Advocating For One-Way Dual Language Programs In High School, Academia Bilingue

Anthony Grazzini
A THREE-PART DISSERTATION:

HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY TEAMS' IMPACT ON TEACHER PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: A PROGRAM EVALUATION

RE-CULTURING A HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY TO INCREASE COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE: A CHANGE LEADERSHIP PLAN

ADVOCATING FOR ONE-WAY DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN HIGH SCHOOL, ACADEMIA BILINGUE

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For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

- Program Evaluation
- Change Leadership Plan
- Policy Advocacy Document

For the **Program Evaluation** candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the **Change Leadership Plan** candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the **Policy Advocacy Document** candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

**Works Cited**


11.19.16
ABSTRACT

To reduce the achievement gap and stem the increasing dropout rate of English Learners (ELs), a one-way dual language program, Academia Bilingue, was introduced at Sterling High School. ELs then and now account for approximately 20% of the students in the district. A significant academic achievement gap had existed between ELs and their English-proficient counterparts. An alarmingly disproportionate number of ELs were dropping out. The purpose and moral imperative of this policy advocacy document was to actualize the stated mission and vision of the district, that all students have an education which meets or exceeds accepted standards of learning, through challenging, engaging, and empowering them to be more self-aware, self-assured, and responsible members and citizens in multiple communities in which they live. An educational, economic, social, political, and moral/ethical needs analysis, timeline for implementation, and measures to assess the impact of the policy are included.
PREFACE: LEADERSHIP LESSON LEARNED

When I was initially hired to be a curriculum director at Sterling School District, one of my first experiences was collaborating with Northeastern Illinois University’s (NEIU) Center for College Access and Success to submit a proposal for an Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) partnership grant. A key component of the grant application was to analyze the data in order to develop a logic model to increase student achievement. Through the analysis of longitudinal data, I discovered that despite the best efforts of our bilingual education program, only a handful of the English learners (ELs) in our school district were achieving proficiency as measured by the State of Illinois. This was alarming because 88% of the students in the school district are Latino and despite the best efforts of the elementary school district, nearly 19.5% of students were entering the high school district still identified as English learners and of those, most were characterized as Long Term English learners (LTEL). LTEL is a formal educational classification given to students who have been enrolled in American schools for more than six years, who are not progressing toward English proficiency, and who are struggling academically due to their limited English skills (Regional Educational Laboratory West, 2016). Consequently, it is a top priority to develop an approach to support students who come from an elementary school district where nearly 75% of incoming kindergartener students are identified as ELs, and 25% of those students are still receiving services when they graduate from 8th grade. The purpose of this Policy Advocacy document is to develop a plan to implement a one-way immersion dual language academy. The Academia Bilingue, as it will be known, is designed to close the achievement gap between English learners and their peers by providing additive
academic support, having heritage speakers and native speakers in the same classroom, and providing opportunities for modeling, peer interaction, and a variety of resources not normally available in a traditional transitional bilingual education (TBE) program.

As I began to work with the director of EL/Bilingual Education to develop an action plan that we could operationalize, we were met with resistance. Some parents and community members became vocal about their desire to maintain the status quo. It became necessary to explain the benefits of a dual language program, provide research demonstrating how one-way immersion programs increase academic achievement for all students, and to illustrate the advantage that being bilingual would provide their students as they pursue postsecondary options. Fortunately, the resistance led to the development of a plan for increased parent and community engagement. Through Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC) meetings, parent book clubs, and other outreach opportunities, we were able to share a vision for the future and demonstrate that what we envisioned for the program and the educational outcomes parents wanted for their students were congruent. During the outreach process, we discovered that we needed to over communicate the benefits that would result from implementing the one-way immersion program. By working together with various stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of the State Seal of Biliteracy, and legitimizing home language as an asset rather than a deficit, we began to realize a new vision—a school for biliteracy known as the Academia Bilingue. Out of our collaboration, the plans to implement a dual language program began to take shape.
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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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<th>TERM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACTFL</td>
<td>American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages</td>
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<td>ACT</td>
<td>American College Testing</td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td>Advanced Placement is a program created by the College Board which offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biliteracy</td>
<td>The ability to read and write proficiently in two languages</td>
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<td>BICS</td>
<td>Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills are language skills needed in social situations. It is the day-to-day language needed to interact socially with other people.</td>
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<td>BPAC</td>
<td>Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee is a group of parents/guardians who meet with teachers and administrators regularly to advocate for fair EL and Bilingual programming for their child.</td>
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<td>CAL</td>
<td>Center for Applied Linguistics is an organization that provides technical assistance to teachers and administrators serving linguistically and culturally diverse students.</td>
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<td>CALP</td>
<td>Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency refers to formal academic learning. This includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing about subject area content material. This level of language learning is essential for students to succeed in school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dual Language</td>
<td>A form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages.</td>
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<td>EL</td>
<td>English learners are students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ESL</strong></td>
<td><strong>English as a second or foreign language is the use of English by speakers with different native languages.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IRC</strong></td>
<td><strong>Illinois Resource Center is an organization that provides technical assistance to teachers and administrators serving linguistically and culturally diverse students.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>L1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language 1 or native language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>L2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language 2 or target language</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LTEL</strong></td>
<td><strong>Long-term English learner is a formal educational classification given to students who have been enrolled in American schools for more than six years, who are not progressing toward English proficiency, and who are struggling academically due to their limited English skills.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NCLB</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Child Left Behind was the main law for K–12 general education in the United States from 2002–2015. The law held schools accountable for how kids learned and achieved. The law was controversial in part because it penalized schools that didn't show improvement.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OWDLP</strong></td>
<td><strong>One-Way Dual Language program is a bilingual program in which native Spanish-speaking students use their primary language and English to learn content and language simultaneously.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PLC</strong></td>
<td><strong>Professional learning community is a group of educators who use an ongoing process to work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SAT</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scholastic Aptitude Test</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Seal of Biliteracy</strong></td>
<td><strong>An award given by a school, district, or state in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFB</td>
<td>A School For Biliteracy is a high school where students exhibit the ability to communicate in two or more languages (including English) by their senior year of high school. Students receive the State Seal of Biliteracy on high school diplomas and serves as a statement of accomplishment for college admission and for future employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBE</td>
<td>Transitional bilingual education is a theory that states that children can most easily acquire fluency in a second language by first acquiring fluency in their native language.</td>
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SECTION ONE: VISION STATEMENT

Awareness of the Need for Change

Equity is not equal. Simply providing language minority students with the same facilities, and providing textbooks, teachers, and curriculum will not close the achievement gap for students who are not proficient in English. In theory, transitional bilingual education (TBE) and English as a second language (ESL) programs were designed to prepare students for success in English-only classrooms. However, both ESL and TBE programs are often seen as ineffective. During the evaluation of the professional learning communities (PLC) model used at Sterling School District, it was discovered that a subgroup of the district’s population was not experiencing the same level of growth as other student groups. Previous research conducted by this researcher as part of a program evaluation showed that PLC teams improved teacher pedagogical content knowledge, and analysis of the PLC process showed that it impacted teaching and learning (Grazzini, 2019). The district applied the lessons learned by this researcher as part of the program evaluation and a subsequent change plan that focused on a broad implementation of the PLC process to operationalize strategies and tactics that increase student learning. As a result of the in-depth analysis of student outcomes, it became apparent that what the district was doing was at the broad universal level and was not meeting the needs of the English learners sub-group of students in the learning community.

