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# Soleado

Promising Practices from the Field

## *Academic Preparation for Success in the DLBE Classroom: Project SEMBRAR Provides a Grow-Your-Own Bilingual Educator Pathway*

*by David Rogers—Project SEMBRAR Administrator*

Project SEMBRAR (Sustaining Equity through Mentorship for Bilingual Teacher Recruitment and Retention) is a five-year (2024-2029), collaborative initiative led by Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLeNM) and the Multistate

Association for Bilingual Education (MABE) with support from Educators for a Multilingual Multicultural America (EMMA™), with the goal of creating a

Grow-Your-Own (GYO) pathway for expanding

or EMMA Standards ([emmastandards.org](http://emmastandards.org)). Expanding the number of quality DLBE educators available to dual language programs across the United States will allow schools and districts to more justly serve

a “growing and vibrant population of [multilingual] students so they can reach their potential and thrive” (U.S. DOE, 2023).



*The New Mexico team of faculty and mentor leaders met on the campus of New Mexico Highlands University.*

Project SEMBRAR is

focused on three primary goals:

1. Teacher recruitment – with the focus on first-generation and/or low-income preservice or working bilingual teachers.
2. Targeted DLBE professional learning - that aligns with the National Dual Language Education Teaching Preparation or EMMA Standards (NDLETPS).
3. Teacher collaboration and retention - to build local and regional capacity within participating districts to train and retain qualified DLBE teachers.

*Bridging academic preparation for success in the DLBE classroom*

There are many strong educator preparation

the dual language bilingual educator (DLBE) workforce in two areas of the country: New Mexico and New England. With initial financial support from a federal National Professional Development grant, the hope is that the U.S. Congress will approve funding for the remainder of the initiative.

The Project SEMBRAR model is built on targeted mentorship and professional development for preservice and inservice DLBE teachers and draws from the expertise and experience captured in the National Dual Language Education Teacher Preparation

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# Cross-Departmental Partnerships to Enhance Mathematical Learning for English Learners

by Jessica Kent—Math Specialist, Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative

Promising practices...

In education, we often stay within our lanes. Elementary teachers attend elementary trainings, special education teachers attend special education trainings, and English language teachers attend professional development tailored to their roles. As a Math Specialist with the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI), it's rare for professionals outside the math and science world to join our training sessions. So when Alabama's English Learner Education Department offered the opportunity to attend the Achievement Inspired Mathematics for Scaffolding Student Success (AIM4S<sup>3</sup>) training in the fall of 2024, I was excited to step outside my usual focus and bridge the gap between math instruction and support for English learners (ELs).

From the beginning of the AIM4S<sup>3</sup> training, I was struck by how well it aligned with AMSTI's approach. The Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) takes a hands-on, inquiry-based approach to teaching math and science in Alabama schools. AMSTI focuses on providing professional development for teachers, equipping them with materials and resources, and fostering a classroom environment where students learn by doing, connecting concepts to real-world applications. This wasn't simply a training focused on ELs—it was deeply rooted in strong math instruction and best practices for supporting all learners. The presenters were not only knowledgeable about language acquisition but also demonstrated a strong foundation in mathematics, which made the learning especially meaningful for someone in my role.

Each day included practical homework that allowed me to immediately apply what I was learning in the schools I support. As a math specialist, I work directly with math coaches across multiple districts in Alabama. This training empowered me to support those coaches more effectively by modeling strategies that make math instruction more inclusive for EL students.



*Jessica Kent and colleague Robin Stutts present a Compendium to a group of newcomer students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.*

One of the most impactful takeaways from the training was the importance of including EL students in every aspect of a math lesson. As a former classroom teacher, I now realize how often I unintentionally allowed EL students to remain passive participants in discussions. With the guidance of my regional EL specialist, Robin Stutts—with whom I attended AIM4S<sup>3</sup> training—I learned practical strategies for

engaging EL students in Number Talks in ways that made them feel confident and valued. With Robin's help, I facilitated Number Talks in multiple classrooms. During these Number Talks, I was able to include EL learners by allowing them to answer in their native language, use hand signals that allowed everyone to participate, and help build motivation in students through perseverance. Robin also joined me in classrooms, providing additional support and insight in how to group students with peers and incorporate scaffolding strategies such as sentence frames.

