Newcomer Academy:
Accelerating English Acquisition for our Neediest Students

~ One District’s Journey for Equity ~

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Fernando Hernandez
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Contextual Background

- Oxnard School District is located in Oxnard, California in Ventura County
- Historic farm worker community (see Curious Unions by F. Barajas)
- Demographic facts about Oxnard:
  - Location: 26.6 square miles, 60 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles, 35 miles south of Santa Barbara
  - Population: 210,037
  - Racial Makeup: 73.5% Hispanic, 14.8% White, 7.3% Asian, 2.4% Black and 1.8% Other.
District Demographics

20 Schools

- 10 K-5 Schools
- 7 K-8 Schools
- 3 Middle Schools
- 10 Dual Language Schools
- 93% Latino, 48% English Learners, 86% low SES

2018-19 K-8 Enrollment: 16,718
Our Arrival

- **What do we do?**
  - Offer consistency, uniform curriculum, appropriate support

- **Needs Assessment**
  - What wasn’t working?
  - Action plans

- **Provide Equitable support**
  - Another site TOSA needed for McKinna (3-5)
## Tests and Trials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-5 PROGRAM</th>
<th>DISCOVERY</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
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</table>
| - Student Placement was not strategic and grade based in 3/4 and 4/5 classes  
- Grouping was not strategic the use of AR or Math GE ranges used inconsistently  
- No Science or History curriculum  
- Teaching staff had high turnover | - 3-5 combos created and placement based on prior schooling in L1 and AR levels  
- Grouping based not on grade but rather AR and Math levels but students mostly stayed in one class, movement based on teacher observation  
- Started Science & History planning  
- Teaching team passionate about demographics however true collaboration and trust still not existent | - Classes created A,B,C,D leveled by ELA and Math levels with more teacher flexibility and student movement  
- Groupings based on student needs not teacher groups/Teacher A may teach low ELA but high Math  
- History and Science Units created and leveled for each group/rotations all teachers get all students at some point in the day  
- More cohesive and collaborative team/trust “our students not mine”  
- Continued para and teacher trainings |
# Tests and Trials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6-8 PROGRAM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISCOVERY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Student Placement was based on time in country/class sizes were big</td>
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<td>- Students moved together in groups mostly by grade level not by need/in order to move a student entire class schedules were impacted</td>
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<td>- Science and History were grouped not by grade level yet 8th graders had to test in science</td>
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<td>- Students with high math levels were put in remedial courses</td>
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<td>- Teaching staff in academy enjoyed the demographics but lacked training. General ed teachers not all willing to work with NCs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>YEAR 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Used curriculum placement and L1 levels/no longer by grade level</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Grouped by language ability not grade level for ELA and ELD/master schedule was changed so that movements were less of an impact</td>
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<td>- 8th graders taught science by core teacher/students placed in grade level math with paras for support</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Teaching team passionate about demographics however true collaboration and trust still not existent</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strategically chose 5 teachers to work with students including 3 core teachers/more training for teachers and paras</td>
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<td><strong>YEAR 2</strong></td>
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<td>- Master schedule is based on student needs</td>
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<td>- Groupings are only for ELA/ELD</td>
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<td>- More opportunities for students to mainstream when they are ready</td>
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<td>- Equity for students in math/ either a basic math skills class OR grade level math with support</td>
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<td>- Teachers working with NCA kids want them in their classes and support them</td>
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<td>- Data chats with students</td>
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<td>- More PLC time with NCA teaching team and continued training for paras</td>
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<td>- Piloting of System 44/Read 180 for systematic reading instruction</td>
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Learn from Experts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Bridge Academy - Denver, CO</th>
<th>Davis High School Language Institute - Davis, CA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Model program mentioned in US Department of Education Tool Kit</td>
<td>● Recommended by current principal to visit (VP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Visited in October 2016</td>
<td>● Visited April 2017 (Spring break)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Specifically designed ECE-8th grade Newcomer School</td>
<td>● Lindsey Bird is the coordinator of the Language Institute - advocate for immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Comprehensive wrap-around services</td>
<td>● Students are able to move when ready, not at semester breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Rigorous academic expectations</td>
<td>● Students can take grade level math classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Adequate placement and promotion</td>
<td>● System 44 and Read 180 to accelerate students in reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Linguistic Options for Families</td>
<td>● Students are aware of and know their levels and what they need to achieve to move forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ DLI for those who bring Spanish (parent choice)</td>
<td>● Students fluent in Spanish take Spanish elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ SEI</td>
<td>“We are not a remedial program. We are an acceleration program.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Newcomer Program Development Plan...

