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The NYSABE Bilingual Times



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Conference Opening: A Focus on History, Language, Families and Actions!

By Tatyana Kleyn, Ed.D.

A powerful opening session set the tone of the 2017 NYSABE Conference. Our president, Dr. Tamara Alsace, began the event by building on the spirit of our anniversary year and bringing us back to what life was like 40 years ago, when NYSABE was founded. She shared that:

- In the U.S. Apple Computer was formed by Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak and NASA unveiled the first space shuttle.
- The average yearly income was \$16,000, the average monthly rent was \$220 and the cost of a gallon of gas was 59 cents.
- Around the world the Soweto riots in South Africa marked the beginning of the end of Apartheid and in Argentina, Evita (Eva Peron) was deposed.

Dr. Alsace stressed the importance of remembering the past in order to realize how far we've come as well as where we are in danger of returning to and finally where we need to go.

Next, New York State Deputy Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green reminded us that we must acknowledge the challenging times we are living in that call for us to come together. At a conference on bilingual education, she advised us to choose our words wisely, as language is power (and the term the state will use to describe our students is multilingual learner.) Then, Deputy Commissioner Infante-Green provide us with a powerful acronym to enact: SUMA (Strategize, Unite, Mobilize & Act).

With the conference being held in White Plains, Lisa Panaro the Director of World Language & ELL Programs in the district, welcomed us on behalf of the superintendent and shared some of the powerful work going on in their schools.

The keynote speaker for the opening session, Dr. Madeline Pérez, Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of Saint Joseph in Connecticut gave a memorable talk titled "Small Things with Big Impact/Cosas Pequeñas con Grand Impacto: Intentionality in Partnering with Diverse Families." Dr. Pérez shared how she is using research to advocate and she did just that. She used powerful examples of school-family collaborations and extrapolated lessons for us to take from them. Like Deputy Commissioner Infante-Green, Dr. Pérez reminded us of the power of words when working with families. For example, the overly used phrase, "I am *just* a parent" sends a strong message about how we (de)value the role of families. She showed us how "small things" such as taking the extra steps to pronounce someone's name correctly or including songs from the home in school can have a big impact.

Dr. Pérez also discussed the impact of the "Let's Talk, Hablemos Project" (which she worked on with Dr. Laura Ascenzi-Moreno and Maria Jaya-Vega at Cypress Hills Community School) that centered on families and checking in with them to see if the school was doing what they were supposed to be – beyond the city or state mandates –for their children. She also shared how collaborations between schools and families should be founded on the basis that people are "not required to attend, but inspired to attend."

— From the Desk of the President —

Dr. Tamara Alsace



Dear NYSABE Community,

As this presidential term nears its end, I want to sincerely thank you for the opportunity to have served as NYSABE President for the past two years. It has truly been an honor and a privilege, one which I will never forget. I have learned so much and my life has been enriched immeasurably through this opportunity.

This issue of the Bilingual Times brings you highlights of our 40th annual conference, *Families, Practitioners, Partners and Policymakers: Fulfilling the Promise of Bilingual Education Together*, which you are sure to enjoy, whether you were able to be there or not. I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to the conference chairperson (and incoming NYSABE President), Iraidá Bodré, who was able to plan and execute a conference that was one of the best yet. Thanks to Iraidá and the wonderful committee chairpersons, committee members, sponsors, and friends of NYSABE, we were able to share three wonderful days of kinship, learning, and growth.

Throughout the 2016-17 year, our Board of Directors, Delegate Assembly, Executive Director, and members were very busily working to fulfill the goals of NYSABE. Our work in the areas of Advocacy, Professional Development, Dissemination of Information and Communications, Networking and Membership, and Leadership was significant. These accomplishments include:

- The development of position statements and commentary on proposed national and state policies: <https://nysabe.net/newspublications/current-issues-in-bilingual-educationadvocacy/>
 - NYS Education Budget for 2017-18 (letter-writing campaign),
 - New Every Student Succeeds Act Accountability Plan Draft,
 - Proposed Federal Education Budget for 2018,
 - Appointment of Betsy DeVos as Education Secretary,
 - NYSED Guidance on Immigrant and Refugee Students;
- The continuation of a strategic planning process to develop a long-range strategic plan that will guide our organization towards achieving its goals over the next several years;
- Support to NYSABE's regional professional development activities;
- Certification as an approved CTLE provider of professional development by New York State;
- Formation of the parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC);
- NYSABE's participation in two important NYSED committees:
 - The NYSED's ESSA Think Tank
 - The Early Childhood/Pre-K programs for ELLs/bilingual learners
 - The NYSED EdTPA Standard Setting Committee;
- Continued collaboration and communication with partner organizations at the local, state and national levels to engage in joint advocacy and networking. Institutions include: NABE, International TESOL, NYS TESOL, NYSCEA, NYSAFLT, Advocates for Children, New York Immigration Coalition, ADASA, Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York, Buffalo Immigrant and Refugee Leadership Team, Buffalo Public Schools Multilingual Education Advisory Committee, Ibero-

— From the Desk of the President —

Dr. Tamara Alsace

Continued from page 2

- Participation of a NYSABE team in the annual NABE and NYS TESOL conferences, including a presentation at the NYS TESOL Conference by yours truly;
- Continuation of the publication of NYSABE's research journal, *The Journal of Multilingual Educational Research* (JMER).
- Continued communication through our Listserv. We once again thank our fantastic ListServ Manager, Melodie Valenciano!
- Growth of our social media efforts with the expansion of NYSABE's Facebook page to reach over 775 followers
- Development of the NYSABE 2017 annual conference website: <http://nysabe.net/2017conference>;
- Continued revision and updating of the *NYSABE Standard Operating Procedure Manual*;
- Completion of NYSABE's 2017 elections;
- Celebration of NYSABE's 40th Anniversary—NYSABE: 40 Years Strong!—held at Fordham University on Saturday, October 28, 2016 with over 100 guests;
- Planning for a membership drive to be held in September;
- Initial planning for the 2018 conference, (spearheaded by President-Elect Bodré) whose theme will be: *Bilingual Education: Uncovering the Talents of Multilingual Learners from Early Childhood through High School and Beyond*.

