

# CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

2009-2010 Evaluation Report

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Submitted by:

California Association for Bilingual Education, Lead Agency

Maria S. Quezada, Ph.D, CEO

16033 E. San Bernardino Road

Covina, California 91722-3900

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Executive Summary

California PIRC-1 is a collaborative partnership among the California Association for Bilingual Education (Lead Agency, California statewide), San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (Southern California), and Alameda County Office of Education (Northern California). Eighteen school based centers facilitate local parent education and leadership development and dissemination of project and NCLB relevant materials. California PIRC-1 has three goals: 1) To have parents knowledgeable about high quality schooling options for their children (especially those traditionally underserved and/or attending Program Improvement schools) and the leadership skills to take action to ensure their children have high quality educational opportunities; 2) To have schools and districts serving disadvantaged students maintain high quality parent education and leadership programs; and 3) To have parent leaders provide parent leadership development to other parents and to effectively participate in local school reform efforts. Five strategies are used to realize these goals.

### 2009-2010 Accomplishments and Outcomes

The CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE Parent Leadership Development program made significant progress in Capacity Building at several levels in Year 4 of the project:

- **Individual Parent level.** Discussions were surprisingly similar with parents be they in Individual Interviews or Focus Groups across all project Treatment schools. Parents consistently expressed amazement that not only could they learn, but that they could teach and work collaboratively with others to improve learning for all children at their school, in their home, and community. Impact is evidenced by: the total number of parents trained (15,190 in all three levels of the parent leadership development program) in 693 separate training sessions; in building capacity within individual schools and communities; and feedback from parents, teachers, and school administrators. Impact also is evidenced by the total number (1,065) of schools involved: 459 elementary schools, 322 middle schools and 284 high schools throughout California.
- **Parent-to-parent level.** Friendships have been formed and grown with other parents at their child's school. A growing sense of "community with other parents" is evident in each Treatment School. They are creating a "telephone tree" to facilitate communication, particularly for those who are non-English speakers. More and more, mothers who always walked their child to school, dropped them off in the classroom, are now staying to work with other parents in a number of ways, e.g., help out in classrooms, read to or listen to children read. Parents are more actively involved in and taken more leadership roles at their school site.
- **School level.** Parents from the treatment sites participate and lead successful school activities. Parents are quickly engaging in school site committees to assist teachers and principals in developing, implementing, and evaluating their school level plan for improving student achievement and parental engagement. Every Treatment School now has Project INSPIRE parents participating for the first time in School Planning Council, categorical program councils, and other committees created to improve teaching and learning for all students in their school.
- **District Level.** CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE partnership with a local urban school district (with a significant number of schools in Program Improvement) is moving towards developing district wide parent engagement by working alongside the District's Community Liaisons to integrate Project INSPIRE into their community work at every school. This will not only distribute Project INSPIRE's work to every school in the district, but it will immediately reach and prepare local leaders within the African American, Chinese-speaking, Spanish-Speaking, and English-speaking communities
- **Regional level.** CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE is strategically imbedding its parent leadership program in established organizations by training permanent staff responsible for parent services. Examples include the Archdiocese of San Bernardino wherein CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE staff will train their parent outreach and community liaisons throughout the Archdiocese, impacting all 94 Catholic parishes, some of which are in the

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

poorest bottom third of California's communities. The San Bernardino Diocesan office has signed a letter of Partnership to provide PIRC workshops throughout the Diocese. CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE is currently piloting in three churches to provide PIRC and Counseling sessions on how to support their child's academic success. Some of those churches are in the community of some of the lowest performing schools in San Bernardino City Unified School District.

- **State level.** The California Superintendent of Public Instruction, in conjunction with a CDE task force, of which the CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE's director is a member, launched a state-wide initiative to increase parental involvement in their children's learning to increase their academic achievement. Traditionally under-served families and their children are a priority, along with chronically under-performing schools (PI). Briefly, the State Superintendent works directly with a small group of County Superintendents each representing counties in a common region. The lead county superintendent works directly with other county superintendents. In turn each county superintendent will work directly with district superintendents in their respective county and they will work directly with the principal from each school in their district. Each administrative level is to develop and implement a parent involvement plan delineating how it will support the efforts of the next lower administrative level. SBCSS, a Hub Partner is the lead for a four county region in recognition of their experience in developing parent involvement in the county. Similarly other Certified Presenters are now parent leaders at county wide advisory committees, as well as to statewide leadership.
- g) **National and Bi-national Levels.** CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE is partnering with the Office of the Mexican Consulate as a member of their Bi-national Advisory Committee to support efforts to increase family and student involvement in educational programs. Project staff works with the Archdiocese of San Bernardino and the Mexican Consulate in San Bernardino and Los Angeles to provide parents with access to the parent leadership development programs as part of a wider effort to reduce dropout rates. Forty-nine parents in 6 of the Treatment Schools also take advantage of the opportunity to complete their formal education through the Plaza Comunitaria program developed by Mexico and offered by the California Association for Bilingual Education to the treatment sites. Of these parents 8 have finished their primary education, 16 have finished their middle school education and 3 have finished their high school education, and have received a certificate of completion from the Secretary of Education in Mexico.

### Services to Low-Income Families

PIRC staff reaches out to individual Program Improvement Schools, with a priority given to the lowest performing schools serving low-income families. In Year 4 of the project staff trained 15,190 participants. Of this total, 10,176 were parents, wherein almost: 88% were low-income, and 79% had children who are English Language Learners. Through school-based, district based, county-based and state-based trainings, CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE is able to reach a much larger number of low-income families while concomitantly building and nurturing capacity at each of these levels. In addition, as noted there is an outreach effort made to involve faith-based and non-profit organizations in low income and rural communities to engage parents in venues that increase the likelihood they will attend Project INSPIRE's parent leadership development.

### Early Childhood Parent Education (ECPE)

*Virtual Pre-K* was developed by Chicago Public Schools to strengthen partnerships between parents, teachers, administrators, and childcare providers. The program is comprised of developmentally appropriate standards-based activities that connect what is being taught at school (at the preschool or kindergarten level) with simple educational activities parents can do at home and in the community. The programs also include web and workshop-based activities that bring both educators and parents together to share and dispense best practices. PIRC staff delivers VPK parent trainings to guide parents on the activities they can do at home and in the community to support ECE standard learning. Project staff strategically and consciously targets sites that serve low-income parents and outreach to the administrators of those sites to create a partnership to support low income families. PIRC, in addition, provides teacher training to the ECE school sites to develop parent involvement. Parents have gained awareness of

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

the important value of ECE education and how they play a key role to ensure their students are prepared to enter Kindergarten. In addition the parent leadership curriculum also includes an early childhood module for parents. This is available to parents of elementary school children.

### Evaluation

For the past four years Project INSPIRE has conducted a research study on the relationship of parental engagement on student achievement at sixteen school-based centers. The two primary questions are: 1) Is the intensive parent leadership program effective in helping parents increase the type, frequency, and intensity of support they provide their child's learning?; And, 2) What impact, if any, does the type, frequency, and/or intensity of parent engagement impact student academic achievement? To answer these questions, CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE is conducting a longitudinal study of the relationship between parent engagement and the academic achievement of their children. This study randomly selected pairs of a Treatment School and a Matched Control School from the pool of chronically under-performing Program Improvement Schools in partnering districts. The school-based intensive parent leadership development is provided to parents, teachers, principals, and community members at each Treatment School. The Matched Control School does not receive access to the intensive parent leadership development program. By tracking parental engagement via each parent's participation in Project INSPIRE's leadership program, as well as the type, frequency, and intensity of parental engagement over time, and monitoring their child's academic achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics, we will assess whether parental engagement will significantly improve 1) their child's learning; and, 2) overall school achievement.

