

Xochitl Rocha - English Transcripts

It is a great honor to be here with you today and present about bilingual programs to all of you that are here. Parents, families, thank you so much. And hopefully in today's short session, we will be able to understand the importance of bilingual education and what it means for your child. And I wanted just to clarify, can I say it in Spanish and then in English and then you will translate the English? Perfecto. OK. [SPEAKING SPANISH]

So I'll just go ahead and just say that it's a great honor just to be here in this space with you parents to really support and increase awareness of what Texas offers in regards to bilingual education to really serve your students and your children but more than anything that you have the information needed so that you can ask the appropriate questions at schools that are going to help you with the education of your child. So thank you so much for allowing me to share this information with you today. [SPEAKING SPANISH]

Can you hear me now?
[SPEAKING SPANISH]

So our Special Pops division here at the Texas Education Agency works collaboratively alongside with homeless and migrant and GT with other programs like Special Ed to really support and really build on a daily basis these systems that will not only increase awareness but really promote equitable access for all the students that we serve in Texas to really improve the outcomes of this population. So it is something that we do on a daily basis to really increase those systems and not only for our educators, our leaders, our principals, but also families like yourselves to, again, together really support the educational journey of your students. [SPEAKING SPANISH]

So during this short session, we really want to make sure that our objectives are that you can walk away, parents, who knowing what is out there in regards to the support the TEA provides to families like yourselves that have children with another language other than English. What is the TEA support so that you can have the appropriate information? [INAUDIBLE] walked in at the appropriate time where they were giving you a walkthrough our EO portal, or our web page, where you can find the resources that you'll need, where you can find videos that are going to really support and understanding some of the things that are happening in the school and many other great resources to really support you and having that communication with your child and teachers in the schools as well.

We will also talk a little bit about, what are the rights? What are some of the rights that you as parents have to continue supporting your child at home? But also, what are some of the look fors of what you receive from schools, and what do they mean to be able to really know the academic progression of your children?

And lastly, one of the biggest buckets for today is really talk about the six program models that the state of Texas allows schools to implement when they're serving students with another language other than English. And there are six models. And each one of those models has a specific benefit for students. So hopefully by the end of today, you'll be able to walk away knowing, what are the programs, and what are their benefits? I know that you do not have perhaps the capability of unmuting, but please use the chat if you have any questions or you'd like to celebrate or anything that you'd like to share with us today.

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

So we're going to talk a little bit about what the law requires in Texas in regards to chapter 89, 1020 or 1210, which talks about program model and design. This particular item talks about student development. How are the programs that schools are implementing tap into the linguistic support for your child? How do they develop cognition? And how do we really tap into instructional pieces that will lower effective or really tap into the social emotional state of your child?

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

So one of the biggest things is families have as rights, as their children are in a public education system here in Texas, whether it be public or charter school-- districts or charter schools, it really starts in the Home Language Survey. That one document is very important. Because this document is going to really tell us how we can better serve your child linguistically, cognitively, and effectively, that social, emotional state of your child.

So there's two questions. The first two questions will be, what is the language spoken at home and you're able to select the language that predominantly is spoken at home or that you speak most at home? And then the second question, what is the language that your child speaks the most? And based on those two questions, if another language other than English is in either of those blanks, automatically, it sends us to the next level of understanding how to serve your child the best.

What does that mean? Is that there is an exam. The next step is to assess your child to see where they're at in English proficiency. And believe me, when I talk about the programs, I'll go a little bit into that. We just want to know where they're at to be able to place them in the best program available in those schools. So based on that, there's going to be an assessment. And if your child, for example, reaches a four and an five or does not reach a four and a five, then the recommendation will be to place your child either in a bilingual or ESL program based on whatever model the school that your child is attending offers.

The next right that you have is that once that decision is made is that you are notified with a letter letting you know this is the bilingual or ESL program we have and we are recommending for your child. And then of course, you will have to then-- you do the final decision whether you accept or do not, but really focusing on the importance of what bilingual education and how they're going to support your child.

