

ISBE DUAL LANGUAGE BILINGUAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE DRAFT 2

Executive Summary

Introduction

Pursuant to Public Act 104-0266, the Illinois State Board of Education presents this guidance document. ISBE's role includes developing and issuing comprehensive guidance to school districts by December 15, 2026, which addresses the establishment and expansion of dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs. Program structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability, staff quality and professional development, family and community engagement, and support and resources to ensure effective implementation across Illinois districts are addressed in this guidance (Illinois General Assembly, 2023).

ISBE developed this guidance to support districts while advancing bilingual education that serves all students through research-based practices and evidence-informed implementation strategies. (Thomas & Collier, 2004). The guidance provides frameworks, tools, and expectations necessary for an effective program delivery.

Rationale for DLBE

DLBE offers students the opportunity to develop high levels of academic achievement, bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence. Research has consistently shown that DLBE programs accelerate English language acquisition while sustaining and developing students' home languages, leading to long-term gain in reading, writing, and overall academic performance (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

DLBE programs in Illinois exemplify content-based language education models that effectively promote bilingualism and academic achievement (Genesse & Lindholm-Leary, 2013; Genesse & Lindholm-Leary, 2021).

Beyond academic outcomes, multilingualism equips students with skills that prepare them for a diverse workforce and global economy. The ability to navigate multiple languages and cultures supports cognitive flexibility, collaborative problem-solving, and cross-cultural communication, competencies that benefit all students, not only emergent bilingual learners (Garcia & Tyler, 2010; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Paris & Alim, 2017).

As Illinois continues to welcome an increasingly diverse student population, expanding DLBE programs responds both to immediate educational needs and broader state priorities around equity, workplace preparation, and community engagement.

Scope and Methodology

The development of this guidance is grounded in the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE) 2023 report, which identified key priorities, challenges, and recommendations for DLBE in Illinois. This report serves as the foundational document shaping the direction of this guidance.

Scope & Methodology at-a-Glance

- **Foundational Report:** Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE) 2023 recommendations set the baseline for guidance development.
- **Stakeholder Input:** Regional listening sessions, focus groups, surveys, and conference feedback captured perspectives of educators, administrators, families, and community leaders.
- **Expert Consultation:** Guidance shaped by review of peer-reviewed research, national reports, and best practices in DLBE.
- **State Board Oversight:** ISBE ensured recommendations address state priorities around equity, quality, and sustainability of programs.

Current Landscape and Rationale for DLBE Programs in Illinois

DLBE immersion programs in Illinois foster biliteracy, cognitive development, and academic achievement among students. As the state's demographic landscape becomes more linguistically diverse, the need for effective DLBE programs has grown significantly. DLBE programs support high academic performance, cultural competence, and socio-cultural understanding. Despite notable progress, key challenges such as the shortage of qualified bilingual teachers, inconsistent program implementation, and ongoing funding constraints persist (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). Addressing these challenges through strategic planning and sustainable resource allocation is essential for ensuring the continued growth and effectiveness of DLBE programs.

This guidance document provides Illinois school districts with actionable strategies and frameworks to implement and expand high-quality DLBE programs that serve all students equitably. DLBE programs develop bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence while fostering an inclusive educational environment that particularly benefits English learners (ELs), newcomers, and students with special needs.

Key Benefits of DLBE Programs:
▪ Enhanced cognitive development and academic achievement for all students (August & Shanahan, 2006).
▪ Accelerated English proficiency development for English learners (Collier, 1995).
▪ Cultural competence and global citizenship preparation (García & Tyler, 2010).
▪ Educational equity through asset-based approaches to multilingualism (Paris & Alim, 2017).
▪ Workforce preparation for an increasingly multilingual economy (García & Tyler, 2010).

This document addresses all seven mandated areas by outlining ten implementation components that support districts from initial program planning through sustained operations. The guidance framework ensures DLBE programs support bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2004; Genesse & Lindholm-Leary, 2013) while meeting requirements established in Public Act 104-0266 (Illinois General Assembly, 2023).

The guidance organizes implementation into ten components that address all statutory requirements:

Implementation Framework: 10 Components
Component 1: Build DLBE Knowledge and Advocacy
Component 2: Develop Mission, Vision, and Goals
Component 3: Design/Adopt a Program Model
Component 4: Develop Enrollment and Family Outreach
Component 5: Develop/Adopt Curriculum and Resources
Component 6: Establish Staffing and Professional Learning
Component 7: Establish Teaching and Learning Standards
Component 8: Establish Accountability and Assessment
Component 9: Establish Funding and Sustainability
Component 10: Support Dually Identified Students (Special Education & English Learners)

Each component provides districts with specific strategies, tools, and resources for meeting state requirements while ensuring program quality and sustainability.

Conclusion

These ten components provide an evidence-based framework to establish and expand DLBE programs that serve all students: ELs, newcomers, students with disabilities, and all other types of learners.

Implementation of this guidance enables districts to create sustainable DLBE programs that address the needs of students, staff, families, and communities through evidence-based practices (Thomas & Collier, 2004). Districts that follow these recommendations will establish DLBE programs that prepare students for success in diverse communities.

ISBE will continue to support districts through implementation, professional learning opportunities, and resource development to ensure effective DLBE program delivery across Illinois.

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I. Introduction

Purpose of Dual Language Bilingual Education Guidance

In accordance with [Public Act 104-0266](#), enacted by the Illinois General Assembly in 2025, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is mandated to develop and adopt comprehensive guidance for school districts regarding the establishment of new DLBE programs and the expansion of existing programs by December 15, 2026.

Per Section 14D-5(b) of the statute, “the guidance adopted under this Section shall cover the following topics:

- (1) Program structure;
- (2) Curriculum;
- (3) Instruction;
- (4) Assessment and accountability;
- (5) Staff quality and professional development;
- (6) Family and community engagement; and
- (7) Support and resources” (Illinois General Assembly, 2023).

This document outlines the scope, methodology, and implementation framework to fulfill these legislative requirements while advancing educational equity and excellence throughout Illinois (Illinois General Assembly, 2023).

Overview and Rationale of Existing DLBE Programs in Illinois

DLBE programs promote biliteracy, cognitive development, and academic achievement among students. Illinois aligns with educational trends and societal needs by investing in DLBE instruction. Following the directives of [Public Act 104-0266](#) and drawing on stakeholder expertise, this guidance advances DLBE in Illinois. The goal centers on improving student outcomes and preparing learners for success in a multilingual world.

DLBE programs in Illinois function as a component of the state’s education system. Programs offer students opportunities to gain proficiency in two languages while building cultural understanding and academic excellence. This section provides an overview of the state of DLBE programs in Illinois and explains the rationale for its implementation and growth.

Current Landscape

DLBE programs in Illinois serve as an educational approach to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and cultural competence. Illinois’ linguistic diversity has increased, creating a demand for dual language bilingual education programs.

The number of English learners (ELs) has risen steadily, reaching approximately 332,936 ELs enrolled in Illinois public schools during the 2023-2024 school year, according to the Illinois State Board of

Education (ISBE), highlighting the need for programs that support language development and academic success.

Districts in Illinois implement bilingual and language learning program models, including one-way and two-way dual language bilingual education, dual language enrichment, transitional bilingual education (TBE) and/or world language programming. These models operate in both urban and rural districts. This guidance focuses on one-way and two-way DLBE models that include English Learner participation. Common languages in DLBE programs in Illinois include Spanish, Mandarin, French, Polish and Japanese, reflecting the state's linguistic diversity. Programs typically begin in the early elementary grades, with some extending through middle and high school levels to support long-term language development and academic achievement.

State policies promote dual language bilingual education programs through [Illinois Administrative Code Part 228](#), which sets requirements for bilingual education programs. Efforts are underway to include an official statewide definition for Dual Language Bilingual Education in Part 228.

Advocacy groups and organizations, such as the Illinois Resource Center (IRC), Illinois Association of Multilingual Multicultural Education (IAMME), and the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE), support expanding dual language bilingual education programs through awareness and resource development.

DLBE Programs Face Challenges

- A shortage of qualified bilingual teachers, addressed through teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development.
- The need for sustainable funding, with guidance for districts under development to support effective resource allocation.

Site visits and shadowing opportunities in these districts are planned to document best practices and inform the development of this guidance document.

To enhance dual language bilingual education in Illinois, this guidance recommends an investment in initiatives. This support ensures districts can provide appropriate resources and interventions tailored to the specific demographics of their ELs populations.

Rationale for DLBE Programs

Research and educational principles underscore the numerous cognitive, academic, and socio-cultural benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy (Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, 2024).

1. **Cognitive Benefits:** DLBE programs facilitate the development of cognitive skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and metalinguistic awareness. Research suggests that bilingual individuals demonstrate enhanced executive function, which encompasses skills such as task-switching, inhibition, and working memory. These cognitive benefits contribute to academic success and lifelong learning (Bialystok, 2017).

2. **Academic Achievement:** Lindholm-Leary's (2018) research has consistently shown that students enrolled in DLBE programs outperform their monolingual peers on standardized assessments across various subject areas, including reading, mathematics, and science. In Illinois, "former ELs," or ELs that met English proficiency and no longer need English language supports, "outperform students who were never ELs on state ELA and math assessment" (ISBE, 2023, p.36). This highlights the effectiveness of EL programming and underscores the importance of the support ELs receive through ESL and bilingual education in providing meaningful access to quality education in Illinois.

This academic advantage is attributed to the cognitive flexibility and metalinguistic skills cultivated through bilingual education, as well as the enriched linguistic input provided in DLBE classrooms (Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, 2024).

3. **Socio-Cultural Competence:** DLBE programs promote cultural understanding, empathy, and appreciation for linguistic diversity. By immersing students in culturally and linguistically diverse environments, these programs foster cross-cultural communication skills and global citizenship, preparing students to thrive in an interconnected world (Howard et al., 2003).
4. **Equity and Access:** DLBE programs play a crucial role in promoting educational equity by providing ELs with equitable access to high-quality education that builds on their linguistic assets. By supporting the maintenance and development of students' home languages alongside English proficiency, DLBE programs empower ELs to achieve academic success while preserving their cultural identity. Thomas & Collier's (2002) longitudinal study provides evidence that bilingual education programs, such as DLBE programs, effectively promote academic achievement and equitable access to education for language minority students, including English learners.

Need for DLBE Program Expansion

Several factors drive the need to expand DLBE programs in Illinois. Research highlights cognitive, academic, and social benefits of bilingual education. DLBE programs promote biliteracy and cognitive development for both English learners and native English speakers (Lindholm-Leary, 2018). DLBE programs support academic achievement across subject areas and foster cultural understanding and empathy among students from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Howard et al., 2003). Given the prevalence of bilingualism and biliteracy globally and the demand for bilingual skills in the workforce, the need exists to expand and enhance DLBE programs to meet the needs of students and prepare students for success in a multilingual society.

