Teacher and Principal Survey Results from Dual Language and Bilingual Programs

Los Angeles Unified School District
Independent Analysis Unit

August 27, 2018

Sydney Ganon, Q. Tien Le, Ph.D., and Britney Wise
The views expressed herein are those of the Independent Analysis Unit and do not necessarily reflect those of the District, the Board of Education, or any individual Board Member.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the results from the Independent Analysis Unit’s (IAU) recent surveys of principals and teachers of dual language programs.

The survey results are of particular interest given that L.A. Unified is expanding its dual language program options from 101 in 2017-2018 to 133 in 2018-2019. ¹ Given this rapid growth, it is important to consider how new programs can improve upon existing programs as well as how to better support existing programs.

As previous research from the IAU has shown, English learners (ELs) who have attended a dual language program in the District have higher cumulative reclassification rates by the end of high school compared to ELs in mainstream English programs (Reclassification Trends for English Learners, June 2018). The expansion of dual language programs is a positive step for the District’s ELs as well as for English only students.

Our analysis of the survey data identifies key areas for improvement in L.A. Unified dual language programs that are important to keep in mind moving forward.

1. Programs need more culturally relevant resources and materials in their target languages.
2. Staff want more professional development on implementing dual language programs.
3. Teachers see a need for more planning time, both within grade and across grades, in order to better align dual language programs throughout their schools and classrooms.

BACKGROUND

English Learner Projects

The IAU is working on several projects around English language learners. The first report, Reclassification Trends for English Learners, was delivered to the Board in June 2018. That reclassification study followed a cohort of English learners from kindergarten until 12th grade. Another report, also being published in August 2018, is a retrospective analysis of long-term English Learners (LTELS) and the variables that may be associated with becoming a LTEL. A December 2018 report will examine EL outcomes in one-way dual language, two-way dual language, transitional bilingual, and structured English immersion programs.

An additional report, to be delivered in June 2019, will discuss the implementation of dual language education and factors that support and/or impede implementation. However, this current report examines the first component of that longer study – a survey administered to teachers and principals across L.A. Unified.

Figure 1. IAU Timeline for English Learner Projects

Dual Language Survey
The IAU administered the survey on dual language programs in May 2018. The survey was sent to 583 teachers and 73 principals of dual language programs. The survey ran for five weeks, from May 21, 2018 to June 26, 2018, and staff were sent two reminder emails in order to increase response rates. The survey took approximately 5-15 minutes and different surveys were sent to principals and teachers. The survey can be found in the supplemental Appendix.

Survey Components
The survey asked staff about their school’s dual language program structure and the teacher or principal’s professional background and qualifications. It also asked respondents to agree/strongly agree or disagree/strongly disagree about statements made on beliefs, practices, professional development, program effectiveness, family participation, curriculum, and instruction. The survey also included optional questions about the respondent’s personal characteristics.

METHODS
Survey Data
We developed the principal and teacher surveys based on preliminary analysis of interview data and prior research on promising practices for dual language implementation. We reviewed, piloted, and revised the survey items to ensure validity. Experts, including university professors, reviewed the teacher and principal survey for content validity.

Response rates for teachers and principals were high across programs. The IAU had a 42% response rate from principals and a 38% response rate from teachers, with a total of 252 responses. The average response to email surveys in general ranges from 30-40%. Internal surveys to employees, such as the IAU surveys, should be on the higher end of these response rates.

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2 Cognitive interviews, a critical step in the survey design process, were conducted with dual language teachers in Spanish and Korean programs to ensure the comprehensibility and validity of survey items.

3 Note: In order to maintain complete confidentiality, no identifiers were used on staff who filled out the IAU survey. We are therefore unable to eliminate any duplicative responses, but based on the data do not believe that duplicates are an issue.
Table 1. Dual Language Teacher and Principal Survey Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># Emailed</th>
<th># Responded</th>
<th>% Responded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Respondents

The majority of teachers and principals (85%) who responded to the survey worked in a Spanish language program and the second most common language was Mandarin (8%). The most common program type from which staff responded was dual language two-way immersion (83%), as seen below.

