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Transforming Schools for Multilingual Learners.

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Introduction

The first edition of this book was written as a comprehensive resource of the most up-to-date research and evidence-based strategies to create successful programming for the rapidly changing population of multilingual learners (MLs). It was also written as a user-friendly guide for educators to put pedagogy into practice. Highly received by leading scholars and practitioners across the country, it became the go-to book nationally and required reading for many pre- and in-service administrators, teacher-leaders, coaches, and other stakeholders.

A good deal has transpired since the first edition was published, including

- changes to federal laws and regulations;
- increased understanding about the urgency to use strengths-based and culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies and practices;
- deeper understanding about the epic number of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences, including children fleeing crises in their home countries, children who are undocumented, children of undocumented families, and unaccompanied minors who live in constant fear of deportation;
- the global COVID-19 pandemic, racial injustices, and natural disasters; and
- increased awareness about the importance of supporting and enhancing student, family, school, and community partnerships.

As a result of these changes, most educators and stakeholders at the school, district, and state levels are seeking support in building, strengthening, and sustaining successful programming for MLs. It has been my honor to work with many state and local educators across the country during these unprecedented times and to see the creativity, flexibility, and downright genius that so many have engaged to transform practice.

What's New in the Second Edition?

This second edition adds to the practice by looking closely at the lessons learned during the past decade and the changes that are likely to occur in the future. The change in the title to *Transforming Schools for Multilingual Learners: A Comprehensive Guide for Educators* reflects a renewed spirit of inclusion and solidarity by reflecting

the strengths that all MLs, their families, educators, and local, school, and classroom communities possess and bring to creating successful programming for MLs. This edition also acknowledges the move away from using a deficit-based approach where MLs and their families are seen as having missed something (such as English) to acknowledging and infusing the assets they bring to all that we do. In this spirit, a range of terms and associated acronyms have been used interchangeably, including English learners (ELs); English language learners (ELLs); heritage language learners; long-term English learners (LTELs); students in dual language, two-way, and immersion programs; and students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). However, the strengths-based term *multilingual learner* is used throughout the book to describe this broad range of students. It encompasses those who have learned or are learning two or more languages and cultures.

The new edition also reflects the trends of leadership in our ever-changing society, from the singular person sitting atop the mantle of power to a collective of people who work together. While leaders have a prominent role in shaping and supervising state policy implementation at the district, school, and classroom levels, they also are charged with creating a school and classroom culture and climate that fully support MLs to succeed. One of the largest lessons we learned during the COVID-19 crises is that we cannot do this work alone. It becomes much more possible when we work in close collaboration and partnership with others. Working groups composed of multilingual, multicultural family liaisons, teachers, coaches, counselors, and others are foundational for creating and sustaining successful language assistance programs. As such, the term *educators* is used throughout this book to reflect the agency that we all exercise, as leaders, advocates, policy makers, and truly inspirers of educating MLs. The book also moves from the term *parents/guardians* to *families* to reflect the ever-changing constellation of caregivers in our society, from the traditional two-parent home to two parents, single parents, foster parents, grandparents, custodial parents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, unrelated people, and extrafamilial people who care for a child. The new edition also includes various voices from the field to illustrate the ideals of creating language assistance programming that works.

Transforming Schools for Multilingual Learners: A Comprehensive Guide for Educators focuses on the ways in which school leaders—including superintendents, principals, curriculum supervisors, coaches, mentors, teachers, teacher educators, and other stakeholders—can create effective school policies, practices, and structures for MLs in their contexts. The goal of this second edition is to help educators who are just beginning to work with MLs as well as those who are veterans build a school environment where MLs can flourish. Each chapter opens with a scenario and focuses on a key element of language assistance programming.

Chapter 1: Starting With Our Students and Ourselves describes this ever-expanding population of students, their educational programming, and their teachers. It presents an analysis of what the demographics tell us and a rationale for developing programming for MLs that is targeted to the needs of individual districts.

Chapter 2: Integrating the Regulations and Principles presents the major historical events that led to the current laws and regulations governing the education of MLs, key principles of second language acquisition, and a description of the various types of program models for teaching MLs.

Chapter 3: Selecting Effective Program Models discusses the processes and protocols for identifying MLs, selecting a program model, staffing the model, and evaluating its effectiveness. It includes forms and protocols associated with the various processes involved in the identification, program selection, and ongoing evaluation tasks and procedures.

Chapter 4: Designing, Implementing, and Strengthening the English Language Development Component details the organizational structures, such as time allocation and staffing considerations, and practices that should be included to effectively implement this critical component into all that educators do.

Chapter 5: Addressing the Core Content Component of a Language Education Program. As schools build, strengthen, and maintain programs for MLs, it is important to define what constitutes a high-quality core content lesson and learning environment. This chapter provides eight guiding principles for providing such lessons for language and content learning and a checklist for teachers, peers, supervisors, and others to use in assessing the overall success of content planning and delivery.

Chapter 6: Emphasizing the Importance of Family Engagement acknowledges that establishing relationships with families is an important objective for educators at all levels. Many educators are not familiar with the various cultural norms of MLs and their families, and many families of MLs are not familiar with school practices in the United States. This chapter provides a strengths-based framework for creating, enacting, and sustaining strong family–school partnerships.

Chapter 7: Identifying and Working With Multilingual Learners With Learning Differences and Learning Disabilities describes U.S. special education trends, the application of a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, and the factors that should be considered to use this framework effectively with MLs. It presents a team approach for evaluating and improving the learning environment and outcomes for MLs and a protocol for engaging in this process.

Chapter 8: Putting It All Together: Making Data-Driven Decisions to Strengthen the Success of Language Assistance Programs discusses the application of strengths-based assessment and evaluation of language assistance programming by exploring the following questions: What role can educators play in enacting language education instruction policies and programming that are evidence based, properly resourced, and proven to work? What are key considerations for enacting strengths-based policies and practices that empower MLs and their families? What rubrics and monitoring charts should we consider for examining the effectiveness of our language assistance programming in relation to MLs? This chapter also offers a rationale for selecting and using a collaborative process for understanding MLs' academic performance and needs. Included in this chapter are protocols for examining the effectiveness of the classroom as well as school–parent engagement and community building.