Expanding DLBE programs meets community demand for bilingualism and biliteracy while advancing equity by offering quality language education to more students, including students from underserved and immigrant background. Early Childhood Education (ECE) research demonstrates that DLBE programs work when programs start in preschool. Research from the UChicago Consortium shows the importance of providing ELs with access to high-quality preschool programs. Early exposure to dual language bilingual education instruction supports language development and lays a foundation for future academic achievement and socio-cultural competence. Beginning DLBE in preschool helps children develop bilingual skills and benefit from the cognitive, academic, and social advantages of bilingualism

and biliteracy from an early age. This early start maximizes the long-term benefits of dual language bilingual education programs (De la Torre et al., 2019).

Research by Gándara et al. (2015) shows the economic benefits of bilingualism. Bilingual individuals have access to job opportunities and can command higher salaries compared to their monolingual peers. In Illinois, expanding DLBE programs contribute to the state's economic vitality by producing a workforce equipped with valuable bilingual skills, enhancing competitiveness in global markets, and attracting businesses that value linguistic diversity.

Incentivizing bilingual instruction through strategic funding mechanisms and partnerships can further support the sustainability and growth of DLBE programs, ensuring equitable access to bilingual education for all students.

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II. Understanding Dual Language Bilingual Education Programs and Definitions

Definition and Concept of DLBE Programs

DLBE programs, known as one-way and two-way immersion, or bilingual education programs, are educational models designed to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and cross-cultural competencies among students. At their core, DLBE programs provide instruction in two languages, the students' native language and a target language, with the goal of developing proficiency in both languages while fostering academic achievement. To maintain the effectiveness of two-way dual immersion, ELs must participate in these programs. English learner participation ensures a balanced linguistic environment where native English speakers and ELs can mutually benefit from peer language models, thus enhancing language development for both groups. The presence of ELs in DLBE programs supports language and academic growth and enriches the learning experience for native English speakers, fostering greater bilingual proficiency and cultural competence among all students (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2018; Castro, Umansky, & Barnes, 2022).

The concept of DLBE programs builds on the principles of additive bilingualism, where proficiency in a second language enhances, rather than detracts from a student's overall linguistic and cognitive development (Paradis, Emmerzael, & Crist, 2011). By providing instruction in two languages, DLBE programs not only support the development of language skills, but also promote cognitive flexibility, metalinguistic awareness, and academic achievement across subject areas (Baker, 2011). To advance literacy in second-language learners, DLBE programs incorporate research-based literacy practices designed to promote academic success for language minority students (August & Shanahan, 2006). Studies further confirm that bilingualism and biliteracy strengthen cognitive flexibility and academic outcomes, reinforcing the benefits of learning multiple languages (Baker & Wright, 2021).

DLBE programs embrace the linguistic and cultural diversity of their student populations, recognizing the value of students' home languages and cultural backgrounds (García & Kleifgen, 2010). Programs create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments where all students feel valued and supported in language and cultural identities. Through this approach, DLBE programs contribute to the academic success and social-emotional well-being of diverse student populations (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). Discussions of language, power, and pedagogy underscore the importance of recognizing bilingual student's identities and sociopolitical contexts to foster effective and equitable instruction (Cummins, 2000; Nieto, 2002). DLBE reinforces this by fostering a sense of belonging and positive identity development, which further contributes to academic and social-emotional health (Paris & Alim, 2017; Potowski, 2022).

Core Principles of Dual Language Programs

1. **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:** DLBE programs aim to develop proficiency in two languages. This involves speaking, reading, writing, and listening both languages at a level comparable to monolingual peers in each respective language. Moreover, being proficient in two languages opens greater career opportunities in an increasingly globalized job market, preparing students for success in various professional fields.

2. **High Academic Achievement:** DLBE programs maintain rigorous academic standards. Research indicates that students in DLBE programs often achieve at or above grade level in both languages compared to their monolingual peers due to the cognitive advantages of bilingualism and biliteracy (Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2004, Lindholm-Leary, 2001). These advantages include enhanced critical thinking skills, greater mental flexibility, and improved executive function (Bialystok, 2011). Additionally, bilingual students develop better memory, attention control, and multitasking abilities, which contribute to their overall academic success. DLBE programs promote higher-order thinking skills and metalinguistic awareness, allowing students to understand and manipulate language structures more effectively. This deep understanding of language facilitates the learning of complex concepts in subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies. The immersive nature of DLBE programs also means that students are constantly engaged in learning and using both languages in meaningful contexts, which reinforces their academic skills and knowledge.
3. **Sociocultural Competence:** DLBE programs foster an appreciation for cultural diversity and promote positive attitudes toward different cultures. Integrating cultural content into the curriculum and encouraging meaningful interactions between students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds fosters deeper understanding and inclusion (Genesee & Gándara, 1999, Cummins, 2000, Thomas & Collier, 2002). By seeing their cultures and languages reflected in the curriculum, students are more likely to participate actively and take ownership of their learning. This increased engagement leads to better academic outcomes and a stronger connection to the educational content. The emphasis on sociocultural competence in DLBE programs also includes teaching students about social justice and equity. By discussing historical and contemporary issues related to race, ethnicity, language, and culture, students become more aware of systemic inequalities and the importance of advocating for social change. This awareness helps students develop empathy and a sense of responsibility toward their communities and the wider world.
4. **Critical Consciousness:** DLBE programs embed critical consciousness by teaching students to recognize and challenge social inequalities and injustices. This involves developing students' awareness of power dynamics, privilege, and systemic inequities, and encouraging students to act toward creating a more equitable society (Nieto, 2002, de Jong, 2011). Dual language bilingual education programs, enriched with the component of critical consciousness, represent a holistic approach to education. DLBE programs not only promote bilingualism, academic excellence, and cultural competence, but also prepare students to be informed and active participants in addressing social injustices. By fostering critical consciousness, DLBE programs contribute to the development of socially aware and empowered individuals ready to make meaningful contributions to an equitable and multicultural society.
5. **Integrated Classrooms:** DLBE programs combine students from different linguistic backgrounds, creating an environment where native speakers of English and native speaker of the target language learn together. This integration promotes language acquisition through naturalistic interactions and peer learning, while also providing opportunities for students to discuss and address social justice issues in a diverse setting (García and Kleifgen, 2010; de Jong & Howard, 2009, Thomas & Collier, 2004). In integrated classrooms, students benefit from the immersive experience of being exposed to both languages throughout the school day. Native speakers of each language serve as linguistic models for their peers, facilitating the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in authentic contexts. This reciprocal language

learning environment encourages students to practice new vocabulary and grammar structures in meaningful conversations and collaborative activities, enhancing their language proficiency.

6. **Balanced Instruction.** Models vary, with some programs implementing a 50/50 balance from the start, while others begin with a higher percentage of instruction in the target language (e.g., 90/10) and gradually move towards an equal balance. This balanced approach ensures sustained development in both languages (Lindholm-Leary & Howard, 2008) and fosters an inclusive classroom environment where both languages and cultures are valued equally. This balance builds students' confidence and bilingual identity by emphasizing the importance and usefulness of both languages in academic and personal contexts. By affirming students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, DLBE programs foster positive self-concept and a stronger sense of belonging within the school community.

Goals of DLBE Programs

The goals of DLBE programs complement the core principles, ensuring that students achieve bilingual proficiency, excel academically, develop cultural competence, and become socially conscious individuals. These goals provide a holistic framework for student development and prepare students for future opportunities in a society where bilingualism, cultural awareness and social justice advocacy are assets.

- **Effective Communication:** Achieve high levels of proficiency in both languages for all students, enabling effective communication and academic success.
- **Academic Excellence:** Ensure students meet or exceed academic standards in all subjects, benefiting from the cognitive and academic advantages of bilingualism.
- **Cultural Competence:** Develop students' abilities to interact positively and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering global citizenship.
- **Critical Consciousness:** Develop students' abilities to interact positively and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering global citizenship.

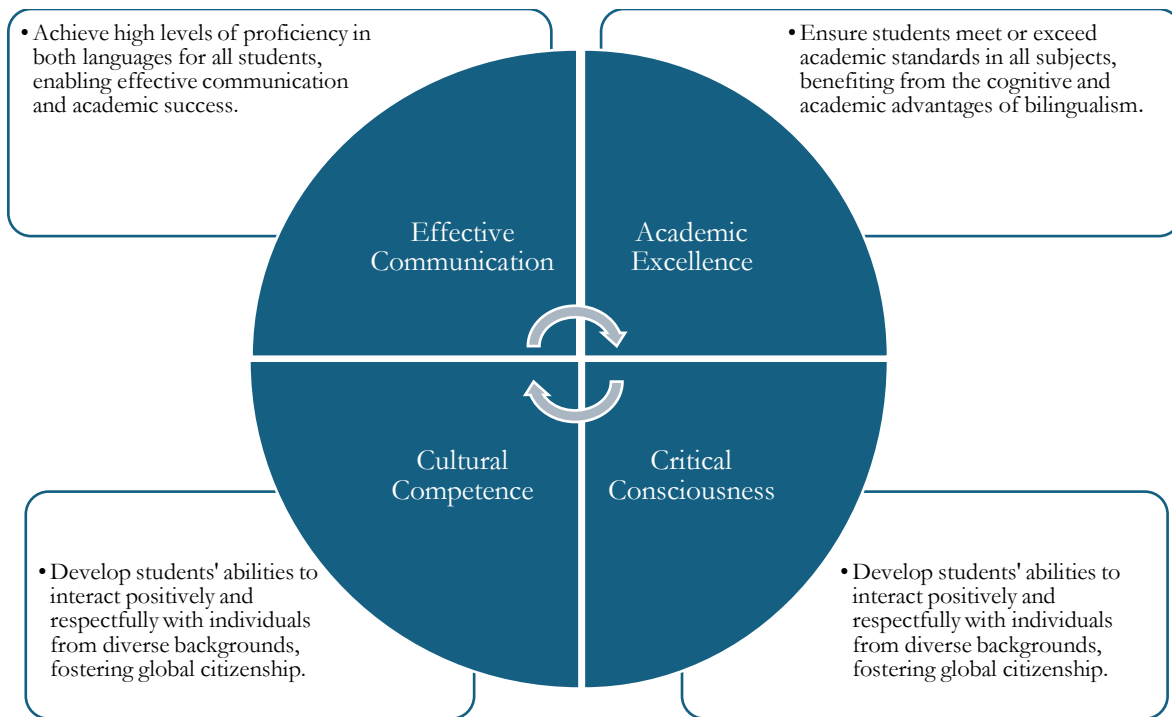


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Types of Research-Based Dual Language Bilingual Education Programs

DLBE programs build on research, demonstrating effectiveness in educational settings.

The conceptual framework of DLBE programs builds on the premise that language learning works when it becomes meaningful, interactive, and integrated into academic content. This approach aligns with sociocultural theories of language acquisition, which emphasize the role of social interaction and cultural context in learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). By immersing students in both languages throughout schooling, DLBE programs aim to create a learning experience that prepares students for a multilingual world.

