

## **VISION FOR ELS IN ILLINOIS**

Building on the linguistic and cultural resources our students bring to schools fosters the future success of our students, state, and nation. The best opportunities for student growth involve their participation in school experiences constructed from the respect and understanding of different linguistic, social, and cultural perspectives. The rich tapestry of students' cultures and languages offers a basis to develop the academic and interpersonal skills needed to thrive in today's world.

In today's interconnected world, multilingual and cross-cultural competencies, critical thinking, collaboration, and decision making are important goals for all students. To foster the development of these skills among students, schools must intentionally incorporate them into linguistically and culturally responsive curricula (Ajayi, 2006; Nora, 2013; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006; Sylvan, 2013, to name a few).

Multiliteracies and multilingualism offer both individual and societal advantages. Students' home language(s) should play an essential role in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Students should be encouraged to use their existing skills across languages in the acquisition of new knowledge. Furthermore, development of pathways to multiliteracies will ultimately contribute to students' college and career readiness.