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2011-2012

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NYSABE Bilingual Times

A Message from the President, Maria-Angélica Meyer



**Hello
New
York
State!**

Welcome to our Winter Edition of the Bilingual Times!!

It is with great pride that on behalf of NYSABE's Executive Board, Delegate Assembly and Executive Director, I officially unveil our Newsletter's new name, *The Bilingual Times*.

As we present this edition, we have recently welcomed each of you to our 35th Annual Conference, *"Achieving a Lifetime of Bilingualism from Early Childhood through Higher Education."* The main objective of our annual conference is to offer an opportunity for all members of the educational community to come together to renew our commitment to bilingual education. It offers cutting edge presentations that share diverse resources and expertise necessary to transform research into practice with an innovative vision. It is a comprehensive professional development

opportunity that ensures the advancement of excellence in bilingual education programs and advocacy of policy issues propelling student achievement to greater heights. This year's conference achieved these objectives and much more. In this 35th anniversary year of our founding, we continue to be inspired by the passion, knowledge, and dedication that we see in practitioners and researchers, support personnel, administrators, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, parents, policymakers, advocates and most importantly our students. For this reason, we are so proud to have presented this venue in which we brought together our members to foster the spirit of *connection, collaboration and communication*.

Our theme exemplified the importance of *all* members of the educational community joining forces to broaden their knowledge and skills to better prepare bilingual students to become lifelong learners, capable of meeting the challenges of a future that hold endless possibilities. It emphasized the importance of paving the path for all, from early childhood through

higher education, by creating enriching opportunities to become proficient, literate, and academically successful in more than one language.

We took this opportunity to showcase the outstanding works and unparalleled achievements of those who have gone beyond the call of duty. We congratulate all the 2012 award recipients for their outstanding contributions to our field!

I would like to express my deep appreciation to NYSABE's Executive Board, Delegate Assembly, our 35 Past Presidents and most especially our Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler for their commitment, unfailing support, dedication, and focused vision. Most importantly, I would like to acknowledge the exemplary work of this year's Conference Chairperson, Yolanda Rodriguez. It is through her commitment,

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A Message from the President, (Cont.)

hard work, and unfailing dedication that this conference came to fruition. I congratulate all the chairpersons and committee members for their endless hours of dedication to ensure a memorable, high quality conference. I trust that all participants left sharing an innovative vision and common goal to promote excellence in education for all ELLs/bilingual learners. A detailed account of the conference activities and complete list of award recipients will be included in our next issue of the NYSABE Bilingual Times.

As I predicted in our Fall 2011 Newsletter, this year has been full of challenges and new initiatives. I can assure you the NYSABE has been at the forefront of focusing our efforts on ensuring that the needs of our students are addressed. It is through ongoing *connection, collaboration, and communication* that NYSABE seeks to continue its unending work on behalf of all bilingual learners, their families, and us, the educators who serve them.

Congratulations to all!

Warm regards,

María-Angélica Meyer

María-Angélica Meyer
NYSABE President, 2011-2012

Communicating,

Collaborating,

Connecting



Editor, Tamara Alsace

Editor's Note:

Here, at last, is the winter issue of the NYSABE Bilingual Times. My experiences in preparing this issue remind me of the importance of preserving information. In today's digital world, information can be lost in a "flash", as I learned all too painfully when my USB drive, containing the one and only file with this almost-completed newsletter, disappeared en route to Cali, Colombia a couple of weeks ago. I was reminded (not for the first time—

sometimes lessons must be re-taught several times before they're learned...) of the importance of BACKING UP (PRESERVING) INFORMATION in multiple ways.

A newsletter such as this serves not only as a vehicle to communicate, collaborate, and connect with our fellow NYSABE members and the bilingual education community at large, but as a means of preserving our ever-developing legacy and connecting us with the bilingual educators of the future.

In this issue, Patricia Velasco describes a new tool for assessing the reading skills of bilingual learners and Jacqueline Cinto tells her own story of being an illegal immigrant in NYC as a call to action in favor of the NY Dream Act. NYSABE delegates keep us informed of their respective events and activities and we present NYSABE's teacher of the year, Gregory Halzen. Also in this issue is a letter to NYSED Deputy Commissioner Ira Schwartz, which outlines NYSABE's stand on the ESEA Waiver.

As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions and I leave you now to save, and save, and re-save, this file.

From the Desk of the Executive Director

NYSABE's current presidential term is characterized by a special emphasis on three key organizational concepts: **Communication, Collaboration and Connection**. These three notions provide a framework for NYSABE's Collective Call to Action.

A Collective Call to Action primarily requires ongoing opportunities to exchange ideas and share experiences among individuals or groups. Their level and extent of their communication determine their possibilities to form partnerships, explore joint initiatives, and engage in teamwork. Furthermore, equitable and meaningful interactions, coupled with a clear common vision, present the potential to form solid bonds and establish continuity in exploring limitless joint possibilities.

NYSABE as a professional organization advocating for the educational rights of bilingual learners is proud to acknowledge the extensive work of its leadership and members who, now more than ever, have strengthened NYSABE's linkages with representatives from varied educational and community-based organizations. They

have all responded to our Collective Call to Action on behalf of our bilingual learners, their educators, and parents.

