# Illinois Dual Language Guidance
## Draft One

Multilingual/Language Development Department

**ILLINOIS**
STATE BOARD OF
**EDUCATION**

**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 Dec. 15, 2026, which addresses the establishment and expansion of dual language (DL) education 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.

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 DL Education**

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

DL programs in Illinois exemplify content-based language education models that effectively promote bilingualism and academic achievement (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2013; Genesee & 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 (García & Tyler, 2010; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Paris & Alim, 2017).

As Illinois continues to welcome an increasingly diverse student population, expanding DL 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 DL education 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 DL education.
- **State Board Oversight:** ISBE ensured recommendations address state priorities around equity, quality, and sustainability of programs.

**Current Landscape and Rationale for DL Programs in Illinois**

DL 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 DL programs has grown significantly. DL 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 DL programs.

This guidance document provides Illinois school districts with actionable strategies and frameworks to implement and expand high-quality DL programs that serve all students equitably. DL 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 DL 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 10 implementation components that support districts from initial program planning through sustained operations. The guidance framework ensures DL programs support bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2013; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2004) while meeting requirements established in Public Act 104-0266.

The guidance organizes implementation into 10 components that address all statutory requirements:

| Implementation Framework: 10 Components |
|---|
| **Component 1: Build DL Knowledge and Advocacy** |
| **Component 2: Develop Mission, Vision, and Goals** |
| **Component 3: Design and Adopt a Program Model** |
| **Component 4: Develop Enrollment and Family Outreach Plans** |
| **Component 5: Develop 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 and English Learners)** |

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

**Conclusion**

These 10 components provide an evidence-based framework to establish and expand DL 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 DL 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 DL 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 DL program delivery across Illinois.

**Executive Summary References**

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Collier, V. P. (1995). Acquiring a second language for school. *Directions in Language and Education,* 1(4), 1–19.

García, S. B., & Tyler, B. (2010). Meeting the needs of English language learners with learning disabilities in the general curriculum. Theory Into Practice, 49(2), 113–120. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841003626585

Genesee, F., & Lindholm-Leary, K. (2013). Two case studies of content-based language education. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education, 1*(1), 3-33.

Genesee, F., & Lindholm-Leary, K. (2021). The suitability of dual language education for diverse students: An overview of research in Canada and the United States. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, 9(2), 164–192. https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.21001.gen

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory Into Practice*, 51(4), 256–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841209600421

Lindholm-Leary, K., & Borsato, G. (2006). Academic achievement. In F. Genesee, K. Lindholm-Leary, W. Saunders, & D. Christian (Eds.), Educating English language learners: A synthesis of research evidence (pp. 176–222). Cambridge University Press.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). Promoting the educational success of children and youth learning English: Promising futures. National Academies Press.

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. Teachers College Press.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2004). The astounding effectiveness of dual language education for all. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice, 2*(1), 1–20.

# Table of Contents

# I. Introduction

## Purpose of Dual Language 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, by Dec. 15, 2026, develop and adopt comprehensive guidance for school districts regarding the establishment of new DL education programs and the expansion of existing programs.

Per Section 14D-5(b) of the statue, "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."

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

## Overview and Rationale of Existing DL Programs in Illinois

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

DL 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 DL programs in Illinois and explains the rationale for its implementation and growth.

## Current Landscape

DL 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 programs.

The number of English learners (ELs) has risen steadily, reaching approximately 332,936 ELs enrolled in Illinois public schools during the 2023-24 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, 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 DL models that include English learner participation. Common languages in DL 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 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 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 programs through awareness and resource development.

DL programs face challenges, including:

- 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 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 DL 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:** DL 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, 2016).

2. **Academic Achievement:** Lindholm-Leary's (2018) research has consistently shown that students enrolled in DL 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 DL classrooms (Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, 2024).

3. **Socio-Cultural Competence:** DL 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:** DL 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, DL 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 DL programs, effectively promote academic achievement and equitable access to education for language minority students, including English learners.

**Need for DL Program Expansion**

Several factors drive the need to expand DL programs in Illinois. Research highlights cognitive, academic, and social benefits of bilingual education. DL programs promote biliteracy and cognitive development for both English learners and native English speakers (Lindholm-Leary, 2018). DL 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 globally and the demand for bilingual skills in the workforce, the need exists to expand and enhance DL programs to meet the needs of students and prepare students for success in a multilingual society.

The expansion of DL programs meets community demand for bilingualism 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 DL 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 instruction supports language development and lays a foundation for future academic achievement and socio-cultural competence. Beginning DL education in preschool helps children develop bilingual skills and benefit from the cognitive, academic, and social advantages of bilingualism from an early age. This early start maximizes the long-term benefits of dual language programs (De la Torre et al., 2019).

Research by Gándara & Santibañez (2016) 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 DL 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 DL programs, ensuring equitable access to bilingual education for all students.

**Introduction References**

Bialystok, E. (2016). Bilingual education for young children: review of the effects and consequences. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *21*(6), 666–679. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1203859

De la Torre, M., Allensworth, E., Jagesic, S., Sebastian, J., Salmonowicz, M., Meyers, C., & Gerdeman, R. D. (2019). English learners in Chicago public schools: A new perspective. University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2021-09/English%20Learners%20in%20CPS-Sep2021-Consortium_1.pdf

Gándara, P., & Santibañez, L. (2016). The economic value of bilingualism in the United States. *Bilingual Research Journal, 39*(1), 6-23.

