



QUESTAR III

BETAC

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Interchange

Where People Come Together

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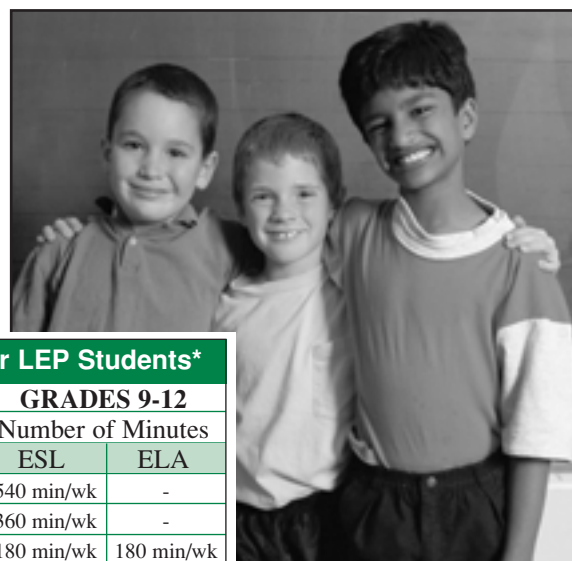
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NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)

by Laura Abate



English Language Requirements for LEP Students*

English Proficiency Level	GRADES K-8		GRADES 9-12	
	Number of Minutes		Number of Minutes	
	ESL	ELA	ESL	ELA
Beginning (1-13%ile)	360 min/wk	-	540 min/wk	-
Intermediate (10-23%ile)	360 min/wk	-	360 min/wk	-
Advanced (20-33%ile)	180 min/wk	180 min/wk	180 min/wk	180 min/wk
Transitional (30-40%ile)	180 min/wk	180 min/wk	180 min/wk	180 min/wk

ESL= English as a Second Language ELA= English Language Arts
 *In addition, for schools in which there are 20 LEPs or more in the same building/grade who speak the same language, a bilingual program must be implemented.

As of May 2003, the NYSESLAT will be used every spring to track the progress in English of our Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. This year, the test will be given during the window of May 14-30 and in subsequent years will also have a set date like other statewide assessments. Scores from the NYSESLAT will guide districts in the placement of students into the 4 levels of English language proficiency for the following year, as well as determining continued eligibility for ESL/Bilingual services. The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and other previously state-approved assessments will no longer be used for this purpose. The LAB has been revised and updated and will be the sole state-approved test for newcomers. The revised LAB (LAB-R) will be used for initial assessment and placement.

Commissioner's Regulations Part 154 require that districts measure the progress of LEP students in acquiring English. In addition, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation under Title I and Title III requires annual assessment in English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The NYSESLAT will meet both these accountability requirements for LEPs. The US Department of Education has approved the NYSESLAT as the ELA test for LEPs who have attended school in the US for three consecutive years or less (see the Office of State Assessment website for more detailed information on this policy: www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html). New York State is in a good position to meet the challenging accountability requirements of NCLB, compared to most states. We already have

(continued on p.3)



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The **BETAC Interchange** is a publication of the Questar III Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center.

The BETAC is funded by a grant from the New York State Education Department to provide technical assistance at no charge to school districts with Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners in the counties of Albany, Clinton,

Columbia, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren and Washington. The technical assistance services we provide our constituents include:



- designing/administering/evaluating inservice training for parents, teachers and administrators
- maintaining a resource library of bilingual and ESL materials
- assisting with educational referral services (translators, consultants, regional agencies)
- developing/facilitating local parent education conferences, activities
- publishing the **BETAC Interchange** a newsletter to disseminate information on workshops, conferences, activities, materials and resources
- conducting administrative workshops regarding LEP aid funding
- facilitating opportunities for students to participate in the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute

The content of articles/opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors. The **BETAC Interchange** neither supports nor rejects them, and is not responsible for their content. We welcome readers' comments, articles and suggestions. Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editor. All correspondence to the **BETAC Interchange** should be addressed to:

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BETAC SURVEYS

Your Voices Heard

Questar III BETAC conducted its annual survey of school districts in our region to collect data about LEPs and to identify areas of concern related to serving them.