It is clear to see that this has been a year full of accomplishments for our NYSABE team. It was through the collaborative efforts of our magnificent Board of Directors, Delegate Assembly, and Executive Director, supported and inspired by our members, partners, students, and families, that we were able to accomplish all that we did on behalf of multilingual learners. I especially want to thank the NYSABE leaders, and particularly our Board of Directors and Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, who have worked side by side with me throughout these past two years to maintain continuity and keep our organization strong. A special thank you to outgoing past president Tatyana Kleyn who has been the longest serving immediate past president in our history and one who has always gone above and beyond the call of duty!

As I prepare to turn over the reins to soon-to-be president Iraida Bodré, I reflect on the past two years and look forward to the year to come. I feel proud of what we have accomplished together and ready to roll up my sleeves to continue the important work ahead of us. Thank you once more for your support of NYSABE as an organization and of me as its president. Adelante!

Sincerely,
Tamara O. Alsace, Ph.D.
2015-17 NYSABE President

— From the Desk of the Executive Director —

Nancy Villarreal de Adler



“The opposite of love is not hate; it’s indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness; it’s indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy; it’s indifference. And the opposite of life is not death; it’s indifference.” Elie Wiesel

The theme of the 2017 NYSABE conference, “Families, Practitioners, Partners, and Policy Makers: Fulfilling the Promise of Bilingual Education Together,” was an intentional call to action. It was a call for all of us to comprehend the current challenges jeopardizing our children’s education. It was also a call to organize an effective response to those threats. As we review this issue of The Bilingual Times newsletter, devoted to our 2017 conference, we will have the opportunity to reflect upon our urgency to stand up to those whose ideologies or actions threaten the educational rights of New York State’s multilingual learners. We must then, speak out against bigotry, persecution, the violation of human rights, and the threats of perceived supremacy that affect our educational communities. The articles on the conference activities, presented in this issue, are clear statements of our mission as educators and advocates for our children. In every keynote session, workshop, exhibit, demonstration, or artistic performance held at the conference the message was very clear: NYSABE will not remain indifferent or silent in the face of hate, divisiveness, ignorance, and bigotry. Once again, NYSABE members will rise to champion the educational rights of our multilingual, multicultural communities.

As we look at the four piece puzzle that symbolized our conference, (Families, Practitioners, Partners, and Policy Makers), we note that we are all represented in the pieces of that puzzle, and that it is our commitment to education and the betterment of our multilingual communities what binds us all together. It is clear that it is this sense of unity, mutual support, and collaboration what must prevail throughout our individual and collective advocacy work. In this 2017 annual conference we felt deeply inspired to transform our spirits in order to urge others to abandon their state of complaisance and indifference. The time had come to join hands together in order to safeguard our one common goal: to ensure the best education for our multilingual learners.

In closing, we would like to thank and congratulate our newsletter co-editors, Lourdes Roa and Hulda Yau, for presenting eloquent conference articles that remind us all of our commitment to NYSABE’s mission, to provide equitable, meaningful, and quality education to all youngsters from New York State’s multilingual, multicultural communities. Very special thanks to Cristina Bosch Rovira for being a true educator, a selfless source of information and inspiration.

“Sólo le pido a Dios que el dolor no me sea indiferente, que la reseca muerte no me encuentre vacío y solo sin haber hecho lo suficiente.

Sólo le pido a Dios que la guerra no me sea indiferente, es un monstruo grande y pisa fuerte toda la pobre inocencia de la gente.

Sólo le pido a Dios que el futuro no me sea indiferente, desahuciado está el que tiene que marchar a vivir una cultura diferente.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyR8CP77imA>



— From the Editors —



This is a very remarkable time in our nation's history. NYSABE is perfectly positioned as a unifying organization to support the education of all English language/multilingual learners across the state. Membership and support for this organization allows your efforts and passions to multiply, creating a powerhouse of strength by people at many levels of educational leadership, from the Board of Regents and NYSED leadership, to classroom teachers and parents, and civic organizations. This year's conference held at the Crowne Plaza in White Plains on March 2-4th, was a most inspiring and memorable occasion to all who attended.

In this issue, we bring you highlights and some of the key themes addressed at the conference. One acronym that repeated itself throughout the conference, initiated by Deputy Commissioner, Angélica Infante-Green at the opening, was **SUMA**. It calls for each of us to **S**trategize, **U**nify, **M**obilize, and **A**ct, on behalf of the students and families that we serve. We are not alone, but we truly are one force. Even if you were not able to attend the conference this year, we invite you to read this newsletter carefully, and join the powerful voice that NYSABE offers to the field.

As always, your comments and ideas for future issues are welcomed and appreciated.

Thank you for your support and your commitment. Lourdes Roa and Hulda Yau

Strategize (Elaborar una estrategia)

Unite (Unificar)

Mobilize (Movilizar)

Act (Actuar)

Advocacy in Action: Families Fighting, Creating and Expanding Bilingualism in Education

By Lourdes Roa

At lunch on Thursday, greetings were provided by Evelyn DeJesus, Vice President of United Federation of Teachers (UFT). Evelyn is a forceful advocate for justice, undaunted and unafraid to speak the truth to those in authority. Her greeting of parents was warm and welcoming, reiterating the importance of parent visibility and inclusivity in the education of their children.

Lisette Colón-Collins, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, in the New York State Education Department, continued to welcome parents. Colón-Collins reiterated the vital role of parents in today's educational settings. She provided a challenge to the participants to find innovative and meaningful ways for parents to be involved and most certainly welcomed in all aspects of education. She called for everyone throughout the state to stand up for their families, regardless of any obstacles or opposing forces. "This is a time when our silence cannot be misrepresented." We must act consciously, strategically and in unity.

