



TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

## **A Plan for Providing Effective Linguistic and Academic Instruction for English Language Learners in Texas**

*An Action Plan for a Quality Education for ELLs submitted by the Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)*

### **Introduction**

As per Dr. Steve Murdock and Associates (2002) demographic study regarding the current status and projected future of the state of Texas, *The Texas Challenge in the 21st Century*, the anticipated cost for **not** effectively educating the Hispanic population of this state, particularly ELLs and other minorities, is detrimental to the entire state. Given that approximately 25% of Hispanics lived in poverty in 2000, compared with 8% of Anglos and a significant portion of this Hispanic group are homes of ELLs, the study's projections state that those poverty households will grow at three times those of Anglos in the next twenty years. If the projected demographic changes come to pass, and *socioeconomic differentials* (largely based on educational attainment...achievement gap) among groups are not positively affected, the *study projects that by 2040 Texas will be a poorer and less competitive state*, the labor force will be less educated, the number of households living in poverty will increase by 4 percent, and the income average of Texas households will be \$6,500 lower than in the year 2000.

Given the growing number of students [over 684,000, TEA 2005] in Texas schools for whom English is not their first language, it is increasingly important to the economic welfare of our state that we provide these students with the most effective researched-based educational programs and practices for increased linguistic and academic attainment. The **Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)** firmly believes that to effectively educate the state's English Language Learner (ELL) population and **close the academic achievement gap** between this group and native speakers of English, *additional* financial resources are essential to ensure quality instructional materials, teacher training, specialized staffing, program evaluation, and other essential components consistent with *quality ELL instructional models*. In doing so, the TABE also recognizes that increased education funds without a comprehensive evaluation plan for district and school accountability will make it less likely that ELLs' linguistic and academic needs will be satisfactorily met.

To this end, the **TABE** respectively submits the following *action plan* with the intent of assisting the state's mission to educate **all** children of Texas and ensure they meet state and federal standards as measured by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (2001).

### **ELL Education Improvement Plan**

The TABE requests that the Texas Legislature *fully* fund bilingual education and through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) review the existing Commissioner's Rules - Chapter 89 Guidelines and modify these rules accordingly to guide districts in the implementation of *Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education* (TEC - Sec. 29.051) and *Content-Based ESL*. And, that the TEA fully adopt the new Commissioner's Rules / Guidelines to guide districts in the implementation of Dual Language Immersion education (TEC - Sec. 28.0051), in order to implement the following **nine** point *research-based ELL education improvement plan* with all due expediency:

### **Program Design and Assessment**

1. The TEA will authorize only the following three ELL instructional models based on existing and robust empirically-based longitudinal research that clearly demonstrates their effectiveness for educating ELLs and closing the academic achievement gap:

As per state law on Bilingual/ESL Education, where bilingual education is required:

- a. One-way Dual Language Immersion Education (ELLs only: PK – 5), or
- b. Two-way Dual Language Immersion Education (ELLs & non-ELLs: PK - 5), or
- c. Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education (ELLs only: PK - 5)

As per state law on Bilingual/ESL Education, where bilingual education is **not** required:

- d. Content-Based ESL Education (ELLs only: PK – 5)
- e. Sheltered Content-Area Instruction (ELLs only: 6 – 12)

2. As clearly evidenced in long-term research, the TEA will phase out the following least effective ELL instructional models: ESL Pull-Out; Early-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education by AY 2008 – 2009.
3. The TEA will establish and disseminate program guidelines for meeting the educational needs of recent immigrants that enter Texas' schools with little or no formal schooling, providing English language development and native language literacy instruction as appropriate (e.g., Newcomers Center).
4. The TEA will require school districts to assess 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading and writing achievement of Spanish speaking ELLs participating in either One-way or Two-way Dual Language Immersion or Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual instructional models in their native language, as per state of Texas and NCLB assessment guidelines.

### **Data Collection and Accountability**

5. The TEA will collect and report linguistic (RPTE) English language achievement data **disaggregated according to ELL instructional model**, for each ELL served in the state Bilingual or ESL program. These data is to be reported at the school, district, and state level.
6. The TEA will collect and report Reading, Mathematics, and Science (TAKS) longitudinal achievement data **disaggregated according to ELL instructional model** for each ELL and former ELL served in the state Bilingual or ESL program. These data is to be reported by school, district, and state level.
7. The TEA will collect and report drop-out and graduation data **disaggregated according to ELL instructional model** for each ELL and former ELL served in the state Bilingual or ESL program. These data is to be reported by high school, district, and state level.
8. The TEA will annually analyze the linguistic and academic data **disaggregated according to ELL instructional model** for each ELL and former ELL served in the state Bilingual or ESL program and provide the necessary assistance to schools and districts who are not adequately meeting the instructional needs of their ELL population. The TEA will accomplish this by assisting such schools and districts to move toward more effective ELL instructional models.

### **Educator Preparation**

9. Effective fall 2008, through the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), the State of Texas will require all Educator Preparation Programs that prepare and certify EC-4, 4-8 and 8-12 teachers to complete one (1) course on bilingualism or second language acquisition, or one (1) course on bilingual education methodologies, approaches, and techniques for educating ELLs based on research and effective practices as a prerequisite to attaining a Texas teaching certificate. This requirement shall increase to both courses stated above by fall 2010.



