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for Urban Education  
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## 2011-2012

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# NYSABE Bilingual Times

## A Message from the President, Maria-Angélica Meyer



### Hello New York State!

It is with distinct pleasure and honor that on behalf of our Executive Board, Delegate Assembly, and Executive Director, I present to you our third edition of the Bilingual Times Newsletter. This edition will showcase all the important work that has been done and the work that continues to be in progress.

To say that this has been an exciting, challenging, and busy year for our organization would be an understatement! As we look back with pride on the work that we have accomplished, we must look forward optimistically and prepare for a period of continued growth and challenges. As my term as the 36<sup>th</sup> President of NYSABE nears its end, I must reflect on and share the work we have accomplished this year.

I enthusiastically assumed my role as president in September of 2011 and was fully prepared for the challenges that lay ahead. However, I knew that the only way to face and overcome those

challenges would be by ensuring that we were not working alone. The focus was always to address the strategic goals of our organization: Advocacy; Networking and Membership; Professional Development; Dissemination of Information and Communication; Leadership and Financial Stability; and to stay true to our mission with the focus on our students and their families.

During this past year, NYSABE participated in many pivotal meetings and discussions related to the NY State Education Department initiatives. We sought out partnerships with other organizations such as NABE NYSTESOL, ADASA, RBE-RNs, and the National CCSS Steering Committee so that our voice was stronger and louder and therefore could make a bigger impact. The powerful collaborations that took place this year had many positive results for our students and their families. For example:

- We ensured that Regents agenda items such as Common Core State Standards, Teacher Effectiveness, Data Driven Instruction (Student Learning Objectives, APPR) were aligned with the specific needs of English language/bilingual learners.
- We reviewed the components of ESEA Waiver Applica-

tion and made appropriate recommendations. This collaborative effort resulted in New York State's Request for an ESEA Waiver approval by the U.S. Department of Education.

- We created a draft document of recommendations, in collaboration with Board of Regents member Dr. Betty Rosa, to address the proposed revisions of Commissioner's Regulations Part 154. This enormous effort brought together many individuals from all realms of the educational field. NYSABE will be presenting these proposals to the Board of Regents in the near future.

- We have supported and will continue to support the preservation of Local Diploma and the passing of the Dream Act.

The work did not stop there. We must applaud the dedication, tireless efforts, and unending support of two very special people, Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo and

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## A Message from the President (cont.)

Carmen Pérez-Hogan!! Their advocacy and leadership at the legislative level introduced the Seal of Biliteracy in New York State. It is with enormous pride, pleasure, and honor that I inform you that both the Assembly and Senate passed this historic bill in New York State, allowing us to follow in the footsteps of California, the first state to pass a Seal of Biliteracy bill. The bill is currently on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature!! A feat of this magnitude was not accomplished alone. This monumental effort that NYSABE ignited resulted in over 1,100 letters of support from statewide educational organizations, RBE-RNs, community based organizations, individuals, districts, parents, educators, and students. This movement even crossed state lines and reached a national level with the endorsement of our National Association ~ NABE and Californians Together. WOW!

In March 2012, we proudly presented our 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, ***"Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood through Higher Education."*** During our conference we presented many "firsts", which are detailed in the pages that follow. Read on to find out about them!

Another major effort this year was to improve the dissemination of information. We accomplished this goal in many ways. I would like to commend two very special people that were instrumental in this endeavor. One is Dr. Tamara Alsace, the

editor of our Bilingual Times Newsletter and Dr. Aida Nevarez La Torre, the editor of our JMER (journal). Thank you both for your exquisite work and maintaining such high standards! Our newly redesigned website offers ways to **connect** with our membership, **communicate** our agenda to the public, and **collaborate** with partners and affiliates. In fact, this has been a year in which **collaboration, communication, and connection** have been at the core of this organization. What we witnessed this past year demonstrated that anything is possible as long as we stand united, with ONE strong voice.

The upcoming year promises to continue to be a challenging one for our students, as well as the educators who teach them. For this reason, participation is key and I urge you all to continue to take an active role in our organization in any capacity in which you are able. It can be as simple as keeping up with current events, attending your regional activities, bringing friends and encouraging them to become members, and/or just becoming a member of other organizations, especially our national affiliate. We are a strong voice within NABE and can only succeed if we make that voice stronger!!!

Keeping current with the issues, contacting with your senators and representative when asked, and attending regional meetings are some other simple ways to make a difference for our students.

As I proudly approach the end

of my term, I confidently pass on the legacy of our association to our incoming President, Dr. Awilda Ramos-Zagarrigo. I know that she will embark on a new journey with a focused vision that will move our organization forward. I can guarantee that she will be blessed with the enormous support that I experienced during this past year. I express my sincere gratitude to all the individuals that made the hard work and the long hours seem effortless. I commend our Executive Board and Delegate Assembly for their commitment, dedication, hard work and passion that was evident every step of the way. It was a true honor to serve with them. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to two very specific individuals, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, NYSABE Executive Director and Past President (1994-1995), and Eudes Budhai, NABE Vice-President and NYSABE Past-President (2005-2006). Their unfailing support, deep insight and sound advice each and every day were invaluable to me.

This year was an amazing experience in which I met many passionate people across New York State. I express my heartfelt thanks to all the members of this organization, the more than 300,000 bilingual learners, their families, and their educators for the opportunity afforded to me this year, the support I experienced and the trust you bestowed on me.

Warmest regards,

*Maria-Angélica Meyer*

Maria-Angélica Meyer  
NYSABE President, 2011-2012



From the Desk  
of the Executive  
Director,  
Nancy Villarreal  
de Adler

## From the Desk of the Executive Director

It is with immense professional pride and gratitude that I write this note for our Spring-Summer issue of the NYSABE Bilingual Times Newsletter.

We began the present school year by celebrating NYSABE's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the legacy of our past presidents and leaders in Bilingual Education. Throughout the year, we have continued honoring that heritage by strengthening our advocacy agenda and taking effective steps towards the successful accomplishments of our goals. Similarly, we have continued to enhance our means of communication and dissemination of information while providing our members with multiple opportunities to assume leadership roles in the field of Bilingual Education and within our organization. Further, we have strengthened our linkages with national, state, and local professional and community-based organizations through our networking and professional development activities.

As we transition into the summer season, a time for reflection and planning for the future, we can attest to the fact that none of our accomplishments would have been possible without the endless commitment and active participation from our NYSABE members. Their spirit of collaboration, sense of mission, and

teamwork has demonstrated once again the true meaning of the POWER OF UNITY!! Thank you all for your tireless work on behalf of our bilingual learners.

Have a great Summer!!

*"Be the change you wish to see in the world."*

*-Mahatma Gandhi*



**Communicating,**

**Collaborating,**

**Connecting**



**Editor, Tamara Alsace**

## Editor's Note:

This final issue of the NYSABE Bilingual Times for the 2011-12 year, is packed with conference highlights, pictures, regional news, and much more. Please examine our advocacy agenda, adeptly summarized by our Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, and consider how you might be an instrument of change with regard to the issues NYSABE has identified and that have been included here. As you think about how these issues relate specifically to your school, district, and/or region, begin to formulate a plan of action. What can you do yourself? How might you get others involved? Who in your area needs to hear the message(s)? ACT NOW! ...and have a wonderful summer.

**NYSABE's 35<sup>h</sup> Annual Conference**  
***"Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood through Higher Education"***

**Written by: Yolanda Rodriguez, Conference Chairperson**



The New York State Association for Bilingual Education has been committed to students, parents and educators for the past 35 years! Our commitment to exemplary practices benefiting all second language learners is evident as we proudly present our annual conferences. It was an honor to have had the opportunity to undertake the important role of being this year's conference chairperson. Our focus this year was *"Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood to Higher Education."* It was my great honor to collaborate with an extraordinary group of professionals to plan this year's conference, where educators, parents, administrators, institutions of higher education, researchers, clinical personnel, and support personnel, in conjunction with policy makers and community leaders, had the opportunity to gather and share their innovative visions and common goals. This was an opportunity for NYSABE to present high quality professional development opportunities to all.

This huge endeavor could not have been accomplished without the support of the NYSABE Executive Board and Executive Director, Delegate Assembly and the dedicated 27 committee chairpersons that worked diligently to ensure the success of this event.

This year brought many technological advances to the registration process. Through our newly redesigned website [www.nysabe.net](http://www.nysabe.net), conference participants were able to register online and download all the necessary forms, including the call for papers and award nomination forms. Although it was a new and at times challenging process, we accomplished our goal of going web-based. Congratulations to all for going high tech!!

We were also proud to introduce the Early Childhood strand for the first time. This strand provided an opportunity to showcase the importance of developing strong, high quality bilingual early childhood programs. It provided both the practitioners and researchers with workshops that explored bilingual instruction at this early level within both the practical and theoretical contexts. This strand was one among many very powerful strands presented. Others included the Dual Language Strand, Special Education Strand, and Higher Education Consortium Strand. The Parent Leadership Institute and the Educational Leadership Forum were other strong components of the conference.

Our Leadership Forum was a valuable venue in which participants were presented with both the local and national views on Common Core State Standards. Ms. Arlen Benjamin-Gomez (NYSED, Fellow for English Language Learners) and Dr. Okhee Lee (NYU) presented the various perspectives. This session was an open forum (first-time ever at NYSABE) in which participants created their own agenda items and discussed matters that directly impacted on their needs based on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Another "first" was the "Dialogue with the Legislators" in which all conference participants had the opportunity to meet with a panel of New York State Assembly members to discuss key issues in education.

Keynote speakers included **Dr. Ivannia Soto-Hinman**, an Assistant Professor of Education at Whittier College, who specializes in second language acquisition, systemic reform for English language learners (ELLs), and urban education; and **Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld**, the Associate Dean in the division of education at Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY. Her specialty is related to cultural and linguistic diversity, linguistics, ESL methodology and action research. Our participants also took part in sessions in which powerful-featured speakers such as, Dr. Julie Sugarman, Dr. Catherine J. Crowley, and Dr. Zoila Tazi shared their expertise.



In the spirit of connection, communication, and collaboration, we were proud to have in attendance special guests such as Dennis Walcott, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, Laura Rodríguez, NYCDOE Deputy Chancellor for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, Pedro Ruiz, NYSED's Coordinator for the Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies, Rebekah Johnson, President of NYSTESOL, Rosanna Boyd, President of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), and over ten Assembly members from the New York State Legislature, just to name a few.

The success of this conference was dependent on the collaboration of a wonderful group of professionals and organizations. First of all, we would like to acknowledge Long Island Region I, along with the Huntington Hilton Hotel, for being the most gracious hosts. We would also like to acknowledge the following organizations for their unending support:

- NYS Education Department

- The New York City Department of Education

- The Institutions of Higher Education

- All Regional Bilingual Education–Resource Networks (R-BERNS) especially those located at Long Island, Fordham University and New York University

- All of our more than 30 sponsors and vendors~ a special mention to Santillana USA, Attanasio & Associates, Inc (Gold Sponsors) for their unending support year after year.