Based on the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the program evaluation and the change these played, it was evident that the district needed to update its approach to supporting the development of our English learners (ELs). With nearly 90% of Sterling
students self-reporting that they speak Spanish at home, one could conclude that a majority of the students would have been ELs at some point and the conclusion would be correct. The district's data indicated that a substantial gap existed between the EL and the English-proficient students (both for former ELs and native English speakers) groups. As one could imagine, once presented with this information, the board of education for the Sterling School District viewed closing the achievement gap for the EL population as a moral imperative. Thoughtful analysis of the data enabled this researcher to identify promising trends that needed to be acted upon if the district was to develop and implement an educational program that would accelerate the growth of EL students.

The vision of the Sterling district is to: Educate All Students to Meet or Exceed the Standards of Learning by Providing Educational Experiences that Challenge, Engage, and Empower Students to be Productive Members of the Global Community. Empowering students to be productive members of the global community means that they must be equipped with the necessary tools to be successful. As a solution for accelerating learning, supporting language development, and closing the achievement gap for our EL students, as curriculum director, I proposed a policy to implement a high school dual language program to develop students who are biliterate; that is, they are able to read and write proficiently in two languages. Implementing a School for Biliteracy (SFB) program will have far-reaching effects by validating the importance of the students’ native language and culture, incentivizing and promoting the study of both Spanish and English, and supporting the district’s long-standing decision to offer a Certificate of Biliteracy to students who had achieved a high level of proficiency in Spanish and English. This process continued from 2010 through 2015 until the State Seal of Biliteracy replaced it.
By recognizing what our students bring with them in terms of conversation skills in both English and Spanish, viewing their native speaking status as an asset, and working to implement a culturally-relevant approach, our School For Biliteracy (SFB) program will allow for EL and other students to work side-by-side in order to develop a high level of proficiency in English and Spanish and increase the status of Biliteracy in our community.

**Critical Issues**

The Sterling School District has a Latino population of over 90%. According to the student historical 2014 ACCESS score report available on Student Information System (SIS), 2,683 of 8,400 students (31.9%) met the exit criteria on the ACCESS test during their academic history. The data indicated that a large number of students, 708 of 3,500 at Sterling West High School (20.2%) and 1,975 of 4,900 at Sterling East High School and Freshman Center (FC) (40.3%) were currently in mainstream classes. The second report showed the number of students who had taken the ACCESS test during their academic history. Therefore, these students were still in the process of acquiring English (3,670 of 8,400 students had taken ACCESS (43.7%) district wide, approximately 23.8% at West and 57.9% at East/FC. These data demonstrate that many of these students had exited an English learner program based on the state criteria, but these students still had limited proficiency and, therefore, were still developing their academic language proficiency and needed continued support in school to reach their potential.

Research indicates that all children are capable of learning two languages (Espinosa, 2013). The School for Biliteracy program will build on that ability. Becoming
bilingual has long-term cognitive, academic, social, cultural, and economic benefits (Espinosa, 2013). Being bilingual is an asset (Espinosa, 2008). Cummins (2000) and other researchers emphasized that linguistic capacity is not specific to a particular language. Research has consistently shown the power of instruction in language one (L1) for successful learning in Language two (L2); however, the success of L1 and L2 instruction is contingent on effective, well-implemented bilingual programs (August & Shanahan, 2006; Cummins, 2000; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). The relationship between L1 and L2 is described in more detail in Figure 1.

![Cummins' Iceberg Model of Language Interdependence](http://ldldproject.net/languages/index.html)

*Figure 1. Cummins’ Iceberg Model of Language Interdependence. Adapted from [http://ldldproject.net/languages/index.html](http://ldldproject.net/languages/index.html)*
The work of Cummins is vital to the Academia Bilingue program. Cummins created the terms Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). These terms describe the difference between the surface skills of speaking and listening and the ability to cope with academic language demands. Understanding BICS and CALP research is vital to equipping students with academic language to parallel the development of their social language (Cummins, 2000).

In concept, the Academia Bilingue is a one-way dual language immersion program (OWDLP) that allows students who are eligible for bilingual services to receive them using the TBE model while also allowing for English-proficient students whose native language is Spanish to become biliterate as well. Academia Bilingue is characterized as an OWDLP because one language group is being schooled through their two languages. In Sterling School District, we enroll mainly Latino students. While some students are proficient in English, without formal instruction in their heritage language, others are proficient in Spanish and are just beginning to learn English. According to Krashen (1996), with dual language immersion, both the language-minority student and the native English speaker prosper and outperform their peer groups. The research of Collier and Thomas (2004), as seen in Figure 2, demonstrates that dual language closes the academic achievement gap for all students participating in the program and that it is the only program for English learners that fully closes the gap.
The success of the program rests in the way the curriculum allows the language-minority students to build their native language proficiency, which in turn strengthens their acquisition of the English language while simultaneously allowing the language-majority (English) speaker to develop competence in a new language, and this additional cognitive process strengthens their English skills. In this OWDLP model, the dominant English speaker maintains the use of English in the majority of the cultural activities outside of school, so their English skills do not diminish during the time they are immersed in their
heritage language, and their English school achievement eventually outperforms that of English-dominant speakers who have been schooled in English-only instruction (Krashen, 1999). Implementing a OWDLP will not only help close the achievement gap between English-speaking and EL students, but also improve achievement for the dominant English students enrolled in the program.

**Recommended Policy**

The policy recommendation for the Sterling School District is to implement a one-way dual language program to meet the needs of EL students. The intent is to have these students who participate in this program graduate from the Sterling School District with a Seal of Biliteracy from the State of Illinois. In order to be cost neutral, there needs to be a large enough student population to offset the expense of implementing the program. To implement this program without accruing additional cost to the district, we determined that we would need a minimum of 150 students, or “One house” (six subject-area homerooms within the school) in Freshman Center, and we would need to be able to keep that minimum number of students in each subsequent cohort. The academy would require one bilingual teacher per course (history, biology, science, and math) who would deliver content in Spanish, and the other core subjects would be taught in English. The initial academy would serve 150 EL and Spanish-heritage students.

*Academia Bilingue* takes an additive approach to developing language. To accomplish the established goals, *Academia Bilingue* teachers will need to build background knowledge and vocabulary while L1 and L2 students are both acquiring second-language skills. Support from a biliteracy coach is an essential part of this policy advocacy. The biliteracy coach supports, develops, and delivers culturally responsive
lessons that meet student needs, promote literacy in both English and Spanish, and increases student achievement (see p. 49). Additionally, the biliteracy coach will provide job-embedded professional development for the teachers who are a part of the OWDLP so that they develop the pedagogical content knowledge necessary to support student success.

Essential to the success of policy advocacy is guaranteeing that the rigorous general curriculum adopted at the Sterling School District is provided to all students. Students must be accountable to the same Key Concepts and Course Requirements delineated in the course syllabi. Academia Bilingue is an additive model that maintains L1 students in the program while developing L2 students. The specific outcomes outlined for all students will also be required for the Academia Bilingue students; in this program, the outcomes will be the same, and the language model will be different. Students in this program will be held to high standards in both languages. Moreover, we need to shape the attitudes adults have about students in the bilingual program (see p. 52). The approach that the program utilizes is designed to confront misguided beliefs that EL students are thought to be functioning below level or at the bottom compared to their general education or Advanced Placement peers. When students are in the OWDLP and it is highly regarded, there is a sense of pride and self-efficacy that encourages stronger performance. By implementing an OWDLP at the high school level, the district can help prevent English learners from falling further behind in academic subjects such as math, social science, and science while learning to become proficient in English and accelerating the Spanish language acquisition of the language-majority (native English speaking) students who are enrolled.
**Envisioned Effect**

Students will receive content-based instruction in both Spanish and English to develop oral language, literacy, and writing proficiency, thus equipping students with the 21st century skills necessary to thrive in a global environment. All students will earn the Seal of Biliteracy, which denotes a high level of competence in English and Spanish. It is predicted that the *Academia Bilingue* students will have a higher average GPA and graduation rate when compared to general high school students, and students in the *Academia Bilingue* will experience a higher percentage of growth in Spanish and English literacy as evidenced by Lexile growth. *Academia Bilingue* students will exemplify the mission and vision at the Sterling School District. Ultimately, we see a successful *Academia Bilingue* program as an exemplar for other districts seeking to mitigate the achievement gap for English Learners.
SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS OF NEED

The purpose of the needs analysis in this advocated policy is to establish a foundation to advocate for policy change. This means assessing the educational, economic, social, political, moral, and ethical aspects of the current realities in education to bring about real reform.