Below are the types of research-based DLBE programs, each with its own characteristics and methodologies.

Two-Way Immersion (TWI) Programs

Two-Way Immersion (TWI) programs integrate native speakers of English and English Language learners in the same classroom. Instruction is divided between the two languages, promoting bilingualism and biliteracy for all students.

Models:

- **50/50 Model:** Instruction splits between English and the partner language from the start.
- **90/10 Model:** 90% of instruction is in the partner language and 10% in English. The ratio adjusts to 50/50 by around third or fourth grade.

Studies indicate that TWI programs support high levels of language proficiency and academic achievement in both languages. Students perform at or above grade level in standardized tests for both languages and exhibit positive attitudes toward cultural diversity and multicultural interactions (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2018).

One-Way Immersion Programs

One-Way Immersion programs serve students who are dominant in one language, including current or former English Learners or heritage speakers of the target language. These programs focus on developing proficiency in the target language, while maintaining academic standards in core subjects.

One-way immersion programs differ from world language immersion programs, which typically serve English-speaking students learning a new language as a world language. The distinction lies in the target population and program goals, one-way immersion supports language maintenance and academic development for English learners or heritage speakers, while world language immersion introduces a new language to English speakers (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2018).

Models include:

- **Full Immersion:** Students receive all or most of their instruction in the target language, especially in the early grades.
- **Partial Immersion:** Students spend a portion of their day learning in the target language, though some subjects may still be taught in the English language.

Research supports the effectiveness of one-way immersion programs in fostering high levels of second language proficiency without compromising academic achievement in other subjects. Students in these programs often exhibit superior cognitive flexibility and critical thinking skills compared to their monolingual peers (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2004).

Subtractive to Additive Models

English-medium programs use primarily English in the teaching of curriculum content in k-12 schools.

Bilingual education programs use two languages in the teaching of curriculum content in K-12 schools.

Below are a range of bilingual education models, showing progression from subtractive to additive approaches. This continuum ranges from weaker, subtractive models to stronger, additive models that foster bilingualism and biliteracy

Models Listed in Order from Subtractive/Weak to Additive/Dynamic

- Submersion Model

- No ESL Instruction
- No sheltered Instruction
- No L1 support
- ESL Instruction Models
 - ESL as a content area
 - Sheltered instruction for academic content
 - Some L1 Support
- Transitional Models
 - Early exit programs
 - Transitional bilingual education programs
 - Uses home language to support English language development
- Maintenance Models
 - Late exit
 - Developmental
 - One way bilingual education models
- Enrichment Models
 - Two way bilingual education models
 - Dual language models
 - Goal is bilingualism and biliteracy

Subtractive models, such as submersion and ESL instruction, prioritize rapid transition to English. These models often limit native language use, which can lead to language loss and reduced cultural connection. ESL instruction provides some support in the student’s first language but focuses on teaching academic content in English using sheltered methods.

Transitional bilingual education (TBE) is commonly seen as subtractive. TBE’s goal is transitioning students to English-only instruction within a few years. However, TBE programs can adopt additive practices by extending bilingual instruction, increasing use of students’ native language, and integrating culturally relevant teaching. This shift allows TBE to move toward DLBE programs, which fall under additive enrichment models aimed at fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural skills.

DLBE programs emphasize maintaining and developing two languages. These additive models build students’ linguistic and cultural abilities rather than replacing one language with another. (Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, 2024)

Well-implemented dual language bilingual education programs are characterized by strong leadership, qualified staff, a balanced curriculum, effective instructional practices, robust assessment systems, and active family and community engagement. By adhering to these key components, DLBE programs can successfully promote bilingualism, biliteracy, academic excellence, and cultural competence among students, preparing them for a diverse and interconnected world.

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III. Statewide Dual Language Bilingual Education Implementation Framework: 10 Components

Identifying a Starting Point

Successful DLBE programs are reflective of the community that they are housed in. Prior to implementing or changing a DLBE program, a district should evaluate the current state of the district and the programming that they offer. Answering these key questions can help inform your entry point into DLBE and what areas need the most support.

- What languages are represented in the district?
- What language programs already exist (world language, transitional bilingual education, heritage language classes, one-way DLBE, or two-way DLBE)?
- What community support already exists for a DLBE program?
- Which students are the intended participants for a DLBE program (English learners, monolingual students, students with a specific language heritage)?
- How will/are equitable access and appropriate supports being provided for students with different needs (special education, newcomers, students with interrupted learning)?

After reflecting on the district's context, consider where the district will enter into this document and which components to focus on.

Component 1: Build Knowledge and Advocacy

The Importance of Stakeholder Buy-In

Successful DLBE implementation depends heavily on securing commitment and support from various stakeholders. When community members, educators, and administrators are invested in DLBE programs, they serve as powerful advocates and partners in the educational process. Conversely, those who resist or remain skeptical can create significant barriers that impede progress and sustainability. The support needed for DLBE programs must be cultivated at multiple levels, including both internal school environments and broader community contexts (Soltero, 2023).

Parents

Parent support is crucial for the success of a DLBE program. Parents make the educational decisions for their students. Districts should begin engagement by recognizing that parents bring diverse perspectives, experiences, and expectations of what school should be for their students. Understanding what the parents expect of the school will inform what the DLBE program looks like (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2016).

Teachers

Teachers are the day-to-day implementors of a DLBE program. Engaging with them to understand curricular, professional development, staffing, and scheduling is important in program evaluation and

improvement. This also ensures that the program continues to meet the needs of the students it serves. Teachers in DLBE also need additional support to ensure that they have the cultural and pedagogical knowledge to create environments that are conducive to develop bilingualism and biliteracy (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2016).

School and District Leaders

School and district leadership play a crucial role in establishing DLBE programs that are inclusive and effective. They create the pathways for strong community participation, communication, and involvement. Leadership can also develop structures and staff responsibilities that promote inclusion and high-quality education. By staying current with research in DLBE programming and best practices, this group helps establish a long-term trajectory for the program (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2018).

Community

The community voice, represented formally by the school board, often decides the programming that schools can offer. Having a community that understands the value and structure of the DLBE programs increases the support and visibility of the program. Organizing support within the community for DLBE programs helps to ensure that funding and support for the program is long-term and will outlast current school leadership (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2016).

Building a Knowledge Foundation for Advocacy

Establishing a comprehensive understanding of DLBE principles serves as the cornerstone for effective advocacy efforts. When educators and leaders possess deep knowledge about the research, benefits, and implementation strategies of DLBE programs, they are better equipped to champion these initiatives and address concerns for stakeholders. This foundational expertise enables more persuasive advocacy and informed decision-making throughout the program development process. Moreover, aligning professional learning with evidence-based guidelines helps ensure advocacy efforts are grounded in proven best practices (Howard et al., 2024; Soltero, 2023).

Administrative Commitment and Support

Effective DLBE programs require strong commitment and active involvement from school and district administrators. This commitment includes providing adequate resources, ongoing professional development, and fostering a school culture that values bilingualism and biliteracy and cultural diversity. Administrative commitment ensures the support structures necessary for program success. To protect and safeguard against leadership changes that could disrupt the program and jeopardize continuity, districts should adopt local board policies that institutionalize the DLBE program. Sustaining these programs also requires strong advocacy at the local and state levels. Supportive policies and dedicated funding are critical for long-term success. Advocates must influence educational policy and secure resources to maintain high-quality DLBE programs and ensure their sustainability (Genesee & Gándara, 1999; Crawford, 2004).

Establishing Shared Understanding Among Stakeholders

Building a solid foundation begins with establishing a shared understanding of DLBE among all stakeholders. A crucial first step involves the forming of a diverse Dual Language Advisory Committee composed of administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and students. This Dual Language Bilingual Education Advisory Committee should represent the linguistic and cultural assets of the community to ensure inclusive and culturally responsive program development (Deters, n.d.; St. Hilaire, 2018; Soltero, 2023). Districts who have established TBE programs may utilize their Bilingual Parent Advisory Councils as part of this work.

Conducting Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Districts should conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that examines student demographics and language assets, community language resources, current staffing, facilities, and overall district capacity and commitment to DLBE education. Providing foundational professional learning on DLBE research and its benefits is essential for district leaders, staff, and families (Deters, n.d.).

Securing Long-Term Leadership Commitment

Securing a long-term commitment from the school board and district leadership is crucial to sustaining these efforts over time. Research shows that strong administrative support and community buy-in are among the most important factors influencing dual language bilingual education program effectiveness (Genesee & Gándara, 1999; St. Hilaire, 2018).

Implementation Timeline and Phased Approach

The implementation timeline for these actions typically spans nine months and follows a phased approach. The first three months focus on stakeholder education and the formation of an advisory committee that reflects the community's linguistic and cultural assets. Months four to six involve conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to identify program priorities and resources gaps.

The final phase, months seven to nine, centers on data analysis and the development of actionable recommendations to guide program growth and improvement. This structured timeline aligns with best practices outlined in the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2024).

Checklist for Building Knowledge and Advocacy

- Follow a structured nine-month timeline covering education, assessment, analysis, and planning phases.
- Form a diverse Dual Language Bilingual Education Advisory Committee with administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and students.
- Establish regular meetings and clear decision-making protocols for the advisory committee.
- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment covering:
 - Student demographics and language backgrounds
 - Community language resources
 - Current staffing and facilities
 - District capacity and commitment to DLBE
- Analyze needs assessment data to develop recommendations and implementation plans.

- Provide professional development sessions on DLBE research and program models for district leaders and staff.
- Host community forums to inform families about bilingualism and biliteracy benefits.
- Secure long-term support and policy commitments from the school board and district leadership.

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Component 2: Develop Mission, Vision, and Goals

Successful dual language bilingual education programs start with a shared mission and vision that align with research-based DLBE principles and the community's needs. Clear mission and vision statements provide direction for the program and build understanding within the school community. Effective programs articulate three core goals: bilingualism and biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence (Howard et al., 2007; Kennedy & Medina, 2017).

Collaborative Development Process

Districts should work collaboratively with their Dual Language Bilingual Education Advisory Committee to draft a vision statement that reflects their commitment to additive bilingualism. This collaborative process ensures stakeholder buy-in and creates ownership among community members (Howard, Lindholm-Leary, Rogers, Olague, Medina, & Sugarman, 2024). The vision should align with the district's equity goals and student success indicators, emphasizing cultural and linguistic diversity as community assets, rather than deficits.

Crafting Effective Vision and Mission Statements

A vision statement articulates where the program hopes to be in the future, addressing key questions: Who is the program designed for? What are the goals and expected outcomes for students? What are the long-term benefits for the entire community? The vision may state, for example: "The DLBE program at [District Name] is designed to [specific goals] so that all students [expected outcomes]" (Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025).

The mission statement provides an overview of steps planned to achieve that vision, addressing how key components will be implemented and who will champion the vision. Research emphasizes that programs with cohesive school-wide shared vision and clearly defined achievement goals demonstrate higher student outcomes (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006).

