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Metropolitan Center for Research
on Equity and the Transformation
of Schools
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2013-2014

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Winter, 2014 Issue

A Message from the President, Yazmín Torres



Dear NYSABE Members, Colleagues and Friends,

As we initiate the second half of the 2013-2014 presidential term, I would like to share a summary of our accomplishments and ongoing projects. These would not have been possible without the spirit of collaboration, commitment, and teamwork of NYSABE's Executive Board, Delegate Assembly, Executive Director, and members. Special thanks to NYSABE's past presidents whose guidance and support continue to be crucial in all initiatives.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The following activities, addressing our organization's objectives: advocacy, professional development, dissemination of information, networking, and leadership, have taken place:

♦ Appointment of the Turkish Language Delegate, Dr. Bahar Otcu-Grillman

♦ Appointment of the African Languages Delegate, Dr. Immaculee Harushimana

♦ Publishing of *The Bilingual Times* Fall 2013 Issue

♦ October Gala, "*Leaders in Bilingual Education: The Pillars of a Biliterate Generation*", which celebrated:

- the elevation of the NYSED Bilingual Education Office with the appointment of our first Associate Commissioner for the Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Services, NYSED, Ms. Angélica Infante Green
- the NYS approval of the Seal of Biliteracy
- bilingual education leaders promoting biliteracy

♦ Ongoing revision of NYSABE's by-laws

♦ Continued partnership with Fordham University's Dr. Aida Nevárez-La Torre, for the online publication of the *Journal of Multilingual Education Research (JMÉR)*

♦ Continuation of the development of the *Professional Standards for Bilingual Educators*. Updates were provided by Dr. Aida Nevárez-La Torre and Dr. Patricia Velasco to NYSABE's Executive Board

♦ Initiation of an online membership application and elections project

♦ Development and dissemination of NYSABE's *Position Statement on Bilingual Edu-*

cation in Early Childhood/Preschool Programs

♦ Continued collaboration for the development of policies and implementation of professional development initiatives with:

- The Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies, NYSED
- The Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, NYC , DOE
- The NYS NYC RBE-RN at Fordham University
- The NYS Language-RBE-RN at New York University

♦ Coordination of NYSABE's 2014 Annual Conference "*Educating Our Next Generation of Biliterate Citizens*"

♦ Strengthening of our collaborative relationship with professional and community-based organizations in relation to the education of ELLs/ bilingual learners, their families, and educators. These organizations include:

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- The National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE),
- The New York State Council of Educational Associations (NYSCEA),
- The New York State Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL),
- The New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT),
- The New York State United Teachers (NYSUT),
- The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families (CHCF),
- The Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE),
- Association of Dominican American Supervisors and Administrators (ADASA),
- Advocates for Children (AFC), and
- The Haitian Educators League for Progress (HELP).

As we reflect on our accomplishments during the first half of this term, I reiterate our commitment to NYSABE's mission and thank members of NYSABE and the organizations listed above for joining us in our efforts to ensure quality Bilingual Education for all NYS youngsters. Look for highlights from this year's annual conference in the next issue of the Bilingual Times!

Cordially,

Yazmín Torres

Yazmín Torres

President 2013-2014

From the Desk of the Executive Director,



**Nancy
Villarreal
de Adler**

Current research reveals the impact of bilingual instruction on the linguistic, academic, and socio-emotional development of preschoolers. In this regard, NYSABE has affirmed its commitment to the equitable participation of ELLs/bilingual learners in Universal Pre-K by developing and disseminating its ***Position Statement on Bilingual Education in Early Childhood/Preschool Programs***.

As you review the Position Statement, please take the opportunity to reflect upon the following recommendations made to policy makers and practitioners:

- ♦To adopt a vision that underscores the belief that the path towards academic achievement begins in the preschool years, and that central to this vision, ELLs/bilingual learners, must be educated bilingually, through their home language and English;

- ♦To develop high quality comprehensive bilingual preschool education programs that include:

- research-based bilingual instruction,
- bilingual support services,
- age-appropriate, culturally relevant instructional materi-

als and assessment tools in multiple languages,

- a comprehensive, long term, research-based professional development plan for educators, families, and support personnel involved in the education of early childhood/preschool bilingual learners;
- disaggregated data on bilingual learners, and
- an effective financial and programmatic accountability system.

As you review NYSABE's position statement, included in this issue, we also invite you to read the policy brief on young ELL/bilingual learners, ***"Ensuring High Quality Early Care and Education to Support New York's Dual Language Learners and their Families."*** prepared by The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. (CHCF) and the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE), also included in this issue.

We sincerely hope that as you share both documents with your colleagues, you will engage in deep conversations that will generate innovative ideas and a renewed commitment to the education of early childhood/preschool bilingual students.

We thank and congratulate the members of CHCF and LCECE for their leadership in developing their policy brief, their generous support, spirit of collaboration, and tireless work on behalf of young ELL/bilingual learners.

Editor's Note:

**Editor,
Tamara
Alsace**

Sociologist Margaret Mead once wrote:

"A basic condition of successful literacy...is that it should be attained in the mother tongue. Literacy achieved in any language other than the mother tongue is likely... to remain superficial and incomparable with the literacy of people who learned to read in the language in which their mothers sang them to sleep."

While we know that home language literacy development is not possible for ALL our ELLs, we know that to the extent that it is possible, our students benefit and thrive when provided home language instruction at an early age. We also know that when home language instruction is not possible, a language-rich early learning setting benefits all learners, and especially our emergent bilinguals.

The time is now for all of us, as advocates for our children, continue to speak loud and clear to our legislators to promote high quality early learning programs. Enjoy this issue of the NYSABE Bilingual Times, which clearly proclaims our position on this matter, and continue your advocacy efforts on behalf of our children.

