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Transformation of Schools
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The New York State Association for Bilingual Education Newsletter

The NYSABE Bilingual Times

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Spring/Summer 2015 Issue

A Message from the President, Tatyana Kleyn, Ed.D.



Dear NYSABE Community,

It is an honor to address you one last time as my term as President comes to a close. I would like to thank our members, friends and supporters and reflect on our significant accomplishments throughout the year.

If you were one of the over 800 people who attended our 2015 annual conference in White Plains, I hope you found it both educational and inspirational. In this issue, you will find a summary of the memorable keynote and highlighted sessions, which I hope will either serve as a reminder of the building bridges theme or as an overview for those of you who could not join us. I would also like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Tamara Alsace and Nellie Mulkay, the conference co-chairpersons, whose professionalism and commitment went above and beyond their line of duty to ensure that every detail of the three-day event was thought of and carried out diligently.

Beyond our conference, there has been a tremendous amount of work completed by many individuals in our organization. NYSABE's accomplishments during the 2014-15 year address the goals established in 1993 in the areas of Advocacy, Professional Development, Dissemination of Information and Communications, Networking and Membership, and Leadership. These accomplishments include:

- ◆ The development of [position statements](#) on proposed national and state policies:
 - ◊ Waiver for a time frame to test newly arrived students with standardized tests in English,
 - ◊ Graduation requirements for ELL/bilingual learners,
 - ◊ Commissioners Regulations Part 154, Parts 2 and 3,
 - ◊ Letter on behalf of parents and parent coordinators in Region V/ Rochester,
 - ◊ Recommendations on the proposed alternate pathways for teaching with a bilingual extension and TESOL certificate, and
 - ◊ Position Statement on the Annual Professional Performance Review (APP) and the evaluation of teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners.
- ◆ Discussions on behalf of Bilingual Education via news media, i.e. NY Post, Univision, and Education Week;
- ◆ Continued collaboration and communication with partner organizations and consulates at the local, state and national levels to engage in joint advocacy and networking. (*continued on next page*)

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Institutions include: NABE, International TESOL, NYS TESOL, NY-SCEA, NYSAFLT, Advocates for Children, New York Immigration Coalition, ADASA, the Bengali, Mexican, Peruvian, and Russian Consulates;

- ◆ Participation of a NYSABE team in the annual NABE and NYS TESOL conferences;
- ◆ Support to NYSABE's regional professional development activities;
- ◆ Coordination and implementation of the Roundtable *Multilingual Learners in Universal Pre-K: Defining the Focus and Direction*. Sponsored by NYSED's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, the New York City Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (NYC R-BERN), and NYSABE, this roundtable gathered key leaders in the fields of Early Childhood Pre-K and Bilingual Education to discuss systemic strategies for the development and implementation of Universal Pre-K programs for ELLs/bilingual learners.
- ◆ Continuation of the publication of NYSABE's research journal, *The Journal of Multilingual Educational Research* (JMER). The summer 2015 edition will be a themed issue on *Bilingual Special Education: Investigating and Implementing Evidence-based Practices in Schools*, and will be guest edited by Dr. Diane Rodríguez, Fordham University. A special issue on *Rethinking Preschool Education through Bilingual Universal Pre-Kindergarten: Opportunities and Challenges*, guest edited by Dr. Zoila Tazi, NYSABE Region III Delegate, is also in progress.

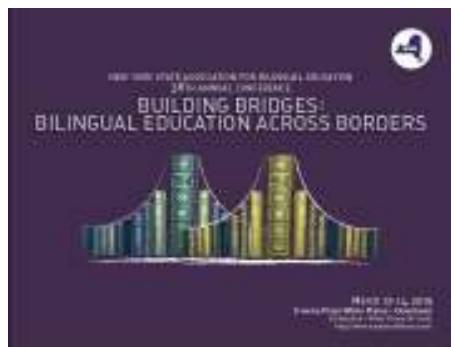
- ◆ Expansion of NYSABE's *The Bilingual Times* newsletter to include articles that span state, national, and global borders and reach a wider international audience.
- ◆ Growth of our social media efforts with the expansion of NYSABE's [Facebook page](#) to reach over 530 people in less than a year and the re-launching of our Twitter page.
- ◆ Development of the NYSABE Annual Conference website: <http://nysabeconference.net>
- ◆ Revision and updating of the *NYSABE Annual Conference Standard Operating Procedure Manual*;
- ◆ The updating and approval of [NYSABE's by-laws](#), for the first time since 1990;
- ◆ Completion of NYSABE's first online elections, which increased participation in the voting process;
- ◆ Endorsement of the *Professional Standards for Bilingual Educators*, led by Dr. Aida Nevárez-La Torre, by the NYSABE Board of Directors and Delegate Assembly with the next phase of commentary from the membership in progress;
- ◆ The convening of an advisory council of 15 NYSABE Past Presidents to provide support and direction for the organization;
- ◆ The acquisition of legal support from Lawyers Alliance of NY to ensure NYSABE's alignment with New York State's Non-Profit Re-

vitalization Act that streamlines the way non-profits must operate and ensure compliance with the law.

I hope that this summary of key accomplishments gives you a sense of the actions and efforts that NYSABE has undertaken this year. I thank you all for your continued commitment and participation in NYSABE. I would also like to offer my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors and Delegate Assembly, whose hard work is the driving force of our organization. Finally, I must thank our Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler, who has stood by my side and offered her support in any and every way possible. I am proud of all we have done together, and I look forward to continuing to expand and strengthen NYSABE's vision and mission on behalf of New York State's ELLs/bilingual learners, their parents/families, teachers and administrators.

Sincerely,

**Tatyana Kleyn,
2014-15 NYSABE President
*Centered on Bilingual Learners***



From the Desk of the Executive Director,



Nancy
Villarreal
de Adler

“Let’s pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful tools and weapons.”

—Malala Yousafzai

“I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.”

“Let’s pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful tools and weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.”

“Education is education. We should learn everything and then choose which path to follow.” Education is neither Eastern nor Western, it is human.”

—Malala Yousafzai

Last October the impassioned words of a 17 year old young woman resonated in classrooms and communities throughout the world. It was the courageous voice of Malala Yousafzai, one of the two recipients of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, who had dared to envision a world where all children could be empowered to reach their potential through quality education. She had declared that without education people would be trapped in a cycle of poverty which could only be broken by ensuring access to quality education for members of every community. Her vision stressed the urgent need to make systemic changes in education that could safeguard the empowerment of students, educators, community members and leaders. During more

than six years, Malala’s voice had represented a worldwide call to action to safeguard the human right to education of all people.

A few days after the announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize awardees, on October 25th, 2014, NYSABE celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Lau vs. Nichols US Supreme Court decision which aimed at ensuring access to **meaningful and equitable education** for all ELLs/bilingual learners. The keynote presentation, panel discussions, and conversations provided the participants with a forum conducive to deep reflections on the impact of the court decision in their daily educational tasks. The activities also inspired the attendees to reaffirm their commitment to ensure that all ELLs/bilingual learners in New York State have access to an equitable and meaningful education from Pre-K through high school.

Both memorable events that took place last fall represented a tribute to all individuals in New York State, our nation, and worldwide who had transcended geopolitical boundaries, linguistic and cultural borders, intergenerational barriers, and multiple limitations of our human condition in order to seek the best ways to provide quality and equitable education to all individuals throughout the world. The celebrations of the Nobel Prize and the Lau vs. Nichols also served as a source of inspiration for all NYSABE activities which sustained an intentional focus on **Building Bridges: Bilingual Education Across Borders**. As we close the 2014-2015 NYSABE presidential term and initiate a new year, we hope that our daily work will continue to mirror the spirit and sense of mission of Malala’s vision and the Lau vs. Nichols Supreme Court decision and that we continue to build bridges, cross borders, and transgress boundaries for the benefit of all ELLs/bilingual learners, their families, and educators in New York State.



Editor's Note:
Editor,
Tamara
Alsace

Dear Readers,

With the 2015 annual conference well behind us and a new school year just beginning, this issue brings you an opportunity to review the idea of building bridges and reflect on how you might put the idea into action this school year. As you read about the highlights of the conference and reminisce about your own experiences there or in your home schools, it is a great time to make a pledge to continue to make connections for the benefit of our ELLs/bilingual learners.

This school year brings us the challenge and opportunity of fully implementing the newly revised CR Part 154 Regulations. It requires us to build bridges across fields as we embrace the requirements for integrated ENL classes and the establishment of Language Proficiency Teams. The regulations further require us to build bridges with parents and families as we enhance communication through a real effort to provide information and materials in their home languages. The professional development requirements will necessitate our collaboration with our colleagues across departments in unprecedented ways.

This summer, I retired from a more than 30 year career in the Buffalo Public Schools. As I reflect on my work there and look forward to the life that lies ahead, I am considering how I might build bridges that will create new opportunities for me to contribute to this field I so love, the field of bilingual education.

Negotiating Borders: U.S.-born and Raised Children (Back) in Mexico

By Tatyana Kleyn, Ed.D.
NYSABE 2014-15 President



During the 2015 NYSABE Conference, I had the honor of giving the President's Address about my research in Oaxaca, Mexico which aligned to the conference theme - *Building Bridges: Bilingual Education Across Borders*. The research presentation, which drew attention to the many borders we face in our field, offered us opportunities to think about ways to bridge them. It focused on the geo-political borders that are created by humans to separate land, people and resources to the benefit of some and the detriment of others.

This year, I was fortunate to receive a Fulbright fellowship to study return migration in Mexico. In August of 2014, I found myself en route to Oaxaca, Mexico, on an airplane with a window seat, a fuzzy red blanket and the flight attendants coming around every hour or so offering me a beverage of my choice. I was also able to select a customs form in English or Spanish. My experience was in stark contrast to the many migrants who cross the U.S.-Mexico border just to survive, but with hopes of a better life. These border-crossers hold onto trains, as they risk losing their limbs or their lives, walk hundreds of miles through deserts battling extreme

temperatures, face physical and sexual abuse, and are at the mercy of strangers who leave water along the path to help others avoid dehydration and death. Their experiences drastically differ from mine for one reason – paper privilege, or the 9 “magical numbers” that I hold as a naturalized U.S. citizen and that allow me to cross borders easily and comfortably while others put their lives in the balance to seek out a better life for themselves and their families.

The U.S. is home to nearly 11.3 million undocumented immigrants (Passel & Cohn 2015). Some came into the country without papers whereas others overstayed their temporary visas. They hail from every part of the globe, although the majority are Latinos and half come from our southern neighbor, Mexico (Krogstad & Passel, 2014). Life in the U.S. without papers is full of challenges. The state where one lives and its policies to support (or hinder) unauthorized immigrants certainly make the national terrain uneven. From everyday obstacles such as making enough money to support their family to the lack of access to healthcare, to the discrimination that Latinos experience in the U.S., to the fear that any day their lives may change and that they may be deported, living undocumented is a tremendous strain emotionally, economically, and physically.

