

# SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Recruitment Super Strategies

Introduction

## WHO ARE STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY?

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 includes individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) meeting one of the following definitions:

- Individuals who were not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English.
- Individuals who come from environments where a language other than English is dominant.
- Individuals who are American Indians or Alaskan Natives who come from an environment where the language is other than English and where this has had a significant impact on their English language proficiency.
- Individuals who, by reasons thereof, have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English that they may be denied the opportunity to learn successfully in classroom where the language of instruction is English or to participate in society.<sup>1</sup>

This document will provide recommendations related to recruiting members of the LEP population. Effective recruitment of LEP learners should be coordinated with a variety of stakeholders, especially the ethnic communities and organizations that serve LEP populations. Also ensure recruitment material and information about support services are available in multiple languages so it can be accessed by LEP students and their families. Be aware of current immigration legislation and immigration status issues that may effect your student population in order to create an environment that is accessible for those with undocumented immigration status.



## DID YOU KNOW?

In 2014, 116,319 Latino students enrolled in Illinois community colleges making Latinos the largest category of minority students in the state. During the same year 69.9% of students in LEP programs were Latino. Asian students made up the second largest LEP group at 10.2%. The changing demographics of the state signal the need for increased recruiting efforts in minority communities to ensure they have equitable access to educational programs.

**icsps** impacting  
educational  
equity

Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support,  
Illinois State University, College of Education



# SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

## Recruitment Super Strategies

## Recommendations

Individuals with limited English proficiency encounter many barriers due to lack of awareness and cultural sensitivity, inconsistent referral systems, and the lack of challenging, relevant coursework. These barriers are complex and can be solved by drawing upon the resources of learners, families, and community for support. Educators need to provide a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere and offer a curriculum that is challenging and provides an opportunity for real-world applications. **This document will cover recruitment strategies to help you reach LEP students and create more inclusive, diverse CTE programs.**

- Engage community leaders, human service agencies, administrators, educational entities or organizations in the recruitment process.
- Disseminate information in multiple languages using local papers, websites, student organizations with presence in non-English speaking communities, and all other avenues of communication used by the college.
- Offer assistance with admission, registration, financial aid and other related issues for LEP students who may have increased difficulty navigating the enrollment process due to both language barriers and unfamiliar cultural contexts.
- Include pictures of diverse individuals in recruitment materials.
- Advertise where members of the community congregate.
  - ✓ Ask to distribute marketing material to employers that may hire a large amount of individuals who qualify as LEP.
  - ✓ Examine high traffic areas in the community and distribute materials there, especially in places where individuals may qualify as LEP and other Special Populations.
    - For example, grocery stores, local clinics, community assistance organizations, and churches.
- Revise school policies to be friendly to undocumented immigrants.
  - ✓ Release a statement of support for undocumented students.
  - ✓ Ensure that enrollment forms include language to make clear the Social Security Numbers are not required.
  - ✓ Ensure that online enrollment forms include instructions for how to leave SSN space blank.

### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup> Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act S.250, 109th Cong., 6 (2006) (enacted).  
<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109s250enr/pdf/BILLS-109s250enr.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Illinois Community College Board. Research and Policy Studies. Fiscal Year 2014 Illinois Community College System Selected Programs and Services for Underrepresented Groups. By the Illinois Community College Board. Springfield, 2015.

# SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Retention Super Strategies

Introduction

## WHO ARE STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY?

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 includes individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) meeting one of the following definitions:

- Individuals who were not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English.
- Individuals who come from environments where a language other than English is dominant.
- Individuals who are American Indians or Alaskan Natives who come from an environment where the language is other than English and where this has had a significant impact on their English language proficiency.
- Individuals who, by reasons thereof, have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English that they may be denied the opportunity to learn successfully in classroom where the language of instruction is English or to participate in society.<sup>1</sup>

To assist LEP students in overcoming the complex barriers they face program's retention policies should address academic support and provide comprehensive support systems. In addition, individuals with LEP benefit when they are provided with a comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program.



## DID YOU KNOW?

A randomly assigned study of [LEP] students requiring test accommodations indicated that those students who received the appropriate test accommodations, had significantly higher test scores than [LEP students] who received no accommodations or those who received incomplete or not recommended accommodation packages. Additionally, students who were given no test accommodations scored no differently than those students that received accommodation packages that were incomplete or not recommended, given the students' particular needs and challenges.

While the study was done in a primary and secondary environment it highlights the individual needs of learners and the flexibility required for programs. In addition, the study also argues for the need of a systematic computerized system that matches needs with accommodations.<sup>2</sup>

# SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

## Retention Super Strategies

## Recommendations

RETENTION STRATEGIES CAN BE CATEGORIZED INTO THREE AREAS: ADVISING, CLASSROOM STRATEGIES, AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

### Advising

- Implement an intensive and organized program to deter potential dropout prior to entry into CTE programs (i.e. orientation, peer mentoring).
- Consider peer mentoring options (i.e. a cohort within a class or a study group facilitated by a bilingual individual).
- Ensure LEP learners are included in career development activities and work-based learning options such as community service, job shadowing, school-based enterprises, youth apprenticeships, and paid work experiences.
- Provide training for staff on current immigration law to ensure advisors understand the protections it provides and its limitations.

- LEP learners who are not familiar with American cultural values and organizational structures are often unaware of the range of postsecondary and career opportunities available to them. Provide parents with information concerning the career development process, and identify ways parents can help their child deal with these tasks.
- Include local work values and work appropriate behaviors in transition support and support services.
- Provide information about support services for other special populations in multiple languages. LEP learners have unique barriers but maybe entitled to other support services that help them overcome barriers not related to their lack of English proficiency.

### Classroom

- Provide a wide array of instructional approaches to meet the needs of LEP learners.
- Embed abstract concepts in real, concrete situations.
- Use approaches that are culturally sensitive and relevant.
- Use teaching strategies that affirm cultural backgrounds and reinforce learners' strengths.
- Consider various learning styles; use auditory in combination with visual and kinesthetic approaches.
- Consider the communication styles of learners, being sensitive to the importance of silence and nonverbal communication.

### Support Services

- Utilize informal support systems such as churches, student organizations, ethnic clubs, and family associations.
- Recognize dependent roles and family dynamics and inform LEP students of full range of support services not just those related to their LEP status.
- Support undocumented student organizations.
- Create a safe space for LEP and undocumented students and make it visible.
- Create partnerships with local health and legal clinics and undocumented immigrant support and advocacy groups to cover gaps in services your school does not or cannot provide.

### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup> Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act S.250, 109th Cong., 6 (2006) (enacted). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109s250enr/pdf/BILLS-109s250enr.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Kopriva, Rebecca J., Jessica E. Emick, Carlos Porfirio Hipolito-Delgado, and Catherine A. Cameron. "Do Proper Accommodation Assignments Make a Difference? Examining the Impact of Improved Decision Making on Scores for English Language Learners." *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice* 26.3 (2007): 11-20. Web.