**"Voices from
the Field"
will return with our
next issue...
make your voice heard!!**

**Share your
successes!!**



This column provides a space for practitioners from across the state to voice challenges and share successes. Here, educators are able to let the field know of the effective, creative ways they have found of providing emergent bilinguals with high quality instruction and supports that will prepare them to meet the demands of the future.

Working with Schools to Embrace Students' Home Languages: CUNY-NYSIEB Works with Priority Schools

By Maite Sánchez,
Project Director,
CUNY-NYSIEB

A little more than two years have passed since the first group of principals was welcomed into the CUNY-NYSIEB project. On February 10, 2012, 27 principals from schools in NYC, Yonkers and Long Island came to the Graduate Center of the City University of New York for the first of the five seminars scheduled for spring 2012. The following February we welcomed a new cohort of 16 schools. While we still had representatives from NYC and Yonkers schools, principals from Newburgh, Spring Valley, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse also joined the initiative. Next month, 14 new schools –still to be selected- will

join the third Cohort of CUNY-NYSIEB schools.

CUNY-NYSIEB or the City University of New York – New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals is an initiative in its third year of operation. Funded by the New York State Department of Education, the initiative is a collaboration of the Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society (RISLUS) and the Ph.D. Program in Urban Education, both of The Graduate Center of CUNY. The initiative's goal is to develop the intellectual and leadership capacities of principals and teachers in schools serving large numbers of emergent bilinguals. The initiative supports schools as they develop innovative methods and policies that will improve the school experience and the academic success of emergent bilingual students in New York State.

Priority schools that have high percentage of emergent bilinguals are invited to apply to CUNY-NYSIEB. Principals write a narrative stating

their interest in improving their school's multilingual ecology and their use of bilingualism as a resource in education. A competitive selection procedure takes place and participating schools are selected based on the principals' commitment to the initiative's principles and activities.

CUNY-NYSIEB was conceptualized, and continues to be run, by the project's co-principal investigators, professors Ofelia García (CUNY Graduate Center), Kate Menken (Queens College and CUNY Graduate Center) and Ricardo Otheguy (CUNY Graduate Center). Professor Tatyana Kleyn, and NYSABE second vice president, from City College, was interim co-PI in 2013. Dr. Nelson Flores, now at UPenn, was the project director in 2011 and part of 2012. In July 2012, I became the project director. The CUNY-NYSIEB Support Teams includes Bilingual Education professors from various CUNY Campuses (Brooklyn: V. Perez and L. Ascenzi-Moreno; City; T.



Some of the CUNY-NYSIEB staff (from left to right, top to bottom): Jose Alfredo Menjibar (CUNY Graduate Center, GC), professor Laura Ascenzi-Moreno (Brooklyn College), professor Cecilia Espinosa (Lehman College), Luis Guzman Valerio (GC), Luz Herrera (GC), professor Brian Collins (Hunter College), Maria Cioe Peña (GC), professor Vanessa Perez (Brooklyn College), Kate Seltzer (GC), professor Tatyana Kleyn (City College), Dr. Maite Sánchez (GC), professor Ofelia García (GC), and Sarah Hesson (GC).

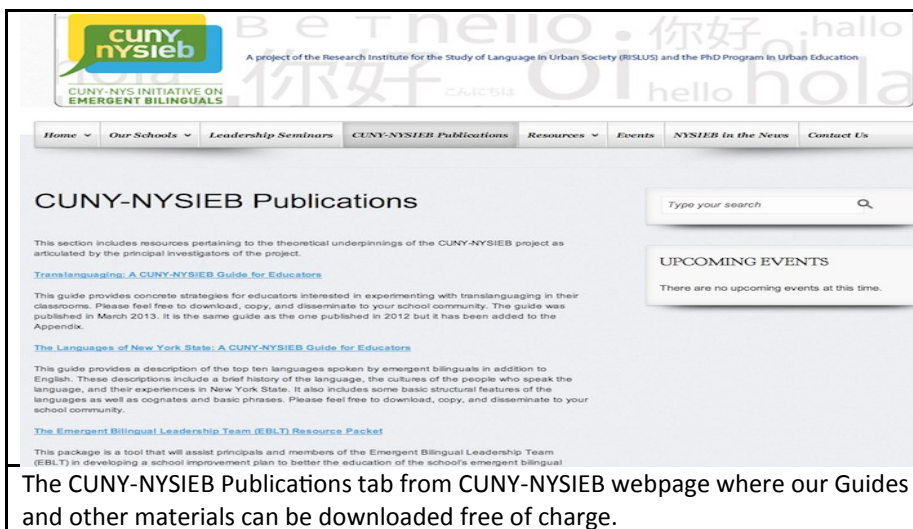
Kleyn; Hunter: A. Ebe and B. Collins; Lehman: C. Espinosa), doctoral students from The Graduate Center, and consultants. The teams have worked closely with CUNY-NYSIEB schools for the past two years. In December 2013, two professors from SUNY Campuses (K. Mahoney, SUNY Fredonia & E. Kearney, SUNY Buffalo) joined the initiative to support Cohort 3 schools in upstate and west New York.

CUNY-NYSIEB provides a professional development program over one-and-a-half years. Principals attend five Leadership Seminars, in some cases accompanied by their assistant principals and district administrators, in the spring of the first year. Starting from the third seminar, principals also bring members of the school's Emergent Bilingual Leadership Team (EBLT), a school team organized by the principal that is charged with working with CUNY-NYSIEB to plan and implement desired changes. These Leadership Seminars become spaces for discussing ideas about bilingualism, for connecting with colleagues, and for sharing school practices and processes to support emergent bilinguals. In 2012, the Seminars took place at the CUNY Graduate Center. In 2013, some of the seminars were also run upstate, at the Mid-State R-BERN or Rochester Public School offices. Parallel to the leadership seminars, CUNY-NYSIEB Support Teams visit the schools several times, observing classrooms, facilitating the EBLT meetings, and providing resources. By the end of the first semester of work, the EBLT creates a School Improvement Plan for Emergent Bilinguals to be implemented the follow-

ing school year. Each school's plan is different and responds to the specific needs of the schools and their students.