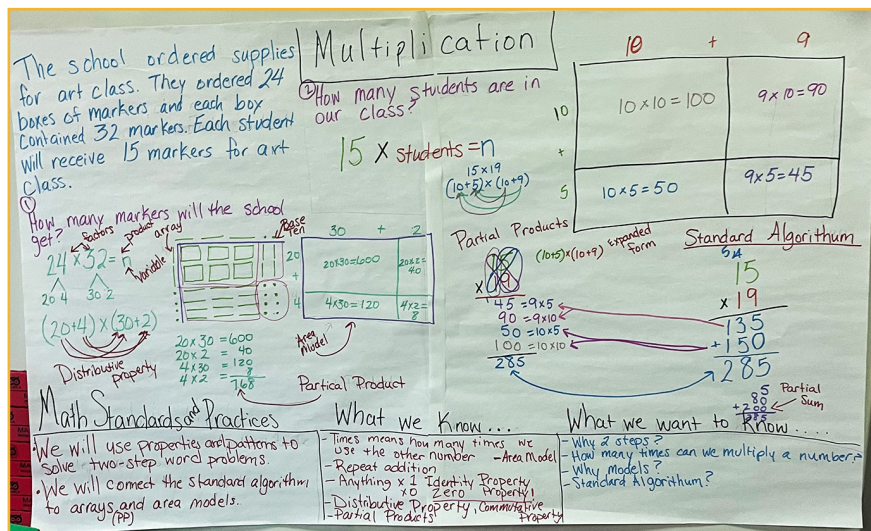
One especially powerful tool we explored during the training was the use of Compendiums—what I like to call “anchor charts on steroids.” This tool became central to several coaching cycles I led during the 2024–2025 school year. Compendiums,

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*This fifth-grade Compendium helped students learn the algorithm for multiplication and gave them a sense of ownership in their learning.*

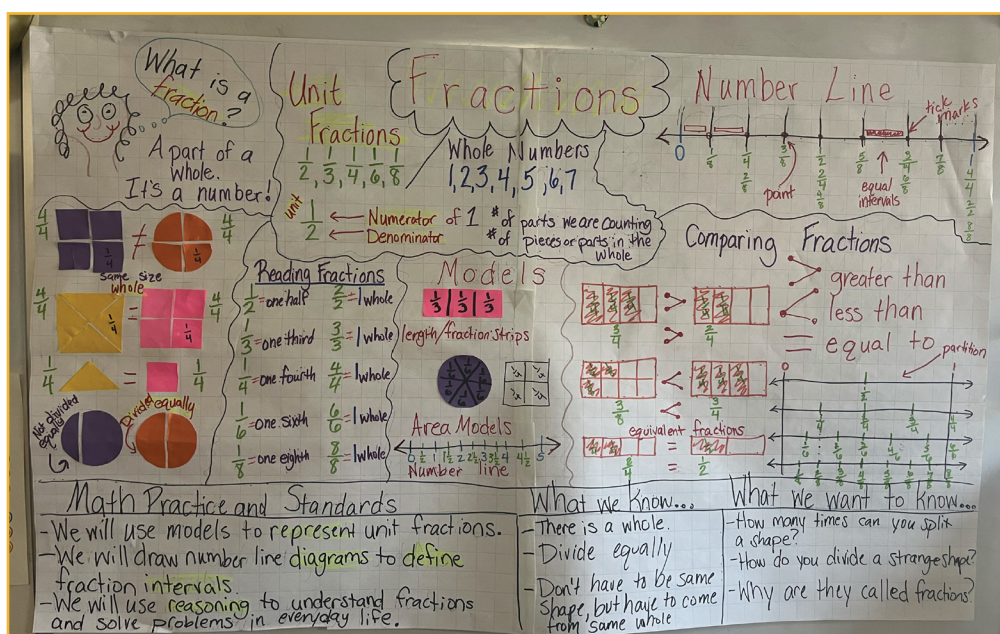
a component of the AIM4S<sup>TM</sup> Math Framework, helped introduce concepts, track ongoing learning, and encourage reflection. A Compendium consists of three parts: student-friendly goals tied to state math practices or process goals, an inquiry chart highlighting student voices, and a concept frame. The concept frame is a visual representation of key information in the unit/math domain that the students are studying. This chart is carefully planned by the teacher ahead of time and then delivered in front of students throughout the unit. I observed both EL and general education students referring to the Compendiums regularly, using them to make sense of new ideas and monitor their own growth. Students were always eager to contribute, often excited by the chance to add something they had discovered in math class themselves.

A fifth-grade Compendium, in particular, stood out for its role in helping students grasp the standard algorithm for multiplication. It not only supported content understanding but also gave students a sense of ownership in their learning. During a coaching cycle focused on multi-digit multiplication, students used

the Compendium to explore partial products and the area model. Their understanding was visibly enhanced through consistent engagement with these visual representations. Once we introduced the standard algorithm to the Compendium, I found that little to no direct instruction was necessary. The fifth-grade students were able to collaboratively analyze and make sense of the mathematical concepts presented, engaging in meaningful discussion without my prompting. This level of student autonomy and peer-led learning was a powerful indicator of success. By the end of the cycle, the math coach and I observed an

80% proficiency gain among the students.

