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Cover Page Footnote

Elizabeth A. Skinner, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the School of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University, specializing in bilingual and urban teacher preparation. She served as Co-Director of the Transitioning Paraprofessionals and In-Service Teachers in School District U-46 (TPI U-46) Program from 2012 – 2017. Pauline Williams, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the School of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State University (ISU) where she has been a faculty member since 2006. From 2012 to 2017, she served as the Co-Director of the Transitioning Paraprofessionals and In-Service Teachers in School District U-46 (TPI U-46) Program. Dr. Williams is also a member of ISU's One Million Dollar Club, which recognized her for exemplary achievement in securing external funding for bilingual and ESL teacher preparation programs. Her research interests include studies that pertain to equity in education for culturally and linguistically diverse students and ISU's Bilingual Education Program's teacher preparation.

Friends with Benefits: Collaboration Between a State University and a School District Designed to Improve Teaching and Learning for Emergent Bilingual Students

Elizabeth A. Skinner and Pauline Williams

Illinois State University

This article describes a long-term collaborative effort between a college of education and a public school district in Illinois. As both the district and the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Program at the university sought to improve the teaching and learning for emergent bilingual students, the relationship between the two institutions evolved. The result is a pipeline of teacher candidates, specifically prepared to work in the district's dual language schools. The article describes the implementation of the federally funded program as well as the challenges encountered over the course of the collaboration.

Keywords: bilingual teacher preparation, partnerships, professional development schools, bilingual education, dual language, preservice teacher education

While public school districts across the country struggle to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations, colleges of education are publicly criticized for how they (fail to) prepare teachers for these struggling districts (U.S. Department of Education, 2009; Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015). In this context, collaboration between teacher preparation institutions and local school districts is both necessary and urgent. This is particularly true in the field of bilingual and English learner (EL) education, which is often misunderstood and poorly implemented at the school level, while grounded in more theory than practice at the university level. Confounding the situation is the fact that the theory and practice endorsed by or promoted at the university level are often in direct contrast to the linguistically subtractive models implemented in schools (Ostorga & Farruggio, 2014).

At Illinois State University (ISU), the bilingual-bicultural education course sequence provides a foundation in the history, politics, and theoretical underpinnings of bilingual education. The methods courses include discussion of the various program models implemented in schools and the assessment of emergent bilinguals. Over the

years, the curricular focus has been on the effectiveness and best practices of additive bilingual education programs, such as dual language models, which have been found to be more effective than subtractive models such as transitional bilingual programs. In their article entitled “The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language Education for All,” Virginia Collier and Wayne Thomas (2004) present data from their two-decade study of bilingual education program models from 15 states covering 23 school districts in urban, suburban, and rural communities. According to these researchers, dual language education is not only the most effective program model, but it is also the only model that fully closes the achievement gap for English learners. Collier and Thomas refer to their findings as a “wake-up call for the field of bilingual education...” (p. 1) Research published within the current decade supports the findings from their longitudinal study (Block, 2011; Collins, 2014; Esposito & Baker-Ward, 2013; Hunt, 2011; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Lindholm-Leary & Hernandez, 2011).

However, when our teacher education students began their field hours, they were often placed in transitional bilingual education (TBE) classrooms and were perplexed as to why they were not seeing teachers practicing dual language or additive teaching practices that contributed to the academic development of students’ home language. As a result, there was a glaring disconnect between theory and practice. This is by no means unique to our program. Ostorga and Farruggio (2014) document a similar contradiction in their discussion on bilingual teacher preparation on the borderlands of South Texas. Given the scarcity of schools with dual language programs in our partner districts where we place our preservice bilingual teachers for field placements, the question we as faculty asked ourselves was how might we support the development of more school programs, not only to benefit the bilingual elementary students in the district, but also so that our own bilingual education majors could experience dual language during their preservice preparation.

