



NEW MEXICO BILINGUAL COMPETENCIES RECOMMENDATIONS

2024

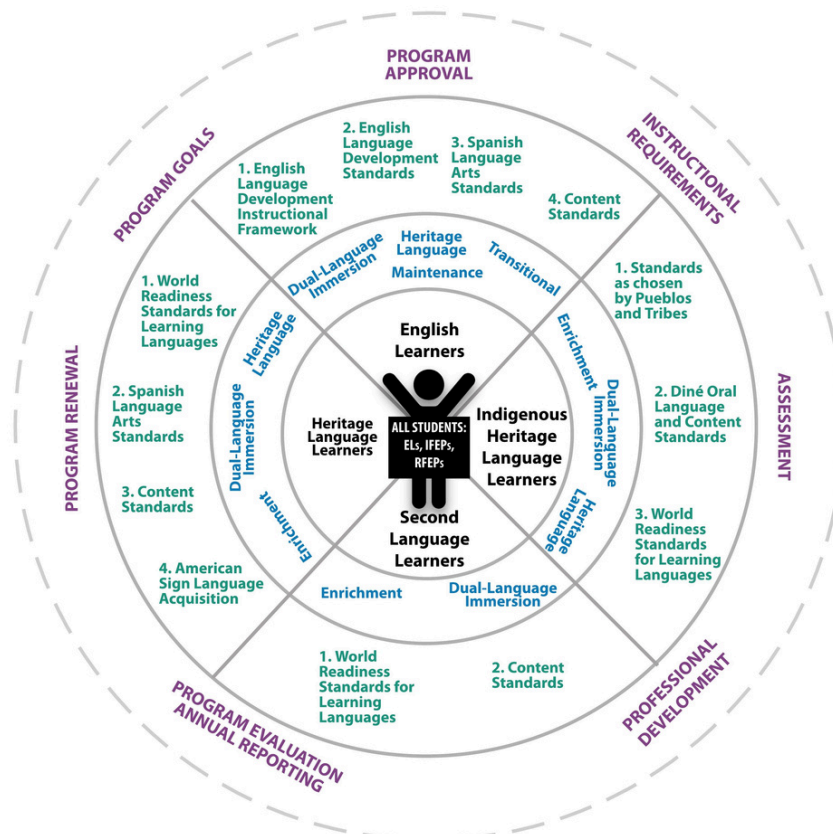


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NEW MEXICO BILINGUAL EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES RECOMMENDATION WORK GROUP

The New Mexico Bilingual Competencies Work Group consists of diverse New Mexican educators with a collective aim to ensure that the bilingual licensure process is open to more than Spanish-English bilingual educators but to all educators in New Mexico to support and uplift the rich linguistic and cultural heritage of New Mexican communities, thus offering multiple pathways for licensure to all teachers. This can be accomplished by creating and adding multiple opportunities for assessments and coursework. Lastly, there is a need to utilize current research in the licensure process to implement current pedagogical practices that best serve New Mexican bi-multilingual students. In this document, we refer to our students in New Mexican communities as bi-multilingual to remember our past and move toward our future. Bilingual education has a long history in New Mexico and the US, however we also recognize that we want to open pathways to multilingualism for New Mexican students.

This group dedicated the 2023-2024 school year to research and discourse on how to refine and enhance New Mexico's Bilingual Education Teacher Competencies for educator licensure. Meeting once a month, we thoroughly examined language development and current bilingual education pedagogy and practice across the US and delved deep into the current bilingual competencies used for licensure. We also evaluated the courses offered by New Mexico's state colleges of education to ascertain what coursework is currently used to prepare bilingual teachers for licensure. Our efforts included two face-to-face meetings and a presentation at the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (NMABE), where we engaged with the local community and gathered valuable feedback. This group also did work outside of the meeting time, completing research and writing for the purpose of these recommendations.

