

# The NYSABE Bilingual Times

*Special Edition*



## Nivia Zavala Art Contest

This certificate is awarded to  
*Dora Cruz-Figueroa*

Grades 6-12  
Third Place

*Transforming Language Learners, Their Multiliteracies, and the World through Bilingual Education*

*Rafaela Eche*  
President  
2018-2019

New York State Association for Bilingual Education



42nd Annual Conference  
March 31, 2019

Summer 2022

# The NYSABE Bilingual Times

Page 2

SPECIAL 2022 Issue



New York University  
Metropolitan Center for Research  
on Equity and the Transformation of  
Schools

726 Broadway, 5th Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10003

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Alicia E. Báez

## A Message from the President

# WELCOME

DEAR NYSABE FAMILY,

I am thrilled to welcome you to this special edition of the NYSABE Bilingual Times! Our beloved organization has experienced multiple moments of history changing events and decision-making during the past couple of years. On behalf of our current President, Executive Director, Board of Directors, and Delegate Assembly, we want to thank you for your steadfastness, support, and continued dedication to NYSABE and the students of New York State.

As we faced moments of uncertainty and at times, fear – you locked arms with us, and one another, to continue the fight for equity in Bilingual Education. When the

pendulum shifted and a spotlight illuminated the inequities we know have existed for years, you joined us in advocating even louder and stronger. Thank you!

During my Presidency (2019-2020 and 2020-2021), for the time in NYSABE history, the Delegate Assembly and Executive Board were held in place for two consecutive terms, the office of President was held by the child of a Past-President e-held our very FIRST state-wide virtual conference. I would like to personally thank our Delegate Assembly and Executive Board for your support throughout our two years together and for trusting me to lead our Organization during such

**(Continued on next page)**

## Inside this issue

Message from NYSABE  
president, Alicia E. Báez

**PAGE 2**

A Note from the Editor  
Cecilia M. Espinosa

**PAGE 3**

From the Desk of the  
Executive Director  
Nancy Villarreal de Adler

**PAGE 4**

Conference Chairpersons  
and Committees

**PAGE 5**

NYSABE 2021 Awards  
Celebration

by Cynthia Felix Jeffers

**PAGE 6**

President's Address

by Adrienne Viscardi

**PAGE 10**

### KEYNOTE

David Kirkland  
Returning to Justice

by Miriam Eisenstein  
Ebsworth

**PAGE 11**

American Reading  
Company: Equity Focused  
Leadership

by Hulda Yau

**PAGE 12**

Bilingual Special Education  
Panel: Collaborative  
Leadership in Bilingual  
Special Education

by Cynthia Felix Jeffers

**PAGE 13**

Equity in Action:  
Transformative Leadership  
Panel Discussion

by Cynthia Felix Jeffers

**PAGE 16**

Dr. Sonia Soltero: Leading  
the Way to Equity, Access  
and Inclusion: Additive  
Bilingual Education as the  
Great Equalizer

by Hulda Yau

**PAGE 17**



unprecedented times. Thank you for believing in me!

As you look inside this special issue, take a moment to think about where we were as a Nation, where you personally were during this time, and smile at how we've overcome – smile at what you helped us achieve. I cannot thank my Conference Chairpersons enough, they not only helped plan the Conference but executed each decision with grace, patience, and understanding as they held true to the vision and mission of NYSABE. David Báez, Past President,

and Wilda Ramos, Past President, I dedicate my words to you – thank you for holding me up and ensuring that NYSABE held an amazing conference!! To our Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, thank you for your sacrifices and for always giving of yourself. To our Delegate Assembly and Executive Board, you are the backbone, and our work doesn't become reality without the governing body of NYSABE. Making the last-minute decision to cancel our conference in March of 2020 was one that broke my heart, the excitement I had around the conference that year is

something I can never put into words. Looking back, it was the best decision we could've made and what's amazing is that it made us STRONGER!

No matter what adversity may come our way, continue to move the work forward, use your voice, speak loudly – even if your voice shakes – ¡Sí, Se Puede!

In Solidarity and Love,

**Alicia E. Báez**

*NYSABE Past-President (2019-2021)*

## A Note from the Editor

### BITAIO SALUDOS



Cecilia M. Espinosa, PhD

In this Special Edition Issue of the Bilingual Times Newsletter, we reflect on a time filled with challenges, continual changes, and, in spite of these, a stronger commitment to bilingual education. Without a doubt, as bilingual educators, we faced each day with the resolution to tap on our knowledge, passion, and camaraderie as we grew, reflected, and posed new questions about research, pedagogy, and policy.

As you read throughout the various

articles, you will be reminded of the power of a community that comes together each year, in person or remotely, to engage in courageous conversations. This is a community committed to re-imagining its role in becoming “the change and the hope,” as Dr. David Kirkland invited us to do. These essays point out to the resolution that, in embracing this stance, we must challenge the ways in which education, including bilingual education, privileges those that it considers the “norm.”