Dr. Betty A. Rosa, Chancellor, New York State Board of Regents, gave the final address to introduce the parent panelists which were featured in this afternoon's luncheon. Chancellor Rosa acknowledged everyone in the audience for taking time to be courageous in this fight. She stated, "We stand with Muslim families, same sex families, families of students with disabilities, and everyone that others cannot tolerate. We will not allow our institutions to be interest to

the highest bidder!" She also quoted Abraham Lincoln, who said that we are not here to "overthrow the constitution, but to overthrow the men and women who pervert the constitution." She encouraged everyone to speak up and find forums for speaking. She ended with "Let all of us roll up our sleeves and say Presente".

The parent panel consisted of three parents: **Nuala O'Doherty** from Community District Education Council 30, NYCDOE; **Maria Jaya Vega**, Parent Co-Director from Cypress Hills Community School, NYCDOE; and **Victor Shotte**, from the Ossining School District.



Heather Homonoff Woodley from New York University moderated the panel by leading with questions and sharing the microphone to allow ample time for each panelist to give

their comments. Some advice that the panelists shared with the educators in the audience:

- Parents can't be involved in a system they do not understand. Please welcome them, then educate them so they CAN understand. They need time to learn the system, to "grow" as leaders. Invest in the parents.
- Unite the parents. They can't be divided into different groups. We want them to see us as valuable resources, partners, equals. Let's work together without blame.
- Learn about the home environment. Don't make assumptions about children from the same culture. Reach out to small local immigrant groups to help educate teachers about the families they serve.

"Let all of us roll up our sleeves and say, ¡Presente!"

Chancellor
Betty A. Rosa



Presidential Address: Advocacy, Action and the Arts

By Lourdes Roa

“We cannot doubt that the results of our actions have an impact...no matter how small or how large”

Dr. Alsace

Dr. Tamara Alsace, in this very moving presidential address, made clear connections between the three A's of the title, and demonstrated the kinds of actions we can take on behalf of bilingual education. This year's presidential address added heart-felt flair and interactive discussion through visuals, theatrical reading and personal inquiry.

Dr. Alsace poignantly obscured the lines between personal and professional responsibilities and our passions. She first took the audience on a historical walk through past era protests and she shared visual images that represent those events in our minds and hearts. Visuals included images from Women's Suffrage, Slavery, The Boston Tea Party, and the Salt March in India. She also identified images used against positive change, some of which live on in our minds, such as Klu Klux Klan Rally images. She included classic murals, and Picasso paintings that represent eras of change and protests for a cause.

Music was also represented in her address to indicate how this art form uses, and has historically been used for, advocacy and activism. She played a relatively current song, (and had us all sing it), “Say His Name (Hell You Talm-bout by Janelle Monáe)”, to remember and memorialize Trayvon Martin and other African American victims of injustice.

Finally, Dr. Alsace shared a theatrical reading of a scene from the play entitled, “Yo También Soy Un Hombre”, written by herself and her partner, Gary Earl Ross. This play represents a fictionalized account of the occurrences leading up to a real-life event, a farmworker uprising that took place south of Buffalo, New York in 1966. This uprising led to improved education and health services provided to migrant workers in that region, and later throughout the state. As stated by Dr. Alsace, “We cannot doubt that the results of our actions have an impact...no matter how small or how large.”



She wrapped up the address by challenging everyone to fulfill the promise of our mission in NYSABE. She gave us the following steps to move forward in fulfilling that promise:

1. Be a role model
2. Encourage students to speak up
3. Teach people to tell their stories
4. Understand the needs of all people
5. Visualize the promise fulfilled

Her closing words were, “We have the power, the power to fulfill the promise.” (As the song, “Power to the People” by Patti Smith, played for all of us to hear, sing, and feel with incredible power.)



Advocacy Takes Center Stage

By Ellen Thea Chernoff

Friday's Major Session II reiterated the message for advocacy that we heard on Thursday, as NY State Regent Judith Johnson greeted attendees, encouraging them to become "peace time warriors for education." She claimed that she is, and we all are, "kindred souls" in this path, and we unite to create a community which welcomes all ethnic groups. Regent Johnson told a receptive audience that, "the kinds of schools we get depend on how strong we stand." She wove together other concepts that aligned with messages given: -The universal language of art binds us together; -We must have the courage to reject bigotry; -Remember to take a stand. Johnson quoted writer and holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel, who said, "Neutrality helps the oppressor. Silence encourages the tormenter...Work together to dismantle bigotry and racism." She also asserted that schools are probably the only shared experience that unifies ALL Americans. "Let's look at schools as dynamic institutions for change and let's ask ourselves: What kind of people do we want our children to become? What kind of country do we want our children to create?" Regent Johnson's invitation to reflect on our roles as advocates may guide NYSABE members to find answers to the questions she posed.

Dr. Kate Menken delivered the session's keynote address, entitled "Bilingual Education Policy in the Trump Era." In her address, Dr. Menken told NYSABE members and supporters that historically, language policies in education are linked with policies on immigration and immigrants. Dr. Menken, a linguistics professor at Queens College, and a research fellow with an on-going interest in language policy, explained that both immigration and bilin-

gual education have been characterized by some periods of tolerance as well as periods of restriction. In ways matching Dr. Alsace's presidential address, Dr. Menken talked about these periods, with a specific focus on language policies in education. Dr. Menken mentioned greater tolerance during the 1960's civil rights era, but also of periods of restriction, such as the emergence of "U.S. English" in the 1980's and 90's.

Given the current national climate around immigration, Dr. Menken warned NYSABE members not to be surprised to see more attacks on bilingual education. However, Dr. Menken expressed some optimism around opportunities for multilingual students in NY State. What we are witnessing in New York State is encouraging, especially in light of federal policy and actions of the new administration. She reminded the audience that state and local policies can be powerful, even in the face of possible challenges at the national level.

