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ABSTRACT

Title VII Special Alternatives was an Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title VII-funded project in its fourth year of operation in 1994-94. The project served 151 middle school students of limited English proficiency in four schools in Brooklyn (New York). More than 10 native languages were represented. Participating students received instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) and the content areas of social studies, science, mathematics, and literature. The project also provided career education using an ESL approach. The project included a broad range of staff and curriculum development activities as well as workshops, general education diploma programs, and ESL classes for parents of participating students. The project met its objectives for staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement, but did not meet its ESL objective. It is recommended that the reasons for the lack of growth in English language skills be assessed and that intensive peer tutoring and assistance be offered. Five tables present evaluation findings. An appendix lists instructional materials. (Author/SLD)

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# OER Report

Title VII Special Alternatives  
Community School District 15  
Special Alternatives Grant T003E90153  
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT  
1993-94

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**Title VII Special Alternatives  
Community School District 15  
Special Alternatives Grant T003E90153  
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT  
1993-94**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title VII Special Alternatives was an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII-funded project in its fourth year of operation in 1993-94. The project functioned at I.S. 88, I.S. 142, I.S. 293, and M.S. 51 in community school district (C.S.D.) 15 in Brooklyn, served 151 students of limited English proficiency (LEP). Participating students received instruction in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and the content area subjects of social studies, science, mathematics, and literature. The project provided students with career education using an E.S.L. approach.

The project included a broad range of staff and curriculum development activities as well as workshops and general education diploma (G.E.D.) and E.S.L. classes to the parents of participating students.

Title VII Special Alternatives met its objectives for staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement. It did not meet its objective for E.S.L.

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

- Assess reasons for the lack of growth in participants' English language skills. Consider offering intensive E.S.L., peer tutoring, and assistance during study halls or outside the regular school day.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been prepared by the Bilingual, Multicultural, and Early Childhood Evaluation Unit of the Office of Educational Research.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1993-94, Title VII Special Alternatives was in its fourth year of funding as an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII project.

### PROJECT CONTEXT

Title VII Special Alternatives functioned at I.S. 88, I.S. 142, I.S. 293, and M.S. 51 in community school district (C.S.D.) 15 in Brooklyn.

All demographics in this Final Evaluation Report are from 1992-93, the last year for which data are available.

The 4,366 middle school students in C.S.D. 15 were of diverse backgrounds: 59 percent were Latino, 22 percent were African-American, 16 percent were European-American, 4 percent were Asian-American, and 0.1 percent were Native American.\* Of these students, 13 percent were of limited English proficiency (LEP), and 72 percent were from low income families, as evidenced by their eligibility for participation in the free-lunch program.

Of the 969 students registered at I.S. 88, 62.7 percent were Latino, 17.6 percent were African-American, 15.7 percent were European-American, and 3.6 percent were Asian-American, and 0.3 percent were Native American.\* Of these students, 15 percent were LEP and 77 percent came from low-income families.

Of the 795 students registered at I.S. 142, 41.8 percent were Latino, 33.5 percent were African-American, 21.0 percent were European-American, and 3.8 percent were Asian-American.\* Of these students, 6 percent were LEP and 63 percent came from low-income families.

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\*Percentages do not equal 100 because of rounding.

Of the 672 students registered at I.S. 293, 57.1 percent were Latino, 33.2 percent were African-American, 7.6 percent were European-American, and 2.1 percent were Asian-American. Of these students, 13 percent were LEP, and 70 percent came from low-income families.

Of the 1,051 students registered at M.S. 51, 47.3 percent were Latino, 26.6 percent were European-American, 21.1 percent were African-American, 4.9 percent were Asian-American, and 0.1 percent were Native American. Of these students, 4 percent were LEP, and 63 percent came from low-income families.

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

Title VII Special Alternatives served 151 middle and intermediate school LEP students. (See Table 1.) Scores at or below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) determined LEP status.