The authors of this newsletter issue call attention to the urgency of creating learning spaces that nurture, affirm and celebrate each one of our bilingual/multilingual students. It matters that the leadership represents a multiplicity of voices (bilingual/multilingual learners, educators, families, and the community). Additionally, the writers of these essays contend that we must take a perspective of strength not only in our teaching but also with regard to how we assess our bilingual/multilingual students. Unequivocally, the bilingualism of our students is an essential and powerful tool; it needs to be capitalized upon if we are to truly ensure equitable assessment practices.

Each year, our conference speaks to the importance of recognizing the many talents of our bilingual/multilingual learners, as well as the fearless advocates whose work transforms communities, institutions, and policy. We thank them for keeping us grounded in what matters most, a top-quality 21st-century education for all our bilingual/multilingual learners. We also thank our exceptionally committed conference team and the NYSABE leadership for making it possible for us to come together in these challenging times. We are grateful to everyone who participated as an audience member, as a presenter, as a conference organizer, as a volunteer, as an author in this newsletter, and/or a conference supporter. We also deeply acknowledge the work of our NYSABE Executive Director, Nancy Villareal de Adler, for her unfaltering dedication to our organization

May we sustain our shared mission of ensuring we continue to serve bilingual/multilingual learners, their families and communities from an asset-based perspective. May we continue to pose new questions that challenge us to strengthen the field of bilingual education.

## From the Desk of the Executive Director

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ةبيط ةيحت NAPAYKUY



Nancy Villareal de Adler

It is with honor, pride and gratitude that I write this note for our special edition of *The Bilingual Times* focusing on our 2021 first virtual annual conference, **Fostering Collaborative Leadership in Bilingual Education: Equity in Action**.

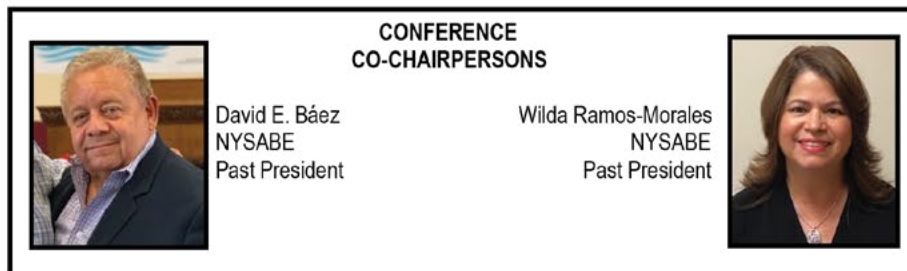
I would like to congratulate NYSABE's 2019-2021 Board of Directors, Delegate Assembly, Conference Chairpersons, David Báez and Wilda Ramos, and all members of the conference committees for implementing a high quality virtual conference. As I reflect upon the unprecedented circumstances and challenges presented by the COVID pandemic throughout the planning and implementation of the conference, I can attest that the huge success of the event was due to the courage, vision, and excellent work of all the organizers and participants. They all embodied the spirit of the conference's theme of collaborative leadership, and NYSABE's mission.

I would also like to thank and congratulate the writers of the interesting articles presented in this special edition of *The Bilingual Times*. Last but not least, please allow me to express our deep gratitude to our new editor Dr. Cecilia Espinosa, and to César Rodríguez, who is returning to the NYSABE Publications team as our graphic designer. Congratulations!





# NYSABE 2021 CONFERENCE COMMITTEES



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# NYSABE 2021 Awards Celebration



Cynthia Felix Jeffers  
NYSABE Delegate at Large

“To be inspired is great, but to inspire is an honor.”

—Stacey T. Hunt

The 43rd annual NYSABE Conference, *Fostering Collaborative Instructional Leadership in Bilingual Education: Equity in Action*, kicked off virtually on Saturday, May 15, 2021, with a Pre-Conference session that celebrated the accomplishments of our students and awardees. Region VI Delegate, Claribel González, opened the session by welcoming participants and congratulating the winners. Next, NYSABE's president, Alicia Baez, greeted the audience, congratulated the winners, and shared how grateful she is to be NYSABE's president and to have the opportunity to advocate for our students. Ms. Baez acknowledged the cancellation of our in-person conference in 2020 and commended Committee Members and Co-Conference Chairs Wilda Ramos and David Baez for their work in organizing our first virtual conference. We then “traveled” to

Williamsburg, Brooklyn where students from PS 257 under the guidance of their teacher Ms. Alexandra Hernandez paid homage to the Dominican Republic in a “Festival de Mangu” that featured Upbeat Tipico Dominican dances that had us dancing through Zoom!

This uplifting start to our first virtual conference showcased the many talents of our award-winning multilingual learners. First place winners of the Nivia Zavala Art Contest included Arcángel Bonilla-Vega, 3rd Grade, School #48 Martin Luther King, Buffalo, NY and Najely de la Torre, 12th Grade, Brentwood High School, Brentwood, NY. Second place was awarded to Camila Renata Marín Jordán, 12th Grade, Brentwood High School, Brentwood, NY and third place was awarded to José Vásquez, 11th Grade, Brentwood High School, Brentwood, NY.

