



## NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools  
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June 1, 2014

2013-2014

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Ms. Deborah S. Delisle  
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Assistant Secretary Delisle:

On behalf of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), I am writing to express our full support to the New York State Education Department's requested ESEA waiver amendment in relation to English Language Learners.

### DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

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**María Encarnación**  
**Rose Mary Villarrubia-Izzo**  
Region VI/Western New York  
**Evelyn Arent**

The main goal of NYSABE is to advocate for equitable educational opportunities for all English language learners (ELLs)/bilingual students in New York State by promoting the professional skills of the educational community. To this end, the views presented in this letter reflect our members' experience and expertise in the implementation of research-based successful bilingual instructional practices aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

NYSABE urges the US Department of Education to approve the New York State Education Department's waiver renewal request to: 1) extend the exemption period for the English Language Arts (ELA) test for recently arrived ELLs for an additional year and 2) include the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in addition to the ELA as part of the Performance Index to better measure ELLs' progress.

#### Delegates-at-Large

**Md. Abul Kalam Azad**  
**Dr. Flor Calero**  
**Dr. Marguerite Lukes**  
**Dr. Claire Sylvan**  
**Melodie Valenciano**

During their first year of attendance at a school in the United States, ELLs are at the initial stage of understanding and using English; consequently, the English Language Arts (ELA) exam is not granular enough to capture their growth made in their acquisition of Language Arts skills. As expected, this practice generates discouraging effects among students and parents as well as educators since the granular data is not captured and therefore does not hold schools accountable in a meaningful way that will drive higher student outcomes and promote higher standards.

#### Parent-at-Large

**Nelly Y. García**

#### Language Delegates

**Dr. Immaculee Harushimana,**  
African Languages  
**Jahanara B. Azad,** Bengali  
**Monalisa Jean-Ferrari,** Haitian  
**Dr. Ved Malhotra,** Hindi  
**Eva García,** Spanish  
**Dr. G. Bahar Otcu-Grillman,**  
Turkish

We are strong advocates of holding teachers and schools accountable for assisting all students, including ELLs, in meeting high standards. However, appropriate measures must be used to achieve this goal. The NYSESLAT is now aligned with the Common Core Standards and was specifically designed to measure ELLs' progress toward proficiency in Language Arts. It also provides more accurate and useful information to teachers and administrators so they can design, plan, and implement appropriate Language Arts instruction. Using the NYSELAT *in addition to* the ELA as part of the Performance Index is appropriate.

On behalf of the students, families, educators, members of community-based and private entities whom NYSABE represents, we thank you for your commitment to address the educational needs of ELLs.

Sincerely,

*Yazmín Torres*

Yazmín Torres  
NYSABE President

C:

Libia Gil, Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director, OELA, US Department of Education

John B. King, Jr., Commissioner, NYS Education Department

Angélica Infante-Green, Associate Commissioner, Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies, NYSED

Ira Schwartz, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Accountability, NYSED

Leo Gómez, President, National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)

Santiago Woods, Executive Director, NABE

Yilin Sun, President, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL International Association)

Susan Bogdan-Ritty, President of the NYS Council of Educational Associations (NYSCEA)

Educational Organizations members of NYSCEA