Project INSPIRE's findings for both Year 3 and Year 4 are consistent: Treatment Students (those whose parents completed and implemented what they learned from Project INSPIRE's leadership development program realized a statistically significant improvement in the rate and level of academic growth than their peers (Control Students) whose parents had not participated in the leadership program. Moreover, the average rate and level of academic growth of Treatment Students is also greater than the average rate and level of academic growth of their peers statewide. These trends suggest a closing of the achievement gap. These preliminary findings are consistent with other research suggesting that when parents from chronically under-performing schools are engaged, their children can significantly improve their learning. Still to be addressed is to understand the number of parents that need to be engaged and the type, frequency, and intensity of engagement needed to improve school-wide achievement. Project INSPIRE is documenting the effectiveness of the leadership development program as well as a positive and convincing relationship between parent engagement and significant increased academic achievement of their children. Finally, as the majority of the families in Treatment Schools are of color (89%), low-income (88%), and English Language Learners (79%), these findings echo Mapp's conclusion (2009) that the relationship between parent engagement and student achievement holds across families of all economic, racial/ethnic, and educational backgrounds and for students at all ages.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Evaluation Report of Findings

The overall goals of Project INSPIRE are to: (a) provide high quality parent education and training to parents throughout California with an emphasis on outreach and services to parents of California's most disadvantaged students, (b) build the capacity of schools and districts serving disadvantaged students to maintain high quality parent education, training, and leadership programs in the future, and (c) build the capacity of parent leaders to provide training to other parents and to effectively participate in local school reform efforts. The Project INSPIRE partnership has targeted the following mutually supportive implementation and outcome objectives to help measure our success.

### Implementation Objectives – Results for 2009-2010

The quality of each of its three levels of the parent leadership programs is monitored and assessed via five instruments and group and individual processes.

- The *Participant Workshop Evaluation* is completed at the end of each leadership development session. This instrument collects basic demographic data (e.g., do they have a child who is an English Language Learner, race/ethnicity, or if they participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program); the number of school-age children, the grade level, school, and district name of each child; and, their assessment of the quality of each individual leadership session. However, from the second and subsequent sessions, parents need only report their assessment of the quality and utility of the session content and learning activities.
- The *Presenter Reflection/Evaluation* is also completed at the end of each session by the Parent Specialist. The Specialist records the number of participants, training level, names the school and district for each participant, as well as commenting on the quality of each module in terms of content and pedagogy thus permitting on-going monitoring and revision of the effectiveness by the CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE curriculum developers.
- A *KWL* chart is used as a tool for assessing the effectiveness of each module in helping parents meet the specific content and performance standards required in each training module. This tool was selected for making it possible for all parents, particularly those with limited education, to share their prior knowledge [(What I Know (K)), What I would like to know (W), and What I learned today (L)]. A KWL chart is completed during each training module.
- At the beginning of each training session parents all record their name in the **Sign-in Sheet** as they enter the room for instruction to document every person in attendance for each module and training level.
- The **Monthly Performance Report** was patterned after the end-of-year Annual Performance Report, thereby making it possible to monitor the level of effort and progress toward reaching monthly target objectives, and progress toward meeting the end of year training targets by module, clustered in specific categories (e.g., Accountability and Supplemental Education Services).
- **Parent Journals** are used to record parent behaviors that impact student achievement and are collected three times during the parent leadership development sessions in Level 2.
- Using a **structured questionnaire**, the External Researcher also conducted individual interviews with parents, teachers, and principals from each Treatment school site and conducted focus groups for parents, teachers, and principals from these same schools. Both interviews and focus groups were conducted in April and May 2010.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Objective 1: The partnership will provide direct parent education and leadership development (Levels I, II, and III)

Level 1, 2 and 3 parent leadership development was provided throughout California to low income, English Learner, and other families. We were able to serve, teach and motivate parents of many ethnicities about the importance of being involved in their child(ren)'s education. Using 12 different topics parents and families were able to interact more within their communities and schools in a family, school and community partnership for the purpose of improving the educational services in low performing, program improvement schools. Success was accomplished by collaborating with schools, school districts and the families themselves. A total of 786 workshops were conducted from October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010. Of the total 15,190 workshop participants (88%) had children participating in the free and reduced lunch program, 12,000 (79%) reported that they had a child identified by their school as an English Language Learner, and, 1,975 (13%) had special needs children.

Comparison of Direct Face-to-Face Training Targets Met and Project INSPIRE's Proposal Based Targets		
	Grant Proposal Training Target	Actual Face-to-Face Training Delivered
<b>Year 4</b>		
Level 1 (offered to parents at conferences and individual school, district, county sessions by project staff and other project certified trainers)	4,342	12,526
Level 2 (offered to parents at the research sites)	450	1,348*
Level 3 (offered to parents at the research sites)	90	225**
VPK	410	1,091
<i>Total</i>	5,292	15,190
% Actual Performance Exceeded Training Target	230%	

\*This year 4 number only reflects parents enrolled in Level 2 for the first time at the treatment sites. In year 4—additional parents, enrolling a second time in Level 2, are not included in this number.

\*\*This number includes only parents at the research sites trained by project staff. In year 4 CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE successfully developed and implemented a Trainer of Trainers (TOT) certification program that increased its ability to offer more parent engagement training. A total of 142 district level parent engagement personnel and community liaisons completed the training and provided 157 sessions using Project INSPIRE's Level 1 curriculum to 4,878 parents.

Project staff worked with 1,065 schools: 459 elementary schools, 322 middle schools and 284 high schools throughout California. Of these, 18 schools were listed as persistently low performing schools and 12 charter schools. These schools came from 683 school districts (18 of which are Program Improvement). In addition project staff partnered with 6 County Offices of Education and 13 non-profit or faith-based agencies to provide parental engagement services through their programs. This impact is also measured in the capacity built within schools and communities, and from the feedback from parents, teachers, and school administrators. Administrators report that not only are the parents participating in larger numbers, but the quality of the interactions with teachers, at meetings, has changed. They have become true partners with the school.

In year four, 12,526 parents participated in Awareness Level 1 parent leadership development training. Of these, 8,992 parents completed, on average, 5 modules. Over 94% of participants rated the quality of information, presentation, opportunities for interaction and discussion, organization, preparation, relevance and practicality of what they were learning was excellent/above average. The top two topics in terms of importance and suggested

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

activities in which they could better support their child were: State accountability system for schools and students; and, importance of parent-parent, parent-teacher, and parent-principal communication. These assessments were echoed repeatedly in parent focus groups, wherein they consistently stressed the importance of what they were learning and the utility of ideas and activities that they were able to immediately put to use to improve and increase their support of their child's learning.

