assessment Battery (LAB).

Matching LAB data were available for 65 students. The mean gain was 2.8 Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.s) (s.d.=12.2). The analysis did not indicate that this gain was significant ($p < .05$). Project Recurso did not meet its first E.S.L. objective.

- A minimum of 70 percent of those who are learning to read in English will increase by two percentile points their performance on the LAB reading subtest.

Matching LAB reading subtest data were available for 24 students. There was a mean loss of 0.9 N.C.E.s (s.d.=10.9). The project did not meet its second E.S.L. objective.

- A minimum of 70 percent of students will increase their performance on the LAB listening, speaking, and writing subtests.

OREA lacked listening, speaking, and writing subtest data and could not assess the third E.S.L. objective.

- A minimum of 70 percent of students will demonstrate a mastery of three new skills consistent with their Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.) short term objectives.

OREA could not assess this objective because it had no data on mastery of new skills.

Native Language Arts

- At least 70 percent of program students will demonstrate a mastery of three new skills consistent with their I.E.P. short term objectives in native language.

OREA could not assess the first N.L.A. objective because of insufficient data.

- At least 70 percent of program students will demonstrate an improved ability to read and comprehend their native language as measured by the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills-Español subtests and teacher-made evaluative tools.

OREA could not assess the second N.L.A. objective because of insufficient data.

- Participating students will demonstrate improved oral, writing, and listening skills in their native language as measured by teacher-made and program developed evaluation instruments.

OREA could not assess the third N.L.A. objective because of insufficient data.

Content Area Subjects

- A minimum of 70 percent of program students will demonstrate a mastery of three new skills consistent with their I.E.P. short term objectives in science and social science.
- A minimum of 70 percent of program students will master a minimum of three new mathematics skills as measured by the Comprehensive Instructional Management System (CIMS) tests.

No more than 66 percent of the students mastered three new skills in any content area. (See Table 1.) Project Recurso did not meet either of its objectives for the content areas.

TABLE 1

Student Achievement in Content Area Courses

Subject	Number of Students	Percent Mastering Three or More Skills
Mathematics	96	65.6
Science	92	37.0
Social Studies	92	40.2

- Fewer than 70 percent of the students mastered three new skills in any content area.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL

Staff Development

- Participating bilingual teachers will have received workshops on development of different skills using the transitional bilingual instructional approach, techniques and the preparation of materials and programs for use with the LEP special education student, and training in the interpretation of student assessment and evaluation data.

The teacher trainers conducted several workshops for bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals. These sessions focused on instructional approaches and curriculum materials, psychological and language needs assessments, and bilingual program models.

Project Recurso met its objective for staff development.

Curriculum Development

- During the fifth project year, staff will complete the preparation of guidelines for non-discriminatory assessment to be used to prepare staff to carry on the program after the funding period has ended.

Project Recurso developed three documents which focused on educational issues for the bilingual special education student. The project was successful in meeting its curriculum development objective.

Parental Involvement

- Parents of project students will be asked to attend workshops to assist them in direct participation in each step of the assessment procedure, formation of the I.E.P., developing their own English language skills, and acquainting them with the policies and procedures of the school system and the Division of Special Education.

The project, in cooperation with the Special Education

Training Resource Center (SETRC), offered parents a day-long conference. At the conference, the project referred parents to specialists from community and advocacy groups so that they might discuss their families and the special needs of their children.

Project Recurso also offered parents a series of workshops on the rights and responsibilities of parents of special education students.

The project met its objective for parental involvement.

FOLLOW-UP OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

During the year, seven students graduated, two left the program for another school or program, and two left for unknown reasons.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Project Recurso completed its final year of a two-year extension of an E.S.E.A. Title VII-funded grant. It provided third through fifth grade Spanish-speaking special education LEP students with content area, English, and native language instruction at 12 schools in four boroughs.

Project Recurso met its objectives in staff and curriculum development and parental involvement. It did not meet two of its E.S.L. and two of its content area objectives. No data were available for OREA to assess two additional E.S.L. or three N.L.A. objectives.

Program strengths lay in Project Recurso's ability to train bilingual special education professionals and offer

activities for parental involvement relevant to the target population of parents.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Disseminate the project's curriculum materials to other bilingual special education programs.