Dr. Menken shared a timeline of bilingual education which demonstrated the pendulum shifts between language tolerance and restriction. She referred to the powerful impact of the voice of the community. Organizations such as "La Lucha Sigue" in California, have been the catalyst for increased language tolerance, and bilingual education programs. In summary, she stated that restriction happens when there is clamping down of immigration. Tolerance and openness happen when there is an upswing of Civil Rights movement. So what happens now?

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"The kinds of schools we get depend on how strong we stand... Let's look at schools as dynamic institutions for change:

What kind of people do we want our children to become?

What kind of country do we want our children to create?"

Judith Johnson



Educators as Innovators:

Enacting Policy at Different Levels

“Whether we came here yesterday, or 100 years ago.. We must not be divided. But we must not be foolish either. There is inequality.”

Dr. Luis O. Reyes

The luncheon session opened with greetings from Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), a union of 200,000 members including New York City. He has led union efforts to transform education in the city and is recognized as a national leader in promoting labor-community collaboration. Mulgrew mobilized a diverse coalition of public and private sector organizations to create the Community Learning Schools Initiative. Schools in the project work with partner agencies to respond to the social, health and educational needs of students’ families and communities as a way of enhancing children’s achievement and opportunities. Mulgrew also worked with the Dept. of Education to launch the landmark PROSE (Progressive Redesign Opportunity Schools for Excellence), which empowers teachers and schools to redesign their school program to better meet the needs of the students. Mulgrew spent 12 years as a classroom teacher at William E. Grady HS in Brooklyn, where he served as UFT Leader. His words to the group reinforced the idea that language learning is not just for ELLs. All students need to become more globally conscious and learn a second language.

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor from the New York City Department of Education followed Mulgrew’s opening. Her address included the idea that we need to be united, not distracted with finger-pointing or blaming. She also challenged districts and communities to find creative ways to attract future bilingual teachers. She reiterated that education is a local need, and must be tailored to meet those local community needs. During her five decade career, Fariña has distinguished herself as an innovative teacher, principal, superintendent and deputy chancellor committed to helping students,

teachers and principals excel. As chancellor, she is working collaboratively with parents, educators, school communities and external stakeholders to ensure that every child graduates from high school prepared for college, a career, and a future as a productive, critical-thinking adult.

Dr. Luis O. Reyes, Member-at-Large, New York State Board of Regents, then spoke to introduce the panel of teachers. The Board of Regents presides over both the New York State Education Department and the University of the State of New York, the nation’s most comprehensive and unified educational system. Dr. Reyes’ publications include an article in the *Harvard Educational Review* (October 2006), on the 30th anniversary of the ASPIRA Consent Decree (1974) that established the legal right for Puerto Rican/Latino students in New York City who were Spanish dominant to receive bilingual education instruction.



Dr. Reyes also has a chapter entitled, “Rebuilding the Puerto Rican education pipeline for a multilingual/multicultural future,” in *Puerto Ricans and the Dawn of the new Millennium*, published by the Center for Puerto Rican Studies in 2014 (E. Melendez and C. Vargas-Ramos, eds). Reyes opened with a recognition of the divine nature in all of us, which binds us as human beings, across all borders, “whether we came here yesterday, or 100 years ago.” He claimed, “We must not be divided. But we must not be foolish either. There is inequality.” Reyes also went on to challenge us all to create and maintain a vision of multilingualism and multiculturalism. He asked that we support the need for funding for native language testing in at least 10 languages, and to include that in teacher and principal preparation programs.

Making Dreams into Realities: Partners as Supports for Immigrant Students and Families

Major session III began with inspiring words from Dr. David Kirkland, the Executive Director of the NYU Metropolitan Center. Dr. Kirkland is a transdisciplinary scholar of English and urban education. He explores the intersections among urban youth culture, language and literacy, urban teacher preparation and digital media. Dr. Kirkland was featured in the NYSABE Bilingual Times Spring/Summer 2016, with his article, *“Overcoming the Tradition of Silence Toward a Critical Bilingual Education for the Voiceless.”*

Dr. Kirkland inspired the group to listen to the voice of our youth, to allow them to transform our world for a new generation. His fourth book, *“A Search Past Silence,”* is being completed now and will be published through Teachers College Press, Language and Literacy Series.

Milady Báez, Deputy Chancellor for the Division of English Language Learners and Student Support, NYCDOE, followed Dr. Kirkland’s remarks to greet the audience prior to the keynote address of Antonio Alarcón. Báez is recognized for establishing prestigious and successful dual language programs and initiating a gifted bilingual program in New York

City. Her support for the advancement of English language learners came through in her words of admiration for Alarcón.

Antonio Alarcón is a remarkable young man, currently studying at Queens College, CUNY. He works as a Youth Organizer for Immigration Issues at Make the Road New York. He eloquently shared his story of rising from struggle and poverty to leadership and advocacy

for the NY DREAM Act, as well as advocating for immigration reform at the federal level.

Alarcón shared details of his own story and showed pictures of his early beginnings, speaking at a rally to the governor as a teenager of 16 years old.

Antonio is now a published author and public speaker. He shared a clip from the film in which he is featured, titled, *“Indivisible”*. His dream is to graduate with a degree in film, and to establish a career where he creates films about the struggle of people of color in our current systems.

For more information on his work and his activities, please visit the website:

<http://www.maketheroadny.org/>



Parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC): Promising Presence at NYSABE 2017

By Elena Zelfond

The parent group at this year's conference was afforded several sessions for information and sharing, as well as opportunities to provide feedback and comments on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) draft plan from New York State. The Parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC) first met at the 40th Annual conference of NYSABE. The objective of this group is "to establish a group of multilingual and multicultural parent leaders." At the meeting, the purpose of the group was identified, and the objectives and opportunities for involvement were discussed. Three additional sessions followed this first meeting:

"Parents as Partners: Effective Communication Within Special Education."