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Academic Instruction for English Language Learners in Texas**

**LIST OF TEXAS-WIDE ENDORSEMENTS FOR TABE PLAN**

(As of April 6, 2006)

The effectiveness of Bilingual Education (BE) has long been substantiated in the research. One common element found in all successful BE programs for English Language Learner's (ELLs) school achievement is extensive and sustained cognitive and academic development of the native language. Successful BE programs continue to demonstrate that the route to "academic English," long-term school achievement in English and closure of the achievement gap is through strong schooling in the native language. To effectively educate ELLs, you must provide native language instruction while simultaneously developing English skills and then facilitate transfer of these skills to English. It is an understanding of "cognitive and linguistic transfer" that is a fundamental principle of BE. Cognitive and linguistic transfer is an understanding that knowledge, skills and cognitive development occurs in *any language* and easily *transfers* to a second language. However, the initial development of this knowledge and skills is best and more readily developed in the native language and then transferred to the second language.

Based on extensive research evidence as outlined above, we strongly support the nine points articulated in this plan, and fully endorse the ***TABE Plan for Providing Effective Linguistic and Academic Instruction for English Language Learners in Texas***:

1. TABE Executive Board 2005 – 2006
2. Ms. Rosa Mendoza, Aldine Independent School District
3. Mr. James Crawford, Former NABE Director, Bilingual Education Advocate
4. Mr. Gregorio Arellano, Bilingual/ESL Strategist, Donna Independent School District
5. Ms. Noemi Green, Bilingual/ESL Strategist, Donna Independent School District
6. Ms. Ofelia Gaona, Bilingual/ESL Director, Donna Independent School District
7. Dr. Sylvia Cavazos Peña, Professor, Endowed Chair, The University of Texas Brownsville
8. Dr. Virginia Collier, Professor, George Mason University
9. Dr. Wayne Thomas, Professor, George Mason University
10. Ms. Liz Martin, Bilingual/ESL Director, Grand Prairie Independent School District, TABE Board
11. Mr. Angel Torres, Bilingual/ESL Coordinator, McAllen Independent School District
12. Ms. Karina Zuno-Chapa, Bilingual/ESL Strategist, McAllen Independent School District
13. Ms. Lisa Cantu, Bilingual/ESL Director, Mercedes Independent School District
14. Dr. Robert A. Patterson, Dean, Professor, Southern Methodist University
15. Dr. Josie Tinajero, Dean, Professor, The University of Texas El Paso
16. Dr. Hilda Medrano, Former Dean, Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
17. Dr. Velma Menchaca, Interim Dean, Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
18. Ms. Connie Guerra, Bilingual/ESL Director, Region One ESC, TABE Board

19. Dr. Beverly Irby, Professor, Sam Houston State University
20. Dr. Shelley Wright, Assistant Professor, Southern Methodist University
21. Mr. José Hernandez, Former HISD Superintendent, TABE Board
22. Ms. Dorothy Castillo-Mathis, Teacher, TABE Board
23. Dr. Rafael Lara-Alecio, Professor, Texas A&M University, TABE Board member
24. Dr. Frank Lucido, Associate Professor, Texas A&M University Corpus Christi
25. Dr. Alfredo Benavides, Professor, Texas Tech University
26. Dr. Eva Midobuche, Associate Professor, Texas Tech University
27. Dr. Judith Marquez, Associate Professor, The University of Houston Clearlake
28. Dr. Laurie Weaver, Associate Professor, The University of Houston Clearlake
29. Dr. Rodolfo Rodriguez, Professor, The University of North Texas
30. Ms. Ana Coca, Doctoral Student, The University of North Texas
31. Dr. Emiliano Gonzalez, Assistant Professor, The University of Saint Thomas
32. Dr. Luis Rosado, Associate Professor, The University of Texas Arlington
33. Dr. Angela Valenzuela, Associate Professor, The University of Texas Austin
34. Ms. Alma Perez, Doctoral Student, The University of Texas Austin
35. Dr. David Freeman, Professor, The University of Texas Brownsville
36. Dr. John Sutterby, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Brownsville
37. Dr. Richard Gómez, Associate Professor, The University of Texas Brownsville
38. Dr. Yvonne Freeman, Professor, The University of Texas Brownsville
39. Dr. Elena Izquierdo, Professor, The University of Texas El Paso
40. Dr. Alcione Ostorga, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
41. Dr. Dora Salazar, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
42. Dr. Maritoni Guajardo, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
43. Dr. Michael Guerrero, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
44. Dr. Peter Farruggio, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
45. Dr. Veronica Estrada, Associate Professor, The University of Texas Pan American
46. Dr. José Ruiz-Escalante, Professor, The University of Texas Pan American, TABE Board
47. Dr. Leo Gómez, Professor, The University of Texas Pan American, TABE Board
48. Dr. Howard Smith, Associate Professor, The University of Texas San Antonio
49. Dr. Roberto Milk, Professor, The University of Texas San Antonio
50. Ms. Belinda Treviño-Schouten, Doctoral Student, The University of Texas San Antonio
51. Dr. Iliana Alanís, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas San Antonio, TABE Board