Educational Analysis

Both the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) agree that developing functional proficiency in another language is essential for our nation to succeed in a global economy. Improving literacy and cultural proficiency are critical components in developing competencies necessary in a globally competitive world. Kettler, Shiu, and Johnsen (2006) argued that Spanish-speaking skills are a gateway to success in school:

If AP can act as an intervention that honors the cultural background of students, then schools may wish to incorporate an advanced Spanish track for all Spanish-speaking students. In this way, more Spanish-speaking students may have the prerequisite language skills necessary to successfully complete the AP course. (p. 77)

The research of Kettler et al. is supported by both CAL and ACTFL which cite research that indicates that language learning correlates with higher achievement on tests such as the ACT and SAT, provides a benefit to the heritage speaker and the non-native speaker, supports literacy in English and the target language, and increases self-efficacy (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL], 2013). Wagner (2008) identified (a) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, (b) Collaboration and Leadership, (c) Agility and Adaptability, (d) Initiative and Entrepreneurialism, (e) Effective Oral and Written Communication, (f) Accessing and Analyzing Information,
and (g) Curiosity and Imagination as the seven new survival skills needed to succeed in our rapidly changing global economy. Each of the seven skills is enhanced through the OWDLAP immersion that leads to biliteracy. If our goal is to eliminate the global achievement gap, then all school districts should embrace models that teach our children to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, collaborators, and influencers who are adaptive and can effectively communicate both orally and in writing with their peers in distant lands.

**Economic Analysis**

This new American century has brought forth many challenges that must be surmounted if we are to thrive as a nation. The problems that impact our economy and even the security of our country are rooted in our educational system. By investing in our educational system and developing future-ready children who are prepared for 21st century challenges, we can maintain our prominence in the world. Our global leadership depends on developing both language skills and cultural proficiency (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD], 2017). To compete globally, our children must be prepared to network and interact with different cultures no matter if they are inside or outside of our national borders. In this instance, biliteracy is an asset. Dual language education promises to give students access to critical 21st century skills—namely, bilingualism, biliteracy, and global awareness, making students truly college and career ready (Heinrichs, 2016). Language proficiency will be a hallmark the 21st century economy; therefore, whether a student chooses to move directly into the workforce or goes into postsecondary education, he or she will be prepared for our ever-changing world.
America has fostered innovation and creativity, which in turn has led to global leadership in many areas. Today, as a result of high-stakes testing and poorly implemented policy, we stand at an economic crossroads. According to Zhao (2009), the American educational system and its focus on cultural competency are, in part, responsible for our economic success. While other nations only focus on the economic advantage derived from studying, Zhao (2009) pointed out that America takes language development beyond the superficial communication level in order to develop what Zhao described as a cross-cultural mindset (p. 172).

The personalized education American schools provide and our rich study of language and culture being deemed an essential part of the educational experience has helped our country develop global competence and made our country prosper. Zhao (2009) argued that the study of foreign languages has been responsible in part for the development of a culturally proficient worldview (p. 47). Developing dual immersion high school models such as the *Academia Bilingue* will immerse more students in a deep understanding of language and culture. In both an economic and educational arena, we understand that language and culture are inseparable and that biliterate citizens will have the necessary cross-cultural understanding that will continue to develop the new American identity and continue our identification as a melting pot of sorts.

**Social Analysis**

America is a nation without an official language. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which granted the Mexican Cession explicitly, guaranteed Mexican Americans the right to their property, language, and culture. One could argue whether we are a cultural melting pot or salad bowl, but when we evaluate the American version of the
English language, it is apparent that we are linguistic fondue (Hitchings, 2011). As a nation of immigrants, the mixing of languages and culture has led to challenges and rewards as each subsequent immigrant group has struggled to maintain its cultural identity while seeing the acquisition of English as the road to prosperity. The pursuit of educational opportunity has historically been central in the path towards inclusion and a better life by immigrant groups in the United States (Olsen, 2010). However, today we face the challenge presented by long-term English learners (students in schools for more than six years who do not reach the English proficiency necessary to be exited out of the EL program). As mentioned previously, a large percentage of Sterling School District’s EL students are characterized as long-term ELs.

Long-term English learners are orally bilingual; that is, they are generally high functioning in social situations in both their home language and in English (Olsen, 2010). The ability to use everyday Spanish and English masks the fact that these students lack the academic language proficiency necessary for postsecondary education success. While the majority of LTEls want to go to college, they are unaware that their academic skills, academic record, and the courses they are taking are not preparing them to reach that goal (Olsen, 2010). Subsequently, generations of students are graduating from schools like those in the Sterling School District without the skills necessary to fully participate in society. As a result, they will continue to struggle to attain social and economic independence.

Educational attainment creates persistent social issues. Long-term English learners are more likely to suffer from poverty, start families while still in school, or drop out before completing high school (Batalova & Fix, 2011). The lack of an
appropriate education continues the cycle of poverty. Subsequent generations are at risk because education attainment impacts one’s future ability to find adequate housing, access to healthcare, economic opportunity, and future educational opportunity. Roughly 3.1 million of the 7 million limited English proficient (LEP) students between the ages of 16 and 26 in the United States are at risk (Batalova & Fix, 2011). We need to take action and change the way we approach educating long-term English learners. Continuing to do what we have always done will not solve the problem posed by LTEL students; we must address the challenges that educating LTEL students present and adapt our approach in order to develop their academic language in Spanish and English in order to improve the social outcomes for our country and its Hispanic citizens.

**Political Analysis**

We are and continue to be a nation of immigrants and children of immigrants. However, EL students continue to enter an American School system that perpetuates a belief that these students should learn English at the expense of academic subjects (Kanno & Cromley, 2015). Graduating students who are culturally proficient, literate in their heritage language, literate in English, and well educated in all other areas will benefit our society. The 21st century requires 21st century skills. Rather than perpetuating an ill-conceived notion that the English language trumps academics, we need to create programs in schools that account for the issues that English learners face.

*Academia Bilingue* will confront the challenges that LTEL students face while keeping students on a rigorous college preparatory track, teaching core academic subjects in the students’ native languages, and integrating the students with their English-proficient peers. Biliterate students will bridge the gap between newcomers and
established immigrant populations; they will open new economic and political opportunities, and they will continue to provide our nation with linguistic and cultural advantages as we engage in a global world. According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition 2008 report, there are over five million ELs enrolled in America’s schools. Both the number and the proportion of ELs are growing rapidly (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). These students are more likely to be poor and come from less educated families than other pupils in the general student population (Ballantyne et al., 2008). Student demographics for Sterling School District’s LTEL students reflect the findings of Ballantyne et al. LTEL and low socioeconomic status go hand in hand for this student subgroup. Years of failed policy have created a multi-generational problem. English proficiency should not negatively impact a student’s ability to succeed in American life. By implementing programs like Academia Bilingue, students will achieve high academic standards while developing a language proficiency in their native language and English. By focusing on biliteracy as an asset, the Sterling School District and others like it will implement programs that ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education, thus preparing them to contribute to American society and the global economy.