This session provided a review of basic communication skills that can assist parents in becoming meaningful partners in the special education process. Parents learned specific terminology to communicate clearly and collaborate effectively as they develop their child's individualized education program.

"NYS Local and Statewide Advocacy in 2017"

This session addressed the role of educators in supporting immigrant, refugee, and multilingual students and families, as well as bilingual education. It was an interactive two-part session to engage with state policymakers about NYSABE's advocacy agenda, and learn through hands-on activities how to advocate

effectively in schools, districts and home regions on behalf of immigrant, refugee, and multilingual students and families.

"Know Your Rights: What to do if you are stopped by the police/immigration and customs enforcement and/or border patrol" This training informed NYS immigrants, both documented and undocumented, of their rights when interacting with all types of officers.

Additionally, PLAC was invited to give feedback on the testing handouts for parents and



the FAQ (frequently asked questions) document disseminated by the New York State Education Department. Specifically, Dr. Tamara Alsace shared important documents from NYSED. The purpose

was to discuss them and obtain the parents' views and recommendations regarding the policies described in such documents and the accessibility of the information for parents. As a follow up to this, in June, PLAC was invited to participate in forums to give feedback on ESSA.

This group of parents will continue to be seen as leaders throughout the state and NYSABE. The leadership of this group, José González and Elena Zelfond, are masterful at engaging parents and helping them to articulate and give voice to their ideas in all educational contexts for multilingual learners.

From Blueprint to Building:

Lifting the Torch for Multilingual Learners in New York State

In November 2016, Janie Tankard Carnock, a program associate with the Education Policy program at New America, authored the publication “From Blueprint to Building: Lifting the Torch for Multilingual Learners in New York State”. She is a member of the DLL National Work Group, where she provides research and analysis on policies related to language learners. In the publication, Carnock summarizes the sweeping and innovative policy changes in New York State regarding the education of multilingual learners. She not only addresses the political ramifications of these changes, but she also touts state leaders for strategic implementation of these changes, which enables systemic improvement of the educational achievement across the state. Included in this journal, are the concluding statements and recommendations made by the author.

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New America is committed to renewing American politics, prosperity, and purpose in the Digital Age. They are a distinctive community of thinkers, writers, researchers, technologists, and community activists who believe deeply in the possibility of American renewal.

New America's Education Policy program uses original research and policy analysis to solve the nation's critical education problems, serving as a trusted source of objective analysis and innovative ideas for policymakers, educators, and the public at large. They combine a steadfast concern for low-income and historically disadvantaged people with a belief that better information about education can vastly improve both the policies that govern educational institutions and the quality of learning itself. This work encompasses the full range of educational opportunities, from early learning to primary and secondary education, college, and the workforce.

Acknowledgements (cont.)

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Here are pages 38 through 41 of the article.
For the full publication, please see :
<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/blueprint-building>

Conclusions and Recommendations:

In May [2016], Assistant Commissioner Colón-Collins faced an auditorium full of ELL educators, administrators, union leaders, and policy-makers at New York State's Association of Bilingual Education's annual conference at New York University. It was the end of the first year of full implementation of the new state rules. Colón-Collins emphasized the initial impact of the reforms on ELL education by beginning five sentences with identical syntax, a booming, rhythmic refrain: *"Because of the regulations...Because of the regulations...Because of the regulations...Because of the regulations...Because of the regulations...."*

In most cases, "regulations" connote dusty, dense volumes of dry, technical language. Their mention does not typically arouse particular passion or excitement. But, for ELLs in New York, and those responsible for their education, these new rules are bringing a buzz of innovation. Indeed, *because of the regulations*, changes are unfolding at the district and school level in ways that meaningfully change educational opportunities for ELLs. These stu-

dents now benefit from expanded opportunities to receive bilingual instruction, better integration of language development into academic content, teachers with growing competencies in serving language learners, more substantive school commitments to engaging their families as partners, and more clearly defined ELL protocols, assessment methods, and data systems.

The shifts in regulations have not occurred in a vacuum. They have rolled out in concert with the Blueprint, reinforcement from other state-led supports and initiatives, and—most critically for the road ahead—a set of capable, bilingual leaders in the administrative hierarchy. According to Colón-Collins, the "stars are aligned" with top-level leadership in Regents chancellor, Betty Rosa, and new board member, Luis Reyes; Marco Crespo, a state assemblyman from the Bronx, characterized the pair as "the one-two punch we've always needed." Within the administration, Angélica Infante-Green leads as Deputy Commissioner for Instruction for *all* students. Colón-Collins said that this ensures someone is "sitting at the table and asking the difficult questions" so that ELLs are incorporated into every aspect of New York's educational system. "When people say 'no,' if you know Angélica, you know she says, 'Why not?' There is always that creativity, vision, and leadership," she said.

But the ambitious, paradigm-shifting reforms have also elicited some criticism. A major objection is that NYSED rolled out too much too fast with not enough guidance or time for stakeholders—school and district leaders, educators, institutions of higher education—to mobilize and change their practices.

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This situation illuminates a larger tension between the urgent need to meet ELL needs *now* and the realities of time and resourcing that it takes to steer a massive, statewide system in a new direction. In the coming years, New York leaders, having clearly defined their aspirations and strategies, will need to establish routines for monitoring performance, set targets that establish trajectories, and honestly examine evidence of progress. They will need to develop and clarify the chain of system leaders who will provide feedback loops, address capacity challenges, troubleshoot problems rigorously, and balance trusting and monitoring districts.