Defining Measurable Program Goals

Establishing measurable goals helps ensure programs set specific targets for student outcomes across three essential areas:

1. **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:** Students achieve proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in both English and the target language. Districts must define when students are considered fully bilingual and biliterate, incorporating standards that align with state assessment requirements.
2. **Academic Achievement:** Students meet or exceed grade-level standards across all content areas. Programs should specify how grade-level academic achievement will be defined and measured, ensuring alignment with state academic standards.
3. **Sociocultural Competence:** Students develop cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship skills. Districts should identify specific ways sociocultural competence will be demonstrated and assessed (Howard et al., 2007; Kennedy & Medina, 2017; Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025).

Establishing Guiding Principles

There is an importance in establishing guiding principles that support the program’s philosophy and practices. These should embrace the additive bilingual education approach, maintain high academic expectations for all students, value linguistic and cultural diversity as assets, promote family engagement and community partnerships, and ensure equitable access to the program (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). Effective DLBE programs establish guiding principles that support additive bilingual education philosophy. These principles should embrace additive bilingual education, maintain high academic expectations for all students, value linguistic and cultural diversity as assets, promote family engagement and community partnerships, and ensure equitable program access. Research consistently demonstrates that additive bilingual programs are associated with content area achievement and proficiency in both the second language and home language (Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2010; Genesee et al., 2006).

DLBE guiding principles should also incorporate the language learning requirements established by state and federal laws and rules for English learners. This includes commitment to instruction in core content areas in both the language other than English as well as in English. Also included in this is equitable access to programming; the guiding principles should establish how access is protected for diverse student groups. Providing trajectories for proficiency in both languages creates principals that foster bilingualism and biliteracy ([Illinois School Code \[105 ILCS 5/Art. 14C and 2-3.39\(1\)\]](#); [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#); [Guidelines and Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 \(EEOA\) Section 1703\(f\)](#)).

Sample Vision Statement

A comprehensive vision statement for districts may read:

“[District Name] DLBE students develop bilingualism and biliteracy through rigorous academic instruction in English and [partner language], preparing students for success in higher education, careers, and global citizenship while celebrating linguistic and cultural diversity as community strengths.”

Checklist for Developing Mission, Vision, and Goals

- Collaborate with the Dual Language Bilingual Education Advisory Committee to draft a clear, research-aligned vision statement.
- Align the vision with district equity goals and student success measures.
- Emphasize an additive bilingualism and biliteracy approach and community diversity in the vision.
- Establish measurable program goals focused on:
 - Bilingualism and biliteracy proficiency
 - Academic achievement at or above grade level
 - Sociocultural competence and global citizenship
- Develop guiding principles that:
 - Support additive bilingual education philosophy
 - Maintain high academic expectations
 - Value linguistic and cultural diversity as assets

- Promote family and community engagement
- Ensure equitable program access

Component 2: Develop Mission, Vision, and Goals References

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Component 3: Design and Adopt Program Model

Selecting the appropriate DLBE program model depends on student demographics, community needs, and available resources. Districts should carefully consider these factors to ensure the chosen model effectively supports bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic success.

Understanding Partner Language

The partner language refers to the language other than English that is used for instruction in DLBE programs (Howard et al., 2024). Also known as the partner language, the partner language serves as the medium for delivering academic content alongside English. Common partner languages in DLBE programs include Spanish, Mandarin, French, and other languages that reflect the linguistic diversity of the community (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2024).

Program Model Options

There are many types of program models for DLBE. The program model is reflective of the student population and needs to reflect the community's goals and needs. Most programs run a combination of models to ensure equitable access and to address the changing language needs of students (Kennedy & Medina, 2017).

One-Way DLBE Program

One-way programs serve ELs and/or heritage speakers who share the same native language, focusing on developing bilingualism and biliteracy while maintaining the home language (Howard et al., 2024). These programs require a robust student base who share a home language. These programs typically are self-contained with students learning in bilingual spaces all day. Classes in this model are taught by bilingually endorsed teachers or co-taught with a bilingually endorsed teacher and content teacher. Long-term continuation of this model requires a stable population of students who speak the language other than English enrolling in the program.

One-way immersion programs focus on students who are ELs seeking proficiency in English through their home language, often in settings with full or partial immersion models (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2004). These programs support second language proficiency without sacrificing academic achievement and foster cognitive flexibility.

Two-Way DLBE Program

Two-way programs integrate ELs and English proficient students, fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, and cultural exchange for both populations. According to DLBE principles, two-way programs should maintain an approximately equal number of students from each language group, with no less than one-third and no more than two-thirds being monolingual or dominant in either English or the partner language at enrollment (Howard et al., 2024). These programs must bridge the language gaps between the groups of students to find a balance so that both groups are developing proficiency in both the language other than English and in English. Considerations about language breakdowns, bridging

activities, scheduling, and staffing to ensure that both languages are being used to provide academically rigorous content is necessary for success.

Two-way immersion programs typically integrate native English speakers and English learners, using models like 50/50 and 90/10 to promote bilingualism and biliteracy (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Research shows that students in two-way immersion, for five years, tend to outperform peers academically while developing positive attitudes toward cultural diversity.

Immersion DLBE Program

Immersion programs are composed of monolingual English students or English learners of a different language background than the language other than English in the DLBE program. In this model, students focus on learning a language in addition to English with the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy. Immersion models require additional planning to close the language gap between English and the language other than English. Similar to a one-way DLBE program, there needs to be explicit instruction in both languages with a focus on developing academic language and a high level of academic rigor in both languages (Thomas & Collier, 2004).

Language Allocation Selection

Research identifies three primary DLBE models: 90/10, 80/20, and 50/50. These ratios reflect the amount of time spent in teaching in the partner language and in English. Similar to program models, most programs use a blend of language allocations to meet students' needs and language outcomes. In all models, it is important to note that the expectation is that the allocation is true in all content areas so that students are developing academic language knowledge in both languages.

90/10 Allocation

The 90/10 model starts with 90% instruction in the partner language and 10% in English. Programs that begin with this model tend to produce the strongest outcomes for both English learners and English proficient students due to greater partner language exposure (Gomez et al., n.d.; Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2023; Billy & Medina Garríguez, 2019). In programs that begin with a 90/10 model, there is a gradual shift toward a 50/50 model over multiple years, typically a minimum of six years. This model works well when there is minimal partner language support in the community.

80/20 Allocation

The 80/20 model begins with 80% partner language instruction and 20% in English. Similar to the 90/10 model, there is a gradual shift toward a 50/50 language distribution. This allocation works well in communities with moderate partner language support (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2023; Participate Learning, n.d.). 80/20 allocations maintain a high level of partner language use for instruction while affording increased time for explicit English growth and development.

50/50 Allocation

The 50/50 model maintains equal instruction time in both languages throughout the program and suits communities with a strong partner language presence and resources (Gomez et al., n.d.). This model is not frequently used as the starting allocation in a DLBE program but rather in the later phases of the program. Most communities have a high presence of English, so higher partner language allocations are better suited to developing bilingualism and biliteracy. However, this allocation enables students to continue to develop academic content language and skills in both languages and fosters spaces to maintain bilingual and biliterate skills.

Program Design Requirements

Effective program design requires a detailed language allocation plan specifying how much instructional time each language receives at each grade level. Content area distribution should be thoughtfully planned across languages with clear progression and transition criteria. Additionally, districts must plan for teacher assignments, classroom scheduling, and assessments in both languages to monitor student progress and program effectiveness (Kennedy & Medina, 2017; Howard et al., 2024). It is important that instruction across content areas is happening in both languages and that time is incorporated to allow for bridging activities.

Theoretical Foundation

DLBE programs align with sociocultural theories of language acquisition, which emphasize meaningful, interactive, and academically integrated language learning within cultural contexts. Immersing students in both languages throughout their schooling creates an enriched educational experience that prepares them for today’s multilingual world (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Program Model Summary

DLBE programs do not have to be limited to one model. Most programs use a combination of models to ensure equitable access, student success, and long-term bilingualism and biliteracy.

DLBE Model	Description
One-Way DLBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English learners and heritage learners of the same language background Develops the home language and English in all content areas Goal is bilingualism and biliteracy in home language and English
Two-Way DLBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English learners from the partner language background and English proficient learners and English learners from a different language background Goal is a 50/50 ratio between these two groups Builds partner language and English proficiency for all students Goal is to build language so that both groups are bilingual and biliterate
Immersion DLBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English proficient and English learners from a different language background Builds partner language and English in all content areas

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal is to build partner language so that students are bilingual and biliterate
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Checklist for Designing and Adopting a DLBE Program Model

- Assess student demographics, community language resources, and available district supports.
- Choose a DLBE model based on needs:
 - 90/10 model: Start with 90% partner language; best for limited partner language exposure.
 - 80/20 model: Start with 80% partner language; suitable for some community partner language support.
 - 50/50 model: Equal instruction in both languages; ideal for strong partner language communities.
- Decide between one-way (serving ELs with shared native language) and two-way (integrating ELs and English proficient students) models.
- Develop a clear language allocation plan outlining instructional time and content distribution per grade.
- Plan teacher assignments, classroom schedules, and DLBE assessment strategies.
- Align program design with sociocultural language acquisition principles to integrate meaningful and interactive bilingual instruction.
- Incorporate transition and exit criteria for moving students through the program.
- Consider the program’s placement on the subtractive-to-additive bilingual education continuum and strive to adopt additive bilingual practices.

Component 3: Design and Adopt Program Model References

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Component 4: Develop Enrollment and Family Outreach Plans

Parent and Family Engagement

Engaging parents and families is essential to building a supportive environment for DLBE students. Schools should provide workshops, resources, and multiple opportunities for families to actively participate in their children’s bilingual education (Epstein, 2011). As parents make the decision about the educational program to enroll their student in, parents have to be educated on what DLBE looks like in the districts. Programs vary by location, and parents come with a variety of experiences and perceptions about what these programs are. When planning for outreach and engagement, consider:

- What are the parents’ experiences and knowledge of the district?
 - Are these newly enrolling parents?
 - Are these parents with other students in the program?
 - Are these parents who are transferring in?
 - Are these parents for whom this is their first U.S. school experience?
- What are perceptions around language in school?
- Are parents aware of the commitments required for DLBE programs?
- Do parents understand the trajectory of students in DLBE programs?

Bilingual Parent Advisory Councils (BPACs)

In accordance with [Article 14C of the Illinois School Code](#), schools serving 20 or more English learners who share the same language background must establish Bilingual Parent Advisory Councils (BPACs) to advise on transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs and foster meaningful parent involvement (Illinois General Assembly, 2023). BPACs represent the interest of English learner (ELs) students, their families, and community members. BPACs should be composed of a majority of parents of ELs.