In addition, 1,348 parents successfully completed the Mastery Level 2 intensive leadership development program comprised of 36 hours of face-to-face learning, augmented with an additional 15+ hours of learning by doing or action plans, e.g., request a meeting with the principal to review their child's cumulative record; planning for the parent/teacher conference, questions to ask as well as how to ask questions; school accountability and the challenges and opportunities that come about because their child's school is in Program Improvement. The effectiveness of this intensive program is the following comment from a veteran teacher: "I've been teaching for over 19 years, and this is the first time a [Latino] parent asked me to review her child's grade level performance standards in math and reading, his current status, was he performing where he should be, he wasn't, so she asked how she could help her child at home, as well as the availability of extra learning resources at school. She had done her homework. She was not the only parent, I had about 6 others come in, and asking pretty much the same questions. I rushed to the principal to ask what was happening with the parents. It was one of the best days that I've had as a teacher".

Participation in the Expert Level 3 leadership program is provided only to those parents who successfully completed the Level 2 Mastery Level program and who expressed an interest in seriously developing their leadership skills so that they can meaningfully participate in improving their child's learning at home, school, and community. The Expert Level is equally as intensive in time commitment as the Mastery Level and participants complete 16 modules that include the underlying rationale of the culturally responsive Community Learning Theory and group facilitation skills (48 hours plus additional coaching and mentoring time as the parents increase their presentation ability and style). The parents participating in this expert level will be the ones that build the capacity of the school to maintain the program at the end of the project for their school site and other schools in the district. In Year 4, 225 parents completed the intensive Expert Level leadership training at the research treatment school sites.

### Findings: Outcome Data

This objective in Year 4 was realized via key program elements/strategies that are both school linked and/or school based: 1) Sought and maintained partnerships and collaborations to build the necessary relationships that help to coordinate and leverage federal, state, and local parental involvement efforts; 2) Further developed and strengthened three main parent information and resource centers and sixteen school-based centers; 3) Provided parent education and leadership development, as well as early childhood education activities for parents, administrators and teacher leaders in predominately underperforming/ program improvement schools/districts; and 4) Continued to refine and update the three level Parent Education and Leadership Development Program and by developing a trainer-of-trainers model to build the capacity of schools/districts to engage parents meaningfully. It is important to note that 271,825 pieces of information were given to identifiable parents. They were given during the parent leadership training at individual school sites, district level sessions and at conference venues. Another 3,160,540 "listeners" received indirect services on the topics of School Accountability, SES and School Choice as well as other information to engage parents in their children's education through radio and television programming and other media events.

The focus group results indicated that Parents are now attending board meetings, running for office in their school committees, joining the PTA and taking other classes to help themselves improve the quality of life that they can offer their families. The research study to date suggests that children of parents who participated in various workshops have and continue to improve academically and are reaching proficiency levels. De-briefing with project staff as they reflected on their accomplishments, they indicated that they felt best about the opportunity they had to be part of the lives of so many families who are now more confident and empowered in a positive way to advocate for their children and community.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

An example of the family, school and community partnerships that are forming in Level 2 schools:

- Level 2 schools agreed to allow the PIRC Parent Specialist to occupy one of the classrooms on site to provide the parent leadership development program to the parents. In many schools the classroom is designated as a Parent Resource Center. All of the Level 2 schools are predominantly low income where many children (88%) participate in the free or reduced lunch program and are predominately from a minority group and are in program improvement schools.
- The modules are 3 hours in duration. The day and time designated for the program at each school is selected during the orientation meeting between the months of September or October. All schools recruited parents through flyers, school newsletters, morning announcements and through the "TeleParent" phone service. This information is provided to them in their home language and is repeated several times during the beginning of the school year. The Project INSPIRE Parent Leadership Development program is scheduled on the average for once a week for a period of 12 to 14 weeks each semester.
- All of the principals from each of the Level 2 schools are invited and attend the sessions. The principals will often co-present to ensure the clarity and relevance of the school's information and to develop a positive and long term relationship with the parents.
- The parents attending are also ELAC, DELAC, DAC and SSC committee members so the principal will sometimes hold their committee meetings immediately after one of the sessions. In almost all cases the principals, along with the parents sitting on the school committees will meet to discuss school policies and procedures during our module training. The committee members will briefly review the committee agenda and minutes with the rest of the group of parents.
- Childcare is provided for all of the parents during the training. The school is also committed to bringing coffee and some breakfast items for the children and the parents at no cost to the parents or the project.
- Project staff has also continued to build collaborations with Arts Active Parents, and the Alameda County Arts Alliance by integrating Mining the Wisdom/Conocimiento with expression through the arts, and by facilitating the connection of parent voice and advocacy to arts education planning and implementation.
- Project staff has successfully leveraged our services by collaborating with Nutrition and Physical Education Programs to outreach to parent groups throughout the region to provide health information integrated with Project INSPIRE content learning about parent rights and responsibilities related to their children's education.
- Principals come into the parent leadership sessions throughout the year to solicit opinions and ideas from the parents in regards to school budgets and expenditures, fund raising, and school activities
- Another great success experienced was that in research site schools ELAC, DELAC, SSC and DAC committees have parents serving on them that have graduated from the Project INSPIRE parent leadership program. This was a natural process for them to gradually go from a parent participant role at the school to a decision making role.

**Objective 2: Parents participating in Level III leadership activities will provide parent education to 500 parents in year two, 1,000 parents in year three, 1,500 parents in year four, and 2,500 parents in year five.**

Level 2 leadership development not only provides parents with intensive learner-centered training in terms of time and performance expectations, parents also receive on-going coaching and mentoring to support their individual learning for the duration of CA PIRC-1. Level 2 training is only available to PI schools as part of a school-wide reform effort. All training is provided on site to each of 18 randomly selected treatment schools. Level 3 Trainer-of-Trainers

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

services are only available to parents completing the 36 hour Level 2 training. Level 3 training deepens and expands upon the content covered in Level 2, but specifically focuses on leadership skills, e.g., diversity responsive outreach, strategic planning, group process facilitation skills. Level 3 on-going coaching and mentoring is provided for the entire duration of the project. There is ample support to guide the development of parent involvement policies; parent involvement compacts; as well as, the Single Plan for Student Achievement and school improvement plan.

## Findings: Outcome Data

The Expert Level program is focused on helping parents develop specific leadership skills, e.g., strategic planning, building an inclusive school community, outreach, presentation, group process, group facilitation skills, and basic evaluation process and tools. In Year 4, 225 parents completed the intensive leadership training (Expert Level) at the treatment sites. CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE continues to exceed Year 4 performance target (1,500) by approximately 9%. Building capacity is evident in that these parent leaders began training other parents at their child's school as well as neighboring schools, at CAFE state and regional conferences, as well as district sponsored parent leadership conferences. Over 225 parents successfully completed the Expert Level leadership development program and have expanded training services by providing parent leadership development services to other parents at the school site with a total of 1,629 parents receiving training in 111 sessions across California.

Parents in the Level 3 Project INSPIRE Leadership Development Program also are:

- Assisting with presentations and mentoring new Level 2 parent groups.
- Volunteering at school and are offering assistance with Food Bank, school newsletter.
- Contributing suggestions to the school level plan.
- Creating and implementing an after-school theater program.
- Offering Project INSPIRE Level 1 workshops to the community including parents of children in the on-site Child Development Center (CDC) preschool by Community Liaisons Certified to train parents. .
- Supporting implementation of the 2010 district-wide Parent Symposium through both leadership and action
- Preparing Level 2 and Level 3 participants to present to the Board of Directors a request to hold postpone action on converting their school into several small schools. Level 2 and 3 parents requested time to review the proposed restructuring proposal, to gather more information and develop deeper understanding in order to cast a vote. They strongly stated that they have experienced that only by being well informed are they able to make decisions. They were heard and their request was granted.
- Coaching new parents beginning Mastery Level training, particularly facilitating group discussions that occur in each training module. Most of the same returning parents co-presented with the Level 2 presenter at schools in preparation for Level 3 Training. This in return allowed for a greater number of graduating Level 2 parents to enroll in Level 3.