Mercy Liseth González Lozano 10th Grade, Brentwood High School, was NYSABE's 2021 Bilingual Student Essay winner for her essay entitled “Soñar En Diferentes Idiomas.”

The winners of the NYSABE 2020 Awards represent fierce advocates of bilingual/multilingual education who have seen first-hand how detrimental the inequities in bilingual education can be. They have devoted themselves to creating educational experiences that are linguistically and culturally responsive. The recipients shared their own experiences as multilingual learners and how those experiences influenced who they are today. They are an inspiration to us all.

Bilingual Parent of the year **Martha Sanchez** knows the power of the parents and community. After her children missed out on the opportunity for a

bilingual education, Martha Sánchez led efforts that now ensure access to bilingual education for hundreds of local children. Martha's efforts have had great impact in her community. She has brought together groups of parents to advocate for bilingualism. These efforts have resulted in two new bilingual education programs in Queens, NY within the past 5 years In Queens, NY.

**Alicja Winnicki**, Superintendent Community School District 14 Brooklyn, NY and recipient of the Dr. Antonia Pantoja Bilingual Advocacy Award, has been a strong advocate for bilingual and dual language instruction. As an immigrant herself, she knows the value of having two languages in our complex and global world. Her reasons why are the students. She worked tirelessly with school leaders, community leaders and parents to establish eight transitional or dual language programs in her district. They are proudly in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Spanish, and Yiddish!

**Dr. Ximena E. Zate**, Bilingual Teacher of the Year award recipient, **Antonia Torres-Gearity** is a role model for her students, colleagues, and is inspired by her own children who reminded her that her accent is beautiful! She is a firm believer in her students' abilities to thrive in her classroom, regardless of their backgrounds.

**María Angélica Meyer**, Bilingual Administrator of the Year. Mrs. Meyer is a visionary leader who uses innovative, multidisciplinary approaches which foster professional learning communities that support the core values and principles on which quality teaching, and learning are built. She collaborates and connects with colleagues, students and



the community to research and identify district-wide systems of improvements with a specific focus on equity and access. She is an equity warrior and advocate for educational justice for all students.

Bilingual Support Personnel of the Year, **Carolina Pérez** believes in establishing lasting relationships with her students and families. As a school counselor she works with them on a personal level and provides them with resources for success during the high school years and post-graduation. Thanks to her efforts, many of our MLL students have moved on to college with a full paid scholarship.

**Angélica Infante-Green**, Commissioner of Rhode Island Department of Education, was awarded the prestigious Gladys Correa Memorial Award. Angélica has been an inspirational leader in the field of education in New York and now in Rhode Island. Throughout her career she has served in a variety of roles focused on improving instruction for all students, particularly students who are multilingual learners. She has worked tirelessly to advocate for equity and access on behalf of Multilingual Learners at all levels. Her work in New York State has served to raise awareness in policy around the needs of multilingual learners and immigrants. Angélica exemplifies the traits that our recipients of the Gladys Correa Memorial possess: fuerza, passion, courage, and unwavering dedication to the education of Multilingual Learners.

The evening was an amazing and invigorating start to our 43rd annual conference.

Congratulations to the Awards Committee for such an outstanding job in selecting the winners!



# NYSABE 2021 AWARD WINNERS

*Award presentations Saturday, May 15th 7:00 - 8:30 PM*

**BILINGUAL  
PARENT OF THE YEAR AWARD**

***Martha Sánchez***

Member, Community Education Council  
Community School District 30  
NYC Department of Education

**DR. ANTONIA PANTOJA  
BILINGUAL ADVOCACY AWARD**

***Alicja Winnicki***

Superintendent  
Community School District 14  
NYC Department of Education

**DR. XIMENA E. ZATE  
BILINGUAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

***Antonia Torres-Gearity***

Bilingual Teacher  
Front Street Elementary School  
Hempstead Union Free School District

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION  
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**

***María Angélica Meyer***

Director  
Instruction, Assessments and Funded Programs  
Westbury Public Schools

**BILINGUAL SUPPORT  
PERSONNEL OF THE YEAR AWARD**

***Carolina Pérez***

School Counselor  
Hempstead High School  
Hempstead Union Free School District

## Gladys Correa Memorial Award

***Angélica Infante-Green***

Commissioner, Rhode Island Department of Education

REMARKS



# NYSABE 2021 STUDENT AWARD CELEBRATION

Saturday, May 15, 2021 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Student Performance: *Festival de Mangú, PS 257, District 14, NYC*

