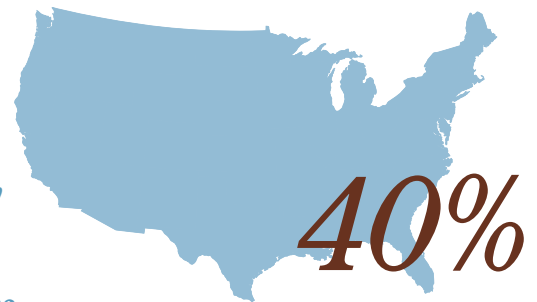


**Highlights of Upcoming Events!**

- February 21, 2008**  
National Board Pre-candidacy Curriculum Training
- February 22-23, 2008**  
NBPTS Facilitator Training
- March 10-12, 2008**  
MEC Conference at ASU Tempe Campus
- March 14-15, April 18-19,  
and May 2-3, May 30-31, 2008**  
Cognitive Coaching (Tucson)

*Did You Know*  *sabías* VOS AVEC SU *wusstest du* 

*By the 2030s, say demographers, English language learners (ELLs) will account for approximately 40% of the entire school-aged population in the United States.*



**Breaking the Silence**

**BRINGING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS INTO THE MAINSTREAM**

One of the greatest challenges facing Arizona educators is the growing number of English Language Learners (ELLs) entering our schools. Up 4% from last year, there are approximately 140,000 currently identified students whose native language is other than English.

In an effort to prepare Arizona educators to provide the very best learning opportunities for all learners, all certificate holders are required to fulfill a Structured English Immersion (SEI) endorsement. To support the State's effort in this area, the Arizona K-12 Center provides high quality professional development for second language learning. The curriculum has included the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) Model and one of its authors, Dr. Deborah Short.



Marcy Granillo, School Improvement Director for Isaac Elementary School District, attended last spring. She was already familiar with SIOP, but found the sharing of best practices to be especially constructive.

"The language and content objectives covered in the training have been very useful to us," Granillo says. "They help support the content objectives in terms of Arizona state standards, and to determine what type of language is needed to help it become comprehensible to ELLs."

Loraine Franklin is the principal of Dunbar Elementary School in the Phoenix Elementary School District. She recommends the training to her fellow principals, as well as teachers.

"The training was fabulous," says Franklin. "It gave me a way to actively gather teachers to focus on SEI. Now when I look in the classroom, I can follow up or comment on things we've studied or talked about."

Robin Greymountain, ELL/Gifted Coordinator for the Page Unified School District appreciated the detailed direction she received.

"The training broke each SIOP component down into workable tasks in the classroom. They made it more specific for Arizona's needs, showing us how to look at Arizona English Language Learner Proficiency Standards."

This is important, according to Greymountain, because the obstacles to learning for ELLs often go beyond linguistic factors.

"Students who come from poverty don't always have the same frame of reference," she explains. "When

*"Since the training, I have totally changed my teaching. My kids are more engaged and more interested."*

you start reading stories about freeways and light rail construction, you have to realize that these students might not know what these things are in any language."

Chris Poslosky, who teaches at Isaac Middle School, echoes this sentiment. "None of my kids have ever experienced being on an airplane, so they can't relate to a question about an airplane on a test."

The training she received has helped overcome such obstacles to learning.

"Since the training, I have totally changed my teaching," says Poslosky. "My kids are more engaged and more interested. They understand the objectives. They know there's a time to talk, a time to think, a time to write."

**SHARING WHAT WORKS**

The Center's SEI Project Director, Cathy Hill, notes that SIOP is a research-based instructional model, proven to be effective. Part of fueling the excitement in others and motivating colleagues to learn new effective instructional strategies is taking time to share student successes. Having participated in the training and, in turn, applying it in their respective teaching environments, participants can now report on their own success strategies.

*Continued on back*

## Breaking the Silence

*Continued from front*

Poslosky, who teaches seventh graders, finds language play to be particularly effective. Kids use the whiteboard and colored markers to reword sentences according to a given criteria. Allowing students to manipulate text gives them opportunities to interact with language. Syntactical structure is foundational. Students need to practice constructing and reconstructing both oral and written language formats.