The other piece that is very important is that the Home Language Survey comes in many different languages. And hopefully, you will get the Home Language Survey in the language that you speak at

home first and primarily. The examination, though, that triggers that assessment that I was talking about, right now, we only have the Spanish and, of course, the English. But they'll assess your child in English if you speak Vietnamese, French, Arabic, or another language other than those two.

But any communication moving forward, any communication after your child is enrolled, should come primarily in the language that you speak at home because we really want to make sure that parents know exactly what is happening in those classrooms and in school so that you can participate in that journey with your child. So one of them being also is that at the end of every year, there's two tests that the state requires for our emergent bilingual students, TELPAS. Because we really want to make sure that we are assessing the development based on the program your child is participating, the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. And it just gives the state an opportunity to see the growth of your child. And also at the end of-- and that starts in Kinder until your child is reclassified.

The other test is the STAAR test that is just testing content, how will your student, your child, is learning science, math, social studies, or language arts. The test of STAAR is available right now and, again, in Spanish and in English from third through fifth grade. So at the end of the year, you should be getting also a progress monitor, a letter that says these are the results for your child so that you know exactly how they're doing academically.

And the last-- not the last right, but one of the other rights that you have is a reclassification. So once your child is identified, once your child is participating in bilingual education, and once you start receiving those progress every year, you also want to know if your child meets the required criteria to then be reclassified as proficient in English and then, of course, is able to leave the bilingual program or ESL.

However, as I share with you the benefits of the programs, there is one program that is a dual language program that even though your child reclassifies and you receive that notice and you sign it, we still recommend for your child to continue participating in dual language because the program goal is different for those program models. So I'll share a little bit about that as well. So again, these are some of the rights and some of the things that you can look for and that you can also find in our EO portal web page.

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

So we can move on to the other one. So there are six state-approved program models for the state of Texas. And I do want to preface or want to say first and foremost that Home Language Survey is very important because it's really going to tell us the value and the languages that your child brings to the classroom space. As a state-- and Texas is one of the few states that allows bilingual education to be implemented for students that are coming in with another language other than English because we want to make sure that we provide access to their first language so that they can use their communication skills in whatever other language they bring so it can support the developments of English. So that's why that home language survey is very important.

As you can see on the left hand side, there are bilingual programs. And bilingual programs are-- any time that a school district or a charter school has 20 students of that same language in the grade level, by law, they have to provide a bilingual education program model. The four different program models right now are transitional early exit, transitional late exit, dual language immersion one way, and dual language immersion two way.

So the two programs are transitional and dual language. And they provide access to their first language as best as possible and develop-- even perhaps delivering content in that language, for example, Spanish alongside with English or Vietnamese alongside with English and until the child is ready to just be reclassified.

And then the other programs that we have on the right hand side are English as a second language programs ESL. We have content-based and we have ESL pullout. These two programs are designed only to provide English instruction with strategies that promote or that help second language learners acquire English. And we'll talk a little bit more about each one of those programs and the benefits for those programs in the next slide.

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

And I know that this is now in English. So our bilingual education program models in Texas, there's a couple of others. There's three program models but each one has two living underneath each program model. So I'll start with the bilingual. So bilingual means, remember, that we are allowing the students to access to have instruction in their first language as best as possible right alongside with English. We have the early or late release program models, which are the transitional program models. And these are the early exit and late exit program models. And the goal of these programs are to really support or use the first language but with a goal of only English proficiency. So the goal of learning in that space is that the sooner this child reaches the ability to speak English or understand English and then is reclassified, then all the instruction will be done in English for that child.

Within that classroom space, you're going to see a very different way in fashion. Because if you have your son or daughter in a classroom and your neighbor has the same son or daughter in that classroom, it's taught very differently. Some students, depending on their linguistic, cognitive, and affective needs, then they may receive half a day in English because they need-- math and social studies perhaps are in English and the science and language arts is given to them in Spanish. We have some students that only receive, perhaps, language arts in Spanish or the other language and everything else is in English.