While over two million undocumented immigrants have been deported by the Obama administration (Gonzalez-Barrera & Krogstad, 2014), many others have found themselves in a position where they have no choice but to return to their

country of origin. These families who repatriate due to challenging circumstances often bring their children, who are either U.S.-born dual citizens or have lived in the U.S. - the only country they have truly known for most of their lives. These children and youth are forced to start their lives anew in a country, culture, and language that are foreign to them in many ways.

It is these students, whom I refer to as **transbordered** (Stephen, 2007), that were the focus of my study. I conducted case studies to answer the question: How do transbordered children and youth adapt to their new Mexican context? I interviewed the students, their parents and teachers/professors, observed their classrooms and asked them to create artifacts that encapsulate their border-crossing experiences. In all, there were nine focal students from three different developmental stages: 1) elementary school students, who were born in the U.S. to undocumented parents and due to their dual citizenship, have the choice to return to their place of birth; 2) secondary students who as pre-teens struggled to fit in with their peers and acclimate to schooling in Spanish and; 3) college students, who unlike the minors, made their own decisions to return in the hopes of finding educational opportunities and freedoms they lacked in the U.S.

Returned Realities

Although the findings of this study are broad, here I will focus on two themes that arose: family separation and unification and struggles with schooling and languaging.

Family Separation and Unification

Crossing borders often has the simultaneous effect of bringing together some family members while tearing others apart. When Sylvia was in the U.S., she had four children (sadly, one died at a young age). She and the children's father did their best to raise them in the U.S., but with the meager wages they earned, without papers and lack of family to support them, Sylvia made the decision to return to Mexico with the children while her husband remained in the U.S. to work and send money for their kids. In Mexico, Sylvia became the primary caregiver. Living with her elderly parents, sister and brother-in law afforded her a built-in familial support system that she was missing in the U.S. After three years of being in Mexico, her children have acclimated to their environment as they arrived rather young (between the ages of 3 and 6). However, every time they speak over the phone with their father they ask him when he

will visit them, and the answer is always "soon." In the drawing in Figure 1, Marcela, the oldest child at 9 years old, compares her life in Mexico, riding a horse, to her life in the U.S., riding a bike. She also shows her in-depth understanding of the connection between migration politics and its role in uniting her family.

Sylvia's decision to return to Mexico with her U.S.-born children has resulted in a family unification, as the children had never met their grandparents until their arrival in Mexico. Yet, they are now living three years and counting without their father, whom they love dearly and still hold out hope to see again.

Struggles with Schooling and Languaging

When U.S.-born children are brought to Mexico at a young age, going to school in their new country is all they know. However, when a transbordered child is transported to the U.S. at the age of three, lives in that country for a decade, and then

finds him/herself in a Mexican school in 8th grade, the challenges are plentiful. This was the reality for Edwin, who was initially in a Mexican school where the dominant language was Zapotec, an indigenous language common in Oaxaca. Speaking little to no Zapotec, he was lost and felt that the other students were putting him down for being different, for being an American. His high school used Spanish as the lingua franca, but he still struggled; although he spoke the language, reading, and writing for academic purposes in Spanish was new to him. He explained:

None of my teachrs knew until I told them, "I am not really good because I came from the U.S. Just speak slower or give me extra classes." Then, they were more helpful. First, they just looked at me and said "How could you come from the U.S.? You look like a normal Mexican that speaks Spanish." – Edwin, transborder student, 17 years old

Although Mexican schools are now educating U.S.-born and raised students at increasing rates, educators have yet to fully understand their experiences and provide supports for these transbordered students. Not surprisingly, Edwin had to advocate for himself to ensure he would receive the assistance he needed to succeed academically.

Implications Across Borders

The transbordered students I discussed here are currently in Mexico, but the chances that some or most of them will return to the U.S. are high. So, the question about what we can do to support transbordered students – on both



Figure 1: Marcela's Drawing. (Translation: I want to be with my mom and dad wherever they go. I want the government to help me.)

sides of the U.S.-Mexico border – is pertinent for *all* educators. These students are our students, they are bilingual students, they are multicultural students, and through their experiences they have developed personal understandings of the ways in which unjust policies impact families in severe ways.

Teachers in Mexico have not been given the opportunity to consider the impact of U.S. migration policies, or lack of them, and how they change the composition of their classrooms. To that end, I worked with a group of transborder high school students, who called themselves “The New Dreamers,” and graduate students from The Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca to develop a resource for Mexican educators called: [Guía de Apoyo a Docentes con Estudiantes Transfronterizos: Alumnos de Educación Básica y Media Superior](#) [Guide to Support Teachers of Transbordered Students: Primary and Secondary Students]. In the U.S. we need to ensure that students are learning through their home language, as they become bilingual and biliterate. Developmental bilingual programs not only provide students a strong foundation, but also equip them to thrive in a globalizing world, whether in the U.S., Mexico, or elsewhere.

I look forward to continuing this conversation next year at the 2016 NYSABE Conference where I hope to share a film that I am currently producing (with Ben Donnellon, William Pérez and Rafael Vásquez) called *Una Vida, Dos Países [One Life, Two Countries]*:

Children and Youth (Back) in Mexico. The documentary chronicles the experiences of these students and their families. In the meantime, let us all continue to build bridges in a world where borders and labels unnecessarily and unjustly define people and determine policies.

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“My experience was in stark contrast to the many migrants who cross the U.S.-Mexico border just to survive, but with hopes of a better life.”





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FOR MORE 2015 CONFERENCE PHOTOS!

Welcoming Remarks from Associate Commissioner

Angélica Infante-Green

By Gregory Halzen, NYSABE Delegate-at-Large

On Thursday, March 12, 2015, Angélica Infante-Green welcomed the crowd at the Opening Session of the 38th NYSABE Annual Conference with greetings from the New York State Education Department (NYSED). As Associate Commissioner of the NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, Infante-Green was in the right place as she set the tone of her talk in the positive light of our communities' rich asset base of multilingualism.

Before diving into specifics of how our state is clearly on the path towards better support of our multilingual learners, Infante-Green spoke proudly of how this is "The Moment" in New York State; this is a very exciting time! And such a statement is not a stretch. There are many ways NYSED and NYSABE are partners in providing the education our state's bilingual learners deserve and this came out in the updates, reminders, and encouragement that Infante-Green shared.

PRESSING CONCERNs AND UPDATES

There were a few topics that the Associate Commissioner brought to light as critical to building up our state's bilingual education, in particular, the roll-out of the revised Part 154 of the NYS Commissioner's Regulations (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/bilinged/CRPart154.html>). First, parents need the information about CR Part 154 and Infante-Green pointed out that

we, as bilingual educators, are accountable for sharing that information. Secondly, she highlighted that the focus is on access to multilingual services for our students and that bilingual education is the default program model for English language learners (ELLs)/bilingual learners.

Updates shared included the supports that the NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages either had available or were preparing to become available as of the NYSABE Conference. Available immediately, Infante-Green noted, is the legal team in her office, which is a new development. In addition, the materials to support the 2015 changes in the NYSESLAT were on the way as were math modules in 5 languages (expected to be available April 2015).

VITAL REMINDERS AND ENCOURAGEMENT

As a reminder to educators working directly with community members each day, Infante-Green stressed that parents need to be the ones making decisions about their children's education. As a part of this focus on the importance of parents, she also confirmed what we know about how the inclusion of home language arts in our programs is a foundation of literacy. She added that supplement-oriented approaches are not the direction we are heading. Similarly, we're not talking about closing bilingual programs in the state of New York.

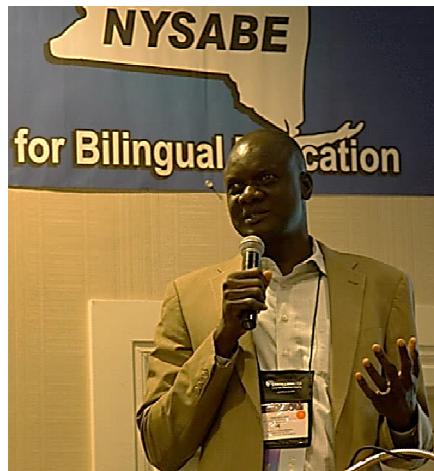
Finally, as words of encouragement, the Associate Commissioner reminded the crowd that as we focus on reaching out to the par-

ents we serve to share in decision-making processes, we are also reaching out to each other. We are parents, too! Our own children go through the very educational programs that we create. As a parent of a public school student herself, Infante-Green reminds us that our work is both urgent and personal. Specifically, learning the ins and outs of CR Part 154 is no small matter. It is essential that we know what we're talking about. And even beyond that, if in some situations we find that parents or teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners are being left out of conversations or decisions, Infante-Green urged us to call the NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (contact: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/>) to solicit their legal support. In her concluding remarks of the first general session of the NYSABE 2015 Conference, Infante-Green called on us to remember that we are united. She pointed out that as teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners we have a role of leadership in our communities. This is especially true, says Infante-Green, as we remain true to our shared value of bilingualism and as the state of New York increases the number of bilingual programs serving our communities.



"Struggle and Success Come as a Package": John Bul Dau, The John Dau Foundation

By Dr. Immaculee Harushimana, African Languages Delegate



On the morning of April 12, 2015, I had the honor of meeting and introducing Mr. John Bul Dau, the first keynote speaker at the 38th Annual Conference of the NYS Association for Bilingual Education. Mr. Dau, who started his career in the U.S. as the former leader of a group of boys from South Sudan, commonly known as "the lost boys of Sudan," is now founder and CEO of four foundations, including *The John Dau Foundation* and *The South Sudan Institute*. To say the least, Mr. John Dau's life story of struggle, resiliency and triumph moved the entire audience, many of whom proceeded to hug him and offer him words of comfort.

Many of the life challenges encountered by Mr. Dau were shared, including how at the age of 12, full of life and happy to be a village boy; his innocent life abruptly came to an end when his village was suddenly attacked by the government army. With no provisions and no chance to go

back home, he had to run for his life while the rest of the family did the same. For four days, he and 26 other boys, only four of whom survived, walked miles and miles without finding any water to drink. To stay alive they had to do the unthinkable - including drinking their own urine. He witnessed some of his companions die of hunger and others being eaten by crocodiles during a risky river crossing, to the point that he and the survivors thought that *God had grown tired of them*.



Most likely, members of the audience who had come to the United States as immigrants or refugees could relate to Dau's nostalgic references to his good life before the war, as a young boy, when he used to live peacefully in his village, taking the cattle to graze and enjoying drinking fresh, warm milk extracted straight from the mother cow.