## NYSABE 2021 BILINGUAL STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

GRADES 9-12

1st Place Winner

*Soñar en diferentes idiomas*

**Mercy Lisseth González Lozano**

10th Grade, Brentwood High School  
Brentwood, NY

## NYSABE 2021 DR. NIVIA ZAVALA ART CONTEST AWARD WINNERS

GRADES 3-5

1st Place Winner

*Bilingual Kids Working Hard*



Arcángel Bonilla-Vega  
3rd Grade  
School #48 Martin Luther King  
Buffalo, NY

GRADES 9 - 12

1st Place Winner

*Somos el Futuro*



Najely de la Torre  
12th Grade  
Brentwood High School  
Brentwood, NY

GRADES 9 - 12

2nd Place Winner

*We Speak the Same Language*



Camila Renata Marín Jordán  
12th Grade  
Brentwood High School  
Brentwood, NY

GRADES 9 - 12

3rd Place Winner

*Juntos as a Family*



José Vásquez  
11th Grade  
Brentwood High School  
Brentwood, NY

# President's Address

## "Fostering Leadership Begins with Family"



Adrienne Viscardi  
Regional Delegate, Region III

When Executive Director Nancy Villarreal de Adler warmly welcomed Conference Co-chairperson David Báez to speak, she noted that many children of NYSABE leadership have also pursued careers in education, administration, and community service. In his opening remarks, Past President Báez commented, "I've been waiting a year to give this presentation." Mr. Báez was referring not only to the postponement of the annual conference but also the opportunity to publicly introduce the NYSABE 2021 President before her opening address. "When Alicia became president, it was an emotional moment for us," Mr. Báez said. In addition to her record of accomplishment in the field of bilingual education, NYSABE President Alicia Báez is Mr. Báez's daughter.

Mr. Báez recalled President Báez's decision to attend Buffalo State before she chose to "study abroad" at Hunter College in NYC, where she remained for more than a decade to work for the NYCDOE in the South Bronx as a teacher, literacy coach, curriculum developer, assistant principal, and program leader for adult ELLs. With her family's support, Ms. Báez eventually returned to Buffalo, where she now serves as Director of Bilingual Education for Buffalo Public Schools, bringing "firm beliefs in high academic standards for all students in an educational community," Mr. Báez said.

Recalling her childhood experience at the NYSABE conference booth, President Báez expressed gratitude to her entire family: "In everything we do as educators and stakeholders, 'our children are watching. I thank God to have had that privilege," Ms. Báez added. "I chose to remain at the NYSABE booth to fold T-shirts that said 'Blessed with Bilingual Brains.' We can't forget those who are standing behind us, supporting us, allowing us to do this work."

In her address, President Báez underscored the importance of collaborative leadership. "As leaders," she commented, "we aim to build capacity and hold people accountable – then we

walk away." Instead, Ms. Báez offered a call to action. "Achievement, structure, [and] culture – [everything] in bilingual education requires collaboration," she said. "There is power in numbers – power in voice." While the conference theme was established in advance of March 2020, Ms. Báez noted, "Little did we know the impact of this year on ELLs [bi/multilingual students]...Equity needs to be a verb [because] equity requires action. We need to walk the walk. Equality and equity are not interchangeable; they are fundamentally different. Equity is about making sure we give our students and families what they need. You won't find that in the definition of equality."

President Báez highlighted educators' collective responsibility to promote literacy in multiple languages, rather than "stripping our students of what they come with." She continued, "As soon as we do that, we devalue [our students]. We need to stop...We need to grow to become real change agents."

On behalf of the greater NYSABE family, Executive Director Villarreal de Adler saluted President Báez "as a remarkable educator, strong visionary, and scholar in the field of education."





# David Kirkland- Returning to Justice: Advancing Culturally and Linguistically Responsive-Sustaining Education in the Midst of Pandemics, Protests and Possibilities



Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth, Ph.D.  
Hebrew Language Delegate

"You are not only the change; you're the hope."

In his rich and challenging keynote presentation, Dr. David Kirkland passionately and cogently called on all of us to become more sensitive and effective in our work with multilingual learners, people of color and all those who are socio-linguistically vulnerable. He asked us to do this through owning and acknowledging the institutional artifacts that structure the marginalization. Dr. Kirkland shared that we have lived and are living through a series of recent and longstanding crises. A pandemic has threatened our well being in terms of health as well as economic and emotional security and has had a differential impact on our communities. Through contemporary media, a pervasive culture of racial and racio-linguistic oppression has become more broadly emphasized in our lives. He posed an urgent question: "How can we be the change and the hope?"

First and foremost, Dr. Kirkland reminded us that we must listen "thickly," and remain open to the perspectives and

experiences of others. In addressing what we hear, Dr. Kirkland inspired us to partner with others, enlisting the support of students and parents to "stem the tide of systemic racial and linguistic violence" that stand in the way of progress. Dr. Kirkland quoted an African proverb that says "To go fast, go alone. To go far, go together." Thus, we must work together in order to reshape our educational system so that it celebrates the rich languages and cultures that students bring, while affirming cultural and linguistic pluralism rather than assimilation.