Our 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, *"Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood to Higher Education"* was a very powerful, energetic, and informative experience for all. It provided many opportunities for all members of the educational field to connect, communicate, and collaborate. The networking and advocacy that took place during our annual conference continues to create strong bonds that are essential in a time in which education is shifting.

The time to continue our journey as educators is now - strengthening and deepening our knowledge and advocating for the rights of our students so that we ensure they are provided a high quality education. For this reason we cordially invite you to our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference taking place in March of 2013.





TO VIEW THE COMPLETE SET OF 2012 CONFERENCE PICTURES, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:  
<http://nysabe.net/conference/>



### ***Parents Creating a Path to Success***

By Maria de los Angeles Barreto, NYSABE Past President 2010-2011

An important component of the NYSABE annual conference is the Parent Leadership institute, designed to help parents understand and participate in the educational system in New York State. This year, NYS Regent Dr. Betty Rosa delivered the keynote address to the approximately 100 hundred parents who attended the institute. During her address, Dr. Rosa emphasized the importance of educators and parents working together to meet the needs of the students. She highlighted strategies that parents can use to advocate for their children and she reminded them that they can actually be the best advocates. Dr. Rosa also stated that children must reach their full academic potential through equal access to quality instruction, enhanced classroom materials, and multiple services available in schools. She reiterated that as their children's advocate, it is the parents' role to support their path to success by providing valuable educational experiences at home and in the community. In closing, Dr. Rosa highlighted the importance of parent participation in the school's decision-making process.

As in the past, the Parent leadership Institute featured a variety of workshops conducted by outstanding educators with ample experience in working with parents. These workshops, conducted in a variety of languages, included the following:

**"Poema Color e Inspiración"**, presented by international artist Ana Soto, highlighted a selection of poems by Hispanic and Latin American writers whose works inspired children's drawings and paintings.

**"How to Raise a Bilingual Child"**, presented by Denise Steele in English, Carmen Rodríguez, in Spanish, and M. Lily Cerat in Haitian Creole, focused on the benefits of being bilingual and strategies to raise a bilingual child.

**"Parents' Strategies to Push Schools to Include Korean Language and Culture in the Curriculum"** was presented by Dr. Kyung Soon Lee in Korean. It focused on the advantages of including Korean language and culture in all school instructional activities.

**"Making College and Careers a Reality for English Language Learners"**, presented by Eva García and Dr. Florence Pu-Folkes in English and Burmese, provided parents with steps to follow in preparing their children for college and careers, beginning in the early childhood grades and continuing through high school years.

**"What Parents Can do to Help ELLs Succeed"**, presented by Nellie Mulkay and Nichole Rosefort in English, French, Haitian Creole and Spanish, highlighted the research findings that support parental tools and ideas to help children succeed in school.

**"Understanding the Special Needs of the English Language Learner"**, presented by Yvonne Sinisgalli and Elizabeth DeFazio-Rodriguez in Spanish and English, discussed how learning a second language aligns with meeting a student's special needs. A discussion and explanation of different disabilities as well as eligibility for services were included in this presentation.

**"You had me at HOLA"**, presented by Yudanny Garcia, offered ideas to organize social events aimed at creating strong networks among families.

During the Parent Institute's luncheon, **Ms. Silvana Medina**, a parent advocate from IS 296 in Brooklyn, was honored as the recipient of the Bilingual Parent-of-the-Year Award.

NYSABE acknowledges the diligent work and remarkable spirit of collaboration of the workshop presenters and members of the Parent Leadership Committee, led by Carmen Alverio-Hope, NYSABE Parent-at-Large. We thank [Audio Resources Group, Inc.](#) whose tools for simultaneous translations allowed all the participants to hear the keynote address in their native languages.



**2012 NYSABE Conference – Major Session II**  
**By Anne Henry Montante, NYSABE Past President 2008-2009**

It is with great pleasure that I write a contributing article highlighting Major Session II at the NYSABE annual conference. The session was convened by NYSABE's immediate Past President, Maria de los Angeles Barreto with an impassioned greeting from President Maria-Angélica Meyer. President Meyer spoke eloquently about the "Three C's: Connecting, Collaborating, and Communicating" which had become an underlying theme to the conference. The President's greeting was followed by remarks from Dr. Pedro Ruiz, who is Coordinator of the New York State Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies (NYSED/OBE-FLS) and 2001–02 Past President. Dr. Ruiz spoke extensively about: 1) the NYSED EngageNY website and available resources pertaining to all students, not just ELLs; 2) assessments and how the NYSESLAT is being aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards; 3) the new teacher evaluation instrument (APPR) and how school districts and unions need to be part of the conversation because as decisions are being made; 4) a new data system so teachers can access accurate data to drive instruction; and most importantly, 5) the civil right of ELLs – "It is more than just saying that we need to do more for ELLs ...we need to be advocates at different levels. It can be difficult at times but we need to make a stand to defend the civil rights of our students. And spread the word with colleagues and parents that their children have the right to a bilingual education...and any other special services that they need."

Next, Dr. Wanda Toledo presented the "Teacher of the Year" award to Luisa Rojas, a third grade dual language teacher at Drexel Aver School (Westbury CSD). Ms. Rojas was described as a compassionate teacher who is committed to her students. She outperformed her colleagues in the achievement of her students in both the math and ELA assessments and many of her students have won the NYSABE essay contests. Aside from her duties in the classroom, Ms. Rojas mentors students and colleagues in her school.

After the award presentation, Mr. Eudes Budhai, 2005–06 Past President and NABE First Vice President, introduced the keynote speaker: Andrea Honigsfeld, Ph.D. Dr. Honigsfeld is Associate Dean in the Division of Education at Molloy College. She teaches graduate education courses related to cultural and linguistic diversity, linguistics, ESL methodology, and action research. She has engaged herself in extensive research in the TESOL field, which led to her most recent publication - *Collaboration and Co-teaching: Strategies for English Learners* with Dr. Maria Dove. In addition, Dr. Honigsfeld is an internationally recognized presenter. She has presented at many conferences within the United States as well as in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

Dr. Honigsfeld's presentation at NYSABE was entitled "Common Core: The Uncommon Challenge of Bilingual Education." The presentation was on the work that she has done on the common core learning standards as it relates to ELLs, in general, and bilingual students, specifically. The research she conducted was to answer three anchor questions:

- 1) What challenges do we face as we discover the meaning of the CCLS for bilingual learners?
- 2) How can we embrace the initiative and make sure that it successfully and meaningfully includes all learners?
- 3) How can bilingual learners receive culturally responsive instruction and curriculum while they develop native and English language skills to succeed academically?

First, Dr. Honigsfeld gave a brief history on the CCLS and where New York State stands as of March 2012 and the three phases of implementation: A) awareness level, B) building capacity level, and C) full implementation level. According to *School Leadership 2.0* (February 2012), the majority of districts are at the planning stage, with very few at the "not doing anything" or at "full implementation" levels.

Second, she shared the results of a series of surveys that were given to teachers and administrators as a means of answering the first anchor question. The survey questions were: 1) How do you perceive the CCLS



for bilingual learners? 2) What is your primary concern regarding the changes CCLS will bring to bilingual learners? 3) What is your primary concern regarding the implementation of CCLS? Which of the 6 instructional shifts (identified by NYSED) will teachers of bilingual learners need the most support with? 6) As a teacher of bilingual learners, which of the following types of support do you need (select from a list)? The results were interesting and extensive but in essence, the data collected showed that the common core learning standards 1) pose a challenge to how ELL instruction has been approached and delivered, 2) present an opportunity for ELLs to have greater access to rigorous instruction and high expectations, and 3) require a shift in overall instruction and a 2<sup>nd</sup> shift in how ELLs are perceived. As such, for educators, it is a balancing act between planning, instruction, and assessment. For full detailed results, visit Dr. Honigsfeld's website <http://coteachingforells.weebly.com/> and click on ccsls\_march\_10\_nysabe.pdf.

Next, she talked about how bilingual and ESL educators can implement CCLS even though the authors of the document stated "...it is also beyond the scope of the standards to define the full range of supports appropriate for English language learners and for students with special needs." (CCLS, p. 4). However, the authors do recognize that "many ELLs have first language and literacy knowledge and skills that boost their acquisition of language and literacy in a second language [and] teachers must build on this enormous reservoir of talent and provide students who need it with additional time and appropriate support." This statement is very much in line with research done in bilingual education that clearly show bilingualism is an asset and not something that needs to be cured. With all of this said, how do bilingual and ESL educators shift from the former New York State ESL and NLA standards to the current CCLS?

To fully implement CCLS and manage the stress of change for teachers and administrators, district leadership teams must look to the research by Ambrose (1987) on managing change.

Vision + skill + incentive + resources + action plan = change  
 -- \_\_\_\_\_ + skill + incentive + resources + action plan = Confusion  
 Vision + \_\_\_\_\_ + incentive + resources + action plan = Anxiety  
 Vision + skill + \_\_\_\_\_ + resources + action plan = Resistance  
 Vision + skill + incentive + \_\_\_\_\_ + action plan = Frustration  
 Vision + skill + incentive + resources + \_\_\_\_\_ = Treadmill

In addition, effective CCLS implementation requires planned changes and monitoring of implementation of assessment, curriculum, instruction, and professional development. (Soto, 2011).

The last anchor question revolves around how ELLs receive culturally responsive instruction and curriculum. To answer this question, Dr. Honigsfeld referred to her own research Dove and Honigsfeld 2012. In order to achieve this, there must be both institutional and individual change. Institutional change includes six ESL/bilingual shifts and redefining the role of ESL/bilingual departments. The six shifts include: 1) a shared vision and mission, 2) curriculum mapping and alignment, 3) collaborative planning, instruction, and assessment, 4) integrated language and content instruction, 5) direct focus on academic language and discourse, and 6) explicit teaching of literacy and language learning strategies. The role of ESL/Bilingual departments include: 1) develop familiarity with CCLS, 2) align NLA/ESL curricula to CCLS (back mapping), 3) design and implement content rich NLA/ESL curricula with a special focus on academic language needed across all content areas, 3) develop and share scaffolded instructional resources, 4) help ensure supportive teaching and learning environment in all classes, 5) align formative and summative assessments to grade level content, 6) offer leadership in CCLS implementation (especially speaking/listening and language strands). Please refer to Dr. Honigsfeld's power point and website for more information.

With the new requirements and districts across New York State struggling to implement CCLS, particularly for ELLs, Dr. Honigsfeld's presentation was timely. She shared the realities of what teachers in ESL and bilingual classes are facing but, at the same time, presented solutions that can be used and modified to fit individual districts. Many thanks to Dr. Honigsfeld for her insights and expertise!

