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NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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Position Statement on the Proposed Amendment for Three Semester Hours of Study in Language Acquisition and Literacy Development for ELLs

The main goal of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) is to ensure equitable and meaningful educational opportunities for English language learners (ELLs)/multilingual learners (MLs) by strengthening the professional skills of all educators across different schools and educational communities and promoting their significant participation in the decision-making process and policy implementation regarding ELLs/MLs in New York State. To this end, the comments presented in this document reflect the collective views and expertise of more than 1,000 members, including educators, parents, families, and community members whom NYSABE represents.

Recommendation

NYSABE strongly supports NYSED's efforts to mandate a [three credit language and literacy course requirement](#) on understanding, serving, and instructing multilingual learners. We fully agree that this certification requirement be part of the preparation of all teachers, rather than exclusively those educators who are certified in Bilingual Education or ESOL. The following is the one recommendation we have to improve this amendment and center it on the linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual learners:

1. Students' home languages and cultures are an integral part of their identities and a formidable resource for learning. Therefore, we recommend the explicit inclusion of students' home languages and cultures in the course description - which also would align with NYSED's Bilingual Common Core Progressions and the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#).

Specifically, we ask for the bolded phrase to be added to the course description:

"A three-semester hour course in language acquisition and literacy development of ELLs/MLLs would address topics such as ELL/MLLs instructional needs, **strategic inclusion of students' home language and cultures in instruction across** grades, programs, and content areas and co-teaching strategies, and **the insightful integration of linguistic and academic instructional scaffolds for ELL/MLLs.**"

In closing, NYSABE commends the NYS Board of Regents and the NYS Education Department staff on their efforts to ensure that multilingual learners are better understood and served by their teachers.

Rebecca Elías, President
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