In another coaching cycle, I partnered with a third-grade teacher to focus on fractions. Recognizing that much of the fractional vocabulary was unfamiliar to the students, we made academic language development a central goal. We highlighted key terms within the Compendium and revisited them frequently during instruction. Though the Compendium became visually dense, it served as a living document of learning. By the end of the cycle, students were able to work flexibly with fractions



*The focus of this third-grade Compendium on fractions was on key terms related to the concepts taught.*

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# A Powerful Tool for Sociolinguistic Justice: Allen Jay Elementary's Spanish and Urdu Dual Language Programs

by Kimberly Pilling—Director, Global Languages, Guilford County Schools, Greensboro, NC

Promising practices...

We know our country is divided. We hear the terms “culture war” and politicians who talk about the tyranny that is diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). But this isn’t just political rhetoric. In July 2025, the federal government cut 6.8 billion dollars in federal funding for public education (Education Week, 2025).

Among these cuts was money slated for Title III spending, which supports English Learners and bilingual program initiatives. At the time this article is being written, Congress has promised to restore the money, but the uncertainty about federal support for language educators who work in public education remains troubling. Language is deeply tied to culture and self-worth—when students’ home languages are valued in the classroom, they feel seen, respected, and empowered to succeed. We also know that at a time when immigration, cultural diversity, and educational equity are often at the center of national debates, dual language programs offer a powerful counter-narrative: one that embraces multilingualism as a strength and prepares students to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

Dual language programs not only have a marked positive impact on academic outcomes for all students (Collier & Thomas, 2009), they are also a powerful tool in the struggle for sociolinguistic justice. When children see their native language used alongside English in academic settings, it reinforces the message that their backgrounds are not just accepted but celebrated. This affirmation

helps build self-esteem, cultural confidence, and a sense of belonging—key factors in student engagement and success. For multilingual learners, maintaining and developing their languages strengthens connections to family and heritage.

Ultimately, dual language programs cultivate a positive, inclusive environment where all students can take pride in who they are and where they come from.

In response to the changing needs of the local community, school-based leaders at Allen Jay Elementary School in High Point, NC decided to begin a two-way Spanish/English program in 2018. They also realized that there was a growing Pakistani community, and parents were anxious to find a way to educate



*Allen Jay Elementary students' backgrounds are celebrated, providing them with a sense of belonging.*

their children in English and maintain ties to their Pakistani roots. With the support of district leaders in Guilford County, North Carolina, the nation's first Urdu/English two-way program began in 2018. Unlike many dual language programs, Allen Jay is not a magnet school. It is a school that reflects its neighborhood and, indeed, without the support of families and communities, it is unlikely the Urdu program would exist. Many of the Urdu teachers at the school are also parents. Former Curriculum Facilitator Milay Álvarez is quoted as saying that opening a dual language program in both Spanish and Urdu was a way to embrace the families in the neighborhood. Students in these

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programs beam with pride when they talk about who they are, where they come from, and the languages they speak. Effortlessly shifting between Spanish and English, 5th grade students at Allen Jay talked about how proud they are that they can speak two languages. One student told me about a time he was waiting for the bus. The Spanish-speaking parent of a friend was also there and needed to communicate with the bus driver. “I got to translate for her from Spanish to English and it made me feel really happy that I could do it and that I could help.”

In addition to feeling they can contribute to their own local communities, students in Sra. Caceres’ class have the chance to speak to children in Venezuela via video conference. This opportunity allows them to share their own culture as well as learn from children their age

in another country. When they grow up, they want to be police officers, chefs, and professional soccer players (of course). They know that being bilingual will help them be better at whatever they choose to become in the future.

Similarly, the 5th graders in the Urdu Dual Language program at Allen Jay were anxious to talk to me about their school experiences. They are happy to be able to speak their heritage language at home and at school. Two of the four students I spoke to were born in the United States and feel proud that they can easily converse with their families who still live in Pakistan. Students reported to me they were able to speak and think easily in both languages—it just “depends on where we are.”

One student spoke about a time when she visited her aunt’s classroom in Pakistan. She was able to

speak to the students there in Urdu and said that when it came to speaking in English “I felt like sort of an expert!” All four students told me “English is our school language”; they don’t speak it much at home. Another student told me she thinks Urdu is a “bit easier” than English, a statement I found baffling! They chuckled a little at my poor attempts to say a few words, but they were very encouraging!