## Leadership Forum

By Eudes Budhai, NYSABE Past President 2005-2006, and NABE First Vice President

This year, in keeping with the conference theme, *Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood through Higher Education*, the Annual Leadership Forum focused on *Uncovering the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Bilingual Learners*. The aim was to experience the implementation of the CCSS from national and statewide perspectives and to provide suggestions and recommendations for future developments in the implementation process of CCSS. After hearing from the featured speakers, the participants set an agenda aligned to the implementation of the CCSS and its impact on curriculum, instruction, and assessments for English language learners. Focus groups shared, discussed, and documented the experiences of districts, schools, and teachers.

Dr. Okhee Lee, a New York University Professor of Early Childhood and a CCSS Steering Committee Member, conducted a presentation entitled **Language Demands and Learning Opportunities through Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts/Literacy and Math and Next Generation of Science Standards**. Dr. Lee gave an overview of the initiative and informed the participants that the Steering Committee would be working on providing the field with more explicit guidance. Dr. Lee made reference to the Understanding the Language Project and presented three goals:

- Engage in a healthy public dialogue on the CCSS and Next Generation of Science Standards (NGSS), and its implications for ELLs.
- Develop exemplars of what CCSS and NGSS-aligned instruction looks like.
- Develop a vibrant, inquisitive, engaging online community.

Ms. Arlen Benjamin-Gomez, a NYSED ELL Fellow, conducted a presentation entitled **Common Core and English Language Learners**. Her presentation focused on the implementation of the common core learning standards, teacher and leader effectiveness, and data-driven instruction, all part of the Regents Reform Agenda. During the presentation, there was a particular focus on aligning the NYSESLAT to the CCSS and exploring native language arts assessments. Ms. Benjamin-Gomez also provided a plan to move forward the curriculum initiatives: ESL, NLA and Bilingual Modules. The graph below represents the timeline that NYSED will follow to coordinate these efforts.

March 2012 - July 2012	Sept 2012 - June 2013	January 2013 - June 2014
Developing a plan to align our Native Language Arts and English as a Second Language Standards to the Common Core	Developing a plan to create curriculum modules for ESL, NLA, and Bilingual Math, that parallel and complement the modules being created for ELA and Math in English	Developing a plan to provide professional development for schools on ESL, NLA and bilingual curriculum modules

For information regarding the Common Core State Standards and English language learners, please visit NYSED's [www.engageny.org](http://www.engageny.org).

It was noted in the discussions that there has been limited guidance and attention provided to educators of English language learners, as well as students with special needs, in relation to the implementation of CCSS. These children are amongst the most vulnerable groups in our school system and we are hopeful that their needs are taken into consideration from the inception to the implementation of transformative reforms. NYSABE is eager and encouraged to see that the timeline presented above will support multilingualism and biliteracy as enrichment to children's lives. We are also hopeful that bilingual education is viewed as the most effective method of acquiring a second language and creating a path towards academic achievement and college and career readiness.

On behalf of the the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), I congratulate NYSABE for hosting a successful conference that benefitted bilingual educators, parents, legislators, and community members and look forward to an ongoing collaboration to benefit the entire bilingual learning community.

## Bilingual Special Education Strand

### by Dr. Alexia Rodríguez—Thompson

The 2012 Bilingual Special Education Strand began with a keynote presentation by Dr. Catherine Crowley, the director of the bilingual speech-language pathology program and Bilingual Extension Intensive Teacher Institute at Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Crowley spoke about common practices in speech-language assessment which have led to the misidentification of communication delays and disorders in many emergent bilinguals. Many speech-language evaluators still rely on tests and checklists that are invalid for most students who are learning English as a second language. Instead of using tools that are only slightly more reliable than “flipping a coin,” Dr. Crowley recommends the use of rich data on typically developing emergent bilinguals.

Bilingual speech-language teachers and evaluators who are interested in improving their skills can take Dr. Crowley’s bilingual extension courses at Teachers College or attend regional workshops sponsored by NYSABE, the New York City Department of Education, and the New York State Education Department’s Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE TASCs).

Break-out sessions included a presentation on identifying and serving limited English proficient students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

*L to R: Dr. Alexia Rodriguez Thompson, Elizabeth DeFazio-Rodriguez, Featured speaker Dr. Catherine Crowley, ASHA Fellow and Board Recognized Specialist in Child Language, Distinguished Senior Lecturer / Director of the Bilingual Extension Institute Program in Speech-Language Pathology at Teachers College, Columbia University., Dr. Maria Victoria Rodriguez, and Jody Sperling.*



Dr. Bernice Moro, of the NYS Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) at New York University shared information about the challenges faced by educators in identifying the strengths and needs of these students. When developing programs for limited English proficient students who are deaf or hard of hearing, one must take into account several factors, such as the dialects of sign language used by the students and their families; variables related to deaf culture, ethnic heritage, and country of origin; and age of onset of hearing loss.

Other break-out sessions addressed the identification of disabilities in young children (Dr. Maria Victoria Rodriguez of CUNY Lehman College); optimizing services and outcomes for emergent

bilinguals who also have disabilities (Alison Provencher, Elizabeth DeFazio-Rodriguez, Lucy Rodriguez, and Margarita Reyes, of the RSE-TASCs, and Alexia Thompson, of NYSED); and misdiagnosis of mental health problems in students with challenging behaviors (Jennifer Cobbs).

Members who work with emergent bilinguals with special needs are encouraged to share their expertise at NYSABE’s regional conferences and consider reaching a wider audience at next year’s annual conference. By building on the successful practices of our members, we can improve outcomes for all emergent bilinguals in the State.



## NYSABE Legislative Luncheon

By Denise Góñez-Santos

The Legislative luncheon, that took place on Friday, March 9 at the 35<sup>th</sup> annual NYSABE Conference, was held in tandem with a breakout session featuring a *Dialogue with New York State Legislators* on issues involving the education of English language learners. These included:

- promoting biliteracy/bilingualism;
- the proposed changes to CR Part 154;
- the concern around future funding of the NYSED's Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (R-BERNS);
- advocacy for early childhood education for ELLs;
- the decrease in the number of bilingual education programs state-wide;
- increasing the pool of certified bilingual education and ESL teachers; and
- the proposed DREAM Act in the NYS legislature.



These issues heightened the awareness of participants and strengthened the focus of the traditional noontime event, expertly organized by the Legislative Luncheon Committee Chairperson, Carmen Pérez Hogan. The goal of the annual legislative luncheon is to inform the NYSABE membership of current socio-political issues that affect the work we do as educators on behalf of our students.

Carmen Arroyo, Chairperson of the Education Subcommittee on Bilingual Education and Assembly member from the 84<sup>th</sup> district in the Bronx, gave the greeting and treated those in attendance to one of her beautifully recited poems. In addition, Assemblywoman Arroyo asserted the need to pay attention and get involved to protect the future of bilingual education and the services to English language learners. Of particular mention was the concern related to the funding for bilingual education which must be specifically identified and utilized for the education of ELLs. Assemblywoman Arroyo stated that going forward the legislature would not accept a budget from the New York State Education Department that does not specify how the money for bilingual education is being used.

Jong-Min Wayne served as keynote speaker for the legislative luncheon. He is a former English language learner and is an advocate for the DREAM Act, comprehensive immigration reform, and the prevention of suicide among undocumented youth. His heartrending speech, "The Dream Act: My story and the Undocumented Student-Led Movement," spoke of the struggles faced by many undocumented youth who are trying to pursue higher education. This presentation called for all present to think about their personal beliefs and responsibilities in a civil society.

Darnell Benoit, Executive Director of the Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project is this year's recipient of the Dr. Antonia Pantoja Bilingual Advocacy Award. She was recognized for her exemplary work and advocacy among Haitian youth in Brooklyn. The work Ms. Benoit has accomplished has taken on increased vigor, particularly after the devastating earthquake that ravaged the island nation on January 12, 2010.

To culminate the Legislative Luncheon, the participating members of the NYS Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task force were invited to share their thoughts, ideas and initiatives with the audience. Assemblymen Guillermo Linares, Roberto Rodríguez, Rafael Espinal Jr., Phil Ramos, and Marco Crespo renewed their commitment to support NYSABE's mission.

**2012 NYSABE Students Essay and Art Award Luncheon**  
**By Yazmín Torres, NYSABE Treasurer and Region V Delegate**

One of NYSABE's goals is to promote quality education for emergent bilinguals. For this reason, the Student Essay and Art Award Luncheon is one of the most important events of our annual NYSABE conference. It is at this luncheon that the winners of the Bilingual Student Essay and the Nivia Zavala Art contests are honored. This year, the luncheon was a true expression of pride, joy, and academic excellence. The luncheon convener, Yazmin Torres, praised the work of the students and the remarkable job done by the contest co-chairpersons, Ms. Amanda Villalba and Ms. Lori Nilof. The organizers said that selecting the winners this year was particularly challenging due to the fact that there were so many excellent entries received from students across New York State.

We were delighted to introduce the following winners for all three grade level categories: 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.:

<b>ESSAY CONTEST</b>		
<i><b>First Place Winners</b></i>	<i><b>Second Place Winners</b></i>	<i><b>Third Place Winners</b></i>
Valeria Suenaga, Grade 5 Drexel School, Westbury Mr. Ramirez/ Mrs. Sandler, Teachers Dr. Wanda Toledo, Principal	Ashley Tavaréz, grade 3 P.S. 169K, Brooklyn Ms. Mary De Jesus, Teacher Ms. Josephine Santiago, Principal	Gianmarcos Ortega, Grade 3 Robert C. Dodson School, Yonkers Ms. Silva, Teacher Ms. Vega, Principal
Florangel Garcia, Grade 8 Harbor Heights Middle School Patricia Pineda, Teacher Monica Klehr, Principal	Ricardo Rosado, Grade 8 Harbor Heights Middle School, NY Patricia Pineda, Teacher Monica Klehr, Principal	Ricardo Rosado, Grade 8 Harbor Heights Middle School, NY Patricia Pineda, Teacher Monica Klehr, Principal
Luis Bisono, Grade 12 Brentwood High School, Brentwood Hector Martínez, Teacher Rich Loeschner, Principal	Juan Baez, Grade 10 Lincoln High School, Yonkers Roberto Scanga, Teacher Edwin Quezada, Principal	Ruddy Santamaria, Grade 12 Brentwood High School, Brentwood Héctor Martínez, Teacher Rich Loeschner, Principal

The first place winners received a certificate of achievement, a gold medallion, and \$100 dollars. The second place winners received a certificate of achievement, a silver medallion, and \$75 dollars. The third place winners received a certificate of achievement, a bronze medallion, and \$50 dollars.

