Success Despite the Odds:
Achieving Academic Success with Spanish-Speaking English as a Second Language Students

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I want to thank my parents for teaching me the value of perseverance, my family for their support and sacrifice, and the members of Cohort 13 for providing laughter and encouragement from beginning to end.
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ABSTRACT

The changing cultural demographics of many Center City schools have caused an increase in the need for English as a Second Language programs throughout the district. In an effort to meet the educational needs of a growing population of non-English speaking families, educators and researcher have developed many curricular models. Within the last century language acquisition models evolved, leaving educators with numerous approaches to help their students learn academic and social English. However, despite these developments, not all schools with English as a Second Language students, have implemented and maintained academically successful programs for these children.

The objective of this study was to first define and identify a curricular model and school within the Center City School district that demonstrated academic success with Spanish-Speaking. Using research based literature that addresses effective schools, school leadership, and effective educational models for ESL students, I established a standard that I could use for comparison. Having accomplished that prerequisite, I examined the factors that contributed to ensuring the academic success of impoverished Latino children in a specific urban school’s ESL program.