Table 2. Survey Respondents: Dual Language Programs by Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dual Language Two-Way Immersion</th>
<th>Maintenance Bilingual</th>
<th>Foreign Language Immersion</th>
<th>Transitional Bilingual</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83%</strong></td>
<td><strong>8%</strong></td>
<td><strong>6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 252 respondents

District Programs

The District had 101 dual language programs in 2017-2018, the majority of which were Spanish language programs (78%). The second most common language taught in the District is Korean (11%), which indicates that the survey undersampled Korean staff or oversampled Mandarin staff. The most common program type in the District is dual language two-way immersion (81%), as seen below.

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4 Results as of June 27, 2018
5 The 2018 Master Plan for English Learners and Standard English Learners renames Foreign Language Immersion as World Language Immersion. We use the old term in this report since the survey was delivered before the adoption of the 2018 Master Plan.
6 Note that the District is adding an additional 32 dual language programs for 2018-2019, but due to the timing of the survey results from those programs are not discussed in this report.
Table 3. L.A. Unified: Dual Language Programs by Language (2017-2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dual Language Two-Way Immersion</th>
<th>Maintenance Bilingual</th>
<th>Foreign Language Immersion</th>
<th>Transitional Bilingual</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81%</strong></td>
<td><strong>7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 101 programs

It should also be noted that though there are 101 dual language programs in the District, they are not at 101 different schools. For example, Cahuenga Elementary School in Board District 2 has a Spanish transitional bilingual program, a Korean dual language two-way immersion program, and a Korean maintenance bilingual program.

Analysis

The analysis that follows is based on summary statistics from the survey results as well as coding the open ended response questions. The data analyses focused on different elements of dual language implementation within the District. Descriptive survey results (data from the free response questions) are integrated with the qualitative data. We did not add weights to survey responses, and gave equal weight to the perceptions and experiences of respondents across the District.

FINDINGS

The goal of the IAU dual language survey was to learn about more about L.A. Unified programs, specifically to identify any barriers that exist for dual language program implementation. The information that teachers and principals provided will help inform the IAU’s ongoing research on dual language programs. However, we also wanted to provide this information to the Board and the District to help inform dual language program implementation moving forward.

The IAU survey examined six primary components of dual language programs in the District, seen in Figure 2 below. This is not an all-encompassing description of what makes the best dual language program model, rather it is an attempt to understand the programs currently operating in the District and how they are implemented. Both the dual language survey administered to principals and the dual language survey administered to teachers addressed the following six components.

**Program structure** questions asked respondents, among other details, about the target language of their program as well as the type of program (seen above in Table 2) and how frequently the target language was modeled (e.g. a 50:50 Spanish to English language ratio).

Questions about **teacher beliefs and qualifications** addressed topics such as staff fluency in the target language, staff qualifications, and what staff believed the goals of their programs were. These questions also asked about staff backgrounds and teacher practices on the teacher survey specifically.
Questions about principal beliefs and qualifications on the teacher survey asked teachers about their school’s leadership, including if principals supported their dual language programs. The principal survey asked principals what they believed the goals of their program were.

Professional development and planning questions addressed issues about District training, visiting other programs, and mentorship. These questions also asked about adequacy of planning time for teachers and staff.

Survey questions about programmatic elements addressed whether staff thought their program was effective in serving English learners as well as how the program was incorporated into the broader school culture. These questions also asked about family participation and support for dual language learning.

Curriculum and instruction questions discussed adequacy of instructional materials, coordination within and across grade levels (vertical alignment), and curriculum standards and assessments.

Teachers and principals responded to a series of agree or disagree statements as well as to open-ended questions about other areas of improvement or issues that needed additional support.

Figure 2. IAU Survey: Six Components of Implementing Dual Language Programs
Program Structure

Principals and teachers from four different types of dual language programs participated in the survey: transitional bilingual, foreign language immersion, maintenance bilingual, and dual language two-way immersion. The majority of respondents worked in a dual language two-way immersion program, as seen below. This is also the program type most common in L.A. Unified; the District has 82 such programs. The second most common program type is maintenance bilingual education (7 programs).

*Figure 3. IAU Survey: Program Type*

Principals and teachers responded from six different language programs: Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, Armenian, French, and Arabic. The majority of respondents worked in a Spanish program, as seen below. This is also the program type most common in L.A. Unified; the District has 79 such programs. However, the second most common language is Korean (11), which was slightly underrepresented in survey responses. Within survey responses, Mandarin was the second most common target language that respondents had in their school.