Bilingual teacher educators are not alone in confronting such a dilemma. In fact, Zeichner (2010) identifies this disconnect between coursework and field practice as, “A perennial problem in traditional college- and university-sponsored teacher education programs...” (p. 91). The dilemma leads to questions regarding school-university partnerships and the role of faculty working in a school and/or district and how to influence practice, while also understanding and honoring the expertise of the educators doing the work. In addition to allowing an alignment between campus courses and field practice, a collaborative school-university partnership provides a context for teacher candidates’ learning. Etta Hollins (2015) claims, “that learning teaching begins with understanding learners and the context in which they grow and develop” (p. 93). Likewise, Murrell’s (2001) vision for school-university partnerships calls for inclusion of parents, parent organizations, and community-based organizations. Thus, participants in a collaborative partnership, both university and school based, may not only need to redefine their roles, but also include the perspective of additional stakeholders (Murrell, 2001; Zeichner, 2010). Ideally, from our perspective, curricular and programmatic change is instigated by the schools, teachers, and families in the district and supported by a university partner.

Recently, one of our long-standing partner school districts made the decision to transition from a district-wide implementation of TBE to a dual language model.

Hearing news of the initiative to adopt dual language as a system-wide program model in the U-46 School District of Elgin, IL, we understood the inherent challenges to such broad implementation but also that this programmatic change would help us improve the preparation of our own bilingual teacher candidates, many of whom complete their year-long internship and student teaching in the district. Our questions then became how can we support this transition to dual language and what is our role? In what follows, we discuss how we strive to support the work of the district through our partnership, while at the same time benefitting from their transition to dual language program implementation.

The College of Education

Illinois State University (ISU), founded in 1857 as a normal school, is ranked among the top teacher preparation institutions nation-wide, according to U.S. News and World Report 2016 Best Education Schools (2015). It is the largest preparer of teachers at the bachelor's or initial level in Illinois and a top 10 in the US (Illinois State University, 2015). Located in central Illinois approximately 120 miles south of Chicago, the majority of ISU's 20,615 students are white and come from the Chicago land area. As the demographics indicate, ISU is a primarily white institution, but increasing diversity is an institutional goal to be attained through a commitment to increase opportunities to enroll and serve underrepresented student populations. An increase in the number of Latino students enrolled at ISU is due in part to the Bilingual Education Program, which has been attracting Latino teacher candidates for more than a decade, primarily through federal grant programs that aim to prepare bilingual and ESL-endorsed teachers. These programs are off-campus initiatives, offered in areas of the state where there are large populations of bilingual learners living and attending public schools. Elgin, a part of the U-46 School District, is one such community.

The School District

Illinois School District U-46 is the second largest school district in Illinois, smaller only than the Chicago Public Schools. Located 45 minutes west of Chicago, the district covers 90 square miles and serves portions of 11 communities. There are over 40,000 students in the district who attend one of the 40 elementary schools, eight middle schools, and five high schools. The student population in the district is 31% White, 50% Hispanic, 8% Asian, and 7% Black. English learners (ELs) constitute 25% of the student population and nearly 60% of the students are considered low-income. As in many school districts, the teacher population does not reflect the diverse student population in U-46. In the district, 79% of the teachers are White and only 17% are Hispanic (Illinois State Board of Education, 2015).

The Relationship

Early Stages

The original collaboration between ISU and School District U-46 began in 2000 and grew out of the desire to educate local teachers on how to address the needs of the increasing number of ELs in their classrooms. This work began with the Illinois Professional Learners' Partnership (IP&P), a federal grant designed to prepare teachers of ELs to be successful in the classroom. The goal of this grant was to prepare 40

preservice and 20 inservice teachers. The grant exceeded its goals by successfully preparing 49 preservice and 108 inservice teachers.

Developing Stage

The collaborative structure of this first grant included a steering committee composed of six staff and faculty members from ISU, four administrators from the school district, and 30 U-46 bilingual and monolingual mentor teachers, who had been prepared by ISU. This steering committee worked together to develop a professional development school (PDS) during the first two years of the implementation of the grant. While PDSs may have a variety of iterations, the principles outlined by The Holmes Group (Rutter, 2011) include the creation of a “learning community” and “continuing learning by teachers, teacher educators, and administrators” (p. 298). With such guiding principles in mind, the initial focus of the PDS in district U-46 was the preparation of bilingual education and ESL teacher candidates but it has since grown into a program that also includes elementary education preservice teachers.

Evolving Stage

As a result, each year, between 10-30 elementary education and bilingual education undergraduate teacher candidates participate in the ISU/U-46 PDS, a year-long internship and student teaching experience in U-46 schools. During the fall semester, the ISU interns work in their assigned classroom three days per week and attend methods classes taught by ISU professors the other two days of the week. The interns return to the same classroom full time during the spring semester, where they complete student teaching.