**Moral and Ethical Analysis**

The main objective for implementing a one-way dual language immersion program is to ensure that the district succeeds at its mission. If the mission is for every student to succeed, than the system and schools need to create the conditions that return learning for all to the forefront. As Hargreaves and Fink (2006) articulately stated,
schools, school systems, and educational change advocates cannot be indifferent to or evasive about just what the moral purpose of educators should be. From the standpoint of sustainability, the heart of that purpose ought to be learning—something that is itself sustaining—and not just any learning, but learning that matters, spreads, and lasts a lifetime. (p. 27)

The success of every student is dependent upon the district’s ability to provide students with an education that prepares them to compete in a global economy. It is our moral obligation to equip staff with the tools to teach, provide academically challenging curriculum, and ensure that students graduate with the appropriate language skills to succeed in the work.

Advancing the concept of a school for biliteracy and the implementation of an OWDLP at the secondary level will empower our students and prepare them for a globally competitive marketplace. Learning through two languages expands and enhances students’ cognitive development and thinking skills in a way that surpasses any curriculum delivered through one language (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Moreover, for our community, providing Spanish language proficiency will maintain links to the culture and heritage of our students and provide connections to the greater community. Through language immersion, culturally proficient, educated, and empowered students will emerge.
SECTION THREE: ADVOCATED POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this section is to provide the goals and objectives of the advocated policy change. The advocated policy statement will identify the needs and values of those being represented through this policy advocacy as well as demonstrate the validity of the goals and objectives.

Introduction

The overall goal of this policy is the implementation of a one-way dual language program to replace the traditional transitional bilingual education (TBE) program. In section three, the goal of the policy advocacy statement is discussed along with a step-by-step explanation of how to achieve the goal. The public advocacy statement seeks to transform the English learner program through the establishment of the Academia Bilingue one-way dual language immersion program.

Academia Bilingue will provide rigorous academic instruction in math, social science, science, and the Spanish language in the students’ native language (Spanish) while concurrently providing intensive English instruction through English language arts, and elective courses. The program’s enrollment would be made up of both EL and heritage-language students who are proficient in English. A certified bilingual teacher who has the proper content area endorsement will teach each course. Students in the Academia Bilingue program will receive the same rigorous curriculum as their peers outside of the program. Academia Bilingue is a school-within-a-school concept that embraces culturally and linguistically responsive practices, provides job-embedded professional development for teachers, and provides accelerated learning for students.
Goals

To implement a School for Biliteracy program and in order to ensure that the district lives its mission, the following goals need to be attended to:

- Implement a one-way immersion dual language program. In order to close the achievement gap for English learners, the district will implement a dual language immersion program in order to increase bilingualism. According to Thomas and Collier (2012), dual language education is the most powerful school reform for high academic achievement, whatever the demographic mix.

- Graduate academically successful English learners. In the state of Illinois, to be academically successful, English Learners must meet three requirements: (a) achieve language proficiency in English, (b) meet rigorous high school graduation requirements, and (c) attain the college and career readiness benchmark established by statewide assessments such as the SAT.

- Increase the number of students who achieve the State of Illinois Seal of Biliteracy.

Objectives

The aforementioned goals can positively impact the educational outcomes of students in the program. In order to achieve these stated goals, the following objectives would have to be met:

- High Expectations: EL students and Spanish-heritage students will be held to the same high academic standards.

- Spanish Language Instruction: Math, social science, science, and Spanish
language courses will be taught using Academic Spanish as part of the OWDLP model.

- **Pyramid of Interventions:** *Academia Bilingue* students will receive extra help and support during the school day.

- **Enrichment:** *Academia Bilingue* will receive supplemental instruction, practice, and or other enrichment as part of an extended school day and in the Pre-AP Summer Academy program in order to accelerate learning.

- **Oracy and Writing:** *Academia Bilingue* will provide students with ample opportunity to practice what is learned in the classroom. *EL Taller*, a special enrichment period during the school day, will utilize the appropriate spoken and written approaches for effective communication in both English and Spanish. The deliberate design of *Academia Bilingue* uses components such as *El Taller* to provide students with a hands-on learning approach that is designed to reinforce communication through immersion.

- **Focus on Biliteracy:** *Academia Bilingue* students will become literate in English and Spanish. Students in this program will meet the criteria to receive the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy on their high school diploma upon graduation. By increasing access to a rigorous curriculum, providing support to mainstream teachers through biliteracy coaching, ensuring students receive academic instruction in their native language, and focusing on language development in English leading to a Seal of Biliteracy, we can accomplish these goals and objectives.
Needs, Values, and Preferences Represented by the Policy

Realizing the goals of Academia Bilingue can have far reaching affects, the problem that Sterling School District is facing is not unique to its locale. While California, New York, and Texas account for approximately half of the school-aged immigrant population in the United States, across the country, children from homes that speak a language other than English account for 25% of the school-age population (Batalova & Fix, 2011). Understandably, a program like Academia Bilingue, when successful, could have a far-reaching impact.

By implementing an additive model like the Academia Bilingue program and affording the English learners access to the same rigorous academic programs as their native English-speaking peers across the state, we seek to transform the expectations for our students and our community. The community aspect of this program is especially important. The majority of EL students who attend Sterling School District schools are born in the United States. We are experiencing second- and third-generation students entering our schools as English learners. Unfortunately, this is not an anomaly, but rather is consistent with national trends. According to a report by Chao and Shenkel, published by Grantmakers for Education (2013), about 75% of English learners in primary and intermediate grades are second- or third-generation Americans. Furthermore, the Grantmakers report illustrates that 57% of middle and high school EL students (those that we consider long-term ELs) were born in the United States (Choa & Shenkel, 2013). Decades of language policy decisions tied to the long-standing immigration debate in the United States has led to a multigenerational issue that must be addressed. No matter how
politically charged the language issue is, as a Republic, we are dependent on an academically competent electorate.

**Stakeholders in the Policy**

The needs of English learners that are characterized in Sterling School District, as well as across the United States, are represented in this advocated policy. We live in a rapidly changing world that is characterized by porous borders, economic strife, and global interdependence. These factors have moved English learners to the forefront of the American educational agenda. Today, just as it was during the Revolutionary War era, we must understand that there is no freedom without education. We know that English learners have become one of the fastest growing demographic groups in our urban centers. Accordingly, we need to focus on ways to provide a high-quality education for these students so that they too can contribute to our nation and economy. Effectively educating English learners is essential to our national prosperity.

**The Rationale for the Validity of the Policy**

Every student has the right to learn and while education is primarily the responsibility of the individual states, it has taken federal legislation and several court decisions to ensure that all students have access to equal educational opportunity (Olsen, 2010). The belief that all students have the right to learn despite differences in their educational, socioeconomic, or linguistic backgrounds has important implications. This policy advocacy is grounded in the belief that equity and access are essential requirements in an educational system that is designed for all students to attain standard educational outcomes (Brighouse & Swift, 2008). Access to highly qualified teachers,
rigorous curriculum, and quality instruction are rooted in legal mandates that manifest themselves in moral and ethical rights. By providing an educational program like Academia Bilingue that is designed to best serve the needs of English learners and enrich the experience of English-proficient heritage speakers, we are creating a system that establishes a pathway to genuine educational equity. Academia Bilingue is economically feasible, is supported by research that illustrates how OWDLP immersion meets the linguistic and educational needs of students, and it demonstrates how biliteracy will positively impact the greater community.