Teachers at the school can see how well their students thrive in dual language. Sra. Caceres grew up in Venezuela and went to an American school there. She understands perfectly the importance of

being bilingual and does exceptional work in building linguistic skill and pride in her students. She also understands that her students have linguistic experiences that are different from her own and she is mindful of giving students the space in her classroom to leverage their own

linguistic repertoires. She frequently ensures that students are given the opportunity to share their own experiences in the classroom, to talk about the language differences they notice, and share the cultural knowledge they have gained from their families.

Ms. Masood, the Urdu teacher, was born in Pakistan. She and her family came to the United States when she was just 14. She told me she wants her students to “be rooted in their culture”. At the same time, she said, “I just want my kids to know they aren’t bound by their culture. I don’t want them to feel like they don’t have access to all kinds of things. I want them to understand that by being in this program they have the best of both; the fact that they are in this school is an advantage.”

Both teachers well understand the value of dual language education and the unique opportunity



*Dual language programs offer students the opportunity for positive academic outcomes and cultural and linguistic pride.*

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# Aligning the ACTFL® Proficiency Guidelines and the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education

by Jennifer Dobberfuhr Quinlan, PhD—Associate Director of Assessment at Language Testing International® (LTI), the exclusive licensee of ACTFL

Aligning the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (Guidelines) and the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education, 3rd edition (Guiding Principles) (Howard et al., 2018) in your program can strengthen your curriculum design and help ensure language development targets are measurable and appropriate. ACTFL's Educator Resources provide many tools to help you target instruction and improve language outcomes. But what does that mean in relation to the Guiding Principles? Looking at each one of the principles, here are some examples of how the Guidelines might support or complement each principle.

## Guiding Principle: Program Structure

As you identify program benchmarks across grade levels, ACTFL proficiency levels (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior) offer a reliable framework for the progression of language development. Likewise, dual language programs can use the ACTFL pyramid to guide realistic expectations and timelines for language development.

Example: A 90:10 Spanish-English program might have proficiency targets at key years of programming, such as Intermediate Low by Grade 5 or Advanced Low by high school graduation. Using the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners (Performance Descriptors) for

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION		
 INVESTIGATE	In my own and other cultures <b>I can</b> identify products and practices to help me understand perspectives.	In my own and other cultures <b>I can</b> make comparisons between products and practices to help me understand perspectives.
 INTERACT	<b>I can</b> interact at a survival level in some familiar everyday contexts.	<b>I can</b> interact at a functional level in some familiar contexts.

NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNERS © 2017

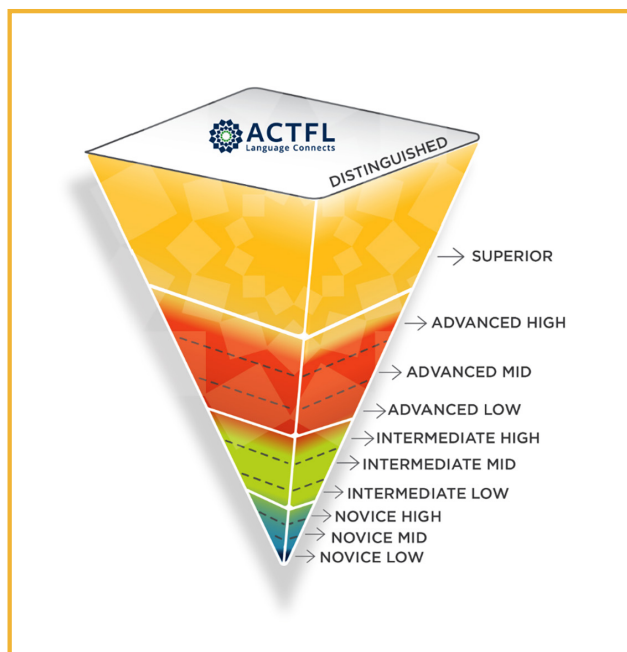
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relevant proficiency levels can help inform the program structure throughout all age levels served by the program.

## Guiding Principle: Curriculum

NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements and Performance Descriptors can guide the design of activities and assessments in dual language curriculum, ensuring a focus on proficiency and developmental appropriateness of tasks. Further, the Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication support sociocultural goals of dual language education (DLE)/dual language immersion (DLI) curricula.

Example: Embedding the statement, "In my own and other cultures I can identify products and practices to help me understand perspectives," into elementary



Inverted Pyramid Representing ACTFL Rating Scale with Major Ranges and Sublevels including Distinguished © 2024 ACTFL. Used with permission.

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school units aligns with Novice outcomes and can be the foundation for targeted activities.

### **Guiding Principle: Instruction**

ACTFL emphasizes target-language-rich instruction, which ideologically aligns with DLE's emphasis on maximizing use of both program languages. DLE programs can benefit from incorporating all three modes of communication (Interpretive, Interpersonal, Presentational) into lesson planning and assessments across content areas. Thoughtful instruction can build language proficiency across all modes of communication and all language skills.