During the following school year, schools start implementing their School Improvement Plans. CUNY-NYSIEB Teams continue to visit schools, meet with members of the EBLT, and provide seminars on pedagogical practices and translanguaging, which is the flexible use of students' home languages in the classrooms. In some Cohort 1 schools and all Cohort 2 schools, the CUNY-NYSIEB Teams have co-planned lessons with teachers, or have co-modeled or modeled translanguaging strategies. During the school year, principals and members of the EBLT also attend additional Leadership Seminars. Long-term supports beyond the three semesters include additional Leadership Seminars, additional Team Support visits and the sharing of resources and materials. So far, the project has created two reference guides,

Translanguaging: A CUNY-

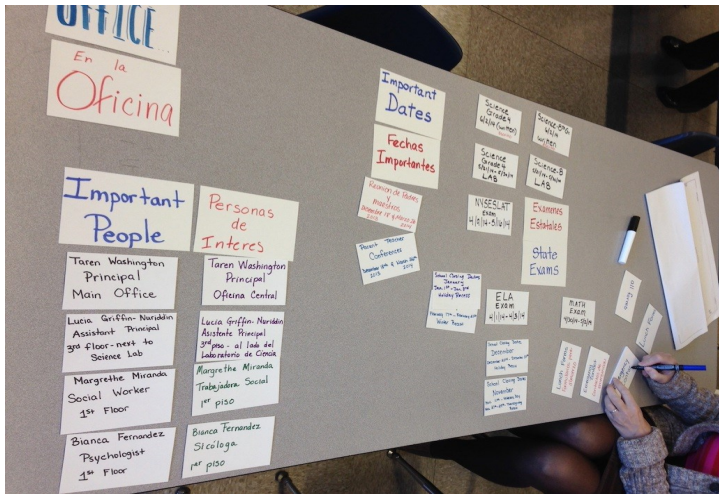


The CUNY-NYSIEB Publications tab from CUNY-NYSIEB webpage where our Guides and other materials can be downloaded free of charge.

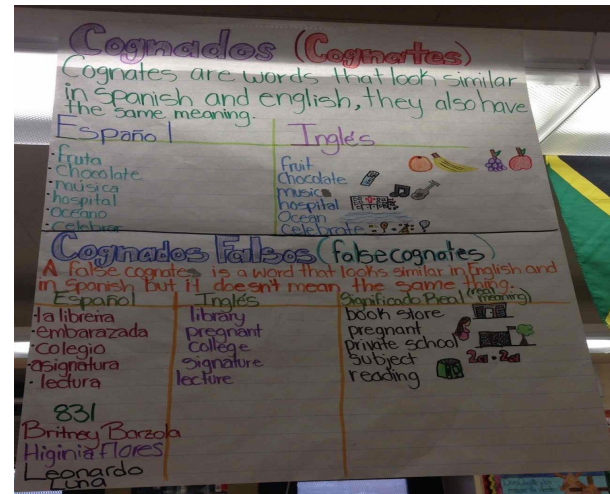
NYSIEB Guide for Educators and **The Languages of New York State: A CUNY-NYSIEB Guide for Educators**. These and other resources such as, **A CUNY-NYSIEB FRAMEWORK FOR THE EDUCATION OF LONG-TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS** are available free of charge on our webpage (<http://www.nysieb.ws.gc.cuny.edu>).

We have witnessed many changes in the schools, including changes in the schools' multilingual ecology. For example, many schools have created multilingual bulletin boards and welcome signs with all the schools' languages. Many teachers have begun to build cognate walls and are displaying students' writing samples in multiple languages. One school in Syracuse produced, with the help of parents, alumni, students and community members a multilingual school newsletter in English, Arabic, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



Teachers in a Yonkers K-8 school working on a Spanish-English informational board for parents.



Cognate charts in a NYC 6th classroom

Schools have also implemented programmatic changes as a result of their collaboration with CUNY-NYSIEB. Schools with bilingual education programs have strengthened and systematized their language allocation policies by prioritizing vertical meetings to discuss consistency in the use of languages throughout the grade levels.

Schools have also brainstormed ways to adapt English-only Common Core-aligned curricula for their bilingual education and ESL classrooms. Other schools have been working on strengthening the collaboration of ESL and bilingual teachers with general education teachers. Many schools have included general education teachers in their EBLT; in some of these schools

"Many schools have included general education teachers in the EBLT."