**Goals and Objectives Are Appropriate and Good**

The design of the School for Biliteracy program takes into account important structural considerations such as curriculum, instruction, assessment, scheduling, enrichment, and job embedded professional development. For the goals and objective to be met, we must make sure that all systems are aligned in a way that fosters success. The goals and objectives represent interdependent parts that must work in concert for the vision of a school for biliteracy to take shape. Creating the circumstances for optimal learning to take place means we must establish the conditions within the district through the use of both support and pressure.

Moving to a OWDLP approach is a substantial change. The goals and objections of this advocated policy will help district leaders to understand how to best lead change in the district. These leaders will be asked to formulate a theory of action that allows for complications, yet guarantees success notwithstanding. Changing the culture is necessary for successful implementation of the Academia Bilingue program. Evaluating progress
toward program goals and objectives as well as celebrating accomplishments are vital to the envisioned success.

Ensuring the success of LTELs has never been more important in the state of Illinois or the United States. In our community, the ability to speak Spanish is a necessity more often than not. Additionally, Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States. Current demographic trends discussed earlier in this advocacy document highlight the importance of OWDLP. Focusing on implementation of the Academia Bilingue program will positively impact the school district and the community, and it is essential to meeting the needs of our stakeholders.
SECTION FOUR: POLICY ARGUMENT

Implementing a program to support the needs of LTEL students is critical to the mission of Sterling School District. Section four of this policy advocacy document discusses the benefits and challenges of executing a policy requiring the implementation of a one-way dual language immersion program. The information in this section is based upon research, individual experience, and the predictable impact that the implementation of the *Academia Bilingue* program will on LTEL students.

**Argument**

If you look at something long enough, you tend to see the pendulum is shifting. In the case of language instruction, the pendulum is moving from English only to dual language. One-way dual language refers to a program that provides literacy and content area instruction to students through two languages, promotes biliteracy, and facilitates grade-level academic achievement (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). As I contemplated advocating for this policy, I became aware of the Advocacy Coalition Framework as it relates to policy change and implementation. Framing the argument for this policy change through the Advocacy Coalition Framework has helped me understand how the overall educational system is composed of different advocacy coalitions complete with their own beliefs, resources, and strategies. The key to reaching a reasonable solution and affecting real change is minimizing political conflict so that the competing coalitions can find a common ground (Sabatier, 1988).

**Divergent Viewpoints**

My research led to the discovery of two competing coalitions that have divergent viewpoints on the purpose of bilingual education. The most significant areas of
contention between these two coalitions are (a) whether bilingual education has a positive effect on English proficiency, and (b) whether bilingual education should be used in schools. The opposing camps’ main argument centers on complex beliefs that were engrained in the experiences of earlier immigrant groups. At the center of the argument is this question: Do English learners gain greater English proficiency through full English immersion or through bilingual education program? The 20th century paradigm that is accepted by the general public has affected policy. In the 20th century, English proficiency was necessary for mobility in a manufacturing-based economy. However, in the 21st century, we are transitioning to a knowledge economy. The old paradigm insisted that English should be the sole language of instruction in schools because it fosters assimilation and economic success. Essentially, this camp believes that bilingual education promotes separation of cultures (Duignan, 1998). Fortunately, today we have much research that supports dual language as a better alternative to English immersion.

**Biliteracy as a Moral Imperative**

Exploring the research and rationale being used by both of the proponents of English-only immersion and transitional bilingual education only served to strengthen the moral imperative that is biliteracy. While the orthodox view held by some educators may be to “end” native language instruction once the students become proficient in English, advocates of biliteracy contend that the goals should be for students to develop high levels of language proficiency and literacy in both program languages and thereby attain high levels of academic achievement in English and the partner language. Rather than relying on a flawed belief that developing and maintaining the student’s native language will interfere with English language acquisition, biliteracy advocates subscribing to an
asset model which is supported by research that indicates native language instruction provides academic instruction in English that is more comprehensible (Krashen, 1999).

**Interdependence of Language Skills**

Krashen’s work is supported by the research of Cummins. According to Cummins’ developmental interdependence hypothesis, literacy in one’s native language facilitates reading in the target language (Cummins, 2000). Using the commonality of language, cognitive and linguistic skills can be transferred from the native language to the target language. Simply stated, if students know a concept in their native language, then they can transfer it to the target language. Accordingly, Cummings’ “threshold” hypothesis suggests that a student’s achievement in the L2 (target language) depends upon the level of the student’s mastery of the L1 (native language) (Cummins, 2000). Therefore, one can conclude that that second language proficiency is dependent upon mastery of the native language, and that the academic and cognitive impact will be greatest as students increase proficiency in their native language (Krashen, 2010).

Thomas and Collier’s research also echoes the benefits of dual language found in the work of Krashen and Cummins. English learners who received five years of dual-language schooling outperformed the comparison group in the district’s highly effective transitional bilingual program (Thomas & Collier, 2003). It should be no surprise that English proficiency increases as the students’ command of their native language increases.

**Counter Argument**

The research of Krashen (1999), a proponent of bilingual education, has debunked studies claiming that English immersion programs were more effective by demonstrating
that these programs contained the essential characteristics of bilingual education.

Additionally, Cazabon, Nicoladis, and Lambert (1998) compiled a research report on the Amigos Program. While the Amigos Program was a two way immersion dual language program, this report cited by many OWDLP advocates concluded that both groups (Spanish and English) had developed balanced skills in the two languages in reading and math. Additionally, but 8th-grade equal numbers of students (Spanish and English) were receiving gifted and talented services (p. 14). The evidence in the Amigos Program report pointed out the dual language programs led to biliteracy and the students who were literate in more than one language performed equal to or better than their monolingual peers.

**Implications**

Research demonstrates that students who develop high levels of proficiency in their native language will develop high levels of listening, speaking, reading, and writing ability in English, and conversely, the same will happen for native English Speakers. The research also clearly demonstrates that neither group of students will sacrifice language development in their native language as second language proficiency increases. By advocating for an approach where all students will develop high levels of proficiency in a target language as well as their native language, we can see the positive impact of the additive approach to bilingual education because all students are given the opportunity to maintain and develop oral and written skills in their first language while they simultaneously acquire oral and written skills in a second language.
SECTION FIVE: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementing School for Biliteracy within Sterling School District’s two high schools requires a well thought out implementation plan. In section five, I outline recommendations for the following components of the plan: assessment and accountability, curriculum, instruction, staff quality and professional development, program structure, family and community, and program budget. Beginning a district-wide initiative like the School for Biliteracy requires a proof of concept before being scaled up across the district. The districts’ Freshman Center will be the site that this advocacy plan will focus on. The Freshman Center has the highest concentration of English learners, so beginning at this site and laddering up implementation to support the needs of students is both practical and sensible.

Sterling School District has worked with the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) for a number of years to refine its TBE program. The district is dedicated to implementing culturally responsive practices, promoting language learning, and supporting the development of the pedagogical content knowledge of all teachers in order to improve educational outcomes for all students. Maintaining the best aspects of the TBE program is extremely important to the staff. As a result, research conducted at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) supports the work already occurring in the district because it seeks to increase equity and access to quality education by focusing on solutions for English Learners. Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2007), published by the Center of Applied Linguistics, is one of the many guidance documents that we have utilized as part of the planning and proposed implementation of our Academia Bilingue program. While we understand that our approach to dual language
education has been influenced by the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002), it is important to see this legislation and its guiding principles as essential components of our plan. These components are: annual achievement objectives for all students, including English language learners; annual testing; alignment of curriculum with state standards; research-based teaching practices; whole-school reform driven by student outcome data; and whole-staff commitment to the continuous improvement of student outcomes (NCLB, 2002). Accordingly, both Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education and NCLB provide convergent themes that have become essential strands that are embedded in program planning and implementation.

