

Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

New York State Education Department

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November 2023 Newsletter



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Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

We often emphasize our commitment to being lifelong learners, a sentiment reinforced by the numerous statewide and national organizations that keep us informed about the latest research findings, theories, and applications in our field. These organizations play a pivotal role in cultivating our expertise and enriching the educational experiences of our students.

The 53rd annual conference of the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYSTESOL), which took place in Albany during the first week of November, was a testament to the importance of these organizations. The conference showcased outstanding presenters, inspiring keynote speakers, and recognized the unwavering dedication of teachers and administrators. Most notably, the event celebrated our students, highlighting the exceptional achievements of four students hailing from various regions of our state who were honored as winners of the student awards and scholarships.

One of the recipients had the privilege of attending the conference with her mother, a recent newcomer to our state. Her presence radiated gratitude, serving as a poignant reminder of the resilience and promise of our youth, and the importance of the opportunities that our educational system provides for this generation of new Americans.

A highlight of the event was the keynote address by our very own member of the NYS Board of Regents, Dr. Aramina Ferrer. Regent Ferrer captivated the audience with a personal journey that traversed her experiences as a young child, educator, and administrator. As a representative from the Bronx, 12th Judicial District, she shared her early encounters with language and how her journey in public service began as a translator for her family and neighbors. Regent Ferrer also shed light on the vital role played by the Board of Regents in supporting education for all students, and she provided insight into the groundbreaking work of the NYS Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures (BRC). To delve deeper into the commission's work, please visit

the [BRC website](#). You can also watch Dr. Ferrer's inspiring digital story by following [this link](#).

In closing, I want to reiterate the significance of your voice and your presence in the lives of our students. Beyond the genuine care you consistently demonstrate, I implore you to join us in advocating for the rights of our children under federal and state law. Every child is entitled to an equal educational opportunity, and language should never be a barrier to hinder their full participation. English Language Learners have the right to be guided by highly qualified, certified educators on their educational journey. They represent the future, and you are their advocates and champions.

With great respect and appreciation,

Elisa Alvarez





All Educators are Educators of ELLs

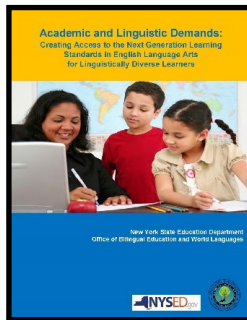
Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez and Regent Aramina Ferrer, along with many of our OBEWL and RBERN staff, strike a pose at the recent 53rd Annual TESOL Conference in Albany.






Academic and Linguistic Demands: Creating Access to the Next Generation Learning Standards in English Language Arts for Linguistically Diverse Learners (ALD)

November is launch month for the *Academic and Linguistic Demands: Creating Access to the Next Generation Learning Standards in English Language Arts for Linguistically Diverse Learners (ALD)*. Years in the making, this document will help teachers identify the words, phrases, and language structures embedded in the Next Generation Learning Standards so that they are able to provide standards-aligned, grade-level instruction to English Language Learners. In advance of its publications Executive Director Christa Stevenson and her team at the Long Island RBERN provided a 2-day turnkey professional learning experience regarding the ALDs to the entire OBEWL staff and our RBERN directors and specialists. We were also joined by representatives of teacher unions, including Katie Kurjakovic, ELL Specialist of the United Federation of Teachers and Susan Lafond, NBCT, Assistant in Educational Services of the New York State United Teachers.

The ALDs can empower English as a New Language (ENL), Bilingual Education, and also content area teachers to design instructional scaffolds to address individual students' needs by language modality and proficiency level. In addition to helping teachers scaffold instruction for English Language Learners, the ALDs also present pragmatic tools that are useful for all multilingual learners (MLs), including those with disabilities, and all students working toward achieving grade-level learning targets. The ALDs can also serve as a framework for schools to develop their own English as a New Language and Home Language Arts curricula aligned to the ELA standards. The ALD document is available now [using this link](#).