*Example:* A science unit in 5th grade might include interpretive reading and listening of non-fiction texts and science media in Spanish, interpersonal discussion with partners, and presentational writing in one or both languages.

### **Guiding Principle: Assessment and Accountability**

ACTFL provides objective criteria for measuring language development across all skills. DLE/DLI programs can benefit from using the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) to evaluate speaking, listening, reading, and writing in both program languages.

*Example:* A district uses the AAPPL in Grades 4, 8, and 10 to track student progress toward targets of Intermediate Low by 5<sup>th</sup> grade and Advanced Low by 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They also use the AAPPL for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy.

### **Guiding Principle: Staff Quality and Professional Development**

Every state in the country relies on ACTFL or Praxis exams for teacher language qualifications. In over half the states, an official ACTFL rating is required or preferred for teacher certification, with the proficiency level required varying by state. Ideally, teachers in DLE/DLI programs have at least Advanced level proficiency in their language of instruction and have been trained in proficiency-based instruction.

*Example:* Hiring rubrics or state Department of Education policies may require Advanced Mid ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) scores for bilingual teachers.

### **Guiding Principle: Family and Community Engagement**

Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communicative Competence encourage respect for diverse cultures and perspectives, and Presentational Can-Do Statements at Intermediate and Advanced levels mention being able to discuss community-related activities. These can be used to develop student activities that might involve discussing community topics, conducting community interviews, giving bilingual presentations, or storytelling.

*Example:* Students at Intermediate-level proficiency interview each other about a memorable school or community event, based on to the Can-Do Statement: "I can tell stories about school and community events and personal experience."

### **Guiding Principle: Support and Resources**

Consider the classroom materials you use to support quality dual language instruction, such as leveled readers, authentic texts, etc. Refer to the *Guidelines* and *Performance Descriptors* to help ensure your materials and goals are aligned to ACTFL and national standards.

*Example:* Make visual maps of *Performance Descriptors* at each level. If your students are at Novice and the target is Intermediate, include language descriptors at each level. Refer to these proficiency maps when you ask students to produce language.

### **How do DLE Principles and ACTFL Resources Align?**

The table below provides an overview of the alignment between the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education*, 3rd edition, and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*.

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# Strategies Considering Dual Language Education and ACTFL® Proficiency Guidelines

by Jennifer Dobberfuhr Quinlan, PhD—Associate Director of Assessment at Language Testing International® (LTI), the exclusive licensee of ACTFL



Enhancing and expanding multilingual and multicultural education worldwide (actfl.org)

of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages, or AAPPL), learning activities, professional development, etc.

As you do this planning, consider what modes of communication will be part of your learning activities. Here's a sample scope and sequence that could be for a Grade 9 DLE/DLI language arts class, illustrating how NCSSFL/ACTFL Can-Do Statements and related performance tasks align to DLE standards.

Have you ever wondered how you can integrate the information in the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines - 2024 (Guidelines) and the ACTFL Performance Descriptors into your dual language education (DLE) or dual language immersion (DLI) curriculum? Are you trying to meet DLE standards and also want to ensure you're targeting performance descriptors at specific language proficiency levels?

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES	ACTFL PERFORMANCE SCALE	AAPPL PERFORMANCE SCORE	FORM	
Advanced Low	Advanced	A-1		B
Intermediate High		I-5		
Intermediate Mid		I-4	A and E	
Intermediate Mid	I-3			
Intermediate Mid	I-2			
Intermediate Low	I-1			
Novice High	N-4			
Novice Mid	Novice	N-3		
Novice Mid		N-2		
Novice Low		N-1		

(Image: © ACTFL. Used with permission. <https://www.actfl.org/assessments/k-12-assessments/aappl/aappl-scores-reporting>)

## Start with the End in Mind

Consider mapping out the standards you are targeting in a lesson or unit. Based on the theory of backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), start with the end in mind.

- What is the desired output or evidence of learning you want from your students?
- From there, consider what learning outcomes will help you achieve that target.
- Finally, build the learning activities and assessments that will guide your students along the path to the desired outcomes.

If you are working to align your program with the Guidelines and a proficiency focus generally, keep that alignment across the board—in your learning objectives, assessments (e.g., ACTFL Assessment

## Example: Language Arts (L1 & L2)

**Evidence of Learning:** AAPPL score of I-2 to I-4 (Intermediate Mid)

**ACTFL Modes:** Interpersonal, Interpretive, Presentational

**Standards Alignment:** Biliteracy development, use of authentic texts, cross-linguistic connections.

## Targeted Outcomes and Content Alignment Make Powerful Programs

In this example, Intermediate Mid is the desired goal. As the school year advances, the can-do statements begin to include Advanced can-do statements. By using both Intermediate and

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Advanced can-do statements, students practice and work to develop language at a higher level (and then are assessed at the Intermediate level). With evidence of learning defined and a targeted scope and sequence, the process of building learning activities and selecting assessments becomes much more focused. And with both *Guidelines* and *DLE Guiding Principles* in mind, you ensure that your immersion program is developing both content and language mastery in your learners.