Although ISU is located a good distance from Elgin, the university maintains a presence in the district by hiring a site coordinator, usually a retired U-46 teacher, who facilitates the PDS program. A faculty member from the School of Teaching and Learning serves as liaison with the site coordinator as additional support. This person serves in a variety of capacities according to the needs of the program.

Since the first grant and the development of the PDS, ISU has collaborated on two additional grants with School District U-46, including the current grant program, The Training of Pre-service and In-service Teachers of English Learners in School District U-46 (TPI U-46), which will be described below. Through all of the grants thus far, more than 300 preservice and inservice teachers have completed or are completing the necessary coursework for endorsement in ESL and/or bilingual education.

Serving ELs in the U-46 School District

For more than three decades the district served its population of emergent bilingual students through TBE programs in schools where the number of ELs required such support. One school had a dual language strand, meaning one classroom in each grade level implemented dual language. In 2011, the district began to transition the bilingual program from TBE implementation to a dual language model of instruction in all schools serving emergent bilingual students.

The district had always needed bilingual teachers and the change to a dual language model of implementation increased that need and it also called for additional

preparation for the mainstream, monolingual English speaking teachers. While dual language advocates and most bilingual teachers applauded the move to dual language, it naturally caused some trepidation for those teachers in the district who speak only English and had not been specifically prepared to work with ELs. Under the TBE model of implementation, emergent bilingual students exited the bilingual classification and program, eventually entering classrooms where the only language of instruction was English. In the dual language program, emergent bilingual students would continue to receive instruction in Spanish for at least 50% of the day. Thus, the need for bilingual teachers in the district continued to grow.

In order to meet the needs of the different student populations at each school, the district distinguishes between one-way dual language programs and two-way dual language programs. There are now 30 out of 40 elementary schools with dual language instruction, all of which implement one-way programs. Of this number, 18 schools also include two-way instruction. The one-way strand is in place at schools where the overwhelming majority of students are native Spanish speakers or simultaneous bilinguals. In these classrooms, there are not many English dominant students, thus it is not considered two-way dual immersion. Nor is it considered TBE because there is a philosophical and pedagogical commitment to the long-term academic development of students' native language. In other words, Spanish instruction is not viewed as a transitional phase until students are proficient in English, but rather a necessary component in the development of bilingual and biliterate students. The two-way model is in place in the schools where there are a number of native English-speaking children who have opted into the dual language program. In both models, the division of time of instruction in each language is 80:20 (80% of the day's instruction is in Spanish, 20% in English) in the early grades. The goal is to transition to 50:50 by the third through sixth grades. In the upper elementary grade levels, where the instruction has reached equal distribution of English and Spanish, there can be two teachers at each grade level. One may be a monolingual English-speaking teacher, who teaches content in English and the other is a bilingual teacher, who teaches the Spanish content. There may also be a bilingual teacher who teaches content in both languages. In any context, emergent bilingual students, who may have formally exited the bilingual category, are still learning content and developing their academic Spanish and thus are not forced to transition into English only instruction. Though initially perceived as a program for bilingual teachers, monolingual and bilingual teachers have implemented dual language in the Elgin district with team teaching.

In addition to the bilingual teachers in the district, a large number of bilingual paraprofessionals are also supporting the education of the U-46 ELs. As is often the case, the bilingual paraprofessionals, with minimal preparation and background in education, are working closely with ELs, who require and deserve specialized support. Many of the bilingual paraprofessionals working in U-46 are from the Elgin community or nearby. Several are also products of the bilingual education program themselves and share cultural and linguistic assets with the students. However, their cross-cultural and bilingual competence is not enough to prepare them to teach ELs, who are challenged by learning simultaneously academic content and English. Without the necessary professional preparation in bilingual pedagogy, language acquisition theory and

research, and ways of supporting language and content learning, the instructional support they can provide is limited.