NEW MEXICO BILINGUAL EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES RECOMMENDATION WORK GROUP

The bi-multilingual population of the world continues to increase, and New Mexican cultural and linguistic identities have been affirmed through the Yazzie-Martinez decision; however, we still have a shortage of bilingual educators. Most educational systems, while implementing bilingual education, have a very superficial understanding of application and support of programs and the educators who serve in the programs (Bobroff, 2019). Every state in the union is growing into a society of many languages and cultures, showcasing the importance of and explaining the shortage of high-quality professionals versed in language and culture. Endorsed teachers of bi-multilingual learners have work loads that differ from those of their colleagues who teach in a single language, namely English. They must understand language development, biliteracy development, translanguaging, and the complexities of existing in multiple cultural, linguistic, and racial spaces. They translate materials, serve as liaisons for parents and monolingual staff, and assess and plan for student growth in content and language. In addition to teaching children, endorsed teachers of bi-multilingual students are tasked with advocating for bi-multilingualism, staying current with bilingual education law, examining and explaining cultural criticism, and promoting diversity.

New Mexico has unique heritage languages that are foundational to our state's cultures. This singular language identity cannot be determined with the current single assessment, and limiting educator licensing assessment options reduces the number of certified bilingual teachers in our schools. Assessing home and target languages through a combination of widely used language assessments like New Mexico's Prueba de Español, OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview), and ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test, certification by a sovereign nation, obtaining New Mexico's State Seal of Bilingualism and Biliteracy, and life experience would open the door to a variety of teachers with expertise in more diverse languages.

While Indigenous languages are a precious resource in New Mexico, an understanding of the concept of oracy is missing from the New Mexico Competencies for Bilingual Educators. While oracy typically focuses on expression through speech, for Indigenous cultures, language, and storytelling are essential to insight about life itself (Dr. Berlinda Begay, personal communication, 2024). For this reason, oracy must be included in the revised competencies.

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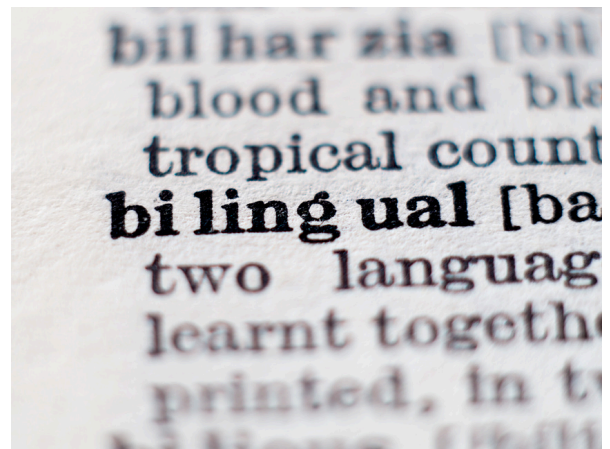
There is a wealth of knowledge and experience among professionals, as well and paraprofessionals, in education-related fields, that could generate quality teachers of bi-multilingual students through examining and enhancing educational pathways and assessments that meet the needs of non-traditional students and giving credit for work experience in New Mexico. It is urgent that all teachers of all languages of instruction have a pathway that supports their development and application of the sociocultural, historical, geographical, and sociopolitical identities of our diverse populations through coursework and/or assessment, and professional learning. In addition to demonstrating competence in language and culture, teachers of bi-multilingual students must be well-versed in bilingualism, bilingual Education, and pedagogy in dual language education, heritage language, and language revitalization efforts. While New Mexico requires coursework of this nature for both TESOL and bilingual education endorsements, the class content and credit hours must be aligned and consistent across programs. Finally, there is no substitute for time spent in the classroom; every teacher of bi-multilingual students must have equitable hours in observation, practicum, and student teaching. As the bi-multilingual population of the United States grows, New Mexico's linguistic identity continues to diversify and grow. We should provide opportunities for other language groups as well. Our Indigenous languages and Spanish-English communities must be provided with the critical bi-multilingual educators they need to flourish in our New Mexican communities and beyond.. Educator preparation programs can no longer underestimate the importance of preparing pre-service teachers in bi-multilingual instruction.