“This works because they are practicing language,” Poslosky says. “Each student is contributing. They see what other kids are doing and it expands their vocabulary at the same time.”

This speaks to an important priority Marcy Granillo would like to see emphasized more in SEI. “We need to facilitate students sharing knowledge,” she says, “so that it’s not all coming from the teachers and so that students don’t just sit quietly while teachers do all the talking.”

When students are reluctant to experiment with new language, a child experiences what some educators refer to as the ‘silent period.’ One effective way of breaking this silence, Greymountain finds, is “backwards design.”

“You tell them in the beginning where they are going to end up after a particular lesson and how they are going to get there,” she explains. “It’s connecting the known to the unknown.”

This works, according to Greymountain, because 70% of her students are visual/spatial learners. They need to see the big picture first, to understand the context of the lesson, in order to perform well.

“You spend more time on the set up,” she observes, “but typically have to spend less time reviewing the lesson before an assessment.”

## DIVERSITY AMONGST ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A major challenge Robin Greymountain faces is how to explain to parents that their child is an ELL, when the child speaks English, but not academic English. For example, on the Navajo reservation, a student might not speak traditional Navajo. His parents see him as an English speaker. It is hard to get across to them that within the school environment, not having well-developed language is an obstacle to that student’s learning.



In fact, ELL education is much more complex than it might appear. As Loraine Franklin points out, there is significant diversity within ELL populations. “Some are gifted, some are special ed., and some are both. Some speak primary languages other than Spanish.” Franklin sees staff development as the key priority to moving forward and bridging the gaps for second language learners.

*“Delivering this type of quality professional development is what the Arizona K-12 Center is all about.”*

## Staff Spotlight: Cathy Hill, SEI Project Director



A teacher at heart, Cathy manages a professional development grant and designs the SEI trainings offered by the Center. She has a rich background, devoting much of her 14-year teaching career to the education of second language learners.

Cathy was first motivated to learn a second language herself when she visited an orphanage in Mexico and found herself with a strong desire to communicate with the children. Her desire was

further fed while in Bolivia one summer. Not only did she want to speak the language but fell in love with the culture. Upon returning to Arizona State University, she changed her major to bilingual education.

Cathy began teaching in a bilingual first grade classroom soon after graduation. “I learned so much from the children. We formed a partnership of language.” Cathy continued working with second language learners and their families over the next several years. She witnessed many successes as her students became proficient in English.

*“I believe if you have high expectations and provide a safe nurturing environment in which students can take risks – they will exceed your expectations.”*

## EVENT SPOTLIGHT

### SHELTERED INSTRUCTION IN CULTURALLY RELEVANT CLASSROOMS

**Dates** July 14-17 and November 13-15, 2008

**Location** Desert Willow Conference Center  
4340 East Cotton Center Blvd, Phoenix

**Times** 8:00am-4:00pm

**Cost** \$350

**Deadline** 6/6/08

Notes: This class meets the 45 Completion Hours necessary to obtain a full SEI Endorsement (when combined with the initial SEI 15 Hour Provisional).

Architects of learning are mindful of today’s culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Classroom structures include varied readiness levels, interests, background knowledge, learning styles, cultures and languages. This learning opportunity will provide any education professional the necessary tools to build a foundation for successful content and language acquisition. You will learn to construct effective lessons based on State Content and English Language Proficiency Standards, and design meaningful learning activities that will allow all students access to key academic concepts. Design meaningful learning activities that will allow all students access to key academic concepts. Explore research-based instructional strategies. Examine multiple formal and informal assessments and use data as a framework for informing instruction. Discover innovative ways to create home/school/community connections. Participants will learn from some of the nation’s most respected educators. Featured in the **July** instruction is, **Dr. Deborah Short**, one of the authors of the SIO Model. In **November**, learners will have the opportunity to learn from the nationally known educator **Catherine Brown**. A wide variety of instructional practices will be addressed. If you’ve experienced SIO training with us in the past, this will broaden your perspective with new, highly relevant content. Teachers, coaches, administrators, ELL directors, principals and superintendents are all welcome. Be prepared to walk away with effective instructional strategies, refine current classroom practice, and enhance your instructional leadership in the area of sheltered instruction.