**Assessment and Accountability**

The data will be collected to monitor the effectiveness of the program implementation and to make frequent course corrections to improve the quality of instructional outcomes and the overall program. Academia Bilingue, like other OWDPs, requires multiple measures of effectiveness for both the target language and the native language in order to assess students’ progress toward meeting the goal of biliteracy and academic achievement (Howard et al., 2007). Both quantitative and qualitative data will be used to plan for professional development to increase teacher pedagogical content knowledge.

A balanced system of assessments will be utilized to monitor the growth of students in the Academia Bilingue program. Students will take ACCESS 2.0 for ELs, AVANT Spanish Language Heritage Exam (Avant SHL), SAT Suite of Assessments, ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL), and Spanish for the Seal of Biliteracy requirements. ACCESS 2.0 for ELs indicates progress
made toward acquiring and attaining English language proficiency, and the SAT Suite of Assessments that measures the development of skills over time. The ACCESS measures student progress by assessing the students in the four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The SAT Suite of Assessments measures English language arts/literacy and mathematics progress. The SAT Suite of Assessments Measures exam is intended to be used to show student growth as well as areas of student needs for teachers to identify and address. The Avant SHL will be used to measure Spanish proficiency for all students in the Academia Bilingue program by measuring growth in vocabulary, grammar, verb use, spelling, and oracy and literacy in Spanish. Data analysis will allow the district to identify gaps in curriculum and instruction in order to develop an action plan to support student learning and design professional development for teachers in the program in order to strengthen teacher pedagogical content knowledge. The biliteracy coach will deliver job-embedded professional development that addresses the weak areas identified through data analysis and as a result, we should see increased student achievement in the areas of low performance.

**Curriculum**

Students in the School for Biliteracy program are to be held to the same rigorous standards that apply to all other students in the district. The state of Illinois has adopted a version of the Common Core State Standards that have been appropriately named the Illinois Learning Standards. The Illinois Learning Standards are the expectations of what all students must know, understand, and be able to do. The curriculum will mirror the district’s curriculum and support the acquisition of the Illinois Learning Standards.

Sterling School District has developed a robust curriculum based on the Illinois
Learning Standards. The English language arts, social science, science, Spanish for Spanish Speakers, and mathematics curriculums align to rigorous college readiness benchmarks, and the district has painstakingly developed both accommodations and materials to support ELs. The district is adamant about providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Consequently, each course will develop a curriculum map that outlines the scope and sequence for the standards that are to be taught, a pacing guide, anchor activities, and benchmark assessments to ensure consistency between what students in the School for Biliteracy and students in the general education curriculum are learning. The curriculum maps provide consistency among Academia Bilingue sections and general education sections, and the common benchmark assessments ensure that students learn the same essential standards.

**Instruction**

Engaging instruction is the cornerstone of student achievement and for the Academia Bilingue program, creating a positive and engaging classroom environment is essential to student success. The mood, attitudes, and tone of instruction will either make the classroom warm and inviting, or hostile and out of control. In order to foster a positive experience, the Academia Bilingue program will use the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) reciprocal interaction model of teaching. The CAL model employs an interactive instructional approach that is different than the traditional instructional framework. Rather than being the Sage on the Stage, the teacher becomes the guide on the side, facilitating learning through cooperative structures that help to foster language development for the L1 and L2 students. Like the Center for Applied Linguistics, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001) suggested that specific instructional strategies
can be used to increase student learning outcomes. Strategies that focus on establishing an environment for learning, supporting understanding, and helping students extend and apply knowledge have a demonstrated impact on the acquisition of new knowledge. In particular, cues, questions, and advance organizers; nonlinguistic representation; identifying similarities and differences; generating and testing hypotheses are ways to help students identify what they already know about the content being taught, linking new content to background knowledge, and providing students with a way to organize new learning (Marzano et al., 2001).

The role of the biliteracy coach will be to support the Academia Bilingue program’s teachers in order to increase their knowledge about second language acquisition. The biliteracy coach will work with the content area teacher to integrate language instruction into the taught curriculum. Coaching cycles will be centered on instructional strategies that are effective at making content knowledge more comprehensible. Coaches will focus on the use of formative assessment, scaffolding, cognates, and other techniques that build on the students’ existing knowledge base. Conversely, it will also be important for biliteracy coaches to monitor instruction and provide feedback to the Academia Bilingue program’s teachers. We want to make sure that our teachers use a monolingual approach when they are teaching. Switching between L1 and L2 during instruction is counterproductive; research suggests that sustained periods of instruction in one language is essential for linguistic development. By design, the structure of the program ensures classroom instruction is delivered in both L1 and L2. Fifty percent of the students’ coursework will be delivered in each language keeping with the 50/50 model that the Academia Bilingue program is built upon. By design, development of language is of
equal importance to content knowledge. Language instruction needs to be a constant focus of education, not an extra additive. Biliteracy coaches will work with content area teachers to ensure that the language objective is integrated into the curriculum.

**Staff Quality and Professional Development**

Teacher quality is essential to the *Academia Bilingue* program. Job-embedded professional development and instructional coaching will support the implementation of sound pedagogy. By having a biliteracy coach to work with teachers in the program, conduct demonstration classrooms, and engage in coach cycles with PLC teams, *Academia Bilingue* teachers will acquire efficacious teaching practices and enhance their ability to meet student needs. Moreover, the process of continuous improvement will allow coaches to support the refinement of instructional practice based on information gained from the analysis of benchmark assessment and longitudinal data.

The recruitment, induction, mentoring, and retention of quality staff are essential to the success of the academy. While we know that having well qualified teachers is important, student achievement has been found to be strongly related to teachers’ preparation in both subject matter and teaching methods, as well as to their preparation to work with diverse students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In the *Academia Bilingue* program, the teachers need to be biliterate. In addition to being biliterate, *Academia Bilingue* program teachers also need to have a thorough understanding of the content, classroom management skills, and specific training with our program model.

A major focus of professional development is to utilize PLC teams to improve teacher pedagogical content knowledge. By working with course-alike teams, the biliteracy coach and other instructional coaches will facilitate internalizing and
operationalizing strategies and methods that increase the student’s content and language acquisition respectively. Additionally, support provided by the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) will insure that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and pedagogical approach to support biliteracy.

Collaboration with the biliteracy coach is essential for the success of the program. Teachers in the Academia Bilingue program will need to plan lessons and work collaboratively with the biliteracy coach to ensure that instruction is sequenced according the CAL framework and promotes biliteracy. However, creating teams is not enough. Like other PLC teams in the district, teams in the Academia Bilingue program will need to follow the same PLC TEAM Cycle that is centered on identifying the essential curriculum that all students must master, creating common formative assessments, and analyzing common data to identify what works, as well as what does not work, and then adjusting instruction (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). The PLC team will provide the teacher with job-embedded professional development through an ongoing process in which Academia Bilingue educators will work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve (DuFour et.al., 2008).