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2003). Trends in two-way immersion education: A review of the research (Report No. 63). Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University. https://www.cal.org/twi/howard-sugarman-christian-2003.pdf

Illinois State Board of Education. (2023, July). *English learners in Illinois SY 2021-22 statistical report*. Multilingual/Language Development Department and Data Strategies and Analytics Department. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/2022-Eng-Learner-Stat-Report.pdf

Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education. (2024). *Incentivizing dual language education in Illinois* [Report]. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Incentivizing-DL-Ed.pdf

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2018). Implications of research for dual language at the early childhood level. In M. B. Arias & M. Fee (Eds.), *Profiles of dual language education in the 21st century* (pp. 82-93). Multilingual Matters.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence. https://www.thomasandcollier.com/assets/2002_thomas-and-collier_2002-final-report.pdf

**II. Understanding Dual Language Programs and Definitions**

**Definition and Concept of DL Programs**

DL 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, DL 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 DL 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 (Castro et al., 2022; Howard et al., 2018).

The concept of DL 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 et al., 2011). By providing instruction in two languages, DL 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, DL programs incorporate research-based literacy practices designed to promote academic success for language minority students (August & Shanahan, 2006). Studies further confirm that bilingualism strengthens cognitive flexibility and academic outcomes, reinforcing the benefits of learning multiple languages (Baker & Wright, 2021).

DL 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, DL 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). DL education 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**: DL 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**: DL programs maintain rigorous academic standards. Research indicates that students in DL programs often achieve at or above grade level in both languages compared to their monolingual peers due to the cognitive advantages of bilingualism (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002). 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. DL 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 DL 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**: DL 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 (Cummins, 2000; Genesee & Gándara, 1999; 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 DL 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**: DL 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 (de Jong & Howard, 2011; Nieto, 2002). Dual language programs, enriched with the component of critical consciousness, represent a holistic approach to education. DL 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, DL 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**: DL 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 (Collier & Thomas, 2004; de Jong & Howard, 2009; García and Kleifgen, 2010). 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 toward 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, DL programs foster positive self-concept and a stronger sense of belonging within the school community.

**Goals of DL Programs**

The goals of DL 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.

- Achieve high levels of proficiency in both languages for all students, enabling effective communication and academic success.

- Ensure students meet or exceed academic standards in all subjects, benefiting from the cognitive and academic advantages of bilingualism.

Effective Communication

Academic Excellence

Cultural Competence

Critical Consciousness

- Develop students' abilities to interact positively and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering global citizenship.

- Develop students' abilities to interact positively and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering global citizenship.
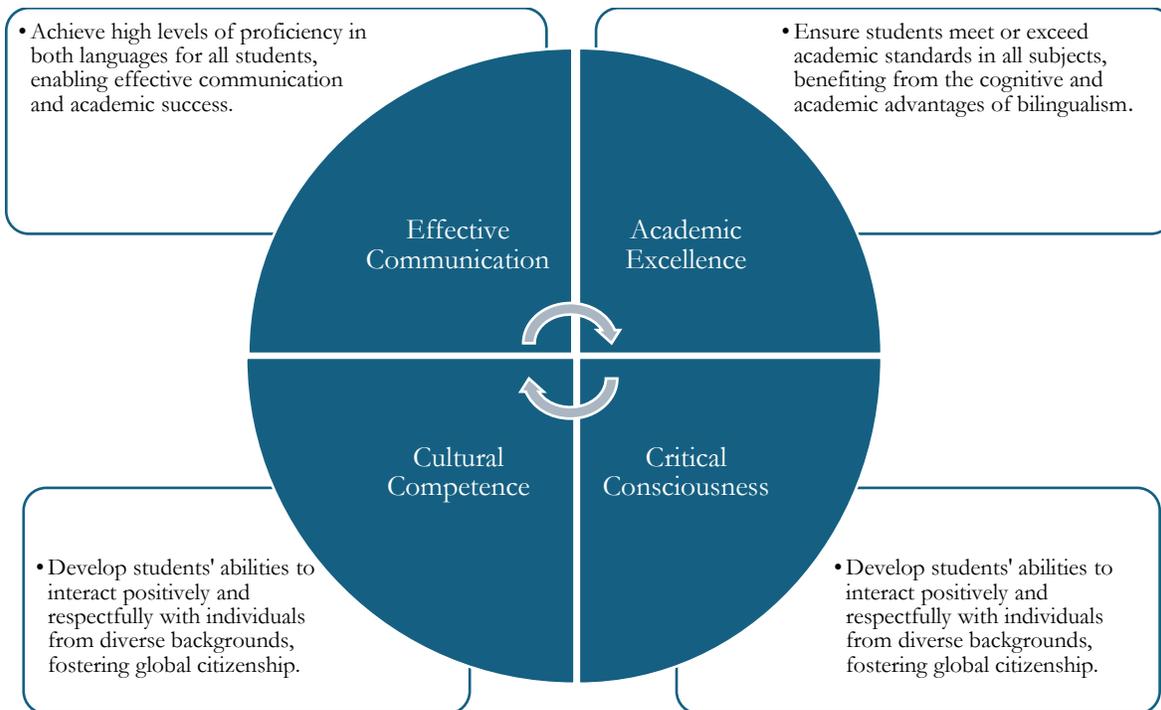
Image Citation: Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education. (2024). Incentivizing dual language education in Illinois [Report]. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Incentivizing-DL-Ed.pdf

**Types of Research-Based Dual Language Programs**

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

The conceptual framework of DL 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 (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). By immersing students in both languages throughout schooling, DL programs aim to create a learning experience that prepares students for a multilingual world.

Below are the types of research-based DL 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 (Howard et al., 2018; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

**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 et al., 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 (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

**Subtractive to Additive Models**

The images below illustrate the 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.