We also need to allow for healing, to privilege and integrate social and emotional learning for linguistically vulnerable students. In contrast to the experiences of school as a place of suffering, documented by researchers such as Michael Dumas (2014), we must strive to create a supportive environment in which students can feel safe and accepted- to reach a state in which they are ready to learn. This is particularly crucial in bilingual classrooms, but is relevant for all. Rather than ask the question: "*Why do we have failing students?*" we should ask, "*Why are we failing students?*" Dr. Kirkland shared research that studied 3 classrooms in 3 cities which convincingly demonstrated that taking time to focus on students and their well being resulted in better outcomes.

Dr. David Kirkland illustrated this perspective by sharing his own story in which he had a chance to "fall in love with language." Diagnosed as dyslexic, he revealed that he was homeless

between ages 12-13. He had only 1 set of clothes and did not think anyone cared until he encountered a teacher who did. She shared her lunches and took the time to get to know him. He recalled, "She encouraged me through a pedagogy of love. She saw me, heard me, and encouraged me in ways that were important."

The speaker also shared his favorite books and authors including: Isabel Wilkerson, Tracy McMillan, H. Samy Alim and Django Paris, Pedro Noguera, Robin DeAngelo, Richard Rothstein, H. Samy Alim and Django Paris. His perspective was at once scholarly, personal, heartfelt, and urgent. We must listen and identify where work is needed, we must partner with allies and band together to attack the limitations and marginalization that remain ingrained in our educational institutions into welcoming, healing, sustaining, diverse, multicultural and multilingual settings that engage and support all learning, valuing the sociolinguistic riches that each individual brings to our classes.

This is a dynamic and recursive process involving *courageous conversation and transformative action*. We must continue to educate ourselves, to read, to hear, to become continually sensitive and aware and to truly become the change and the hope. Thank you, Dr. Kirkland, for sharing your wisdom and your experience. Your voice and your contribution have enriched us immensely.

Dumas, J. J. (2014). Losing an arm: Schooling as a site of black suffering. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 1:1, 1-29.

# Equity-Focused Leadership: The intersection of high-quality curriculum, culturally and historically responsive teaching, and children's educational future



Hulda Yau  
Bilingual Teacher  
Rochester City School District

American Reading Company (ARC) has collaborated with NYSABE for many years as a leader in bilingual education helping thousands of bilingual teachers with culturally responsive practices in literacy. In this year's conference Mario Palma, the Vice President for Multilingual Teaching & Learning, and Amelia Van Name Larson, the Executive Vice President of Innovations and Academic Partnerships, were the presenters for one of the sessions. Their presentation was divided into three sections: The Role of Assessments to Accelerate and Empower, The Role of an MLL Coaching Mindset, and The Role of Leadership. Mario never disappoints with his Padlet link filled with a treasure trove of knowledge.

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." The words of the acclaimed American writer James Baldwin, resonated with me during the presentation. As educators, we may not be able to achieve all of our dreams of change, but acknowledging collectively that there is a systemic problem is the first step in creating positive change. ARC emphasized that "To make gains in

student learning, schools must identify patterns of inequity and take responsibility for changing them."

According to ARC, educators can begin making small incremental changes in their practice that will make a big impact in the education of the multilingual learners (MLLs). These changes begin with how we as educators analyze data and use it to deepen our understanding on how students learn, what drives their misconceptions, and how we can modify instructional techniques to create greater impact. We were reminded that only when the analysis of data is combined with strong supports for improved teaching will there be a positive shift in student outcome. The focus must be relentless on impact and in solving problems before they become great failures.

One of the articles shared during the presentation, and in Padlet, was Jim Cummins *What Do We Know about Multilingual Learners?* Gone are the days when policymakers and some educators viewed students' home language as an obstacle to overcome in the acquisition of English. Jim Cummins states that after thousands of research studies over the past 40 years, "we now know that knowledge of two or more languages confers intellectual, linguistic, and personal benefits on multilingual learners." He has synthesized through a variety of publications how educators can implement research in the classroom as powerful instructional strategies and use home language as a powerful source in MLLs academic development.

As a NYSABE participant, I have always found exceptionally helpful how quickly I can implement ARC skills and strategies when I return to my classroom. In maintaining an equitable assessment practice with multilingual readers, educators were encouraged to observe students through an asset lens and use a different approach that will appropriately inform instruction. Educators were also encouraged to steer away from a monolingual lens, unconscious bias, or deficit thinking that may affect the improvement efforts in our schools. To most appropriately inform instruction during reading assessment, do not count:

- "Errors" due to pronunciation or accent
- "Errors" where the word is not yet in their vocabulary repertoire ("new word in English or their home language")
- "Errors" where the concept is new to the student (in any language)

"Errors" in any of these categories need to be ignored when assessing an MLL's reading accuracy in English because they are NOT true reading errors, they are language development approximations (errors). If you are wondering, why there is a consistent focus on reading instruction let me share nine great reasons given to all session participants:

1. Builds knowledge
2. Improves achievement
3. Increases motivation



4. Increases vocabulary
5. Improves writing
6. Builds background knowledge
7. Improves understanding of text structures
8. Develops empathy
9. Develops personal identity

I'm grateful to Mario and Amelia for sharing the complexities of reading as a multilingual learner and for giving us the foundational knowledge to develop a comprehensive and systemic approach to literacy skills instruction. Thank you for integrating research and the science of learning and development to help schools create a transformative literacy system that is focused on transferable learning and the well-being of the whole child.