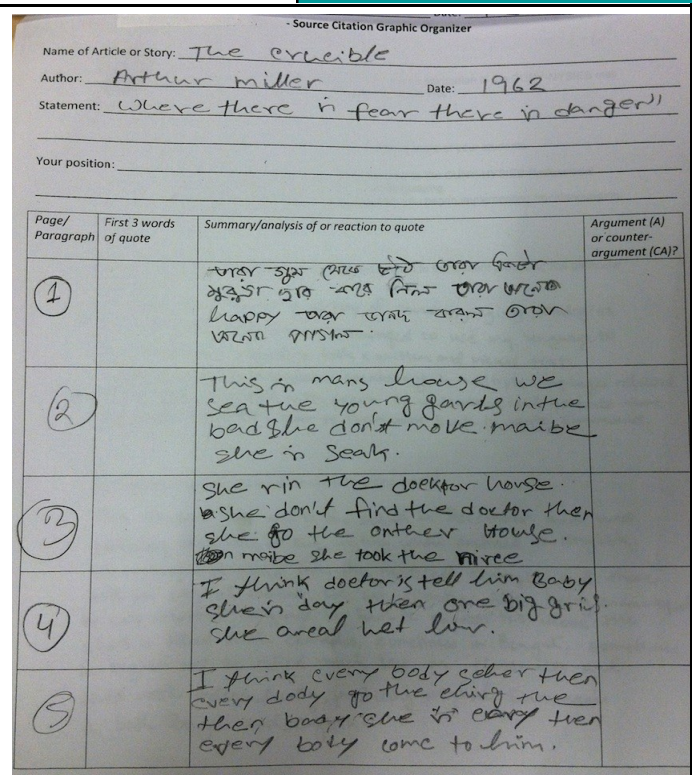
Implementing Code X in a 50-50 Bilingual Program (Suggestion by CUNY-NYSIEB Support Team)



Adaptation of a grade 6, unit 3 Code X CCSS curriculum for a bilingual education program. There are days where the targeted instruction is primarily English (text, questions, writing prompts and student language use expectation) and other in Spanish. However, translanguaging strategies are used everyday.

In many of our schools, changes have also been evident in the classroom. Many teachers working closely with our Teams have been implementing translanguaging strategies. Teachers, including ESL and general education teachers, are starting to allow students to use their entire linguistic repertoire during classroom discussions and writing tasks. Many teachers have seen an increase in their students' production of writing or increase in oral participation (both in English and the home language) since implementing translanguaging strategies.

On behalf of the CUNY-NYSIEB family, I thank all the CUNY-NYSIEB schools for the good work they are doing to improve the education and lives of emergent bilingual students in New York State. We also hope that NYSABE members benefit from the resources on our webpage and find them useful in their work with emergent bilinguals.



A 9th grade ESL student writing sample with translanguageing strategies



My Life in Retirement—By Florence Pu-Folkes, Ph.D.; Past President, NYSABE, 2000-2001

My life in retirement has been one of constant activity: coordination of various projects, -domestic and abroad; travelling inland and internationally; and engagement with church and family. After retiring from the New York City Board of Education, I worked with Fordham University's Bronx RBERN for 2 years. I am now involved in working with Burmese professionals and American educators (Teachers Across Borders), to help Myanmar (Burma), my birthplace, in its educational initiatives on its road to democracy. I also work with the Myanmar- U.S. Chamber of Commerce in New York, in its efforts to connect Myanmar and America. A trip to Myanmar is being planned in association with its Ministry of Education to train a cadre of teachers in July, 2014. I also serve as a deaconess and a leader of Music Ministry at the Elim Alliance Church, Valley Cottage, New York, playing piano, writing music, adapting plays, and directing the choir.



For leisure, my husband (Dr. Karl Folkes) and I have traveled to Canada, the Greek Islands-Turkey-Croatia, Israel, China, and Myanmar. In Myanmar I not only visited my siblings and friends, but also celebrated with them the Bicentennial Anniversary of Adoniram Judson, the Baptist Missionary to Myanmar. During this visit, my husband, two of our children and four grandkids toured Mandalay and its palace-- the splendor of Burmese royalty; the historical sites of Bagan, a land of serenity; and Inle, a beautiful floating city built on a lake with its famous long neck women and leg rowers. I am proud to say that, despite the setbacks in Myanmar, its natural beauty and the sincerity of its people remain unfettered. As grandparents, Karl and I feel so fortunate to have our 12 grandkids visit us occasionally, and to be able to help their parents with baby-sitting. Spending quality time with our grandchildren gives us an unparalleled and incomparable energy and youthfulness for which we feel truly blessed.



Update on The French Bilingual Revolution

By Dr. Fabrice Jaumont
Education Attache,
Embassy of France



It all started with our fundraiser's kick-off party last December. Our campaign, which seeks to raise \$2.8 million to support the development of French-English bilingual programs in NYC's public schools, caught the attention of the New York Times' Kirk Semple. He wrote a story which shot up to the top of the most e-mailed list on the nytimes.com web site and held the number one spot for a remarkable 24 hours, which is extremely rare. This amount of interest totally surprised all of us, even the author. Little did we know that there was more to come!



The New Republic's John McWorther went on with publishing "Let's stop pretending that French is an important language" which raised heaps of comments and rebuttals, including Zach Simon's "In Defense of French" in the Huffington Post, Rob While's "7 Reasons You Should Teach Your Children To Speak French" in Business Insider, Rob Dreher's "Why Learn French?" in the American Conservative, and Frank Pool's "Learning French, and the death of languages" in News Journal.

Simultaneously, the French press started to get interested, to the point that all French media outlets came to talk about New York's bilingual programs. Le Monde, Le Figaro, France Info, I-Tele, France Inter, France 2, Slate, Le Parisien, TV5, to name but a few. We have listed some of these stories below.



This is a good sign, which tells me that French is alive and well in the United States, and that France and the United States are true friends. Even Michelle Obama introduced - in French - PBS's new Global Learning & Diplomacy Collection for grades K to 13.



**"Vive
la
France!"**

Our fundraising campaign continues. Please support our effort and join the French bilingual revolution here: <http://www.facecouncil.org>





NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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Position Statement on Bilingual Education in Early Childhood/Preschool Programs

The main goal of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) is to ensure equitable access to all educational opportunities for English language learners (ELLs)/bilingual students in New York State. To this end, NYSABE affirms its commitment to Bilingual Early Childhood/Preschool programs for all ELLs/bilingual learners that underscore the academic, socio-emotional, and language needs of these students by building upon the rich linguistic and cultural experiences that they bring from their homes and communities.