## Project INSPIRE Trainer of Trainer Certification Program

Capacity building is a CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE priority. Project staff worked with schools, districts, and other non-profit or faith-based organizations by developing and refining a quality Certification Training program, including ongoing follow-up coaching, mentoring, support and collaboration. Through the Certification Training program, project staff reached out to and tailored Project INSPIRE services to specific diverse communities in the state, including multiple Spanish-, Chinese-, Vietnamese- and Russian-speaking immigrant communities, African American families, and foster parents.

Project Staff made a strong effort to build regional capacity by working through staff in county offices of education and school districts to develop and support a parent engagement leadership network. The primary strategy provides Project INSPIRE curriculum and Certification Training to key county and district level personnel who provide direct services to schools and parents. Project INSPIRE Certification Training emphasizes understanding of the

## California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

Community Learning Theory Conceptual framework and key strategies that support the integration of the conceptual framework into work with parents. Project staff also is working to build capacity at the District level by providing Project INSPIRE Certification Training to District personnel who provide direct services to schools and parents. In Project INSPIRE partner districts receive intensive comprehensive leadership development services (Mastery & Expert Levels).

As an example, an urban school district in northern California began as a Project INSPIRE partner district. There are two Treatment Schools in this district, each with their own Matched Control School. Project INSPIRE provides both intensive parent leadership development programs (i.e., Mastery Level and Expert Level) to parents, teachers, principals and community members at each Treatment School. This includes critical ongoing mentoring and coaching as each participant and the group as a whole, begins to apply what they are learning to specific areas of need identified and prioritized by the group to improve support student learning at home, school, and/or in their community.

During 2009-2010, Project staff collaborated with the district to develop a strategy for District-wide implementation of Project INSPIRE for work with parents. Eight district and site level community liaisons participated in INSPIRE Certification Training. They then formed a team to offer and deliver Project INSPIRE Level One workshops within the District. They developed an outreach, delivery, and reporting structure with the support of Project INSPIRE staff. Because of the positive response to Project INSPIRE workshops from parents and staff in Spanish, English, and Chinese-speaking communities the School Board approved a resolution in January 2010 to provide and expand Project INSPIRE Certification Training to Community Liaisons throughout district and site levels to support the use of Project INSPIRE to engage parents at a comprehensive level throughout the district. In March, 2010, sixteen Community Liaisons were trained and are integrating Project INSPIRE into their site-specific work with parents and staff. In May 2010, district Community Liaisons who are Project INSPIRE Certified Presenters met to analyze and respond to the proposed district-wide "Parent Engagement Plan." Through a facilitated process, they developed a series of recommendations for District Administration.

The Trainer of Trainers program is now extending Project INSPIRE's reach by working with school and district level staff who work with parents to engage them in a certification program so they can conduct Level 1 training. To date these Expert Level trainers provided 157 parent leadership sessions to 4,878 parents. A simple but immensely important event, which we hope is a harbinger of the benefits of effective parental involvement supporting student learning. Recently two Project INSPIRE Certified Presenters, a middle school and a high school community liaison, collaborated to bring parents of eighth graders and their students to a Project INSPIRE presentation at the high school their children will be attending. The Level 3 Certified Presenters jointly delivered Module 2, the importance of effective home-school communication.

### **Objective 3: At least 60% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development program each year will be parents of English Learners (limited English proficient students).**

Project staff not only met, but greatly exceeded the target number of LEP parents to be trained. The target number of 3,178 was increased by an additional 8,822 providing a year-end total of 12,000 (79% of parents served). This greatly exceeded the target by 121%. This is another significant increase in Year 4 performance objective. The CA PIRC-1 Project curriculum is in English and is translated into Spanish and Chinese. In some districts the parent leadership development program workshops are offered in English and in Spanish at the same school site so more parents can be served. In keeping with Project INSPIRE's priority, the majority of services are conducted in program improvement schools that are heavily minority and LEP. In year 4 for the CABE hub, for example, project staff target Tier I schools with a high enrollment of African American and Latino students. These schools are invited to participate in Project INSPIRE parental engagement activities and other professional development for teachers.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

The dissemination strategies for indirect services include the quarterly PIRC newsletters, brochures in English, Chinese and Spanish. PIRC staff is constantly searching for additional materials in languages other than English to meet the needs of LEP, low income parents.

### Findings: Outcome Data

In the majority of research site schools are parents of English Learners. One of our greatest accomplishments for this school year for Level 2 is the high number of parents that joined the Level 3 parent leadership development program after participating in level 2. By the end of the school year there were over 50 parents—many of them parents of LEP students. Some of the parents that took the challenge and graduated to Level 3 are parents who display a very low literacy level even in their own first language. This was a very exciting challenge to the trainer because the modules were reviewed and the activities modified to reach these parents at their academic learning level.

Many EL parents also returned for a second year to review Level 2 and in the process became mentors and coaches to the new parents. Many of them even co presented with the trainer during the presentations. This was a great experience for them to easily graduate to Level 3 and expand their understanding of the Level 1 modules. Another great accomplishment at one of the schools was to have the PIRC Level 2 graduating class of 2010 be recognized at a school wide student achievement day by the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education. This took our parents and Project INSPIRE to an even higher level within LAUSD. These parents have volunteered hundreds of hours at this school and have qualified as exceptional parent leaders through the parent leadership development program.

At one of the research sites the school principal involved our PIRC parents in deciding where to spend several thousands of dollars on simultaneous interpretation equipment to better address the language barrier at the school meetings and the district meetings as well. The equipment was to be used for ELAC, DELAC, SSC and School Board meeting where parents had limited English skills, Spanish, Vietnamese or other. The PIRC parents were included in deciding the fund raising activity and in the decision making process as well as the planning and costs involved in the schools plan to provide better services to children and parents.

### **Objective 4: At least 30% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development program each year will be parents of socio-economically disadvantaged students.**

The PIRC performance objective requires that at a minimum 30% of the parents (i.e., 1,558) served in Year 4 are to be socio-economically disadvantaged. CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE staff continues to significantly outperform the established targets. In this instance the increase can only be described as spectacular, with an end of Year 4 tally of 88% (i.e., 13,367) of the parents trained are low-income. Moreover, over two-thirds of parents have minimal to no proficiency in English or much of a formal education. It is not surprising then that  $\geq 2/3$  of parents participating in Project INSPIRE's leadership development program have very little information prior to or contact with any aspect of ESEA, e.g., student or school performance accountability, public school choice, nor supplemental services or contact prior to attending PIRC-1's leadership program.

Some in their school community perceive these parents as “not interested, not valuing education, too lazy, unable to understand what goes on at school, nor their child's classroom. Yet these same parents eagerly attended and completed a very demanding leadership program both in time (over 80 hours of study) and performance expectations. It is exciting, impressive and inspiring to observe the profound changes within each parent, each family, each group of parents, as a result of carefully designed modules wherein each masters the content related to schooling and learning, but equally important acquire the skills needed to successfully navigate the school context by learning how: to identify and pose questions; how to approach and collaborate with other parents, teachers, and principals; and participate in small and large group discussions to not only better their understanding of information,

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

but how to work in concert with others to expand and improve the quality of learning opportunities for every child at home, school, and community.