None of this is easy work. Time will tell if New York's reforms build up in ways that truly change long-term outcomes for ELLs. But the foundation of research-based, stakeholder-informed policy design has been laid. And vitally, the state seems to have embraced a mindset of responsive, continuous development. Infante-Green acknowledged that the state is "still in the process" and emphasized the ongoing nature of change: last year "was 'Year 1,' and we still have a lot of work to do. And we anticipated that we would have a lot of work to do," she told us. Just as the Statue of Liberty required years of molding, sculpting, hoisting, and hammering, a new statewide system for ELLs will require many stages of construction as well as scaffolding and attentive management from leaders throughout the process. In addition, New York's state-level ELL policy model imparts a reminder that true reform is entrepreneurial. It requires leaders to take risks, adapt, learn from successes and failures, and fine tune early ideas. There is no clear manual to draw on for ELL policy reform. New York leaders are writing their own, and no other state has done all that New York is attempting. Of course, as other states look to extract ideas from New York's example, they must do so carefully. Differences in demographics, political context,

and general capacity are likely to be significant. The history of New York as the epicenter of American immigration stocks the state with a rare level of resourcing and human capital that has enabled responsive multilingual policies. Newer portals may not have the same pool to draw on, and they may have a less embracing ethos in response to newcomers. So, New York State's approach may not be transferred wholesale; state leaders should determine the individual components that will be most effective in their own contexts. Nonetheless, New York State imparts several key lessons. First, it is noteworthy that the new urgency and creativity for ELLs stemmed, in part, from federal accountability. The U.S. Department of Education's corrective action several years ago marked a somewhat of a low point for state officials. While several factors motivated New York State's reforms, federal oversight provided critical prodding for leaders to try new, bold approaches. The newest federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, significantly reduces the degree of federal monitoring and intervention, so states will face less external pressure to do right by ELLs going forward.

Moreover, New York's example shows that massive, organizational change has a much greater chance of success when leaders combine mandates of formal authority with tools of informal influence. To a large extent, the passage of new Part 154 regulations in tandem with the publication of the *Blueprint for English Language Learners (ELLs) Success* and other capacity-building initiatives embody such a combination. State leaders have attempted to foster a culture that moves local agents to a place of "committed compliance"—where teachers and administrators understand and want to engage in the work required of them.

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New York's efforts represent a more fundamental shift in the role state education departments should play in driving equity for students. As limited agents in a decentralized U.S. education system, states must partner with districts in ways that nurture their work. This role will be all the more important going forward given increased state autonomy under ESSA. After all, the most meticulously crafted accountability system can only go so far. A state can identify where its struggling schools and districts are, but then discussions must switch to remedies and solutions. In this sense, the Empire State's work—while still under construction—breaks new ground for ELL policy and leadership that other states can draw on. States should consider the following six recommendations gleaned from New York's experience:

Develop and communicate a high-profile ELL vision at the state level.

While vision-setting is only a starting point, it serves as a critical anchor of reform, a reference point for stakeholders at all systems levels. The Blueprint for ELL Success provided a foundation for explaining reforms and capturing the spirit behind new mandates. The Blueprint's principles have begun to trickle down and encourage shifts in ideas about ELLs at the local level.

Design policies that incorporate home language as an asset through dual immersion models. Dual immersion instruction can close academic achievement gaps in English while simultaneously growing bilingualism in order to enhance college and career opportunities. New York is making significant investments in its linguistic assets through expanding district-level mandates for bilingual instruction, incorporating home language into new, content-aligned language development standards, translating openly licensed and freely accessible math curriculum into five languages, providing grant-based fund-

ing for districts to start new bilingual programs, and creating a pathway for high school graduates to earn a Seal of Biliteracy on their diplomas.

Design policies that integrate language development and academic instruction across the board. New York's new policies push towards more inclusive, "integrated" instructional models, primarily through co-teaching models where content teachers and ELL specialists work together to provide linguistic supports during mainstream instruction. The rules set differentiated expectations by English proficiency level to meet ELL needs through a hybrid of stand-alone and integrated language services, setting a baseline that allows for flexibility in local decision-making. The reforms also set specific requirements for *all* teachers, mainstream and ELL specialists alike, to receive professional development to integrate language and content instruction.

Build statewide systems to develop administrator and teacher competencies with ELLs, equipping them for success in meeting and exceeding regulatory expectations.

While districts and schools control the specifics of how new policies take root, New York has established various mechanisms for capacity building and resource sharing. In particular, the state education department developed a free Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to guide district leaders in implementation of the new regulations and Blueprint principles. Moreover, the state's system of eight Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs) has helped disseminate information and connect educators to professional development opportunities and resources across the state. But, even with these supports, several educators voiced concerns over a lack of sufficient state guidance on implementation of changes.

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An incremental roll-out of reforms, with piloting or prototyping in certain locations, could have smoothed district transitions to the new policies and practices.

Coordinate administrative action with institutions of higher education and state government to ensure policies can be implemented optimally. New York’s new rules have exacerbated a shortage of bilingual and ELL teachers; demand has outpaced supply.

To address this issue, NYSED has created “fast track” alternative certification options and engaged schools of education proactively, expanding the number of university partners under its existing Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Education (ITI-BE) tuition assistance program. However, the department has gotten little assistance from the state legislature on new initiatives. The legislature should consider passing additional, dedicated funding for ITI-BE and to help offset district costs for hiring more ELL teachers.

Create policies that collect more meaningful ELL data to evaluate the impact of reforms, and share that information in publicly accessible ways. New York’s new policies require all districts to report more detailed data by instructional program and specific ELL subgroup, including newcomer, developing, long-term, and former categories as well as those with disabilities and/or interrupted formal education. With increased ELL data reporting requirements under the newest federal education law, ESSA, New York State provides an example of thoughtful data disaggregation that allows for clearer tracking of ELLs over time and on how instructional program differences affected academic outcomes. In the short term, education officials should invest in interim measurement and data-gathering tools to measure progress beyond “inputs,” such as teacher hires and district plans. Moving from a blueprint of powerful

ideas to the building of concrete change, leaders in New York are lifting a torch that can guide others seeking to advance equity for multilingual students across the country.