NYSABE mirrors the linguistic and cultural diversity of NYS public schools. In this connection, NYSABE acknowledges and celebrates the diversity and uniqueness of its members in relation to their experiences, educational backgrounds, the role that they play in our varied educational communities, and their own views in relation to the current educational changes and challenges. NYSABE also recognizes that it is this diversity of views and our democratic ability to express them that moves our organization to a much higher dimension. Our strength lays in NYSABE's ability to unite diverse peoples around one common goal, to promote the academic advancement of our NYS bilingual learners. This is our mission.

In view of our urgent need to respect pluralism while encouraging unity under common goals, NYSABE applauds the efforts of educators, parents, members from community-based and commercial organizations, and elected officials who have embraced our goals to foster **Communication, Collabo-**

ration, and Connections among all people. NYSABE thanks them for responding to our Collective Call to Action to safeguard the educational rights of ALL NYS students.

"Be the change you wish to see in the world."

-Mahatma Gandhi



From the Desk of the Executive Director, Nancy Villarreal de Adler

**Supplemental Spanish Literacy Assessment
for El Sistema de la Observación de la Lectura (SSLA)**

By Patricia Velasco

Bilingual Education Program

Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education

Queens College, CUNY

NYSABE Region II/New York City Delegate

Introduction:

Most children learning to read in their first language will associate sounds and spoken words to their written equivalents. They will engage in songs and rhyming games while flipping through the pages of a fairy tale. Some children will even imitate the voice modulations of the adults who read to them while holding a book. They will recognize books by the title and perhaps even by their favorite authors. For these students, learning to read will be a joyful and effortless process. But many children will fail to make these connections and experience reading difficulties that can ultimately lead to school failure. Students who are most at-risk are those who enter school not only with limited exposure to oral language interactions but with little prior understanding of concepts related to the sounds of language, letter knowledge, print awareness, and general verbal skills. Children raised in poverty, with low literacy backgrounds might show limited oral language proficiency even in their first language. Speech disorders and/or hearing impairment can also have a negative impact on reading development. Furthermore, there are a substantial number of students who even though they have had exposure to language, conversations focusing on books and opportunities to learn to read, can present significant difficulties acquiring reading skills. Whether the causes are environmental, congenital or genetic in nature, they will impact early literacy development.

The SSLA can be used with the following populations:

1. K- 2nd grade students learning to read in two languages (i.e. bilingual, dual language programs) should be assessed in both languages. The SSLA can provide important information regarding the reading components that impact reading comprehension in the early grades in Spanish.
2. Children whose first language is Spanish and are learning to read in their first language exclusively.
3. Students who are new arrivals and come from any Spanish speaking country. Even if these students are in the upper grades of elementary education they could be the result of interrupted schooling. They might still have to master elements in the reading process that are associated with lower-grades (automaticity or phonemic awareness, for example).

The SSLA can signal potential areas of difficulty that if left unattended, can have devastating consequences in the reading comprehension process. Prevention and early intervention programs that teach phonological and phoneme awareness, target vocabulary development in the context of what is being taught, and where children have an opportunity to engage with books and talk about them, work better before the age of 9. After that, responses to literacy intervention become poorer for both Spanish speakers (Ferreiro, 2007; Dickinson et al. 2004) and English speakers (Snow 2005).

The Supplemental Spanish Literacy Assessment (SSLA) is the result of collaboration between the New York City Department of Education, Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, and the Division of Academics, Performance, and Support, with the Bilingual Education Program Coordinator, Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education at Queens College, CUNY. The purpose of the SSLA is to complement Spanish Reading assessments such as El Sistema de Observación de la Lectura (ELSOL), a Spanish reading assessment used in a number of schools throughout New York City, that targets early childhood reading development (K-2nd grade). The SSLA focuses on limited and large scope reading components that play an important role in reading comprehension (Snow 2004). Limited Scope components comprise technical aspects of reading. Phonological and phonemic awareness as well as automaticity fall within this category. These elements play a crucial role in mastering the reading process and they establish the foundations of reading at an early age, but they should be considered steppingstones to better literacy learning. The Large Scope components relate to vocabulary and capacity to construct oral narratives. They represent conceptual knowledge (in the form of word knowledge) and discourse practices that are associated with literacy development.

The following description lists the different factors that are addressed in each section of the SSLA. In addition, some selected pictures are included in order to exemplify how different tasks are presented.

The SSLA- comprises the following sections:

I. Limited scope components:

1. Phonological Awareness
2. Phonemic Awareness
3. Automaticity

II. Large Scope Components:

1. Vocabulary
2. Construction of Oral Narratives

I. Limited Scope Components

1. Phonological awareness:

Involves an appreciation of chunks of sounds as well as the meaning of spoken words. Research in phonological awareness in Spanish by Dickinson et al. (2004) and Ferreiro (2007) show that the more phonological awareness a child shows, the better prepared the student is in learning to read. Producing and recognizing rhymes (masa, pasa, casa, gasa); breaking words into syllables (he-li-cóp-te-ro), recognizing that two different words have the same ending (brocha/roncha), are all components of phonological awareness. Phonological awareness has been demonstrated to relate to literacy outcomes about as strongly as vocabulary in Kindergarten and 1st grade (Dickinson 2004). These results have led to paying extra care and attention to phonological awareness within early reading curricula.