Top 5 areas of concern/need were:

1. Districts want information about the NYSESLAT, the new statewide test for LEPs.
See cover story and Trainings, Workshops and Presentations section (p.4) for upcoming NYSESLAT regional trainings.
2. Districts have concerns about scheduling the mandated minutes of ESL.
See English Language Requirements for LEP Students.
3. Districts want information about testing accommodations for LEPs under NCLB.
The new policy is stated in the Test Administrator's manual for the 4th and 8th grade ELA and math exams, pages 1-2 and 6. It's on the web at: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/testing/elintgen.html>. Click on "Public School part 1."
4. Districts are looking for opportunities for more content area/mainstream teacher training in teaching strategies for LEPs.
See Calendar section (p. 8) for the upcoming SUNY Spring Forum.
5. Districts want information about funding sources for LEPs.
Submitting CR Part 154 form A (receiving LEP aid) or B (not receiving LEP aid) each year is more important than ever. Only those who have an approved Part 154 plan for serving their LEP students (whether A or B) are eligible to apply for annual grant opportunities, such as the Bilingual Excel grant, the Bilingual Staff Academy for Raising Standards (BESARS) grant, the Title III and immigrant monies, and the Two-Way grant (every 4 years). For information on any of these funding sources, contact the BETAC.

Please contact the BETAC if you wish to schedule a training/meeting in your district or if you need technical assistance on any of these issues.

Top 5 languages in the Questar III BETAC region

(according to Part 154 A and B applicants):

1. Spanish (comprising about 45% of total LEPs)
2. Chinese
3. Urdu
4. Arabic
5. Korean (with Pushtu and Bengali almost tied for 5th place)

Using Centers in the ESL Classroom

Interchange recently visited Theresa Longhi-Chirlin’s ESL class at Ichabod Crane Primary School in Kinderhook. Here’s a taste of what goes on...

Students are picked up from their various classes and walk together to the ESL classroom. Since Theresa shares her classroom with Speech and Reading, there are already several kids working with another teacher at the other end of the small room. The students run ahead of us, hiding when they get in the room and giggling loudly. After playing along a bit, “Mrs. L-C” directs them to read today’s schedule on the wall which tells students their individual schedules for the day. They now know how to cycle through the centers. But first, everyone settles on the floor for a story. They have been doing an author study on Robert Munch



photography by L. Abate

and today are reading (appropriately) “50 Degrees Below Zero.” At this point, I notice some student work displayed on the wall. One bright picture full of flowers and sunshine reads, “I am sad. I miss Mexico.” The teacher asks students to predict what the story is about from the cover illustration and elicits prior knowledge of weather-related vocabulary. She then reads dramatically and has students participate with periodic choral reading of key phrases.

(continued on p.7)

NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test *(continued from p.1)*

content standards, including ESL standards, and now have a statewide achievement test based on those standards. Education Week recently ranked New York as the number one state for standards and accountability! (Education Week, Vol. 22, number 17, p. 84, 2003).

The NYSESLAT is ordered from the State Education Department by each school district. The test is free of cost, and generally follows the procedures for other New York State assessments. The School District contacts their Regional Information Center (RIC) to request scoring services. The test materials will be sent by the State Education Department and the answer sheets by the RICs. The test is a secure test, so the material will not be made available before the test date. There is a test sampler on the Office of State Assessment’s website (www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html) which includes the rubrics used for scoring the Speaking and Writing sections. (Also, see Trainings, Workshops and Presentations section on page 4 for information on NYSESLAT trainings). All test materials must be returned and no part of the test may be recorded or photocopied. These security measures will be in place for the first five years, until a pool of items is built up. The test has four sections, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The Listening and Reading sections have multiple choice questions, which are sent to the RICs for scoring. The Speaking section will be scored by a teacher (a certified ESL, ELA or Common Branch teacher who has been trained to score) at the time of the test administration.

The teacher will use a rubric to score student responses as the test is administered. The Writing section will be scored either locally or regionally (this is a district decision) by teams of no fewer than two teachers per test. The results of both the Speaking and Writing sections will be sent to the RICs to be added to the other two sections. The raw scores and scaled scores will then be sent back to the State Education Department and the district.

The test is untimed. Following is an estimate of how long each section may take:

Grades K-1		Grades 2-12	
Test Section	Estimated Time	Test Section	Estimated Time
Listening	25 minutes (per group)	Listening	45 minutes (per group)
Speaking	10 minutes (per student)	Speaking	15 minutes (per student)
Reading	25 minutes (per group)	Reading	50 minutes (per group)
Writing	15 minutes (per group)	Writing	50 minutes (per group)

LEP students with special needs may have accommodations indicated on their IEP for state assessments.

Visit the Office of State Assessment website (above) for frequent updates and information on the NYSESLAT! The BETAC is excited about the potential that this test brings for higher consistency and accountability across the state, as we educate our students. ●

All Limited English Proficient (LEP) students must receive a minimum of direct-contact ESL instruction by a certified ESL teacher as follows:

This ESL instruction must not supplant any mandated content area instruction or specials, and it must take place during regular school hours.

TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS, PRESENTATIONS

NYSESLAT Administration Regional Training

Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2003

Location: Albany Public Library
161 Washington Ave.