The Evolving Friendship

Given the district's ongoing need for bilingual teachers and the shift to dual language, the time was right for an additional collaborative effort between our university and the U-46 district. We identified three different populations of teachers, all of whom would be working in the dual language schools, which we hoped to serve through the program. First, the monolingual English-speaking teachers needed preparation to work with ELs and earn their ESL endorsement. Our sequence of courses in bilingual-bicultural education and ESL would provide these teachers with knowledge of the foundations of dual language education and second language acquisition as well as practical methods for working with ELs. With an ESL endorsement, these teachers may team teach in a dual language program, either one-way or two-way, with teachers who have a bilingual endorsement. Second, the bilingual paraprofessionals in the district, already working intensively with the emergent bilingual students, needed to further their education in order to work more effectively with their students. As envisioned, the new collaboration could also provide those qualified paraprofessionals the opportunity to advance into teaching careers within the dual language program. In our program, paraprofessionals earned a bachelor's degree in Education with bilingual and ESL endorsements. Finally, there were also a number of provisionally licensed bilingual teachers in the district who needed to complete the courses to earn their full bilingual endorsement and they were the third population of teachers we targeted in the proposal.

Our experience and knowledge as former bilingual and dual language teachers helps us to prepare both our preservice and inservice teachers for the demands of a dual language classroom. Our work as faculty involved in the Elgin PDS with our traditional-aged preservice bilingual candidates provided us insight into the teaching and learning taking place in the bilingual classrooms in the district. Working in the PDS, we helped identify cooperating teachers for our bilingual candidates' internship and student teaching placements, and through this established relationship with school administrators. We supervised the teacher candidates during their internship and student teaching, which includes multiple classroom observations and the opportunity to interact with teachers and elementary aged students. This PDS experience informed our approach to the implementation of the new project, which allowed us to expand our work with inservice teachers in the district, including as instructors for their courses in ESL foundations, methodology, assessment, linguistics, and diversity.

While we have collaborated with U-46 bilingual cooperating teachers and administrators for many years to help us mentor our traditional college-aged bilingual education majors, the new program complements this work by providing opportunities not only for inservice teachers, but also for paraprofessionals in the district. Most of the bilingual paraprofessionals are Latinas, who could not continue their education without the opportunity provided by the grant, which pays for all classes and books. Thus, the program allows opportunity for an underrepresented group of students to continue their education and ultimately to teach in the district. This component of the program

shares elements with the Grow Your Own teachers law in Illinois (Skinner & Schultz, 2011) in that it demonstrates value for the skills and cultural capital the non-traditional students bring to the program but also recognizes the need to prepare them well and offer academic and social supports necessary for success as students. Such an effort also addresses the discrepancy between the large number of Latino students in the district (50%) and the number of Latino teachers (17.2%). Increasing the number of teachers of color in Illinois schools is another shared goal between our program and the Illinois GYO teacher initiative (Skinner & Schultz, 2011).

Program Design and Implementation

With the history of collaboration between the University and U-46 district in mind, as well as the new context for bilingual education described above, members of the Bilingual-Bicultural Program at ISU designed a program hoping to support the needs of three distinct populations of teachers: inservice, provisionally licensed, and paraprofessionals. A federal grant from the Office of English Language Education allowed us to carry out the work of the so-called TPI U-46 Program. The goal of the program was to recruit a total of 100 educators to further their education so as to be able to work more effectively with the emergent bilingual students in the district in the context of a dual language model of bilingual education.

The first phase of implementation consisted of recruiting candidates from the three distinct populations of teachers. Inservice teachers were easy to find and enroll, as they understood the urgency of earning their ESL endorsement and their desire to better serve their students, particularly given the transition to dual language. The other two categories of candidates, provisionally certified bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals, were more difficult to identify, recruit, and matriculate. In order to fill the program to capacity, we had to recruit a number of candidates from outside the U-46 district.

The inservice teachers had the shortest path to earn their ESL endorsement, so they began their coursework first. Following an off-campus cohort model of implementation, we mapped the course trajectory, allowing for two courses per semester. We then identified faculty members from campus or off-campus adjuncts to teach the required courses. The courses met in the evenings in the central administration building of the district. Within two years, 50 inservice teachers in the district had completed the courses required by the state of Illinois to earn their ESL endorsement. (See the Appendix for a chart of coursework sequences for each program.)

Recruiting inservice bilingual teachers holding a provisional bilingual endorsement (Type 29 in Illinois) was more challenging, as changes in the state requirements and the number of years since allowing the hiring of provisional teachers had passed, there were fewer teachers in the category. We expanded our search to nearby districts, with student populations similar to U-46 and we were able to eventually enroll a cohort of 27. This cohort completed their required courses in December 2015 and earned their bilingual and ESL endorsement to attach to their current teaching license.