The Phonological section of the -SSLA covers the following sub skills:

- a. **Rhyme Recognition:** words that end in the same syllable.
This section has an accompanying Rhyme Generation Card.
An example follows:

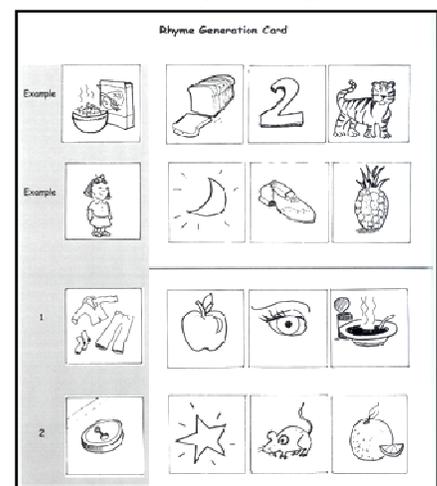
Teacher: Ahora voy a decirte los nombres de estos dibujos.

Escucha con atención.

¿Cuál de estas palabras rima con la primera?

Practiquemos juntos.

- arroz—pan—dos—tigre
- ¿Qué rima con arroz? Correct response [dos]



- b. Syllable Recognition:** separating words into one, two or three syllables (sal, me-sa, to-ma-te)
- c. Syllable isolation:** taking out a syllable and being capable of analyzing the rest of the word:
paraguas: quito *par* y queda *aguas*.
- d. Recognizing Stressed Syllables:** recognizing the stressed syllable within a word (but not necessarily spelling). Examples include: ma-**má**; le-**che**; bo-**tón**

2. Phonemic awareness:

Phonemic awareness is the capacity to break down words into the smaller units or phonemes. Phonemes are what letters stand for and it is the previous step in understanding letter–sound correspondence (or phonics). For children learning how to read in English, phonemic awareness is considered a pre-requisite for reading success (Snow, 2005). For children learning how to read exclusively in Spanish, Ferreiro has reported that phonemic awareness is developed simultaneously as the child experiments with writing by engaging in invented spelling or meaningful scribbles (Ferreiro, 2007). Whether phonemic awareness is practiced as a pre requisite or a simultaneous skill as the child engages in writing, it is a crucial for the child to understand that the letters that s/he will be encountering represent specific sounds. Without this understanding, the underlying principles of reading remain obscure and bewildering.

Few pre-schoolers spontaneously attain phonemic awareness on their own. Children develop phonemic awareness by engaging in activities that draw their attention to the existence of phonemes in spoken words. Having children omit, substitute, break words into their constituting phonemes, are all activities that help develop this skill.

Phonemic awareness has to target the sound not the letter name. If the letter name strategy is used exclusively it will result in confusing the reader. García Marquez (2003, in Snow 2004) remembers how confusing this process was in his early attempts in learning to read:

Me costó mucho aprender a leer. No me parecía lógico que la letra "m" se llamara "eme", y sin embargo con la vocal siguiente no se dijera "emea", sino "ma". Me era imposible leer así. (p. 112)

(I had a hard time learning to read. It didn't seem logical to me that, given that the letter "m" was called "eme", when it was followed by a vowel you were supposed to say "ma" and not "emea". It was impossible for me to read like that.)

The Phonemic section of the SSLA has the following sub skills:

- a. Initial Phoneme Isolation:** identifying the initial phoneme: hola, [o]; pan [p]
- b. Final Phoneme Isolation:** identifying the final phoneme in a word: uva [a]; caballo [o]
- c. Phonemic Identity:** identifying the same sound that is part of two words: *ten* and *tos* [t]
- d. Oral Segmenting:** separating the phonemes that compose a word: *mio*: [m/i/o]
- e. Oral Blending:** providing the phonemes that compose a word and putting them together:
/l/o/m/a; loma

There is no evidence that learners need or benefit from phonological and phonemic awareness after 2nd grade or after 20 hours of instruction. Phonemic and phonological awareness are considered indispensable for learning to read successfully, but they are not ends in themselves.

3. Automaticity

Automaticity is defined as fast, accurate and effortless word identification at the single word level. Automaticity implies that a reader is capable of recognizing the sound /letter relationship within words without having to consciously think about it. Having automatic recognition frees cognitive space that can be devoted to comprehension.

Researchers compare automaticity to driving a car. In the beginning, a driver's cognitive space is targeted towards knowing how to shift, brake, and control the car's speed (this would be comparable to gain automaticity in letter sound recognition and sight words). As the driver gains more control of the car; cognitive space is freed and the driver can concentrate on the road, the route and the shortcuts (this would be comparable to comprehension). The speed and accuracy at which single words are identified is yet, another predictor of reading comprehension.

For children in the early, primary grades, automaticity relies on the visual patterns inherent in the different syllable- types found in Spanish and the inflections that characterize verbs in the past, present and future tenses. This leads to reading words as wholes rather than through laborious and slow reading. The work focusing on automaticity in the SSLA covers the array of consonant and vowel combinations in monosyllabic or polysyllabic words in Spanish. Minimal pair combinations (one consonant that changes the meaning of the word: pan/tan) and prosodic characteristics (stressed syllables) are included. Here are some examples:

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| 1. pan | 2. tan | (c-v-c word) |
| 3. grasa | 4. brasa | (consonant digraph) |
| 5. flan | 6. plan | (consonant digraph) |
| 7. saltó | 8. faltó | (past tense inflection) |
| 9. mirando | 10. comprando | (present tense inflection) |

II Large Scope Components

In the SSLA, vocabulary knowledge and the ability to construct oral narratives are the large scope components. These factors will ultimately have a larger impact on reading comprehension and academic success than the limited scope ones. Their importance lies in that they form the basis of background knowledge (words) and the ability to construct an extended, self explanatory, discourse.