There's going to be students that are getting everything in English and only a short period of time with their first language like Spanish or Vietnamese or French or Arabic or any other language that they have. So the teachers are teaching at a different content and language depending on the needs of each child in that classroom space. But the goal is, again, English proficiency. So the students that are participating in that classroom are only students that are identified as emergent bilingual students based on that Home Language Survey that they come in with another language other than English. The early exit means that they have predominantly up to third grade to show mastery of the English. And then the late exit means that sometimes the program can go all the way to sixth grade to allow your child to really become proficient and then, after that, receiving everything in English.

Then we have the dual language program models. And within the dual language program models, there's two, one way and two way. Both program models are the same. The goal is to teach 50% of the instruction in their first language and the 50% of the instruction in the English language. And when we say that, we want to make sure that your students are learning math, science, social studies, and language arts as best as possible in both languages because we're going to continue using the first language as the vehicle for learning English.

We want to make sure they feel successful but that they also see the value of their first language, and as they're learning, reaching that proficiency at the same level. So the goal of the program is that your children that are participating in dual language become not only bilingual to communicate in both languages appropriately but that they also become biliterate so that they're able to read, write, listen, and speak in both languages and at a very high proficiency level and academic level and really adding to their languages that they bring.

Even if we say Tex-Mex, Spanglish, it's OK. That's in addition to language. That's a variation of language. So that's appreciated in dual language because we want to make sure that your student continues to receive instruction in the language that they bring from home, the language that the parents taught, the language that the grandparents speak at a very high level as well.

The students that participate in this program model are students not only that are identified as emergent bilingual students or English learners but also students, and I don't see it here, students that are not emergent bilingual identified, students that already have a proficiency in English. So the beauty of this program is that they have these two populations of students working together and learning the same content materials in both languages so that, again, all of them have the opportunity to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural.

And we always like to say even multicultural. Because even within that space, there's other beautiful languages that are spoken so students begin to understand their culture, understand the culture of their ethos, their peers. So therefore, it increases their self-esteem and their identity. And in most programs, because it's a bilingual program by law as long as they do it pre-K to fifth grade, but in some districts across the state of Texas, this is the only program, bilingual program, that goes all the way to high school. And some districts have already graduated cohorts or classes up to 12th grade of dual language biliterate students.

And I put that red sign on the bottom because the beauty of this program also is that, yes, the goal is to attain English but not leaving the first language behind. Both languages are added in the instructional classroom for your children. And the other program, the English as a second language program, or ESL programs, that you've heard of, perhaps, is when the district does not have enough students to create a bilingual program, they offer at least second language acquisition strategies, really supporting the language development of English of your children in those classroom spaces. But the goal, again, is just English proficient, that your child reaches at that level that they can understand the language and comprehend to be successful in school.

There are two different types of ESL programs. One is the content, which means that all of the teachers have gone through the training to provide that second language acquisition strategies, two, the students that are in those classroom spaces, whether it be math, science, social studies, or language arts. In the pullout, it's the same thing. The students are still getting support but mainly one teacher can come throughout the day and have a one to one with your child to really go over the grammar, the language,

the comprehension, individually with your child, again, to support what they're learning in the other content area classrooms.

The students that participate in these programs are students that are only identified as English language learners. And at the middle school and high school level, it may be different because it depends on the classrooms that they select to participate because of whatever pathway they seek. Then that's why the ESL has either one teacher to pull them out or all the teachers that are in the school in that grade level to provide the support that your child will need to really develop English and become successful.

And again, all three programs is really looking into the linguistic support for your child in all content areas, providing the cognitive strategies that your child will need to be successful. And they tap into the social emotional, making sure that your child feels safe in that environment that appreciates and embraces their first language alongside the development of English. So those are the bilingual programs and ESL program models that the state of Texas offers.