## Bilingual Special Education Panel: Collaborative Leadership in Bilingual Special Education



Cynthia Felix Jeffers  
NYSABE Delegate at Large

I had the honor of being a panelist on the Bilingual Special Education panel moderated by Dr. Gliset Colón, Assistant Professor, SUNY Buffalo State College. The Special Education Panel focused on collaborative leadership to improve special education services for Multilingual Learners with disabilities. Dr. Colón introduced the panelists and the importance of collaboration in our field.

Elisa Álvarez, Associate Commissioner, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, NYSED shared some of the current issues in Bilingual Special Education such as the shortage of Bilingual Special Ed teachers and service providers, the over identification of MLLs and the over representation of males who are MLLs with IEPs. She shared also the initiatives that NYSED is implementing to address these

issues. The initiatives include Intensive Teacher Institutes, Multitiered Systems of Support Framework, MLLs with IEPs Task Force and the Alternative English Language Proficiency Assessment. NYSED is focused on developing a culturally responsive sustaining education that will address also new language development. She emphasized the commitment of NYSED to strengthen opportunities and equity for all students.

Julie Esparza Brown, Associate Professor, Bilingual Special Education, Portland State University continued the discussion by emphasizing the needs and ways we can move the field ahead by developing equitable opportunities to learn. Dr. Esparza stressed that, "Education must begin to sing a different song – bilingualism is not just for the privileged (i.e. English speakers in dual language programs) but can be realized for all, including students with disabilities." She emphasized how we cannot position disability over linguistic factors –both must be addressed. She also reminded the audience about the importance of advocating and building strong networks amongst ourselves to support advocacy efforts.

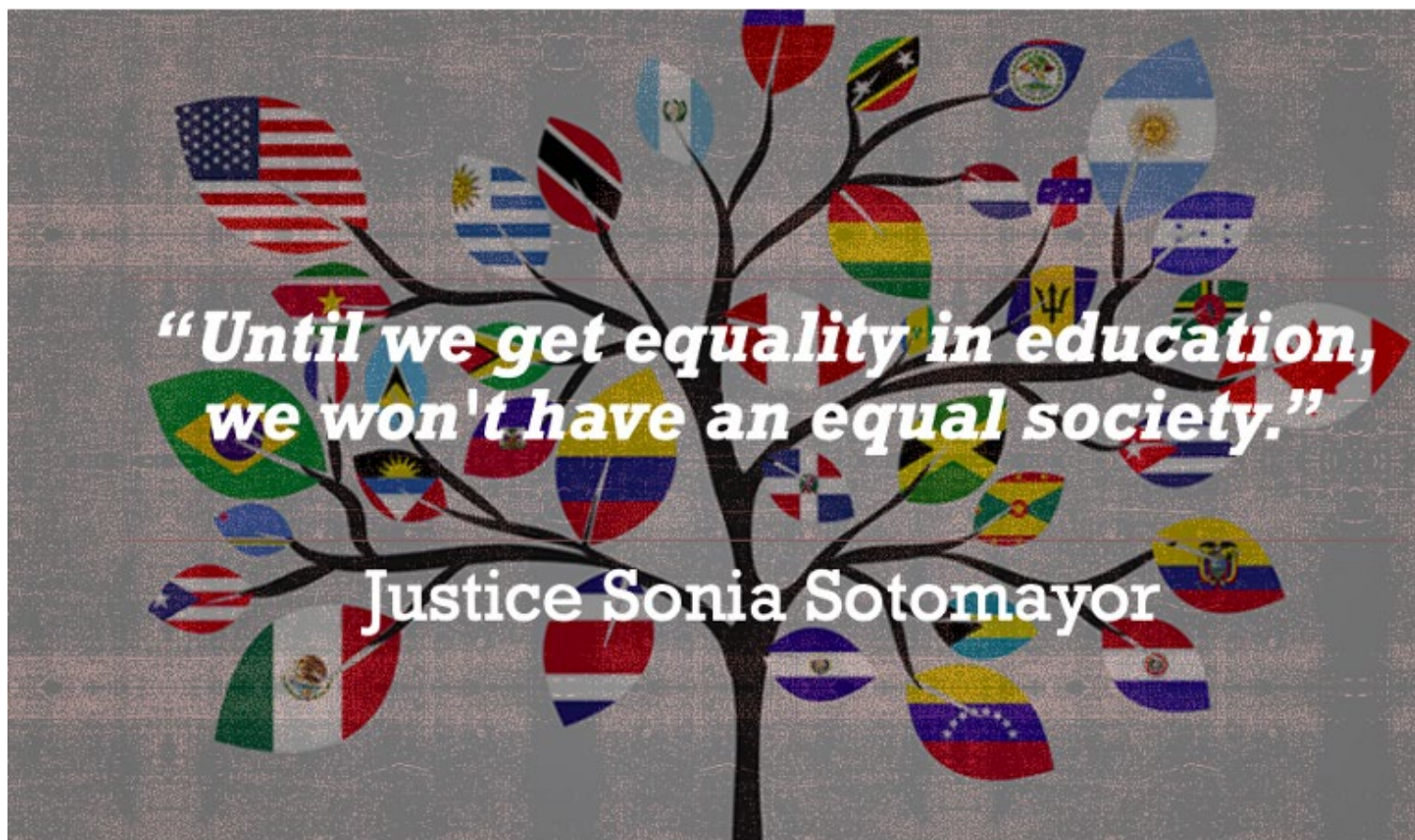
I focused on the challenges that can create barriers in identifying MLLs with disabilities and ways we can