1. Vocabulary:

One of the most robust long-term predictors of successful reading is vocabulary (Nation 2001). Children with large oral language vocabularies are very unlikely to have problems learning to comprehend what they read. The relationship of vocabulary to success in reading comprehension is easy to understand. Obviously, it is nearly impossible to comprehend a text that contains many words one does not know (Snow 2004).

Solid vocabulary knowledge requires having an extensive vocabulary (breadth of word knowledge) as well as having in depth knowledge of the multiple meanings that a word can have (depth of word knowledge). In addition, the vocabulary section of the SSLA presents students with receptive comprehension of formal word definitions, an aspect that has been found to be highly correlated with literacy development in bilingual children (Snow 1987; Snow et al. 1985).

a. General vocabulary knowledge: For students whose first language is not Spanish, these words might not be necessarily known. This section not only focuses on nouns (*familia, mamá escuela*), but incorporates verbs (*duermo, peina, lee*, for example) and prepositions (*sobre, fuera*).

b. Breadth of vocabulary knowledge: or knowing many words. This section presents words that are closely related in terms of meaning:

*Quando jugamos pelota en el parque estamos felices.
¿Qué palabra significa lo mismo que felices?*

contento | triste | cansado

c. Depth of vocabulary knowledge: refers to knowing the multiple meanings that a word can have. In the following example the target word is *nada*. The child is required to point to the picture that reflects the meaning of the sentence:

El niño no tiene nada.


d. Receptive comprehension of formal definitions: In this section, the teacher presents the formal definition as a guessing game. The student is given three options and s/he has to come up with the right answer:

Teacher: Objeto redondo y plano que se usa para comer

Options: Tenedor/ plato/ cuchillo

2. Constructing Oral Narratives:

The capacity to produce a stand-alone narrative (or monologue) is a characteristic that is strongly related to reading comprehension. The parallels are evident. When a child has the capacity to tie and weave together a plot, a setting, a character's perspective as well as describing the climax and a resolution; then the child can recognize all these features in a written text (Snow et al. 2005).

The SSLA has 6 different sets of sequencing cards plus a set for modeling a narrative by the teacher. Each set depicts a story. Narratives require taking a particular point of view, usually from the main character in the story. The speaker has to explain, select or embellish the information in order to be a successful narrator. These 6 narratives are to be used from K to 2nd grade at the fall and spring of each grade level. A rubric is provided to assess the characteristics of the child's oral narrative.

Here is an example corresponding to First grade (Fall):



Conclusion:

Literacy development involves both the accomplishment of technical, print-related skills and the capacity to use words and talk in new ways. The SSLA can help teachers identify limited and large scope components in Spanish that impact reading comprehension.

The SSLA- is a non-standardized assessment test that targets specific factors that impact reading comprehension, but it doesn't target reading comprehension itself. Teachers should complement the SSLA with the DRA, Rigby or any other standardized, Spanish reading comprehension test, as well as running records. The SSLA and Estrellita target many of the same reading components and can be used jointly. In addition, the SSLA includes descriptions of classroom activities that can be implemented to reinforce the different limited and large scope reading components.

New York City public school teachers have access to the SSLA through the Periodic Assessment ARIS community: <https://www.arisnyc.org/connect/node/733869>.

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Fighting for the New York Dream Act: Undocumented and Unafraid!

By Jaqueline Cinto, Co-Founder and Youth Services Coordinator, NYS Youth Leadership Council

Many media outlets, politicians, and a few ignorant people call me “illegal”, trying to dehumanize my existence with this derogatory term. They do not acknowledge my presence as a human being; they forget I am a daughter, a sister, a friend, a student, an unstoppable fighter. The first time I heard the term *illegal* was in high school coming out of the mouth of one of my classmates. I was paralyzed. I just turned around and walked away. Until that point I had never been classified as such in my community. After more than 11 years since that happened, I have learned not to turn my back, but to let my voice be heard loud and clear. My response is, “I am undocumented. I am a human being deserving of a chance to achieve my dreams - to fulfill my call to become a bilingual educator”.

I was fourteen when I came to the US to be reunited with my parents after years of being separated. My wish when I arrived at an apartment building in Harlem was to hug them both again and tell them about the birthdays and the events of my life. At fourteen I did not know about borders or the transnational policies that had forced my family and millions of others to migrate leaving behind their roots in their homeland. In my new home, I landed in Wash-

ington Heights at a high school and community that received me with open arms. At Gregorio Luperón High School I learned the academic language to help me continue on to a college education, but there I also learned the more subtle language of social justice. In that small school with crowded classrooms, I found my inspiration to become an educator. My teachers made me look at education as the means for social justice. Learning from their own teaching philosophy and practices, I aim to use my skills and knowledge to facilitate learning and dialogue among my students while supporting their critical awareness development.