### Findings: Outcome Data

During the course of the 16 module sessions of the Mastery Level and Expert Level parents have an array of opportunities in which they can volunteer and participate as their circumstances permit. More and more parents in each Treatment School are stepping forward to become members of important standing committees such as the ELAC, DELAC or SSC, but several short term committees to address short term needs, e.g., gathering resources to purchase school supplies. An important outcome of the leadership program is that parents are able to see themselves as a “doer” and leader. Completing their Mastery Level leadership development parents are excited and ready to step forward to work with teachers and principals, only to find that teachers and principals do not have any experience in working collaboratively with parents. An important learning is the need to include teachers and principals in the same modules with parents, thereby helping school personnel and parents identify a “menu” of projects or activities that would best support the day-to-day school program.

Project INSPIRE parents are emerging as the core PTA volunteers for fundraisers across Treatment Schools. These parents carry their responsibility with great respect. A cross-cutting sentiment among parents in Treatment Schools: “What could be more important than supporting my child’s learning and that of other children? It is their future that is important. So whatever it takes, I will do it. I now understand how I can help my child learn.” Treatment parents learned how: to create a time and place where they could sit together and have their child share what they learned at school that day; to ask “open-ended questions” which required more thinking and extended responses than “yes” or “no,” ; and to identify a place and time to do homework and study.

At school, Treatment parents working collaboratively with other parents, teachers, and principals: raised thousands of dollars, and have in one particular case, brought change to the school’s entire play-ground equipment. This was due in part to the principal meeting with parents and sharing with them the need for new equipment to give the children ways of playing safely and together to reduce fighting and accidents during recess. At another school, PIRC parents were involved in fund raising events that led to the purchase of over one thousand books to replace the out dated books in their library. In other schools parents worked with teachers to prepare “home learning packets” which teachers would be able to send home with a child if that child needed more practice.

There are many examples of how our PIRC services and in particular our modules have impacted parents, one example includes: In Module 10 the topic is about beyond high school and getting children ready for this major milestone event. Parent specialists share the importance of A-G classes and ask the parents to meet with their school academic counselor to review their children’s progress. Some Treatment parents have children that are in high school and some whose children are getting ready for high school. As a result of these discussions, many PIRC parents find themselves reflecting on their own educational needs and wants. One Treatment parent returned to college and is attending the same college with their child. Other parents are also continuing their education through the partnership with the Mexican consulates in San Francisco, San Bernardino and Los Angeles and 49 parents are enrolled in the Plaza Comunitaria and completing their primary, middle and high school.

**Objective 5: At least 65% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development program each year will be parents of students attending underperforming/program improvement schools.**

PIRC staff reaches out to individual Program Improvement Schools, with a priority given to the lowest performing schools serving low-income families. PIRC staff offer parental engagement sessions using the Parent Leadership curriculum in a variety of venues: conferences, parent leadership summits, individual schools and districts. In Year 4 of the project, staff trained 15,190 participants. Of this total: 88% were low-income, and 79% had children who are English Language Learners. Project staff provided services to 1,065 Title 1 schools and 297 non Title 1 schools.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Findings: Outcome Data

At these school sites parents could choose from the 12 module topics and select any number of module presentations (schools/districts on average selected up to 5 modules for their parents). In Year 4 many of these school sites/districts elected to have all twelve modules presented to their parents; for example in one district all the DELAC chairs and vice chairs (100 parents) participated in the 12 sessions at the district level. Each hub also created informative websites with descriptions of its curriculum, goals and services inclusive of videos and photos of workshops to inform the public of Project INSPIRE's PIRC services and priority to serve low-income families in chronically under-performing schools.

Project staff collaborated with UNIVISION and other main newspapers and journals to inform the public of PIRC-1 services and of the positive effect for student academic success. The partnership with the Consulate of Mexico garnered almost weekly talks with the Consul General in his weekly radio address. Through these school-based, district based, county-based and state-based trainings, Project INSPIRE is able to reach a much larger number of low-income families while concomitantly building and nurturing capacity at each these levels. In addition, as noted there is an outreach effort made to involve faith-based and non-profit organizations in low income and rural communities to engage parents in venues that increase the likelihood they will attend Project INSPIRE's parent leadership development.

**Objective 6: At least 30% of the parents participating in Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development *Virtual Pre-K* program each year will be parents of children between birth and age five.**

CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE provided face-to-face training to 1,091 parents, a significant increase (162%) over the target number of 410. It is becoming clear that VPK to be effective needs to be used in a context in which it was developed. This requires a significant commitment by the district, school, pre-school teachers, and their immediate supervisors. However we found that using the VPK activities with parents and helping making it clear to them the underlying structure of an informal lesson so that they could use the VPK lessons and are encouraged how they might create other learning activities at home.

Parents of all children who participate in Module 11, the ECPE module, are finding the activities they can do at home with their children extends the learning of even the older students. The communication between a parent and their children is enhanced through the use of the activities. Parents also learn the power of language and how positive reinforcement is a better motivator for children that also encourages them to achieve academically. VPK services were implemented through a network of preschool teachers, at each hub support from staff, and parent specialists, and parent leaders.

## Findings: Outcome Data

CABE PIRC has partnered with the City of Paramount to provide VPK teacher training to their city run preschools. Once teachers are trained they will work with the parents who have their children enrolled in these preschools. The City of Paramount had a meeting with teachers and other city members to introduce VPK and the sessions were established for parents of preschool children.

PIRC staff delivers VPK parent trainings to guide parents on the activities they can do at home and in the community to support ECE standard learning. These trainings, in turn, provide guidance to ECE staff on how to engage parents to support student learning. The trainings have been 2 hours long each with homework for parent /child to do together with parental guidance. Other activities include:

- A VPK lesson was integrated into Project INSPIRE Level 2, Module 11, at each site. Parents then took home VPK activities to do with their children.

## California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

- Project INSPIRE Level 3 parents in a school contacted the on-site CDC (Child Development Center) preschool and arranged to offer Project INSPIRE Level 1 workshops to CDC parents.
- A paraprofessional who is an authorized Project INSPIRE presenter and a Level 3 parent arranged with the director of the on-site Child Development Center at a school to offer Project INSPIRE Level One workshops and VPK presentations to the parents of the preschoolers.
- Project staff reached out to New Haven Adult School in Hayward and Oakland C-BET program to offer VPK training and activities for parents of young children who are attending adult school classes. In the Oakland C-BET program, project staff collaborated with the C-BET English teacher to create VPK lessons where modeling of shared reading by Project staff in English and Spanish is integrated into the VPK lessons and activities.
- Project staff trained teachers at preschools to utilize VPK as home activities aligned with their classroom curriculum. Parents and children received and learned to use an interactive early literacy journal as part of the program.
- Level 2 parents have supported Migrant Program's early childhood education with Project INSPIRE VPK Program.

