

For Immediate Release
November 9, 2006
Becky Powell
(202) 403-6843

National High School Center Provides Guidance on Supporting Academic Success Among English Language Learners in High School

Washington, D.C. – The National High School Center released a research brief today, *“Improving Literacy Outcomes for English Language Learners in High School: Considerations for States and Districts in Developing a Coherent Policy Framework,”* outlining recommendations for states and districts to better support adolescent English language learners (ELLs).

A key finding of the brief indicates that ELLs who are supported in accessing high-level courses develop higher levels of literacy than do ELLs of similar proficiency who are tracked into low-level courses. “In too many instances, we are seeing ELLs, especially Latino ELL students, being placed in remediation courses when the body of existing research clearly indicates that ELL students need to be exposed to and supported in higher-level courses to maximize success,” said Joseph Harris, interim director of the National High School Center.

The brief outlines existing barriers regarding teacher expectations, tracking, and placement of ELL students and offers key policies and useful strategies in building capacity and developing learning environments conducive for all students in obtaining academic success. “English language learners represent a critical mass of student learners in today’s high schools, and these numbers are expected to rise. It is critical that *all* students gain access to an appropriate and challenging academic experience to succeed at high levels in order for the United States to remain competitive in today’s global workforce,” added Harris.

The brief, authored by WestEd, a partner of the National High School Center, is available free-of-charge on the National High School Center’s Web site at www.betterhighschools.org. Additional tools and research on adolescent English language learners, as well as other pressing topics concerning high schools and high school students, are expected to be published by the National High School Center in the near future. Viewers are encouraged to sign up for the [National High School Center E-newsletter](#) to receive periodic announcements of the latest tools, products, and research regarding high schools.

About the National High School Center

The National High School Center (www.betterhighschools.org), established in 2005, serves as a central source of expertise on high school-related issues for all students, with a special focus on students with disabilities, students with limited proficiency in English, and students at risk of school failure. The National High School Center is housed at the American Institutes for Research, located in Washington, DC, and serves the Regional Comprehensive Centers, a national network developed by the U.S. Department of Education. Subcontractors include Learning Point Associates, MDRC, the National Center for Educational Accountability, and WestEd.

###