In connection with the theme of education and its challenges, particularly for those learning in a language other than their own, Mr. Dau delivered a message of hope to a very attentive audience. With a good dose of humor at times, Mr. Dau shared how his first exposure to education took place in the most difficult circumstances, in a Kenyan refugee camp. At seventeen years of age, with very little support, and with no prior education whatsoever, Mr. Dau was introduced to formal education. His first classroom was *the shade of a*

tree, with his finger serving as a pen and the sand as his notebook. He treasured the day representatives from the Lutheran World Organization donated notebooks and pencils to them. Despite the difficult conditions under which he and his fellow refugees learned, they took education seriously. He did not mind being caned for giving a wrong answer as long as he was learning. For, he remarked, "Education was my father and my mother. Education protects you. Education gives you food."

Through hard work, defeating all odds, he succeeded in earning the prestigious Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education. Later on, when he was resettled in Syracuse, New York, he earned both an Associate's and a Bachelor's degree.

Throughout his address, Mr. Dau conveyed the message that struggle and success come as a package. I was so proud to be standing with a man, a very tall man who had managed to overcome invisibility, as he challenged the educators present to do the same for their students. My NYSABE will continue to be an umbrella of justice and equity, where immigrants of all backgrounds feel welcomed and protected.



The Immigration Strand 2015 NYSABE Conference

By Co-coordinators

*Carmina Makar, City College of NY,
CUNY, and*

*Patricia Velasco, Queens College,
CUNY*



The Immigration Strand at the 2015 NYSABE Annual Conference aimed at exploring salient issues around immigration, bilingualism and education that would be of interest to New York school teachers, families, and communities. The strand included the two panels outlined below:

Visual Journeys through Wordless Narratives: Supporting Immigrant Children's Literacy Using "The Arrival" in US and abroad.

This panel, facilitated by Dr. Carmen Martínez Roldán, synthesized the research conducted by an international research team including Carmen Martínez Roldán, Teachers College, Columbia University; Evelyn Arizpe, School of Education, University of Glasgow; and Teresa Colomer, Department of Language, Literature and Social Sciences Education, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. In their transnational collective research project, the authors used the picture book "*The Arrival*" with recently arrived immigrant children to explore the benefits of using wordless narratives, such as picture

books and graphic novels together with visual strategies, to support immigrant children's literary understandings and visual literacy. The panel was facilitated in Spanish and English and included a workshop model in which Dr. Martínez Roldán discussed scaffolding strategies that teachers could implement with wordless picture books

Indigenous Communities in the United States: Educational and Health Challenges

Statistics do not tell the story of immigration. People do. The challenges that the American society faces today are not new. Since its inception, the United States has been continually infused with the energy of newcomers. The purpose of this panel was to present an overview of the challenges in the realms of education and health faced by immigrants in this country, with particular focus on indigenous communities.

Gabriela Perez Báez, a researcher at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, presented her unique work focusing on Zapotec immigrants living in California and in San Lucas Quiavina in Oaxaca, Mexico. Her presentation, which showed how she had followed the subjects of her research, touched on important demonstrations of how language and immigration are conceptualized and transformed among both the immigrants who travel between the United States and Mexico, and those who remain in one location.

Alysha Galvez is an Associate Professor at Lehman College, CUNY and the former Director of the CUNY Mexican Studies Institute.

Her presentation covered aspects related to reaching out to undocumented Mexican students who may qualify and apply for financial support and the challenges that current immigration laws entail in the process.

Rebeca Madrigal, a first grade teacher at Dos Puentes Dual Language School, focused her discussion around her experiences with Mixteco-Mexican parents. Mixtecos are an Indigenous group from Mexico who have settled in large numbers in New York. Rebeca discussed their commitment and the educational expectations Mixtecos have for their children.

Esperanza Tuñon, a researcher at the Colegio de la Frontera Sur, Chiapas, México, was not able to attend the panel personally but she conducted her presentation via Skype, with the assistance of her colleagues, Alysha Galvez and Carmina Makar. Esperanza's presentation described the changes and consequences of eating patterns among Indigenous immigrants. Preliminary research shows that diabetes and obesity are prevalent within the Indigenous population living in NY, and that these characteristics are not just the result of changing eating patterns but of genetic predispositions as well.

All presenters emphasized how the human potential of groups and individuals is fueled by education and health.

Parent & Family Strand

By Co-Chairpersons

Maria Kot, Parent-at-Large and Eva García, Spanish Language Delegate



On March 12th, 2015 approximately 200 parents from across New York State gathered at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, NY to attend the Parent/Family Strand at the NYSABE annual conference. This year's conference theme "Building Bridges: Bilingual Education Across Borders," offered the appropriate forum for parents to reflect upon the importance of learning about current trends, policies, and practices as well as statewide initiatives affecting the implementation of language programs for their children. The Parent/Family committee was charged with the responsibility of connecting parents to multiple resources and supports in order to generate a deep understanding of current best practices in bilingual education. Parents arrived with much enthusiasm and were greeted by dedicated volunteers and the diligent coordinating team who ensured that parents experienced a warm welcome and received much needed information through translated materials and Parent/Family workshops.

At the opening session, parents witnessed the welcoming remarks from NYSABE President Dr. Tatyana Kleyn,

and greetings from Angélica Infante-Green, Associate Commissioner, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, NYSED. Ms. Infante-Green articulated her ongoing and profound commitment to ELLs/bilingual learners and stated that we are all responsible for their academic success and socio-emotional development. "These goals must be at the forefront of every educational initiative," she said. "We have made many strides to ensure that the needs of ELLs are addressed, and New York State is powerfully moving in the right direction," she added.

As planned, the conference highlighted geo-political borders as they relate to issues of immigration and the education of immigrant youth and their families. A riveting keynote address was made by John Bul Dau, founder of *The Lost Boys Foundation of New York*. His life story resonated among the parents when he spoke of the struggles many first generation immigrants face as they adjust to life in a new country. Parents were able to connect to his experience and clearly expressed how they understood the challenges faced when arriving in a new country and having to overcome enormous difficulties to achieve their dreams.

Followed by the moving story of John Bul Dau, María-Angélica Meyer, NYSABE Past President, presented the Parent of the Year Award to José González for his outstanding contributions and dedication to his school and community in District 9, New York City. The NYSABE Parent of the Year Award recognizes the outstanding service of parents who, as role models in their communities, exemplify courageous advocacy and diligent work to educate other parents of ELLs/bilingual learners. In this

regard, NYSABE acknowledged the exemplary work of José González.

The general session was followed by breakout sessions planned to address the specific needs of parents. Topics presented included: *What Families Should Know, Part 154 Regulations and ELL Students, Strategies to Support Your Child Meet the Common Core Learning Standards, How to Help Your Child Prepare for College, Raising Children With Disabilities, Latino Immigrant Youth and Interrupted Schooling: Dropouts, Dreamers and Alternative Pathways to College, and Parents' Rights and Responsibilities*. The International Luncheon included the presentation of "I Learn America," a documentary directed, produced, and discussed by Ms. Gitte Peng that focused on the role of bilingual education in the achievement of immigrant students. During the luncheon parents were also treated to an immigration panel discussion moderated by Dr. Claire Sylvan, NYSABE Delegate-at-Large and Dr. Marguerite Lukes, NYSABE Second Vice-President. Members of the panel offered educators and parents valuable instructional strategies and a variety of support practices that aim at ensuring the academic achievement and socio-emotional development of immigrant students.

Complementary and important materials, in a variety of languages, were distributed throughout the day by the following organizations: NYC Immigration Coalition, NY Higher Education Services Corporation, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, The Committee

for Hispanic Children and Families, Advocates for Children, College for Every Student, The US Federal Government, and The Hispanic Scholarship Fund. The resources provided by these organizations will help parents make informed decisions about their children's education.

Parents attending the parent/family strand expressed their appreciation for Dr. Tatyana Kleyn's vision to include them in all the general sessions where they joined educators in discussing critical educational issues. Parents also demonstrated their interest and enthusiasm in participating in the NYSABE Parent Leadership and Advocacy Committee (PLAC). As discussed in the 2012 NYSABE Advocacy Agenda, the goals of the PLAC are to develop leadership skills among parents and provide them with critical information so they can participate in the decision-making process in their school communities, local school districts, and statewide initiatives and policies.

In summary, the Parent/Family Strand at the 2015 annual conference provided opportunities for reflection, connections, networking, and deep discussions related to the education of ELLs/bilingual learners in New York State's diverse communities



Bridging Differences, Connecting Lives: Two Teacher Educators on the Joys of Border Crossing Sonia Nieto and Keisha Green By Suzette Malone, Region III Delegate



On Saturday, March 13th, 2015, following the day's theme, *Building Bridges: Connections Across Generational Borders*, Sonia Nieto and Keisha Green addressed the audience during the morning's major session. These two dynamic, multi-talented researchers and teacher educators who embody this year's metaphor of "bridging," spoke on how their professional relationship crosses bridges of generations, academic fields, and even professional endeavors. They discussed the timelines of their lives, influential people and crucial moments, situations and challenges that have shaped them into the people they have become. Their message to us was to come down out of our silos and create relationships where we would least suspect. "We should cross bridges back and forth, opening our hearts and minds," they said.

Sonia, whose first publication was *Affirming Diversity* in 1992, has long been a staunch advocate for bilingual education. She grew up in Brooklyn, NY, and taught at the

first bilingual school in the northeast: PS 25, Bronx, NY. She learned about activism at Brooklyn College where she began crossing bridges and challenging barriers on behalf of ELLs/bilingual learners. She continues to do so to this day, in her work and life at UMass.

Keisha focused her work mainly on the Afro-American population as an undergraduate. It was in this work that she noticed the low representation of Afro-American authors in the texts used at the university. Thus, she began

her lifetime work of also crossing bridges and challenging barriers so the contributions of diverse populations can be acknowledged and included across college campuses. Keisha's work to "humanize the academia" is an example of what brings Sonia and Keisha together. This concept can be "bridged" into all fields of study.

Although they may differ in their focus, Sonia and Keisha share their concern for linguistic justice and a belief in public education. These two strong, open-minded women have left us with the challenge to cross borders and continue to challenge barriers that prevent the academic achievement of students from linguistic and culturally diverse backgrounds.



The International Luncheon at NYSABE's Conference: A Teacher's Perspective

By Miriam Net, Teacher



I love coming to the NYSABE annual conference because I get reenergized and inspired. New and veteran educators alike are validated as they reaffirm their commitment to our bilingual education mission. This year's International Luncheon was no different. The well-attended and successful luncheon kicked off with our president Dr. Tatyana Kleyn introducing the White Plains' Superintendent of Public Schools, Timothy Conners, who gave everyone a warm welcome! Mr. Conners acknowledged the changes in the way children are learning languages today and how we all need to work together for the betterment of our NYS schools. He also emphasized White Plains' commitment to bilingualism by highlighting their dual language schools from kindergarten all the way to high school.