Following the same teaching philosophy, I decided to get involved with a group that has its roots in a silenced community: undocumented youth. That is how I found the New York State Youth Leadership Council (NYSYLC), the first undocumented youth-led and volunteer-run organization that empowers undocumented youth to let go of their fears and challenge the broken immigration system. It accomplishes this through leadership development, grassroots organizing, and educational advancement all within a safe space for self-expression. Thanks to the NYSYLC community I found my voice as an undocumented and unafraid woman, ready to take action to achieve my dreams and to support other youth do the same. The federal government failed to acknowledge undocumented youth and the contributions we could offer

to our communities when the federal Dream Act was narrowly defeated in December of 2010. Furthermore, we have witnessed the implementation of harsh immigration laws such as HB 1070 in Arizona, HB 56 in Alabama and many other anti-immigrant state bills that continue to bring fear to our immigrant communities, separate families and dehumanize people. In New York, as in the states of Illinois and California, we are taking a stand to show the nation the valuable contributions that undocumented youth could bring to the state if only we were given the opportunity. For that reason, the NYSYLC, under the leadership and guidance of NYS Senator Bill Perkins and Assemblyman Guillermo Linares, was able to introduce the New York Dream Act in March of 2011. If passed, the bill would provide undocumented youth with public financial assistance to continue with their college education. In 2012, the NYSYLC along with undocumented youth leaders, continue to lead the efforts to highlight the many challenges we face everyday, such as not being able to work legally, travel by plane, drive a car, pay for college, continue our education and work in our areas of expertise. As part of an undocumented youth-led movement, we will not remain in the shadows anymore. For many of us, there is no line to legalize our status. After more than a decade of living in this country, forging my life in Washington Heights, Harlem and Queens, I am still being denied the right to contribute to my community as a

bilingual teacher. I am an undocumented and unafraid educator and currently a master's student in a CUNY institution. Today, on behalf of many other undocumented youth I ask for your support as a parent, an educator, a guidance counselor, a school principal, and/or a concerned citizen of the world, because if you are reading this you are already a tireless advocate for equal access education for all, regardless of age, language, religion, race, sexual orientation, and immigration status. I ask you to take action with me.

What can you do?

Here are 8 things you can do to support the NY Dream Act!

1. Donate to the **NYSYLC Scholarship Fund** for undocumented youth at <http://bit.ly/supportylc>. Contact info@nysylc.org for more information
2. Sign the online NY Dream Act petition <http://action.dreamactivist.org/nydreamact/>
Forward the link to your networks.
3. Start a petition drive for the NY Dream Act at your school, in your church, or in your community.
4. Write a blog/note on facebook/tumblr or an article in your school or local paper about the importance of the NY Dream Act
5. Tell a friend, teacher, or relative about the NY Dream Act and spread the word through your online networks.

6. Contact your city council member, assembly member and state senator via phone, email, letter, or in person meeting urging them to support the NY Dream Act. If you do not know who they are or to find out if they have already co-sponsor the bill go to www.nydreamact.org.

7. Host a NYSYLC workshop about college access for undocumented youth or how to get active to support undocumented youth in your class, club, or church. Contact us at info@nysylc.org.

8. Join the YLC as an advocate! Contact us at info@nysylc.org Remember that any action you take counts to support undocumented youth, our dreams and the passage of the NY Dream Act. Because we also have a dream, we count on you to support us as we work to get to the other side of the mountain and finally see the light.

My name is Jaqueline.
I am undocumented, unafraid and unapologetic.

“After more than a decade of living in this country, forging my life in Washington Heights, Harlem and Queens, I am still being denied the right to contribute to my community.”

Workshop for Prospective Bengali Bilingual Teachers

By Md. AbulKalam Azad,
NYSABE Delegate at Large



Md. AbulKalam Azad greets participants at the Long Island City High School Workshop for prospective teachers.

A workshop for prospective Bengali bilingual teachers was held at Long Island City High School (LICHS) in Queens on February 9, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. The event, organized by the NYC Department of Education (DOE), was an attempt to meet the acute recruitment needs of schools and to offer the Bengali community valuable educational and career opportunities.

The NYC DOE manager for teacher recruitment, Ms. Jenpeg Avignon Steele, and Ms. Evelyn Intrator of Teacher Recruitment and Application services from the NYSED spoke on teacher certification and how to get licensing from the DOE. In addition, the NYC Teaching Fellowship Program and other initiatives such as Incentive Programs for Teachers of Tomorrow; Housing Support; Gotham Graduates Give Back Program; etc. were presented. Leaflets about the teachers' salary structure were also distributed.

Dr. Nancy Sterm of City College, Dr. Patricia Velasco of Queens College, and Dr. Laura Baecher of Hunter College spoke about vari-

ous programs available to the prospective teachers in their colleges. Dr. Odalys Trapote Ignery and Nancy DiMaggio explained the NYS Intensive Teacher Institute in Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Program."

Though this workshop was originally planned for Bengali groups, there were participants from Chinese, Spanish and some other South Asian communities. About one hundred and fifty people attended the workshop.

Mr. Azad, who recently retired from the DOE as an ESL and Bengali teacher and Mr. Galahut, math teacher at LICHS, concluded the workshop by taking questions from the audience. Ms. Pat Lo from the Office of English Language Learners, NYC DOE, chief organizer of the workshop, was so impressed by such a enormous turnout that she promised that similar workshops would be organized in the other New York City boroughs. Ms. Diane Scalara and Mr. Azad, who initiated the event, agreed that more such events were needed in the future. Ms. Scalara thanked all for making this workshop, the first by the NYCDOE, a success.

