

Bilingual, Dual Language, and English Learner Programs in New Mexico Schools: Key Considerations and Resources for Educators and Families

Bilingual Education, Multicultural, and Dual Language Programs

The New Mexico Department of Education, Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau provides funding and support for several types of programs such as Dual Language program models and Indigenous Language programs.

The benefits of using practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive are clear in the research and evidence in schools across the globe.

Key Considerations for Educators and Families:

- The New Mexico Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy is an award given by a school or district in recognition of students who have studied and, by high school graduation, attained proficiency in a language other than English. The Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy emblem appears on the diploma of the graduating senior including a notation on the student's transcript)and encourages students to pursue biliteracy, honors the skills students attain, and can be evidence of skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions offices. For more information visit:
http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Bilingual_Seal.html
- Planning and preparation of programs should include deliberate consideration for language proficiencies, styles of learning, special education status, and grouping of students.
- All learning environments include language learners and require that students have opportunities to be actively engaged in the subject areas and language(s) through the use of a variety of teaching and learning strategies appropriate for the academic and language proficiency levels of the students.
- It is important to follow student progress as ELs, including the assessments and reporting tools that are used with the English Language Development Assessment, and other language assessments. Parent and Teacher Reports are available for EL students with useful information.
- *All families* includes culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse families, and families with English Learner students and/or students with disabilities. All students and families deserve to be appreciated as individuals who bring strengths and assets to the classroom learning opportunities.
- Family-School Partnership programs and Bilingual Program Parent Advisory Teams should be carefully planned with deliberate considerations to ensure that families are part of the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and respected.
- Review list of useful resources included below on page 3.

English Learners (ELs)

Students are identified as English Learners through a process that starts with a home language survey upon registration at the school and the language assessments used to determine the strengths and needs of the students. In New Mexico, ELs often speak a language other than English or have family members who speak languages other than English in their homes.

Special attention is given to the academic language needs of students who are identified as ELs so that they can have access to what the school offers to all students. Teachers use what is called Sheltered Instruction Techniques to ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop the academic language skills they will need to be successful in school. Language skills in speaking, reading, writing and listening are all important.

Following are some key questions that parents and educators should ask to ensure all children are on the path to success.

1. What are the benefits of completing the home language survey and identifying a student as an EL?
2. What kind of services and programs does the school have to help students learn English and all the other subjects they are studying?
3. What opportunities does my child have to practice English with peers?
4. How are the school and families helping students prepare for courses that determine if they will earn a High School diploma with a Bilingual Seal?
5. Is there an educational plan for ELs based on multiple forms of assessment such as English Language Development Assessments and class assignments?
6. What opportunities are available for parent education about topics related to the school system and student success?
7. What flexible volunteer opportunities are available for families to get involved in the school? How can families help with anything at the school? Is there a parent advisory committee or other opportunities to support the school activities and English Learner Programs?
8. How can the school best use the resources included on the NMPED website:
http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Bilingual_ServingELs.html

Review the list of useful resources on page 3.

Resources for Bilingual, Dual Language, and English Learner Programs in New Mexico Schools

Links:

[New Mexico Public Education Department, Bilingual Multicultural Education Bureau](#)

[Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations \(CESDP\)
Ben Lujan Leadership and Public Policy Institute](#)

[Dual Language Education of New Mexico](#)

[Academic Language and Literacy Network](#)

[Colorin Colorado](#)

[Teaching for Bilinguality](#)

[Worldclass Instructional Design and Assessment](#)