**TABLE 1**

**Number of Students in Title VII Special Alternatives, by Site and Grade**

Site	Grade					Total
	6	7	8	9	Unreported	
M.S. 51	8	12	9	0	0	29
I.S. 88	1	0	0	0	67	68
I.S. 142	0	0	13	11	0	24
I.S. 293	0	6	17	7	0	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>151</b>

In 1993-94, the project served a total of 151 students. Participating students were all of limited English proficiency and had no fewer than ten native languages. (See Table 2.) Most of the participants (11.9 percent each) were born in Puerto Rico or the United States and the Dominican Republic or Mexico (11.3 percent each). (For students' countries of origin, please see Table 3.) All participants were from low-income families.

TABLE 2  
Student's Native Languages

Language	Number of Students
Spanish	84
Haitian	6
Polish	3
Arabic	2
Hindi	2
Urdu	2
Chinese	1
Italian	1
Turkish	1
Other	3
Unreported	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>

**TABLE 3**

**Students' Countries of Origin**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Puerto Rico	18
United States	18
Dominican Republic	17
Mexico	17
Yemen	8
Haiti	5
Ecuador	3
Nicaragua	3
Poland	3
El Salvador	2
Colombia	1
Honduras	1
Hong Kong	1
India	1
Italy	1
Peru	1
Venezuela	1
Czech Republic	1
Other	4
Unreported	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>

## Needs Assessment

Before instituting this project, Title VII Special Alternatives conducted an exhaustive needs assessment of the targeted LEP population, their families, and the educational staff who were to serve them. The data obtained from this study revealed two needs: (1) to infuse E.S.L.-based career skills into the existing basic skills curriculum so as to instil self-awareness, decision-making, and career-planning abilities in LEP students to encourage them to stay in school and meet promotion and graduation standards; (2) to prepare LEP students for tomorrow's world of accelerating change.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

### Student Objectives

- Eighty percent of the LEP students participating in the E.S.L./Career Education project will improve their English language proficiency (5 N.C.E.) as measured by the Language Assessment Battery in a pre- and posttest administration.

### Staff Development Objectives

- Participating teachers will receive ten (10) training sessions in the areas of teaching E.S.L., career education E.S.L., and teaching E.S.L. through the content areas, and receive, at least, three college credits on the teaching of E.S.L.

### Curriculum Development Objectives

- The E.S.L. Resource Specialist will have prepared a teacher's guide consisting of lessons which include the teaching of E.S.L. through science, mathematics, and social studies.

### Parental Involvement Objective

- Eighty percent of parents of participating students would have attended workshops to train them in the areas of: assisting LEP children develop academic skills, reinforcing the home/school relationship, assisting LEP students in choosing careers.

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

During the 1993-94 school year, the Special Alternatives project provided instructional and support services to LEP students and their families. The project's main goals were to assist LEP students in achieving English language proficiency as quickly as possible; train teachers in the new methodologies for teaching E.S.L.; enable parents to become active participants in the education of their children; and develop a teacher's guide for teaching E.S.L. through science, mathematics, and social studies.

Content area subjects, including career education, were taught in English using E.S.L. techniques. The project offered in-service staff development activities and also provided an extensive program of parental involvement activities.

#### Materials, Methods, and Techniques

Teachers of participating students focused on career education using an E.S.L. methodology. They gave lessons on requirements for particular careers and how to prepare for them, and then gave students practice in completing applications and interviewing. Staff received monthly training sessions in E.S.L. techniques and strategies training.

For a list of instructional materials used in the project, see Appendix A.

### Capacity Building

Next year, tax levy will fully fund the resource teacher's position.

### Staff Qualifications

Title VII staff. Title VII and tax levy jointly funded one resource teacher. She had a master's degree and was a native speaker of Spanish. Her responsibilities included coordinating activities, offering assistance with career education, providing materials, setting up community projects and developing the project newsletter.