ACTFL assessments, such as the AAPPL, can

(LTI), the exclusive licensee of ACTFL, provides robust AAPPL reporting features and a dedicated support staff to help you digest test data and identify actionable steps based on that data.

Further, ACTFL's Educator Resources, professional learning opportunities, and publications can help you identify realistic language goals in your DLE/DLI programs. With a proficiency focus in your DLI/DLE programs, students will develop language competency beyond just content vocabulary and will be better positioned to leverage their language skills in real-world contexts.

Thematic Unit	Sample Can-Do Statements (L1 & L2)	Performance Tasks
First quarter: Identity & Community	I can describe myself and my family. I can talk about very familiar things in my community.	Write several sentences about yourself in both languages. Present a basic bilingual community map.
Second quarter: Heroes & Role Models	I can describe someone I admire. I can explain in simple sentences what they did.	Create a bilingual biography poster and discuss it with your partner.
Third quarter: Cultural Stories & Legends	I can retell a short story. I can compare main ideas from two legends or folktales.	Compare simple folktales from each culture in both languages.
Fourth quarter: Our Changing World (Environment & Society)	I can summarize short articles. I can share basic opinions and advice on a variety of familiar topics.	Write and present a short persuasive speech in both languages.

improve your assessment strategies by using content that is age- and proficiency-level appropriate and tightly aligned to the *Guidelines*. Detailed AAPPL reporting can help you identify specific skills where learners may need more support or practice. Language Testing International

### References

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Pearson.





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programs found in universities across the United States that offer high-quality coursework. Often, experienced teachers who are willing to support new teachers in dual language bilingual education programs are identified as mentors. However, there is little consistency across these programs in the competencies being developed for future educators. While the EMMA Standards provide “a sound framework of standards, anchored in relevant theory, to support” and guide DLBE teachers toward more effective professional practices” (*emmastandards.org*), Project SEMBRAR views university teacher preparation as only a part of the “teacher pathway”. The most committed schools/school districts ensure that newly certified teachers have a clear pathway to being recruited and received into a professional community that ensures continual professional learning through relationship building with colleagues, and access to the expertise and commitment of seasoned educators—often referred to as a community of practice (CoP). The Project SEMBRAR Grow-Your-Own model and pathway provides preservice teachers a community of practice in the district and school where they will accept their first assignment as a dual language bilingual educator.

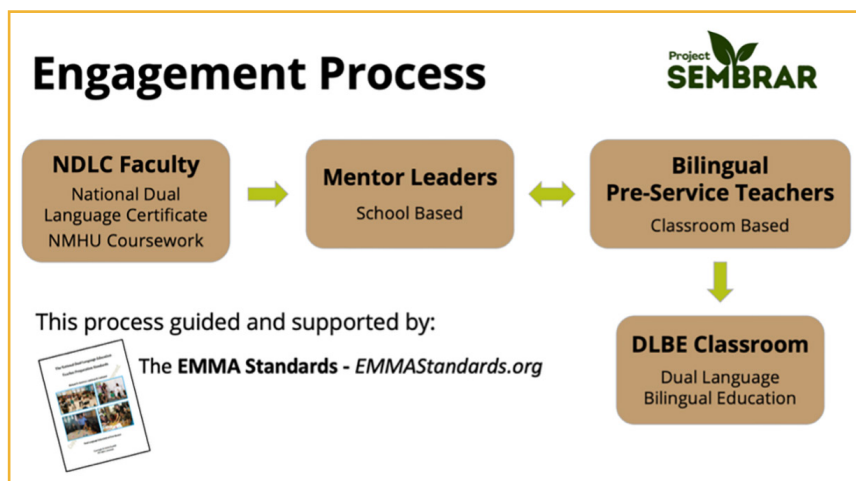
### The Grow-Your-Own Model

Project SEMBRAR has identified and recruited participants for its Grow-Your-Own model from identified school communities, as there are unquestionable advantages to preparing educators who know the community and are familiar with its needs and goals. Educators from the community often have the same cultural and linguistic profile as the younger members and are committed to preserving and improving the quality of life for their neighbors.