Rationale

A growing number of studies on instructional approaches in early childhood reveal benefits from teaching young children in their home language. Dual Language or developmental bilingual programs which utilize English and the students' home language for instruction demonstrate significant gains for English Language Learners/emergent bilinguals (Barnett, et al, 2006; Collier & Thomas, 2009; Tazi, 2011). These studies suggest that bilingual instruction in the preschool years has cumulative benefits in addressing school readiness – it combines the enrichment of early experiences with the efficacy of accessing background knowledge and existing strengths in home language development. For children who speak little or no English as they begin school, bilingual instruction activates and builds upon what they know in the home language, and continues to positively impact children's cognitive progress as they acquire new academic skills across languages. Examples include:

- Vocabulary mastery in the home language supports reading comprehension in English (Bialystok, 2007)
- Storybook reading and storytelling in a child's home language promotes English vocabulary acquisition (Roberts, 2008)
- Bilingually instructed children exit the "English Language Learner" category earlier than children who are only taught in English (Tazi, 2011)
- Sustained gains in concepts of print are evident when children are exposed to shared reading and writing activities in the primary language (Coppola, 2005)
- Bilingually instructed children evidence greater rates of phonemic awareness by the end of Kindergarten (Tazi, 2011)

Recommendations

NYSABE proposes the following recommendations that align current research on early childhood education and bilingual education:

- Ensure equitable access for all ELLs/bilingual learners to Universal Pre-K in schools and early care settings;
- Adopt a vision that underscores the beliefs that (1) the path towards academic achievement begins in the preschool years, and that (2) central to this vision, ELLs/ bilingual learners, must be educated bilingually, through their home language and English;

- Secure adequate funding to initiate and sustain preschool bilingual programs;
- Develop high quality comprehensive bilingual preschool education programs that include research-based bilingual instruction, bilingual support services, and parent/family engagement in order to ensure academic success as well as optimum socio-emotional development;
- Ensure that bilingual preschool programs implement research-based bilingual instructional strategies that link language development to literacy and strengthen the student's home language and English, thereby building a foundation for biliteracy;
- Attain, develop, and use age-appropriate, culturally relevant instructional materials in multiple languages;
- Attain, develop, and use age-appropriate, culturally relevant formative assessment tools in multiple languages to screen and identify the educational needs of bilingual preschool learners;
- Provide a supplement to offset the cost for preschool teachers to earn a bilingual extension;
- Ensure that teachers are bilingual and biliterate and that they have the teaching credentials and preparation that will qualify them to work with young bilingual learners;;
- Implement a comprehensive, long term, research-based professional development plan for educators, administrators, families, and support personnel involved in the education of early childhood/preschool bilingual learners;
- Create an early education data collection system that provides disaggregated data on bilingual learners and the type of programming they are receiving. Use this data to build and improve the instruction and support services in bilingual early childhood/preschool programs;
- Provide disaggregated data on bilingual learners with disabilities, to ensure that their special needs are met within bilingual programs at an early age;
- Develop and maintain an effective accountability system to ensure that funds generated by preschool ELLs/bilingual learners are allocated to bilingual preschool classrooms according to specified guidelines.

On behalf of the students, families, educators, members of community-based and private entities whom NYSABE represents, we thank all individuals and organizations that will support this Position Statement and will ensure the access of all preschool ELLs/bilingual learners to bilingual Universal Pre-K programs.

Yazmin Torres

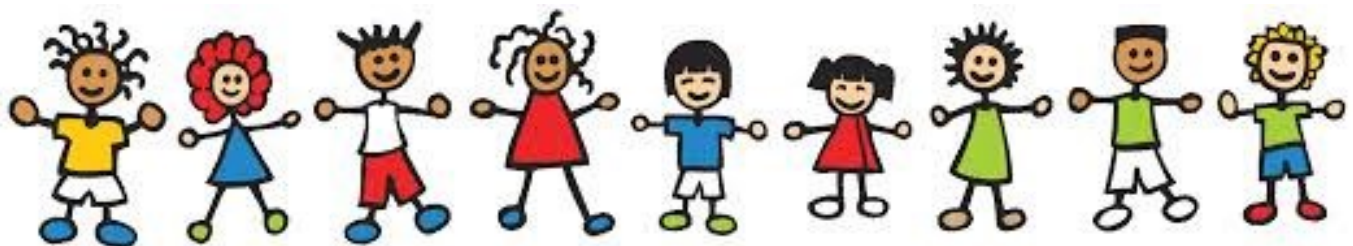
Yazmin Torres

NYSABE President

March 26th, 2014

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The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

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February 5, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

Elba I. Montalvo

Founder & President/CEO

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As President and CEO of The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc., and a member of Mayor Bill de Blasio's Universal Pre-K Working Group, I believe this is a great moment to transform "a tale of two cities" and implement a full-day pre-K education model that is free, high quality and available to all children. It is therefore with great pleasure that, on behalf of CHCF and LCECE, I present you with this paper, Ensuring High Quality Early Care and Education to Support New York's Dual Language Learners and their Families, which highlights the main components that a successful UPK initiative should include and provides recommendations regarding the needs of Dual Language Learners.

Research demonstrates that pre-K is instrumental in closing the achievement gap and a key experience for children's academic futures and lives. It is our collective responsibility to have in place the programs, curricula, educators and the lessons to fulfill that promise.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Mayor to implement a plan for UPK inclusive of a vision for English language learner students. This vision would recognize that incorporating children's home languages into their education is fundamental for their development in both the first language and in English language acquisition.