*Figure 4. IAU Survey: Program Target Language*
The majority of survey respondents said that their program was a 50:50 model (81%), indicating that 50% of instruction was delivered in the target language and 50% was delivered in English. This is also the most common model across L.A. Unified; 63% of dual language programs utilize a 50:50 model.

**Figure 5. IAU Survey: Program Model**

![Bar chart showing program models](chart1.png)

Most survey respondents said that their program alternated daily (86%), indicating that their dual language program taught both in English and in the target language each day.

**Figure 6. IAU Survey: Program Alternates**

![Bar chart showing program alternation](chart2.png)
Teacher Beliefs and Qualifications

The teacher respondents were, on average, experienced teachers. Teachers who took the IAU survey had an average of 17 total years of teaching experience, and 51% of respondents had between 16-25 years of teaching experience.

*Figure 7. Teacher Respondents: Total Years Teaching Full-Time*

Teachers also had an average of 6 years teaching in a dual language program, 11 years teaching at their current school, and 17 years teaching with L.A. Unified. The majority also held a Bilingual Cross-cultural Language in Academic Development (BCLAD) credential, as seen below. The survey did not ask about additional bilingual certifications.

*Figure 8. Teacher Respondents: Hold a BCLAD Credential*

Out of the 221 teacher respondents, the majority worked in dual language two-way immersion programs (84%) and their target language was Spanish (84%). The majority also worked in programs that alternated languages daily (86%) and had a 50:50 language model (81%), where they taught 50% of the time in the target language and 50% of the time in English.

The majority of teacher respondents identified as female (90%) and reported their native languages as Spanish (55%) or Spanish and English (14%), as seen below. This aligns with the fact that the majority of L.A. Unified dual language programs are in Spanish (78%).
Teachers felt positively about their knowledge and skills when asked about their teaching practices and qualifications.

- 86% agreed that they have native-like fluency in the program’s target language;
- 86% agreed that other teachers in their program have native-like fluency in the target language;
- 96% agreed that they are knowledgeable about second language learning;
- 90% agreed that they feel prepared to teach in a dual language program; and
- 95% agreed that they are knowledgeable about sheltered instruction practices (e.g. graphic organizers).

This confidence in staff qualifications was echoed by principals. When principals were asked about staffing and staff quality, the majority of responses were positive.

- 90% agreed that their dual language classrooms are staffed with qualified teachers;
- 94% agreed that their teachers have native-like proficiency in the target language; and
- 94% agreed that their teachers follow the language allocation of the program model.

However, principals reported some difficulty with recruitment and retention of staff.

- 26% disagreed with the statement, “I am able to attract bilingually certified teachers to my school”; and
- 29% agreed that they have difficulty retaining bilingually certified teachers at their school.

Concern about staffing was echoed in the open ended responses. One of the areas that both principals and teachers cited as needing improvement and support was an increase in staff, particularly paraprofessionals and teaching assistants to support full-time dual language teachers.
“We need assistance in finding qualified Paraprofessionals that speak English and [the target language].” – Dual Language (DL) Principal

“It would be helpful if the program provided a TA to support the teacher in the classroom.”
– DL Principal

“We need a paraprofessional at least one hour a day to help support the program and acquisition of the target language.” – DL Teacher

“A bilingual teacher assistant to practice and reinforce language comprehension and use of both languages.” – DL Teacher

Principals and teachers also requested additional staff support from L.A. Unified headquarters (Beaudry or the Central Office). Though there appears to be dual language coordinators at the District and Local District level, the teacher and principal surveys indicated that teachers need more support. Several responses indicated that teachers and principals may not be aware of this resource.

“Offer part time or full time Dual Language Coordinators like Magnet does.” – DL Principal

“Access to a full-time bilingual coordinator.” – DL Teacher

“It would be great to have a coordinator that is paid by the district who is qualified to train and support teachers in the dual language program.” – DL Teacher

“The teachers need more ongoing support from the MMED office. The MMED office needs more staff to be able to respond to our emails, concerns, questions and to be able to offer more specific support to our teachers.” – DL Teacher

Principal Beliefs and Qualifications
Out of the 31 principal respondents, the majority had dual language two-way immersion programs (74%) in their schools and had Spanish as the target language (88%). Two principals responded that they either had more than one program type or more than one language taught in their school.

The average principal who responded had been principal at his/her school for an average of 4 years and principal in the District for an average of 8 years. The majority responded that they had 6-10 years of teaching experience.