**Objective 7: 80% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE parent leadership development program (with the exception of Virtual Pre-K training) will demonstrate enhanced knowledge of standards-based report cards, the state accountability system, public school choice, supplementary service providers, and NCLB requirements, as measured by pre- and post-assessments.**

CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE outreach efforts explicitly target its parent leadership program services to chronically under-performing schools identified by the California Department of Education as Program Improvement schools (PI). The California Department of Education identified the lowest 5% of PI schools. CA PIRC-1 PROJECT INSPIRE is providing parent leadership services statewide to over 64 of the lowest performing schools to support CDE and their respective districts' educational school-wide reform efforts. Project staff met and exceeded project goals for providing information to parents about the State Accountability System, Supplementary Educational Services, and Public School Choice. The number of parents for each of the categories is identified by attendance sheets from Project INSPIRE training. For some parents attendance could be for only one module, but as was stated earlier the average number of modules individual parents attended was five sessions. This is especially true for Level 1 training where sessions were offered in conference settings, school sites, and district level training. All level 2 and 3 training includes unique counts of parents who attended all 12 modules at the treatment sites.

GPR Objective	Total Number of parents involved in direct face to face parent leadership development program	Total Number of identifiable parents who received Information directly*	Total Number of parents who received information through radio, television and other media
State Accountability Systems	11,527	597	73,027
Supplementary Educational Services	12,181	471	1,192,770
Public School Choice	10,790	747	1,006,028

\*This number is low because this information was not tabulated until after the annual progress report submitted in June 2010. Identifiable parents now sign a roster when they receive information in any of the three areas.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Findings: Outcome Data

The three parent leadership development programs' training modules relate specifically to the GPRA standards are modules 1 through 9 with the exception of module 2 and 3. These modules include the content for SES, Accountability, and Parent Choice. During the parent leadership training parents also receive handouts, and are provided and review additional resources of the subject matter by the trainer for each module. The module discussions with the parents include small group sharing, "community learning theory" and sharing in a large group setting as well. During the discussion of school choice, parents are given additional resources beside the module material about what other choices their communities and surrounding areas offer. Some of the parents at the Level 2 schools have planned and gone on field trips to visit Charter and Magnet schools in their areas. They then come back and do an evaluation of the schools and analysis of their finding with the other parents. The PIRC Parent Specialists encourage parents to explore other options and to discuss their opinions openly and freely.

An example of the type of parent engagement at one of the research sites included the District Central Office Enrollment Specialists who joined the Project INSPIRE workshop #8 to answer parent questions about programs available at specific school sites and enrollment processes, particularly in reference to students transferring from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. Project INSPIRE parent participants later reported that they had called and visited the District Enrollment Office to request specific program choices for their children. When they interacted with the Enrollment Office, they reported that they felt confident that they understood how to advocate for their children, and that they felt welcomed; they specifically mentioned that they felt that they had a relationship with the Enrollment Office staff.

At Project INSPIRE research site schools, project staff obtain and study with parents the District Enrollment Guide, which gives particulars of programs available at each school. School staff on site explain enrollment processes and selection criteria. After studying bilingual program models in Module 8, parents advocated with Principal and Staff at their site through the ELAC to convert to a more effective late exit model.

**Objective 8: 90% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development program (including Virtual Pre-K training) will demonstrate enhanced knowledge of California Content Standards, ways parents can be involved in schools, and ways parents can support their children's learning at home, as measured by pre- and post-assessments.**

The results of the parent, teacher, principal interviews and focus group responses indicated the following:

- At Project INSPIRE Level 2 research sites, as part of Module 7, parents reported that they study their school's SARC and their school's accountability information using CDE's Dataquest and individual school websites.
- At Project INSPIRE Level 2 sites, as part of Module 6, parents form grade-alike small groups and study the grade-level standards in at least one subject area. They discuss which of the standards they have seen reflected in their students' work across and within classrooms at the grade level. They also talk about their individual children's learning strengths and role play how they might share with the teacher their observations about how their children learn and ask the teacher to help them find ways to support their children's progress in learning the standards.
- Principals at various schools (Research sites) joined the Project INSPIRE group to answer questions about the school's PI status and school improvement plan. Parents asked when they would have an opportunity for input in revising the plan. They also asked to see budget allocations and offered the Principal suggestions for increasing reading achievement through parent support of daily at-home reading.
- Parents started Module 6 on Standards and testing by expressing that they and their children were feeling anxious and pressured about standardized tests. One mother feared that her child would fail the grade level if

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE

## 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

the score was not high enough on the test. After studying how the standards-based instructional system functions during the workshop, parents felt more confident about supporting their children's academic progress

- At Freedom School in Pajaro Valley USD, 50 parents attended the school's first Project INSPIRE workshop. Site administrators studied the parent evaluations with project staff and saw that parents requested information about the District's budget issues, which had been in the local news media. Project staff then presented Module 4, which gave parents basic information about school governance and funding. At the end of the module 4 presentation, parents worked in small groups to generate specific questions about the budget. The site administrators invited a District budget analyst to come to a parent meeting the following week to answer the parent questions.
- Parent Journals of parents attending the Level 2 and 3 Parent Leadership Development program parents reported a fuller understanding of School Accountability and their role in their child's schooling by: a) checking to see that their children completed their homework an average of 5 times per week; b) helping their child with their homework an average of 6 hours per week with an average of 30 minutes each time; c) checking that their children did their homework at a set time and place on the average of 4 times per week; d) attending conference/meetings with their children's teacher an average of 10 times per year with each meeting lasting an average of 20 minutes; e) asking teachers how they might help their children at home to improve learning an average of 6 per year; and f) talking to their child about the importance of his/her education on the average of 3 times per week.

**Objective 9: 85% of parents and educators participating in the Project INSPIRE parent education and leadership development program each year will report that delivery of content is of high quality and highly useful to them and have increased their participation in their child(ren)'s education.**

Direct Services- The **Process Evaluation** focused on answering the following questions: a) Were all project activities (i.e., key strategies) implemented as planned? (Timeliness and Quantity); b) How well were project activities implemented? (Quality); c) Were people trained as planned? (Timeliness and Quantity); and d) How well were participants trained? (Quality).

Quality of Training: Parents consistently rated the 12 module Parent Education and Leadership Development series as outstanding or above average:

- a. 96% rated the quality of the content as outstanding (74%) or above average (22%). Six percent considered the content to be average, with only 1% rating the content to be below average or poor.
- b. 97% felt that the quality of presentation was outstanding (74%) or above average (23%).
- c. 95% indicated that the quality of organization, e.g., agenda, individual and group activities, and handouts) were outstanding (72%) or above average (23%).
- d. 98% stated that the quality of the presenter's preparation was outstanding (74%) or above average (24%).
- e. 97% rated the relevance of the training to their family, job, school, and/or community as outstanding (76%) or above average (21%).

**Objective 10: 80% of parents participating in the Project INSPIRE Level II and Level III parent education and leadership development program will produce improvements in parental engagement in schools and with their children.**

An example, a CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE parent assumed responsibility to develop school-wide activities for parents. One parent group took the initiative to organize two school-wide cultural events: Latino Heritage Day and

## California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

Mother's Day. Students prepared and presented heritage culture, poetry, song, dance, and theater. With parent advocacy and support in preparing students, teachers collaborated to create the parent-initiated events. This event drew approximately 200 family members. Parents in the Paramount area also planned and engaged 300 parents in a "Despierta Mujer" conference where personal and educational topics were discussed. To increase parent involvement, a group of parents in another project school are developing parent to parent outreach strategies, e.g., Project INSPIRE parents identified three key locations whereby everyone has to pass where they set up a "Welcome Parent Table" at all school-wide events, such as Open House, Parent/Teacher Conference. Each table has at least 4 parents, who introduce themselves with a smile, and while handing out copies of the school newsletter, flyers of interest to parents, they begin to share information on up-coming activities of interest to parents and their children which the emerging parent group has identified. They have sign-up sheets just in case, or at least they have a name and phone number.