**Program Spectrum: Bilingual Education Models**

English-Medium Programs     Bilingual Education Programs

Subtractive Weak ◄———————————————————————► Additive Dynamic Strong

Submersion Model    ESL Instruction Models     Transitional Models    Maintenance Models    Enrichment Models

The use of English in the teaching of curriculum content in K-12 schools (Monolingual/Subtractive)

The use of two languages in the teaching of curriculum content in K-12 schools (Bilingual/Additive)

- No ESL Instruction
- No Sheltered Instruction
- No L1 Support

- ESL as a content area
- Sheltered Instruction for academic content
- Some L1 support

---

**Bilingual Education Programs**

◄ (weak)    **Subtractive to Additive Continuum**    (strong) ►

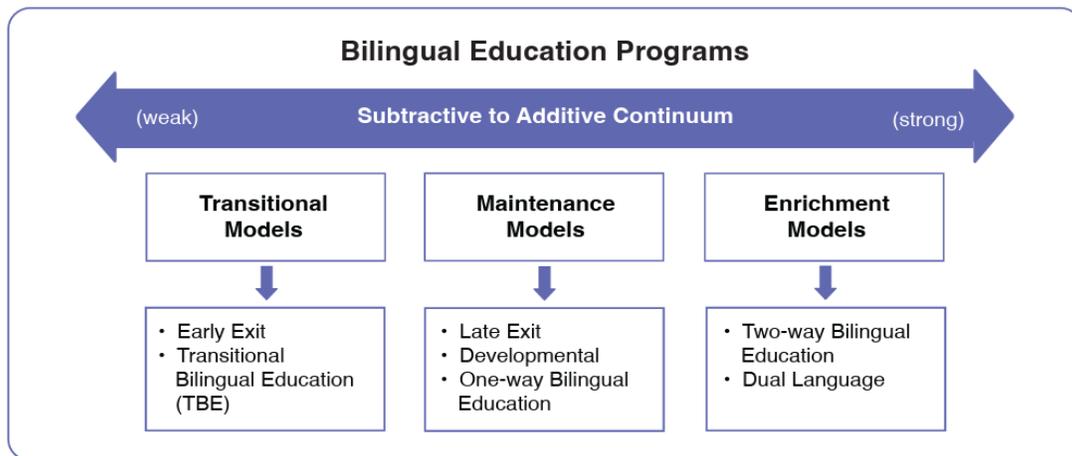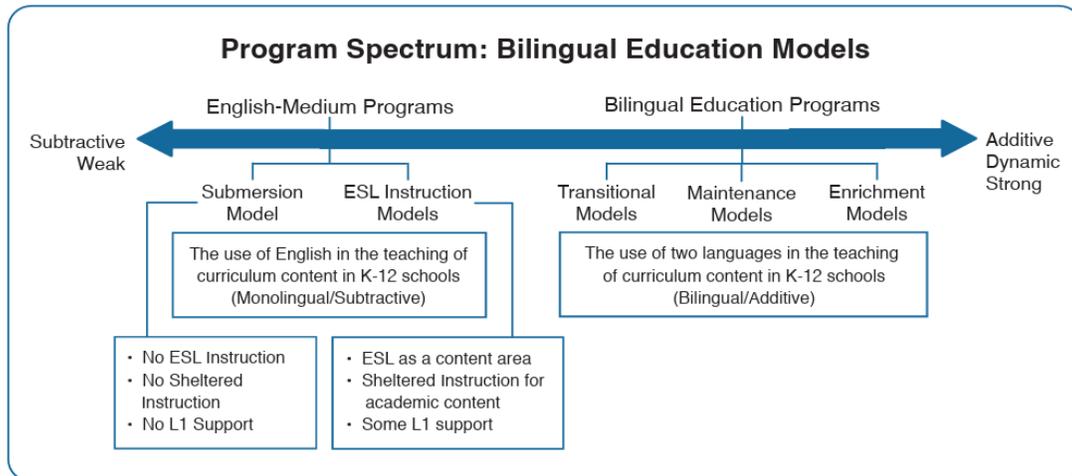| Transitional Models | Maintenance Models | Enrichment Models |
|---|---|---|
| • Early Exit<br>• Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) | • Late Exit<br>• Developmental<br>• One-way Bilingual Education | • Two-way Bilingual Education<br>• Dual Language |

Image Citation: Illinois State Board of Education & Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education. (2024). Incentivizing dual language education in Illinois [Report]. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Incentivizing-DL-Ed.pdf

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 DL programs, which fall under additive enrichment models aimed at fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural skills.

DL programs emphasize maintaining and developing two languages. These additive models build students' linguistic and cultural abilities rather than replacing one language with another.

**Understanding Dual Language Programs and Definitions References**

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.). Multilingual Matters.

Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2021). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (7th ed.). Multilingual Matters.

Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 65(4), 229–235. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025406

Castro, D. C., Umansky, I. M., & Barnes, E. M. (2022). Equity and effectiveness in dual language education: Addressing the needs of English learners and English proficient students. *Review of Educational Research*, 92(1), 5-35.

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2004). The astounding effectiveness of dual language programs for all students. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 2(1), 1–20.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power, and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Multilingual Matters.

de Jong, E. J., & Howard, E. R. (2009). *Language development and education in schooling complex environments*. Routledge.

Gándara, P., & Hopkins, M. (2010). *Forbidden language: English learners and restrictive language policies.* Teachers College Press.

García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, & practices for English language learners*. Teachers College Press.