<b>ART CONTEST</b>		
<i><b>First Place Winners</b></i>	<i><b>Second Place Winners</b></i>	<i><b>Third Place Winners</b></i>
Luis Valencia Sanchez, Grade 4 P.S. 169 (Sunset Park School) Brooklyn Title- "New York Life" Ms. Srowr, Teacher Josephine Santiago, Principal	Laccha Espinoza, Grade 5 Museum 25, Yonkers Title "Growing Apples, Growing Friends" Olga Serret Pugliese, Teacher Dr. Wyatt, Principal	Sherlyn Trucios Grade 4 P. S. 169 (Sunset Park) Brooklyn Title " Bridge to New York City" Ms. Srowr, Teacher Josephine Santiago, Principal
Christian Escobar, Grade 8 Robert C. Dodson, Yonkers Title "Wings to the Future" Jay Casella, Teacher T. Reyes-Vega, Principal	Alex Lopex, Grade 8 Robert C. Dodson, Yonkers Title "Mi Barrio" Jay Casella, Teacher T. Reyes-Vega, Principal	Katishka Calderon, Grade 7 Robert C. Dodson, Yonkers Title "Me in the Future Helping People" Jay Casella, Teacher T. Reyes-Vega, Principal
Gladis Guevara, Grade 11 Roosevelt High School, Yonkers Title "Education" Ms. Veresova, Teacher Ms. Sharp, Principal	Vanessa Montenegro, Grade 10 Early College High School, Yonkers Title "Portrait of Man" Mr. Muñiz, Teacher Dianne White, Principal	Diego Leonardo, Grade 10 Early College High School, Yonkers Title "Lily" Mr. Muñiz, Teacher Mrs. Dianne White, Principal

The students' art work was displayed during the luncheon and readings of the essays by the award winners were video recorded by Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network (HITN).

NYSABE would like to thank all participants' parents, teachers, and principals for their support, dedication and commitment to quality education, as demonstrated by the achievements of all participants. Congratulations to all for an exceptional job!

## Higher Education Consortium (HEC) Strand

By Dr. Tatyana Kleyn,  
Region II Delegate

The Higher Education Consortium (HEC) strand at the 2012 NYSABE conference featured a range of panels, round tables and networking opportunities. The HEC planning committee included faculty from a range of public, private, city and state schools, namely Cándido De Jesús (Bank Street), Tatyana Kleyn (CCNY), Nancy Rodríguez (Fordham University), Myriam Eisenstein Ebsworth (NYU) and Tim Ebsworth (College of New Rochelle). The strand featured two panels from the upcoming book "Bilingual Community Education for American Children: Beyond Heritage Languages in a Global City" (Multilingual Matters), edited by Ofelia García, Zeena Zakharia and Bahar Octu.

The presenters were authors of chapters that highlighted opportunities for American children to expand their Bengali, Japanese, Turkish, French, Haitian Creole, Russian and Chinese language practices. The 'Table and Talk' event allowed researchers, teachers, administrators and students to come together to discuss current issues in bilingual education. The topics included: Preparing teachers for today's educational climate; Diversity dilemmas; Advocacy and activism; The role and preparation of administrators; and Issues in research in bilingual education. The HEC looks forward to offering NYSABE members continued ways to advocate, network, and share research with colleagues from across the state.







## A DIALOGUE WITH NYS LEGISLATORS: NYSABE's ADVOCACY AGENDA

During the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 NYSABE presidential terms, our organization's leaders met in Albany with representatives from the New York State Education Department, the NYS Assembly, and NYS Senate. Thanks to the sponsorship of Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo and the coordination of Carmen Pérez-Hogan, the NYSABE Advocacy Team had the opportunity to formulate and discuss NYSABE's Advocacy Agenda that address urgent issues affecting the education of ELLs/bilingual learners. This agenda would serve as a framework for NYSABE's advocacy work in the immediate future.

This year, during the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference that took place on March 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in Melville, NY, NYSABE held a *Dialogue with NYS Legislators*. This special session provided members of the NYS Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force and NYSABE members the opportunity to reflect upon the items included in the NYSABE Advocacy Agenda and discuss recommendations to meet current challenges. Items on the NYSABE Advocacy Agenda are:

- I. The revision of CR Part 154 – Commissioner's regulations for the education of LEP/ELL students
- II. The NYS Seal of Biliteracy
- III. Bilingual education for early childhood ELLs/bilingual learners
- IV. The NYS Dream Act
- V. The assessment of ELLs/bilingual learners in general and special education
- VI. Bilingual/ESL services for NYS students from Caribbean countries where English is the medium of instruction
- VII. The development of the NYSABE Parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC)
- VIII. Appropriate, targeted funding for ongoing technical assistance and professional development for schools and districts, pertaining to the education of ELLs/bilingual learners

NYSABE thanks Ms. Carmen Pérez-Hogan for coordinating this important event. Very special thanks to Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo and Assemblymen Guillermo Linares, Philip Ramos, Marcos Crespo, Roberto Rodriguez, and Rafael Espinal, Jr. NYSABE also expresses its gratitude to all individuals who attended the session and expressed their views and recommendations and to NYSABE members who submitted their written recommendations. Below, we offer you summaries of some of the presentations made during the *Dialogue with the Legislators*. This section also includes written comments submitted by members in response to our Advocacy Agenda.

### **I. The Revision of Part 154-Commissioner's Regulations for the Education of LEP Students**

During the present school year, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has been engaged in the revision of Part 154 and we are pleased to acknowledge the participation of numerous NYSABE members from all regions in this process. Parallel to the work conducted by NYSED, Regent Betty Rosa and NYSABE joined forces to form a representative team that would review key aspects of Part 154, formulate recommendations for the improvement of services, and submit a written summary to the NYSED and NYS Board of Regents. The Regent Rosa-NYSABE Part 154 initiative included members from diverse geographical locations and professional experiences as well as varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The team also expanded to

welcome the views of representatives from the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL), the Association of Dominican American Supervisors and Administrators (ADASA), and staff from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (R-BERNs).

#### Comments from the participants:

"It was encouraging to be invited to join the working group assembled by Regent Betty Rosa on the Part 154 revision initiative and work together with colleagues from many state associations (NYSABE, RB-ERNs, and ADASA) on delineating policies that will best serve our English language learner and bilingual students. I applaud Regent Rosa for seeking input from so many organizations involved in advocating for our multilingual learners and educators. Members of the working group carefully reviewed all sections of Part 154 and thoughtfully suggested important additions, clarifications and phraseology to best mandate services. I want to thank Maria-Angélica Meyer and Nancy Villarreal de Adler for including NYS TESOL in these important endeavors! Have a wonderful summer!"

-Dr. Rebekah Johnson, president of NYS TESOL

"As an educator of and advocate for ELLs/bilingual learners, it was very important for me to be part of the Commissioner's Regulation (CR) Part 154 focus group which was composed of highly intellectual and respected professionals working toward a common goal – to create, review and provide feedback on structures and policies that better support the education of ELLs and ensure improved academic outcomes for them. The revision of CR-Part 154 is very important for many reasons. ELLs do not fit easily into simple categories because of their diversity. There is no one profile for an ELL student, nor is one single response adequate to meet their educational and emotional needs. Therefore, the work that this group did in providing feedback to further enhance CR-Part 154 was vital because it protects the rights of our ELLs and ensures that this population is provided with opportunities to achieve and attain the same educational goals and standards as the general population. This group is forging the path to build capacity for all ELLs/bilingual learners to be successful."

-Dr. Marybelle Ferreira, Recording Secretary of ADASA's Board

"The opportunity that NYSABE provided to review the Part 154 Guidelines and examine those sections that needed to be updated was extremely crucial. The services mandated by Part 154 are essential to the educational development of ELLs. The guidelines must be clearly defined to meet the needs of all LEP/ELLs, especially in today's data-driven environment when all students are being held accountable. Students must receive the appropriate services that will help them achieve at high levels. It was important for me to participate in this review because I believe that those of us who know this document well and have worked with LEP/ELLs for so many years must share our experiences to ensure that a revision of the Part 154 Guidelines reflects equity for all English language learners (including Creole-speakers who are from English-speaking Caribbean countries). In addition, Part 154 must reflect research-based and most effective strategies that districts and schools must implement to help students meet higher learning standards."

-Nicole Rosefort, NYS Language RBE-RN at New York University

NYSABE thanks the members of the Regent Rosa-NYSABE Part 154 team for their excellent team work: María de los Angeles Barreto, Milady Báez, Eudes Budhai, Vivian Bueno, Fanny Castro, Marybelle Ferreira, Florence Pu Folkes, Karl Folkes, Eva García, Marcia González, Rebekah Johnson, María-Angélica Meyer, Bernice Moro, Nelly Mulkay, Vanessa Ramos, Gila Rivera, Larry Rolla, Nicole Roquefort, Claire Sylvan, Zoila Tazi, Yazmín Torres, and Melodie Valenciano. Very special thanks to Lydia Gutiérrez, Melanie Pores, Luis O. Reyes, and Margarita Reyes, whose selfless guidance and unlimited support have been key to the success of this initiative.



## II. The Seal of Biliteracy: Conferring prestige on those NYS high school graduates who have demonstrated their capacity in two languages

by Dr. Claire Sylvan and Dr. Marguerite Lukes

Low cost, high leverage, and critically important for ensuring that our students' assets are recognized by New York State and that biliteracy for all students is honored, the New York State Seal of Biliteracy honors all students who have achieved the distinction of being bilingual and biliterate in an increasingly global world.



The **Seal of Biliteracy** was first launched with success in California, where the state government signed on to the Seal of Biliteracy in October 2011. California's Seal of Biliteracy built upon work that had already begun in individual school districts across the state, where students at various levels received this recognition. For example, California's Seal recognizes graduating seniors that demonstrate evidence of their academic proficiency in English and at least one other world language and honors them with a gold insignia on their diplomas. With the leadership of Assemblywoman Carmen E. Arroyo and Senator Joseph Robach, the NYS Assembly and Senate have both passed the bill that creates an official Seal of Biliteracy for students in New York State.

NYSABE expresses its deep gratitude to the NYS legislators and a very special recognition to Carmen Pérez-Hogan, Special Assistant to Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo. Without them and the NYSABE membership, as well as the many other sister organizations that have actively supported of this bill, including the National Association for Bilingual education (NABE); the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL); the Association of Dominican American Supervisors and Administrators (ADASA); the Internationals Network for Public Schools; the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT); the NYS United Teachers Federation (NYSUT); the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC); the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families; Advocates for Children (AFC), and Flamboyant, this bill would not have moved so far so fast.

The **New York Seal of Biliteracy** recognizes the importance of a state-wide commitment to language development, bilingualism, biliteracy and cultural diversity. It demonstrates New York's support for educational programs that value cultural and linguistic diversity and lead to academic success through the demonstrated acquisition of proficiency in more than one language. Furthermore, a **Seal of Biliteracy** encourages students to develop biliteracy and multilingual skills, helping them to form a high level of linguistic, cultural, and communicative proficiency that connects them with diverse linguistic and cultural vocabularies, whether they start out as proficient speakers of English or of another home language.