Other staff. Tax-levy funds paid the salaries of four classroom teachers who provided instructional services to project students. For a description of their degrees, certifications, and language proficiency, see Table 4.

TABLE 4

Qualifications of Non-Title VII Staff

Position Title	Degrees	Certification	Language Proficiency
Teachers (4)	M.A. 3 B.A. 1	Bil. Common Branches 3 E.S.L. 1	Spanish NS <sup>a</sup> 3

<sup>a</sup>NS = Native Speaker

### Staff Development

Teachers of participating students attended monthly training sessions and trainers made weekly school visits to help them solve any problems they might have been experiencing. Guest speakers presented various workshops.

### Instructional Time Spent on Particular Tasks

The project did not provide the Office of Educational Research (OER) with sample class schedules.

### Length of Time Participants Received Instruction

The project did not provide OER with information regarding the number of years participating students had been educated in a non-English-speaking school system or in the United States. It also failed to provide the number of months students had participated in Title VII Special Alternatives.

### Activities to Improve Pre-referral Evaluation Procedures

Students who were in need of special education would be served in this project.

### Instructional Services for Students with Special Needs

No disabled or gifted and talented students are currently served by Title VII Special Alternatives.

### PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The project sponsored parental involvement activities that included both workshops and conferences. The project also offered parents E.S.L. and general education diploma (G.E.D.) classes.

## II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### EVALUATION DESIGN

#### Project Group's Educational Progress as Compared to that of an Appropriate Non-Project Group

OER used a gap reduction design to evaluate the effect of language instruction on project students' performance on standardized tests. Because of the difficulty in finding a valid comparison group, OER used instead the groups on which the tests were normed. Test scores are reported in Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s), which are normalized standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.1. It is assumed that the norm group has a zero gain in N.C.E.s in the absence of supplementary instruction and that participating students' gains are attributable to project services.

#### Applicability of Conclusions to All Persons Served by Project

Data were collected from all participating students for whom there were pre- and posttest scores. (There were no pretest data on students who entered the program late; therefore, posttest data for them will serve as pretest data for the following year.) Instruments used to measure educational progress were appropriate for the students involved. The LAB is used throughout New York City to assess the growth of English skills in populations similar to those served by Title VII Special Alternatives.

## INSTRUMENTS OF MEASUREMENT

OER compared pre- and posttest scores on the LAB to assess the E.S.L. objective.

All students were tested at the appropriate grade level. The language of the LAB was determined by the test itself.

According to the publishers' test manuals, all standardized tests used to gauge project students' progress are valid and reliable. Evidence supporting both content and construct validity is available for the LAB. Content validity is confirmed by an item-objective match and includes grade-by-grade item difficulties, correlations between subtests, and the relationship between the performance of students who are native speakers of English and students who are LEP. To support reliability, the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR20) coefficients and standard errors of measurement (SEM) are reported by grade and by form for each subtest and total test. Grade reliability coefficients, based on the performance of LEP students on the English version, ranged from .88 to .96 for individual subtests and from .95 to .98 for the total test.

## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

### Data Collection

To gather qualitative data, an OER evaluation consultant carried out telephone interviews of the project director several times during the school year. The project evaluator collected the data and prepared the interim evaluation report in accordance with the New York State E.S.E.A. Title VII Bilingual Education Final Evaluation Report

format, which was adapted from a checklist developed by the staff of the Evaluation Assistance Center (EAC) East in consultation with the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA).

#### Proper Administration of Instruments

Qualified personnel received training in testing procedures and administered the tests. Test administrators followed guidelines set forth in the manuals accompanying standardized tests. All students were tested at the appropriate grade level. Time limits for subtests were adhered to; directions were given exactly as presented in the manual.

#### Testing at Twelve-Month Intervals

Standardized tests were given at 12-month intervals, following published norming dates.

