



**Date:** December 3, 2009  
**To:** Dr. J. Brian Sarvis, Superintendent  
**From:** Dr. Davis C. Hayden, Director of Research, Evaluation and Technology  
**Subject:** Report on the Board Presentation "CCCS Dual Immersion Program" by Dr. Kathryn Lindholm-Leary

Unfortunately, Dr. Lindholm-Leary's presentation (attached) was fraught with errors and misunderstandings concerning Cesar Chavez. In the following, I will mainly be addressing her conclusions about Cesar Chavez and the data she presented concerning Cesar Chavez.

First, however, in her effort to be extremely positive about dual immersion or dual language programs, Dr. Lindholm-Leary presented evidence that inaccurately represented research findings. For instance, she reports in multiple statements that dual language programs outperform English only programs. In any data collection of this type, there is a distribution of schools from dual language programs and English only programs, and not all dual language programs outperform English only programs. What would have been a more honest statement would be to simply state that "on average", dual language programs outperform English only programs and that properly managed and run, dual language programs can show strong gains by both English learners and English only students. Even this statement might not be true as there are so many selection issues that cannot be fully controlled when comparing schools or programs that are self-selected to programs that are not. We all know that when parents are highly involved in a school, there is a correlation to the students doing better. As you know, I was highly involved in teaching research design and statistics at the graduate level, and I am a little dismayed at the cavalier manner in which limitations of research in this area were not presented and such a biased approach on dual immersion programs was presented. I also note that there is a body of research that seems to supports the dual immersion concept.

For her first two charts, Dr. Lindholm-Leary presents CELDT data. As you know, I talk to the different heads of various departments at CDE fairly often and for the CELDT, I have inquired about its proper usage on many occasions. **First and foremost, it is not an academic achievement test!** It was never meant to be one, and any use of it in that light is inappropriate. It only tells us how a student is progressing on learning English and was never meant to be used in the manner that Dr. Lindholm-Leary is attempting to use it. In addition, using the scaled score

Adams Elementary School	McKinley Elementary School	Roosevelt Elementary School	Goleta Valley Junior High School	Dos Pueblos High School
Cesar Chavez Charter School	Monroe Elementary School	Santa Barbara Charter School	La Colina Junior High School	La Cuesta Continuation High School
Cleveland Elementary School	Open Alternative School	Santa Barbara Community Academy	La Cumbre Junior High School	San Marcos High School
Franklin Elementary School	Peabody Charter School	Washington Elementary School	Santa Barbara Junior High School	Santa Barbara High School
Harding Elementary School				Home School Santa Barbara

for the overall test is inappropriate. The way in which one uses the CELDT to find students proficient requires looking at the overall and all the subscales as a whole.

On her first CELDT chart, she presents percentages for “intermediate” and then a combined “early advanced”-“advanced”, but does not present “proficient.” Why such an odd combination? At the very least, she needed to present the most important category of “proficient.” In addition, where is the 6<sup>th</sup> grade on this chart? The last grade presented, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, is the most crucial grade and on that grade Cesar Chavez does worse. In her title, however, she states “At all grade levels” CCCS does better. She also leaves off the lower grades. Unfortunately, she does not compare these findings to a comparison school of where the students would “otherwise” have attended and does not mention that the sample sizes are very small for Cesar Chavez and the single school she chose to include, Adams. This first chart is insufficient to tell us anything about academic achievement at Cesar Chavez, and tells us little about progress for English learners on English language acquisition.

Her second CELDT chart is no better. Again, she leaves off 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She uses the “overall” CELDT scaled score which should not be used in this way. She does not look at comparison schools, and without the sixth grade, we have no knowledge of how Cesar Chavez actually compares. However, the main problem is again that we should not even be looking at this chart for any determination about academic progress for English learners at Cesar Chavez.

Her next two charts look at California Standards Tests, or CSTs. We can all agree that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class of 08-09 was a strong one for Cesar Chavez and it comes close to matching some of our lower performing schools (schools also in Program Improvement status). However, what about all the other grade levels, especially the crucial ones, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>? Again, her graphs are very selective and show nothing more than what is in the charts that I presented to the board. Those charts include Adams and all the other schools that the students would “otherwise” attend. I also included all grades for the comparison school. Her data is not “wrong”, it is just very selective and even though selective, does not support showing Cesar Chavez in a good light.

Finally, in her conclusion she makes some inaccurate statements. She states that the Cesar Chavez program is a “new program at upper grades.” This is not entirely true. The school is now 10 years old and they have had upper grades for 5 years now. As one can see below, they have actually had the advantage of small class sizes for most of these 5 years at the upper grade levels. They have also been fully informed of their low CSTs for 4 years, so this can hardly be called a “new” program or a “new” school.

	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
08-09	36	24
07-08	27	13
06-07	14	17
05-06	18	9
04-05	8	0

Dr. Lindholm-Leary makes the statement that the “CST, CELDT and resulting API are based on relatively more grade 2-3 students and relatively fewer grade 4-6 students.” As one can see above, this is not true for 08-09 as both the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades were full. Also, I’ve no idea why she thinks that CELDT scores are included in the API, as they are not.

She states that “Also, large percentage of CCCS students represented in several different subgroups (EL, Hispanic, socioeconomically disadvantaged) of API - these risk factors are each associated with additional decreased student achievement. Not surprising to see lowered API.” I believe that Dr. Lindholm-Leary just does not understand that Cesar Chavez is in the advantaged position here in comparison to the other schools in our district as they have less “disadvantages” than most of them. They have higher parent education levels, they have less socio-economically disadvantaged, and they have fewer English learners. In general, Dr. Lindholm-Leary gets this backwards. I can only assume that she was told this by others and did not have the time to check her facts on this issue.

I do not find anything to critique in her recommendations, and believe that she probably is quite knowledgeable in terms of what a good dual immersion program looks like and needs.

In conclusion, my analysis of her report finds it fraught with errors and a lack of understanding of the purpose of the CELDT, seemingly no basic understanding of API and what it is about and composed of, full of incomplete data analyses and misstatements about the basic demographics and understanding of Cesar Chavez. Given more time and a chance to consult with her, I believe that many of these errors could have been corrected. As always, I am willing to go over the actual data with anyone so that at least that part of any discussion is based on accurate information.