The luncheon continued with Dr. Claire E. Sylvan, NYSABE Delegate-at-Large, and Dr. Marguerite Lukes, NYSABE Second Vice-President, presenting Gitte Peng, a filmmaker and advocate for young immigrants. Ms. Peng introduced her documentary *I Learn America* which depicts her research in the International High School at Lafayette in Bensonhurst, a Brooklyn public high school dedicated to newly arrived immigrants from all over the world. Through a few clips, the audience got to experience the

journey of two young immigrant students, Sing and Brandon, as they face the struggles of learning a new language, a new culture, a new learning environment, and a new family life. *I Learn America* reminds us that the immigration story does not end once children arrive in the United States. Everyone in the audience was left wanting to watch more of *I Learn America* to find out what happens to the protagonists at the end of the documentary. Do they get to create the future they wanted in their new country?



Last but certainly not least, the Immigration Panel Discussion was underway. The panelists included Ibrahim Diallo, financial services professional; Sara Said, teacher at Claremont International High School; Osbani García, teacher at Claremont International High School; Tania Romero, a bilingual social worker; and Juan Villar, principal at Gregorio Luperón High School for Science and Mathematics. Dr. Claire E. Sylvan and Dr. Marguerite Lukes, who did a wonderful job continuing the conversation among the principal, social worker, teachers and supporters of bilingual education and the Dream Act, moderated the panel. The panelists presented their diverse perspectives in working with young immigrants and their own experiences in being immigrants themselves. They all echoed the sentiment that what marked their school experience more than anything else was that teachers saw their potential and

made them believe in themselves. What makes a positive school experience for all English language learners is feeling safe within an environment of acceptance and encouragement. The panelists reminded us that we need to serve children as a whole, not just their brains, and take into consideration the role of the family and the community in the lives of the students. As educators of immigrants, we all need to collaborate and create a network of support for the student and his/her family. We need to listen to their individual stories, nurture their voices, develop their talents, and help them become leaders inside their communities. Principal Villar challenged everyone in the audience to "go out today and change one student's life".

The International Luncheon came to its conclusion with David Cabrera-Villafaña, NYSABE past president, presenting Gloria Barrera with the 2015 Bilingual Instructional Assistant of the Year Award. "Ms. Barrera goes above and beyond her duties as she always thinks of all students first. She is a true inspiration for all educators," he said.

Thank you to everyone who participated in making this luncheon a tremendous success!



Bilingualism for All: Transgressing Educational Borders - Ofelia García's Keynote Address

By Kate Menken, Region II Delegate



On Friday, March 13th, 2015, at the NYSABE conference, Professor Ofelia García, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, conducted the morning keynote address to a fully packed ballroom of conference attendees. Keeping in line with the theme of this year's conference, her presentation was entitled "Bilingualism for All: Transgressing Educational Borders" during which Professor García's remarks offered an invitation to NYSABE members to engage in intellectual border crossing by challenging some of the more traditional assumptions inherent in bilingual education programs in schools today.

Professor García began by acknowledging many of the great early advocates for bilingual education, and then focused on the work and influence of her own teacher, the renowned bilingual education scholar and activist Professor Joshua Fishman, who had passed away just 12 days before García's NYSABE keynote address. García noted how Fishman had worked simultaneously as an advocate for and critic of bilin-

gual education in order to improve it, something García does in her own work, as elaborated upon later in her address. While advocating to gather testimonies for the original *Bilingual Education Act*, García described how Fishman had also begun transgressing early on by arguing that the policy was for "Anglification" rather than bilingualism, and contesting the transitional nature of the law's orientation towards bilingual education. She explained how Fishman had questioned the duality embedded in program design by arguing that "[a] fully balanced bilingual speech community seems to be a theoretical impossibility" and that rather than setting imaginary linguistic goals, bilingual education should "develop language practices and behavior patterns that are traditionally meaningful" to minoritized students.

Fishman's emphasis on actual language practices and children's voices has influenced García's recent work, and specifically her critiques of how bilingual education models aim to develop fully balanced bilinguals, which she argued is a form of "social engineering" that is not grounded in the actual language practices of bilingual children. Maintaining instead that the way a bilingual child experiences his/her languages is more integrated, García shared her work as Co-Principal Investigator of the City University of New York – New York State Initiative for Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY-NYSIEB) and described the project's main principles, (1) bilingualism as a resource in instruction, and (2) cultivating a school wide ecology of

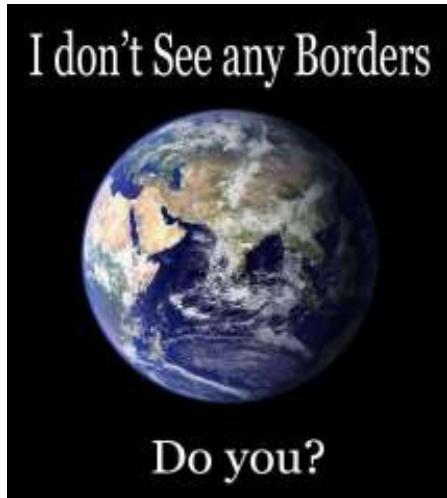
multilingualism.

García provided five real cases of linguistic flexibility already occurring in classrooms serving bilingual children in New York State, or what she terms translanguaging, as documented in a forthcoming book she has co-edited. The first case shares a dual language bilingual education classroom in which children are allowed to navigate an English text through a strategy of "getting the gist" in English or Spanish. The second case goes into an 11th grade English as a second language classroom where translanguaging is permitted in classroom interaction to allow students self-expression. The third case involves students using bilingual cognates in a pre-reading activity in order to negotiate Greek mythology. The fourth case was gathered from an 8th grade transitional bilingual education classroom in which the teacher uses translanguaging strategies in instruction and offers students affordances by allowing written work in both English and Spanish together. The fifth case comes from an 8th grade English language arts/English as a second language class in which the students, who come from 21 countries, sit with peers who share their home language and use digital translators and their full linguistic repertoire to make meaning of a lesson from the Engage NY Curriculum.

García concluded her keynote by suggesting that bilingual education program models might be better suited for student populations of the past, but how increasing language contact and international mobility have resulted in extreme



linguistic diversity in schools that must be accounted for in programs of today. Accordingly, she suggested that we offer spaces for linguistic flexibility in education and permit the translanguaging practices that are already occurring, while harnessing them in thoughtful ways. Professor García suggested that doing so is central to “bilingual education for a future that will include all of our students.”



<https://occupycentral.wordpress.com/signs/occupy-no-borders-one-world-one-family/>

***“What do you
need to do
in your own work
to cross borders
or build bridges?
Transgress!
Advocate!”***

-Dr. Kate Menken

NYSABE Leadership Luncheon
By Zoila Tazi
Region III/Mid-Hudson Delegate



The NYSABE Leadership Luncheon is our annual gathering of key leaders in the educational community who influence policy but also serve to inspire us and rally our efforts in support of bilingual education. The 2015 conference gathered important allies in this work: Thomas Roach, Mayor of White Plains, New York; Carmen Farina, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education; and Betty Rosa, New York State Regent. Highlights of their talk are listed below.

Thomas Roach

The Mayor of White Plains knows, from experience, that there are genuine benefits to garner from bilingual education. He elected to have his own children participate in the school district’s Dual Language Bilingual Education program. As he welcomed NYSABE to his city, he applauded the effort to promote bilingualism which represents a social and cultural asset in a modern world.

Carmen Farina

Chancellor Farina recounted her own experience as a young student entering school without speaking English – for the majority of her first school year, the teacher did not speak to her directly because “she does not respond to the American name I have

given her." This experience still fuels her passion for the work to be done now. She listed a few reminders to those of us advocating for bilingual education:

- ◆ Be mindful to provide bilingual education programs in middle and high school.
- ◆ Create dual language programs that target common languages – Japanese, Hebrew, Arabic, Haitian Creole, as well as Spanish.
- ◆ Be aware that the fastest growing program, International Baccalaureate, has become momentous because of its foreign language requirements.

Forever a teacher, Chancellor Fariña concluded with a few homework assignments for all of us:

- ◆ Work to build a workforce with more qualified bilingual teachers;
- ◆ Continue your advocacy work – join forces on behalf of children;
- ◆ Devise a quick path toward teacher certification – the need is urgent.

Finally, Chancellor Fariña reminded us that the whole nation is watching. There are hopeful advocates in other states eagerly attuned to what happens in New York City because they know, "If they can do it in NYC, we can do it too."

Regent Betty A. Rosa



In her forthright style, Regent Rosa linked feminism to the efforts for bilingual education. "Susana is not in the kitchen anymore!" Her comment

hearkened back to the covert sexism in some of the passages that Spanish language learners had to memorize, "*Susana está en la cocina.*" Regent Rosa reminded us that children are the architects of tomorrow and if we are to support them, we need to engage parents, communities, teachers, and administrators – everyone, not just one group. Like Fariña, Regent Rosa exhorted us to "be the educational leaders of our [New York's] enterprise!"

After the energizing greetings from Mayor Roach, Chancellor Fariña, and Regent Rosa, the Leadership Luncheon featured a panel of educators, moderated by Dr. Kate Menken and Dr. Maite Sánchez.

Leadership Panel: Building Bridges Across Fields



The panel addressed the topic of "Building Bridges" as a metaphor for both inter-disciplinary and transformative work. The panel included Bridgit Claire Bye-Dyster, a school administrator; Jackie Gilmore, a ninth grade ELA teacher; and Jan Valle, a professor from City College. Each panelist offered unique insights to the work of promoting bilingual education.

Bridgit Claire Bye-Dyster – teacher collaboration is at the heart of interdisciplinary work. Teachers need to collaborate on creating units of study (content knowledge) and on building bilingual language skills.

Jackie Gilmore – African American students are emergent bilinguals too. They receive no language supports and yet they utilize a very different language at home, "African American English" (AAE). Rather than disregard this difference, she engages her students in comparative analyses that both validates their home language and promotes learning standard English.

Jan Valle – As a professor of childhood education, Dr. Valle had minimal experience with bilingual approaches. Over the course of a semester she and her colleague, Dr. Tatyana Kleyn, charted their insights on how they might "build bridges" into each other's certification areas. A new convert to bilingual education, Dr. Valle will join the advocacy efforts.

The panel concluded with a challenge from Dr. Kate Menken: "What do you need to do in your own work to cross borders or build bridges? Transgress! Advocate!"



Building Bridges Across Fields

By Dr. Heather Homonoff Woodley

New York educators and researchers collaborated around the unique intersections of bilingual education and other academic fields, including special education, general education, and foreign language education, to present *Building Bridges Across Fields*, a strand that aimed at demonstrating effective collaboration among educators from different fields to support the achievement of ELLs/bilingual learners. Each of the strand's three sessions shared research and classroom practice highlighting the ways multilingual learning is present and thriving in diverse educational settings, as well as the implications for further research, policy, and pedagogical change.