Objectives

-  Participants will become familiar with the layout and structure of the Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NYS Next Generation ELA Standards (ALDs) document
-  Participants will learn how to unpack the ALDs with teachers during professional learning
-  Participants will explore how the ALDs document is a unifying resource incorporating multiple NYSED resources

ALDs Turnkey Training - C. Stevenson - Nov. 2023 2



Using Data to Drive Classroom Instruction



Using data to drive classroom instruction has long been a required element for New York State educators. Recently the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) facilitated a discussion amongst the members of our English Language Learner (ELL) Leadership Council to create a better understanding of how data is being used by various districts to support English Language Learners. The goal was to assist ELL Administrators in helping English as a New Language (ENL), Bilingual Education, and content area teachers to identify the strengths and needs of individual students and to create appropriate scaffolds. These scaffolds should be constructed using data that creates a truly wholistic understanding of students' learning style and experience. This data can then be used in the classroom to create differentiated input and output and to facilitate flexible grouping and project-based learning based on culturally- and linguistically-responsive and social-emotional-learning concepts.

The ELL Leadership Council consists of nearly one hundred district leaders from across the state and includes members of our Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs), ELL/ENL Coordinators, Principals, Assistant Superintendents, and Superintendents. We began the session by dividing participants into small break out groups to discuss the following questions, record responses, and share with the rest of the Council:

1. How is data collected on ELLs in your school district?
2. How is data on ELLs analyzed, presented, and/or shared in your school district?
3. How does data inform instruction for ELLs in your school district?
4. Other than NYS Assessments, what tools and/or programs does your district use to gauge student performance in English Language Arts, Home Language Arts, and content areas?

Results from our discussion show that districts are using a variety of data sources (NYSITELL/NYSESLAT, 3-8 ELA/Math and Regents Scores, Running Records, IEPs, etc.). Many districts are purchasing English and Home Language computer-based programs which provide assessments and aggregated data for both languages. Various data is collected on both purchased and custom-made data dashboards available to educators, parents, and community members. These dashboards provide information on the progress of ELLs and also support the planning for targeted professional learning opportunities. Overall, feedback shows that NY State ELL Administrators appear to be following current trends in educational data usage which expands the formal definition of student data use to incorporate aspects of personal history and behavior.

Following is some information about sources of research and best practices that can help inform educators on improving data usage:

Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation

Authors Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan coined the term “Street Data” to discuss methods that help schools gain a wholistic view of the various needs of all their students. The authors explain that, while standardized test may be helpful in identifying areas in need of development, schools can benefit by expanding the definition of student data to incorporate aspects of personal history and behavior. This information can help schools gain a better understanding of their students' lives and the various needs and situations that can impact their academic success. This information is especially useful for students such as ELLs, Students With Disabilities, and others who deal with significant issues beyond the classroom that may not be readily apparent during instruction. Street Data can include family input such as surveys, interviews, informal conversations with parents or other caregivers, attendance, participation in programs or academic interventions, health, living environment, and past education. In developing Street Data, Safir and Dugan seek to provide educators with “concrete tools to shape an equity-centered instructional vision and a pedagogy of student voice.”

Using Data-Drive Decision Making to Support English Learner Students

On August 2, 2021 the article “Using Data-Drive Decision Making to Support English Learner Success” was published on the *Institute of Education Sciences' Regional Educational Laboratory Program blog*. In this article, authors Jeanette Simenson-Gurolnick and Jason Victor discuss what should be key data for monitoring the progress of ELLs, such as

proficiency levels in English language arts, mathematics, other content area assessments, and English Language Proficiency (ELP) exams. But they also encourage educators to focus just as much on teacher observations, explaining that “Teachers are often the best source of data for how students’ English language skills are evolving. And in fact, if we can get observations in more than on setting, then we can have a more complete picture of the students’ level of language mastery.”

Assessment & Reflection With ELLs—And All Students

In this excerpt from their book *The ESL/ELL Teacher’s Survival Guide*, published in the May 2012 edition of *EducationWeek*, authors Larry Ferlazzo and Katie Hull Sypniewski caution schools to “Be data-informed, not data driven.” As they further explain, “when schools are data-driven, they may make decisions that do not help students. However, in schools that are data-informed, test results are just one more piece of information that can be helpful in shaping instruction. Data-informed teachers will use assessment data to reflect on their practice, identify adjustments, and seek out the resources and knowledge necessary to make those changes.”

4 Ways Teachers Can Use Assessment Data to Inform Instruction

In this article posted on the *Instructure* website, author Michele Romano states her belief that, “If we solicit data from kids, we have a moral obligation to use that data to benefit kids.” Romano discusses the concept of data driven instruction by explaining that “Data-driven assessment is only valuable when the data is actionable. A continuous feedback loop that consists of planning, teaching, assessing, and adapting can help drive meaningful data-driven instruction. Formative assessment, which includes things like short quizzes, exit tickets, thumbs-up/thumbs-down, and interviews give teachers learning feedback in the moment on where students are in their learning. It gives the teacher the ability to adjust their teaching....”