Identifying, recruiting, and then enrolling a cohort of paraprofessionals who would ultimately earn their Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education and their teaching license, including a bilingual endorsement, was a challenge. There were fewer paraprofessionals working in the U-46 and surrounding districts than we anticipated. We relied on district administrators and teachers to help us identify the bilingual paraprofessionals working in the district and then reached out via email and posted fliers with information about the program. We eventually enrolled 27 candidates in this category. Given the varied academic backgrounds and experiences of the cohort members, academic advising was critical prior to each candidate's enrollment in the university. Several of the members of this cohort needed to commit to finishing general education requirements at the community college level while at the same time taking ISU courses. In addition to the number of courses needed for the degree, members of this cohort also need to pass a number of high-stakes, standardized exams required by the state for a teaching license. This has proven to be a challenge for some of the candidates. In spite of supports offered through the program, such as test preparation and tutoring, three of the candidates did not pass the first gateway exam and thus did not earn a state license. However, 20 members of this cohort earned their bachelor's degree and state of Illinois teaching license in May 2017. Fifteen of the graduates were hired to teach in the U-46 district. Three members of the cohort earned their degree in interdisciplinary studies, which did not include a teaching license.

Challenges

In spite of federal funding, clear goals, and well-qualified personnel hired to carry out the project, the implementation has not been without challenges. Some of those challenges are administrative or related to the finances of the grant. Other challenges require thoughtful and sometimes creative solutions because they relate to the students and their professional outcomes.

One of the early, administrative challenges included funding student tuition at 100%. We addressed this problem by presenting a proposal, which was the result of University and school district collaboration, to the office of the Provost to offer the classes as contract courses. The proposal was approved, and there is now one cost for each class as opposed to individual tuition fees for each student. This agreement significantly reduces the cost of tuition and allows us to stay within the proposed budget, while still serving a large number of teachers and teacher candidates.

As previously mentioned, the recruitment of qualified candidates was an initial challenge that we did not anticipate. The number of paraprofessionals working in classrooms had decreased in recent years, perhaps due to budget issues. Additionally, there were fewer teachers working with provisional licenses, not only in District U-46 but also in the surrounding districts. As a result of the difficulties we encountered as we began to recruit, both the school district and the University personnel worked together to identify and communicate with provisionally licensed in-service teachers and bilingual paraprofessionals working in the district. We also reached out to neighboring districts for teachers with the provisional license. We did finally reach our recruitment goals but doing so was a challenge we did not foresee.

Recruiting such a diverse pool of candidates, from experienced inservice teachers with master's degrees to paraprofessionals taking university courses for the first time, meant that we had to spend time on the evaluating transcripts and advising for each student. This was a straightforward process for the inservice teachers. We compared their coursework with the state requirements for the ESL endorsement and planned accordingly for individuals and the cohort. The inservice teachers started their course sequence in the spring of 2013 and both cohorts completed the required ESL coursework by spring 2014. Similarly, the provisionally licensed teachers needed only the courses required for the bilingual and ESL endorsements, so their course of study was easily mapped. The majority of the provisionally licensed teachers completed their courses during the fall 2014 semester.

The cohort of paraprofessionals who entered the program with a wide range of academic experiences required more time and attention at the initial advising stage. The program of study was designed and intended to attract candidates who had completed all of the general education requirements prior to admission. During the recruiting process, we realized that this was not going to be the case for many of the candidates. Although most of the candidates had taken some general education courses at the community college, very few had completed all of the requirements. This presented the program directors and staff with a difficult decision. Although many candidates did not meet our original admission requirements in terms of courses and course credits, after interviews and review of their application materials, we thought many of them were excellent candidates and deserving of the opportunity. After much discussion and debate, we did admit a number of paraprofessionals who needed several general education courses in addition to the education courses that ISU would offer. These students were conditionally admitted with the understanding that they had to complete their required general education courses on their own at the local community college, while also taking the ISU courses. The local site coordinator of the program, who had worked as an advisor on campus, met individually with each student to ensure that they took the right courses at the community college and stayed on track to complete the outstanding courses. At the end of each semester, students had a follow-up conversation with the site coordinator and submitted transcripts of their grades to her.