In *Building Bridges Across Fields: Bilingual and Foreign Language Education*, a panel of teacher educators and researchers focused on the ways bilingual and foreign language education classroom practice can both learn from each other and share meaningful strategies for emergent bilinguals of all language backgrounds. Miriam Eisenstein-Ebsworth, PhD., NYU Steinhardt, Multilingual Multicultural Studies, and Timothy John Ebsworth, PhD., The College of New Rochelle, Graduate School, Multilingual Multicultural Education, explored contrasts in pragmatic strategies and semantic formulas across languages and cultures as well as norms and values they may represent. They shared strategies for educators in foreign language and bilingual classrooms to facilitate lessons and conversations that focus on issues of intercultural pragmatics. Robin Harvey, Urban Master Teacher, NYU Steinhardt, Multilingual Multicultural Studies, added a unique focus to this panel by looking at the links between foreign and bilingual education in Chi-

nese dual language classrooms. She shared research and practical strategies for Chinese language teaching within a meaningful cultural context, especially considering the unique needs of heritage language speakers in foreign language classrooms.

Building Bridges Across Fields: Bilingual and Special Education was a valuable opportunity to hear from the front lines of teaching in the NYC Department of Education as two public school teachers shared pedagogical and community-based tools to help emergent bilinguals with diverse IEPs. Evelyn Bohan, kindergarten bilingual special education teacher at Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning School in Manhattan, addressed the growing concerns of parents and families with a bilingual special education learner. Her presentation offered educators practical strategies of how to address these concerns in order to promote bilingual education for students with disabilities, and ways to encourage literacy development in non-English speaking households. Adding to this session was Natalie Madison, a bilingual special education teacher at P.S. 5 in Manhattan. With vivid snapshots of her bilingual special education classroom, Natalie shared ways to build student independence and confidence in reading through learning stations. She highlighted both the struggles and accomplishments of various literacy learning stations in a bilingual 12:1 class that were implemented in order to build student independence and increased reading comprehension with the emergent bilinguals.

The final session of the strand, *Building Bridges Across Fields: Bilingual and General Education*, brought together three presentations exploring different perspectives of multilingual learning and learners in traditional

ESL tracks where bilingual education practices were present as well.

Immaculee Harushimana, Ph.D., Lehman College, CUNY, English Education & TESOL, explored ways in which African students who speak low-incidence home languages are provided with bilingual learning experiences regardless of their general educational settings. This included both attention to linguistic diversity and the specific social-emotional needs of these students, many of whom include students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) or refugee students. In the second portion of the session, Carolyn Strom, Ph.D., NYU Steinhardt, Teaching & Learning, analyzed examples from her research that highlight the ways emergent bilinguals are building metalinguistic awareness through individualized literacy instruction. She shared valuable tools for educators who work with struggling bilingual readers taking into account language diversity and teaching through individualized differentiation.

In the final piece of this session, Heather H. Woodley, Ph.D., NYU Steinhardt, Multilingual Multicultural Studies, and Andy Brown, a 5th grade teacher at P.S. 153 in Queens, explored the multilingual translanguaging occurring in Andy's classroom, which includes six home languages amongst the emergent bilinguals. Snapshots from everyday practice that illustrate a vibrant multilingual ecology and consistent home language use of all students in the learning process were shared. Presenters also discussed practical strategies for teachers of all language backgrounds to utilize students' linguistic diversity in meaningful ways for learning, drawing upon student and teacher interviews and meaning-making of this powerful multilingual learning space that fosters cooperative learning and empowers students as language experts.

NYSABE 2015 CONFERENCE AWARDEES



Gloria Barrera
Bilingual Instructional Assistant of the Year



Rebeca Madrigal
Dr. Ximena E. Zate Teacher of the Year Award



John Spridakis
Bilingual Administrator of the Year



Ninaj Raoul
Dr. Antonia Pantoja Advocacy Award



Connie Attanasio
Gladys Correa Memorial Award



José González
Bilingual Parent of the Year



Debra Hinckley-Sugg
Bilingual Support Personnel Award

2015 NYSABE Students Essay and Art Award Luncheon *By Margarita González-Martínez, NYSABE Past President*

One of the main goals of NYSABE's annual conference is to acknowledge the achievement of students. For this reason, the conference includes the Students Award Luncheon where the winners of the Bilingual Essay and the Nivia Zavala Art contests are recognized.

Once again, this year, the Student Awards Luncheon provided the appropriate forum to highlight our students' remarkable biliteracy skills and art talent. The event conveners and co-chairpersons of the Student Awards Committee, Past Presidents Wilda Ramos and Heriberto Galarza, praised the work of all contest participants and the outstanding support of their teachers, parents, and school administrators. As they presented the awards to the winners of both contests in the three categories, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grades, Ms. Ramos and Mr. Galarza explained the challenge of selecting the winners among numerous excellent entries.

All the winners received a certificate of achievement and a monetary incentive. In addition, the first place winners received a gold medallion, the second place winners received a silver medallion, and the third place winners received a bronze medallion. Furthermore, the students' works of art were displayed during the luncheon and readings of the essays by the award winners were part of the luncheon's program.

NYSABE would like to thank all participants as well as their parents, families, and educators for their support, dedication and commitment to quality education, as demonstrated by the contest entries. Congratulations to the co-chairpersons of the Student Awards Committee and members of their team for such an outstanding job in selecting the winners!

NYSABE 2015 STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST AWARD WINNERS

GRADES 3 - 5

1st Place Winner

Amy Luis - 5th Grade
Drexel Avenue School

2nd Place Winner

Anthony Velásquez - 5th Grade
Drexel Avenue School

3rd Place Winner

Kwabena Boateng - 5th Grade
Roosevelt School

GRADES 6 - 8

1st Place Winner

Briana Pabón - 6th Grade
Eugenio María de Hostos Charter School

2nd Place Winner

Joiny De León - 6th Grade
Eugenio María de Hostos Micro Society School

3rd Place Winner

Jennifer Herberth - 6th Grade
Eugenio María de Hostos Micro Society School

GRADES 9 - 12

1st Place Winner

Jhon Carrera - 12th
Brentwood High School

2nd Place Winner

Santos Galeas Castillo - 10th Grade
Westbury High School

3rd Place Winner

Lensa Romage - 9th Grade
Westbury High School

NYSABE 2015 DR. NIVIA ZAVALA ART CONTEST AWARD WINNERS

GRADES 3 - 5

1st Place Winner

"From Puerto Rico to America"
Marilyn Clausell - 4th Grade
North Street School

2nd Place Winner

Allison Waldron - 4th Grade
North Street School

3rd Place Winner

Abdiel Ubiles Maldonado - 4th Grade
North Street School

GRADES 6 - 8

1st Place Winner

"Freedom"
Javier Cotto Amaro - 6th Grade
Bilingual Center #33

2nd Place Winner

"Libertad para todos"
Joshua Rivera Camacho - 6th Grade
Bilingual Center #33

3rd Place Winner

"Oportunidad"
Christopher Encarnación Calderón
6th Grade, Bilingual Center #33

GRADES 9 - 12

1st Place Winner

"Liberty for All"
Arnold Perdomo - 10th Grade
Freeport High School

2nd Place Winner

"Our Journey"
Ana Salazar Alvarado - 9th Grade
Freeport High School

3rd Place Winner

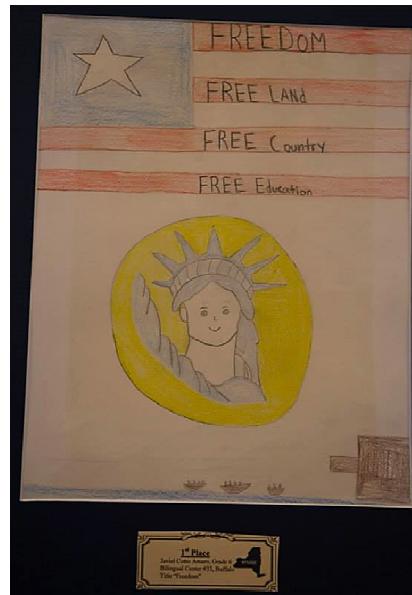
"New Life"
Misael Gutiérrez Mejía - 9th Grade
Freeport High School

FIRST PLACE

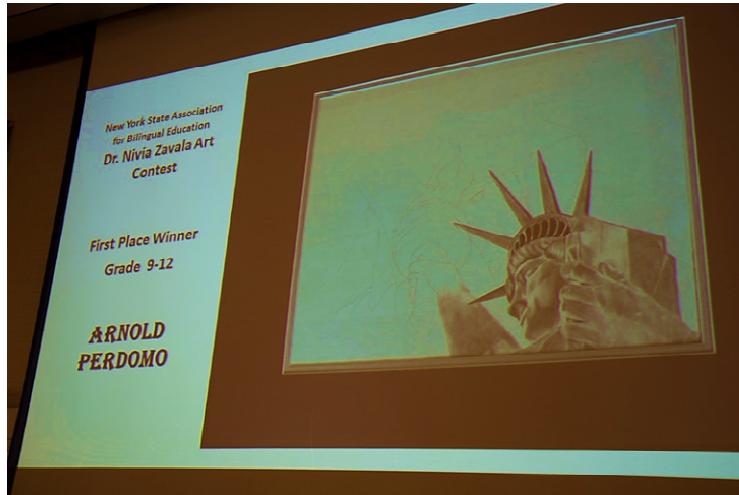
Grades 3-5

"From Puerto Rico to America"**FIRST PLACE**

Grades 6-8

"Freedom"**FIRST PLACE**

Grades 9-12

"Liberty for All"

Education Policy

By Janet Quiñones Eatman
NYSABE Delegate, Region IV/Central



On Friday, March 7th, NYSABE presented a highlighted session on Education Policy which was moderated by Dr. Claire E. Sylvan, Executive Director of Internationals Network for Public Schools, NYSABE Delegate-at-Large and Chairperson of the Advocacy Committee. The panel was comprised of Regent Betty A. Rosa, Assemblywoman Shelley Mayor, Democratic member representing Assembly District 90, which includes the city of Yonkers, and Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo, Chairperson of the 85th Assembly District and Chairperson of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force.

The audience had an opportunity to exchange ideas and perspectives and ask the difficult questions regarding the education of English language learners (ELLs) in New York State. The meeting was initiated by Regent Rosa who outlined a number of critical issues that require our continued attention, including:

- ◊ lobbying efforts,,
- ◊ Universal Pre-K for young bilingual children,
- ◊ the campaign for fiscal and educational equity,
- ◊ the passing of the Dream Act,
- ◊ the assessment of recently arrived ELLs,

- ◊ changes in teacher evaluation policies and their implications for our neediest participants, and
- ◊ the refining of the assessment of ELLs by looking at the academic and linguistic entry points of each child to more accurately determine their progress.

Regent Rosa presented her opposition to the fact that the media often expresses the dearth in Latinos with the necessary preparation for college success. Rosa's reply is, "Don't blame the victim! The percentage of Latinos without advanced high school degrees is not necessarily their fault. The high schools where most Latinos are enrolled in are not offering the coursework that leads to a diploma." Consequently, we need to develop alternative tracks for youth that do not finish high school or are not able to attend the college of their choice.