The **Seal of Biliteracy** promotes the development of the multilingual skills so necessary for 21<sup>st</sup> century global citizens and results in a workforce that can participate effectively and meaningfully in an increasingly globalized economy. To its enduring advantage, New York's diverse economy draws upon strong ties to global commerce and economies all across the world. New York State can reinforce this strength and develop it further in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by formally recognizing the accomplishment of having achieved bilingualism or plurilingualism. Creating a **Seal of Biliteracy** incentivizes the development of bilingual proficiency by giving students a marketable credential that recognizes their attainment of proficiency in more than one language. Finally, the **Seal of Biliteracy** supports current businesses that engage New York's expansive immigrant population by creating a workforce that can better serve diverse customers' needs and innovate in order to better target diverse consumers.



### III. Bilingual education for pre-schoolers/early childhood bilingual learners

Dr. Zoila Tazi and Dr. Luis O. Reyes demonstrated once again their strong commitment to equitable education for early childhood emergent bilingual learners. Dr. Zoila Tazi's presentation at the *Dialogue with the Legislators* was a confirmation of the firm beliefs she presented in her dissertation, *"Bilingual by design: A vision for preschool education in New York."* Dr. Tazi stressed her view that all New York State children must be entitled to quality bilingual education beginning in preschool. "Current research supports the notion that bilingual preschool is a win-win scenario. This program provides all children with an early education, builds language skills and confers cognitive advantages that prepare children for global citizenship," she said. For additional information on Dr. Tazi's dissertation, please see NYSABE's Newsletter, Fall 2010 issue.

Dr. Luis Reyes's presentation at the *Dialogue with the Legislators* was followed up later at a special session, *"Walking the Walk: Building on our Children's Languages and Cultures"*, where he moderated a panel that included Jorge Sáenz de Vitteri and María Mayoral. The panel discussions stressed the importance of increasing the availability and quality of culturally and linguistically competent early education programs, supporting the growth of a culturally diverse teacher workforce, and engaging parents in a meaningful way to participate in their children's education. The presentation also focused on the following

#### Six Research-Based Guiding Principles Serving the Needs of English Learners in Preschool "School Readiness" Programs

*(Developed through the Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center in Spring, 2005)*

**Principle # 1:** A child's home language is a crucial foundation for cognitive development, learning about the world, and emerging literacy.

**Principle # 2:** A learning environment that facilitates social-emotional growth and affirms a child's culture and language is essential for full participation and healthy identity development.

**Principle # 3:** One language is enhanced by another – therefore, effective programs provide intentional support and access to opportunities to learn in, whenever possible, both the home language and in English.

**Principle # 4:** Effective approaches for linguistic and cultural congruity build strong home-school partnerships and support parents as a child's first teacher.

**Principle # 5:** High quality, research-based professional development is needed in order for teachers, paraprofessionals and early childhood caregivers to meet the needs of preschool English Learners and their families.

**Principle # 6:** Culturally, developmentally and linguistically appropriate assessment is essential for effective, quality early childhood education.

Further, the panel discussed the following recommendations of the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE) to the NY State Legislature, developed by Dr. Luis O. Reyes, Jorge Sáenz de Viteri, and Vanessa Ramos:

#### Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE)

**Calls on the NY State Legislature to give priority to the following recommendations:**

1. **Adequate resources and funding must be available for developmentally, linguistically, and culturally competent programs** in early care and education that provide ELLs and Latino children with the skills to succeed in school.
2. High quality early care and education requires and investment in **hiring and developing a diverse, linguistically, and culturally competent workforce** at all levels.

3. New York State should use **effective outreach strategies focused on Latino and ELL families** to create awareness of the availability of high-quality child care and early education programs.
4. New York State should create and implement **a unified early care and early education data system** to include demographic breakdown by the language, race & ethnicity of 0-3 and 3-5 year-old children in the overall state population as well as by cities and towns (at least the Big Five). How many ELL and how many young Latino children are there in New York State, whether they are in day-care, family care, Pre-K, Head Start or no care? This is an uncouneted group of children whom we need to care for and educate; and for whom we need to train bilingual/culturally competent professionals (teachers, administrators, caregivers).

## IV. The NYS Dream Act

### I am a "DREAMER"

By Jong-Min



My name is Jong-Min and I am an undocumented American. I was born in South Korea in 1980 and arrived the following year in Dec 1981. My parents and I lived in the great city of Nashville, TN and after about 7 years moved to Brooklyn, NY. I then attended Mark Twain and Stuyvesant High Schools and went back to college in TN. After graduating with *magna cum laude* honors in 2003, I came back to NY and could only find employment at odd, under-the-table jobs even with my bachelor's degree. It was humbling to say the least, but my story reflects not only my journey, but the tales of an estimated 2.1 million undocumented Americans in the same predicament.

The Dream Act was introduced in 2001 for immigrant youth like me. The requirements were that we had to have arrived before the age of 16, lived in the U.S. for 5 consecutive years, have graduated from high school, and have attended college for at least 2 of the 6 years' conditional residency period, plus have good moral character, in order to earn legal residency. The bill seemed like a real "dream". And it was, because currently, due to our circumstances, there is no pathway to citizenship through our hard work and education. Sometimes it amazes me how this great country denies us a real opportunity to become full-fledged citizens, even when we have tried our best and will do everything in our power to reach our life-long goals.

Likewise, and sadly to say, the Dream Act has not passed, even at the time of this writing, due to various reasons - politics, the economy, the dreaded "Amnesty" label, and 9/11. And yet, after nearly a decade of congressional inaction, undocumented Americans are undaunted, especially after the latest defeat in 2010. They have set forth a blaze of fearless activism - hunger strikes, "coming out" rallies, sit-ins, and civil disobedience arrests. Their slogans, "Undocumented, Unafraid!" and "Education, NOT Deportation!" epitomize the thinking behind the vastly growing movement's power.

It's never been easy - nor should it have been. Perhaps it may be even more difficult to be undocumented, as the Obama administration has stepped up their deportation to a record breaking number of 400,000 in 2011. However, dream activists - undeterred and determined, as always, fought not only for their cause, but for their undocumented parents, relatives, mentors and friends.

And so within the last two years, as Congress played political football on immigration, states have been challenged by these same activists to help them locally. The NYS Dream Act was introduced in March 2011, which was to help alleviate the barriers undocumented students face in attending institutes of higher education. Making financial aid available would've ensured greater access for undocumented youth in their quest for post secondary education. Yet, like the federal bill, it remains a "dream" - having been untouched and abandoned. And its recent "no-vote" defeat in Albany led us to our usual saying of "We'll pass it next year", as we again rolled up our many signs used over the years.

However, a NEW ERA has arrived. On the national level, and as recently as June 15, 2012, President Obama issued an immigration order from the Rose Garden to stop the deportation of Dream-eligible youth, effective immediately. His administration also said that the youth would be eligible for temporary work permits renewable every 2 years. And very importantly, those in detention and in deportation proceedings would benefit as well. The program and the guidelines would be released in 60 days, ensuring some time and efforts for other Dreamers to apply.

While some immigration advocates and Dreamers did like the idea, there was criticism even from them, saying the plan doesn't go far enough. In fact, the President did say, "This is not a pathway to citizenship, not a permanent fix. I still want Congressional action on this issue." Thereby saying, we still NEED the Dream Act because it is within Congress' jurisdiction in granting citizenship to its undocumented citizens. Individual states have their own problems as each state legislation can grant in-state tuition and driver's licenses to their undocumented residents. However, with all this said, my thoughts are that this was a great fresh start in solving this immigration crisis. It would ideally provide relief to many, many, many Dreamers - possibly an estimated 1.4 million - according to the Pew Hispanic Center.

Within this past week of June 17-23, I've been updating as much as I can for this newsletter. There have been numerous forums, webinars, press releases, and newspaper articles to help understand this policy. Yes, it's still very early, and all this news is fresh and without guidelines. Many immigrant coalitions wish to do their best to get the most accurate information out there - for which they should be applauded.

Sadly, I may not benefit from this new policy as I've turned "30-ish" this year. But mark my words, I will still push for Congressional action at the state and federal level and I urge all of you to do the same (write letters to Senators, Congressmen; call your local Representatives; fill out online petitions, forms; fundraise for scholarships; and especially, form Dream Clubs). I believe our goals should be to make this country better for ourselves and for each other. I truly believe that immigrants, especially young Dreamers wish to do that by becoming better people, neighbors, friends, and even spouses (not to mention, become doctors, lawyers, and teachers) in the same country they love and call home. I believe that these beliefs, values and "Dreams" truly make us Americans!

For more information:

Please check out this website for FAQ on the policy - <http://www.nilc.org/FAQdeferredactionyouth.html>  
And those who wish to consult or hire a reputable and knowledgeable immigration lawyer please call the Bar Association Legal Referral Service at [\(212\) 626-7373](tel:2126267373). You can also get a 30-minute consultation for just \$35. Plus, you can get a list of legal service providers helping individuals with low or moderate incomes at [www.law-help.org/NY](http://www.law-help.org/NY)

## **V. The assessment of ELLs/bilingual learners in general and special education**

Dr. Marybelle Ferreira made an impassioned plea on behalf of ELLs/bilingual learners who must take high stakes test in English after attending school in the USA for a year. "As you all know", she said, "I am devoted, just like all of you, to making sure that all children have equal access to a high quality and fair education. I am against the law requiring that our ELLs be tested in English language arts before they have had the opportunity to be educated in that language and before their language and academic skills have fully developed."



In support of Dr. Ferreira's statements, Gila Rivera, school social worker, wrote the following comments in relation to current testing practices for ELLs/bilingual learners with severe disabilities:

### **LOST IN TRANSLATION**

#### **Why Are Kids With Severe Cognitive Impairments Mandated to Take the NYSESLAT?**

No one likes getting lost. It is not a good feeling. Yet, when it comes to the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, kids with severe cognitive disabilities are getting lost through no fault of their own.

The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) was designed to assess the English language proficiency of typical learners. It was not designed to measure the language proficiency of students with severe cognitive disabilities. Why then are these students subject to the burden of taking a test that was not designed for their population? The problem stems from a mismatch between two federal laws. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) violate one another.

NYSAA, the New York State Alternate Assessment, is given to students who have been designated as having severe cognitive disabilities. Participation criteria for the NYSAA have nothing to do with their non-disabled peers. Non-disabled students do not take the NYSAA. Only very severely cognitively disabled students do. To reiterate, NYSAA-mandated students are youngsters with severe cognitive impairments who are exempt from taking standardized tests. If NYSAA-mandated ELLs/bilingual learners are exempted from taking standardized tests<sup>3/4</sup> such as the ELA (English Language Arts), math, science, and social studies exams, why are they mandated to take the NYSESLAT?