Haitian Leaders and NYSABE Join Forces

By Monalisa Jean-Ferrari, President of H.E.L.P. and NYSABE Haitian Language Delegate

On Friday February 3, 2012 María-Angélica Meyer, NYSABE President was invited by Monalisa Jean-Ferrari, the President of the Hai-

tian Educators League for Progress (H.E.L.P.) and NYSABE Haitian Language Delegate, to join a forum of bilingual educators dedicated to ensuring high academic achievement for bilingual learners. They were joined by Mr. Eudes Budhai, NABE Vice President and NYSABE Past President; Ms. Iraida Bodre, Region I NYSABE Delegate; and Mr. Jean Mirvil, NYSABE Past President. A total of 54 participants attended the session.

Ms. Meyer shared the NYSABE mission, vision and goals and discussed the need for our connection, collaboration, and communication as we embrace the future. Members of H.E.L.P. shared their concerns and engaged in dialogue around how they might establish a better relationship with NYSABE and remain active collaborators in the promotion of bilingual education.

As a result of this meeting, a partnership between the two organizations was established. The leaders had an opportunity to exchange ideas regarding how to promote their visions as they uphold the missions of both organizations.



L to R: Eudes Budhai, Jean Mirvil, Maria Meyer and Monalisa Jean-Ferrari at February 3, 2012 H.E.L.P. Forum.

Region I Delves into Common Core Learning Standards

By Linda Scalise and Iraida Bodre,
Region I/Long Island Delegates

NYSABE's Region I, Long Island, held a meeting on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 for its members. The meeting, which focused on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), was held at the Bay Shore Schools District Office from 4:00-6:00 p.m. and was attended by members from over eight districts. NYSABE delegates Linda Scalise and Iraida Bodre used their presentation to spark a lively discussion on second language learning and teaching within the CCLS. The main emphasis was on the Six Shifts in the CCLS and how they fit in with the second language acquisition of our students. We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Maria Olsen of Attanasio and Associates, who provided examples of teaching materials.

Other Regional News:

In December 2011, Linda Scalise attended the Committee of Practitioners meeting in Brooklyn on the 9th, and on the 12th Iraida Bodre travelled to Albany to attend a meeting on the revisions to CR Part 154. The two delegates reported on their respective meeting topics at the January NYSABE delegate assembly and they distributed related materials.



NYSABE President Maria-Angélica Meyer welcomes panelists and guests at CCNY.

City College of NY (CCNY) and NYSABE Highlight Gregorio Luperón High School from Various Angles

By Tatyana Kleyn, Assistant Professor,
CCNY, CUNY and NYSABE Region II/NYC Delegate

On Thursday, December 8, 2011 over 100 people came together to learn about Gregorio Luperón High School and its successful approach to the education of Dominican immigrants through a bilingual approach. The panel brought together the diverse yet interconnected views of researchers, the school principal, an ESL teacher, and an alumna who is currently a CCNY undergraduate student. The event began with welcoming remarks by Doris Cintrón, School of Education Dean, and by NYSABE President Maria-Angélica Meyer, who also highlighted the organization's new initiatives, including its redesigned, multilingual website:

www.nysabe.net

The panel began with the authors of "Additive Schooling in Subtractive Times: Bilingual education and Dominican immigrant youth in the Heights" (Vanderbilt University Press, 2011): <http://www.vanderbiltuniversitypress.com/books/403/additiveschooling-in-subtractivetimes>. Lesley Bartlett, Associate Professor at Teachers College and the book's co-author, outlined the theoretical underpinnings of the book and the reasons for the focus on this specific school. Next, Ofelia García, Professor at the CUNY Graduate Center and the book's second author, spoke about the importance of reconceptualizing bilingualism in education through a dynamic approach.



*Additive Schooling in Subtractive Times:
authors Lesley Bartlett and Ofelia García*

Luperón's co-founding principal, Juan Villar, spoke about the school's primary mission of educating the whole child as something that comes before any externally imposed mandates or focus on standardized tests. Next, ESL teacher Jakob Clausen shared his experiences at Luperón and his realization that the students' home language – Spanish – is a valuable resource to be used in his ESL classes. Lastly, Emelyn Carpio, a 2011 graduate of Luperón and freshman at CCNY who has also been behind her mother in the Dominican Republic and coming to NYC to live with her father, whom she barely knew. She credits the staff at Luperón for her academic successes as they supported her both academically and personally as she learned the English language and mastered high school level academic content. Her goal is to work hard and eventually bring her mother to the U.S. The panelists provided a holistic and multi-perspective window into the ways Luperón High School succeeds with Dominican youth, a matter of critical importance given the high dropout rates among Latinos in New York City schools. The event was both educational and inspirational for those who attended.

Region VI/Western New York Gets Busy

By Evelyn Arent, Region VI Delegate

The winter months have been very busy for Region VI. We have focused on advocacy, networking, professional development and leadership. NYSABE First Vice President Dr. Awilda Ramos Zaggarrigo and the regional delegates Rose Colón and Evelyn Arent, in collaboration with the State University College at Buffalo, held an advocacy and information meeting to discuss the "Enhanced Transition Program" for our bilingual exceptional education population. This informative meeting provided parents with the goals and objectives of a program that included college readiness, job readiness, self advocacy, and self determination. Also, they were provided with information and applications for after school tutoring programs that are available to all students, the SES tutoring program funded through Title 1 under NCLB. Parents were informed that the students will be able to receive tutoring in ELA and Math.