Genesee, F., & Gándara, P. (1999). Bilingual education programs: A cross-national perspective. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(4), 665–685. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00145

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Trends in two-way immersion education: A review of the research* (2nd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford University Press.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J. (2001). *Impact of two-way bilingual elementary programs on students' attitudes toward school and college* (Research Rep. No. 10). Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J., & Howard, E. R. (2008). *Language development and instruction in two-way immersion classrooms*. University of California Press.

Nieto, S. (2002). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (4th ed.). Pearson.

Paradis, J., Emmerzael, K., & Crist, E. (2011). *Dual language development & disorders: A handbook on bilingualism & second language learning*. Brookes.

Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. Teachers College Press.

Potowski, K. (2022). Linguistic diversity and dual language education: Affirming students' languages and identities. Multilingual Matters.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

## Component 1: Build DL Knowledge and Advocacy

### The Importance of Stakeholder Buy-In

Successful DL education implementation depends heavily on securing commitment and support from various stakeholders. When community members, educators, and administrators are invested in DL 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 DL programs must be cultivated at multiple levels, including both internal school environments and broader community contexts (Soltero, 2023).

### Building a Knowledge Foundation for Advocacy

Establishing a comprehensive understanding of DL education principles serves as the cornerstone for effective advocacy efforts. When educators and leaders possess deep knowledge about the research, benefits, and implementation strategies of DL 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 DL 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 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 DL 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 DL programs and ensure their sustainability (Crawford, 2004; Genesee & Gándara, 1999).

### Establishing Shared Understanding Among Stakeholders

Building a solid foundation begins with establishing a shared understanding of DL education 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 Advisory Committee should represent the linguistic and cultural assets of the community to ensure inclusive and culturally responsive program development (Deters, n.d.; Soltero, 2023; St. Hilaire, 2018). 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 DL education. Providing foundational professional learning on DL 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 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 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 DL education
- Analyze needs assessment data to develop recommendations and implementation plans
- Provide professional development sessions on DL 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

**Component 1: Build DL Knowledge and Advocacy References**

Crawford, J. (2004). *Educating English learners: Language diversity in the classroom* (5th ed.). Bilingual Educational Services.

Deters, J. (n.d.). *Scaling dual language immersion programs in your district*. EAB. https://eab.com/resources/research-report/scaling-dual-language-immersion-programs/

Genesee, F., & Gándara, P. (1999). Bilingual education programs: A cross-national perspective. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(4), 665-685.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., & Sugarman, J. (2024). Guiding principles for dual language education (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Soltero, S. W. (2023). A Framework for success: Dual language education building blocks. In J. Freire, C. Alfaro, & E. de Jong (Eds.), *The handbook of Dual Language Bilingual Education* (pp. 115–130). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003269076

St. Hilaire, A. (2018). *Part 1: Building advocacy for your K-8 dual language program. Teaching for Biliteracy.* https://www.teachingforbiliteracy.com/part-1-building-advocacy-for-your-k-8-dual-language-program/

**Component 2: Develop Mission, Vision, and Goals**

Successful dual language programs start with a shared mission and vision that align with research-based DL 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 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 et al., 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 DL 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 schoolwide shared vision and clearly defined achievement goals demonstrate higher student outcomes (Genesee et al., 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 & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020). Effective DL 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 (Genesee et al., 2006; Lindholm-Leary & Genesse, 2010).

**Sample Vision Statement**

A comprehensive vision statement for districts may read:

*"[District Name] DL 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 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 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**

Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, W., & Christian, D. (2006). *Educating English language learners: A synthesis of research evidence*. Cambridge University Press.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., & Sugarman, J. (2024). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., Christian, D., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., & Rogers, D. (2007*). Guiding principles for dual language education* (2nd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics. https://www.cal.org/twi/Guiding_Principles.pdf

Kennedy, B., & Medina, J. (2017*). Dual language education: Answers to questions from the field. Center for Applied Linguistics.* https://cal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CAL-Practitioner-Brief-Dual-Language-Education-Sept2017.pdf

Lindholm-Leary, K., & Genesee, F. (2010). Alternative educational programs for English language learners. In California Department of Education (Ed.), *Improving education for English learners: Research-based approaches* (pp. 323-382). CDE Press.

Vonderlack-Navarro, R., & Garibay-Mulattieri, K. (2020). *Illinois English learner handbook for school board members, district administrators, and principals.* Latino Policy Forum. https://englishlearnersinil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/illinois-english-learner-handbook.pdf

Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2025). *Dual language: 8 steps for success*. https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2025-02/dual-language-8-steps-success.pdf

**Component 3: Design and Adopt a Program Model**

Selecting the appropriate DL 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 DL 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 DL programs include Spanish, Mandarin, French, and other languages that reflect the linguistic diversity of the community (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2024).

**Program Model Selection**

Research identifies three primary DL 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. The 90/10 model, which starts with 90% instruction in the partner language and 10% in English in kindergarten, and which gradually shifts to a balanced 50/50 by fifth grade, tends to produce the strongest outcomes for both English learners and English proficient students due to greater partner language exposure (Billy & Medina Garríguez, 2019; Gómez et al., n.d.; Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2023). The 80/20 model begins with 80% partner language instruction, shifting gradually to 50/50, and works well in communities with moderate partner language support (Participate Learning, n.d.; Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2023). 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 (Gómez et al., n.d.).

**One-Way vs. Two-Way Immersion**

Districts must also decide between one-way and two-way. One-way programs serve ELs and/or heritage speakers who share the same native language, focusing on developing bilingualism while maintaining the home language (Howard et al., 2024). Two-way programs integrate ELs and English proficient students, fostering bilingualism and cultural exchange for both populations. According to DL education principles, two-way programs should maintain 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). This choice should reflect the district's demographic composition and community goals (Kennedy & Medina, 2017).