Through researching and presenting the following five updates this group recommends New Mexico's competencies reflect current bilingual education research as required course work including oracy, translanguaging and biliteracy practices, and expand the definition of a bilingual educator in New Mexico by diversifying pathways and assessment requirements to include the English side of instruction. TESOL is no longer sufficient in serving the bi-multilingual students of New Mexico.

FIRST RECOMMENDATION: COMMIT TO A REVISION CYCLE THAT UTILIZES CURRENT RESEARCH

Update New Mexico's Bilingual Education Teacher Competencies to reflect current research in bilingual education, language development, the inclusion of critical consciousness, identity development, and culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies. Revisiting the competencies should be done every three to five years to maintain current research and meet the changing needs of New Mexico's culturally and linguistically diverse learners. We recommend that a study group, or taskforce, consisting of a diverse group of stakeholders including higher ed and in-service bilingual educators be charged with this review in collaboration with the Department of Education of New Mexico's Language and Culture Division.

Reflect Current Research in Bilingual Education



RATIONALE FOR FIRST RECOMMENDATION

Research revealed new best practices in bilingual education, specifically in the practice of Critical Consciousness and Oracy (New Mexico Administrative Code 2000). Updating the New Mexico Competencies for Entry-Level bilingual education teachers to reflect current research and the state's unique needs will ensure that the growing population of bi-multilingual students is taught by high-quality educators. The Yazzie-Martinez decision also mandates that New Mexico's schools provide multicultural-bilingual education to all students, focusing on to students who are English language learners (Bobroff, 2019).

Bilingual education teachers serve as advocates for their students and communities, making an understanding of Critical Consciousness and continued learning about bilingual education theory essential. Deficit language ideologies can arise when teachers are uninformed, leading to discrimination against language minority students, who must then overcome these biases to achieve academic success (Scherzinger & Brahm, 2023). As Paulo Freire stated, critical consciousness involves "an in-depth understanding of the world, allowing for the perception and exposure of social and political contradictions," and taking action against oppression.

Oracy is crucial to the reclamation of Indigenous languages as written versions were created to facilitate colonization. The concept of oracy as bilingual Education is missing from the current competencies and has been included in detail in this document.

New Mexico has a unique opportunity to support and grow bilingual Educators who specialize in heritage languages, equipping their students with the skills to navigate a linguistically diverse future. New Mexico can empower its communities to thrive in a multilingual world by embracing translanguaging and honoring linguistic identity.

SECOND RECOMMENDATION: HONOR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES THROUGH THE INCLUSION OF ORACY

To effectively nurture and modernize New Mexico's Bilingual Competencies and embrace the state's diverse linguistic landscape, it is crucial to prioritize oracy, integrating it into the training and development of both Native and non-Native bilingual Educators. This approach aligns with Indigenous pedagogy, supports decolonization, and fosters a deeper understanding of language as a vital element of sociolinguistic and cultural identity.



Oracy, with its emphasis on spoken language, plays a crucial role in the development of biliteracy, supporting students to engage with and understand the nuances of language(s) through dialogue, discussion, storytelling, and listening to name a few of the practices of oracy development.

RATIONALE FOR SECOND RECOMMENDATION

To effectively modernize the New Mexico Bilingual Competencies to better reflect the state's diverse linguistic landscape, there is a need to prioritize oracy, which is currently not emphasized in the bilingual Competencies. By explicitly integrating oracy into the training and development of both Native and non-Native bilingual and heritage teachers, we can foster a deeper understanding of how language functions not only as a tool for communication but as a vital element of sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and identity development. This approach aligns with the principles of Indigenous pedagogy, also known as Indigegogy, which advocates for teaching methods that are rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems and values that will support all bilingual programs in New Mexico. Emphasizing oracy in this context supports the decolonization of education by recognizing and valuing the oral traditions and practices inherent to many New Mexican Indigenous communities as well as Spanish-speaking communities and other community languages, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and culturally sustaining educational framework.

