

CARMEN SANCHEZ SADEK, Ph.D.

President, LA/USC Chapter of CAFE

3113 Malcolm Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034-3406

(310) 474-5605

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Letters to the Editors:
The Los Angeles Times
Time Mirror Square, Los Angeles 90053

Sirs:

NOTE: This letter has been prepared by members of this Chapter of the California Association for Bilingual Education

Regarding your article "2 Inglewood Schools Defy Odds, Achieve Excellence" (Feb. 3, 1992), I feel saddened by the impoverished experiences that Limited English Proficient (LEP) students must have at those schools.

The Principals featured in the article do not approve of bilingual education.

Bilingual education aims to develop the LEP child's **mind**. Bilingual Education teaches the LEP child how to think, how to analyze and solve problems, how to reason, how to understand, and it gives him/her every opportunity to develop, "from the moment they enter school", the critical thinking skills that are urgently required in our technologically sophisticated society. Bilingual Education is about **working with the LEP children's mind, not their tongue**. I am sure that the Principals' disapproval is the result of a lack of understanding, because bilingual education does NOT have as a "goal to teach (students) Spanish".

Imagine a Kindergartener--or a student in any other grade--, who cannot understand a word of English. In these Inglewood schools, this child is placed in a classroom where he/she MUST BEGIN TO LEARN TO READ ENGLISH "FROM THE MOMENT THEY ENTER SCHOOL"-- as these Principals described their instructional programs. How can a child learn to READ in a language he/she does not understand or speak? In essence, all the LEP children at these schools are put "on hold" for two or three years, until they learn enough English. Meantime, nothing happens in their minds. At the critical developmental stage when their curiosity and their intellect seek to understand the world, and when their ability for growth in the academic areas is tremendous, these LEP children are locked into a

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