**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).

**Theoretical Foundation**

DL 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 (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978).

**Research Support for Program Models**

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 tend to outperform peers academically while developing positive attitudes toward cultural diversity.

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

**Checklist for Designing and Adopting a DL Program Model**

- Assess student demographics, community language resources, and available district supports
- Choose a DL 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 DL 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 a Program Model References**

Billy, R. J. F., & Medina Garríguez, C. (2019). Dual language: A combined dual language framework for implementation: A 90/10 and 50/50 model design. English Language Teaching, 12(10), 108–117. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n10p108

Center for Applied Linguistics. (2024). *Dual language program directory*. https://www.cal.org/areas-of-impact/english-learners/dual-language-programs

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2004). The astounding effectiveness of dual language programs for all students. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 2(1), 1–20.

Gómez, E., Freeman, D., & Freeman, Y. (n.d.). Dual language education: A promising 50–50 model. Region One ESC. https://apps.esc1.net/ProfessionalDevelopment/uploads/WKDocs/189675/Gomez,%20Freeman%20%20and%20Freeman%20%20Dual%20language%20education%20A%20promising%205050%20model.pdf

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2024). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics, Dual Language Education of New Mexico, & Santillana USA.

Kennedy, B., & Medina, J. (2017, September). Dual language education: Answers to questions from the field (Practitioner Brief). Center for Applied Linguistics. https://cal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CAL-Practitioner-Brief-Dual-Language-Education-Sept2017.pdf

Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford University Press.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J., & Borsato, G. (2001). Impact of two-way bilingual elementary programs on students' attitudes toward school and college (Research Rep. No. 10). Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Participate Learning. (n.d.). Tips for successful dual language student recruitment. https://www.participatelearning.com/blog/successful-dual-language-student-recruitment-tips/

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. George Washington University, Center for Applied Linguistics.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2023). Washington State dual language program guide: For developing and implementing dual language programs. https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-11/duallanguageprogramguide.pdf

**Parent and Family Engagement**

Engaging parents and families is essential to building a supportive environment for DL students. Schools should provide workshops, resources, and multiple opportunities for families to actively participate in their children's bilingual education (Epstein, 2011).

**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. BPACs represent the interest of English learner (ELs) students, their families, and community members.

**Dual Language Advisory Committees (DLACs)**

While BPACs are mandated by Illinois law, Dual Language Advisory Committees (DLACs) are recommended best practice structures specifically designed to support DL program development and implementation (Howard et al., 2024). DLACs 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 & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020). Districts may leverage existing BPAC structure by expanding their scope to serve as DLACs, ensuring compliance while providing comprehensive support for all bilingual programming (Illinois State Board of Education, 2025; Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020). Districts should be mindful, however, of the requirements in Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, regarding the composition of BPAC membership to ensure their compliance.

**Family Engagement Activities**

Family engagement extends beyond enrollment through activities such as DL family nights, parent education sessions on bilingual development, and opportunities for families to volunteer or serve as guest speakers (Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020). Involving families creates a collaborative atmosphere that supports bilingualism 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 & Garibay-Mulattieri, 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 DL programs. Enrollment staff should receive training in both program details and cultural responsiveness to better support families during the enrollment process (Washington State 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 (Washington State 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 (U.S. Department of Education, 2024; Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2025).

**Home Language Assets and Translanguaging**

Districts should 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 & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020).

**Support for Newcomer Students**

Districts should design newcomer programs that combine intensive language development with grade-level content instruction. School leaders should include cultural orientation sessions and trauma-informed practices to address social-emotional needs. Educators should implement peer mentorship and buddy systems to facilitate social integration and language practice in authentic contexts (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008; Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020).

**Professional Learning and Family Engagement**

Districts should provide educators with training on inclusive pedagogies, translanguaging, and trauma-informed teaching. Schools should engage families of diverse learners through workshops on supporting language development at home and include them in decision-making through advisory committees (Epstein, 2011; Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020).

**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 DL 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 DL 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:

- o Use home languages as assets
- o Provide native language instruction and translanguaging strategies
- o Offer culturally responsive social-emotional support
- Collaborate for students with disabilities:
  - o Create joint plans between DL and special education teams
  - o Provide individualized, bilingual support and monitor progress
  - o Deliver professional development on bilingual special education
- Support newcomer students with tailored approaches:
  - o Integrate language development and grade-level content
  - o Offer cultural orientation and trauma-informed practices
  - o Use peer mentorship and flexible entry points
- Foster authentic family partnerships:
  - o Emphasize two-way communication in preferred languages
  - o Respect family diversity and promote shared decision-making
  - o Connect families to community resources and leadership opportunities
- Maintain robust communication systems:
  - o Ensure access to interpretation and translation
  - o Provide multilingual websites and materials
  - o Share regular bilingual progress reports
  - o Use multiple communication channels

**Component 4: Develop Enrollment and Family Outreach Plans References**

Cummins, J., & Hornberger, N. H. (Eds.). (2008). *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 5. Bilingual education* (2nd ed.). Springer.

Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Westview Press.