Registration Deadline: April 9, 2003

NYSESLAT Scoring Regional Training

Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2003

Location: TBA

Registration Deadline: April 17, 2003

Revised LAB Administration and Scoring Regional Trainings:

Check your mail and email for information coming out soon!

The Inner World of the Immigrant Child Study Group

"I was lonely and alone and sad. I wasn't sure I'd still make it in school. And I had no friends. I felt kind of odd because I didn't know anyone. There was only me and my sister. And I didn't really know anyone here. Because I didn't know anyone and I couldn't speak English...that well. I just came from the Philippines. It was hard for me to communicate with other people."

The above quote, taken from *The Inner World of the Immigrant Child*, describes the essence of this study group. The book will be used as a point of departure to create a learning community where participants will read, learn and explore the world of their English Language Learners. Participants will explore what students bring with them to the classroom that teachers need to understand as a prerequisite for meaningful teaching and learning. Appropriate for both ESL and mainstream classroom teachers.

Date: Tuesdays: April 8 and May 7.

Location: Potter Room, Alumni House, The State University at Albany

Time: 4-6 pm Fee: \$15 Code: PSG 640

Contact the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center for more information. 518.479.4083

PR/HYLI NEWS

Latino Leadership Training

The annual Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute was a big success! 14 Capital Region youth participated in the weekly trainings and the Institute and Mock Assembly at the Capital on March 15-17, joining about 200 other Latino youth from around the state. The Institute's purpose is to foster the leadership skills of Latino students and to introduce them to New York State's legislative processes. From the Capital Region Delegation, 2 students were awarded college scholarships at Institute's banquet: Ashley Ruiz and Jonathan Hernandez, both from Shaker High School. Congratulations! ●



photography by L. Abate

Chinese Community Center

By Laura Abate

There are many recent immigrant families in the greater capital region who are Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese speaking. The result is that our area schools have over 100 Chinese students (including 20 in Albany, 22 in Guilderland, 11 in Troy and 10 in both Schenectady and Bethlehem). Chinese-speakers comprise the second largest language group in the Capital District and New York State, second only to Spanish-speakers.

The Chinese Community Center can be a wonderful resource for teachers who have Chinese students in their classes. The center currently leases space at Shaker High School in Latham while they are building their own facility. Established in 1973, the “CCC” is a non-profit, non-political organization with the goal of “serving the Chinese community and friends in the Capital District who are interested in Chinese culture, language, and people” and “to promote understanding and appreciation of the Chinese heritage.” The center has a weekend Chinese Language School for anyone interested in learning Chinese. There are also classes in Tai Chi, Chinese painting, folk dance, and chess. Check out their web site for cultural activities open to the public, such as the Chinese New Year Festival: www.cccalbany.org. ●

Korean Delegation visits Albany Area Schools

By Laura Abate

Our need for international understanding has become clearer to everyone in light of recent world events. U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, recently outlined his agency’s new priorities for International Education, focusing on four policy priorities for the U.S. Department of Education:

- Increasing U.S. knowledge and expertise about other regions, cultures, languages and international issues;
- Sharing with other countries information about U.S. education policies and practices, providing leadership on education issues and working with international partners on initiatives of common benefit;
- Learning more about the effective practices and policies of other countries to improve teaching and learning in the United States; and
- Supporting U.S. foreign and economic policy by strengthening relationships with other countries and

promoting U.S. education.

In the spirit of the new priorities, area schools hosted a delegation of educators from Taegu, South Korea, on December 3-5, 2002. More than 20 Korean educators spread out to visit both public and non-public schools in the Capital District in order to observe classes, talk with teachers and administrators, and share professional expertise and culture. *Interchange* surveyed participating districts to get feedback on their experience.

Interchange: How did the recent visit from Korean educators impact your school?

“[Their visit] expressed to our children that other teachers – from as far away as Korea – are interested in them and care about what takes place at our school.”

~ Patrick Kelly, Brighter Choice Charter School

“The visitors were eager to talk with everyone. We exchanged email addresses and are looking forward to an international correspondence between our students and students in Taegu, Korea.”

~ Kathy Brown, Principal, School 26, Albany

Interchange: What did you learn about the Korean educational system, teaching approaches, and culture?

- They have similar problems, such as difficulty in getting students to value education and the challenge of helping children develop the ability to think and synthesize instead of merely reciting facts
- Superintendents are responsible for the schools of the entire province, whether they are public or non-public.
- Teachers are scheduled several times each year to visit other schools to observe teachers of the same grade level
- They often have 40+ students per classroom

Interchange: What do you think the Korean delegation brought back to their country as a result of visiting your school?

“We gave them some great resources and new ideas on ways to deliver instruction. I think they have a better understanding of our culture and the similarities we share. I hope this is the beginning of a wonderful relationship in which we will continue to share best practices.”

