

thinkingless world. And LEP children lose out completely since there is no academic input they can understand.

Children are, above all, docile and mindful of adults, and, thus, they follow the school routines even if they understand little or nothing. Eventually, they may drop out of school. Research indicates, however, that THEIR DECISION TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL IS MADE IN THE THIRD GRADE!!!! Extensive evaluation studies of LEP students attending bilingual programs show that they tend to stay in school longer, and graduate from high school in greater numbers, than LEP students NOT attending bilingual programs. One of the sad facts about LEP students who eventually drop out, is that they do not fully control the English language, nor do they have mastery of their native tongue. They are defined in the research literature as "Limited Bilinguals". Basically these are individuals who do not have enough language skills in neither of the languages they precariously control. Research has found that Limited Bilinguals are the result of "pushing" LEP students into English too soon. Research has also demonstrated that when concepts are learned, through whichever language, these concepts become readily available once a second language is learned. In other words, once a student learns "addition" through his/her native language, they can add correctly in the second language they have learned. "Dos más dos son cuatro" leads effortlessly to "Two plus two are four."

Parents who receive accurate information about bilingual education fully support it for its many benefits for LEP children--and for children who only speak English, too!!! Parents realize that it is essential for the wellbeing of their children that they continue to guide their children, especially through puberty and adolescence. When parents and children cannot communicate because the children have been forced to develop language skills in a language that the parents do not understand nor speak, the most important teachers that a child has are rendered, in effect, MUTE. **Bilingual education promotes strong family ties!!**

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