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Widely Used ELL Model To Undergo First Rigorous Evaluation

Portland, OR—Education Northwest has been awarded a highly competitive \$2.8 million grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) for a four-year experimental study of Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design). Although GLAD has been used by more than 48,000 teachers in 13 states to help English language learner (ELL) students develop academic English skills, the model has never undergone such a rigorous evaluation.

The Education Northwest study will examine GLAD’s effectiveness through a randomized control trial involving fifth-grade teachers and students in 25 Idaho elementary schools. Teachers in treatment classrooms will receive GLAD training and follow-up coaching during two years. Teachers in control classrooms will not be trained during that time but will subsequently receive GLAD training.

The research team will focus on whether GLAD training impacts student outcomes in reading, writing, and science. According to Principal Investigator Theresa Deussen, “Since its development in the 1990s, GLAD has been very popular with educators. This is a great opportunity to rigorously test its impact and to address a compelling and growing need in the region for programs that work with ELL students.”

Deussen adds that Idaho was selected as the study site because it has a rapidly increasing ELL population and its teachers have not been trained previously in GLAD strategies. Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna acknowledged, “Education Northwest is working with the Idaho State Department of Education to provide research-based professional development to Idaho teachers so we can all work together to improve student achievement among our limited English proficient students.”

Education Northwest CEO Carol Thomas said the IES award provides “yet another example of our capacity to conduct the most rigorous evaluations, adding to our reputation for providing highly relevant research and technical assistance.” Education Northwest, based in Portland, Oregon, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming teaching and learning. For more than 40 years, the organization has worked to improve learning by building capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development. More information about Education Northwest is available at www.educationnorthwest.org.