Our ELL Leadership Council will continue this important discussion by studying the book *Street Data* as a group starting in 2024. The OBEWL Project Based Learning and Portfolio Assessment Strategic Planning Group will also continue to provide district leaders and ENL/Bilingual Education teachers with innovative classroom tools and assessments that support our linguistically diverse students.

Associate Commissioner Alvarez Visits Indigenous Language Programs

In order to support the aspect of Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages’ mission “to ensure that all Multilingual Learners achieve the highest level of language proficiency in English and in one or more other languages,” NYSED has worked for the last three years with the 11 districts across New York that offer programs in Indigenous languages. These districts are Akron, Buffalo, Center Moriches, Gowanda, LaFayette, Lake Shore, Massena, Niagara Wheatfield, Salamanca, Salmon River, and Silver Creek. This collaboration involves supporting and expanding these programs and supporting students to obtain the NYS Seal of Biliteracy in English and an Indigenous language. As November’s Indigenous Peoples Month celebration comes to a close, we wanted to highlight these vital programs that work with the Nations to ensure that students continue to learn these languages.

In order to begin to build relationships with these Indigenous language programs and the sovereign Nations of the peoples that speak these languages, Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez and her team visited the Seneca language programs at Silver Creek, Lake Shore, and Akron in April of 2023. During these visits, Ms. Alvarez had the opportunity to see Indigenous language programs in action and to speak directly with Seneca language teachers like Justin Cooke from Lake Shore and Scott Logan from Akron to hear about the challenges they are facing. Some of



these challenges were competition for instructional time with students, resources and funding for programs, and a very daunting teacher shortage. A special student panel was held during the visit to Lake Shore in which Seneca students expressed how important it is to them to be able to learn the language of their Nation and how the Seneca language is a vital part of their identity.

It is our hope moving forward to continue these partnerships to continue to support indigenous language programs throughout the state.

Claribel González, RBERN West Resource Specialist, Honored as Featured Speaker at La Cosecha 2023 Conference

by Michael Duffy, Executive Director, Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) West



Each November, Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLeNM) hosts its annual conference, *La Cosecha* (the Harvest). This conference draws thousands of bilingual educators from across the United States to share in best practices for dual language bilingual education. Here at RBERN West, we are so proud that DLeNM reached out this year to ask our very own Claribel González to be one of their [featured speakers](#) at this important national conference.

In her November 11th session, *Coding as Language: Amplifying Multiliteracies and Computational Thinking in Dual Language Education*, Ms. González highlighted her accomplishments working with dual language educators at School 33 in Buffalo, NY.

In her presentation, Ms. Gonzalez asks, “Can a coding platform serve as a vehicle to promote and expand the development of students’ languages, multiliteracies, and advocacy for quality 21st century education?” Her participants explored the journey of dual language learners utilizing a coding platform to create projects and games that amplify their experiences while simultaneously developing their languages and computational thinking skills. Participants reflected on creating future visions that respond to the shifts of our world and begin to transform dual language spaces as we continue to define education in the 21st century.

This is just one more accomplishment in a series of professional successes Ms. Gonzalez has achieved in recent years. She is also the renowned illustrator of several professional texts that feature her impactful and artistic sketchnotes, including titles such as *Collaboration and Co-Teaching for Dual Language Learners* (2023), *Co-Planning: Five Essential Practices to Integrate Curriculum and Instruction for English Learners* (2022), and *From Equity Insights to Action: Critical Strategies for Teaching Multilingual Learners* (2022).

The RBERN team values growth, innovation, and continuous improvement. We are grateful that Claribel’s innovative thinking pushes everyone to imagine what students *can* do when they are provided rich experiences and nurturing support.

The theme of this year’s La Cosecha conference was “Honoring Our Story: Reclaiming Our Past Through Empowerment and Action.”

The mission of DLeNM is “To develop, support, and advocate for high-quality dual-language enriched education in New Mexico and beyond.”