Dual Language Bilingual Education Advisory Committees (DLBEACs)

While BPACs are mandated by Illinois state law, Dual Language Advisory Committees (DLBEACs) are recommended best practice structures specifically designed to support DLBE program development and implementation (Howard et al., 2024). DLBEACs should include parents of both English learners and English-proficient students, educators, administrators, and community partners to guide program vision, mission, and practices (Howard et al., 2024); Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). Districts may leverage existing BPAC structure by expanding their scope to serve as DLBEACs, ensuring compliance while providing comprehensive support for all bilingual programming (Illinois State Board of Education, 2025; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). Districts should be mindful, however, of the requirements in Part 228 regarding the composition of BPAC membership to ensure their compliance with that Part.

Family Engagement Activities

Family engagement extends beyond enrollment through activities such as DLBE family nights, parent education sessions on bilingual development and opportunities for families to volunteer or serve as guest speakers (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). Involving families creates a collaborative atmosphere that supports bilingualism, biliteracy and cultural diversity at home and in the broader community. Hosting

cultural events such as festivals, performances, and exhibitions celebrates the rich traditions and languages of students and their families. These activities strengthen school-community connections, promote cross-cultural understanding, and enhance students' sense of belonging and cultural pride (García, 2009).

Equitable Enrollment Policies

Equitable enrollment policies and family engagement strategies are critical to program success. Schools need clear admission criteria that include preference categories such as ELs, heritage language speakers, students residing in the attendance zone, and siblings of current participants (U.S. Department of Education, 2024). When demand exceeds available slots within these preference categories, a transparent lottery system ensures fairness while upholding the program's commitment to diversity. This approach helps maintain equity and transparency in the selection process. (National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2024).

Inclusive Outreach Strategies

Outreach strategies must be inclusive and culturally responsive. Schools should translate materials into multiple languages, collaborate with community groups and cultural centers, and use social media and digital platforms to reach families effectively. Information sessions should be held in various community settings to improve accessibility (Pacific Learning, n.d.; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Communication Plans

Communication plans should include bilingual website content, enrollment materials, and informational videos that explain program benefits. Establishing links with early childhood programs helps create seamless pathways into DLBE programs. Enrollment staff should receive training in both program details and cultural responsiveness to better support families during the enrollment process (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025). Clear and accessible communication requires professional interpretation and translation services, multilingual websites, regular progress updates in both languages, and the use of varied communication channels including digital, print, and in-person contacts (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025).

Transportation and Access

Transportation and access considerations influence equitable participation. Schools should assess transportation needs, offer programming at multiple school sites if possible, and develop policies for late enrollment and program transfers. Managing program capacity and waiting lists proactively ensures access for all interested families (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025; U.S. Department of Education, 2024).

Home Language Assets and Translanguaging

Recognize students' home language as assets and integrate native language instruction alongside English. Translanguaging is the dynamic practice where multilingual students use their full linguistic repertoire fluidly to communicate, learn, and express themselves, not just switching between languages,

but blending them to enhance understanding and engagement (García & Wei, 2014). Employ translanguaging strategies by allowing students to use their full linguistic repertoire to deepen comprehension and engagement. Provide culturally responsive social-emotional support that honors students' identities and community strengths (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Support for Newcomer Students

Design newcomer programs that combine intensive language development with grade-level content instruction. Include cultural orientation sessions and trauma-informed practices to address social-emotional needs. Implement peer mentorship and buddy systems to facilitate social integration and language practice in authentic contexts (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020). While Illinois rule allows for temporary separation from general education peers for newcomers who need this intensive support, the structure should be short-term and an intentional plan to integrate students either into a more traditional DLBE program or mainstream classes needs to be in place.

Professional Learning and Family Engagement

Provide educators with training on inclusive pedagogies, translanguaging, and trauma-informed teaching. Engage families of diverse learners through workshops on supporting language development at home and include them in decision-making through advisory committees (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020; Epstein, 2011). As most DLBE programs are not a districtwide program, professional learning needs to happen for both educators who work in the program and those who do not so that the differences in instruction and student outcomes are understood. Also, both groups need to be able to advocate and speak of the benefits of the programming.

Authentic Family and Community Partnerships

Authentic partnerships with families rely on valuing them as educational partners and cultural resources. Schools should establish two-way communication in families' preferred languages, respect diverse family structures, and engage families in shared decision-making. Approaches that recognize families' cultural wealth and assets foster positive outcomes (Epstein, 2011; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Building partnerships with community organizations and local businesses further enriches DLBE programs by expanding resources and support. These collaborations provide real-world learning contexts, additional materials, funding, and volunteer assistance that contribute to a vibrant educational environment. Research highlights that strong school-community partnerships improve student outcomes and support program sustainability (Epstein, 2011).

Checklist for Enrollment and Family Outreach Plans

- Establish equitable enrollment policies:
 - Develop clear admission criteria.
 - Implement lottery system with preferences for English learners, heritage speakers, attendance zone students, and siblings.

- Create culturally responsive outreach strategies:
 - Translate materials into multiple languages.
 - Partner with community organizations and cultural centers.
 - Use social media and digital platforms.
 - Host community-based information sessions.
- Design effective communication plans:
 - Provide bilingual website content and enrollment materials.
 - Produce videos explaining program benefits.
 - Form partnerships with early childhood programs.
 - Train staff in program knowledge and cultural responsiveness.
- Address transportation and access:
 - Evaluate and plan transportation services.
 - Offer programming at multiple sites as needed.
 - Develop policies for late enrollment and transfers.
 - Manage waiting lists and program capacity.
- Implement family engagement activities:
 - Host DLBE family nights and cultural celebrations.
 - Facilitate parent education on bilingual development.
 - Encourage family volunteering and guest speakers.
 - Maintain active bilingual parent advisory councils.
- Support equitable service for all students:
 - Use home languages as assets.
 - Provide native language instruction and translanguaging strategies.
 - Offer culturally responsive social-emotional support.
- Collaborate for students with disabilities:
 - Create joint plans between DLBE and special education teams.
 - Provide individualized, bilingual support and monitor progress.
 - Deliver professional development on bilingual special education.
- Support newcomer students with tailored approaches:
 - Integrate language development and grade-level content.
 - Offer cultural orientation and trauma-informed practices.
 - Use peer mentorship and flexible entry points.
- Foster authentic family partnerships:
 - Emphasize two-way communication in preferred languages.
 - Respect family diversity and promote shared decision-making.
 - Connect families to community resources and leadership opportunities.
- Maintain robust communication systems:
 - Ensure access to interpretation and translation.
 - Provide multilingual websites and materials.
 - Share regular bilingual progress reports.
 - Use multiple communication channels.

Component 4: Develop Enrollment and Family Outreach Plans References

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Component 5: Develop Curriculum and Resources

Language Allocation Plan

Effective DLBE programs rest on a well-designed curriculum and strong instructional practices. A clear language allocation plan is essential; it defines how and when each language is used for instruction. Whether following a 90/10, 80/20, or 50/50 model, consistency in adhering to this plan ensures balanced exposure to both languages, fostering language proficiency and bilingual development (Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

Standards Alignment

The curriculum must align with [Illinois Learning Standards](#) as well as the [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework](#) and, where applicable, the [Illinois Spanish Language Arts Standards](#). For partner languages that do not have established Illinois Learning Standards, districts should look for curricular materials that are standards-based and work to align those standards with the Illinois Learning Standards. Programs should also integrate the [Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Standards](#).

An integrated curriculum that combines language and content instruction in math, science, social studies, and language arts to support students' academic and language development. This approach aligns with research emphasizing meaningful academic content within language learning (Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Comprehensive Literacy Framework

A holistic literacy approach addresses listening, speaking, reading, and writing in both languages. The [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#) highlights the Seven Components of Literacy: Oracy, Phonological Awareness, Word Recognition, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Writing, as essential to broaden communication and expression skills. To complement this, culturally relevant curriculum materials that reflect students' backgrounds foster engagement, build cultural competence, and promote inclusivity in the classroom (Gutiérrez, Morales, & Martínez, 2009; Illinois State Board of Education, 2024).

Instructional Materials and Resources

Access to high-quality instructional materials in both languages including textbooks, digital resources, and supplementary materials is critical for rigorous bilingual education and academic achievement (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Equally important are adequate staffing and funding, which support smaller class sizes and enable hiring qualified bilingual educators. Ongoing professional development equips teachers with effective instructional strategies, enhancing student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

Technology Integration

Incorporate technology by selecting digital tools aligned with program goals, ensuring equitable student access, and training educators on bilingual educational software. Technology supports differentiated instruction and develops digital literacy in multilingual contexts (Howard et al., 2024).

Assessment in Both Languages

Develop formative and summative assessments, including rubrics, performance indicators, and portfolio systems in both languages. Align these tools with program goals and state standards to monitor biliteracy progress and inform instruction (WIDA, n.d.).

Cross-linguistic Connections and Translanguaging

Design thematic units that leverage cross-linguistic connections and translanguaging strategies. Assessments and curriculum should intentionally integrate and address these skills. Having distinct language and content goals allows for students to use their full linguistic repertoire to demonstrate learning. Explicitly address how linguistic features of each language support students understanding and bilingual competence (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008).

Collaboration and Support Networks

Districts can leverage support from Illinois State Board of Education Principal Consultants and Regional Offices of Education bilingual coordinators and professional organizations such as the Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education (IAMME), National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), ICTFL (Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), ACTFL (American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages, TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), ITBE (Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), and the Illinois Resource Center (IRC). These networks offer research tools, program evaluation frameworks, and best practice guidance for curriculum development (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2024).

Checklist for Developing Curriculum and Resources

- Develop and implement a clear language allocation plan consistent with your DLBE model (90/10, 80/20, or 50/50).
- Align curriculum with Illinois Learning Standards, WIDA English Language Development Standards, and applicable partner language standards.
- Design an integrated curriculum combining language and content instruction across core subjects.
- Use a comprehensive literacy approach covering listening, speaking, reading, and writing in both languages, guided by Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan components.
- Select culturally sustaining instructional materials that reflect students' backgrounds and promote inclusivity.
- Procure high-quality instructional resources like textbooks, digital tools, and supplementary materials in both languages.
- Plan for technology integration, ensuring access, training, and digital literacy development.
- Develop assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes in both languages, aligned with goals and standards.

- Incorporate cross-linguistic connections and translanguaging within curriculum design.
- Leverage state and regional support, including specialists and bilingual coordinators.
- Engage professional organizations and use research-based evaluation tools like CAL's Dual Language Program Evaluation Toolkit for continuous improvement.
- Provide ongoing professional development for bilingual educators to support effective instructional practices.

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Component 6: Establish Staffing and Professional Learning

Recruit and Retain Qualified Bilingual Educators

Highly qualified bilingual teachers are the cornerstone of successful DLBE programs. These educators must demonstrate strong proficiency in both languages of instruction and possess the skills to effectively deliver content bilingually. Recruiting and retaining such teachers is critical given the high demand and limited supply. Strategies to attract and keep bilingual educators include offering competitive salaries, comprehensive support systems, and fostering a professional culture that values bilingual education (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017; Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), 2022).