At one of the Treatment schools, the Principal shared the need to collect money for copy paper – Level 3 participants addressed the issue by taking the lead and with the support of Level 2 participants they made all parents aware of their schools immediate need and asked for their support. Parents sold tickets to raffle items. This was a win-win for teachers who now had the supplies they needed for instruction. The Level 3 (Expert) and Level 2 (Mastery) parents effectively modeled an integrated and coordinated effort not only for all children, but teachers, principals, and parents at their child's school. The tickets sold raised money for school supplies.

Parents participating in the CA PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE Parent Leadership Program have:

- Gained awareness of their role as their children's first teacher – of the need to ensure their students attend school regularly and that homework provides guidance for them to know what their students are learning and ways they can expand, nurture, and review the units taught;
- Become more familiar with academic standards and have gained knowledge of how they can create academic goals and units of learning at home and in the community;
- Realized they have the right to visit the classroom and that by doing so learn how they are able to best support students at home;
- Gained awareness that the school does need and benefit from their collaboration and that they should not wait for the school to contact them, rather, that they can take the initiative to contact the school to address their interests and concerns;
- Formed project targeted committees to bring programs to school, fundraising events, and dynamic action to create change;
- Collectively prepared themselves and followed through to present issues and petitions of concern at the State Board of Education meetings when they learned that their children were not achieving and the district was not listening to their concerns;
- Realized the need to support teachers to build a partnership and they have built strong communication with their children's classroom teachers in order to support academic success; and
- Made counselors and teachers accountable for student learning by requesting support and creating working contracts of what each will do to support the student.

**Objective 11: Students in districts with satellite centers whose parents participate in the Project INSPIRE intensive parent education and leadership development program will demonstrate improvements in student achievement as measured by increases in attendance, standardized assessments, and grades.**

Project INSPIRE program activities also include conducting a randomized, quasi-experimental research study designed to examine the impact of parental engagement on student achievement and the relative effectiveness of the CABE Project INSPIRE Parent Leadership Development Program. There are sixteen (two schools did not fully follow the program and were dropped from the study) school-based centers participating in the study where project staff

## California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

facilitates local parent education and leadership development and the dissemination of project relevant materials. In the project study Project INSPIRE posits four factors that are critical towards improving or blocking parent involvement that supports student learning. They are:

- ***Types of Parent Involvement*** (extent to which parents are: introduced to each type of engagement; and, provided with opportunities to "practice" each type of engagement),
- ***Frequency of Involvement*** (i.e., how often parents are provided opportunities to learn, practice, and reflect on each type, as well as once learned, the opportunities they are provided to implement each type of involvement),
- ***Intensity of Involvement*** (amount of time spent learning, practicing, and reflecting on each Type of involvement, and once learned the opportunities they have to implement each type), and,
- ***Teaching and Learning Strategies*** (used to help parents learn, practice, and reflect on how they can support their child's learning at home, school, and community as well as how to do outreach, facilitate groups, processes used to create active participant centered meetings, and strategic planning to support effective family-school-community collaboration.)

Project INSPIRE's research study has two primary questions: 1) Is the intensive parent leadership program effective in helping parents increase the type, frequency, and intensity of support they provide their child's learning?; And, 2) What impact, if any, does the type, frequency, and/or intensity of parent engagement impact student academic achievement? To answer these questions, the Project INSPIRE longitudinal study looks at the relationship between parent engagement and the academic achievement of their children. This study randomly selected pairs of a Treatment School and a Matched Control School from the pool of chronically under-performing Program Improvement Schools in partnering districts. The school-based intensive parent leadership development is provided to parents, teachers, principals, and community members at each Treatment School. The Matched Control School does not receive access to the intensive parent leadership development program. By tracking parental engagement via each parent's participation in Project INSPIRE's leadership program, as well as the type, frequency, and intensity of parental engagement over time, and monitoring their child's academic achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics, we will assess whether parental engagement will significantly improve 1) their child's learning; and, 2) overall school achievement.

Preliminary findings are consistent with those from other research efforts examining the relationship between parental engagement and student success at school (C. Nye, J. Schwartz, and H. Turner, 2006; Henderson and Mapp, 2008). Project INSPIRE's findings for both Year 3 and Year 4 are consistent: Treatment Students (those whose parents completed and implemented what they learned from Project INSPIRE's leadership development program) realized a statistically significant improvement in the rate and level of academic growth than their peers (Control Students) whose parents had not participated in the leadership program. Moreover, the average rate and level of academic growth of Treatment Students is also greater than the average rate and level of academic growth of their peers statewide.

These trends suggest a closing of the achievement gap. However, please note, these results are tentative, pending completion of Year 5 (AY10-11) of the study. Nonetheless, these preliminary findings are consistent with other research suggesting that when parents from chronically under-performing schools are engaged, their children can significantly improve their learning. Still to be addressed is to understand the number of parents that need to be engaged and the type, frequency, and intensity of engagement needed to improve school-wide achievement. Project INSPIRE is documenting the effectiveness of the leadership development program as well as a positive and convincing relationship between parent engagement and significant increased academic achievement of their children. Finally, as the majority of the families in Treatment Schools are of color (85%), low-income (88%), and English Language Learners (79%), these findings echo Mapp's conclusion (2009) that the relationship between

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

parent engagement and student achievement holds across families of all economic, racial/ethnic, and educational backgrounds and for students at all ages.

The HLM analysis is based on 16,040 observations from 8,514 students in chronically under-performing elementary schools from 11 school districts from northern and southern California. Students' scale test scores in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, along with grade level, are level-1 variables. Student demographical variables, type of school they attended (Treatment School, Matched Control, Other Program Improvement School, Adequately Performing School) and with/without parent authorization of school district to release their child's school data are at level-2. Level-1 variables change along with the grade level, e.g. student test scores and grade level values change. While level-2 variables stay constant, like ethnicity, treatment status, etc.

## Longitudinal Analysis: Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM)

### LEVEL-1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

VARIABLE NAME	N	MEAN	SD	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
ELA	16040	322.57	53.42	33.00	600.00
MATH	16040	346.68	74.70	22.00	600.00
GRADE_2	16040	1.47	1.22	0.00	4.00

### LEVEL-2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

VARIABLE NAME	N	MEAN	SD	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
NSLP_MEA	8514	0.93	0.25	0.00	1.00
SPED_MEA	8514	0.07	0.26	0.00	1.00
TREATMEN	8514	0.52	0.50	0.00	1.00
PIRC_MEA	8514	0.02	0.13	0.00	1.00
ASIAN_ME	8514	0.03	0.16	0.00	1.00
PAC_MEAN	8514	0.00	0.05	0.00	1.00
HISP_MEA	8514	0.79	0.41	0.00	1.00
BLK_MEAN	8514	0.05	0.21	0.00	1.00
OTH_MEAN	8514	0.00	0.05	0.00	1.00
EL_MEAN	8514	0.61	0.48	0.00	1.00

### English Language Arts (ELA) outcome variable

Based on HLM results on student ELA scale scores pooled across Treatment and Non-Treatment Program Improvement schools (Table 1), we found that the mean student ELA score for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders is 332.5 points. Moreover, the mean score goes up by an increment of 5.7 points for each higher grade level. For example the mean ELA scale score for 3<sup>rd</sup>-graders is  $332.5+5.7=338.2$  points; for 4<sup>th</sup> graders it is  $338.2+5.7=343.9$  points. This incremental grade level increase is *statistically significant*.