address them together. I stressed how having educational spaces that value and celebrate the whole child, family, and community—from every culture a school serves, particularly children with disabilities, helps build culturally and linguistically appropriate bridges that will lead to education without barriers. I declared, "We must replace barriers with opportunities and address the ways we've allowed communities of color and/or people with disabilities to be marginalized. As educators we must be prepared to shift the paradigm in which education and society operates, recognizing that our notion of "normal" in education is often a reflection of faulty assumptions based on privilege. We need to be honest and objective if a disability affects a child's ability to learn and thrive. But let's do so without communicating implicit ideas of what is "normal."

Dr. Colón thanked the panelists and concluded by reminding all participants that language is a right and *juntos podemos!*

NYSABE would like to congratulate Dr. Colón and NYSABE Past-President Dr. Tamara Alsace on the publication of their new book: *Bilingual Special Education for the 21st Century: A New Interface*. This is a much needed and valuable resource for our field!







# PARENT ADVOCACY SESSION



## *Parents as Leaders of Educational Change*

**TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2021**  
3:00 - 4:30 PM

**Ivana Espinet, NYSABE Parent Delegate**  
**Kate Menken, NYSABE Parent Delegate**

This highlighted NYSABE session is facilitated by parents and for parents, and promotes parent/family leadership in education. We will learn important information about school funding and NYSABE's advocacy work. We will then discuss different channels inside and outside of schools through which we can advocate for our children's education. We will have a conversation about the work we are doing as parents in our local communities and how we can help each other and work together.



# Equity in Action: Transformative Leadership Panel Discussion



Cynthia Felix Jeffers  
NYSABE Delegate at Large

“When NYSABE and NYSALAS collaborate, our organizations achieve a level of confluence that could not be attained singularly”

—Dr. David Mauricio

Held on the last day of the conference, the Leadership session was a joint collaboration of NYSABE and the New York State Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (NYSALAS). David Mauricio, Superintendent of Peekskill CSD, NYSALAS President and NYSABE Past-President, and moderated the panel that featured Alicja Winnicki, Superintendent, CSD 14, Brooklyn, NY; Alex Marrero, Interim Superintendent, City School District of New Rochelle and Rafael Pérez, Principal of Frank A. Sedita Academy, Buffalo Public Schools. The focus of the session was to engage in a dialogue around providing equitable and quality services to all students,

particularly our Multilingual Learners as schools reopen.

Dr. Mauricio opened the panel by introducing the panelists and acknowledging that while it was a year of challenges and changes, it was one that offered us many opportunities as well. Panelists answered questions focused on the use of federal and state funding, the use of summer extended school year programming to address the opportunity and achievement gaps that exist, plans for the opening of schools in the fall, change the world and for as well as how their district is transforming how we educate our students.

Panelists shared lessons learned in 2020 and innovative methods on how they would provide equitable learning opportunities to address the learning losses caused by COVID 19. These innovative methods include in person summer programs that will offer academic support, arts, recreation, and social-emotional support for ALL students run by school leaders and trusted community-based organizations. Safe and supportive environment that focus on students' social/emotional and academic growth. Strategies that support quality instruction through a collaborative model of leadership were discussed, as well as the importance of uplifting leadership at all levels to transform education. In addition, all the panelists stressed the importance of creating opportunities that engage children, educators, families and the community in the planning process.

Dr. Mauricio commended the NYSABE leadership on hosting the conference as it allowed educators from across the State to learn from examples of best

practices.

2020 showed us how we can overcome challenge after challenge when we work collaboratively. We are proud of how NYSABE brings administrators together to share best practices. Dr. Mauricio noted, “On behalf of the NYS Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (NYSALAS), I was proud to host the leadership panel to provide a pathway forward for Districts who serve our children. **When NYSABE and NYSALAS collaborate, our organizations achieve a level of confluence that could not be attained singularly.**”





# Dr. Sonia Soltero: Leading the Way to Equity, Access and Inclusion: Additive Bilingual Education as the Great Equalizer



Hulda Yau  
Bilingual Teacher  
Rochester City School District

It was an inspiring experience to have Dr. Sonia Soltero as the final virtual keynote speaker on Saturday. Dr. Soltero is the Department Chair of Leadership, Language, and Curriculum at DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois and a faculty member at the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Graduate Program. Dr. Soltero began her presentation with an important question that quickly engaged many participants. Why should we advocate for bilingualism and biliteracy for multilingual learners? The chatbox ignited with many responding that it was the students' right and our responsibility as educators to empower them. Others mentioned how critical it was in celebrating diversity and validating students' cultures. One of the comments warmed my heart because it mentioned the importance of embracing all students and their families.