"Conversations around these "big ticket items" is critical," expressed Assemblyman Marcos. Granting more local control to school districts to funnel monies to the neediest schools directly is imperative. A concern raised by several audience members referred to the inefficient way that monies are currently being distributed among schools. They are not distributed in a way that makes sense nor in a timely manner. Educators and administrators expressed the fact that the funds are needed at the start of the academic year, not at the end. Districts receive their funding so late into the year that there is a scramble to spend it or lose it.

Assemblywoman Mayor added, "Do not just throw money at the problem. Target specific schools and design the programming that they need." Her district is composed of 70% Latino with 8 failing schools. Assemblyman Mayor also mentioned the importance of addressing the needs of the whole child. This is impossible to do when, in Yonkers for instance, there is an average of 1 counselor per 700 students. One way of bridging the gap could be to provide rich afterschool programs for every child.



On a positive note, the panel agreed that there is greater ethnic and gender diversity on the board of Regents. There are now 9 women, including the first Asian member of the board, six former superintendents, and seven members of color. The changes in APPR are being debated vigorously and with the changed composition, starting in the April meeting, there is expected to be even more opposition to how APPR is determined in NYS.

The panelists also agreed that poverty is not an excuse but a reality. It has to be part of the story or the story is incomplete.

Regent Rosa expressed how Yonkers now has similar issues as those that have been faced by the Bronx for decades. She went on to

say that now we have another opportunity to create a new narrative; we should be proud of the progress that has been made. Regent Rosa stated, "Part 154 happened as a result of many in this room sitting around the table and debating the issues on behalf of our students." For the first time in the history of NYC public schools, Chancellor Carmen Farina has appointed a Deputy Chancellor of the Department of English Language Learners and Student Support (DELLSS), Milady Baez. The NYC DOE's DELLSS is strategic in meeting the needs of approximately 140,000 ELLs in schools across the five boroughs of New York City.

A lively conversation about Common Core ensued, with many concerns raised by participants about how it is being implemented for English language learners. The panelists agreed that there is "push back" from suburban districts, particularly in terms of the tests. As Regent Rosa stated, *"They are rejecting rejection. We've accepted rejection for too long. We've silently accepted rejection and internalized it. It is time to say no and come to the table. Let your voice be heard. Be courageous."*

Assemblymen Mayor and Marcos advised members of the audience at this crucial time of budget appropriations, as well as throughout the year, to be creative and partner with your local organizations to host visits from your Senator and local legislative bodies. Have them visit schools and see first hand how their decisions affect teachers as well as students.

Building Bridges Across Generations

By Dr. Claire Sylvan,
NYSABE Delegate-at-Large



What an inspiring session! The panel included important advocates, practitioners and researchers from across the generations. Expertly chaired by Cecilia Espinoza, Associate Professor at Lehman College, the participants included Carmen Dinos, bilingual education pioneer recognized as the "Mother of Bilingual Education" in New York City; Fabrice Jaumont, Education Attaché, Office of the French Embassy in NYC; Luis Reyes, Director of Education Programs, Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College; Maria Victoria Rodrigues, Associate Professor at Lehman College; and Ron Woo, Deputy Director, Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network, New York State Education Department.

Each member of the panel provided the audience with a vivid description of their work for bilingual education. Carmen Dinos, noting that she is now 91½ years old, described her life as an educator, which began as a teacher in Puerto Rico. Carmen obtained her master's degree, after studying with Charles Fries, a pioneer in teaching English to speakers

of other languages. Carmen returned to Puerto Rico to supervise the teaching of English, but because of certification issues, she could not teach. During this time, Carmen worked in business, lived in Europe, and worked for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In order to get the NYC Board of Education to open programs for Puerto Rican students, Carmen and others worked together with a variety of entities, including Jewish organizations and civil rights groups.

Some other key figures in the struggles during that time were Joe Monserrat and Isiah Robinson, both of whom served as Presidents of the NYC Board of Education during periods of great change and struggle. Carmen ended her remarks by saying, "We worked like hell. We were out there in the streets. Our students and our communities were fighting for this."

Fabrice Jaumont followed with discussion of his work to develop French bilingual programs. Having worked as a principal in Boston, Fabrice came to NYC and began to work with parents to develop, in 2007, the first public school French-English dual language program in Carroll Gardens. Fabrice continues to work to open more such programs in more public schools, and wrote a roadmap to creating dual language programs; so far, there are 12 NYC public schools with these programs serving 1300 students about ½ of whom are Francophone students from Europe, Africa and the Caribbean. In closing, Fabrice said, "Bilingualism should be for everybody."



Luis Reyes, the next panelist, noted that he followed the leadership of Antonia Pantoja and recommended the audience learn more about her by reading her "Memoirs of a Visionary" in which Antonia recounts her work as a leader for civil rights, and a founder of many Puerto Rican organizations, including Aspira. "Based on a sense of righting what is wrong." Luis also was active in the civil rights movement. During this time period, in 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed that English language learners need specialized support in the historic Lau v. Nichols case. Also in 1974 in a NYC case, Luis represented parents who sued the Board of Education, resulting in a Consent Decree overseen by Judge Frankel, which represented a political compromise. Luis noted that this compromise lacked an asset-based approach to bilingual education. Frank Bonilla and Pedro Pedraza were also key figures in these struggles. Luis noted that "bilingualism is part of our generational work. We have to get beyond legislation....to build an asset based approach....Civil rights are necessary, but not sufficient."

Another perspective on bilingual education was shared by Maria Victoria Rodriguez. Maria came to the U.S. to work as a bilingual teacher in a transitional bilingual program and was supposed to teach students to

read in Spanish. But she was surprised to learn high achievement was defined as a high reading level in English, not in Spanish. Maria couldn't understand the context of the program, and eventually got a Master's Degree from City College where she learned the political, social and historical context of bilingual education. Maria is now working in the area of Bilingual Special education, and noting both the over-representation of bilingual students in special education and the importance of the home language in working with students with disabilities. Finally, Maria noted that "we still don't know how to differentiate between language issues and disabilities but things have changed. I don't have to waste time on why, now the question is how."

The final speaker, Ron Woo, expressed how honored he felt to be part of this panel, and how heartened he was to see all of the audience members. Ron noted the importance of influencing the new federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently known as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB). Ron commended New York State for taking the important step of establishing the Seal of Biliteracy, and pointed out the importance of building the necessary human resources to staff bilingual programs. Ron ended by stating, "We are not faceless and voiceless. We have unfinished business. There is more to come. We WILL have asset-based multilingual programs across the state."

In the remaining time, there was further discussion among the panelists, and among the audience, including Sonia Nieto who joined the conversation. One of the audience members remarked that the work is so hard, therefore, many people want to leave the field. Ron pointed out the importance of advocating by educating. Luis pointed out the need to network. Sonia Nieto added that a classroom teacher's day is already very complicated, and that it is important to "start where you are at." Sonia ended on a high note pointing out the changes occurring in New York City, including the development of 42 new bilingual programs and the appointment of the first Deputy Chancellor for English Language Learners.



Participants left invigorated by the intergenerational perspectives shared, and energized to continue to promote bilingual education in their work.

Tri-Regional Lau vs. Nichols Celebration in Rochester

By Region V Delegates

Rose Mary Villarrubia-Izzo and María Encarnación



On Saturday, February 28, 2015, in collaboration with the Rochester City School District's Department of ELLs, LOTE, and Bilingual Education, NYSABE held a tri-regional professional development event in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Lau vs. Nichols U.S. Supreme Court Decision. This 1974 landmark case granted students whose first language was other than English the right to equitable and meaningful educational services.

Region V/Rochester's Delegates, Rose Mary Villarrubia-Izzo and María Encarnación, were joined by Region IV/Central Delegate Janet Quiñones-Eatman and former delegate Ofelia Anamaría. Representing Region VI/Western New York were Regional Delegate and President-Elect Evelyn Arent, and past president Dr. Awilda Ramos-Zagarrigo.

The Rochester City School District's Department of ELL, LOTE and Bilingual Education was proud to have this great collaboration and partnership with NYSABE. Tracy Cretelle, Mariela Diaz, and Brendan Gallivan worked closely with us in coordinating and implementing the professional development component that addressed specific linguistic and learning needs as well as effective

instructional strategies for Burmese, Nepali, Somali, Sudanese, Arabic, and Spanish speaking students in Central and Western New York.

Following the presentation, Father Lawrence Tracy was presented an award from NYSABE which read: *On behalf of New York State Association for Bilingual Education, in Celebration of the Lau vs. Nichols 40th Anniversary, Father Lawrence Tracy was presented this award in honor of his visionary and inspiring leadership and dedication. His excellent work embodies the spirit and intent of the Lau vs. Nichols United States Supreme Court decision, providing access to meaningful and equitable education for ELLs/bilingual learners.*

part of Human Rights, and that has served for us as our own landmark case. Father Tracy has been part of the RCSD Bilingual Council that was established for parents and community members ever since and meets at the Rochester School District Office once a week to discuss the needs of our students with District top administrators. "The award could not have gone to a more deserving individual.", said Rose Mary Villarrubia-Izzo who has been working with Father Tracy for the last 31 years. "The only reason I have seen him miss a meeting is because he was hospitalized or conducting a funeral service. He is an incredible human being who has been, and continues to be, a voice for the Rochester Hispanic community," she reiterated.



It was with great pride that the award was presented to Father Lawrence Tracy as he was instrumental in Rochester having its own case filed with the Department of Human Civil Rights in the early 70's. Since 1973, Rochester has had a Memorandum of Agreement, that was signed by the Superintendent, Board of Education, and the De-

The celebratory morning event ended with a luncheon where a spirit of collaboration, collegiality, and professionalism were evident.

Bilingual Special Education Institute in Rochester, NY

By Margarita González-Martínez, NYSABE Past President and Wilfredo García, Midwest RSE-TASC Bilingual Special Education Specialist



After a long hiatus, the Bilingual Special Education Institute returned to Western New York. The Midwestern Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center (RSE-TASC) coordinated this event for members of the educational community to come together in the spirit of ensuring equity and access for all culturally and linguistically diverse students. NYSABE's Melodie Valenciano, Ofelia Anamaria , Maria Encarnación, Janet Quiñones-Eatman, President Elect Evelyn Arent, and Executive Director Nancy Villarreal De Adler were on hand to welcome nearly 300 educators and administrators from schools in and around Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse.

The institute's organizers, Margarita González-Martínez and Wilfredo García, recognized the demand for high quality professional development created by the unprecedented movement in policies and regulations associated with the education of English language learners (ELLs). This timely event brought together nationally recognized keynote speakers, representatives from the New York State Education Department, and local experts in the fields of special edu-

tion, English as a new language, and bilingual education to share their knowledge with participants. Angelica Infante-Green, Associate Commissioner for Bilingual Education and World Languages and Dr. Alexia Rodriguez Thompson, Bilingual Associate, Office of Special Education, NYSED, addressed some of the burning questions related to the recent amendments to Commissioner's Regulation Part 154. Participants were able to get a clearer understanding of the impetus behind the changes as well as some specific guidance on implementation.

