



**New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE)
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**NYSABE Position Statement
on Reductions in Force at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English
Language Acquisition
April 28, 2025**

The New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) is an organization whose mission is to promote and advocate for the provision of high-quality services for multilingual learners (also known as English language learners) in New York State, including ensuring the availability of bilingual education programming. NYSABE is deeply concerned about the unwarranted and unprecedented reductions in force at the U.S. Department of Education.

The current Administration, via Education Secretary Linda McMahon, has enacted a near-complete reduction in force of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA), effectively abolishing this office. The role of OELA staff is to administer statutory funds connected to key programs for multilingual learners (also known as English language learners), including grant funding from Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, in order to ensure that multilingual learners have resources to attain language proficiency and meet academic standards. Without staff, the New York State Association for Bilingual Education is deeply concerned that protected, statutory funds will not be dispersed to the schools that are entitled to receive them.

Furthermore, OELA provides technical support and guidance that is needed nationally to ensure services are provided for multilingual learners consistently and systematically from state to state. OELA also oversees the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, a critical hub for data, research, and best practices that many schools rely on for guidance in serving their multilingual learners. Eliminating the expert staff of the Office of English Language Acquisition will decrease the availability and quality of services provided to multilingual learners, representing a misguided return to the past when little to no supports were provided to immigrant students arriving in our schools.

The Office of English Language Acquisition administers and monitors hundreds of millions of statutory dollars in active National Professional Development grants to institutions of higher education and other organizations nationwide to support programs that prepare teachers of multilingual learners. For well over two decades, school districts in New York State have faced devastating bilingual educator shortages, resulting in stark outcomes for multilingual learners; these students have the lowest high school graduation rates of all students in New York, as well as the highest dropout rates (see our [position statement on the Bilingual Educator Shortage in New York here](#)). National Professional Development grants are essential to rebuilding our bilingual educator pipeline, and their funds have been constitutionally appropriated by Congress.

There are currently 245,570 multilingual learners/English language learners enrolled in school in New York State (New York State Education Department [NYSED], 2024), comprising 10% of the total school population. New arrivals comprise 182,810 (74%) of all multilingual learners, and the state has received unprecedented numbers of newcomers since August 2022. The near elimination of all staff in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition threatens the legal and effective operation of key programs to serve this growing population and their teachers.

The New York State Association for Bilingual Education calls on our elected officials to demand that this decision be reversed and that the staff of the Office of English Language Acquisition of the U.S. Department of Education be reinstated immediately. We further call for a swift legal response from the Attorney General in order to halt and reverse this decision.