The agency’s vision states that “New Mexico’s rich linguistic and cultural resources must be developed as assets. Four decades of research provide a road map for developing a multilingual, multicultural citizenry. Providing an enriched multilingual education combined with high expectations has the greatest potential to close the achievement gap and prepare students for success in the 21st century (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Ramírez et al., 1991; Goldenberg, 2009). In addition to academic and career benefits, bilinguals possess increased cognitive flexibility and enriched problem-solving skills.

“Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLeNM) stands in solidarity with their community, no matter the race, gender identity, sexual orientation, creed, or class. They believe that everyone deserves to be treated with compassion and dignity and ALL children deserve, and should receive, equitable access to high-quality education.”



Adult English as a New Language (ENL) Classes – Closer Than You Think

by Dr. Ron Woo, Executive Director, New York State Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN)

As more asylum seeking and refugee families are coming into New York State, many non-English speaking adults are seeking free adult English as a New Language (ENL) classes. The classes may be closer than you know; though they are often oversubscribed.

NYSED's Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCESS) offers Adult ENL Instruction in listening, reading, oral and written communication, computer skills, and life skills for individuals with limited English proficiency through its Regional Adult Education Networks (RAEN). A list of the RAENs, including local BOCES, may be found [here](#).

The New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program (NYSESRP) provides enhanced services to newly arrived refugees in the U.S., Special Immigrant Visa holders, Afghan humanitarian parolees as well as their wives and children and asylees. It supports services such as English language training. You can view NYSESRP Program Providers [here](#).

The New York State Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) has created A Guide to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) for Immigrants which provides a list of organizations throughout New York State. Some of these CBOs offer free adult ESL classes. The list of CBO guides, which are organized by the New York State region, may be found [here](#).

Local public libraries, particularly in large urban municipalities, often offer free adult ESL classes in neighborhoods with high immigrant populations. Further, local community colleges will offer adult ESL classes for a nominal fee.

Lastly, ESSA allows local school district to allocate Title III funds to strengthen and increase parent, family, and community engagement in programs that serve English Language Learners and immigrant students. This includes the formation of support programs and initiatives that enhance the English language skills of adults, helping them to better integrate into the community and workforce. Information on allowable Title III expenditures can be found [here](#).



Clinically Rich-Intensive Teacher Institutes (CR-ITI) and Dual Certification Initiatives

With the continued influx of immigrant families and asylum seekers in all regions of New York state, more educators are choosing to become dually certified as bilingual and ESOL teachers. With continued teacher shortages, dual certification not only makes teachers more versatile and desirable, it also allows educators to better fulfill the needs of the ever growing English Language Learner (ELL) population and increasing Bilingual programs in New York State.

To address the critical issue of teacher shortages, NYSED has developed [Clinically Rich Intensive Teacher Institute](#) (CR-ITI) programs that provide credits needed to become dually certified English to Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) teachers or to add a Bilingual Education (BE) extension to a current teaching certification. These programs provide tuition assistance for enrollment in programs from various Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) that qualify teachers to test for additional certification in ESOL and/or a BE extension.

To accommodate districts facing a shortage of educators qualified to support the influx of newly arrived immigrants, the Board of Regents has adopted an emergency rule to amend the requirements towards earning a supplementary teaching certificate or supplementary extension in Bilingual Education. NYSED normally offers these supplementary credentials, which allow certified teachers to obtain an additional teaching certification in an area of demonstrated need, by passing their certification exam and completing a portion of their coursework up front and then finishing their remaining coursework over a five-year period, or a three-year period for supplementary extensions to existing teacher certifications. With the new flexibility approved by the Regents, for the duration of the 2023-24 school year content area-certified teachers who are seeking ESOL certification and ESOL-certified teachers who are seeking content area certification may attain supplementary certification upon completing *either* the examination requirement *or* the coursework requirement instead of both. This flexibility also allows teachers who are currently certified in a core content area to attain a Bilingual Education extension valid for three years upon passing the Bilingual Education Assessment (BEA); teachers who then enroll into an approved bilingual education teacher preparation program can receive a one-time renewal of this supplementary extension for an additional three years.

For information on the certification application process, certification requirements, and all related questions can be found by visiting [NYSED's Office of Teaching Initiatives Certification Unit](#).