Educators, elected and appointed leaders, policy makers and advocates must commit to implementing policies supporting equal access and opportunities for ELL children and youth from early care and education settings all the way through to college and careers. CHCF welcomes the Mayor's Report, Ready to Launch: New York City's Implementation Plan for Free, High Quality, Full-Day Universal Pre- Kindergarten (Jan. 2014) supporting a comprehensive approach to creating the best opportunities for ELL children and engaging parents. This is a starting point for advancing the human right to education and expanding dual language programs that will prepare our children to be bilingual and bi-literate contributors to society. It is also an opportunity to discuss and elaborate solutions to poverty and socio-economic inequalities.

English language learner children are a vital and growing population in New York City. Their success requires the availability of effective high-quality models of instruction, inclusive of transitional bilingual and dual language programs, as well as highly qualified teachers prepared to teach this growing group of children. According to NYCDOE's Demographic Report of 2013, over 41 percent of students in NYC public schools speak a language other than English at home.



In light of New York State and New York City's support for UPK for all children, now is the time to transform a deficit-based, remedial, monolingual system and embrace linguistic and cultural diversity as assets.

Sincerely,

Elba Montalvo
President/CEO

Ensuring High Quality Early Care and Education to Support New York's Dual Language Learners and their Families



**The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.
Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education
February 2014**

The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. commissioned this paper to highlight the main components that a successful UPK initiative should include and provide recommendations regarding the needs of Dual Language Learners. The paper was prepared by Jorge Saenz De Viteri, M.S. Ed.* in collaboration with Vanessa Ramos, Esq., Elba Montalvo, M.A and Abe Barranca of CHCF, Dr. Luis O. Reyes, and the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education.

Since 1982, The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. (www.chcfinc.org) has combined education and advocacy to expand opportunities for children and families and strengthen the voice of the Latino community in New York. Believing that the most effective way to support Latino families is by building upon their existing strengths and fostering self-sufficiency, CHCF provides a number of programs and services through Youth Development programs, an Early Care & Education Institute, and Policy and Advocacy initiatives. CHCF's model is innovative in its effective inclusion of cultural and linguistic competencies to effect change. CHCF's grassroots focus makes it one of the few Latino organizations in NYC that combines direct service with policy work that amplifies Latino voices at the local, state and national levels.

**Jorge Saenz de Viteri, M.S. ED., is a founding member of the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education and the Past President of the New York City and Palisades Association for the Education of Young Children. He also serves as a co-facilitator of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Latino Interest Caucus and on New York City's Citizen Review Panel for Child Protective Services.*



Ensuring High Quality Early Care and Education to Support New York's Dual Language Learners and their Families

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New York City's initiative to provide free, full-day, universal pre-kindergarten to all children and the recently adopted appropriations in the 2014 federal budget present a unique opportunity to invest wisely in high quality, culturally and linguistically competent early education models for our children at the local and national levels.

Nearly two-thirds of English Language Learner students (ELL) in New York State are Spanish speakers.

Therefore, it is critical that we strategically invest in programs yielding the highest return of investment in a manner consistent with current evidence-based research supporting Dual Language Learner (DLL) instruction and students' families. It is well-established that high quality preschool strengthens young Latino ELL students' language and literacy skills and decreases academic achievement gaps.

In that light, The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. (CHCF) and the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE) make the following recommendations to UPKNYC's implementation:

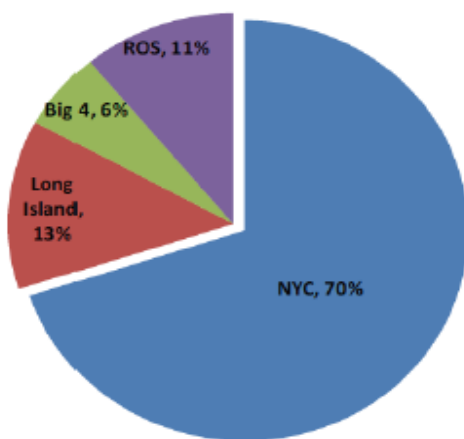
- Salary parity across New York City's entire publicly funded early care and education system.
- That funding is set aside for ongoing preparation and professional development of the professional prekindergarten workforce with coursework on dual language acquisition and effective teaching practices for DLL students.
- That New York City promotes specific strategies that encourage parent involvement and support Latino parents in creating engaging language and literacy experiences at home to reinforce children's learning at preschool.
- That the New York City Department of Education's web-based systems expand to encompass all schools and providers who administer Universal Pre-K services and incorporate child outcomes data being collected through the various online systems that pre-kindergarten programs are currently using.
- That New York City ensures that the web-based information is also available in print-format in the parents' home language.
- That New York City's early education programs ensure that children have opportunities to demonstrate their abilities, skills, and knowledge in any language, including their home language, and utilize assessments in both English and the home language that help determine what the child has learned and is capable of doing as well as the child's level of language development.
- That Mayor Bill de Blasio creates the Office for Early Care and Education.

Background and History: Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education

In 2007, The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. (CHCF) formed the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE), a workgroup of early care and education scholars, specialists, advocates and leaders to bring attention to the early education needs of Latino children from birth to age five in New York. LCECE's mission is to increase the availability and quality of culturally and linguistically appropriate child care and early education for Latino children and all English language learner (ELL) children in New York State.¹

In 2008, LCECE convened a public forum in New York City, bringing together local, state and national researchers, policymakers, administrators and advocates to discuss current research and practice in the field of early care and education. The subsequent report, *Building on Latino Children's Language and Culture*, was released in December 2008. In December 2011, CHCF organized an expert panel to highlight the implications of New York State's adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Latino and ELL children from prekindergarten to the third grade. CHCF and LCECE also released an accompanying report, *Early Education and the Implementation of the Common Core State Standards: What would the CCSS mean for Latino and ELL children in New York?*²

Appropriations from the recently adopted 2014 federal budget and New York City's planned expansion of the UPK NYC initiative present a tremendous opportunity to expand early care and education programs nationally and locally. Therefore, it is critical that we carefully plan how to invest our funds to ensure that New York's most vulnerable families have access to the highest quality culturally and linguistically competent early care and education services.