**Program Structure**

To begin implementing the program, we will need work with the board of education to approve and develop the program pilot, hire a biliteracy coach, and create a professional development plan to prepare the Academia Bilingue program staff. Table 1 provides an implementation schedule for the pilot program.
Table 1

*Implementation Schedule for Academia Bilingue School for Biliteracy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>OWDLP attitudinal and bilingualism surveys given to parents, students, and teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Written analysis of survey results to summarize the findings of both the attitudinal survey and bilingualism survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Develop proposal for One-Way Dual Language program</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2019</td>
<td>The proposal is presented to the Superintendent and Board of Education for approval. Once approved:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Hire Biliteracy Coach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b) Formally select staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c) Finalize budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2019 to May 2020</td>
<td>During the 2019–2020 Directors of Instruction and Curriculum Committee members will complete the following tasks:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Create promotional materials to inform parents and students of Dual Language option</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Course offerings finalized</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Refine syllabi, curriculum and assessments for each course to meet the goals of the OWDL program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Identify, select, and order textbooks and resource materials to support each course offering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Identify, select, and order language support materials for each course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f) Develop Summer Bridge program for incoming English Learner and Spanish-heritage students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g) Plan for parent outreach and engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2019 to May 2020</td>
<td>Extensive professional development to train staff for ODLP pilot for the 2020-21 School Year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Staff visit high schools that currently offer dual language</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Implementation of Coaching model with selected staff</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Create an on-library of resources (digital and print) that support biliteracy, and culturally responsive practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2020 to July 2020</td>
<td>Implement Summer Bridge program for incoming English Learner and Spanish heritage students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2020</td>
<td>Implement <em>Academia Bilingue</em> (School for Biliteracy) for 9th grade pilot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 1, once the pilot is approved, we provide training for our TBE teachers at the Freshman Center. We have highly qualified math, social science, and Spanish language teachers who are fluent in both Spanish and English. We will employ a 50/50 model. World History, science, Integrated Math 1, and Spanish for Spanish Speakers will be taught in Spanish and English; reading and health/PE will be taught in English. The teachers will receive professional development consistent with our model so as to support the Biliteracy Pathway we are developing. We will utilize a similar “school-within-a-school” structure as we ladder up the program from 9th through 12th grade.

To promote the program, we will participate in extensive community outreach. We will work with the local elementary school district to identify candidates for the program. Additionally, we will set up community forums at the junior high school and at events sponsored by the community to showcase this program to parents, stakeholders, and community business partners. After students are selected, we will have a parent meeting where parents will be able to enroll their child in the Academia Bilingue program through an application process.

The initial cohort will be limited to 150 students. The 150 students will be mosaically scheduled among the six school-within-a-school (house) classrooms. Seventy-five students will be English learners, and the other 75 students will be Spanish-heritage students who are not identified as ELs. The OWDLP utilizes an additive approach; the Spanish language is an asset and is not viewed as something that needs to be remediated.

**Family and Community**

Parental involvement is essential to the success of the Academia Bilingue program. Parents are key levers to establishing the collective efficacy that is vital to the
success of the program. To put it plainly, what parents communicate to their children about a dual language program has a positive academic impact (Howard et al., 2007). In our district, we are very fortunate to have parent liaisons at each campus. The parent liaisons are part of the district overall strategy to increase family and community engagement. Parents in each school and each grade level form learning communities. Each learning community works to ensure that we operationalize our mission of every student succeeding by working to leverage available resources to maximize the academic impact. The Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC) is a key component of this process. Our BPAC works with the EL, Bilingual, Modern Language, Principals, and other groups to educate and uplift parents. Our approach is more than your typical Parent Learning University or English language learning classes offered for adults. A real emphasis is placed on educating parents and raising expectation along the way because we believe that the key to student achievement is motivating parents to aim for the stars and be the motivation and success that their children need to see.

Program Budget

The proposed budget for Academia Bilingue policy advocacy will be based off of the needs of the pilot program. Materials and supplies will be budgeted from departmental accounts. The budget will include the cost incurred for hiring a biliteracy coach, the Summer Bridge staff, curriculum committee work, and professional development related to OWDLP. Participants in curriculum committee work and professional development outside of the school day are paid at an hourly rate of $25.90 per hour. Table 2 provides a breakdown of staff costs for the pilot program.
Table 2

*Staff Salaries*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biliteracy Coach</td>
<td>$53,483.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Curriculum Committee  
  30 staff members @ $25.91 per hour x (40 hours per course) | $31,092.00 |
| OWDLP Training Hours  
  6 staff members @ $25.91 per hour x (10 hours a month x 9 months) | $13,991.40 |
| Summer Bridge Program Teachers  
  6 staff members @ $2136.65 per course | $12,819.90 |

Additional professional development services will be provided by outside agencies. The district will contract with the agencies for professional development services. Table 4 shows an estimated breakdown for professional development for the initial pilot program.

Table 3

*Professional Development Services Budget*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily fee for a presenter/consultant costing approximately $6,5000 x 8 sessions</td>
<td>$52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Substitute cost for 6 teachers @ $119.00 per day x 8 session</td>
<td>$5,712.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total anticipated budget for the *Academia Bilingue* pilot is $169,098.00. At first glance, this cost may seem expensive, but when one evaluates the initial cost of program implementation versus the cost of remediation programs for English learners, it is easy to justify the expanse.
SECTION SIX: POLICY ASSESSMENT PLAN

The success of the *Academia Bilingue* program is essential to Sterling School District. The assessment plan will provide a clear picture of what has been accomplished and what needs to be done. The assessment plan will enhance the effectiveness of the program, guide decision making, and identify areas that need support. Consequently, multiple measures will be used to assess program implementation and make course corrections to ensure the fidelity and integrity of the program. These measures will include: (a) program interest, (b) teacher professional learning needs, (c) target language attainment and growth, (d) academic success in the core curriculum, and (e) program evaluation for program refinement.

**Program Interest**

First of all, we will assess the participation interest of the parents of incoming 9th grade students by monitoring the applications that are collected during the December Open House, Triple “A” Showcase, and specific parent meetings. Parents will have had the opportunity to participate in one of our outreach events that will explain the design and structure of the dual language program (*Academia Bilingue*) that will be offered in Sterling School District. Also, the local elementary schools will hold sessions at BPAC meetings, where information about the program will also be available to families that have students in our TBE program.

**Teachers’ Professional Learning Needs**

The next step of the plan will be to work with CAL and the IRC to identify staff professional learning needs. Providing professional learning aligned to the program goals is necessary for program success. Additionally, we will need to assess the preparedness
of the biliteracy coach and instructional coaches in order to insure that they can meet the needs of the staff. Furthermore, the principal and the Human Resources personnel will have to identify educator qualities in order to develop a candidate profile to ensure that appropriate teaching candidates are hired in advance of the laddered up implementation.

**Target Language Attainment and Growth**

The overall goal of the *Academia Bilingue* program is to increase student achievement and accelerate learning through developing biliteracy. Accordingly, we will need to assess Spanish and English language development in order to monitor student progress. Additionally, students in the *Academia Bilingue* program will take the appropriate SAT suite assessment each spring, which will allow the district to compare the *Academia Bilingue* cohort to their general educational peers. Additionally, each PSAT assessment will be used to assess the student's progress towards English and content area proficiency, while the Avant SHL will be used to measure the progress toward proficiency in Spanish. Assessment results will be analyzed annually and the data will be used to monitor and adjust the program design.

**Academic Success in the Core Curriculum**

As noted previously, the key goals for the *Academia Bilingue* program are closing the achievement gap, supporting mainstream teachers of long-term ELs, and increasing bilingualism for mainstream students and ELs that will lead to achievement of the Seal of Biliteracy. In order to achieve these goals, students will need to matriculate through the established course sequence, culminating in graduation. Sterling School District will use district-developed end of unit common summative assessments to ensure students are succeeding in the curriculum and to maintain the fidelity and integrity of each course.
Additionally, data derived from the PSAT Suite of Assessments and other data will allow the district to chart student progress.

**Program Evaluation for Program Development**

Previously, the researcher discussed how the strands (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Educator Quality, Professional Development, Family and Community Engagement, and Budget) form the foundation of the *Academia Bilingue* program. Each step in the process is outlined in the Implementation Schedule (see Table 1), which has been based on the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard et al., 2007). When we meet as a district to assess the impact of the *Academia Bilingue* program pilot, the team will utilize the implementation schedule, district-developed implementation rubrics, and planning tools provided by our partners to establish goals and action steps for each subsequent year.
SECTION SEVEN: SUMMARY IMPACT STATEMENT

In this section, I discuss how the policy will impact the Sterling School District. The following four areas are addressed: (a) the appropriateness of the policy, (b) the consistency with the district’s vision and mission, (c) whether the needs and values of the stakeholders are represented, and (d) the impact on the school improvement plan.