Figure 10. Principal Respondents: Total Years Teaching Full-Time
Fifty-two percent of principal respondents had a BCLAD Credential, which is a high rate, and 32% reported that they had experience as a full-time dual language teacher. However, unlike teacher respondents, the most common self-reported native language by principals was English (39%).

**Figure 11. Principal Respondents: Native Language/s**

The majority of teacher respondents felt positively about their school leadership. Eighty-one percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their principal was knowledgeable about second language learning and 86% agreed or strongly agreed that their principal was an advocate of dual language education. These statements, along with the level of principal experience, speak well for school leadership at dual language programs.

One concern about leadership that arose in teacher open ended responses was about how dual language programs are treated when school administration changes. One teacher responded that,

“As new administration comes in, they know very little about the program and because they have to learn so much DUAL is not a priority. There are different demands [for dual language education] and administrators might benefit from being involved in the lesson planning, discussions, translation, and a day in a dual language classroom. They are the voice of the school and should be able to articulate it to parents as well.” – DL Teacher

**Professional Development and Planning**

An issue concerning both principals and teachers was the adequacy of professional development for dual language programs. Thirty-six percent of teachers discussed a need around professional development in the open ended responses. This included issues such as more monitoring and classroom coaching visits, training on best practices, and training on using technology.
“Dual Language Schools should be monitored and visited consistently by the DL coordinator to ensure effective program implementation. The instructional directors for dual schools should be a seasoned dual education advocate and leader.” – DL Teacher

“We need more consistent trainings for Benchmark in Spanish.” – DL Teacher

“I would like more training on dual language teaching practices.” – DL Teacher

In addition, when teachers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed about statements around professional development,

- 56% disagreed with the statement, “I receive ongoing training from the District related to dual language”; and
- 56% disagreed with the statement, “I receive training from the District that is specific to the target language of their program”; and
- 53% disagreed with the statement, “New dual language teachers at my school are mentored”; and
- 73% agreed that they do not have opportunities to visit other dual language schools.

Principals agreed with their teachers on the necessity of improved professional development.

- 26% disagreed with the statement, “I receive ongoing training from the District related to dual language education”; and
- 32% disagreed with the statement, “I receive support from the District when faced with an issue in my dual language program.”

Additionally, the most common issue raised by principals in the open response was a request for more professional development for their staff (32%). This included more training for teachers as well as more observation opportunities, both for District staff to observe and give feedback to teachers as well as for teachers to visit other classrooms and programs to learn from other teachers.

“Onsite support that includes coming to the site and observing classes as a team.” – DL Principal

“Teachers need more guidance in which portions of the prescribed curriculum they need to use and in which language. They really need a specialized program that shows them how to integrate teaching the two languages.” – DL Principal

Along with professional development opportunities, teachers felt that there was not enough planning time opportunities with other dual language teachers.

- 50% disagreed with the statement, “There are adequate opportunities to plan with other dual language teachers in their grade level”; and
- 71% disagreed with the statement, “There are adequate opportunities to plan with other dual language teachers in different grade levels.”

Thirty-four percent of teachers discussed a need for more planning time in the open ended responses. They referred to more planning time with their team teachers, within grade levels, and across grade levels.
"We need more planning time within and across grade levels." – DL Teacher

"More opportunities to plan and collaborate with other dual language teachers." – DL Teacher

"Teachers need time to collaborate, and not during our recess or lunch time." – DL Teacher

"Teamwork, communication, more planning time and a more descriptive standards for the four key domains: speaking, listening, reading and writing." – DL Teacher

Programmatic Elements

A lack of planning time can lead to programs that are not well-coordinated within or across grade levels, also known as vertical alignment. Forty-one percent of teachers felt that the curriculum was not coordinated across grade levels and 19% saw a lack of coordination within grade levels in their schools.

"Time during school day for grade level and cross grade level articulation." – DL Teacher

"There is no collaboration across grade levels nor in the same grades." – DL Teacher

"We need time to plan vertically so that there we are all connected." – DL Teacher

"We need to create/revise a vision for our dual program and create opportunities to grow vertically (different grade levels)." – DL Teacher

In terms of programmatic elements, the majority of teachers were positive.

- 93% agreed that students in their dual language programs are included in the greater school environment;
- 89% agreed that their dual language program meets the needs of English learners; and
- 80% agreed that their dual language program promotes equal status of both languages.