CR-ITI and Dual Certification Resources

[List and Links to NYSED-supported CR-ITI programs](#)

[Board of Regents Item Relating to Flexibilities for the Supplementary Certificate and Supplementary Bilingual Education Extension Requirements in Response to the Influx of Recently Arrived and Asylum Seeking Students](#)

[Fact Sheet: Pathway for Content Area Teachers to Obtain Supplementary Certification in English](#)

[Fact Sheet: Pathway for ESOL Teachers to Obtain Content Area Supplementary Certification](#)

[Memo on New Pathways to Certification for Out-of-State Teachers and Leaders](#)

[Video of discussion regarding the benefits of CR-ITI programs](#)



News from Other NYSED Offices

Delivery of the 2022-23 School Year English Language Proficiency (ELP) Accountability Report

The 2022-23 school year (SY) results in English Language Proficiency (ELP) SIRS 113 Report is now available for informational purposes. Information displayed in this report will be used to make 2023-24 SY accountability status determinations. For information concerning SIRS reports and resources, please refer to the [L2RPT support page](#). If you need any further data-related assistance, please contact your Regional Information Center or Big 5 City School District data center. **For New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)**, please reach out to your [Director for Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners](#). **For All New York City Charter Schools**, please contact the [NYCPS Charter School Help Support Desk](#) and submit a ticket. *For all other questions, contact accountinfo@nysed.gov and specify "ELP Accountability Report" in the subject line of your email.*



ARP ESSER Sustainability and Support Team

As budget planning season gets underway please remember that the [ARP ESSER Sustainability and Support Team](#) is available to provide technical assistance to LEAs by offering insight, data, and resources to support the work of your LEA with sustaining ARP ESSER-funded activities. Our team can collaborate with you to discuss identifying alternate sources of funding along with financial sustainability. You will find resources available on our webpage such as the [Strategic Planning Workbook](#) which you may find to be helpful in measuring the effectiveness of ARP ESSER-funded activities and determining how you will prioritize these expenditures once the funds expire in Fall 2024.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** collects data on students' health risks and behaviors. **The New York State 2021 YRBS results were utilized to create [infographics](#) available** on our technical assistance center the [New York State Center for School Health's](#) website. Health Educators and School Administrators can utilize the infographics in curriculum development, and to improve student wellbeing and school climate. *For more information, please contact the New York State Center for School Health at nyscsh@monroe2boces.org or (585) 617-2380.*

Social Emotional Learning and Equity

The Office of Student Support Services released [Social Emotional Learning & Equity](#), the first in a series of 'SEL Snapshots' to support the implementation of New York's [Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks](#). These 2-page info sheets provide basic information about how Social Emotional Learning (SEL) integrations with other areas of focus. Look for *Adult SEL* and *SEL & Family and Community Engagement* in the coming weeks. *If you have any questions, please contact studentsupportservices@nysed.gov.*

Navigating PreK Day: May 2, 2024 – Registration Available Now

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) will be holding a free, in-person professional development day at the New York State Cultural Education Center in Albany on May 2, 2024. The agenda will build off Navigating PreK Day 2023, but attendance at previous events is not required. Topics will include up-to-date 2024-2025 budget information, changes to Education Law, collaboration, students with disabilities, and the opportunity to network and meet 1:1 with OEL liaisons. This one-day session will be open to school administrators, business officials, professionals, and specialists responsible for Prekindergarten programs. Registration is now open for Navigating PreK Day 2024 [at the event registration link](#).

Need local support? Contact your local RBERN!

The RBERNs support OBEWL's mission to ensure that all students' individual educational paths and socio-economical needs are met in multiple languages leading them to college, career, and civic readiness. They are NYSED's key providers of guidance, technical assistance, and support to New York State Districts, Charter Schools, Non-public Schools, and other organizations in the development of programs for MLs.

- [New York State Language RBERN \(statewide\)](#)
- [Capital District Region RBERN at Questar III BOCES](#)
- [Hudson Valley RBERN at SW BOCES](#)
- [Long Island RBERN at Eastern Suffolk BOCES](#)
- [Mid-State RBERN at OCM BOCES](#)
- [Mid-West RBERN at Monroe 2 - Orleans BOCES](#)
- [New York City RBERN at Fordham University](#)
- [West Region RBERN at Erie 1 BOCES](#)

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The mission of the New York State Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages is to ensure that all New York State English Language Learners (ELLs) attain the highest level of academic success and that all Multilingual Learners (MLs) – which include ELLs, Former/Ever ELLs, World Languages students, and heritage speakers of World Languages – achieve the highest level of language proficiency in English and in one or more other languages.