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2024). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics, Dual Language Education of New Mexico, & Santillana USA.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2025). *Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC)*. https://www.isbe.net/Pages/BPAC.aspx

National Center for English Language Acquisition. (2024). *Equitable enrollment practices in dual language and bilingual education programs*. https://ncela.ed.gov/equitable-enrollment

Pacific Learning. (n.d.). Building bridges with bilingual families: Proven strategies to strengthen engagement in dual language schools. https://pacificlearning.com/building-bridges-with-bilingual-families-proven-strategies-to-strengthen-engagement-in-dual-language-schools/

Suárez-Orozco, C., Suárez-Orozco, M., & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a new land: Immigrant students in American society*. Harvard University Press.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2024, December). Dual language immersion playbooks: Policy playbook. https://ncela.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/dual-language-playbook-1-20241219.pdf

Vonderlack-Navarro, R., & Garibay-Mulattieri, K. (2020). *Illinois English learner handbook for school board members, district administrators, and principals*. Latino Policy Forum. https://englishlearnersinil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/illinois-english-learner-handbook.pdf

Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2025, February). Dual language: 8 Steps to Success [Conference presentation]. NABE Conference. https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2025-02/dual-language-8-steps-success.pdf

**Component 5: Develop Curriculum and Resources**

**Language Allocation Plan**

Effective DL 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 should align with Illinois Learning Standards, as well as national standards such as WIDA English Language Development, and, where applicable, the Illinois Spanish Language Arts Standards. Districts should implement 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 et al., 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**

Districts should 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**

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

**Cross-linguistic Connections and Translanguaging**

Teachers should design thematic units that leverage cross-linguistic connections and translanguaging strategies. Educators should 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), the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ICTFL), American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), and Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ITBE). 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 DL 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

**Component 5: Develop Curriculum and Resources References**

Center for Applied Linguistics. (2024). *Dual language program directory*. https://www.cal.org/areas-of-impact/english-learners/dual-language-programs

Cummins, J., & Hornberger, N. H. (2008). *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 4: Second language education). Springer

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2009). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute.

Gutiérrez, K. D., Morales, P. Z., & Martínez, D. C. (2009). Re-mediating literacy: Culture, difference, and learning for students from nondominant communities. *Review of Research in Education*, 33, 212–245. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X08328251

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2024). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics, Dual Language Education of New Mexico, & Santillana USA.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2024). *Illinois comprehensive literacy plan*.

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory Into Practice*, 51(4), 256–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2012.726053

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

WIDA Consortium. (n.d.). *WIDA standards framework*. http://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx

**Component 6: Establish Staffing and Professional Learning**

**Recruit and Retain Qualified Bilingual Educators**

Highly qualified bilingual teachers are the cornerstone of successful DL 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 (Intercultural Development Research Association [IDRA], 2022; Sánchez et al., 2017).

**Illinois Licensure and Endorsement Requirements**

DL teachers in Illinois must hold a Professional Educator License (PEL) with a bilingual education endorsement; an ESL endorsement is recommended. Candidates 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 Illinois Chicago, 2020).

**Strategic Staffing and Support Personnel**

DL 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 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 (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2000; Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 2020)

**Professional Development Framework**

Ongoing professional learning should cover:

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

**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; Sánchez 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 DL expertise foster ongoing growth and teacher satisfaction (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2016; Vonderlack-Navarro & Garibay-Mulattieri, 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 expertise
- Structure professional learning to include:
    - Second language acquisition theory
    - DL 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**

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Cummins, J., & Hornberger, N. H. (2008). *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 4: Second language education). Springer.

Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Westview Press.

Gándara, P., & Maxwell-Jolly, J. (2000). *Eight successful California bilingual elementary schools: Summary report*. University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2013). *Administrative code: Certificates and endorsements*. https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Administrative-Rules.aspx

Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA). (2022). *Strengthening bilingual educator pipelines: Grow-your-own and international exchange strategies*. Intercultural Development Research Association.

Montecel, M. R., & Cortez, R. M. (2020). *Guiding principles for dual language education* [PDF]. Center for Applied Linguistics.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCLEA). (2016). *Mentoring the bilingual teacher*. https://www.ncela.ed.gov/sites/default/files/rcd/BE020683/Mentoring_the_Bilingual_Teache.pdf

Sánchez, M. T., García, D. X., & Solorza, C. (2017). *Bilingual teacher recruitment and retention: Best practices*. Bilingual Research Journal, 40(3), 245–259.

Sánchez, M., García, G. E., & Solorza, C. (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogy for dual language learners*. Language Arts, 94(2), 102–110.

University of Illinois Chicago. (2020). *Bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsements*. https://education.uic.edu/academics/licensure-endorsements-credentials/endorsements/bilingual-esl-endorsements/

Vonderlack-Navarro, R., & Garibay-Mulattieri, K. (2020). *Illinois English learner handbook for school board members, district administrators, and principals*. Latino Policy Forum. https://englishlearnersinil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/illinois-english-learner-handbook.pdf

Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2025). *Dual language program guidance*.

**Component 7: Establish Teaching and Learning Standards**

**Scaffolded Instruction**

Teachers should 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 (Echevarría et al., 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 et al., 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; García & 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**

Teachers should implement interdisciplinary projects that address real-world problems through both languages. Educators should 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

**Component 7: Establish Teaching and Learning Standards References**

Banks, J. A. (2015). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching* (6th ed.). Routledge.

Cummins, J., & Hornberger, N. H. (2008). *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 4: Second language education). Springer.

Echevarría, J., Vogt, M. E., & Short, D. J. (2017). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model* (5th ed.). Pearson.

García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, and practices for English language learners*. Teachers College Press.

Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. Corwin.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An educational psychology success story: Social interdependence theory and cooperative learning. Educational Researcher, 38(5), 365–379. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X09339057

Stoller, F. L. (2006). Establishing a theoretical foundation for project-based learning in second and foreign language contexts. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 1*(1), 21–34.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners* (2nd ed.). ASCD.