However, there were several teachers who wanted to see increased inclusion of biliteracy across their school and suggested adding signs in the target language outside of the classroom as well as books in the school library in the target language.

Teachers also had concerns about parent involvement and student attrition.

- 52% agreed that student attrition was a concern in their program;
- 33% agreed that there were limited opportunities for parents to get involved in program improvement; and
- 60% said that parents do not participate in training to support their children at home in developing the two languages.

"Parent workshops to build capacity for parents that are advertised to our community by our principal by making connect-ed call in two languages. Advertising our dual language program to let the community know we are accepting applications. It would be nice to plan scheduled walk-throughs and orientations for parents to learn more about the program. As of now, the program is promoted by word of mouth." – DL Teacher
“In order for our Dual Language Program to improve at our school, we must have more teacher, parent, and student participation in regards to teaching, learning, and being a part of the program.” – DL Teacher

“Mandated parent trainings on cultural sensitivity and how to support their child in dual language to maximize success.” – DL Teacher

Seventy-seven percent of principals thought that there were opportunities for parents to get involved in dual language programs, however,

- 48% disagreed with the statement, “Parents participate in training to support their children at home in developing the two languages”; and
- 61% agreed that student attrition was a concern for their program.

Principals echoed these concerns about parents in the open-ended response question.

“We could benefit from District support for the parents, so that the parents can be continually informed of the research-based practices that are a part of the program, and be reminded of how beneficial the program is to the long-term achievement of their children.” – DL Principal

“We need to support parents of all language learners and EOs to know how to support their child and what to expect from the program.” – DL Principal

“We do have some training for parents but it would help to have more coordinated trainings available developed by the district for dual language parents.” – DL Principal

**Curriculum and Instruction**

When asked about professional development and resources, 90% of principals agreed that they had adequate materials for programs in English. However,

- 48% disagreed with the statement, “The dual language program at my school has adequate instructional materials in the target language.”

The second most common issue discussed by principals in the open-ended response question was a lack of materials in the target language. This is concerning because a lack of resources in the target language can implicitly send the signal that English language development is the priority, not that the two languages are equal. We address this issue further in the Recommendations section. Twenty-nine percent of principals discussed a need in this area, aligning with the agree/disagree questions in the survey described above.

“Vertical articulation of Mandarin and Spanish instruction, curriculum, and expectations. It would also be helpful to have benchmarks, assessment, and curriculum made for Mandarin immersion program so Mandarin teachers don’t have to create everything.” – DL Principal

“We need more quality instructional materials in the target language.” – DL Principal

Like principals, teachers felt that their program had adequate instructional materials in English (94% agreed or strongly agreed). However, 49% said that they do not have adequate materials in the target language. The most common issue raised by teachers in the open-response question was a request for more resources in the target language (40% included this feedback). This included technology with the target language, instructional materials that were culturally relevant, and school-wide materials that promoted both languages more equally.
“More resources for target language teachers to use in their classroom. For example, quality literature in the target language.” – DL Teacher

“Provide additional Mandarin resources like books, technology like media and apps.” – DL Teacher

“The materials and resources for Spanish instruction are very limited. Parents have complained about the poor curriculum. It is just a translated version of Benchmark and not an authentic Spanish language curriculum.” – DL Teacher

“Material in both languages including Science/Social Studies, Art, Health with teacher supplementary materials. The materials we to have access to are outdated and missing components.” – DL Teacher

“Our program needs more Spanish books! We are asking the students to read and write in both languages, but we do not have enough Spanish books in our classroom libraries!” – DL Teacher

“Spanish teachers should have equal access to training and materials that are specific to Spanish teaching.” – DL Teacher

Positively, most teachers felt that their programs were meeting content and academic standards.

- 97% agreed that their dual language program addresses content standards;
- 87% agreed that their program addresses language standards in the target language; and
- 87% agreed that their program addresses English language development standards.

Summary

In addition to the top five topics raised by teachers and principals, both groups brought up issues of funding inadequacy, a desire for increased access to bilingual technology, a request for more support from Beaudry, issues around compensation, and some issues related to implementation. The IAU is in the process of a study on dual language implementation and program alignment due to the Board in spring of 2019.