Illinois Licensure and Endorsement Requirements

DLBE teachers in Illinois must hold a Professional Educator License (PEL). Teachers providing instruction in the partner language must have a bilingual education endorsement. Teachers must demonstrate language proficiency in the partner language and cultural competence reflecting bilingual developmental needs. Educators must also hold appropriate endorsements for whichever content area(s) they will be instructing (Illinois State Board of Education, 2013; University of Chicago, 2020).

Different Professional Educator Licenses (PELs) and Their Roles

Bilingually Endorsed Teacher

Bilingually endorsed teachers are able to provide bilingual support for the range of the endorsement. In order to be the teacher of record, the teacher must also have a PEL in the area in which they are teaching. For example, a teacher with a K-6 Elementary Education PEL and a Bilingual endorsement is able to be the teacher of record for a 3rd Grade bilingual education class. In a DLBE program, the bilingual endorsement is what authorizes an educator to provide native language instruction.

English as a Second Language (ESL)-Endorsed Teacher

ESL-endorsed teachers are able to be the teacher of record for standalone ESL classes in the grade bands of the endorsement. Please note that ESL classes are not the same as ELA classes. While it is required that the ESL classes count as ELA classes for credit purposes, the standards that govern the two classes are different, and an ESL endorsement does not authorize an educator to teach an ELA class. ESL-endorsed teachers are also able to provide EL supports in any content areas in which they are licensed or through co-teaching with a content-endorsed teacher. In a DLBE program, ESL teachers are required to provide the ESL instruction that is required for ELs.

Content Area Teacher

Content area teachers are able to teach the contents for which they are endorsed. These are frequently the initial non-provisional license that a teacher earns. In a DLBE program, these teachers can co-teach with a bilingually endorsed teacher to provide instruction or, if they are bilingually endorsed as well, can teach a bilingual version of the class.

Educator License with Stipulations – Transitional Bilingual Education (ELS-TBE)

The ELS-TBE is a provisional license that is non-renewable. This license allows teachers to be the:

- Bilingual Education teacher of record in a language art class in the partner language, Grades preK-12
- Bilingual Education teacher of record (non-content based) in Grades preK-12
- Bilingual pull-out resource or push-in/co-teacher (not the teacher of record) in Grades preK-12 in a TBE program
- ESL Education teacher of record (non-content based) in Grades K-6
- ESL pull-out resource or push-in/co-teacher (not the teacher of record) in Grades K-6

In DLBE programs, these teachers are able to provide bilingual support across multiple grade bands through co-teaching. Also, in bilingual classes that do not require a content endorsement, they can be the teacher of record.

Educator License with Stipulations – Visiting International Teacher (ELS-VIT)

The ELS-VIT is a provisional license that is non-renewable. This license is for international teachers who come to the U.S. to teach for a limited amount of time. This license allows teacher to teach:

- ESL, Bilingual (non-content based) and World Language in teacher's native language (PK-12)
- Additional grade level and content area endorsements based on teacher's foreign credential evaluation

In DLBE programs, these teachers are able to provide bilingual support across multiple grade bands through co-teaching. Also, in bilingual classes that do not require a content endorsement, they can be the teacher of record.

World Language-Endorsed Teachers

World language-endorsed teachers are educators who earned an endorsement subsequent to their initial PEL. These teachers are able to provide world language instruction in the grade bands they are endorsed for. In DLBE programs, world language teachers can provide world language instruction in the partner language. This license does not meet the requirements for native language instruction that is required for students in a TBE program.

World Language-Licensed Teachers

World language-licensed teachers are educators who earned an initial license in world language education. These teachers are able to provide world language instruction in the grade bands they are licensed for. In DLBE programs, world language teachers can provide world language instruction in the partner language. This license does not meet the requirements for native language instruction that is required for students in a TBE program.

Strategic Staffing and Support Personnel

DLBE programs require strategically staffed educators and support personnel to ensure linguistic equity, instructional quality, and cultural responsiveness. Qualified bilingual-endorsed teachers with expertise in dual language bilingual education pedagogy are essential to meet the needs of all students. Support personnel such as paraprofessionals, family liaisons, and cultural coordinators further enhance program effectiveness by supporting language development and family engagement. Adequate investment in a trained, culturally competent team is foundational to program sustainability and success (Gandara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020)

Professional Development Framework for Shared Responsibility

DLBE programs impact a school's culture and are a shared responsibility for all staff. Staff need specific learning and support to ensure that students in a DLBE program are an integrated part of the school community and have the tools for success.

School Principals and Assistant Principals

Understanding language acquisition is essential for school administrators overseeing DLBE programs. DLBE programs should be highlighted as an enrichment program that develops multiple languages. Making multilingualism the norm in the districts helps to integrate these programs into the greater district culture. Some steps to increase the visibility of multilingualism:

- Post signage and share communication in a multilingual format
- Ensure equity of visibility of English and the partner language
- Plan with multilanguage implementation in mind (from registration to back-to-school nights)
- Ensure multilingual parents have equitable access to parent leadership opportunities
- Ensure multiple entry points for lessons and programming
- Involve the DLBE parents and teachers in district decision-making and planning.

As a building leader, it is also important that you establish a cycle for evaluation, growth, and learning that centers bilingualism and biliteracy. Here are some considerations for developing systems that encourage success of a DLBE program:

- Build in time for collaboration across different instructional groups for lateral and vertical alignment
- Identify high-quality professional developments for all stakeholders to engage in and facilitate its implementation
- Understand language acquisition goals for both languages and plan for the ability to assess, monitor, and adapt for students
- Facilitate knowledge sharing by engaging experts and following data-driven strategies for success

Finally, lead by example. Ongoing professional learning for yourself should cover multiple topics such as:

- Second language acquisition theory (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000; August & Shanahan, 2006)
- Dual language bilingual education instructional strategies and pedagogy (Montecel & Cortez, 2020)
- Translanguaging and cross-linguistic transfer (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008)
- Cultural competency and family engagement (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020; Epstein, 2011)
- Bilingual assessment methods and data analysis (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025)

District Curriculum Directors

Curricula used in DLBE programs should be subject to the same rigorous selection criteria as other curriculum. Furthermore, to decrease isolation of DLBE programs, curricula across the district should be reflective of and address language learning and cultural diversity as an integrated component. Here are some considerations for curricula selection:

- Do curricula afford multiple entry points and is it adaptive for a diverse range of linguistic needs?
- Are curricular materials readily available for the high incidence languages represented in the district?
- Are curricula reflective of the communities served?
- Are school and classroom libraries inclusive of materials at varying linguistic complexity and in languages of the community?
- Are language objectives, including forms and structures, integrated in all classes, standards-based, and rigorous?
- Are content objectives and language objectives distinct and aligned?
- Have cultural and linguistic barriers been identified and addressed in materials?
- Do all curricula align with state standards?
- Does the curriculum allow for adaptive lesson planning and address linguistic needs of students in the classroom?

Furthermore, in implementing curriculum, structures should be in place that allow for supporting students with different linguistic ability and content knowledge within the classroom. Policies should also be developed that establish norms around assessments with consideration for language utilization and accessibility.

Special Education and Gifted and Talented Directors

Students in DLBE represent a variety of needs. Enrollment in a DLBE program should not be curtailed nor should it curtail special education needs or access to gifted and talented programs. To facilitate this access, consider how students are identified for these programs. Key considerations:

- RTI/MTSS should be responsive to linguistic and cultural needs and be appropriate for multilingual learners.

- Benchmarking tools should be adapted for students in DLBE programs to address the differences in language proficiency that students in these programs have.
- Students' proficiency in a language should not be a factor in determining access to gifted and talented programs or in determining eligibility for special education services.
- Communication about these programs should be available in the languages represented in the district.
- Educators need to understand how to modify instruction for a variety of language proficiency levels to ensure equitable access to content learning.
- Collaboration between bilingual, special education, and gifted and talented teachers is needed to ensure that assessments are normed for language learners and placement determinations are not being made with assessments that are not linguistically and culturally responsive.

Reading Specialists and Instructional Coaches

For students in DLBE programs, language acquisition can happen at different rates than peers in monolingual learning environments. This means that special consideration needs to be given to instructional strategies and assessments of knowledge. In programs that serve language-learning students, instruction should emphasize meaning-making rather than isolated skill development. For example, a teacher might teach discrete phonics skills embedded in a meaningful, whole-text activity, emphasizing comprehension of the text while highlighting the decoding skill.

Programs should also look for and use reading assessments that are normed for speakers of the partner language and use these in conjunction with English normed assessments to develop a more comprehensive view of the students. Teachers working with students need to have easy access to the students' proficiency levels from both languages and understand the assessment results. Lessons must be differentiated, relevant, and engaging for all students based on linguistic ability and cultural considerations. This is because oral language and background cultural knowledge play a role in reading comprehension and writing performance.

When developing tools for a DLBE program:

- Use research-based practices that have been evaluated for success with multilanguage learners
- Ensure scaffolding tools are integrated into all lessons
- Model how knowledge demonstrations look across all four domains of language
- Understand how entry into literacy at later ages looks
- Evaluate programs for instructional or programmatic weaknesses with regards to language development

Librarians and Media Specialists

Libraries provide a space to expand and increase access to materials in the partner language. This begins by educating yourself on the literacy level of your students and the community and obtaining materials that affirm identities through multilingual and multicultural displays, texts, and media.

Steps to consider:

- Ensuring both online and print collections are accessible, multilingual, and multicultural
- Ensuring both classroom and school libraries are representative
- Highlighting and bookmarking websites that increase accessibility and represent resources in the languages of the program and community
- Offering parallel resources for languages

Guidance Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists

Guidance counselors, social workers, and school psychologists represent an additional avenue to connect with families and the community to support the DLBE program. They can help ensure that materials are available in multiple languages and are representative of the linguistic diversity of the program. This group of staff needs to be informed of cultural norms that impact family interactions with school and other professionals and share this information with the broader community. Also, they can connect the program and its members with community resources that can enhance programming and ensure social-emotional resources are multilingual.

Partnerships to Strengthen Recruitment

Districts should partner with university bilingual teacher preparation programs and engage in national conferences like NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education), ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), and ATDLE (Association of Two-Way & Dual language Education). Grow-your-own initiatives targeting paraprofessionals and community members and international teacher exchange programs expand the bilingual educator pipeline (IDRA, 2022; Sanchez et al., 2017).

Retention Strategies

Retention strategies should include mentoring programs for new teachers, competitive compensation with bilingual stipends, clear career advancement pathways, and cultivating a collaborative, supportive work environment. Professional learning communities and instructional coaching with DLBE expertise foster ongoing growth and teacher satisfaction (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), 2016; Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Checklist for Establishing Staffing and Professional Learning

- Hire qualified bilingual teachers who meet Illinois licensing and proficiency requirements.
- Plan for adequate staffing ratios and support personnel, including bilingual substitutes.
- Develop recruitment strategies like university partnerships, national conference engagement, international exchange programs, and grow-your-own pathways.
- Provide ongoing professional development covering language acquisition, bilingual pedagogy, assessment, cultural competency, and family engagement.
- Implement retention strategies, including mentoring, competitive pay with bilingual stipends, career development pathways, and supportive work environments.
- Create professional learning communities and provide instructional coaching with dual language bilingual education expertise.