Trust, T., Krutka, D. G., & Carpenter, J. P. (2016). "Together we are better": Professional learning networks for teachers. *Computers & Education, 102*, 15-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.06.007

**Component 8: Establish Accountability and Assessment**

**Balancing Formative and Summative Measures**

Regularly monitoring students' development in both languages is vital for DL program success. A balanced assessment framework combines classroom-based formative checks, district benchmarks, and high-stakes summative evaluations. For instance, Gottleib 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 DL 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, DL participants typically achieve parity with, and often surpass, monolingual students in both English proficiency and academic achievement (ISBE, 2024; Marian et al., 2013; Steele et al., 2017; Thomas & Collier, 2002). A balanced assessment framework paired with longitudinal evaluation best captures the multifaced benefits of DL programs by aligning with program goals and tracking progress over time, thereby maintaining 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 (ISBE, n.d.). These summative measures offer actionable feedback to learners, families, and educators, guiding instruction to celebrating achievement (García & Wei, 2014; Howard et al., 2003; 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 DL 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)**

DL 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 DL 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 DL education 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 DL 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 (*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 1981):
    1. Base DL programs on sound educational theory recognized by experts
    2. Implement DL programs with adequate resources, materials, and qualified personnel
    3. Evaluate DL 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 DL 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

*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981).

Field, R. F. (2011*). Competing discourses about education and accountability for ELLs/bilingual learners: Dual language educators as agents for change*. Journal of Multilingual Education Research, 2, Article 3. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1175495.pdf

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Georges, A., Maldonado, S. L., & Coady, M. (2019). Assessment, accountability, and culture: Key issues and trends in bilingual education. In K. Ferris, T. Kleyn, & B. Mogharreban (Eds.), *The handbook of dual language bilingual education* (pp. 279–287). Routledge.

Gottlieb, M., & Nguyen, D. (2007). *Assessment and accountability in language education programs: A guide for administrators and teachers.* TESOL Press.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, D., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2023). Guiding principles for dual language education (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2003). *Ongoing program evaluation: Sustaining high-quality dual language programs*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Illinois State Board of Education. (n.d.). *State Seal of Biliteracy*. Retrieved from ISBE website.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2024, October 10). *Incentivizing Dual Language Education Report*. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Incentivizing-DL-Ed.pdf

Machado-Casas, M., Smith, M., & Ek, L. D. (2022). *Bilingual assessment in practice: Culturally and linguistically responsive approaches.* Multilingual Matters.

Maldonado, J. R., Sánchez, P. C., & García, O. (2018). Observation and coding protocols for tracking student exposure and dosage in dual language education: A framework for program evaluation. *Language Testing and Assessment Review, 8*(2), 156–175.

Maldonado, S. L. (2019). Assessment, accountability, and culture: Key issues and trends in bilingual education. In K. Ferris, T. Kleyn, & B. Mogharreban (Eds.), *The handbook of dual language bilingual education* (pp. 279–287). Routledge.

Marian, V., Shook, A., & Schroeder, S. R. (2013). Bilingual two-way immersion programs benefit academic achievement. *Bilingual Research Journal, 36*(2), 167–186. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2013.818075

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement. Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Steele, J. L., Slater, R., Zamarro, G., Miller, T., Li, J., & Burkhauser, S. (2017). Dual-language immersion programs raise student achievement in English. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 39*(3), 281–301.

## Component 9: Funding and Sustainability

**Importance of Sustainable Funding**

The long-term success of DL 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 DL settings (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).
- **IDEA:** Ensures English learners with disabilities receive appropriate special education services within DL 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 DL 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 DL education (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 DL methodology and culturally sustaining practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 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 et al., 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.

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 DL 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 DL education (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 DL programs
- Develop local funding strategies:
    - Allocate general education funding for core DL 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 DL programs
    - Develop retention strategies for qualified bilingual educators
    - Create professional learning communities and mentorship programs

- o Conduct annual program evaluations to demonstrate effectiveness
- o Engage families and community members as ongoing advocates and partners
- Follow implementation timeline:
  - o Year 1: Complete planning, stakeholder engagement, staff hiring, and resource preparation
  - o Year 2: Launch kindergarten program with comprehensive support systems
  - o Years 3-5: Add grade levels annually while refining program based on evaluation data

## Component 9: Funding and Sustainability References

*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981).

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2009). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute.

Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Westview Press.

Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95, 129 Stat. 1802 (2015).

Gándara, P., & Maxwell-Jolly, J. (2000). *What do we know about bilingual education for English language learners?* UCLA Civil Rights Project.

Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. Corwin.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2025). *Transitional bilingual education funding guidelines*. https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Bilingual-Education-Funding.aspx

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory Into Practice, 51*(4), 256–262.

Trust, T., Krutka, D. G., & Carpenter, J. P. (2016). "Together we are better": Professional learning networks for teachers. *Computers & Education, 102*, 15–34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.06.007

U.S. Department of Education. (2019). *ESSA Title III guidance: English learners*. https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiiguidenglishlearners.pdf

Vonderlack-Navarro, R. (2020). *Culturally responsive family engagement strategies*. Latino Policy Forum.