#### Data Analysis

Accurate scoring and transcription of results. Scoring, score conversions, and data processing were accomplished electronically by the Scan Center of the Board of Education of the City of New York. Data provided by the Scan Center were analyzed in the Bilingual, Multicultural, and Early Childhood Evaluation Unit of OER. Data collectors, processors, and analysts were unbiased and had no vested interest in the success of the project.

Use of analyses and reporting procedures appropriate for obtained data. To determine the proportion of students showing gains on the LAB, OER computed the frequency of students who showed gains from pretest to posttest. To assess the

significance of students' achievement in English, OER computed a correlated *t*-test on the LAB N.C.E. scores. The *t*-test determined whether the difference between the pre- and posttest scores was significantly greater than would be expected from chance variation alone.

The only possible threat to the validity of any of the above instruments might be that LAB norms were based on the performance of English proficient (EP) rather than LEP students. Since OER was examining gains, however, this threat was inconsequential—the choice of norming groups should not affect the existence of gains.

### III. FINDINGS

#### PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

##### Participants' Progress in English

Throughout the school year, students had ample opportunity to develop their English language skills. Students had E.S.L. instruction five days each week. Content area instruction, including career education, the focus of the project, was in English with an E.S.L. methodology. Staff development stressed E.S.L. instruction.

Participating students at M.S. 88 gained reading skills by preparing to share stories with younger children. At M.S. 142, the students gained comprehension and speaking skills by listening and speaking to senior citizen groups.

The Title VII Special Alternatives project proposed the following objective for English as a second language:

- Eighty percent of the LEP students participating in the E.S.L./Career Education project will improve their English language proficiency (5 N.C.E.) as measured by the Language Assessment Battery in a pre- and posttest administration.

There were complete pre- and posttest scores on the LAB for 112 students from grades six through nine. (See Table 5.) The average gain of 1.3 N.C.E.s (s.d.=10.3) was not statistically significant ( $p>.05$ ). Overall, 35.7 percent of the students showed a gain from pretest to posttest.

Title VII Special Alternatives did not meet its objective for English as a second language.

TABLE 5

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), by Site

Site	Total number of project students	Number of students for whom data were available	Pretest		Posttest		Difference		t value
			Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
M.S. 51	29	21	15.2	14.0	16.1	15.0	0.9	9.9	0.42
I.S. 88	68	49	9.3	12.5	9.8	14.2	0.5	10.1	0.35
I.S. 142	24	20	15.3	15.2	21.5	20.6	6.2	10.8	2.54*
I.S. 293	30	22	15.0	16.4	14.0	13.5	-1.0	9.9	-0.45
Total	151	112	12.6	14.2	13.9	15.9	1.3	10.3	1.34

\*p < .05

- At one site, participating students showed a significant gain on the LAB.

### LEP Participants' Academic Achievement

Teachers taught all content area subjects in English with an E.S.L. methodology. The Title VII resource teacher assisted teachers with E.S.L./career education. Students were offered community service activities to help them gain first hand experience of what the world of work was like and also to give them a sense of accomplishment in being able to help others.

### FORMER PARTICIPANTS' ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

This information was not available.

### OVERALL EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS ACHIEVED THROUGH PROJECT

#### Mainstreaming

The project did not pose any specific objectives for mainstreaming. No participating students were mainstreamed during the year under review.

#### Grade Retention

Title VII Special Alternatives did not pose any specific objectives to reduce grade retention. No participating students were retained in grade after the year under review.

#### Attendance

The project did not pose any specific objective for attendance. Nor did it report an attendance data to OER.

#### Placement in Gifted and Talented Programs

No students were placed in gifted and talented programs during the year under review.

## CASE HISTORY

The project did not provide OER with a case history.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

The staff engaged in a variety of staff development activities during the 1993-94 school year. Project staff attended at least one workshop per month. The topics of these workshops varied, but all focused on E.S.L. instruction. The following is a list of monthly workshops held by the project:

teaching E.S.L. through social studies, teaching multicultural education through an E.S.L. setting, teaching E.S.L. through cooperative learning;

teaching E.S.L. through the arts (guest speaker from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and hands-on activity for parents, teachers, students);

teaching language through the holidays;

how to assess the needs of the LEP child, alternative assessment for the E.S.L. child;

teaching E.S.L. through technology;

special exhibit and program (*Second Language Fair*) which also included all students;

how to use computers with an E.S.L. component; and

primary language record--alternative assessment for the E.S.L. student.