Designing Effective Programs for English Learners

**W.H.A.T.** to do:

**W** – Welcome them

**H** – Harness resources

**A** – Assess assets & needs

**T** – Teach them
How do we welcome our new students?

W.H.A.T. to do:
- Welcome
- Harness
- Assess
- Teach
Welcoming Students

- Intake meetings with Outreach Specialist/Social Worker (in 3-5)
  - TOSA refers to Outreach Specialist/Social Worker
  - TOSA provides academic intake and discovers academic needs
- Intake meetings with Outreach Specialist/TOSA (in 6-8)
  - Discover student and family needs
- Social-Emotional Curriculum/Training
  - Toolbox (3-5)
  - Support for Immigrant and Refugee Students (3-8)
  - Relevant literature with teaching strategies
Parent Workshops

Supporting our Parents

○ Workshops
  ■ Our parents are newcomers too

*Four sessions during the year*

○ Supporting your student at home
○ Parent Involvement
○ American Schools
○ Resource Fair
Welcoming Students

- Welcome to our school workshops/presentations
- TOSA check-in with students and parents
  - Parent phone calls, home visits
- Strategic grouping/teacher teaming
- Integration activities with Gen Ed students
- Partner/buddy with other students within program
  - Integration/partner activities with Gen Ed students
What resources are available for our families, students, and staff?
Resources:

- Professional Development specific to Academy Needs
  - Social/Emotional PD
  - Para Training
  - ELD Standards Training
  - GLAD
Resources:

● Personal
  ○ Parent Liaison
  ○ School Counselors
  ○ Outreach Specialists
    ■ Connect families to community resources
  ○ District Support
  ○ District Mixteco Translators
    ■ Translators for additional languages
  ○ Paraeducators in classrooms
  ○ Social worker at elementary level
How do we monitor academic progress?

W.H.A.T. to do:  
W - Welcome  
H - Harness  
A - Assess  
T - Teach
Monitoring 6-8

- Vertical Articulation across programs
- PLCs
- Creative Schedule/Structures - Teacher Teaming
- School Site TOSA
Monitoring 3-5

● Intake assessments and data gathering around students
  ○ Academic background, socio-emotional needs, parental education and available support
● Teacher Teaming
● School Site TOSA
● ELD/ELPAC
Monitoring 3-5

- Progress monitoring
  - Developing and finalizing our assessments for 3-5 Newcomer Academy
    - Multiple assessments that focus on four domains
    - One-on-one assessments
      - Reading foundations, reading comprehension, listening and speaking
How do we design instruction of language, literacy and content to best meet the needs of our newcomer students?
Base Curriculum for Newcomers 3-5

- REACH - NG Connect
  - In The USA
  - Reach Into Phonics
  - Reach Levels A-D
- Oxford Picture Dictionary For Kids
- Wonders for Newcomers
- My Math
- Pearson Language Central for Math
- Thematic Units for Social Studies and Science
  - Adapted for different levels
Instruction, Literacy, and Content

- Strategic grouping based on student academic backgrounds/levels. Instruction is tailored to student needs
  - A
  - B
  - C
  - D
Year 2 Plan (6-8)

- Master Schedule with student needs.
- Teachers that want to teach.
- Grouping only in ELD/ELA
- Bringing class for mainstream
- Equity for students in math
- Para training and support
  - Data Chats
- PLC (Collaboration Time)
Year 2 (2018-19): The Plan (3-5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-5 Combo A (Gandara)</th>
<th>3-5 Combo B (Garcia)</th>
<th>3-5 Combo C (Sharp)</th>
<th>3-5 Combo D (Boulger)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leveled Math D</td>
<td>Leveled Math C</td>
<td>Leveled Math B</td>
<td>Leveled Math A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>PE</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELA – Level A</td>
<td>ELA – Level B</td>
<td>ELA – Level C</td>
<td>ELA – Level D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content Based Social</td>
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<td>Studies/Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotations – A</td>
<td>Rotations – B</td>
<td>Rotations – C</td>
<td>Rotations – D</td>
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- Teacher flexibility
- Teaming by language levels and not grades
- Teacher training and TOSA modeling
- Para training
- Support for newcomers in 1st and 2nd grade
- First time explicitly teaching content based newcomer adapted social studies and science
Findings ~ What Worked?

• District/Leadership Support with flexibility

BE STUBBORN ABOUT YOUR GOALS, AND FLEXIBLE ABOUT YOUR METHODS.
Next Steps

- Write a Procedures Manual for Academy
- Survey of teachers, students and parents
- Further collect data
Next Steps

- Yearly self-reflection ~ growth mindset

Important achievements require a clear focus, all-out effort, and a bottomless trunk full of strategies. Plus allies in learning.

Carol Dweck
Investigation Phase: Researching Best Practices and Resources
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