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

**Audience and Purpose**

This guidance serves multiple audiences: special education and DL 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 DL 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 (Center for Applied Linguistics & National Dual Language Forum, 2022) 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 high-quality DL 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**

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

4. **Explicit, Scaffolded Interventions**

   Teachers should 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**

Educators should promote student engagement and independence through authentic, culturally responsive activities. Guthrie et al. (2006) found that cognitively engaging tasks that connect to students' backgrounds and allow choice boost time on task and deeper learning. DL 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 DL 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 DL 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
- DL 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)

- o   Deliver coordinated interventions within general classrooms (Howard, 2003)
- Ground instruction in sociocultural theory:
  - o   Incorporate home languages and cultural practices into lessons (Vygotsky, 1978)
  - o   Use community resources and family knowledge as learning mediators (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003)
- Provide explicit, scaffolded interventions:
  - o   Embed targeted skill instruction within authentic content-area tasks (Richards-Tutor et al., 2016)
  - o   Offer repeated practice with peer and teacher scaffolds (Drysdale et al., 2015)
- Enhance student engagement and independence:
  - o   Design choice-based, culturally relevant projects (Guthrie et al., 2006)
  - o   Facilitate peer modeling and cooperative learning in both languages (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000)

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

Baca, L. M., Baca, E., & De Valenzuela, J.S. (2004). The bilingual special education interface: Co-planning for literacy and language development. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 28(2), 111–130.

Center for Applied Linguistics & National Dual Language Forum. (2022). Welcoming bilingual learners with disabilities into dual language programs (White paper). https://www.cal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Welcoming-Bilingual-Learners-with-Disabilities-into-Dual-Language-Programs-3.pdf

Drysdale, J. S., Klingner, J. K., & Boardman, A. (2015). Embedding interventions within content-area instruction: A collaborative approach. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 46(3), 225–236.

Gándara, P., & Maxwell-Jolly, J. (2000). *Priming the pump: Strategies for increasing the achievement of underrepresented minority undergraduates*. The Civil Rights Project, UCLA.

Genesee, F., Paradis, J., & Crago, M. B.  (2021). Language development in bilingual learners with developmental disorders. *Journal of Child Language Acquisition*, 48(1), 45–67.

Guthrie, J. T., Wiggins, T., Perencevich, K. C., Tabor, A., & Stimson, M. A. (2006). Engagement in reading for understanding: Conceptual and methodological issues. *Educational Psychologist*, 41(4), 189–205.

Gutiérrez, K. D., & Rogoff, B. (2003). Cultural ways of learning: Individual traits or repertoires of practice. *Educational Researcher*, 32(5), 19–25.

Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. Corwin.

Hilliard, J. F., Genesee, F., Sánchez-López, C., & Young, T. (2022). Welcoming bilingual learners with disabilities into dual language programs. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, E. R. (2003). Two-way immersion programs in bilingual education. *Journal of Bilingual Education*, 5(3), 203–218.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., & Olague, N.  (2018). Strength-based practices for bilingual learners with disabilities. *Bilingual Special Education Quarterly*, 12(2), 75–88.

Klingner, J. K., Artiles, A. J., & Barletta, L. M. (2004). English language learners who struggle with reading: Language acquisition or learning disabilities? *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 37(2), 158–173.

Klingner, J. K., & Vaughn, S. (2000). The power of collaboration. *Educational Leadership*, 57(2), 86–87.

Lindholm-Leary, K., & Howard, E. R. (2008). Two-way immersion for students with disabilities: A longitudinal study. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 31(2), 101–105.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J. (2012). Bilingualism and the brain. *Principal Leadership, 12*(8), 10-15.

Paradis, J., Paradis, J., Genesee, F., & Crago, M. B. (2021). Preschool dual language learners' language trajectories. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 57, 50–63.

Richards-Tutor, C., Baker, D. L., Gersten, R., Baker, S. K., & Smith, S. B.  (2016). Effects of small-group, tiered reading instruction for English learners with reading difficulties. *Exceptional Children*, 83(3), 287–303.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners* (2nd ed.). ASCD.

Vonderlack-Navarro, R. (2020). *Culturally responsive family engagement strategies*. Latino Policy Forum.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

## IV. Conclusion

**Sustained Commitment and Collaborative Planning**

Implementing high-quality DL 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 et al., 2021; Vygotsky, 1978).

**Well-Documented Benefits**

The journey toward DL 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 DL 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 DL 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 DL 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 equally essential. Both start-up funds and ongoing financial support must cover curriculum development, professional development, assessment systems, and staffing to sustain DL programs long-term (Illinois State Board of Education, 2025; U.S. Department of Education, 2019). 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 in 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 though bilingual education (Hamayan et al., 2022; Klingner et al., 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 network and foster innovation (Epstein, 2011; Hilliard et al., 2022).

By committing to 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 a diverse, culturally rich, and globally connected world.

**IV. Conclusion References**

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981).

Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Routledge.

Genesee, F., & Lindholm-Leary, K. (2021). The suitability of dual language education for diverse students: An overview of research in Canada and the United States. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, 9(2), 164–192. https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.21001.gen

Hamayan, E., Marler, B., Sánchez-López, C., & Damico, J. (2022). *Special education considerations for multilingual learners: Delivering a continuum of services* (3rd ed.). Brookes.

Hilliard, J. F., Genesee, F., Sánchez-López, C., & Young, T. (2022). Welcoming bilingual learners with disabilities into dual language programs. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding principles for dual language education* (3rd ed.). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Illinois State Board of Education. (2025). Transitional bilingual education funding guidelines.

Klingner, J. K., Boelé, A., Linan-Thompson, S., & Rodriguez, D. (2014). Essential components of special education for English language learners with learning disabilities: Position statement of the Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children. Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 29(2), 93-96. https://doi.org/10.1111/ldrp.12040

Lindholm-Leary, K. (2012). Success and challenges in dual language education. *Theory Into Practice,* 51(4), 256–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841209600421

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). *Promoting the educational success of children and youth learning English: Promising futures.* National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/24677

Paradis, J., Genesee, F., & Crago, M. (2021). *Dual language development and disorders: A handbook on bilingualism and second language learning* (3rd ed.). Brookes.

U.S. Department of Education. (2019). ESSA Title III guidance: English learners.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: *The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.