Below is a summary of principal and teacher responses about their dual language programs’ strengths and areas for improvement. While teachers and principals differed on what were the primary strengths and weaknesses, there were two strengths and two improvement areas on which they agreed. Both principals and teachers agreed that:

- Their programs have adequate instructional materials in English, and
- Teachers have a native-like fluency in the target language.

However, both principals and teachers also agreed that their programs needed:

- More instructional materials in the target language, and
- More professional development for teachers.
Table 4. Teacher and Principal: Dual Language Program Strengths and Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Responses</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher knowledge of second language learning and instructional practices</td>
<td>1. More instructional materials in the target language*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. English instructional materials*</td>
<td>2. More professional development, including mentorship and observations*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Addressing language and content standards in both languages</td>
<td>3. More planning time across and within grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers have a native-like fluency in the target language*</td>
<td>4. Improved implementation and inclusion of biliteracy school-wide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Principal support for and knowledge of dual language programs</td>
<td>5. Improved alignment of dual language across grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Responses</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers have a native-like fluency in the target language*</td>
<td>1. More professional development for teachers*</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Teachers follow the language allocation of the program model</td>
<td>2. More instructional materials in the target language*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dual language classrooms are staffed with qualified teachers</td>
<td>3. More support staff for dual language, including assistants who are bilingual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English instructional materials*</td>
<td>4. More support for parents and families, such as materials or parent centers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Programs are effective for English language learners</td>
<td>5. More funding for dual language programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates an agreement or alignment between principal and teacher responses

RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide More Materials in the Target Language

The most urgent area for improvement was more and better instructional materials in the target language for classrooms, as reported by both principals and teachers. The issue of providing adequate materials to classrooms has a long-standing history in California. In 2004, the state settled Williams v. California, which argued that the state did not give all of its students – particularly low-income students, immigrant students, and students of color – the resources needed for an adequate education. These resources included ensuring that there were enough textbooks and learning materials for all students.7

While the IAU survey did not find that dual language programs were as deficient as the schools presented in the Williams case, the issue raised by both principals and teachers of inadequate instructional materials in the target language is an area that the District should address. Not having equally adequate materials in both languages sends an implicit signal to students and to families that English is prioritized over the

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target language. It indicates that the languages are not on equal status with one another, which goes against what research tells us is best practice for dual language programs.\(^8\)

Curriculum should reflect and value the students’ cultures and should also be linguistically and culturally relevant.\(^9\) Teachers reported that their curriculum for dual language programs in the target language was often simply a translation from the English materials, not truly a curriculum developed for the target language. An important consideration is that while great progress has been made in California on valuing biliteracy, many curriculum standards were not designed with English language learners in mind, and therefore adjustments to curriculum may be needed in order to better serve ELs in the classroom.\(^10\) Based on the teacher feedback, this may be an area of improvement for dual language programs. In addition, teachers report needing more books in the target language for their classroom libraries.

**Expand Professional Development on Dual Language Education**

The second primary area for improvement identified by both teachers and principals was professional development for teachers on dual language programs. Current District guidelines require a two-day preservice training for first year teachers and teachers who are new to the District. The training includes a one hour presentation on English Language Development (ELD) which is meant to:\(^11\)

- Train teachers on the L.A. Unified English Learner Master Plan;
- Teach the elements of quality ELD instruction, emphasizing theory and research;
- Orient and train teachers on the L.A. Unified ELD instructional materials; and
- Provide an opportunity to learn and practice ELD teaching strategies.

There are also 10 Title III coaches who work for the Local Districts to ensure that all English learners develop proficiency in academic English and have equitable access to instruction. This role includes giving demonstration lessons and providing feedback to teachers on ELD. However, the number of comments from both surveys on increased professional development indicates that this is not sufficient for the District’s programs.

In addition to Title III coaches, teachers have the opportunity to attend EL-specific trainings given by EL designees at their school. The trainings given by EL designees are not required, so the ability of these trainings to influence teacher practices may vary greatly from school to school.

The District also provides refresher workshops to continuing teachers, but no refresher workshops are required and no trainings are required for dual language programs. These optional workshops present new ELD teaching strategies, teach background and theory on language development, provide new strategies and activities for ELD instruction, and educate staff about monitoring student progress.\(^12\)

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), found that L.A. Unified was underserving its English learner students (case number 09-10-5001). During the course of the OCR’s

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\(^10\) Howard et al. (2018). Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education.