Participating educators must be attending or have attended teacher preparation programs that are built on a foundation of relevant theory and high-quality competencies like the EMMA Standards. They may be licensed teachers working toward their bilingual endorsement and/or completing their language proficiency requirements, education majors completing their licensing credential, or

student teachers beginning their field experience. Candidates will be welcomed into a CoP where they will receive targeted mentoring from identified seasoned bilingual teachers from their district and/or school who are committed to dual language bilingual education and are willing to share their knowledge and expertise with them.

The model looks like this:



### Cohort #1 – 2025-2026

Project SEMBRAR’s first cohort is made up of 114 mentor leaders and bilingual preservice teachers from 14 school districts in Northern New Mexico, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. 68% of Cohort #1’s bilingual preservice teachers are first-generation university attendees, with 81% self-reporting as being from a lower socioeconomic community. This not only meets Project SEMBRAR’s specific goal of having at least 50% of its participants as first-generation university students and/or coming from a lower socioeconomic background, it ensures the development of a richly diverse group of effective teachers.

In June of 2025, mentor leaders and bilingual preservice teachers from Cohort #1 gathered to participate in a Jump-Start Orientation with Project SEMBRAR grant team members, including National Dual Language Consortium Faculty and Project Coordinators. One meeting was held in Las Vegas, NM at the New Mexico Highlands University Campus for participants from Bernalillo, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, and Chama Valley. A second meeting was held in Sturbridge, MA where participants from the New England

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gathered. Project faculty and identified mentor leaders met for two full days, while preservice teacher candidates joined for the last half of the second day.

The agenda for the Jump Start Orientation included opportunities to:

- ✿ meet participating faculty and mentor leaders and work together.
- ✿ explore high-quality professional learning through mentorship models, including the specific needs of various educator roles (i.e., paraeducators, permanent substitutes, classroom teachers, ancillary staff, etc.).
- ✿ learn approaches to professional learning appropriate to CoP for which the mentor leaders will be responsible.
- ✿ familiarize themselves with the six modules of the EMMA Standards and the on-line platform where mentor leaders will learn the content and access module resources for CoP sessions and mentoring.
- ✿ meet their preservice teacher candidates, get to know each other, and begin organizing their future CoP sessions.



Participants from the New England states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut met in Sturbridge, MA.

have a much larger amount to learn their first year than other teachers who are in an English-only classroom. They need to manage all the challenges of being a first-year teacher while also learning about DL instructional practices and bilingual pedagogy.

From mentor leaders:

*Whenever teachers feel supported and encouraged to pursue further certification, given the chance, they*

*will. Inservice teachers and preservice teachers need support and guidance throughout different stages of their career. Project SEMBRAR does that.*

Teacher participants will be surveyed mid-school year for their feedback. Feedback from the various role groups involved in the initiative will inform the work moving forward. The hope is that over the course of this initiative, Project SEMBRAR will serve a total of 80 mentor leaders who will provide support to 400 bilingual preservice teachers working to complete their teacher licensure program and/or bilingual credential.

It is the sincere hope of everyone involved in Project SEMBRAR that the federal grant supporting this work will be fully funded by the U.S. Congress, as was intended in 2023. With the appropriate financial support, this work will significantly help to improve teacher preparation programs and establish GYO pathways for dual language bilingual educators across our country.

Feedback was gathered from key stakeholders.

From faculty members:

*...The modules [grounded in the EMMA Standards] offer practical, research-based strategies that bilingual preservice teacher and instructional coaches can directly implement in their classroom...*

From representatives of participating school districts:

*Having opportunities for preservice teachers to develop understanding of DL will be a huge benefit for DL programs. Currently, most teachers leave their teacher prep program with minimal to no understanding of dual language or even bilingual education, which means they*



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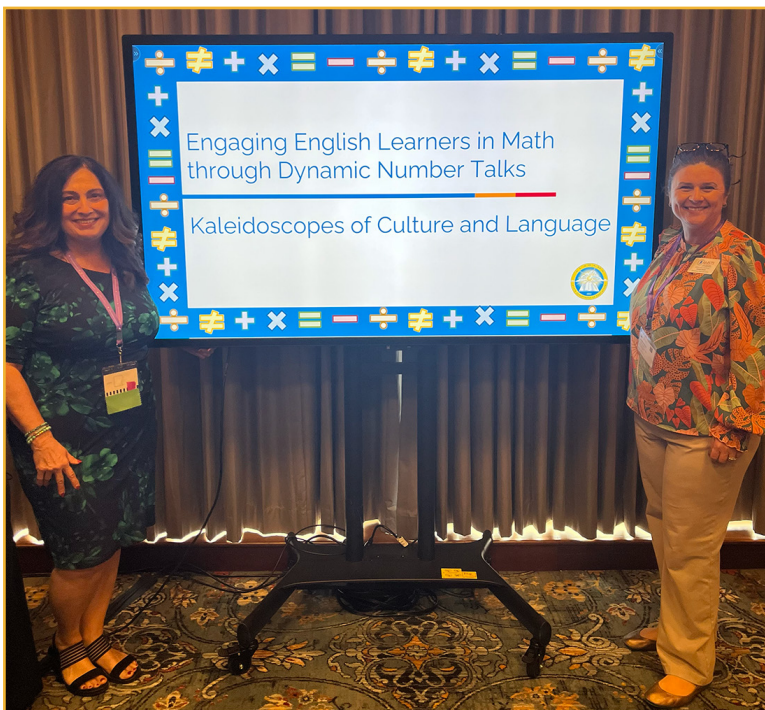