According to the NYS Education Department (NYSED), in the academic school year 2011-12, there were a total of 224,300 LEP/ELL students in public schools throughout the State and an additional 90,871 ELLs in non-public schools. The overwhelming majority of ELLs are concentrated in New York City, which has close to 70% of the State's ELL public school population.³ According to 2009-10 data, NYS ELL students speak nearly 200 different languages. Nearly two-thirds of ELL students in the State speak Spanish, followed by Chinese, Bengali, Arabic, and Haitian Creole.⁴

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has called for all states to develop a system of early childhood care and education with appropriate regulatory, governance, finance, and accountability mechanisms, to ensure that:

- **All Children** have access to safe and accessible high quality early childhood education that includes a developmentally appropriate curriculum, knowledgeable and well-trained program staff and educators, and comprehensive services that support their health, nutrition, and social wellbeing, in an environment that respects and supports diversity.
- **All Early Childhood Professionals** are supported as professionals with a career ladder, ongoing professional development opportunities, and compensation that will attract and retain high quality educators.
- **All Families** have access to early care and education programs that are affordable and of high quality, and are participants in the education and wellbeing of their children through family involvement in programs and schools, as well as opportunities to increase their educational attainment.
- **All Communities** are accountable for the quality of early childhood programs provided to all children, backed by the local, state, and federal funding needed to deliver quality programs and services.⁵

Given the current data, our demographics and Mayor Bill de Blasio's public support to invest and expand high-quality early care and education programs to help close the achievement gap, the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education believes it is timely and critical to build upon NAEYC's vision. New York City must **invest in programs yielding the highest return of investment in a manner consistent with current evidence-based research supporting Dual Language Learner (DLL) instruction and students' families.** We know that high quality preschool strengthens young Latino ELL students' language and literacy skills and decreases achievement gaps between them and their non-Latino peers.⁶

Dual language learners are children learning two (or more) languages at the same time, as well as those learning a second language while continuing to develop their first (or home) language.

- Office of Head Start Definition

CHCF and LCECE recognize that the State and the City support for UPK for all children offers a great opportunity to address the needs of ELL students. In that light, CHCF and LCECE propose the following recommendations for the implementation of UPK NYC:

Compensation

We know that a key component of quality programs is the quality of the teachers and educational teams.⁷ In New York, the average starting salary for teachers in non-public school settings (such as Head Start) is about \$36,473 a year. In contrast, teachers in the public school system have a starting annual base salary of \$45,530 and are eligible for annual incremental increases.

Pay Difference, Teachers in ACS-Funded Centers and Public School

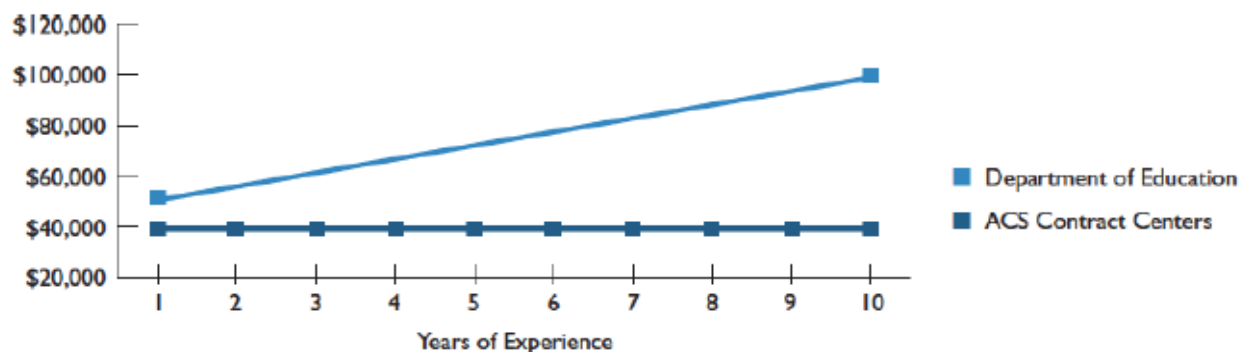


Image Source: CCI Primer 2011

Similar to President Obama's Plan for Early Education for all Americans, CHCF and LCECE strongly recommend salary parity across New York City's entire publicly funded early care and education system, "Well-trained teachers, who are paid comparably to K-12 staff."⁸

Multi-Cultural Principle 6

Effective programs for children who speak languages other than English require continued development of the first language while the acquisition of English is facilitated

Children enrolled in the bilingual preschool programs showed significant gains in both Spanish and English vocabulary acquisition. Instead of experiencing a decline in their first language, children who attended the bilingual preschools demonstrated continued growth of first language skills. In addition, these children advanced their development of specific skills in Spanish, such as using increased numbers of words to tell a story. The authors attributed the children's progress in both languages to the high quality of the programs children attended.

- Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs (2008)

Teacher Preparation and Ongoing Professional Development

The New York State 2013 Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Application stated that, *“New York will integrate the Core Body of Knowledge throughout its professional development system in a more intentional, thorough, and systematic way to establish that it is truly the foundation for all professional development and preparation in the state. Targeted strategies will be implemented to engage higher education faculty and other professional development providers to ensure their work is aligned with the Core Body of Knowledge.”*⁹

It is unfortunate that NYS was not one of the 2013 recipients. However, CHCF and LCECE support the State’s plan and recommends that the State elaborate on it to ensure that our early childhood teacher preparation programs are designed to offer sufficient coursework to adequately support and prepare the workforce to work with Dual Language Learners.