In another step forward, Region VI in collaboration with the State University College at Buffalo held their second student-focused professional development session for a group of future educators. This workshop highlighted classroom management strategies. We were also able to introduce a concise overview of an upcoming professional development opportunity on instructional practices in working with ELLs. In addition, we visited the NYSABE website and provided additional information about our organization, including

the annual conference.

International School at Lafayette News

New at the International School at Lafayette, serving students in grades 7-12 in Buffalo, NY, is an initiative that will focus on students becoming agents of change and on students as leaders! At Lafayette, students will be able to participate in one of the following new after school clubs: Native Language Club and the Interpreters Club.

The Native Language Club will be a place where students can meet other students who share the same language—a place that can become a support system—a close, warm place for the whole student body, and a space for building community.

The Interpreters Club will prepare and train the students with the necessary skills and strategies to become interpreters. The students will use their native language to provide essential assistance and become part of a support system for parents and others in the community at large.

We offer special thanks to Naomi R. Cerre Principal at Lafayette, Dr. Tamara Alsace, Director of the Multilingual Department, Rocío Cortes, Bilingual Counselor from the Multilingual Department and Evelyn Arent, Bilingual Special Education Teacher for helping to get these clubs off the ground and for their endless advocacy for our bilingual /ELL population.

Upcoming Region VI events:

March 20th Lafayette High School in collaboration with Leadership Buffalo and NYSABE will hold their first Annual Leadership Summit. The topic of this summit will be "Leadership Challenge-Becoming Agents of Change". The focus of this summit will be Bullying Prevention and Leadership. The bullying workshop will be presented by James Newton, Tonawanda School principal. He is also an Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Trainer. The Leadership portion of the summit will be presented by David Mammano, President CEO of Next Step Magazine.

March 22nd Lafayette High School in collaboration with Parent Network and NYSABE presents Bullying and Students with Disabilities. This workshop will be presented in the following languages: Spanish, English and Burmese.

May 11th Annual Nominations Meeting and Social. King's Court Restaurant. 4:00—7:00 p.m.



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

**New York State University
Metropolitan Center for Urban Education
726 Broadway, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10003
Tel: 212-998-5104 Fax: 212-995-4199**

January 29, 2012

Mr. Ira Schwartz
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Accountability
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue, Room 365 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

On behalf of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), I would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft of the ESEA Waiver application, and express our concerns and recommendations as they relate to the education of English language learners (ELLs)/ bilingual students. The recommendations reflect the membership's experience and expertise in the implementation of research based practices aligned to Part 154 of the Commissioner's Regulations as well as the Common Core State Standards. They are also framed by basic principles, stated in the *Regent's Twelve Action Steps to Assist LEP/ELLs in Meeting the ELA Standards* and the *Essential Elements of Effective Programs for LEP/ELL*, that aim at ensuring programmatic and financial accountability as well as appropriate supports in the implementation of rigorous education for ELLs/bilingual learners.

The recommendations address the following:

Financial Accountability

- Encourage consolidation and coordination of all ELL generated funding, including Title I, Title II, Title III, Foundation Aid, Contract for Excellence, and local district funds, to ensure that all financial resources, at the district and school levels, are in fact spent on the education of ELLs/bilingual learners;
- Establish an accountability system that will provide transparency in the use of all ELL generated funds and ensure that the funds are used for the students for whom they were intended.

Programmatic Accountability

- Infuse awareness of the fact that within a single, statewide accountability system the ELL subgroup is not a monolithic entity. Instead, the ELL subgroup presents a variety of student characteristics, backgrounds, and needs (i.e. students with interrupted formal education, long-term ELLs, etc.) that calls for **differentiated** educational approaches, interventions, and supports;
- Take into consideration the learning path of ELLs in bilingual programs that are learning and achieving through the use of native language while acquiring English skills. Fair, accurate, and meaningful data would include native language assessments for progress monitoring and accountability;
- Consider the needs of newly arrived high school students who could participate in advanced placement; however, the lack of appropriate assessments in their native language prevents schools from assessing their skills and offering them appropriate advanced placements;
- Develop native language assessments for students who must demonstrate prior learning in their countries, or academic progress while participating in a bilingual education program in the USA;
- Develop ESL standards and Native Language Arts standards aligned to the Common Core Standards to ensure standards-based teaching and learning in all bilingual/ESL classes;

- Review current research that demonstrates the length of time that students need to develop academic language. Such studies provide evidence against the current practice of testing with the ELA exam, from 3rd through 8th grade, those students who have been in a USA school one year and a day. Request a waiver that eliminates this practice;
- Encourage districts and schools to develop realistic, yet rigorous Annual Measurable Objectives that take into consideration the length of time needed by ELLs to develop academic language, literacy, and content knowledge;
- Assess ELL's academic and linguistic progress in English by implementing a growth model that will compare them with other students in their subgroup, instead of comparing them with youngsters from the general English language population;
- Identify and reward schools whose ELLs/bilingual learners demonstrate significant linguistic and academic progress through growth measures;
- Analyze the trajectory of ELLs/bilingual learners whose progress is demonstrated through growth measures, and determine whether these students are on track toward the achievement of college and career ready standards;
- Offer flexibility in graduation time requirements to ELLs/bilingual learners who, due to unique circumstances, may require more than 4 years to graduate from high school, e.g. SIFE students.