The advancement of oracy skills among bilingual educators is crucial for embracing a decolonial and critical pedagogical stance that respects and integrates the linguistic diversity of New Mexico. By making oracy a central component of our teaching methodologies, we acknowledge and empower educators to create environments where these identities are affirmed and celebrated. Such a strategy is in harmony with decolonial pedagogies, which seek to dismantle the colonial structures that have historically marginalized Indigenous languages and cultures as well as Spanish and other languages in New Mexico. Through a deliberate focus on oracy, educators can better serve the needs of bi-multilingual students by providing them with the sociolinguistic tools needed to navigate and contribute to their communities effectively, thus reinforcing the sociocultural component essential to both Indigenous pedagogies and critical pedagogies. In the case of Indigenous space the practice goes beyond the Western ideology of storytelling and includes our own creation stories that build our society.

In New Mexico, where the tapestry of cultures and languages is rich and diverse, enhancing oracy among bilingual-heritage educators creates a vital bridge between the Indigenous past and present, facilitating a deeper, more holistic connection for students to their cultural and linguistic heritage and identities; in Indigenous spaces oracy reflects a much deeper connection to our linguistic and cultural identities, it connects us to the purpose of why our language was given by the holistic beings along the historical timeline of our creation. The language(s) sustains the songs and prayers that were given as is today. The spirit of the language(s) gives life to our stories and it ensures they are protected as the language(s) in many forms is what we still have left today.

RATIONALE FOR SECOND RECOMMENDATION

Similarly, in Spanish bilingual spaces, teachers could incorporate traditional oral histories or cuentos that not only improve oracy but also connect students with the historical and contemporary experiences of Spanish-speaking communities in New Mexico and beyond while maintaining a deeper connection to the language practices of the home. Even in English and other language instructional spaces, this might manifest as storytelling sessions where students are encouraged to share their cultural narratives from their community, practicing oracy skills while immersing themselves in the linguistic structures and vocabularies of English.

Oracy, with its emphasis on spoken language, plays a crucial role in the development of biliteracy, supporting students to engage with and understand the nuances of language(s) through dialogue, discussion, storytelling, and listening to name a few of the practices of oracy development. This engagement is particularly critical in bilingual Education, where students are navigating the complexities of learning in two or more languages. The connection between oracy, biliteracy, and academic multiliteracies is not currently evident in the bilingual Competencies outlined for New Mexico's educators, nor is it sufficiently based on current research in second language development, bilingual Education, and Indigenous language revitalization. Integrating oracy practices and defining such practices in the NM Bilingual Competencies would be beneficial for educators to support them while fostering environments where students actively use all of their languages in context(s) of school, home, and community practices, thereby enhancing their ability to distinguish how and when to shift in their speaking, reading, listening and writing domains through authentic and meaningful communication(s).

Addressing the unique cultural and linguistic spaces in the Bilingual Competencies of New Mexico requires an understanding of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), biliteracy development, translanguaging pedagogies, and Indigenous pedagogy, also known as Indigegogy that centers the practices of our languages and cultures in New Mexico. These approaches acknowledge a dynamic process of biliteracy by moving between different linguistic and cultural spaces for making knowledge. Learning is not just about language acquisition and development, but about connecting with the cultural, linguistic and intellectual traditions of both the Indigenous past and the global present. Based on current research in second language development, bilingual Education, and Indigenous language revitalization, the Bilingual Competencies outlined for New Mexico's educators inadequately demonstrate the interconnection among oracy, biliteracy, and academic multiliteracies. By prioritizing oracy development, biliteracy, and academic multiliteracies in the New Mexico Bilingual competencies could impact all bilingual programs in New Mexico. We could affirm the value of New Mexico's diverse linguistic and cultural students and support their development to be speakers of their language(s) and develop their bi-multiliteracies who are capable of navigating and contributing to the rich cultural and linguistic weavings of their communities.