With regard to the UPKNYC initiative, we recommend that funding is set-aside to address the ongoing preparation and professional development of teachers, principals, directors and the professional pre-k workforce with trainings on dual language acquisition and effective teaching practices for DLLs.

Early childhood education (ECE) educators need the knowledge and skills to work with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families—a knowledge set that is often not provided in traditional training courses and certification processes.

Karen Hopper,
NCLR Issue Brief 22

Preparing Young Latino Children for School Success:
Best Practices in Professional Development

Parent, Family, Community Engagement & Data Collection

Parent, family, and community engagement (PFCE) is essential to meeting children’s school readiness and later school success.¹⁰ The Meaningful partnerships between preschool programs and families enhance the education of Dual Language Learners.

The U.S. Department of Education has pointed out that, *“Under current law, family engagement is too often focused on a checklist of activities rather than on driving results, funding isn’t always targeted to the most effective practices, and family engagement is treated as a discrete activity rather than as an integrated strategy that should have a place across multiple programs.”*¹¹

Specific strategies that encourage parent involvement and provide support to Latino parents in creating engaging language and literacy experiences at home reinforce children’s learning at preschool.¹²

The most recent evidence suggests that support for the home language during the PreKindergarten years will help, not hurt, long term attainment in English.

- Linda Espinosa, PHD
Challenging Common Myths About Young Dual Language Learners:
An Update to the Seminal 2008 Report
(2013)

One of the most effective ways to reach parents is through schools themselves. As an example, New York City's Department of Education's ARISParent Link is a web-based system available to parents in nine languages that compiles student K–12 performance data in one place, giving parents a continuing record of their child's performance.¹³ This system is also used by central office staff to share additional resources, tools, links and articles to parents based on data collected through its portal.

CHCF and LCECE recommend that the system expand to encompass all schools and providers who administer Universal Pre-K services. This will not only create a more strongly data-informed school system, but will improve communication between all stakeholders.

The system needs to incorporate child outcomes data being collected through the various online systems that pre-kindergarten programs are currently using (i.e., Teaching Strategies GOLD) and we need to ensure that the information is also available in print-format in the parents' home language.

New York City needs to ensure that early care and education programs are using best practices when screening and assessing young children. The Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework states, "Programs are to ensure that children have opportunities to interact and demonstrate their abilities, skills, and knowledge in any language, including their home language."¹⁴

Assessments in both English and the home language will help determine what the child has learned and is capable of doing as well as the child's level of language development.¹⁵

A Systemic, Comprehensive Approach to High Quality Early Care and Education

Currently, too many governmental and regulatory entities have oversight of the various early care and education settings in NYS.¹⁶ Our ECE delivery system is fragmented and challenging to navigate for both parents and providers alike. Complex regulations, funding gaps and eligibility requirements exacerbate this problem.

The East Harlem Council for Human Services Inc., Bilingual Head Start Program

Through our research efforts, we have worked with a variety of Head Start programs, and the East Harlem Bilingual Head Start program is the only program we have come across in New York City that truly adopts a bilingual approach in its educational practices, viewing all of the children as dual-language learners, and providing a rich language environment in both Spanish and English. (June 2012)

Gigliana Melzi, Ph.D.

The Latino Family Involvement Project and

The Home and School Literacy Project,

Director of the Undergraduate Program in Applied Psychology
NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development

In October 2005, the NYC Administration for Children's Services laid out an ambitious reform of its publicly subsidized child care, *Rethinking Child Care-An Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development in New York City*.¹⁷

Several principles for an early care and education system guided this work. The plan focused on six goals to help Child Care and Head Start fulfill their mission and better serve young children and families with high quality early childhood development services.

Unfortunately, the plan has faced challenges stemming from the different regulatory policies and inadequate funding to support the delivery of high quality early care and education services.

In order to capitalize on possible funding available through city, state, and federal investments, CHCF and LCECE

recommend that the Mayor's Office consider the creation of the Office for Early Care and Education. Its primary role would be to streamline the coordination of services to support all families' access to high quality early care and education, ensure that institutions and agencies are delivering high quality early care and education services, that professional development includes training in dual language acquisition and effective teaching practices for Dual Language Learner students and are transparent to the various constituencies. Furthermore, this agency would ensure that NYC's system maximizes all potential funding sources so that it can adequately invest in and fund the provision of high quality full-day early care and education for all children.

*New York is one of the top states in the country in terms of the number of Limited English Proficient students. Our population continues to grow, particularly among the youngest children. In order to ensure equitable outcomes for our students and to meet the challenges of Race to the Top, we will need early childhood education to deliver its most potent and lasting effects. **This will require a targeted approach with English Language Learners that emanates from a research-based understanding of what's good for young ELLs and not solely from what programs feel prepared to deliver.***

Zoila Tazi, PHD,
Department Chair Childhood Education and Associate Professor,
Mercy College

Lesson Learned from Illinois

- ensure that pre-K providers and schools receive financial support from the state and their local districts for resources they spend on English Language Learners, and that there is an adequate bilingual education budget to cover all eligible children
- track outcomes for ELL students over time and reserve funding for evaluative studies to determine where investment is most (and least) effective
- continue to align the ELL experience in pre-K, kindergarten and the early grades and enable shared professional development opportunities in ELL instruction for teachers and school leaders across the PreK-3rd grade.

Maggie Severns
Starting Early With English Language Learners
New America Foundation
April 2012

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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, and 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).

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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 (JMER): 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.