- Structure professional learning to include:
 - Second language acquisition theory
 - DLBE instructional strategies
 - Translanguaging and cross-linguistic transfer
 - Cultural competence and family engagement
 - Bilingual assessment and data analysis

Component 6: Establish Staffing and Professional Learning References

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Component 7: Establish Teaching and Learning Standards

Scaffolded Instruction

Implement structured support like modeling, visual aids, graphic organizers, and interactive activities to make content comprehensible and gradually release responsibility as students build language proficiency (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2017).

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning further enhances language development and community-building by encouraging students to work together in both languages. Activities like group projects, peer teaching, and discussions provide authentic natural opportunities for language use, fostering proficiency and essential social skills in a supportive classroom environment (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is vital to meet students' diverse language proficiencies and learning styles. By tailoring lessons and materials and offering multiple ways for students to engage with content and demonstrate understanding, teachers ensure equitable access and meaningful progress for all learners (Tomlinson, 2014).

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment practices are crucial for monitoring student progress in language and content areas. Using varied techniques, such as observations, quizzes, reflections, and informal comprehension checks, helps teachers adjust instruction responsively, promoting continuous student growth (Heritage, 2010).

Technology-Enhanced Learning

Technology integration offers additional avenues for language practice and personalized learning. Tools like language apps, interactive whiteboards, and online platforms support engagement, provide instant feedback, and accommodate diverse learning needs and paces. Ensure equitable device access and train educators on effective bilingual tech integration (Trust, Krutka, & Carpenter, 2016).

Translanguaging and Cross-Linguistic Transfer

Design tasks that allow students to leverage all linguistic resources, encouraging transfer of skills such as phonemic awareness and comprehension strategies from one language to another. Promote metacognitive reflection on language use (Cummins & Hornberger, 2008; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Cultural integration enriches the learning environment and builds deeper connections to the languages taught. Including literature, music, art, traditions, and cultural experiences such as celebrations, guest speakers, and fairs promote cultural understanding and broadens students' worldviews (Banks, 2015).

Project-Based Learning

Implement interdisciplinary projects that address real-world problems through both languages. Encourage inquiry, critical thinking, and collaboration while reinforcing content knowledge and language skills (Stoller, 2006).

Checklist for Establishing Teaching and Learning Standards

- Develop and implement clear language allocation protocols by time and subject.
- Train teachers to maintain consistent language use and nurture cross-linguistic connections.
- Employ scaffolded instruction techniques such as modeling and visuals to support comprehension.
- Foster cooperative learning and peer interaction in both languages.
- Integrate explicit academic vocabulary development across languages.
- Plan differentiated instruction responsive to individual language proficiency levels.
- Provide explicit literacy instruction tailored to the unique linguistic features of each language.
- Support transfer of literacy skills between languages and encourage metacognitive awareness.
- Use multiple formative and summative assessment formats in appropriate languages.
- Document and analyze student progress in both languages to inform instruction.
- Maintain high academic standards and create linguistically and culturally rich learning environments.
- Integrate translanguaging pedagogy and project-based learning with real-world relevance.
- Incorporate technology strategically to support bilingual instruction and personalized learning.
- Design culturally responsive curricula inclusive of literature, traditions, and experiences from students' linguistic backgrounds.

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Component 8: Establish Accountability and Assessment

Balancing Formative and Summative Measures

Regularly monitoring students' development in both languages is vital for DLBE program success. A balanced assessment framework combines classroom-based formative checks, district benchmarks, and high-stakes summative evaluations. For instance, Gottlieb and Nguyen (2007) recommend using a portfolio system that integrates formative tasks, district assessments, and state-level standards to provide a comprehensive view of learner progress.

Clarifying Student Performance in Grades 3-5:

It is crucial to recognize that students in DLBE programs may initially score below their monolingual English peers on standardized, English-only tests in elementary grades, particularly between third and fifth grades, because their instruction is intentionally divided between two languages. This early pattern is expected and does not reflect a deficit in learning. Longitudinal research and ISBE data indicate that by late elementary or middle school, DLBE participants typically achieve parity with, and often surpass, monolingual students in both English proficiency and academic achievement (Marian et al., 2013; ISBE, 2024; Thomas & Collier 2002; Steele et al., 2017). A balanced assessment framework paired with longitudinal evaluation best captures the multifaceted benefits of DLBE programs by aligning with program goals and tracking progress over time, thereby maintain stakeholder confidence during early grade assessments (Howard et al., 2023).

Linking Assessments to Biliteracy Credentials

Aligning assessments with the [State Seal of Biliteracy](#) ensures that evaluation reflects students' bilingual and biliteracy skills. These summative measures offer actionable feedback to learners, families, and educators, guiding instruction to celebrating achievement (Howard et al., 2003; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Machado-Casas et al., 2022).

Building a Robust Data System

A strong data infrastructure enables ongoing tracking of individual and cohort progress across grade levels. Disaggregated, longitudinal data on language proficiency, academic outcomes, and demographic subgroups support evidence-based decision-making (Field, 2011). Monitoring partner language and English achievements side by side helps educators evaluate whether program goals are met and identify areas for targeted support.

Comprehensive DLBE Assessment Framework

As Georges et al. (2019) note, dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs require a comprehensive and dynamic approach for assessing student achievement that encompasses content learning, biliteracy development, and cultural competence. Furthermore, Maldonado et al. (2018) developed observation and coding protocols to help stakeholders track student exposure and dosage in content, language, biliteracy, and cultural standards, emphasizing the critical role of time in interpreting achievement outcomes.

Program Evaluation and Stakeholder Feedback

Beyond individual student assessments, regular program evaluation is critical. Annual reviews involving stakeholder input help identify areas for improvement and ensure alignment with intended outcomes. Evaluations should analyze student results compared to district benchmarks, assess teacher effectiveness and retention, and gauge family satisfaction and community engagement. This comprehensive program evaluation supports evidence-based decision-making and resource allocation (Howard et al., 2003). Scholars further emphasize that administrators should design internal accountability systems that celebrate each program's unique developmental journey while ensuring rigor and appropriateness (Maldonado, 2019).

*Legal Accountability Under *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981)*

DLBE programs should align with established legal frameworks for accountability, particularly the standards set forth in *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981). This landmark case established a three-pronged test under Section 1703(f) of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 to determine whether school district instructional programs for English learners comply with federal law. The *Castañeda* standards require that programs for emerging bilingual students be based on sound educational theory recognized by experts in the field or deemed a legitimate experimental strategy. Additionally, programs must be implemented effectively with sufficient resources, materials, qualified teachers, and appropriate facilities to deliver instruction successfully. Finally, after a reasonable trial period, programs must be evaluated to ensure they effectively help students overcome language barriers and achieve academic success (*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 1981). These legal standards provide a framework for districts to use to assess their DLBE program accountability and ensure compliance with federal requirements for serving English learners.

Continuous Improvement Cycle

A continuous improvement process rounds out accountability efforts. Data from assessments and evaluations should inform instructional practices and program adjustments. Providing feedback to educators and communicating results to families and the community fosters transparency and shared responsibility for program success. Sustaining high-quality DLBE requires maintaining an ongoing cycle of assessment, evaluation, adaptation, and communication.

Lastly, the accountability process should be situated within a continuous improvement cycle. Data from assessments and evaluations should guide instructional practices and program adjustments. Providing feedback to educators and communicating results transparently to families and the broader community, fosters shared responsibility for program success. Field (2011) highlights that DLBE programs strengthen their legitimacy by developing pedagogically sound accountability systems that rely on multiple measures and reflect authentic student learning. When assessments and accountability are used as tools for improvement rather than punishment, programs sustain the high quality of DLBE instruction over time.

Checklist for Establishing Accountability and Assessment

- Design a balanced assessment system including formative and summative assessments in both languages:
 1. Use WIDA ACCESS for English proficiency.
 2. Identify partner language proficiency assessments.
 3. Develop portfolio systems to document biliteracy growth.
- Collect and analyze data longitudinally, disaggregated by demographics and participation.
- Monitor academic achievement and language proficiency development in both languages regularly.
- Conduct annual program evaluations with input from stakeholders:
 1. Compare student outcomes to district averages.
 2. Review teacher effectiveness and retention.
 3. Survey family satisfaction and community engagement.
- Implement a continuous improvement cycle:
 1. Use data to guide instructional and programming decisions.
 2. Adjust program components based on findings.
 3. Provide timely feedback to educators.
 4. Communicate program results with families and communities.
- Incorporate multiple assessment measures beyond standardized tests.
- Assess students in the language of instruction, allowing language development trajectories over 3-7 years.
- Involve families in understanding and interpreting assessment data.
- Follow established legal accountability frameworks such as the Castañeda standards (*Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981*):
 1. Base DLBE programs on sound educational theory recognized by experts.
 2. Implement DLBE programs with adequate resources, materials, and qualified personnel.
 3. Evaluate DLBE program effectiveness in helping students overcome language barriers and achieve academic success.

Implementation Timeline and Next Steps

- Year 1: Planning and preparation
 - Complete initial components from knowledge building through enrollment.
 - Secure school board approval and community support.
 - Begin teacher recruitment and staff preparation.
- Year 2: Program launch
 - Implement curriculum, resources, staffing, and accountability systems.
 - Launch DLBE program with first student cohort.
 - Provide comprehensive professional development.
- Year 3 and beyond: Expansion and refinement
 - Expand program by adding new grade levels annually.
 - Conduct ongoing program evaluation and make necessary adjustments.
 - Plan for program sustainability and growth.

Component 8: Establish Accountability and Assessment References

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Component 9: Funding and Sustainability

Importance of Sustainable Funding

The long-term success of DLBE programs hinges on reliable funding streams. Districts must develop comprehensive strategies that integrate federal, state, and local resources, ensuring both program implementation and expansion are financially supported (Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

Federal Funding Sources

- **Title III:** Provides supplemental resources for professional development, instructional materials, and family engagement specific to English learners and immigrant students (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Districts should be mindful of the fact that Title III funds are specific to English learners and must not be used to support non-English learners.
- **Title I:** Allocated to high-poverty schools, Title I funds can bolster academic instruction and support services within DLBE settings (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).
- **IDEA:** Ensures English learners with disabilities receive appropriate special education services within DLBE programs (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004).