THIRD RECOMMENDATION: EMPHASIZE THE VALUE OF A BILINGUAL TEACHING LICENSE BASED ON SPECIFIC COURSEWORK FOCUSED ON MULTIPLE EFFECTIVE BILINGUAL EDUCATION PEDAGOGIES.

Require coursework in translanguaging practices and pedagogy, biliteracy/multiliteracy, multimodality, dual-language, bilingual Indigenous education, and language and culture.

Currently, New Mexican institutions of higher education that prepare teachers shall deliver the competencies in a PED approved endorsement program within a range of twenty-four (24) to thirty-six (36) semester hours of credit. For secondary, middle-level and pre K-12 specialty area licensed teachers, a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours must be upper division credit.

Our research and analysis indicate that New Mexican postsecondary institutions give higher priority to TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) compared to bilingual Education in terms of coursework as there are many more classes offered at the institutions with a TESOL focus instead of a bilingual one. While we recognize the importance of TESOL, in the state of New Mexico we must center bilingual Indigenous multicultural Education in our efforts to meet the needs of our bi-multilingual communities. While requirements for New Mexico bilingual and TESOL endorsements are vital to support high-quality programs, they should not be limiting factors that increase the shortage of teachers of bi-multilingual students.



RATIONALE FOR THIRD RECOMMENDATION

To foster biliteracy instruction, translanguaging, as a resource, can revolutionize biliteracy instruction in Dual-Language bilingual Education (DLBE) at the New Mexico Colleges of Education. By embracing a flexible model of biliteracy, students utilize their entire linguistic repertoire to engage with texts in different languages, fostering deeper comprehension and literacy skills.

A case study featuring a third-grade DLBE teacher in New Mexico illustrates this approach. Initially, the teacher kept languages separate but eventually integrated content from English literacy and social studies into Spanish literacy instruction. The creation of a translanguaging space, called Los Círculos, allowed multi-bilingual students to merge their learning across content areas, enabling holistic biliteracy development. Adopting and implementing a versatile approach to biliteracy is essential for bilingual educators to maintain the diverse literacy practices of multi-bilingual students. Embracing such a model has the potential to align with students' own translanguaging, bridging the divides that often force them to navigate between languages without respite. This approach enables teachers to comprehensively document students' linguistic abilities and conduct assessments that are equitable. This would provide pathways to all teachers to become bilingual educators and incorporate more languages into the endorsement, not solely Spanish.

The New Mexico Colleges of Education bilingual programs should consider focusing on fostering a bi-multilingual environment within school facilities and classrooms, incorporating the language practices of all students and families. This involves identifying existing language practices and making them visible and tangible. Instructional approaches should be developed that affirm students culturally, racially, and linguistically, while leveraging their translanguaging practices. This happens when instructors modify existing curricula and teaching methods to highlight students' bilingual/multilingual abilities and knowledge, incorporating these aspects into their learning experiences. Professors' assessment practices should be revised to account for students' translanguaging abilities, allowing them to utilize their translanguaging skills continuously. This can be achieved through a translanguaging-oriented approach to assessment, which involves various stakeholders and provides access to resources for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Professional development opportunities should accompany pre-service teacher instruction and be offered to deepen and promote a translanguaging approach, aiming to reconceptualize language as a decolonizing process and empower the language practices of minoritized multi-bilingual populations. This can be achieved through book studies, Professional Learning Communities, leadership teams, guest speakers, and discussions on translanguaging.

RATIONALE FOR THIRD RECOMMENDATION

The New Mexico Colleges of Education should address the challenges faced by emergent bi-multilingual students in the classroom and leverage translanguaging as a pedagogical tool to support their language acquisition and content learning. Research indicates that utilizing students' home languages alongside English instruction can enhance their understanding and retention of newly acquired words. By incorporating translanguaging practices, such as providing instructions in English, supplemented with key terms and phrases in students' home languages, teachers can create a more inclusive learning environment. Furthermore, exposure to multiple languages in the classroom benefits not only emergent multi-bilinguals but also native English speakers by fostering awareness of linguistic diversity.