#### **Clash of the Titans: IDEA '97 vs. NCLB**

When the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized in 1997, Congress added a new stipulation to the bill, namely that all students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, must take all large-scale assessments (e.g., state assessments) at the same time as non-disabled students. Because New York State exams were given at the 4th, 8th, and high-school levels, the original New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) was only administered at those three levels. Prior to IDEA '97, students with severe cognitive disabilities were exempt from assessments. (In New York City we called these youngsters "Category C" students).

The NYSAA was developed in response to IDEA '97, and it was piloted in 2000. Starting in 2001, the NYSAA has been administered to all students who meet the participation criteria. The Committee on Special Education (CSE) determines whether or not a student is eligible to take the NYSAA based on the following criteria:

- the student has a severe cognitive disability, significant deficits in communication/language, and significant deficits in adaptive behavior
- the student requires a highly specialized educational program that facilitates the acquisition, application, and transfer of skills across natural environments (home, school, community, and/or workplace)
- the student requires educational support systems, such as assistive technology, personal care services, health/medical services, or behavioral intervention

In 2001, the NYSAA was aligned to the old learning standards and to Alternate Performance Indicators (ways for students with severe cognitive disabilities to demonstrate mastery of the standards). Back then, students were assessed in the following content areas on the NYSAA:

- English Language Arts (ELA)
- mathematics, science, and technology (MST)
- social studies

- career development/occupational studies (CDOS)
- Health, Family, and Consumer Sciences (HFCS)

ELLs were permitted to take the ELA (English Language Arts) NYSAA in their native languages (e.g., students in bilingual Spanish classes were permitted to perform tasks in Spanish on the ELA portion of the NYSAA). In addition, all four modalities<sup>3/4</sup>listening, speaking, reading, and writing<sup>3/4</sup>were assessed on the 2001 NYSAA. When the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was passed in 2002, it mandated, among other things, that all Limited English Proficient (LEP) students take an English-language proficiency exam. No exemptions were permitted. Because New York State has never developed an alternative to the NYSESLAT for ELLs/Emergent bilingual learner with severe cognitive disabilities<sup>3/4</sup>whose IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) mandate alternative assessments<sup>3/4</sup>these students were and continue to be mandated to take the NYSESLAT **in violation of IDEA '97**.

Also, the new New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) eliminated measurement in the speaking portion of the ELA evaluation (since speaking is not assessed in general education on English Language Arts and English assessments; speaking on standardized assessments is only measured in foreign-language courses). Therefore, the new NYSAA could not be used to examine English as a second language achievement.

Although it is true that *"the NYSESLAT is not only used to determine a student's English Language Proficiency, but also to determine the amount (periods per day) the student is entitled to ESL instruction,"* using NYSESLAT scores to determine the amount of instruction for LEP/ELLs who have severe cognitive disabilities and alternative assessment mandates does not address the language-learning needs of these students. Using NYSESLAT scores also yields unreliable information about the students' instructional needs and levels related to second-language acquisition. It conflicts with the need to base instructional decisions on an Individualized Education Program for these students. The IEP takes into consideration all the factors (e.g., second-language acquisition and disability-related conditions).

### The Road Best Traveled

NYSAA-mandated students have alternative assessment mandated in their IEP (Individualized Education Program). The NYSESLAT is a standardized test, but because there is no alternative assessment for second language, our students must take the NYSESLAT. Have you seen one of our little NYSAA-mandated students who are also ELLs with severe cognitive impairments trying to take this test? It is really sad. The NYSESLAT is administered over the course of weeks, and the components are as rigorous, if not more so, as the ELA (English Language Arts). What is more tragic is that our kids are enslaved to the NYSESLAT until they pass it. In most cases, they are getting lost on this test not because of their language skills, but because of their disabilities.

It does not make sense to use the NYSESLAT to test students with disabilities, especially if those students are NYSAA-mandated. Many of these youngsters have many problems, including processing of language, so why must we put them through the agony of taking a standardized exam that was not designed to test their true abilities? Why lay out a path that is all but guaranteed to get them lost?

In closing, I express my support to NYSABE in its continued plea to make an Alternative Assessment of second language acquisition a reality for ELLs/bilingual learners with severe cognitive disabilities.



*Gila Rivera is a bilingual school social worker. She is the Title III Coordinator for District 75, NYC Dept. of Education, and is a NY State Education Dept. Alternate Assessment Training Network Specialist.*

## VI. Rationale for Bilingual/ESL services to New York State students from Caribbean countries where English is the medium of instruction

by Dr. Karl Folkes

Historically and linguistically recognized since 1984 as “children of the gap,” students from Caribbean countries where English is the medium of instruction, reflect and represent a rich multilingual and multicultural native Creole-speaking population that is intertwined with and overlapping with Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch, English languages; and with the various distinct Creoles (Guyanese, Haitian, Jamaican, etc.) of the region.

Comprised of 19 territories (Consult the NYSED published document, “Resource Guide for the Education of New York State Students from Caribbean Countries Where English is the Medium of Instruction”), these countries (Refer also to Time Almanac 2011, Time Almanac 2012 For Kids, Encyclopedia Britannica 2011) represent a multilingual region with migrant Creole-speaking populations that overflow and extend into the Dominican Republic (Samana region), Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama.

Because of the extensive language overlap in the region, these countries individually possess a variety of languages that link them indelibly-- historically, socially, and culturally—with other countries in the Caribbean Basin. As reported by researcher Ian Hancock, Professor of Linguistics and English at the University of Texas at Austin, in a 1992 catalogue article published by the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage of the Smithsonian Institution: “Linguists have documented many creole languages throughout the world. Creoles are not dialects of the various languages from which they took most of their vocabularies—English, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. —and the long-standing supposition that they are has caused serious problems in the classroom. This unfortunate situation is the result of several factors, in particular the perpetuation of negative attitudes instilled in the creole-speaking populations during the years of colonialism, and the lack (until recently) of formal training for educators in creole language history and structure...”

In addition to this important observation, the State Education Department of the State of New York at Albany, Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies, in conjunction with the NYS Haitian Language BETAC, has published and disseminated in 2011, via the internet website, <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/bilingual> the document, “**Resource Guide for the Education of New York State Students from Countries Where English is the Medium of Instruction.**” Endorsed by Lawrence Carrington, Professor of Creole Linguistics, University of the West Indies, with supportive testimonial by Dr. Pedro Ruiz, Coordinator, OBE-FL, NYSED; and with researched contributions from bilingual educators that include Carmen Pérez-Hogan and Dr. Ximena Zate, this resource guide provides strong rationale for the expansion of C.R. Part 154 to include bilingual/ESL services for Caribbean students who have been appropriately screened and identified. The Resource Guide also stipulates the criteria for how this population is to be served.

By expeditiously implementing these recommendations, educators and legislators will remedy a far too long neglected and delayed need to fully identify and serve all students of limited English proficiency, including those “from Caribbean countries where English is the medium of instruction” (but where a native creole is the dominant home language).

The last two agenda items are currently under development:

## VII. NYSABE Parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC)

## VIII. Targeted Funding for Technical Assistance and Professional Development

Excerpts from the recommendations made by Silvana Medina, on the need for NYSABE PLAC, and Terry Brady- Méndez, on funding for technical assistance and professional development, will be discussed in NYSABE’s *The Bilingual Times*, Fall 2012 issue.

## Region I/Long Island News

By Linda Scalice,  
Region I/Long Island Delegate

Region I has been busy since the NYSABE annual conference, which was held on March 7-9, 2012 in Long Island!

- We held our nominations meeting in Westbury on May 9, generously sponsored by Santillana, and were treated to a presentation entitled, "Learning to Read, Write and Speak with Technology" by Christine Losito, of LogicWing.
- Iraida Bodré attended the Region III meeting on May 14 and the ADASA banquet in NYC at which high school seniors received awards.
- May 24 was a "Night of Laughs", held at the Brokerage Comedy Club in Bellmore. This was a great success and will be repeated in the fall.
- Linda Scalice prepared a presentation for the Long Island ESOL conference at Molloy College held on April 24. The topic was "News and Notes", designed to disseminate information and to show the participants how to find the information after the conference. This spring has been an invigorating time spent in collaborating, communicating and advocating.



## Region II/New York City and Queens College Collaborate to Present "Developing Literacy Skills in Bilingual Children"

By Dr. Patricia Velasco, Assistant Professor, Queens College and NYSABE Region II/NYC Delegate

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, NYSABE-Region II/New York City and Queens College held a workshop

titled: Developing Literacy Skills in Bilingual Children (Spanish, Chinese and Korean). María-Angélica Meyer, NYSABE President, and Nancy Villarreal de Adler, NYSABE Executive Director, opened the session and explained the important role that NYSABE plays in supporting and developing the knowledge base of bilingual teachers. The presenters, Elizabeth Ijalba (Queens College); Patricia Velasco (Queens College); and Cate Crowley (Teachers College, Columbia University) addressed a variety of topics that ranged from early literacy development and family intervention programs in pre-school children to targeting academic vocabulary development in the primary and middle school grades. All these are key factors that have different roles at different stages of literacy development in two or more languages.

This workshop was initially planned to accommodate 50 participants; however, 85 teachers registered. This response validates the need for targeting more workshops and topics specifically designed for bilingual teachers. Participants received certificates of attendance.



*L to R: Cate Crowley, Patricia Velasco, Elizabeth Ijalba, Elizabeth Kratz*



## Region II/NYC Meets to Discuss, Honor and Nominate

By Dr. Tatyana Kleyn, Assistant Professor, CCNY, CUNY and Region II/NYC Delegate

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the NYC delegates convened a meeting with the goals of professional development, recognition of educators and nominations for upcoming positions in the organization.

The meeting began with an eye-opening presentation by Dr. Patricia Velasco, who is a professor at Queens College and a NYC regional delegate. Her talk focused on the integration of content and language goals to support language growth in academic settings. Through video excerpts participants were able to see this type of instruction in action.

Next, the region recognized Gregory Halzen, who was awarded the 2012 NABE Teacher of the Year Award. Greg is a middle school bilingual social studies teacher in Brooklyn. He has been instrumental in developing the dual language bilingual program in his school where there is an emphasis on the collaboration between the administration, teachers and community. Greg also shared his unique philosophy of addressing classroom management, which stems from a deep commitment to developing respect and empathy for everyone around us. Lastly, the membership nominated three individuals for the delegate-at-large positions.



*L to R: Patricia Velasco, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, Aida Nevárez-LaTorre, Tatyana Kleyn*



## Happenings in Region III

By Dr. Zoila Tazi,  
NYSABE Region III Delegate

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, the Mid-Hudson Region held an awards ceremony for emerging leaders in the education of emergent bilinguals. Eight students at Fordham University's *Bilingual & ESL Teacher Leadership Academy* (BETLA) were recognized for their work with emergent bilinguals in Westchester County. We applaud these individuals for continuing their own education and training with the goal of better serving their students.

