

**Critical Issue: Using Technology to Support Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students'  
Learning Experiences**  
*Pathways to School Improvement*

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Educational technology as a learning tool can increase opportunities for students. As educators and policy makers look at effective ways to integrate technology in LEP students' learning, research-based understanding of technology integration to support and extend LEP students' learning experiences through adequate and effective strategies has become a necessity. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) clearly sets a goal for LEP students to meet the same challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic content standards expected of all students. The law also states that every student should be technologically literate by the 8th grade, regardless of student background or family socioeconomic status. LEP students, moreover, will be tested in English after they have attended school in this country for three years.

With these rigorous requirements in mind, this paper will focus on the critical issue of using technology as a tool to enrich classroom practices for LEP students. Arising from the informed understanding of a variety of language instructional programs, it shows how technology can be beneficial and successfully used, regardless whether the classroom setting is mainly bilingual or contains an ESL (English as a second language) component. This paper supports the view that academic content understanding and technological literacy should, ideally, develop simultaneously to: Increase strategic use of technology; Enhance LEP student orientation in content classrooms; Redefine teacher roles; and Increase access and equity for LEP students. In this paper, we look at research and examine diverse school settings that range from high-poverty schools in El Paso, Texas, to a more prosperous district of Schaumburg, Illinois, where technology is used successfully with LEP students. Together, development of these interrelated components offers a promise of making LEP student academic success a reality.