Assistant Commissioner, Lissette Colón-Collins, addresses the audience at the New York State Association of Bilingual Education's annual conference in May. Photo: New York State Association for Bilingual Education



Conference Opening: A Focus on History, Language, Families and Actions!

(continued from page 1)

Dr. Pérez also discussed the impact of the “Let’s Talk, Hablemos Project” (which she worked on with Dr. Laura Ascenzi-Moreno and Maria Jaya-Vega at Cypress Hills Community School) that centered on families and checking in with them to see if the school was doing what they were supposed to be – beyond the City or State mandates –for their children. She also shared how collaborations between schools and families should be founded on the basis that people are “not required to attend, but inspired to attend.”

Dr. Pérez left us with the following words of advice to ensure our partnerships are powerful and responsive to the needs of the communities:

- Acknowledge contributions of families
- Reference cultural nuances
- Get to know each other, partnerships are based on relationships
- Be aware of the history of bilingual education and how families have been treated
- Consult with those most impacted by the issue we are trying to solve.

Advocacy Takes Center Stage

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Anti-immigrant rhetoric is central to the Trump campaign. From January 2017, with travelers being detained across the U.S. in airports, to the Muslim ban and the tremendous increase in ICE activities (Immigration Civil Enforcement), these policies are having an impact on our schools. We can call it the “Trump effect”.

This effect is one of FEAR. It begs the question, “what does it mean to be an American at this time?” Why does policy matter so much now? Because the Trump effect requires us to engage in immigration discourse and policies that impact our students, the author and educator, Paolo Freire, is quoted to have said, “Education is a political act.” It is necessary to increase our own awareness of our civil rights, and the rights of others, to steer the course to inclusivity for ALL people.

In closing, Dr. Menken told us all, “Don’t agonize, organize.” She challenged us all to be “relentless” for our students. She said that though this fight is at the federal level, not at the state level, we need to stand with our local lawmakers who support bilingual education and multilingualism. She claimed that we need to join hands

with other groups for the purpose of Civil rights, all groups, including African Americans and Jewish Associations, as well as the LGBT community or whoever is disenfranchised.

Educators as Innovators: Enacting Policy at Different Levels

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For the Keynote address, an accomplished panel of educators was introduced by Maite Sánchez of CUNY Graduate Center and Laura Ascenzi-Moreno of Brooklyn College. The panelists included NYSABE Region V Delegate, Hulda Yau, from Henry Hudson School #28 in Rochester, New York, and Suzanna MacNamara from the International High School in New York City, and Miguel Medina, from Bilingual Center School 33 in Buffalo, New York. Each of the panelists eloquently spoke about their experiences and their encouragement as bilingual educators.

They each had meaningful insights that were particular to their role and region, as well as their unique situation. They shared anecdotes and genuine, applicable ideas, that worked for them to lead effective change in their schools, causing improvements for multilingual learners and their families. In closing, the message shared was for each of us, as members of the bilingual education community, to have conversations about bilingual education, advocate for the programs, and ask for (or demand) the data. Once you find your voice, let it radiate out. Talk to people. Make a difference. Words matter.





Highlights of the 40th Anniversary NYSABE 2017 Conference

Photographs by Rafael Mencía



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NYSABE

40th Annual Conference

2017 Professional Awards



Bilingual Administrator of the Year: Miguel Medina

Miguel started his journey as an assistant principal at Bilingual Center School 33 in Buffalo, NY during 2008-2009. Later, as principal, he saw the existing program as a social injustice which did not meet the needs of all of the students. He embarked on a mission to demand equity. He led the school to become the first in Western NY to develop and implement a Reggio Emilia inspired Dual Language Immersion Program that integrates project based learning philosophies. He has worked tirelessly, against all odds, to create a school in which the education philosophy and school culture prepare students for lifelong success in academics, languages, socio-cultural competence and 21st century skills.

Ximena Zate Bilingual Teacher of the Year

Daisy Balaguer

Daisy is a second grade bilingual teacher in the Dual Language program of Buffalo Public School #64-Frederick Law Olmstead. She is enthusiastic, dedicated and motivated. She is a daily role model for her students, colleagues, administrators and parents. She demonstrates unshakeable advocacy for multilingualism, multiculturalism, and a firm believe in her students' abilities to thrive in her classroom, regardless of their backgrounds and previous negative experiences.

Liya Wang

Mrs. Wang is a Chinese English Bilingual Social Studies teacher, currently working in John Bowne HS in Queens. She has been teaching in the New York City public school system for the past 22 years. Her experiences also include 8 years of teaching at a community college in Shanghai. Her thirty years of teaching has given her an abundant experience in helping multilingual learners learn both the content of social studies and English as a New Language. Liya sees the power of the parents and community. As a fervent advocate of bilingual education, she has also taken on the role of vice president of the association of the Chinese-English Bilingual Educators East Coast of USA, as well as leader of other numerous activities serving her students and community.

Gladys Correa Memorial Award: Claire Sylvan

Claire has been an inspiring, unwavering leader in the field of education for more than 40 years. Her outstanding work and impact spans communities, fields, and populations. She began her career in the classroom as a bilingual and ESL teacher in Brooklyn, and soon began advocating and working on behalf of multilingual learners (MLLs) of all backgrounds. She taught and worked on behalf of immigrant adults, and was a founding teacher at the ground breaking International High School at La Guardia in 1985. She was a title VII fellow and a tireless advocate. Throughout her career, she has mentored teachers, advised countless students, and continuously strove for excellence for all learners. Her efforts include supporting Dreamers and DACA recipients. Her work at the national level has served to raise awareness in policy around the needs of multilingual learners and immigrants. Claire demonstrates admirable and exceptional leadership, courage, passion, thoughtfulness, and unwavering dedication to the education of MLLs of all backgrounds and abilities.