This exposure may inspire students to pursue language learning opportunities, thereby expanding their career prospects and cultural understanding. Bilingual educators with ideological and linguistic clarity can encourage the continued development of students' proficiency in both languages through explicit and collaborative teaching approaches (Alfaro, 2019). By embracing translanguaging in the classroom, students can leverage their home language backgrounds as assets for English learning and academic success.



FOURTH RECOMMENDATION: INCORPORATE MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Create multiple avenues for the language other than English assessment to ensure New Mexico bilingual educators meet updated and comprehensive standards, reflecting current research and best practices in bilingual Education.



RATIONALE FOR FOURTH RECOMMENDATION

Teachers who are proficient in social, professional, pedagogical, content, and academic home language proficiency are more likely to experience student growth. One of the most important competencies for teachers of bi-multilingual students is knowledge and skill in language. This includes being proficient in daily, professional, pedagogical, cultural, and academic language in both the target language and home language. Research shows home language proficiency is directly related to target language proficiency (Scherzinger & Brahm, 2023). It is essential that teachers of bi-multilingual students are adept in more than one language as demonstrated through assessment, coursework, or certification by a sovereign nation. Teachers of bi-multilingual students who are from diverse backgrounds are of greater benefit to their students.

Educators pursuing a bilingual endorsement must have access to a range of assessments and a portfolio option in order to accurately gauge language proficiency. Language proficiency must be demonstrated through a valid and reliable assessment in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Relying solely on La Prueba de Español is insufficient as bilingualism in New Mexico extends beyond Spanish to include Native American, Modern and Classical languages. Recognizing these languages in the bilingual endorsement acknowledges their linguistic value, fostering multilingual educators who will, in turn, develop bi-multilingual students.

Portfolios offer an alternative pathway for demonstrating biliteracy and bilingualism, showcasing language growth, self-reflection on bilingualism, and language proficiency. Portfolios provide a multidimensional view of an individual's progress and encourage self-reflection, linking instruction and assessment. According to "A Framework for Portfolio Assessment In the Foreign Language Classroom", portfolios "demonstrate what an individual knows, what they can do, and offer a multidimensional perspective of the individual's progress over time, encouraging self-reflection, participation, and linking instruction and assessment" (Fullerton.edu). This method supports comprehensive evaluation beyond standardized testing, aligning with contemporary educational practices that value holistic assessment.

As the state of New Mexico moves to a more inclusive assessment of teachers with the use of portfolios, we recommend that in language proficiency of bilingual teachers the same could be applied as portfolios are effective in assessing language proficiency. They allow for personalized feedback and the demonstration of a range of skills in various contexts. The use of portfolios in language education has been supported by various educational institutions and research, highlighting their ability to reflect students' authentic language use and development over time. For instance, the Utah State Board of Education uses World Languages Competency Portfolio Rubrics to assess language proficiency, emphasizing the interactive and reflective nature of portfolios.

RATIONALE FOR FOURTH RECOMMENDATION

The current New Mexico Bilingual Teacher Competencies require teachers to maintain an eighth-grade level of oral and written home-language skills while also stating that competent teachers “communicate effectively” and “demonstrate a high level of accuracy” when speaking the home language. This eighth-grade level requirement is contradictory and insufficient. We recommend taking the grade level out of the narrative and utilizing the corresponding language of the assessment.

Various assessments such as [AVANT Stamp for Educators](#), [AAPPL](#), [WPT](#), and [OPI](#) measure language proficiency according to ACTFL standards. These tools provide clear, objective evidence of a teacher’s proficiency, making the certification process more efficient and reliable., and, therefore should be used in addition to [La Prueba de Espanol](#) for assessing language proficiency in New Mexico’s bilingual Teachers. Scores for bilingual Teachers should be in the Advanced Low to Superior range depending on the specific assessment. In addition to recommending a portfolio option, the work group created an example of a [Portfolio](#) assessment that can be found at the above link. Assessment should continue to be an option for demonstrating language proficiency.