And I know it's a lot of information in a little amount of space, but I did want to leave some room for reflections. I did want to leave some space for you all to reflect on the rights of your parents, knowing that you will be informed from your schools in the language that you speak, not only at the beginning but throughout the educational years your child will be from pre-K 12 in those schools, and also getting to know, what are some of the things that you're going to be asking for?

What can you ask the teacher? Oh, this is the program my child is in. How is he being instructed? What are the languages that she or he is being instructed? How is he or she doing in the classroom? And if it's a dual language, for example, you want to see the progression of your children in both languages. So having said that, I wouldn't want to give this opportunity to you all as families that I'm saying it in English so that the translations occur so that we can have some time to hear the voice of our parents if you have any questions on the chat. Just ask. And you don't have to answer. This can be a reflective just for you to know and what are some of the things that you can do to go and ask a school.

So the very first one is that I want you to think, what do you think about bilingual education programs in Texas? Really think about when you hear bilingual education, ESL programs, transitional programs, or dual language programs? What is the first thing that comes to mind? Do you know the program your child is in? And now that you know the benefits, what do you think?

And the second question is, as a parent, how would you like to advocate for your child? Now that you know the different types of programs that Texas offers, could this-- I'm sorry. Could this also give you some questions to ask your school? To learn about the program, to meet with the teachers, to know how your child is doing, and if they're in a bilingual program, how is my child using Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, whatever other languages they bring to the classroom used to be able to support the growth in English as well. So what can you do as a parent, thinking now, OK, now that I know this, what can I do? I'm just going to give you a couple of minutes here so that I can see some of that information come through the chat.

These are great questions. So the questions are-- or the comment in one of them was when you know two languages or learning in those two languages, yes, it's going to provide-- what research tells us is that it is going to provide a longer term success for your child if they come in with those social skills in their first language and were using that as a learning process for your child. Absolutely. There's more opportunities to become bilingual, job opportunities, professional opportunities, yes.

And I love the question also, and I don't know if I can see the name here, Miss-- one of the parents is asking, can you select, as the parent, the programs in your schools? So the answer to that is yes and no. So it really-- no to the point-- it depends on the programs available at the school. So if you have a program and then you talk to your parents and if that is something that you would like for your students like dual language, then yes, you can go to the school and have conversations with the principal, the teachers, the district. And hopefully that can also occur from transitional to dual language. Because as long as it's a bilingual program, yes, you can do that. So hopefully I answered your question. Yes. And Dr. Rocha, the people from the Spanish interpretation room are in this room. So you might need to recap what you just said in Spanish.

[SPEAKING SPANISH]

Let me see. And then Dr. Rocha, there was a question, and maybe it's just something for us to think about, it says if we could get a percentage breakdown of the different languages of English learners or emergent bilingual students in Texas. And it says being a parent of a Portuguese speaker, it seems that there aren't as many resources for kids that speak a lesser spoken foreign language in Texas. So I didn't know if maybe Ted-- ask Ted or whatever on the TEA site has something like that.

There is languages-- we do have the top languages or the languages that come into Texas. We serve 5 million students, and out of those 5 million, we serve one million students identified as emerging bilinguals. 50% of those emergent bilingual participate currently in ESL programs pre-K to 12. And then the other 50% participate in bilingual programs. I think there is a 20 and 20 percentile, something like that, in both transitional and dual language. Predominantly, or the languages that are spoken the most, are Spanish-- and correct me, I know I have a couple of my colleagues here-- Spanish, Chinese, Burmese, Vietnamese-- and I'm missing the fifth one

Is it Arabic possibly?

Probably Arabic, yes. Those are the top five. But that doesn't mean that Portuguese is not one of them. Yes, we do have French, Portuguese, Pashto. I can't think of the-- we have beautiful languages. We have many, many beautiful languages. But I think that would be something that we can definitely provide moving forward as kind of a visual representation. These are the top, and these are the ones that are upcoming.

[SPEAKING SPANISH]