Appropriateness of the Policy

Implementation of a one-way dual language immersion program like Academia Bilingue in a high school will benefit not only the targeted EL students but also the community in general. Latinos are the fastest growing demographic group in our country. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2009), one out of every four newborns and of our school-aged population, one in five students are Latino. Consequently, we need to move from looking at a language learner as having a deficiency, to seeing the language as an asset. We need to prepare the Latino immigrants in our community to be entrepreneurs, knowledge workers, innovators, inventors, and leaders.

The District Mission, Vision, and Goals Are Consistent With the Policy

The mission of Sterling School District is “Every Student Succeeds.” Making necessary policy changes to operationalize a program like the Academia Bilingue program over time will mold and shape the outcomes for English learners to be more consistent with their peers. “Every Student Succeeds” when we increase biliteracy, reduce the EL dropout rate, improve educational outcomes, and enhance our community’s economic success through the implementation of programs that arm a greater number of students with the tools necessary to be productive members within a 21st century economy.
All Stakeholders Values and Needs Are Considered

This policy advocacy is a moral imperative and quite possibly could be the social justice issue of our day. Identifying the needs of a community of English learners and implementing a policy to meet those needs must follow the same thoughtful approach the district has used as it addressed such issues as equity and access to Advanced Placement courses, or the implementation of a Professional Learning Community Team. The Policy advocacy for the Academia Bilingue program is an advocacy that will require substantive change and, therefore, continuous interaction with stakeholders, program monitoring, and adjustment based on data and feedback. Successful implementation of the pilot program will allow the district to scale up the program, taking a measured approach across grade levels and school. The decisions we make will determine the future of our nation, and the decision to develop a biliterate electorate that contributes to our economy and enhances our social fabric is the only real decision I can see.

Policy is Consistent With the Vision Driving it

We are a nation of immigrants; while much has changed since the days of Ellis and Angel Islands, much remains the same as droves of immigrants still come to America in search of a better life. Today’s English learners (many of which were born in the United States) and students in general will benefit from a system designed to build on their strengths instead of focusing on their shortcomings.

As educational leaders, it is our responsibility to provide educational programs and experiences that meet the needs of students today and future generations. This policy will help ensure educational equity that allows all students the same opportunity to learn and thrive in the new knowledge economy.
REFERENCES


Regional Educational Laboratory West at WestED. (2016, October). *Reference desk memo: Summary of research and resources on long-term English learner students.* Retrieved from

https://relwest.wested.org/system/documents/pdfs/484/original/REL_West_Reference_Desk_Memo_LTELs_508.pdf?1476900570


APPENDIX A

Biliteracy Coach Job Description

(DRAFT)

TITLE: Biliteracy Coach

QUALIFICATIONS: Applicant must hold a valid Illinois type 09 teaching certificate with appropriate ESL/Bilingual endorsement; Minimum of 5 years teaching experience, including successful instructional experience in the area of English Language Learning; Training on facilitating groups and working with adult learners preferred

REPORTS TO: Director of ELL and Modern Languages

JOB GOAL: To empower teachers to most effectively teach academic vocabulary, literacy and culturally responsive teaching practices by providing on-going intensive professional development, modeling excellent teaching strategies, providing resources for staff based on current best practice, and ensuring implementation of state and district curriculum standards across the content areas.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Provide classroom support for teachers by presenting demonstration lessons on instructional techniques and use of instructional materials, locating resource materials, providing training with district in-service and assisting with special projects.

2. Assist staff in understanding and implementing best practices for English Learners including the district standard-based curriculum and WIDA standards.

3. Analyze available data, primarily to demonstrate for teachers or to support teachers in their instructional decision making.

4. Participate on building and district literacy committees to develop school and district wide plans to improve academic language in all content areas.
5. Work closely with the Directors of Instruction and the LSS Office to recommend, develop, and/or supply effective district in-service

6. Assist staff in performing assessments and developing plans to meet the students’ language and cultural needs.

7. Assist staff in analyzing student achievement data and determining how to focus instruction to remediate and reinforce skills to be learned.

8. Research and demonstrate in classrooms and workshops the current best practices in education, therefore bringing theory into practice. Research sources would include technology, books, visits to exemplary schools, workshop and convention attendance, and any other devices or presentations which would be instrumental in adding to the effectiveness of the teaching staff.

9. Assist staff in using observational techniques and various assessments to determine student mastery of reading/writing skills as well as determine areas that need increased instruction.

10. Reinforce reading skills in the content areas by using hands-on techniques that address various learning styles and incorporate multiple-intelligence strategies, integrated learning, inter-disciplinary connections, and higher order thinking skills appropriate for a wide range of abilities.

11. Provide and demonstrate materials and techniques designed to help all students, utilizing differentiation for “at risk” and accelerated populations.

12. Provide workshops and materials for curriculum development, classroom management, multi-cultural experiences, and technology integration.

13. Facilitate staff sharing sessions, such as grade level meetings and team meetings, for teachers to reflect on and analyze their teaching and offer mutual support for new ideas.

14. Maintain activity log verifying instructional support across all content areas.

15. Assume any other duties as may from time to time be delegated by the supervisor and the supervisor may make any adjustment in the scope of responsibilities as outlined above which will be in the interest of the school district.

16. All actions must be in concert with the mission and vision statements, core beliefs, objectives of Sterling School District
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Extensive experience and expertise in ELL and Bilingual strategies as supported by course work/training in related areas.

Extensive experience in integrating culturally relevant materials and strategies.

Demonstrated success in secondary teaching of ELL and Bilingual students as evidenced by evaluation, recommendations by both administrators and teaching colleagues.

Exceptional ability in people-skills, including amiability, a high level of professionalism, with ability to maintain confidentiality and personal flexibility in all areas.

Technology expertise.

Creativity and initiative.

Current knowledge and demonstrated ability in the use of hands-on techniques addressing various learning styles, multiple-intelligence strategies, integrated learning, inter-disciplinary connections, higher order thinking skills, and brain research.

JOB PERFORMANCE:

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or ability required.

This description is written primarily for position evaluation purposes. It describes duties and responsibilities which are representative of the nature and level of work assigned to the position. The principal activities are representative and not necessarily all inclusive.
APPENDIX B

Attitudes Toward Biliteracy and Bilingualism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Responsiveness</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always or almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I plan my lessons to capitalize on my students' cultures and experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I take time to learn about the cultures represented by the students in my classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can relate to my students' and their parents' backgrounds and life experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I recognize and consider my own cultural influences and how they affect the way I communicate my expectations and how I teach.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I use words or phrases from my students' home language in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Teacher Perception                                                                     |       |        |           |       |                          |
| 6. Referencing a student's native language can help them acquire vocabulary in a second language. |       |        |           |       |                          |
| 7. Switching back and forth between two languages in a single conversation is a sign that the speaker knows both languages well. |       |        |           |       |                          |
| 8. I feel comfortable when I am in a group and others are                              |       |        |           |       |                          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>speaking a language I don't know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I build strong, positive relationships with the parents of my students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I contact the parents of my students for positive reasons, not just when there is a problem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I make an effort to educate families about our school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Models</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I am knowledgeable about the different types of Bilingual Education programs that exist.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I plan my lessons with English Language Learners in mind.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I understand second language development and what my students can and can't do at the different stages along the way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>