For Indigenous languages, proficiency certification requires Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations to develop their own methods for determining language proficiency, with districts and charter schools maintaining updated agreements to recognize this certification. This ensures that the determination of Tribal language proficiency remains within the authority of the respective communities.

By incorporating these diverse assessment methods, New Mexico can ensure its bilingual educators are well-equipped to meet the needs of bi-multilingual students, honoring the state’s rich linguistic heritage.



FIFTH RECOMMENDATION: RE-CREATE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BILINGUAL EDUCATOR AND CREATE DIVERSE PATHWAYS TO INCREASE LICENSE ELIGIBILITY

Establish requirements for many distinct pathways for a multitude of bilingual teachers utilizing a new and more relevant definition of a bilingual educator as one who teaches bi-multilingual students, teaches in a language other than English, or is bi-multilingual themselves, or monolingual but teaching in English to bi-multilingual students must become part of the bilingual education narrative.



RATIONALE FOR FIFTH RECOMMENDATION

The group recommends creating alternative models of certification to alleviate the shortage of bilingual teachers nationwide and ensure that all students have access to high-quality bilingual education.

Often, factors such as "marketability" and job security, coupled with market-driven entrepreneurial institutions, conspire to weaken the essence of many excellent bilingual education professionals and programs (Midobuche, 1999). A large and still-growing field of research indicates that bilingual education models are the best way to support ELs develop their home languages, learn English, and succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. Additive bilingual approaches are far more meaningful when they are developed upon a foundation that respects the contributions of the child's entire linguistic repertoire.

This group researched the process of bilingual licensure in multiple states around the US. The research indicated that each state had a common theme of multiple pathways including all levels of teachers' reciprocity. Around the country bilingual endorsements are available for Native American languages and Modern and Classical language teachers with licensing options for more than 23 languages. Some states such as Massachusetts require school administrators who evaluate bilingual teachers to have the bilingual endorsement. New Mexico currently has programs that offer a maintenance, dual language immersion, heritage, transitional, and enrichment models. However, Modern and Classical language instruction has traditionally not been included as an enrichment bilingual model. Because Modern and Classical language teachers are also bi-multilingual, and teach all four domains of a targeted language, including oracy and culture, this group recommends that Modern and Classical Language courses should be part of the enrichment bilingual model to cultivate multilingual classrooms in New Mexico.



RATIONALE FOR FIFTH RECOMMENDATION

The more language teachers we have, the more opportunities the students will have to become multilingual. The need for bilingual education teachers is especially dire. “Experts say the dearth of Bilingual Education teachers in the U.S. stems from a lack of role models, inaccessible and unaffordable higher ed teacher training programs and weak academic language skills among would-be educators: (Tamez-Robledo, 2024).

These are some examples of How to Grow Bilingual Pathways. While New Mexico is currently implementing many of these steps, efforts need to be reinforced and extended funding provided.

1. Federal and state policymakers should launch new grant programs explicitly targeted at growing bilingual teacher training pipelines and increasing the linguistic diversity of the U.S. teaching force.
 2. State policymakers should examine their state licensure system to ensure that each of its components is essential to supporting high-quality instruction—and that no components worsen bilingual teacher shortages.
 3. Federal, state, and local policymakers should invest resources in alternative teacher certification programs, particularly those tailored specifically to the needs of bilingual teacher candidates.
 4. State and local policymakers should also structure scholarships, fellowships, and other financial aid programs to cover the cost of that coursework, with a specific focus on growing bilingual teachers.
 5. Local policymakers should establish specific bilingual Teacher pathways for current bilingual staff—particularly paraprofessionals and administrators. (Williams & Zabala). NM currently does not require administrators to hold a bilingual endorsement to oversee and administer bilingual programs. This has raised several concerns, including the proper allocation of funding for bilingual Programs, the reduction of these programs due to a lack of understanding and support from school administrators, and the negative impact on teacher evaluations stemming from insufficient comprehension of updated language practices. Furthermore, there is a lack of instructional and pedagogical support from this gap in knowledge from administrators of bilingual programs.
- To better serve our Native American Communities in the State of NM, the state should increase the pathways to certify more Native American teachers to develop DLI programs where students can learn their native language in schools (Francis, 2002).