Supports for Effective Learning and Teaching

- Create a single diagnostic tool that recognizes the needs of all subgroups and that will drive specific supports and interventions for ELLs/bilingual learners;
- Support and promote educational leadership for all educators working with ELLs/bilingual learners by requiring professional development, establishing coursework requirements for certification, and establishing regional network centers focusing specifically on the needs of ELLs/bilingual learners. These regional networks will provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development, and will develop initiatives promoting rigorous learning in bilingual and ESL classrooms.

In closing, NYSABE reiterates its commitment to the education of ELLs/bilingual learners and appreciates this opportunity provided to us to comment on the New York State ESEA Waiver application.

Sincerely yours,

María-Angélica Meyer

María-Angélica Meyer
NYSABE President, 2011-2012

Cc: Pedro J. Ruiz
NYSABE Executive Board and General Assembly
NYSABE Members

**Congratulations to the
National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
2012 Teacher of the Year:
Gregory M. Halzen**

Born in Gallup, New Mexico of parents from Iowa and New Jersey, both of European heritage (mostly Frisian), Mr. Halzen eventually came to teach social studies in a dual language middle school program at I.S. 93 Ridgewood (Queens). His motivation and passion for dual language education come from his own cross-cultural experiences growing up among speakers of Navajo and Spanish, experiences seeing segregated schools and other injustices during his Peace Corps service in the Balkans, and his pake's (grandfather's) stories about losing the family's language and culture in assimilation-minded schools that even changed his name because it wasn't "American" enough. He studied in Uruguay and Ecuador, graduated with a degree in Economics and Psychology from Elon University, worked with Habitat for Humanity in the Dominican Republic and in the Embassy of Mexico in Washington DC, and served as a Community and Organizational Development volunteer with the Peace Corps before graduating with a masters in Bilingual/Bicultural Education at Teachers College, Columbia University under advisers Dr. Ofelia Garcia, Dr. Patricia Velasco, & Dr. Maria Torres-Guzman. He has, in addition, been a founder of a Brooklyn community organization for Christian housing called Radical Living and has been active in efforts to prevent the eviction of neighbors with unfair foreclosures due to predatory lending. As a teacher at I.S. 93 Ridgewood Gregory has helped start a new dual language program by writing grants, running workshops for parents and other teachers, and dedicating himself to high quality instruction that promotes dignity and respect for our bilingual students in the community.

**Save The Dates!
NABE 2013
42nd Annual Conference
Coronado Springs Resort
Orlando, Florida
February 6-8 2013**

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



New York State Association for Bilingual Education MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY Please note: This information will be used to generate your membership card and future mailings. www.nysabe.net

I was referred by: [] NEW [] RENEWAL Name: Phone - Work: Home Address: Phone - Home: City: State: Zip: Email: Languages Spoken:

NYSABE Dues: [] \$35 Associate [] \$45 Regular [] \$75 Institutional [] \$100 Commercial Select your local region: [] Region 1-Long Island [] Region 2-New York City [] Region 3-Mid-Hudson [] Region 4-Capital/Central District [] Region 5-Rochester [] Region 6-Western New York I would like to volunteer: [] Advocacy [] Fundraising [] Special Event [] Membership [] Other

CONTRIBUTION: I would like to contribute to NYSABE's continuing efforts to strengthen Bilingual Education in New York with my tax-deductible contribution of: [] \$25 [] \$50 [] \$100 [] Other \$

Signature Date

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

Please make check payable to NYSABE and mail with this completed form to: NYSABE Treasurer 189 Eaton Road Rochester, NY 14617

THE ORGANIZATION

NYSABE is a multilingual, multicultural association founded in 1975, which represents all language groups and educational sectors throughout the State.

NYSABE unites educators, parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, the media and policy makers in a common interest — excellence and equity for language minority students.

NYSABE encourages the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of quality programs in bilingual education.

NYSABE promotes bilingual education as a process by which students achieve success through instruction in their native language while learning English.

NYSABE supports the belief that language pluralism and bilingual competence in English and other languages benefit the nation and all its citizens.

NYSABE believes that bilingual education is a critical component of contemporary education in the United States.

NYSABE is affiliated with NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education), SCOL, (New York State Council of Languages) and NYSCEA (New York State Council of Educational Associations).

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Join the NYSABE team. Through your membership dues and involvement, you have the opportunity to make integral contributions towards positive educational change for limited English proficient students. Membership benefits include:

NYSABE Journal • The yearly issue of this journal is a must for every library and member of the association. It publishes articles of professional and academic significance to bilingual education. Scholarly research, instructional methodology, techniques, and second language learning are the topics of articles by respected educators in the field of bilingualism.

NYSABE Newsletter • A quarterly issue bringing you updates on the activities of the association and its members; local, regional and state calendar of events; information on current legislative and policy developments related to the field of bilingual education.

Professional Development • NYSABE offers local and regional educational activities and the opportunity to network with other professionals in your field of interest.

Activism • The opportunity to work in Committees, Special Interest Groups, Language groups, and much more.

And the pride in belonging to the only association that protects the rights of the limited English proficient students participating in bilingual education.