Controlling for other variables in the model, Treatment School students increase their ELA score by 4.8 points as grade level increases. However, Treatment School students, whose parents participated in Project INSPIRE's parent education and leadership development program, realized an additional 8.8 point increase in their ELA score over and above the average 4.8 grade level increase, i.e.,  $4.8$  (Treatment School grade level increase) +  $8.8$  (parent participates in the education and leadership development program) =  $13.8$  total increase in ELA at each grade level increase. Thus, both Treatment School and Parent Participant variables are statically significant.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

Table 1

Comparing the Rate and Level of Academic Growth in English Language Arts between:  
(1) Students in Treatment and Non-Treatment Schools; and (2) Students Whose Parents Participated in Project INSPIRE's Education and Leadership Development Program and those Whose Parents Did Not Participate

Final estimation of fixed effects (With robust standard errors)

Fixed Effect	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-ratio	Approx. d.f.	P-value
<b>For INTRCPT1, P0</b>					
INTRCPT2, B00	332.527890	2.517791	132.071	8503	0.000
NSLP_MEA, B01	-9.032130	2.291503	-3.942	8503	0.000
SPED_MEA, B02	-55.695258	2.262028	-24.622	8503	0.000
TREATMEN, B03	4.777900	1.034957	4.617	8503	0.000
PIRC_MEA, B04	8.823863	3.273775	2.695	8503	0.007
ASIAN_ME, B05	31.984670	3.842489	8.324	8503	0.000
PAC_MEAN, B06	-1.623396	15.088078	-0.108	8503	0.915
HISP_MEA, B07	6.792414	1.644666	4.130	8503	0.000
BLK_MEAN, B08	-13.277542	3.064416	-4.333	8503	0.000
OTH_MEAN, B09	-15.285246	8.606168	-1.776	8503	0.075
EL_MEAN, B010	-26.279615	1.186317	-22.152	8503	0.000
<b>For GRADE_2 slope, P1</b>					
INTRCPT2, B10	5.655754	0.239863	23.579	16028	0.000

Final estimation of variance components:

Random Effect	Standard Deviation	Variance Component	df	Chi-square	P-value
INTRCPT1, R0	41.31977	1707.32360	8503	40355.75829	0.000
level-1, E	28.35920	804.24451			

Statistics for current covariance components model

Deviance = 165680.797468  
Number of estimated parameters = 14

The rate and level of ELA academic achievement is higher among Asian and Hispanic students than that of their White, African American, or/Other peers.

### Mathematics outcome variable

Based on HLM results for student math scale scores, the mean student math score for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders is 351. The mean score increases incrementally by 4.9 points for each higher grade level. (Table 2) For example the mean math scale score for 3<sup>rd</sup>-graders is 351+4.9=355.9; and, 4<sup>th</sup> graders is 355.9+4.9=360.8. This rate and level of academic growth is *statistically significant*.

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

Table 2

Comparing the Rate and Level of Academic Growth in Math between: (1) Students in Treatment and Non-Treatment Schools; and (2) Students Whose Parents Participated in Project INSPIRE's Education and Leadership Development Program and those Whose Parents Did Not Participate

Final estimation of fixed effects (with robust standard errors)

Fixed Effect	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-ratio	Approx. d.f.	P-value
-----					
For INTRCPT1, P0					
INTRCPT2, B00	350.993479	3.722999	94.277	8503	0.000
NSLP_MEA, B01	-5.736226	3.356447	-1.709	8503	0.087
SPED_MEA, B02	-74.336485	2.941142	-25.275	8503	0.000
TREATMEN, B03	9.949902	1.490692	6.675	8503	0.000
PIRC_MEA, B04	17.005994	5.210105	3.264	8503	0.001
ASIAN_ME, B05	62.407545	5.369243	11.623	8503	0.000
PAC_MEAN, B06	-7.169034	18.111431	-0.396	8503	0.692
HISP_MEA, B07	5.389564	2.353272	2.290	8503	0.022
BLK_MEAN, B08	-29.635704	4.251708	-6.970	8503	0.000
OTH_MEAN, B09	-24.739107	13.911019	-1.778	8503	0.075
EL_MEAN, B010	-22.976616	1.730386	-13.278	8503	0.000
For GRADE_2 slope, P1					
INTRCPT2, B10	4.935303	0.378659	13.034	16028	0.000
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Final estimation of variance components:

Random Effect	Standard Deviation	Variance Component	df	Chi-square	P-value
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INTRCPT1, R0	59.81002	3577.23901	8503	41750.81546	0.000
level-1, E	40.10745	1608.60782			
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Statistics for current covariance components model

Deviance = 177101.616218  
Number of estimated parameters = 14

Controlling for other variables in the model, students in Program Improvement (PI) Treatment Schools on average increase their math score by an additional 9.9 points (over and above the 4.9 mean increase per grade level) than their peers in Non Treatment Program Improvement Schools. Noteworthy, Treatment School students whose parents participate in Project INSPIRE's education and leadership development program realize an additional 17 scale score points as compared to their peers whose parents did not participate. As an example, the average 3<sup>rd</sup> grade math score is 351+4.9 (mean increase by grade level)+9.9 (mean increase per grade level for being in a Treatment School)+17 (mean increase for students whose parents participating in Project INSPIRE's education and leadership development programs) = 382.8 points. Both variables, the grade level increase and parent participation in Project INSPIRE education and leadership development, are *statistically significant*.

Summary:

# California State PIRC-1 Project INSPIRE 2009 – 2010 Evaluation Report

## Recommendations

It was during these focus group meetings that it became evident that two of the selected sites in San Bernardino County and one in Alameda were not fully implementing the design of the parent leadership development project. Steps for Year 4 will be to work intensely to bring either two new schools (since Project Staff have worked closely with two schools in Ontario Montclair School District these may replace those two schools in San Bernardino who are not meeting the goals and objectives. One of the Alameda schools was dropped and another school in San Jose Unified School District will be part of the Level 2 and 3 training research sites.

Clearly, limited funding precludes a more thorough data collection, e.g., more direct observations, more extensive individual and group interviews of parents, teachers, and site administrators. Developing an operational definition of effective home-school relationship requires more in-depth observations, individual interviews, group observations as well as focus groups than are possible with current resources. This provides an impetus for constantly trying to assess the value of each data collection instrument and process to address emerging issues while not compromising our long term assessment of linking parent involvement with their children's academic growth.

## Lessons learned from activities of the CA State PIRC and the CAFE Project Inspire Parent Leadership Development Program

Outreach to and involving traditionally underserved and under-represented families is possible by developing diversity responsive teaching and learning approaches and strategies. Such efforts are successful by creating a learning environment that is safe, reinforcing and validating of what each participant already knows and their lived experience, as well as the collective knowledge and experience of the group. This is made possible through the purposeful and strategic use of group processes and group facilitation skills to nurture the development of a group ethos, a sense of community and the collective power of the "group" to support the academic growth of their children.