The workgroup created a document with multiple pathway examples that can be referenced here.



CONCLUSION- ACTIONABLE STEPS

In order for New Mexico’s bi-multilingual learners to be educated by highly qualified professionals, cultural and linguistic diversity must be promoted, honored, and explored by implementing more bilingual programs around the state. We have enrichment programs, heritage programs, maintenance programs, transitional programs, and dual language programs. There is a program to fit every school in New Mexico and there is no excuse for every school not to have at least one or more implemented on their school sites. We believe these programs are not implemented to their fullest due to lack of understanding of bilingual education, licensing issues, and a lack of professional development support. These recommendations offer the department of education the opportunity to correct those issues.

The educational background and experience of local leaders must match the population being served. It is not only legally imperative but educationally sound to support the development of new teachers of bi-multilingual students with many layers of support. To that order, this group recommends the legislature work with PED licensure and New Mexico Schools of Education to change bilingual educator Competencies to reflect required coursework, ensuring an understanding of oracy and current multi-bilingual education research. The group also recommends an expansion of what it means to be a bilingual Educator in New Mexico by diversifying pathways and assessment requirements and enabling more students access to high quality bilingual multicultural education.



CONCLUSION- ACTIONABLE STEPS

With that said, it has come to our attention that there are other areas of work to be done to improve bilingual education. The following are recommendations that are not tied to the competencies but to the larger work of bilingual multicultural education in New Mexico.

- There is currently no consistency among New Mexico school districts concerning additional time and compensation for endorsed teachers of bi-multilingual students. It is imperative that the state of New Mexico mandate and fund consistent stipends for teachers and administrators taking on this crucial task. While additional pay will ensure that all teachers of bi-multilingual students are highly qualified, additional support is necessary.
- Encouraging “Grow Your Own” initiatives in New Mexico schools is the best way to recruit teachers with rich cultural and linguistic experience tailored to our unique spaces. Bridging middle and high school Teacher Academy students’ educational journeys with tuition assistance, funded student teaching, and cultural and career support through college campus connections will encourage the successful return of our graduates to our classrooms as highly qualified educators.
- Leadership unfamiliar with the demands of teaching in a bi-multilingual classroom cannot adequately support their staff. New Mexico must develop a pathway for administrators with expertise in educating bi-multilingual populations to ensure that classroom teachers are met with understanding, resources, and inspiration.



CONCLUSION- ACTIONABLE STEPS

Lastly, we noted as diverse group of bilingual educators from across the state there is a discrepancy between the numbers of bi-multilingual learners and their endorsed teachers is alarmingly vast; even more so the discrepancy between knowledgeable administrators on the applications and implications of bilingual education is even more alarming. As all of us had multiple accounts of administrators not understanding the implementation of bilingual programs as well as how they need to be instructionally supported. Thus, leading us to recommend that some sort of preparation for administrators needs to be put into place and to offer more avenues of bilingual educators to become bilingual administrators with an emphasis on how to administer and support a bilingual model in the distinct geographic areas of New Mexico.

Thoughtful time from a dedicated, careful work group researched, organized, discussed, drafted, researched some more, solicited community input and revised for the 2023-24 school year in order to create the recommendations before you. Updating the New Mexico bilingual Competencies is timely, not difficult and what is best for our students and communities. Creating more equitable pathways for more teachers to attain a bilingual endorsement will take time but will be the best action to continue to serve our bi-multilingual students.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to the Bilingual Education of New Mexican children.

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