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and confidently use academic vocabulary when communicating their thinking to peers.

Together with Robin Stutts, I worked with a group of newcomer students in Grades 1 through 4. These students came from diverse linguistic backgrounds and had limited English proficiency. We decided that starting with a counting-focused Compendium would best support their learning. Given the wide range of ages and developmental levels, we emphasized language acquisition through mathematics. As a general education teacher, I quickly drew upon strategies and resources from my AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> training to meet the varied needs of the group. We integrated visual supports, consistent

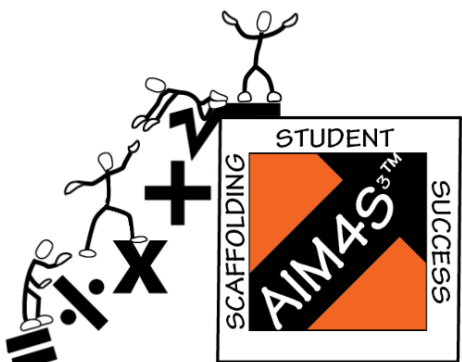
routes, and multimodal instruction to make mathematical language and concepts accessible. This experience reinforced the value of targeted math language instruction for multilingual learners.



Robin and Jessica shared the impact their learning from AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> and the collaboration across departments had on their state.

Robin Stutts and I were also able to present together at the Alabama Mississippi Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (AMTESOL) conference in 2025. We shared with others the impact our learning from AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> and the collaboration across departments had on our schools and state. This experience reminded me that unification across disciplines in education is essential.

AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> opened new doors for me as a math specialist, and ultimately, for the students and educators I serve.



**Achievement Inspired Mathematics  
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### About AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> Math Framework

AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> provides a framework of instructional components that shelters mathematics content to make it comprehensible and accessible to all students, with a focus on English learners (ELs) and students who struggle with math. AIM4S<sup>3™</sup> can be utilized with any mathematics program and targets teachers in kindergarten through middle school (<https://dlenm.org/aim4s3-math-framework/>).

For more information, please contact Evelyn Chávez or Lisa Meyer at [aim4s3@dlenm.org](mailto:aim4s3@dlenm.org) 505-243-0648



—continued from page 5—

traditional English-only classes said, “Multilingual kids are much quieter in a traditional classroom, they sit back in other classes but here they feel more comfortable. Kids in dual language have more pride—they wanted to wear their country’s names on hoodies. Kids in traditional classes don’t have the same pride.”

Obviously, to engender pride in every student about their language, culture, and heritage is the ultimate goal. In the meantime, as debates over language and identity continue to shape national discourse, embracing bilingualism in our schools is not only an educational imperative but also a moral one. Dual language programs affirm the value of linguistic and cultural diversity, empower students—especially those from immigrant and Latinx communities—and equip all learners with the tools to thrive in a global society. Supporting and expanding these programs is a critical step toward a more inclusive, just, and culturally competent America.



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# La Cosecha 2025 Pre-Conference Institutes



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## PROJECT GLAD® Key Strategies for Biliteracy – Project GLAD® Institute

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DLeNM GLAD® Biliteracy Team



## Empowering Secondary Educators: Navigating Dual Language Programming and Advocacy

Wednesday, Nov. 12

Dive into best practices for sustaining and advocating dual language programs at the secondary level.

DLeNM Staff



## Bilingual Brilliance: Uniting Teachers & Admins to Unlock Multilingual Learners' Potential!

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Yvonne Williams & Samuel Aguirre



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DLeNM Staff & NAELPA



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Igone Arteagoitia



## Biliteracy Mapping Through the 4-Step Cross-Linguistic Co-Planning Process

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Elizabeth Howard & Shera Simpson



## Empowering Young Minds: Crafting Dynamic Spaces for Dual Language Growth and Joyful Learning

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## Stronger Connections, Stronger Biliteracy: Effective Biliteracy Instruction with Literacy Squared

Wednesday, Nov. 12

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