While one student could not maintain such a heavy course load and was dismissed from the program, we feel that the individualized support provided by our site coordinator has been important in the success of the students who remain in the program. However, the individualized attention and support has not been enough to get all of the paraprofessionals successfully through the Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP) test in Illinois. The TAP test is a standardized test of basic skills that serves as the gateway into colleges of education. If a student does not pass the TAP test they are not formally admitted into the College of Education and cannot enroll in professional education courses required for the degree and state licensure. The TAP test has been controversial in Illinois as research demonstrates that fewer students of color are passing the test and being admitted into colleges of education. In fact, recent data indicate that the pass rate for African Americans is 24% and just 14% for Latinos (Illinois State Board of Education, 2017). The numbers indicate that the discrepancy

between the number of teachers of color and students of color will continue to rise in the state. The numbers also indicate that our students, all Latinos and bilingual, will struggle with passing the TAP test.

In anticipation of this struggle, the University provided workshops to help prepare the preservice teachers to pass the TAP test and a handful of students have paid to take the test multiple times. As the program progressed and students moved through the course sequence, we eventually had to request that six students change tracks of study because they would not be admitted into the College of Education due to failure to pass the TAP test. As a program, we allowed students as much time as possible to pass the TAP test but eventually had to make a final decision. Rather than dismiss the students from the program, we advised them to earn an interdisciplinary studies degree. Such a degree will not lead to state licensure in teaching, but it is a bachelor's degree from Illinois State University. For some students, whose dream it is to teach, it is small consolation.

For those students who successfully passed the TAP test and continue with their professional education studies, the pressure is not necessarily relieved. As of September 1, 2015, the Education Teaching Performance Assessment (edTPA) exam is high stakes and required for licensure in the state of Illinois. As the name implies, the edTPA is a performance-based assessment that teacher candidates complete during their student teaching experience. The assessment includes lengthy written analysis of video-taped teaching events. While in general ISU students have been successful passing the edTPA exam, the students in our cohort are decidedly different from ISU's primarily White and female teacher candidates. Additionally, there are concerns about the edTPA specific to bilingual education, including the assessment's lack of alignment with the goals of good instruction for emergent bilinguals (Kleyn, López, & Makar, 2015). While we feel the courses prepare our students well, we have plans to offer workshops and additional supports for the students in preparation for taking the edTPA.

As noted earlier, District U-46 is quite a distance from ISU's campus and this contributes to another of our challenges. Even when partnering institutions are in proximity, truly collaborative work can be difficult given the traditional structure of teacher preparation programs. We found that it was difficult to recruit tenured and tenure track professors to teach the courses due to the distance between the campus and the school district. As a result, in addition to face-to-face instruction, we offer online coursework and hybrid classes (taught face-to-face and online). We also recruit qualified adjunct professors who work or have worked in the district and live nearby. It is also important that professors and instructors understand and have experience working with the non-traditional student population, many of whom speak English as their second language. While we have identified a pool of excellent instructors, hiring teachers each semester is an on-going challenge.

As we prepare for intensive field hours for the students, in the form of internship and student teaching, we will need to identify cooperating teachers in schools in the district. As previously mentioned, in the past we faced the challenge of placing our traditional-aged PDS students in classrooms where best practices are in place. The

implementation of dual language programs system-wide will make this less of an issue for our cohort students but we will be requesting a large number of cooperating teachers from dual language programs, in addition to those typically requested for our PDS students.

Outcomes and Implications

Effective partnerships between colleges of education and schools or school districts have the potential to challenge the traditional hierarchy of teacher preparation by valuing not only the expertise of teacher educators, but also school-based practitioners. Through both the PDS program for preservice educators and the project for inservice teachers and paraprofessionals, described above, our institution has made a sustained attempt to truly collaborate with the U-46 District. And while the program described above could be strengthened with further and more intentional collaboration with teachers and community members, we believe that everyone benefits as a result of the partnership between ISU's Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program and School District U-46. In an effort to close the achievement gap for ELs, School District U-46 adopted dual language instruction system-wide. In support of this initiative, ISU's grant prepares English dominant and bilingual teachers as well as bilingual paraprofessionals to become licensed and endorsed to serve in these programs that are geared to meet the needs of all students, particularly ELs.

