Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Lewis&Lewis   cecv catholic education commission of victoria ltd   MONASH University

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Project Website: www.olsel.catholic.edu.au

ORAL LANGUAGE SUPPORTING EARLY LITERACY RESEARCH PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT
1 MARCH 2010
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1.   Teacher Knowledge & Experience: Mid-Project Review

Area Rated	Pre OLSEL PD Program Rating (April 2009) 8 schools 49 Teachers	Post OLSEL PD Program Rating (April 2009) 8 schools 49 Teachers	Current Rating (December 20009) 7 schools 33 Teachers
My current knowledge and experience with the oral language content (OLSEL, ICPALER,)	2.56	3.21	3.45
My current comfort level with embedding oral language into my literacy planning	2.54	3.48	3.61
My current comfort level with using oral language to improve student literacy outcomes	2.67	3.48	3.58
Rate the resources provided by the CEO contacts over the past two months	NA	3.73	3.36
Overall, how would you rate the value of this professional learning activity for schools	NA	4.42	4.24

N.B.:   While data from two schools was not received in the December Survey, the third sample
size is sufficient to allow for comparison between the two sets of responses.

A positive finding in the data when comparing the three questions that were surveyed at the three points of time was the steady gains that were apparent. Teachers' perceived they had further increased their professional knowledge and also indicated they were more able to embed oral language activities in the classroom and impact on student learning outcomes.

2.   Teacher Interviews: Analysis of Qualitative Data

The interviews conducted with teachers from both the research and control schools aimed at gaining insight to their understanding of the links between oral language competence and literacy acquisition are currently being transcribed. Analysis of the transcriptions will commence in March with the aim being for this to be completed by April 2010.

The process to be applied will include an open coding approach followed by categorisation of these codes. Where possible, code names will directly relate to comments made by teachers (i.e. in vivo codes).   Once categories have been determined, a continuum of response will then be identified for items within the categories. The final phase of coding to be undertaken will focus on differentiating information within and across the categories.

3.   Coordinators' Planning Session: 22/2/2010

A planning session was held with staff from the eight research schools to review current progress and set directions for 2010. A draft version of an OLSEL Implementation Guide was distributed which outlined specific initial teaching goals for school personnel who have responsibility for OLSEL implementation following the professional training program. The initial teaching targets selected were based on the current findings from this project and included the following:

- Vocabulary knowledge (i.e. vocabulary of literacy / work unit specific vocabulary);
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- Phonological awareness (i.e. rhyme identification, syllable segmentation, onset-rime segmentation, phoneme segmentation);
- Awareness and application of the Story Grammar Sequence; and,
- Enhanced use of self-talk to guide student learning.

Activities that could be used to enhance the quality of existing teaching and learning interactions for each of these five areas were outlined and discussed. It was emphasised that while the aim is not to add new oral language activities to the daily schedule, there will be a need to increase the time allocated to oral discussions and oral language development. This will necessitate some changes to current work plans with opportunities for oral language interactions made more explicit though the details of work units would remain the same.

In addition, school staff were provided with a procedure for school based evaluation of outcomes. A spreadsheet containing effect size formulae was provided. Data based on students' performances can be entered by school staff and effect sizes measuring the impact of teaching and learning activities both on literacy and oral language learning can be estimated. A process for analysing and interpreting the data was discussed. The aim is to embed this process of analysis in the research schools during the course of 2010.

4.   Professional Development Program: Update Session

Staff from the research schools will be attending an OLSEL Program update session on 9/3/2010. Assoc. Professor John Munro will review teaching activities and introduce others that can be readily used within the classroom context. A session focused on classroom-based application of the *Colourful Semantics* strategy will be conducted by Speech Pathologists from the Catholic Education Office Melbourne in the afternoon.

5.   DEEWR Pilot Projects Forum: Canberra 18/3/2010

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