~ Gail Moon, Rotterdam-Mohonasen Central School District

“They were particularly interested in the fact that we taught values and multiculturalism.”

~ Theresa Ewell, Saint Catherine of Siena School

“More interest in incorporating classroom discussion in their work with students.”

~ Kent Jones, Emma Willard School, Troy



NEWS FROM THE FIELD

The **BETAC Interchange** is accepting articles for publication from YOU! We would love to hear your experiences and/or positions on topics related to the education of Limited English Proficient students. Please submit your articles to the **BETAC Interchange**.

Also, we would like to disseminate other information from the field. Please tell us what is happening in your schools:

- Has your school won a grant or implemented a new program?
- Are you doing something innovative and inspiring?
- Have you found materials that have truly helped your LEP Students?
- Have you used strategies and techniques that help your LEP students meet the NYS Standards?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then we would love to hear from you! Please send your news to the **BETAC Interchange** for publication.

ONLINE TIDBITS

Content Areas:

Math

- www.mathforum.org

Science

- www.nationalgeographic.org

Social Studies - Slavery narratives

- <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>
- www.teachingtolerance.org

ELA

- www.esl-lounge.com

FOCUS GROUPS

ESL Focus Groups

The BETAC ESL Focus Groups provide an opportunity for colleagues to share concerns, issues, information, resources, and to brainstorm solutions to common challenges. Please join us!

Location: East Greenbush Community Library

Date/Time: May 13, 2003, 3:45-5:45

BILINGUAL EXTENSION

The College of Saint Rose in Albany is now offering a bilingual extension program for classroom teachers who wish to become certified to teach in bilingual (Spanish/English) classroom settings. The program provides teachers with the theoretical and practical knowledge they will need to address the unique needs of bilingual learners. The program is designed to allow teachers who are currently working full-time the opportunity to complete the program in one year. To receive more information, contact Nathan Wright at (518) 454-5125 or wrightn@strose.edu.

Using Centers in the ESL Classroom *(Continued from p.3)*

When the story is done, they tell a partner what their favorite part was.

They now split up to go to their centers. Several

students start at the listening center where there is another book on the same topic waiting for them. Mrs. L-C had created a recording of instructions for them and a reading of the text that they could follow along with. According to the oral directions, after they had listened and read a second time, students were to show their comprehension by writing a sentence and creating a picture responding to the book. They share these with two other people before sharing them with the teacher. They create "word walls" with new words they had trouble spelling. The walls are a running list of words the students have chosen to learn how to spell conventionally.

Meanwhile, Theresa sits with another group at the math and reading center. These students have their own work folders with math sheets and cubbies with books on their reading level. They count pretzels and work on graphs.

Occasionally a pretzel is sacrificed to someone's need to munch. Then they choose a book to read aloud and several to take home. Each child has a reading log to keep track of home reading. Theresa touches base with parents monthly at what she calls literacy meetings. I am treated to "How Spider Tricked Snake" beautifully read by a second grader.

Two beginning students finish the listening center and begin to work on a word puzzle on the floor, a center, Theresa says, created especially for them. They need extra work with word formation at their level.

Several students come in about 15 minutes after class has started because of their particular schedules, but that does not disturb the ordered chaos of the room. They check the schedule and start to cycle through the centers. Toward the end of class, a mainstream teacher pokes her head in and pronounces, "gym!" This dismisses a handful of students, but not before they clean up their area, put their work back in their cubbies and take their home-reading books. No one seems eager to leave. They smile and repeat the teacher's name. There is certainly a sense that this is *their* classroom. ●

photography by L. Abate



**SUNY Spring Forum:
Enriching Content Areas for LEPs**

This workshop is a follow up to the fall forum of the same title. Ideal for mainstream teachers who have LEP students in their classes.

Date: April 5, 2003

Location: SUNY Albany Alumni House

Contact Nancy Fisher 518.442.5009

nfisher@uamail.albany.edu

**Teaching Foreign Languages
in the Elementary Classroom**

Date: June 26, 27, 30 and July 1, 2, 2003

Time: 8am-5pm

Location: Sand Creek Middle School, South Colonie SD

Code: GC636

Fee: \$375 / 45 hours (3 SUNYA grad. Credits)

Contact the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center for more information. 518.479.4083

**Summer Institute on Reading
Comprehension, K-12**

Date: July 15-17, 2003

Trainers/authors: Stephanie Harvey, Debbie Miller,
Chris Tovani

Contact the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center for more information. 518.479.4083

Summer Institute on Writing, K-8

Date: August 5-7, 2003

Beginning and advanced level workshops for K-1 teachers, as well as Levels I and II for teachers of grades 2-8.

Cosponsored by the Literacy Center and Greater Capital Region Teachers Center.

Contact the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center for more information. 518.479.4083



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