For ISU's traditional-aged students who complete their yearlong internship and student teaching in the district, the partnership enables them to observe and implement, in a specific context (Hollins, 2015), the evidence-based bilingual instruction practices they learn in courses on campus. Working with cooperating teachers who are implementing dual language also allows our students to witness and engage in professional discussions about the program and ways to adapt and adjust their teaching. The cooperating teachers' knowledge of the school community and the dual language initiative contribute to the preservice teachers' understanding of their teaching context and instructional decisions and practices.

In the case of the English dominant teachers in the TPI U-46 Program, initially many of them expressed concern about the district's adoption of dual language instruction because they feared they might lose their jobs. After completing the courses for their ESL endorsement, they could clearly see their place as team teachers working alongside bilingual teachers in the dual language programs. Zeichner, Bowman, Guillen, and Napolitan (2016), in discussing partnerships, remind us that, "The mission of teacher education is not to try and 'save' students from their communities, but to work with and for communities to help build on their strengths..." (p. 288). By basing coursework on an asset-based approach to teaching emergent bilingual students, we expect that the inservice teachers also gained a better understanding of their emergent bilingual students' identities, communities, and how to effectively teach them.

For bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals, the program offered not only the coursework leading to licensure and/or endorsement in bilingual education and ESL, but it also supported them with workshops in academic writing in English and test-taking skills to prepare them to pass the state teaching examinations. Additionally, ISU's grant program provided homegrown community members an opportunity to

become teachers in the district's dual language programs. These new teachers share linguistic and cultural assets with their students and are part of an increasingly diverse teaching force in the district.

Though not without its challenges, the partnership, in its 15 years, has been an example of "friends with benefits." Close collaboration between two seemingly (and geographically) distant institutions mitigates the disconnect between theory and practice for all. What sustains this "friendship" is each party's commitment and passion for developing teachers to meet the needs of all learners, particularly ELs, and educating the children that we serve.

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Appendix

Coursework Sequences per Category

Spring '13	Sum '13	Fall '13	Spring '14	Sum '14	Fall '14	Spring '15	Sum '15	Fall '15	Spring '16	Sum '16	Fall '16
Cohort 1 Inservice Teachers											
ENG 341	ENG 344	ENG 345									
TCH 320	TCH 409	TCH 322									
Cohort 2 Inservice Teachers											
	ENG 341	ENG 344	ENG 345								
	TCH 320	TCH 409	TCH 322								
Cohort 3 Provisionally Certified Teachers											
	TCH 319	TCH 341	TCH 320	TCH 344	TCH 345						
			TCH 409	TCH 321	TCH 322						
Cohort 4 Paraprofessionals											
		TCH 319	TCH 204	TCH 233	ENG 343	ENG 345	KNR 222	MAT 201	TCH 257	TCH 110*	STT
		TCH 110	ENG 243	ENG 341	TCH 208	TCH 320	EAF 228	SPA 215	TCH 258	TCH 233*	
				ART 204	ENG 344	TCH 209	TCH 321	TCH 322	TCH 264		
				TCH 319*			PSY 302				

*Offered twice for students who were unable to take the class the first time that it was offered.

Key for Classes:

TCH 110 – Cross-Cultural Teaching and Learning	ENG 243 – The Grammatical Structure of English
TCH 204 – Elementary Education: Practices and Issues	ENG 341 – Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics
TCH 208 – Reading and Language Development	ENG 343 – Cross-Cultural Issues in TESOL
TCH 209 – Literacy II: Reading and Language Arts	ENG 344 – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TCH 233 – Teaching and Learning in Middle Level Education	ENG 345 – TESOL Methods and Materials
TCH 319 – Study of Bilingual/Bicultural Education	ART 204 – Arts for Elementary Schools: Visual Arts
TCH 320 – Assessment of Bilingual Learners and Bilingual Program Design	EAF 228 – Social Foundations of Education
TCH 321 – Methods and Materials for Bilingual and English Language Learners	KNR 222 – Physical Education for Elementary Classrooms
TCH 322 – Bilingual Education Internship	MAT 201 – Teaching Mathematics in the Elementary School
TCH 257 – Science Methods	PSY 302 – Adolescent Development
TCH 258 – Social Studies Methods	SPA 215 – Introduction to Spanish Linguistics
TCH 264 – Language Arts and Instruction Strategies	