Several breakout sessions focused on high quality research-based strategies for ELLs rooted in specially designed instruction for students with disabilities and the translanguaging work coming out of the CUNY-NYS Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals. Additionally, one of the most pressing needs addressed throughout the two day institute was the issue of assessing ELLs for special education eligibility.

ing assessments and multi-tiered systems of support, which consider the student's unique social, cultural, and language needs. Breakout sessions on authentic assessment and evaluation of ELLs provided practical strategies for participants to bring back to their schools.

To round out the institute, Dr. Pedro Noguera, Executive Director, Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, New York University, delivered a riveting talk on educational equity for all students in light of the high standards and test-based accountability movements that have swept the nation. He offered a framework that districts can follow for ensuring equity that rests upon child developmental theories grounded in holistic learning, the use of native language while acquiring a new language, principles of neuroscience and brain plasticity, and sociocultural factors that impact student growth and academic success.



Dr. Catherine Collier presented her framework for separating language difference from disability. Disproportionate numbers of ELLs in NYS continue to be classified with speech language impairment, specific learning disabilities, and intellectual impediments. She shared her work on adapt-

We hope to continue the tradition of providing high quality professional development opportunities to support the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in the Western and Central Regions of New York State.

Multilingual Learners in UPK: *Defining Focus and Direction* A Roundtable Discussion

By Zoila Tazi, Ph.D.,
NYSABE Delegate, Region III/Mid-Hudson

Across the state, and even the country, there is growing interest and support for preschool education. New York has seen an unprecedented expansion of Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) programs in the past few years that has captured public attention eager to see results for the tens of thousands of children entering these programs. NYSABE, advocating for the needs of the very youngest emergent bilinguals, developed a position statement in 2014 calling for bilingual education beginning at the Pre-Kindergarten level.

Any educational program or initiative requires our deliberate focus and sound rationale for instructional designs. In the case of UPK, many programs are newly created, often within a few months' time, in order to meet the public demand. Clearly, there is a need to offer support to early childhood educators in articulating the focus and direction the field should assume as UPK quickly expands. Once again NYSABE assumed a leadership role, this time by bringing together key stakeholders to articulate the challenges, opportunities, and best practices that would serve as a guiding focus for programming.

A formal collaboration between NYSABE and the NYS/NYC Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (NYS/NYC RBE-RN) at Fordham University led to the creation of a Roundtable event bringing together educators, policymakers, researchers, and community leaders in response to two overarching questions:

1. Given our limited conversations about the role of the home language in early learning, are we prepared to

meet the needs of our multilingual Pre-Kindergarten learners now and in the future?

2. What is our focus and direction in preparing to meet their needs?

Participants from a wide selection of practitioners, policymakers and other key stakeholders from the NYC, Long Island, and Westchester County areas, were invited to take part in the Roundtable which was held on June 5, 2015 at Fordham University. The Roundtable was organized as panel presentations and structured break-out discussions focused in 5 core areas in preschool education:

- ◊ Programming and instruction
- ◊ Leadership and policy
- ◊ Community partners
- ◊ Higher education and teacher preparation
- ◊ Research

Initiating the discussion, the New York State Associate Commissioner for Bilingual Education and World Languages, Angélica Infante-Green, delivered a "State of the Field" address. Following, each panelist introduced key topics (history, trends, emerging research, and new directions) in their area with a brief presentation. The audience then took part in break-out sessions that focused on one of the five core areas presented.

The entire event proceedings, including the culminating recommendations for each of the 5 core areas will be made available at the NYSABE website (www.NYSABE.net) and at the NYC RBE-RN website, ([http://www.fordham.edu/info/21065nysnyc regional bilingual education resource network](http://www.fordham.edu/info/21065nysnyc%20regional%20bilingual%20education%20resource%20network)) in September 2015. In addition, a full description will be included in the *Journal of Multilingual Education Research*.

An event of this magnitude is not possible without the collaboration of many dedicated individuals. NYSABE and NYC RBE-RN would like to thank the following individuals for their pivotal roles in bringing about the Roundtable *Multilingual Learners in UPK: Defining Focus and Direction*.

We also extend acknowledgements and thanks to collaborators on this event:

Diane Rodríguez, Professor, Fordham Graduate School of Education, and Principal Investigator for NYC RBE-RN

Mid-Hudson RBE-RN

Long Island RBE-RN

Hunter College

Queens College

Mercy College

The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

The Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education (LCECE)

Organizers	Panelists	Facilitators from the NYS/NYC RBE-RN
Eva Garcia Executive Director, NYS/NYC REBE-RN NYSABE Spanish Language Delegate	Moderator Dr. Luis Reyes, Latino Coalition For Early Care and Education (LCECE)	Abby Baruch Sara Martinez Aileen Colon Elsie Berardinelli
Dr. Zoila Tazi Associate Professor Mercy College NYSABE Region III Delegate	Instruction and Programming Dr. Elizabeth Ijalba, Queens College	Roser Salavert Dr. Bernice Moro Diane Howitt
	Leadership & Policy Danielle Guindo, Committee for Hispanic Children and Families	
	Community Partners Jorge Saenz de Viteri,	
	Higher Education and Teacher Preparation Dr. Juan Morales, KCC	
	Research Zoila Tazi, Mercy College	

**UPK Roundtable,
Continued from p. 25:****NYSABE Region IV/Central
Spring Colloquium/Annual
*Nominations Meeting***

By Janet Quiñones-Eatman,
Region IV Delegate

On April 25th, 2015, NYSABE's Region IV/Central held its Spring Colloquium and Nominations Meeting at Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications. We had the distinct pleasure of having as our guest speaker Dr. Lucia Buttaro who spoke to our theme, *"Dual Language Programs: Can the U.S. Compete Globally?"*

Dr. Buttaro, a dynamic speaker, author and teacher educator, has written extensively in the areas of bilingual education, home language literacy, and language diversity. We were able to delve into two of her books on effective dual language programs that will enable our schools to prepare our students for a global economy.

A panel that addressed the theme, *"Current Issues Facing ELLs at the Local and State Level,"* followed Dr. Buttaro's presentation. The panel included Mr. Ezekiel Hernandez, Principal, Delaware Dual Language Program; Ms. Tanya Rosado-

Barringer, Director, NYSED RBE-RN, Onondaga BOCES; Dr. Zaline Roy-Campbell, Associate Professor, Syracuse University; and Dr. Lisa Saka, Literacy Coach, Syracuse City School District. The audience was comprised of community leaders, educators, parents, and public officials that have been advocating for the rights of bilingual children and families in our community for decades. It was a welcomed opportunity to gather and exchange ideas and strategies around the education of English language learners of various linguistic backgrounds. In the last two decades, our city and schools have experienced a growth in diversity. Today, you can hear 70 languages spoken in our schools, from Spanish and Somali to Arabic and Burmese.

We all came away energized and charged to continue the expansion of dual language programs in Syracuse, NY. Thank you to our sponsors Nosotros Radio Inc.; Tu Voz Latina; Onandaga BOCES R-BERN, Syracuse University; and NYSABE for helping to make this event happen!



Pictured are Dr. Lucia Buttaro (left), Fanny Villarreal, Founder & Executive Director of Nosotros Radio, Inc. Your Latino Voice (center), Janet Quiñones Eatman, NYSABE Delegate, Region IV/Central (right).

Region VI/Western NY

Sails into Summer

By Heriberto Galarza

NYSABE Past President



This past June, Region VI/Western New York had a wonderful event to end the 2014-15 school year. We had a 3 hour cruise aboard the Miss Buffalo II from the Buffalo Marina travelling to Lake Erie, into the Niagara River, through the final locks of the Erie Canal before returning to the Erie Basin Marina. Our excellent DJ played music of all genres and all ages to the delight of the 128 persons attending. This was an excellent turnout raising over \$1,000 for NYSABE.

Among the members and friends attending, we had community members, the local press, teachers, administrators, teacher aides, parents, members of the NYSABE Board of Directors, Delegate Assembly, and candidates for Delegate Assembly positions... plus FIVE NYSABE Past Presidents!!!

It was a beautiful outing on a beautiful day with many good friends of NYSABE and professionals that enjoyed the companionship of their fellow colleagues.

Check out the pictures at:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10156032653240179.1073741849.594375178&type=1&l=f1af259c1c>



**NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

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Position Statement on the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) and its Impact on Teachers Serving ELLs/Bilingual Learners

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)/bilingual learners by strengthening the professional skills of the educational communities and promoting their significant participation in the decision-making process and policy implementation in New York State. To this end, NYSABE has been joined by the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL), the Association of Dominican American Supervisors and Administrators (ADASA), and Internationals Network for Public Schools, to discuss wide-ranging concerns in relation to the impact of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) on teachers serving ELLs/bilingual learners.

After a thorough discussion of our concerns, NYSABE presents this position statement that focuses on the two major components of the APPR: (1) Student Performance and (2) Classroom Observations.

RATIONALE**Student Performance**

The practice of using state test scores attained by ELLs/bilingual learners for the purpose of teacher evaluation is neither valid nor reliable, and would unfairly target teachers of these students. ELLs/bilingual learners are unrealistically expected to perform to the level of their English monolingual peers, with whom their scores are compared, on these exams. Language proficiency affects test performance, such that ELLs/bilingual learners underperform in comparison with their monolingual peers on tests of academic content across all subject areas (Abedi & Dietal, 2004; Menken, 2008, 2010). For instance, in 2014 only 2.6% of New York's ELLs/bilingual learners in grades 3-8 scored at or above the proficiency level on the state's English language arts exam and only 11% did so on the math exam (as compared to 31% and 36% for all students respectively).

The lower test scores of ELLs/bilingual learners do not mean that teachers are failing to educate these students, but rather it is simply an affirmation of the fact that ELLs/bilingual learners are in the process of learning English. It also highlights how no state in the USA has been able to develop tests that are truly able to divorce language from content. Yet, test failure comes at a high cost for ELLs/bilingual learners and the teachers who serve them when high-stakes decisions are attached to their test scores. These students, in New York and elsewhere across the U.S., experience higher grade retention rates, higher dropout rates, and lower graduation rates. They are far more likely to attend schools which are targeted for punitive measures, such as restructuring or closure under current accountability mandates (Abedi & Dietal, 2004; Government Accountability Office, 2006; Menken, 2010, 2013). Accordingly, many researchers have drawn into question the validity of using results from these state exams to determine high-stakes decisions for ELLs/bilingual learners and their teachers (see Solórzano, 2008 for a review).

Classroom Observations

The evaluation of teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners demands evaluators with the expertise necessary to do so. Rather than relying on outside evaluators, we maintain that this expertise should be cultivated among school leaders.

Principals and other school and district administrators in New York are not required to receive preparation about the education of ELLs/bilingual learners in order to obtain state licensure. In addition, principal and school administrator preparation programs have generally failed to provide adequate content knowledge and practicum experiences for school leaders to oversee the instruction of these students (Farkas et al., 2003; Hale & Moorman, 2003).