Local Resources and Community Partnerships

Local resources play a vital role in program sustainability. General education funding forms the foundation of DLBE program support, while community partnerships and grants can provide additional resources. Private foundation support and business sponsorships offer opportunities for enhanced programming, materials, and professional development. Building strong community relationships helps ensure ongoing local investment in DLBE (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Budget Planning and Key Cost Areas

Budget planning requires careful consideration of key cost areas that drive program success. Personnel costs represent the largest investment, including bilingual-endorsed teachers, program coordinators, and support staff with appropriate language skills and certifications (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000). Professional development and training expenses ensure educators receive ongoing preparation in DLBE methodology and culturally sustaining practices (Darling-Hammond, Hylar, & Gardner, 2009). Curriculum and instructional materials in both languages require significant upfront investment and ongoing updates to maintain quality and alignment with standards (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Assessment tools and evaluation systems support data collection and program improvement efforts (Heritage, 2010). Family engagement and community partnership activities foster essential stakeholder support (Epstein, 2011). Technology and infrastructure costs include bilingual digital resources, devices, and connectivity to support modern language learning approaches (Trust, Krutka, & Carpenter, 2016).

Legal and Administrative Compliance

Illinois law establishes specific requirements for English learner education that impact funding and program planning. Under Article 14C of the Illinois School Code, districts must provide transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs when enrolling 20 or more English learners from the same language background in a school. These programs must include native language instruction in core academic subjects and ESL instruction aligned with WIDA standards. When districts have fewer than 20 English learners from the same language background, they must provide Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPI) with locally determined programming that includes ESL services and native language support as appropriate (Illinois General Assembly, 2024).

Administrative compliance requires attention to several key elements. Districts must implement appropriate student identification and assessment procedures to determine English learner status and program placement. Hiring qualified staff with proper endorsements ensures program quality and legal compliance. Parent notification and engagement requirements mandate communication in families' preferred languages about program options and student progress. Program evaluation and reporting demonstrate effectiveness and accountability to state and federal agencies. Professional development mandates ensure educators receive ongoing training in bilingual education methodology and best practices (Castañeda v. Pickard, 1981; Illinois State Board of Education, 2025).

Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

Building sustainability requires strategic planning for staffing, materials, and ongoing program evaluation. Districts should establish clear policies that institutionalize DLBE programs, protecting them from potential leadership changes. Professional learning communities, mentorship programs, and career advancement pathways help retain qualified bilingual educators. Regular program evaluation and community engagement demonstrate effectiveness and build continued support for DLBE (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020).

Checklist for Funding and Sustainability

- Identify and secure federal funding sources:
 - Apply for Title III funding for language instruction and professional development. Ensure compliance with eligibility requirements. Title III funds are exclusively intended for services benefiting English learners and may not be used for non-EL students.
 - Utilize Title I funds in high-poverty schools for additional academic support.
 - Ensure IDEA compliance for English learners with disabilities in DLBE programs.
- Develop local funding strategies:
 - Allocate general education funding for core DLBE program operations.
 - Build community partnerships with cultural organizations and businesses.
 - Pursue private foundation grants and local sponsorship opportunities.
- Plan comprehensive budgets addressing key cost areas:
 - Personnel (teachers, coordinators, support staff with appropriate endorsements).
 - Professional development and ongoing training.
 - Curriculum and instructional materials in both languages.
 - Assessment tools and evaluation systems.
 - Family engagement and community partnership activities.
 - Technology and infrastructure for bilingual instruction.

- Ensure legal compliance with Illinois requirements:
 - Meet administrative requirements for identification, staffing, communication, and reporting.
- Plan for long-term sustainability:
 - Establish school board policies that institutionalize DLBE programs.
 - Develop retention strategies for qualified bilingual educators.
 - Create professional learning communities and mentorship programs.
 - Conduct annual program evaluations to demonstrate effectiveness.
 - Engage families and community members as ongoing advocates and partners.
- Follow implementation timeline:
 - Year 1: Complete planning, stakeholder engagement, staff hiring, and resource preparation.
 - Year 2: Launch kindergarten program with comprehensive support systems.
 - Years 3-5: Add grade levels annually while refining program based on evaluation data.

Component 9: Funding and Sustainability References

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Component 10: Dually Identified Students (Special Education and English Learners)

Audience and Purpose

This guidance serves multiple audiences: special education and DLBE teachers, families, district leaders and administrators, and regional education officers. It addresses the needs of students who receive both special education and English learner services.

[National Dual Language Forum's White Paper](#)

Creating inclusive DLBE programs requires intentional design of learning environments that draw on research-based features shown to support bilingual learners with disabilities. The National Dual Language Forum's white paper highlights several critical elements:

1. Strengths-Based Developmental Orientation

Adopt a strengths-based developmental orientation, recognizing each student's linguistic, cultural, and disability-related assets (Howard et al., 2018). Research shows that bilingual learners with Down syndrome, autism, and developmental language disorders achieve language milestones on par with monolingual peers when provided with high-quality DLBE exposure (Genesee et al., 2021; Paradis et al., 2021). Focusing on students' strengths shifts the narrative from deficit to potential, fostering motivation and engagement (Howard et al., 2018).

2. Integrated Bilingual Special Education Services

Ensure integrated bilingual special education services through regular collaborative planning. Baca et al. (2004) describes the bilingual special education interface, in which bilingual and special educators co-design instruction to address both language development and disability-specific needs seamlessly. Studies of two-way immersion programs demonstrate that coordinated interventions narrow achievement gaps for students with disabilities over time (Howard, 2003; Lindholm-Leary & Howard, 2008).

3. Sociocultural Theory Foundations

Ground instruction in sociocultural theory, leveraging students' home and community practices to mediate new learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Research on preschool DLBE learners indicates that culturally relevant, context-embedded instruction enhances both languages' development without compromising either (Paradis et al., 2021).

4. Explicit, Scaffolded Interventions

Implement explicit, scaffolded interventions in meaningful contexts. Effective bilingual interventions provide systematic, repeated practice of targeted skills alongside general classroom instruction (Drysdale et al., 2015; Richards-Tutor et al., 2016). For example, collaborative strategic reading delivered in both languages improves decoding and

comprehension for bilingual students at risk for reading disabilities (Klingner et al., 2004).

5. Authentic Engagement and Independence

Promote student engagement and independence through authentic, culturally responsive activities. Guthrie et al. (2006) found that cognitively engaging tasks—those that connect to students’ backgrounds and allow choice—boost time on task and deeper learning. DLBE classrooms that integrate peer modeling and cooperative projects sustain engagement for learners with disabilities (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).

Checklist for Supporting Dually Identified Students

Enrollment

- Procedures for placing special education students in DLBE programs
- Strategies to remove accessibility barriers
- Alignment of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals with program participation

Community Engagement

- Family involvement strategies for students with disabilities
- Cultural responsiveness requirements
- Parent education on DLBE benefits (Vonderlack-Navarro, 2020)

Curriculum and Resources

- Instructional modifications and materials adaptation in both languages
- Technology integration guidance (Lindholm-Leary, 2012)

Staffing and Professional Learning

- Bilingual special education certification pathways
- Collaborative planning between bilingual and special education staff
- Professional development standards (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000)

Teaching and Learning

- Evidence-based bilingual instructional strategies for students with disabilities (Tomlinson, 2014)
- Scaffolding and support practices across service models

Assessment and Accountability

- DLBE assessments differentiating language acquisition from disability (Heritage, 2010)
- Data collection and progress monitoring in both languages
- IEP goal development and evaluation with qualified bilingual specialists

Inclusive Environments

- Adopt a strengths-based orientation:
 - Inventory students' linguistic, cultural, and personal assets (Howard et al., 2018).
 - Use asset mapping in IEP development (Paradis et al., 2021).
- Integrate bilingual special education services:
 - Schedule regular co-planning sessions for bilingual and special educators (Baca et al., 2004).
 - Deliver coordinated interventions within general classrooms (Howard, 2003).
- Ground instruction in sociocultural theory:
 - Incorporate home languages and cultural practices into lessons (Vygotsky, 1978).
 - Use community resources and family knowledge as learning mediators (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003).
- Provide explicit, scaffolded interventions:
 - Embed targeted skill instruction within authentic content-area tasks (Richards-Tutor et al., 2016).
 - Offer repeated practice with peer and teacher scaffolds (Drysedale et al., 2015).
- Enhance student engagement and independence:
 - Design choice-based, culturally relevant projects (Guthrie et al., 2006).
 - Facilitate peer modeling and cooperative learning in both languages (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).

Component 10: Dually Identified Students (Special Education & English Learners) References

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IV. Conclusion

Sustained Commitment and Collaborative Planning

Implementing high-quality DLBE programs requires sustained commitment, collaborative planning, and ongoing evaluation. By following this comprehensive guidance and maintaining focus on equity and inclusion for all students, particularly, newcomers and students with special needs, Illinois districts can create transformative educational opportunities that prepare students for success in our interconnected, multilingual world (Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2021; Vygotsky, 1978).

Well-Documented Benefits

The journey toward DLBE excellence is iterative and demands patience, but the cognitive, academic, and social benefits are well-documented. Meta-analyses show improved literacy and content mastery for DLBE students compared to peers in English-only settings (August & Shanahan, 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

Policy Framework and Stakeholder Engagement

This guidance offers a clear roadmap for expanding and enhancing DLBE programs across Illinois. Adopting these recommendations enables legislators, policymakers, and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to build a robust framework that supports bilingual education and meets diverse student needs (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2021; Hilliard et al., 2022).

To realize a multilingual and culturally responsive educational environment, all stakeholders (i.e., Educators, administrators, policymakers, community leaders, and families) must unite behind these initiatives. The Illinois General Assembly and ISBE should define and standardize DLBE programs through clear policy changes that ensure consistency and quality across the state (Castañeda v. Pickard, 1981; Howard et al., 2018).

Funding and Resource Allocation

Securing and allocating necessary funding is essential. Both start-up funds and ongoing financial support must cover curriculum development, professional development, assessment systems, and staffing to sustain DLBE programs long-term (U.S. Department of Education, 2019; Illinois State Board of Education, 2025). Partnerships among school districts, higher education, and community organizations will strengthen support networks and foster resource sharing and innovation (Epstein, 2011).

Continuous Professional Learning and Equity

Investing continuous professional learning ensures that educators are equipped with evidence-based instructional strategies and cultural competencies. Special education considerations and differentiated approaches support dually identified learners, promoting inclusion and social justice through bilingual education (Hamayan et al., 2022; Klingner, Boelé, Linan-Thompson, & Rodriguez, 2014).

Prioritizing equitable access for historically underserved communities addresses educational disparities and promotes social justice through bilingual education (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017).

Call to Action

To realize a multilingual and culturally responsive educational environment, all stakeholders, educators, administrators, policymakers, community leaders, and families must unite behind these initiatives. Partnerships among school districts, higher education institutions, and community organizations will strengthen support networks and foster innovation (Epstein, 2011; Hilliard, Genesee, Sánchez-López, & Young, 2022).

By committing these actions, Illinois can create an inclusive, effective educational system that prepares students for success in our interconnected world and enhances the state's social and economic vitality. Advancing these recommendations firmly establishes Illinois as a national leader in educational equity and multilingual innovation, setting the foundation for a future where every student grows and flourishes in diverse, culturally rich, and globally connected world.

Conclusion References

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