The beginning of Dr. Soltero's presentation emphasized the growing importance of multilingualism in the U.S. job market. She highlighted the U.S. News & World Report in 2015 that stated how the global job market would be crowded with educated graduates

from Europe, China and Mexico among many other countries who have mastered English in addition to their mother tongue. The demands for bilingual workers in the US has more than doubled from 240,000 postings aimed at bilingual workers to 630,000 postings in 2015. Americans will be competing in the 21st century job market with multilingual candidates.

Dr. Soltero emphasized how an English only mindset comes at a cost to society and the individual:

**Educational Costs:** U.S. devotes significant money for foreign language training. U.S. schools have a record of producing lower-leveled competencies in 2nd languages.

**Time & Effort Costs:** It takes time, effort, commitment, motivation, hard work to learn another language in HS/college, but much less effort to maintain a home language.

**Sociocultural Costs:** The linguistic and cultural capital of the diverse ethnolinguistic groups in the U.S. enrich our society and enhance the socio-emotional well being of students.

**Economic Costs:** US multinational businesses are hampered by the low numbers of Americans who are competent in other languages and have knowledge of other cultures.

**National Security Costs:** Millions of dollars are spent annually training foreign-service and military personnel in foreign languages.

**Cognitive costs:** Children miss out by not fully developing more than one

language. Bilingual/biliterate children show higher performance cognitive ability and flexibility.

The educational experiences of multilingual learners vary greatly across the country as they continue to represent a growing part of the U.S. student body. Dr. Soltero shared some facts that came from the 2018 study made by the Pew Research Center. It states that multilingual learners make up about 10% of public-school students with over 400 languages represented in K-12 public schools. Most multilingual learners were born in the U.S. and are U.S. citizens with over 4,800,00 multilingual learners enrolled in K-12 public schools. The most commonly spoken language other than English is Spanish followed by Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese.

The New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) was another important topic in Dr. Soltero's presentation. As of April 2021, 41 states and DC passed the Seal of Biliteracy legislation with 5 states under consideration and 3 in the early stages. The NYSSB recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages, in addition to English. The intent of the Seal is to:

- Affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society;
- Prepare students with twenty-first century skills;
- Encourage the study of languages;

- Identify high school graduates with multilingualism and multiliteracy skills for employers;
- Provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission;
- Recognize the value of world and home language instruction in school.

One of the key components in Dr. Soltero's presentation was the breakdown of the bilingual education orientations that she adapted from Ruiz language orientations and García's bilingualism

conceptualization which include additive and subtractive bilingualism. With additive bilingualism, students gain an additional language which is viewed as a right (additive-recursive) and as a resource (additive-dynamic). This type of bilingual education is typically seen in dual language programs. With subtractive bilingualism, language is seen as a problem. Assimilation with monolingualism is the outcome with this early exit bilingual education transitional model. She highlighted the NYS Blueprint for English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Success that encourages districts and schools to

recognize home languages as cultural assets.

Dr. Soltero ended her presentation with an essential message: "A multilingual and multiliterate population has the potential to enhance academic achievement, advance intercultural competences, boost economic competitiveness, improve intergroup relations, strengthen national security, and leverage inequities in society." Thank you Dr. Soltero for teaching us how to lead the way to equity, access and inclusion through additive bilingual education as the great equalizer.







## New York State Association for Bilingual Education

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

*Kindly note that this information will be used to generate your membership card and future mailings*

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

I was referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ NEW

☐ RENEWAL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Languages Spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

#### NYSABE Dues: (please check one)

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

#### Select your local region: (check one)

- ☐ Region I-Long Island  
☐ Region II-New York City  
☐ Region III-Mid-Hudson  
☐ Region IV-Syracuse/Capital District  
☐ Region V –Rochester  
☐ Region VI-Western New York

#### I would like to volunteer in:

- ☐ Advocacy  
☐ Fundraising  
☐ Special Events  
☐ Membership  
☐ Other

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

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**NYSABE**  
**NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools**  
**726 Broadway, 5 Floor**  
**New York, NY 10003**

#### 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 (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.

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

**NYSABE BILINGUAL TIMES STAFF INCLUDES:**

Nancy Villarreal de Adler, Project Director

Dr. Cecilia M. Espinosa, Chief Editor

César Rodríguez, Graphic Designer



**The New York State  
Association for  
Bilingual Education**





**We'll see you at the NYSABE  
Conference in Spring 2023!**

**Learn more at [NYSABE.NET](https://nysabe.net)**