Strong leadership is vitally important to education – especially now. As we confront the uncertainties of the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) and the new Common Core Learning Standards along with dwindling resources, we rely on leaders who will protect and promote the most effective instructional approaches. Leaders emerge from programs such as Fordham's BETLA prepared to advocate for bilingual education because they are grounded in the nature of bilingual learning and passionate about supporting their students.

As members and colleagues of NYSABE, we all exercise leadership in our communities when it comes to upholding bilingual education; of the many instructional, historical, legal, cultural, or linguistic arguments we might make to support bilingual education, we remember that:

**Research supports bilingual education** – although we must always advocate for more research to validate the experiences of bilingual teachers and students at every

grade level, there is ample research to demonstrate that –

- Children benefit from instruction in their home language
- Children can learn more than one language –and can be instructed bilingually

*L to R: Carmen Vargas, Alexis Vázquez, Jenice Mateo-Toledo, David Cruz, Eileen Quinn, Frances Jiménez, Maggie T. Albers, and Karen Dakin*



**Linguistic diversity is good for the nation** – a multilingual populace seems like a very basic requisite in a global context. Children who can speak more than one language represent a national treasure not an educational challenge. Bilingual education plays a critical role in preserving that treasure.

**Bilingualism is good for individuals** – speaking more than one language confers cognitive benefits that persist for a lifetime. Don't we want that for all children?

Award recipients included: Frances Jiménez, White Plains School District; Maggie T. Albers, New Rochelle School District; David Cruz, Lakeland School District; Carmen Vargas, Peekskill School District; Alexis Vázquez, Peekskill School District; Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Hasting-on-Hudson School District; Karen Dakin, Brewster School District; and Eileen Quinn, Harrison School District. The students attending schools in Region III are fortunate to have such committed educators!

Our awards ceremony was a collaboration between NYSABE, The Long Island/Westchester BETLA, and Fordham University. In particular, we would like to thank Nancy Rosario Rodríguez, Director of the LI/Westchester BETLA, and Dr. Anita Vázquez Batisti, Associate Dean for Fordham University Graduate School of Education.

Region III continues to build partnerships with local colleges and universities to promote membership and to advance bilingual education through events such as the First Annual BETLA Awards Celebration.

The parent base in Region III is also a strong constituency for NYSABE. Several organized parent groups around Westchester County regularly take part in trainings and educational events that highlight the importance of parental involvement for academic achievement. In particular, Spanish-speaking parents in the county are becoming more visible and vocal by taking part in conferences, but also by contributing to political efforts such as gathering signatures in support of the Seal of Biliteracy. With greater knowledge and education comes greater solidarity and empowerment. NYSABE plays an important role in the growth of our parent community here in Region III.

**On June 12<sup>th</sup>**, Manhattanville College presented a conference for Spanish-speaking parents focusing on special education. Over 125 parents were in attendance and Region III's NYSABE was there to advocate for bilingual education for our special needs students.

## Region V/Rochester Holds Parent Forum

By Melodie Valenciano,  
Region V Delegate

On May 1, 2012, at Saint Michael's Hall, Dr. Pedro Ruiz met with Region V parents and the Rochester Bilingual Council. Yazmin Torres, our NYSABE Treasurer and Regional Delegate was the mistress of ceremonies. Our Past President, Margarita Reyes, welcomed parents, community members, and Rochester City School District administrators including Miriam Ehtesham, the Executive Director of the English Language Arts Department, Anaida Gonzalez-Fortiche, the Director of Bilingual Education, Jose Mora, the Vice-Principal of Martin Luther King Jr. School No. 9 and Jay Piper, the Principal of The Children's School of Rochester No. 15.

Gloria Sabastro, the Rochester City School District Bilingual Council President introduced Father Tracy who also expressed the parents' concerns for quality education for their children. Yazmin Torres introduced the NYSABE Region V delegates; Millie Bermudez-(Regional), Maria Otero-Rivera (Delegate at Large), and Melodie Valenciano, (Delegate at Large). Our mistress of ceremonies welcomed special guests Laura Arpey, Associate in Education Improvement Services, OBE-FLS, NYSED; Annalisa Allegro, Executive Director, Mid-West Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN); Dr. Awilda Ramos Zagarrigo (NYSABE First Vice-President); and Dr. Pedro Ruiz, Coordinator, Office of

Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies, NYSED.

Dr. Ruiz thanked parents in Spanish and English for their warm welcome and explained that he was given the task of trying to explain what New York State believes are the rights and responsibilities of the parents in their child's education. According to Dr. Ruiz, parents play the most critical role in the education of their children. Without parents the state could not do their job. Parental support from the time children are born is crucial for our students to be prepared for school. Parents are the first teachers of whom children ask questions, and it is the parent that instills the first stages of analytical thinking skills in their children. Educators have come to understand that children enter the school system with a vast amount of knowledge and it is our job to nurture that knowledge.

Our Parent Forum had successful attendance and collaboration of parents, administrators, educators, NYSED leaders, RBERN leaders, NYSABE Region V and VI delegates. Parents and special guests were welcomed to stay for a Hispanic dinner sponsored by El Pilón Restaurant, Wegmans, and Borinquen Bakery. Parents were pleased with Dr. Ruiz's visit and the fact that their Region V Delegates are available to support them and advise them of their children's educational rights. Region V Delegates are honored to support our community and advocate for bilingual education. This Parent Forum exceeded our expectations!



*L to R: Annalisa Allegro, Miriam Ehtesham, Dr. Pedro Ruiz, Yazmin Torres, Anaida Gonzalez-Fortiche, Melodie Valenciano*

## Region VI Buffalo Public Schools Guidance Counselor Tells Success Story of SIFE Students

by Amy Overfield, Lafayette High School



Our school is a very special place for so many reasons. We are afforded the rare and unique experience of sharing each day with students from all over the globe. Many of the teachers and staff have learned so much about the world from speaking with our students.

Four years ago (2008-2009) was our first year having a **SIFE** program (Student with Interrupted Formal Education). We started that school year with 3 full time ESL teachers. Four years later we have 14.5 ESL teachers, and the ESL department has become our largest department on campus. Four years ago, many of our current seniors were just starting at Lafayette as freshman. Most of them knew very little English. It's been truly amazing to watch these students blossom academically, socially and personally over the years.

Our scholarship winners are Elizabeth Poe Mu, Toma Dhital, and Kamala Ghimirey. Elizabeth has only been at Lafayette for 3 years. She was able to accrue all of her credits and pass all of her exams in this time. She is from Thailand and is going to study

social work at Erie Community College. Toma is from Bhutan. She started as a freshman in 2008. She is going to be an accountant and is attending D'Youville College in the fall. Kamala is also from Bhutan. She will be going to D'Youville in the fall to study nursing. She entered into Lafayette in 2008 as a freshman. All of the students are members of the International Club at Lafayette and have received Global Scholar awards at our recent Class Day. They are often called upon to assist teachers and staff with translations and with acquainting new students to our campus. All three students are very well liked by their teachers and peers and have really helped in making Lafayette into the international family that it has become.



On behalf of Region VI delegates Evelyn Arent and Rose Colón, first Vice President Dr. Awilda Ramos-Zagarrigo, and Past Presidents Wilda Ramos, Heriberto Galarza, and David Mauricio, I would like to thank Mrs. Naomi Cerre, Principal of the International School at Lafayette, and her entire staff for sending personalized letters in support of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy to Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo.

*"We are afforded*

*the rare*

*and unique*

*experience of*

*sharing each day*

*with students*

*from all over*

*the globe."*

## **Proposal for the Development of Professional Standards for Bilingual Education Teachers**

### **Written by Dr. Aida A. Nevárez-La Torre and Dr. Patricia Velasco**

The NYSABE Board, in its May 29, 2012 meeting, approved a proposal for the creation of professional standards for bilingual education teachers. The purpose of the standards is to outline the characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective bilingual teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student learning. In the upcoming academic year, the leaders of this initiative, Dr. Aida A. Nevárez-La Torre (Fordham University) and Dr. Patricia Velasco (Queens College), will create a task force to design a process for the development and approval of professional standards for bilingual education teachers in the State of New York.

For decades now, different national professional organizations for educators have worked to identify criteria that define the essential knowledge of teachers in specific disciplines. Several of these organizations, in addition to state departments of education and accreditation agencies, have been successful in using these criteria in the design and evaluation of programs that prepare teachers in higher education institutions (i.e., TESOL, ACTFL). Presented as professional standards, these criteria are designed to answer two critical questions: (a) What is the essential professional knowledge that teachers need to know about teaching in a particular field and with a specific population? (b) What is the essential pedagogical knowledge that teachers must possess to show mastery in teaching a particular field?

A survey of the relevant literature revealed that such criteria do not exist at the national level in the field of bilingual education. Information on the professional standards developed by national professional organizations in the area of language education does not address educators who teach in bilingual education programs (see for example, Professional Standards developed by TESOL; ACTFL; ECES). Our review revealed only three states that at the current time have professional standards for bilingual education teachers. These states, with affiliates of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), are Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas.

There continues to be an increase in the number of students who are emergent bilinguals (Garcia, Kleifgen and Falchi, 2008) in United States schools (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2006). Parallel to demographic changes, we are observing an expansion of school programs that use two or more languages as mediums of instruction (Freeman-Field, 2011, García, 2008). This expansion is triggered by a variety of factors including: economic interdependency of nations across the world; federal government support for dual bilingual education; a constant influx of new immigrant students into our schools; and a desire of middle class parents in certain geographical areas to educate their children bilingually (de Jong, 2011). Thus, it is imperative to create professional standards that signify the relevant knowledge and skills that teachers must demonstrate in educating students bilingually.

Professional standards in bilingual education will provide a reference point for the supervision of pre-service teachers and the coaching and mentoring of in-service teachers. The standards development will support the recognition of the work these teachers do and the contributions they make. In sum, we envision that the professional standards will (a) advance the specialized knowledge reflective of best practices and research in the field of bilingual instruction (Sweeney & Velasco, 2011); (b) influence the exploration of ways to improve teacher education and professional development in bilingual education (Nevárez-La Torre, 2010); and (c) better position bilingual teachers in New York State to be compared favorably with their peers across the nation.

For more information on this project you may contact Dr. Aida A. Nevárez-La Torre ([nevarezlator@fordham.edu](mailto:nevarezlator@fordham.edu)) and Dr. Patricia Velasco ([patricia.velasco@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:patricia.velasco@qc.cuny.edu)).

**References\*** (continued on p. 31)



**NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

**New York State University  
Metropolitan Center for Urban Education  
726 Broadway, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10003  
Tel: 212-998-5104 Fax: 212-995-4199**

June 5, 2012

Assemblywoman Carmen E. Arroyo  
Legislative Office Building 734  
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Assemblywoman Arroyo:

On behalf of the Executive Board, Delegate Assembly, Executive Director, and members of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), I am writing to express our full support for the passing of legislation that would create a Seal of Biliteracy and would honor the achievement of the students of New York State.