Teachers also visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art, toured art galleries, and shared what has worked with their students. There were weekly classroom visits by the resource teacher. Teachers received individual help as needed. The project also offered E.S.L. workshops at the participating schools.

The Title VII Special Alternative project proposed the following staff

development objective:

- Participating teachers will receive ten (10) training sessions in the areas of teaching E.S.L., career education E.S.L., and teaching E.S.L. through the content areas, and receive, at least, three (3) college credits on the teaching of E.S.L.

Teachers attended more than ten training sessions in teaching E.S.L., career education E.S.L., and teaching E.S.L. through the content areas. At least one teacher received college credits and completed E.S.L. certification in June. The others already had appropriate certification in E.S.L.

The project met its objective for staff development.

#### CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Curriculum development was significant in the project. Staff developed or adapted materials in literature and career education, both with an E.S.L. focus.

The project posed one objective for curriculum development:

- The E.S.L. Resource Specialist will have prepared a teacher's guide consisting of lessons which include the teaching of E.S.L. through science, mathematics and social studies.

In the current year, the resource specialist developed *Teaching E.S.L. through Literature*, and adapted *Partners' Program* and *School-Age Child-Care Helper Program*. Previously she had developed curricula for social studies, science, and mathematics.

Title VII Special Alternatives met its objective for curriculum development.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT OUTCOMES

The project had a number of activities to encourage parental involvement in their children's education. The project held workshops and conferences designed to assist parents. One workshop covered the high school application process; another focused on helping children study at home. Through the E.S.L. and G.E.D. classes, parents received information on AIDS awareness, school procedures, and career opportunities.

The project posed the following parental involvement objective:

- Eighty percent of parents of participating students will have attended workshops to train them in the areas of: assisting LEP children develops academic skills, reinforcing the home/school relationship, assisting LEP students in choosing careers.

The project provided a full day parent conference on a Saturday. The parent coordinator offered a medical careers evening, which project parents attended. Parents attended E.S.L. and general education diploma (G.E.D.) classes both during the day and in the evening.

The project met its objective for parental involvement.

#### IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Title VII Special Alternatives met its objectives for staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement. It did not meet its objective for E.S.L.

Participating students showed academic progress. Of the 151 students in grades six through nine, all were promoted to the next grade.

Teachers attended a variety of workshops designed to increase their knowledge of E.S.L. and career education. One teacher accumulated college credits and received E.S.L. certification at the end of the academic year.

There was extensive curriculum development.

The project offered parents a number of activities so that they could increase their skills and become more involved in the education of their children.

##### MOST AND LEAST EFFECTIVE COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

The most effective component of the project was career education. Students became aware of options available to them and were provided with information on how to apply for different jobs. Community service helped students experience the world of work and gave them a sense of accomplishment as they helped others.

The least effective component of the project were E.S.L. instruction and parental involvement. The project director cited the inability of many parents to attend the many conferences and workshops offered to them because of their work schedules.

## RECOMMENDATION TO ENHANCE PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

- **Assess reasons for the lack of growth in participants' English language skills. Consider offering intensive E.S.L., peer tutoring, and assistance during study halls or outside the regular school day.**

APPENDIX A

Instructional Materials

**E.S.L.**

Grade	Title	Author	Publisher	Date of Publication
*	Addison Wesley, Levels A-F	*	*	*
*	Career Education Reader	*	*	*
*	Job Box/Career Box	*	Incentives for Learning	*
*	Multicultural Celebrations	*	Macmillan	*

\*Information not provided.