NYSABE

40th Annual Conference

2017 Student Awards



NYSABE

40th Anniversary

Bilingual Student Essay Awards

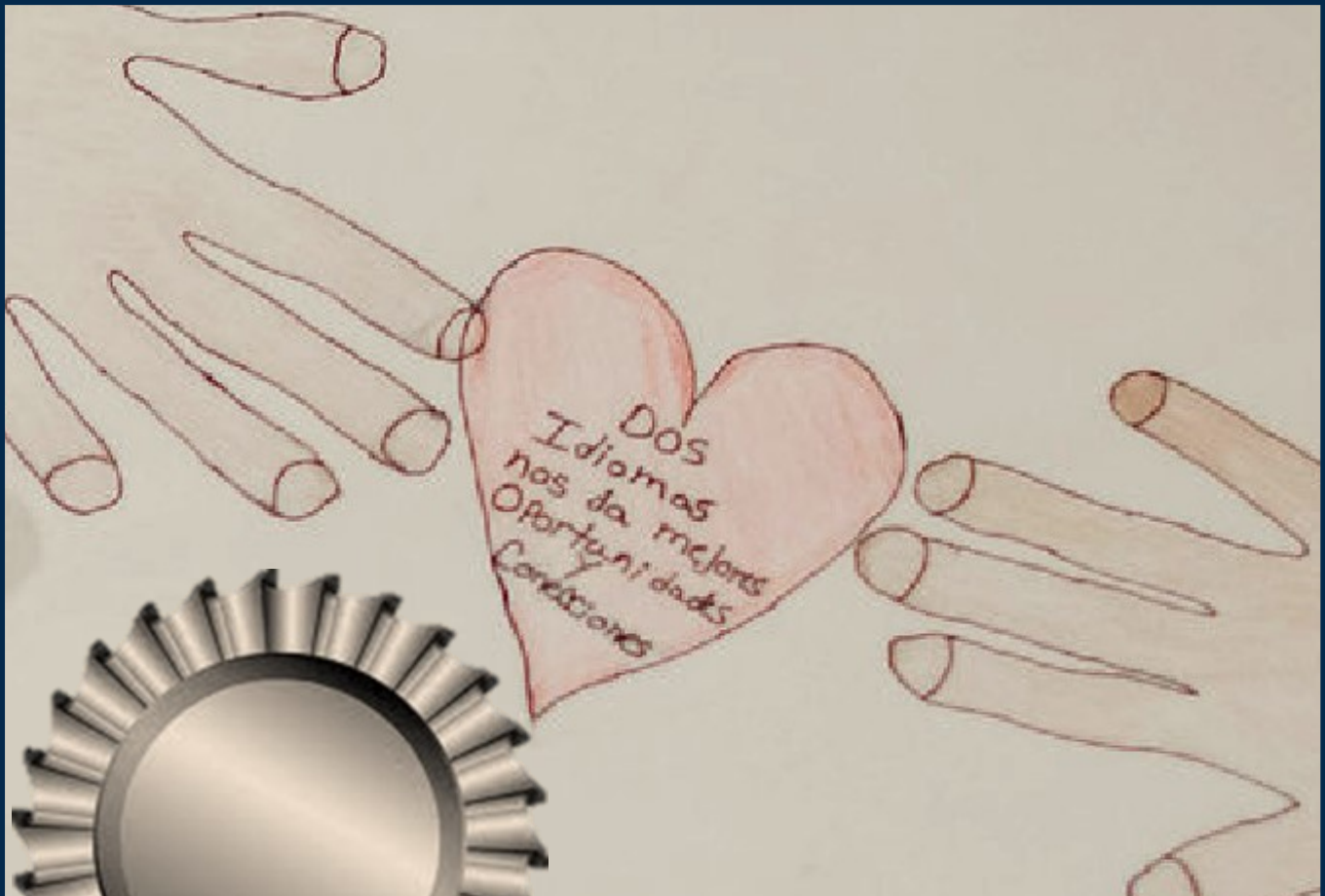
Grades 3-5



Grades 9-12



NYSABE
40th Anniversary
Nivia Zavala Art Contest Award



1st Place
Gabriela Santiago Vélez
8th grade
Bilingual Center, #33
“Dos Idiomas”



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THE ORGANIZATION:

NYSABE is a multilingual, multicultural professional association that promotes the academic achievement of more than 300,000 English language learners (ELLs)/bilingual students, and supports the development of biliteracy skills among all students in New York State. Founded in 1976, NYSABE unites educators, parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, researchers, members of professional organizations, educational institutions, and the news media sharing a common goal to ensure excellence and equity for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

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

NYSABE promotes bilingual education as a process by which students achieve academic success through instruction in English and a language other than English. NYSABE supports the belief that language pluralism and literacy in more than one language benefit the nation and all its citizens.

NYSABE collaborates with the NYS Education Department, school districts, and educational institutions by participating in their initiatives and ensuring excellence and equity in the education of ELLs/bilingual learners. NYSABE is affiliated with the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and the New York State Council of Educational Associations (NYSCEA).

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

Join the NYSABE team! Through your membership dues and involvement, you will have the opportunity to make integral contributions towards positive educational change for ELLs/bilingual learners.

Membership benefits include:

NYSABE Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMRE): The yearly issue of this journal is a must for every library and member of the association. It publishes current research on best practices in instructional methodologies, optimum program models, and key elements in the implementation of successful bilingual education programs.

The NYSABE Newsletter, The Bilingual Times: The quarterly issues of The Bilingual Times offer updates on the regional and statewide activities of the association and its members. The Bilingual Times also provides information on current legislative and policy developments as well as articles on best educational approaches for ELLs/bilingual learners.

Professional Development: NYSABE offers local, regional, and statewide professional development activities that focus on optimum, research-based practices in bilingual education. These activities create a professional forum suitable to network with other professionals in your field of interest, to share experiences, and explore new ideas.

Advocacy and Leadership: NYSABE offers opportunities to develop leadership skills while participating in hands-on training, special committees, language group events, and advocacy activities on behalf of students, their parents, and educators.