Introducing outside evaluators to assess the effectiveness of a teacher violates principles we adhere to with regards to classroom observation. Effective evaluation for teachers does not occur outside the context of ongoing supervision and support for professional growth. Considering the widespread need to develop and implement effective practices for ELLs/bilingual learners, we advocate for classroom observations that are conducted by school leaders familiar with the work of the teacher and the nature of the needs in his or her student population. In the case of teachers working with multilingual students, for example, many schools and educational communities struggle to articulate the right conditions for a classroom observation: can a teacher be observed using more than one language in a lesson? What is the acceptable use of a student's home language in a lesson? These and other questions with regards to language are fundamental elements of a classroom observation for which a teacher may be rated very differently by different evaluators when they have limited understanding of the best approaches to teaching ELLs/bilingual learners and no knowledge of the school's bilingual practices. Rather than subject teachers to evaluations in the "eye of the beholder," we advocate for dedicating available energy, resources, and time to building capacity among school leaders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to address our concerns about (1) the appropriateness, reliability and validity of standardized tests to assess ELLs/bilingual learners' student performance and growth, and (2) their usefulness in measuring student growth as part of the teacher evaluation, we recommend the following:

- To disaggregate APPR ratings in order to track the impact of the teacher evaluation system on teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners and determine if these teachers have received disproportionately low ratings due to flaws in the APPR system;
- To ensure that every district has a meaningful locally determined appeals process in place to correct any APPR rating that has been negatively affected by the factors described above; and
- To encourage and facilitate the use of portfolio assessments and performance-based assessments, and factor these into student performance metrics for schools implementing them.

In order to ensure that teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners are fairly and accurately evaluated through classroom observations in ways that promote their professional growth as well as the progress of their students, we recommend the following:

- To build the capacity of school-based leaders so they can supervise and evaluate teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners within a context of ongoing systematic supervision and support for professional growth;
- To dedicate available resources, energy, time, and a clear focus to building capacity among current and future school leaders;
- To regulate the use of outside evaluators. If these evaluators are required, limit their assessments' weight value to no more than 10% of the observation component of the APPR, with the exact percentage to be determined locally;
- To ensure that outside evaluators of teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners have demonstrated expertise in ELL best instructional practices; and
- To ensure that outside evaluators are knowledgeable of the particular research/evidence-based approaches used in the school where they are evaluating teachers of ELLs/bilingual learners.

On behalf of the students, families, educators, members of community-based and private entities whom NYSABE represents, we thank the members of the New York State Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department for this opportunity to express our concerns and recommendations on the Annual Professional Performance Report (APPR).



Tatyana Kleyn, Ed.D.
NYSABE President
June 2015



www.nysabe.net

Executive Director
Nancy Villarreal de Adler

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May 15, 2015

Dr. Elizabeth Berlin, Interim Commissioner, NYSED
Dr. Cosimo Tangorra, Jr., Deputy Commissioner, Office of P-12 Education, NYSED
Dr. John D'Agati, Deputy Commissioner, Office of Higher Education, NYSED

Dear Drs. Berlin, Tangorra, and D'Agati,

The New York State Bilingual Education Association (NYSABE), in collaboration with NYS TESOL, and other bilingual education organizations and professionals, assisted NYSED in the development of the *Blueprint for ELLs Success* as well as the recently adopted amendments to Commissioner's Regulations Part 154 which strengthen efforts to support and improve instruction for ELLs/bilingual learners across New York State. One of the impacts of the amended CR Part 154 is an increase in the need for certified teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and teachers with Bilingual Extensions in different regions across New York State.

Similar to our partner organizations, we are all concerned about how this shortage of teachers will affect our students. We are all in agreement that having appropriately certified classroom teachers is a priority. In response to the increased need, NYSED has proposed alternate pathways for Supplementary Bilingual Education (BE) Extensions and Supplementary Certificates for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers (NYSED memo, March 9, 2015).

On behalf of NYSABE, I thank the NYSED for providing us with an opportunity to comment and make recommendations regarding these proposed alternate pathways. We understand that the "purpose of a supplementary certificate is to authorize a teacher who is currently certified in a title in the classroom teaching service to teach in a different title in the classroom teaching service for which there is a **demonstrated shortage of teachers...**" (our emphasis).

As an organization, we are currently faced with the dilemma of equally unacceptable choices in attempting to educate our ELLs/bilingual learners and balancing the need to serve them with an underprepared teacher or not to serve them at all. In this regard, we agree that an alternative pathway for a Supplementary Bilingual Education (BE) Extension Certificate is necessary, but **not** as proposed by NYSED. In this regard, we offer the following recommendations as an alternative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations and concerns expressed below are framed by the underlying premises that (1) we are all stakeholders in ensuring that our ELLs/bilingual learners are receiving the required services pursuant to CR Part 154, that (2) we must all work diligently to support these efforts, and that (3) we must ensure that all ELLs/bilingual learners are served by qualified, fully certified teachers.

Recommendation 1 –

A school district approving a teacher for a supplementary certification in English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and/or with a Bilingual Extension must report to NYSED its good faith efforts to recruit fully certified teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and teachers with Bilingual Extensions and the results of such efforts. Approval of supplementary certifications must be contingent on a review of the school district's recruitment efforts and results in a manner as prescribed by the Commissioner

Recommendation 2 –

A school district with approved teachers holding supplementary certifications as teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and teachers with Bilingual Extensions must report to NYSED the candidates' academic status and progress toward fulfilling certification requirements in a manner as prescribed by the Commissioner.

Recommendation 3 –

Regarding Pathway I for Bilingual Extensions, we agree that the supplementary teacher candidate must:

- have completed or be currently enrolled in a course leading to three semester hours in bilingual education, including study in the theories of bilingual education and multicultural perspectives (currently proposed);
- submit evidence of having achieved a satisfactory level of performance on the bilingual extension assessment (currently proposed);
 - **CONCERN:** Please clarify whether the "bilingual extension assessment" is the same as or different from the "bilingual education assessment (BEA)" administered by NYSTCE. We would agree if the proposed exam is clearly and unambiguously the NYSTCE "BEA," similar to the articulation of the "ESOL CST" in the proposed pathway for the ESOL supplementary certificate. If it is a different test, we must be informed of its content and make-up so that we can make an appropriate determination of its acceptability.
 - **CONCERN:** Please clarify whether "satisfactory level of performance" for the bilingual extension assessment is the same level of performance required of all Bilingual Education teacher candidates who take the Bilingual Extension Assessment (BEA). We would agree if the "satisfactory level of performance" is equal to that on the BEA. We would disagree if the required level of performance is lower because it is the only objective indicator, in lieu of coursework, to determine whether the supplementary certificate candidate has the minimum threshold of knowledge necessary to teach in a bilingual setting.

- be required to be currently enrolled/matriculated in a registered preparation program or become enrolled/matriculated within one year of issuance of the supplementary certificate;
- be required to provide documentation of ongoing and continuous progress toward fulfilling the full certification requirements;
- be required to complete the balance of required coursework for full certification within three years;
- be clearly informed that the supplementary certificate is valid for three years and non-renewable.

Recommendation – 4

Regarding Pathway II for Bilingual Extensions, **we reject this proposal**. We are not confident and secure that “evidence of satisfactory bilingual teaching experience” is demonstrative of a “satisfactory experience.” That evidence is typically provided by the candidate’s supervisor who is typically a generalist with limited or no formal preparation regarding ELIs/bilingual learners. Further, the supervisor may not be bilingual in the language of service to be able to attest to the accuracy or language proficiency of the candidate. In addition, there is no objective teacher evaluation rubric that includes indicators of effective bilingual instruction among the NYS approved materials. Lastly, this requirement does not indicate the currency or distribution of the teaching experience which could be as recent as the last two years, or cumulative service over irregular periods, or service that may have occurred more than five or ten years earlier.

Recommendation 5 –

Lastly, we believe that NYSED must also take affirmative actions in ensuring that there are a sufficient number of registered preparation programs available in which to matriculate all of these supplementary certificate holders. We recommend and strongly urge NYSED to:

- work with institutions of higher education (IHEs) across the state to establish sufficient registered certification programs for Bilingual Education (BE) Extensions and teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to meet the growing demands;
- establish and develop an expedited process for approving registered certification programs for Bilingual Education (BE) Extensions and teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL);
- assist IHEs which have Bilingual Education and TESOL programs to increase their enrollment capacities;
- provide funds to incentivize current and potential candidates to become Bilingual Education and ESOL teachers (e.g., Intensive Teacher Institutes).

We thank you in advance for your serious and thoughtful consideration of our recommendations, and look forward to seeing them included in the final proposal to the Board of Regents.

Sincerely,



Tatyana Kleyn, Ed.D.
NYSABE President

Dear NYSABE Members,

Thanks to all of you who took the time to vote in our 2015 elections! I am proud to say that we successfully conducted our first on-line elections and had a record number of members take part in the process. Across the state 255 members voted for language delegates and 221 members voted for regional delegates.

I would now like to announce the results and congratulate our new and continuing delegates:

Regional Delegates:

Region I/Long Island: Iraida Bodré & Dr. Rosa Lien

Region II/NYC: Eva García & Ron Woo

Region III/Mid-Hudson: Nicole Sibiski Ayala

Region IV/Central: Ofelia Anamaria & Janet Quiñones-Eatman

Region V/Rochester: Maria Encarnación & Rose Mary Villarrubia-Izzo

Region VI/Western NY: Petra Mencia & Rebecca Murphy

Language Delegates:

Bengali: Md. Abul Kalam Azad

Chinese: Wen-Tsui Pat Lo

Greek: Dr. John Siolas

Haitian: Dr. Carole Berotte Joseph

Hebrew: Dr. Miriam Eisenstein Ebsworth

Hindi: Dr. Ved Malhotra

Korean: Dr. Soekhee Cho

Spanish: Dr. Zoila Tazi

Turkish: Dr. Bahar Otcu-Grillman

I would like to congratulate the nominations and elections committee who led us through this process and devoted a great deal of time, care, and professionalism to all details. A heartfelt thank you to Co-chairpersons Wilfredo Garcia and Past President Margarita Gonzalez-Martinez, and committee members Dr. Tammy Alsace and Past President María-Angélica Meyer.

Thanks to all those who ran in the elections and those of you who voted as well. I look forward to another powerful year ahead of us!

Best,

Tatyana Kleyn

Centered on Bilingual Learners

President, 2014-15

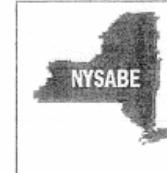
NYSABE
wishes to
thank all
of our
contributors
and supporters
for lending
their expertise
to this
publication.

NYSABE Bilingual Times Staff includes

Tamara Alsace,
Editor

Nancy Villarreal
de Adler,
Project Director

Bahar Otcu-
Grillman,
Contributor



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

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 Urban Education
726 Broadway, 5th 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, 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).

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.