\(^12\) Note that this is based off of the District’s 2012 Master Plan, as the 2018 Plan was not yet adopted at this time.
investigation, the District signed an Agreement to Resolve and began taking steps to improve its programs for ELs. The District agreed,

“To ensure that content area teachers receive training on making their instruction accessible to EL students… Training will be provided to all staff who provide interpretation and translation regarding the EL program and the information that must be provided to parents of EL students. The District will provide professional development to staff at all levels who are responsible for implementing any portion of its agreement with OCR.”13

The case against L.A. Unified from 2011 as well as the comments from teachers and principals this past June indicate that adequate professional development for teachers who work with English learners is an ongoing issue for improvement for the District. This area deserves further consideration so that the District can best serve its English learner students.

Best practices suggest additional professional development for teachers who work with English learners, including opportunities for in-class demonstrations and personalized coaching,14 topics that were brought up in the IAU survey. Staff should also be trained on dual language programs, including:

- Using content pedagogy in the context of bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism;15
- Equity pedagogy;16
- Sheltered instruction;17
- Parent and community involvement;18 and
- Understanding the dual language education model, as well as the theories and philosophies underlying the model.19

Increase School-Wide Buy-In

In addition to training teachers, ownership of dual language programs should occur school-wide. Several teachers suggested that improved implementation and inclusion of biliteracy across the school would improve their programs. Indeed, research urges schools:20

- To incorporate school vision and goals focused on bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence; and
- To increase equity and a positive school environment.

Creating a school-wide vision and goals for biliteracy, as well as a shared commitment by students, parents, teachers, and staff, improves dual language programs. In addition, students need to see that their school values and supports linguistic and cultural diversity. A simple example on how to improve in this area is to ensure that signs and posters throughout the entire school, not just in the bilingual classroom, are written in all of the languages spoken in the dual language programs. Similarly, school assemblies can integrate the target language to ensure the equal status of both languages.

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15 Calderon et al. (2011). Effective Instruction for English Learners.
18 Howard et al. (2018). Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education.
Another way to aid school-wide buy-in is to commit to ongoing, continuous program planning and vertical alignment. Several teachers brought up the issue that their school was not doing enough to align the dual language program across grade levels, including a lack of adequate planning time for teachers to collaborate with others in the school within their grade and in other grades.

**Improve Horizontal and Vertical Articulation**

Program articulation for dual language education should be oriented both horizontally and vertically throughout grade levels and planning should be school-wide and include teachers from all programs. A consistent, sustained, and well-implemented program is important to help students become fluent in both languages. Vertical alignment and a sustained dual language program are major factors in reaching fluency. Dual language can lead to positive student outcomes when they are enrolled for at least six years.

Improving horizontal and vertical articulation is not easy. Currently, formal teacher planning time occurs during pupil free days and on Banked Tuesdays. While increasing pupil free days for planning time may be desirable, pupil free days come at a financial cost for the district and, in addition, it may disrupt instruction for students. On Banked Tuesdays students leave school early so that teachers can plan and attend professional development. This is a good opportunity for improving articulation, however there are many competing interests for these Tuesday afternoons – dual language is not the only program area available for teachers’ professional development.

Principals also brought up the concern that their teachers did not have enough assistants or support staff who were bilingual. While bilingual staff assistants would be an asset to the program, also of importance is that monolingual English speakers who participate in a team-teaching model as the English instructor understand the development of the target language in the early grades. This is especially important when there is a shortage of bilingual teachers.\(^{21}\)

**CONCLUSION**

Dual language programs in L.A. Unified are a great asset for English language learners. As English learners spend more time in a dual language program, their likelihood of reclassifying to English proficient significantly increases (see the IAU’s previous report: *Reclassification Trends for English Learners 2018*). Given this trend, it is important to ensure that the District’s programs are operating as smoothly as possible.

As L.A. Unified continues to expand its dual language program offerings, it is important for the District to consider how new programs can improve upon existing programs, as well as how the District can better support its existing programs. The IAU’s analysis of the dual language principal and teacher surveys can be utilized to consider improvements moving forward.

The key issues to consider in both new and existing dual language programs are:

1. Increasing the number of authentic resources and instructional materials in target languages.
2. Adding dual language specific professional development for teachers, both for new and experienced staff.
3. Improve vertical alignment across grades within a dual language school, in part by increasing planning time for teachers.