Our mission statement affirms that NYSABE “is a multilingual and multicultural association fostering the awareness and appreciation of bilingualism and biculturalism as an integral part of cultural pluralism in our society.” Within this framework, NYSABE’s goals are:

- To encourage the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of quality programs in Bilingual Education
- To promote Bilingual Education as an educational process by which the success of students is enhanced through instruction in their native language and English
- To foster the recognition by the total community of the importance of bilingualism and its contribution toward a better understanding of the cultural and linguistic differences among people.

In this connection, the New York State Seal of Biliteracy and NYSABE’s mission concur in their recognition of the importance of language development, bilingualism, and biliteracy as well as linguistic and cultural diversity among New York State students. By honoring students who have attained proficiency levels in literacy in two or more languages, the Seal of Biliteracy reaffirms NYSABE’s vision, to prepare students for success in the academic realm and aims at ensuring their participation in the globalized economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In closing, NYSABE applauds your commitment to the education of bilingual learners and your unfailing support to the work of educators, parents, and community members whom NYSABE represents.

Sincerely,

*Maria-Angelica Meyer*

María-Angélica Meyer  
NYSABE President  
[www.nysabe.net](http://www.nysabe.net)

**NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

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June 14, 2012

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan  
Legislative Office Building #836  
Albany, New York 12248

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 10367 and Senate Bill 7331

Dear Assemblywoman Nolan:

On behalf of the Executive Board, Delegate Assembly, Executive Director, and members of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the possible phasing out of the NYS Local Diploma and the unavailability of multiple pathways to graduation for thousands of NYS high school students, including English language learners (ELLs)/bilingual students.

NYSABE is a multilingual and multicultural professional association that represents educators, parents, members of community-based organizations, private agencies, and institutions of higher education that advocate for the equitable educational rights of New York State's ELLs/bilingual learners. In this connection, NYSABE seeks to ensure equal access to a graduation diploma for high school youth by underscoring the crucial role that a local diploma plays in the life of thousands of ELLs/bilingual learners. In addition, NYSABE aims at emphasizing the urgent need for the NYSED to develop high quality alternative pathways that will support the graduation rights of these youngsters.

Taking into consideration that:

- there has been an increase in the number of students in the general population obtaining a Regents diploma while this has not been the case for the most vulnerable groups, including Latino, and ELLs/bilingual learners,
- ELLs/bilingual learners, who are in the continuous process of learning the complex academic language as well as the cultural context of high stakes tests items rely disproportionately on the local diploma,
- due to the fact that high stakes test fail to assess the skills and knowledge that the students possess,
- due to the significant barriers encountered in attaining a Regents diploma and the current statistics demonstrating that:
  - ELLs/bilingual learners graduating after 4 years graduate with local diplomas at nearly 3 times the rate of all students graduating statewide,
  - 27% of ELL graduates from the 2006 cohort relied on the local diploma compared with just 10% of overall New York State graduates,
  - ELLs/bilingual learners graduating after 5 and 6 years also rely on access to the local diploma in greater proportion than overall graduates across the state. 41% of 5th year ELL graduates attained a local diploma and 51% of 6th year ELLs/bilingual learners graduated with a local diploma, compared with 15% and 18% respectively for overall statewide 5th and 6th year graduates,

- at the present time, when the local diploma may be eliminated, there is no plan developed by NYSED to address the graduation hurdles of thousands of NYS ELLs/bilingual learners, thus denying them the possibilities of graduating and pursuing their college and career goals in the near future,

NYSABE expresses its full support to the Assembly Bill 10367, introduced by Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli, and the Senate Bill 7331, introduced by Senator John J. Flanagan. These bills would make the local diploma available to all students entering the ninth grade prior to the 2013-2014 school year and will require the NYSED to hold public hearings on creating high quality multiple pathways to a high school diploma. The local diploma will be extended until the time when the alternative pathways are implemented.

In closing, NYSABE applauds your commitment to ensuring that ELLs/Bilingual learners have equal access to educational opportunities and we are grateful for your unfailing support to the work of educators, parents, and community members whom NYSABE represents.  
Sincerely,

*Maria-Angélica Meyer*

María-Angélica Meyer

NYSABE President, 2011-2012

C: Members of the Education Committee

Members of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

**Save The Dates!**  
**NABE 2013**  
**42nd Annual Conference**  
**Coronado Springs Resort**  
**Orlando, Florida**  
**February 6-8 2013**

*(Continued from page 28)*

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**Retirement of Jean V. Mirvil, Past President 2004-2005  
By Dr. Florence Pu Folkes, NYSABE Past President 2000-2001**

Jean V. Mirvil, the 28th President of NYSABE (2004-05) and Principal of PS 73X, retired from the NYC Department of Education, after 29 years of stellar service and achievements. Some of his accomplishments include: improving the school morale, upgrading the school's overall academic performance, resulting in receiving a report card of "A," and establishing an innovative French-English Language Program which has been recognized as outstanding by the French government. Jean, along with four other principals, was dubbed with Knighthood - the Order of Academic Palms initiated historically by Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte.

Mr. Mirvil's retirement celebration, held on June 22, 2012, was well attended by staff from his former school, PS 110X, staff from his present school, his family, friends and representatives from various organizations. For his dedication, vision, compassion, and tireless leadership, Jean was honored with the Outstanding Leadership and Achievement Award from the Highbridge Community Life Center, Change for Kids, and the Bronx Museum of Arts. NYSABE, represented by President Maria-Angélica Meyer, joined in honoring Jean with the NYSABE Certificate of Recognition. Dr. Florence Pu-Folkes, on behalf of Dr. Pedro J. Ruiz, presented Jean with the NYSED, Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Languages Certificate, as well as the NYS Legislature Citation from Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo.

It was a night to be remembered! It was a night filled with emotions, love, joy, respect, sadness, and high hopes for Jean as an educator, principal, friend, and leader. Many wished him the best for his next endeavors. Jean plans to return to his native homeland of Haiti to help in the professional growth of teachers and in the quality education of children with special needs.

**In Memoriam – José Vázquez**

It is with deep sadness that I write this note to announce the passing of our beloved Professor José Vázquez, a pioneer in the field of Bilingual Education, a mentor, an excellent teacher educator, and a great friend. José served as director of the Multifunctional Resource Center (MRC) at Hunter College for many years. He will be missed by all of us who knew and loved him. - Nancy Villarreal de Adler

"Jose Vazquez, one of bilingual education's pioneers, passed away last night. He was one of my mentors, as he was for so many in our field." - Dolores M. Fernández

"It brings back fond memories from a long time ago." - Jim Cummins

"This is truly the end of an era. Jose Vazquez was indeed a pioneer and a stalwart advocate for the children, and a leader in the fight for social justice and educational equity. I am so sad." - Lily Wong Fillmore

"I am deeply saddened by the news of the passing of this great educator. I have worked closely with Jose during the expansion for quality foreign language and bilingual programs in District 29. Both Jose and Michelle, left an outstanding impact on my staff. Their contribution will forever be remembered. Indeed, our community has lost a superb educator." - Jean Mirvil

"To my respected and admired friend, a perfect gentleman: you will always be remembered for your dedicated participation, keen intelligence and valuable contributions and support to the many causes and individual efforts for Bilingual Education. Requiescat in Pace," Maria Eugenia Valverde, Ph. D.





## **SAVE THE DATE**

**September 11, 2012 at 6:30 pm**

**NYSABE- REGION II  
and the  
GRADUATE CENTER of the CITY UNIVERSITY  
OF NEW YORK**

**Invite you to a screening of:**

**[A BETTER LIFE, by Chris Weiz](#)**

Unfolding exclusively from the perspective of immigrants, *A Better Life* is a poignant movie that depicts the lives of Carlos Galindo and his son. Carlos works as a gardener in East Los Angeles. He juggles the demands and strains of working as an undocumented immigrant, of raising his son single handedly, and pursuing his aspirations and dreams for a better life.

**The Graduate Center, CUNY  
365 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10016**

NYSABE wishes to thank all of our contributors and supporters for lending their expertise to this publication.

NYSABE Bilingual Times Staff includes

Tamara Alsace,  
Editor

Nancy Villarreal  
de Adler,  
Project Director



## New York State Association for Bilingual Education

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Please note: This information will be used to generate your membership card and future mailings.

[www.nysabe.net](http://www.nysabe.net)

I was referred by: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ NEW ☐ RENEWAL  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone - Work: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
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 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Languages Spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

#### NYSABE Dues:

- ☐ \$35 Associate (full-time student, parent, paraprofessional)  
☐ \$45 Regular (teacher, administrator, education)  
☐ \$75 Institutional  
☐ \$100 Commercial

#### Select your local region:

- ☐ Region 1-Long Island  
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#### I would like to volunteer:

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**CONTRIBUTION:** I would like to contribute to NYSABE's continuing efforts to strengthen Bilingual Education in New York with my tax-deductible contribution of:

- ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please duplicate and disseminate this application to your colleagues and others.

Please make check payable to NYSABE and mail with this completed form to:

**NYSABE Treasurer**  
 189 Eaton Road  
 Rochester, NY 14617

#### THE ORGANIZATION

NYSABE is a multilingual, multicultural association founded in 1975, which represents all language groups and educational sectors throughout the State.

NYSABE unites educators, parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, the media and policy makers in a common interest — excellence and equity for language minority students.

NYSABE encourages the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of quality programs in bilingual education.

NYSABE promotes bilingual education as a process by which students achieve success through instruction in their native language while learning English.

NYSABE supports the belief that language pluralism and bilingual competence in English and other languages benefit the nation and all its citizens.

NYSABE believes that bilingual education is a critical component of contemporary education in the United States.

NYSABE is affiliated with NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education), SCOL (New York State Council of Languages) and NYSCEA (New York State Council of Educational Associations).

#### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Join the NYSABE team. Through your membership dues and involvement, you have the opportunity to make integral contributions towards positive educational change for limited English proficient students. Membership benefits include:

**NYSABE Journal** • The yearly issue of this journal is a must for every library and member of the association. It publishes articles of professional and academic significance to bilingual education. Scholarly research, instructional methodology, techniques, and second language learning are the topics of articles by respected educators in the field of bilingualism.

**NYSABE Newsletter** • A quarterly issue bringing you updates on the activities of the association and its members; local, regional and state calendar of events; information on current legislative and policy developments related to the field of bilingual education.

**Professional Development** • NYSABE offers local and regional educational activities and the opportunity to network with other professionals in your field of interest.

**Activism** • The opportunity to work in Committees, Special Interest Groups, Language groups, and much more.

And the pride in belonging to the only association that protects the rights of the limited English proficient students participating in bilingual education.