



# NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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

**Executive Director**

Nancy Villarreal de Adler

## POSITION STATEMENT ON BUDGET CUTS

Albany, New York

February 10, 2009

### 2008-2009

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**Sylvia Figueroa**

#### Language Delegates

**Amidor Almonord, Haitian**

**Evelyn Arent, Spanish**

On behalf of the educators, parents, advocates, community-based and educational entities whom NYSABE represents, we thank you for this opportunity to address our members' concerns in relation to the current budget crisis. We are all aware that the proposed executive budget severely threatens the education of English language learners (ELLs) throughout New York State. The areas of concern include the following:

- The statewide low proportion of ELLs graduating with a high School Diploma (25.2%) and the high ELL drop out rate (29.4%)
- The current number of ELLs in New York State (approximately 200,000 students, 13% of the total student population) distributed among 525 districts, with highest concentration in the five big cities.
- The continued increase of ELLs in every school district
- The actual funding needed to educate ELLs (approximately double in comparison to non-ELLs, as reported in recent studies conducted by the NY Immigrant Coalition).
- The historical underfunding for ELL programs
- The 360 million reduction in expected Foundation Aid earmarked to educate ELLs
- A reduction of 30% in Contract for Excellence
- The failure of many districts to use large portions of ELL generated funds on actual ELL programs

Based on these observations, NYSABE urges Governor Paterson and New York State legislators to consider the following recommendations:

- Restore 360 million of Foundation Aid intended for ELL programs
- Strengthen and enforce the Contracts for Excellence Regulations so that ELL generated funds will be utilized specifically to develop, support and enhance ELL programs
- Establish clear guidelines for program accountability and alignment with Part 154 regulations.

32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference

*“Bilingual Education: Honoring Our Heritage for a Better Tomorrow”*

March 12 – March 15, 2009

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- Preserve Bilingual Categorical funds to support essential programs such as:
  - The Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Centers (BETACs)
  - Parent Leadership training and language assistance and adult literacy
  - Pre-K and full day kindergarten
  - Extended day instruction
  - Alternative Assessment for ELLs in general and special education
  - Pre-service and in-service support for bilingual and ESL teachers.
  - Degree-oriented programs for bilingual school psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other support personnel in general and special education

In summary, NYSABE reiterates its commitment to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all ELLs. For this reason, NYSABE urges Governor Paterson and NYS legislators to safeguard the education of ELLs so they can excel academically and become successful citizens of our nation.

Respectfully

Anne Henry Montante  
President

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