
**Evaluation of the
Dual Language Bilingual Education Program
at Bedford Central School District**

Executive Summary

Dual Language and Multilingual Education

Center for Applied Linguistics

May 1, 2026



The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) promotes language learning and cultural understanding by serving as a trusted source in the field of language and cultural education. For decades, CAL's research, resources, and policy analysis have supported effective language education for multilingual learners.

This executive summary reflects the findings and prioritized recommendations of the Bedford Central School District's Spanish-English dual language bilingual education program (DLBE) evaluation, conducted during the 2025-2026 academic year. The evaluation was organized around the seven strands of CAL's *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education*, 3rd edition (Howard et al., 2018). This program evaluation was completed by CAL staff, with a team member transition during the process; despite this change, steps were taken to ensure continuity and quality throughout its duration. This executive summary is intended for district leadership, board members, and community stakeholders seeking an accessible overview of the evaluation findings and recommendations.

The full evaluation report is available for readers seeking detailed findings, data, and methodology.

Evaluation Purpose & Scope

Bedford Central School District's Spanish-English dual language bilingual education program was evaluated to assess whether policies and practices reflect research-based, effective implementation and to examine student academic and linguistic performance outcomes.

The evaluation was primarily qualitative in design, employing observation and listening session protocols, but also included quantitative data reports related to extant academic and language performance outcomes provided by the district. Data collection included listening sessions with staff, students and families, a site visit by one CAL researcher to BCSD schools with a DLBE program, and a review of extant documentation and student performance data reports.

The evaluation was guided by three primary research questions:

- Are the policies and practices for serving students representative of research-based, effective practices in DLBE programs, and are the policies and practices implemented appropriately?
- Given available performance data, how are DLBE students performing academically and linguistically?
- What do staff and stakeholders believe is working well and what needs improvement?

Prioritized Recommendations

The following section presents prioritized recommendations drawn from findings across all seven strands and organized into two categories – Immediate and Ongoing – reflecting sequence, not importance. Immediate recommendations address conditions that are actively limiting program implementation and should be prioritized for action within the current or upcoming school year. Ongoing recommendations support the program’s growth and development over a longer horizon. All recommendations are grounded in findings documented consistently across multiple data sources and reflect conditions that, left unaddressed, risk compounding over time. As such, they should be incorporated into district planning with clear timelines and designated ownership.

Recommendations have been summarized for brevity; full recommendation language, supporting findings, and contextual detail are available in the complete evaluation report.

Immediate		
Program Structure	1	Convene a DLBE advisory group with diverse stakeholders, defined roles, and decision-making authority; formalize a program mission and vision and designate a primary program authority.
	2	Develop a written commitment to families articulating the program’s scope, expectations, and goals.
	3	Develop and publish a formal written language allocation plan in collaboration with the ESOL director, classroom teachers, and specialists.
	4	Protect Spanish instructional time by developing a substitute coverage plan that does not pull Spanish Zone teachers from their assigned roles.
Curriculum	5	Prioritize development of a documented bilingual scope and sequence for language and literacy, led by the ESOL director in collaboration with teachers and a biliteracy curriculum consultant.
Instruction	6	Incorporate differentiated language-embedded supports during lesson preparation to enable all students to engage in sustained oral and written language use.
Assessment & Accountability	7	Prioritize strategies to accelerate academic language and literacy development among English Learners across both program languages, using existing district data to inform decisions.
Staff Quality & Community	8	Establish a unified professional development plan designed for a dual language biliteracy context, developed with teacher input and vetted through a bilingual lens.
Family & Community	9	Invest in a proactive, sustained public communication strategy that accurately represents the mission and outcomes of the DLBE program.
Support & Resources	10	Build district-level bilingual leadership capacity to reduce dependence on a single point of advocacy and ensure bilingual expertise informs district-level decisions.

Ongoing		
Program Structure	11	Provide structured time for intentional collaboration and planning between teachers.
	12	Schedule regular collaboration between DLBE elementary and middle school teachers, support staff, and administrators to ensure vertical alignment.
	13	Continue vertical expansion of the DLBE program in middle school and consider adding a high school strand to create a K-12 pathway to the NYS Seal of Biliteracy.
Curriculum	14	Establish a program-wide expectation that every lesson includes a posted and stated language objective distinct from the content objective, supported by bilingual coaching and instructional walkthroughs.
	15	Continue implementation of the ARC ELA and SLA curricula with fidelity through the full three-year plan before considering modifications.
Instruction	16	Provide structured opportunities for students to engage in extended oral discourse through strategically designed pair and small group work with individual and group accountability.
	17	Increase intentional opportunities to draw cross-linguistic connections between the two program languages to promote transfer and metalinguistic awareness.
	18	Incorporate sociocultural practices in elementary classrooms so students engage with rich, culturally responsive content.
Assessment & Accountability	19	Establish a regular data review cycle that triangulates multiple assessments across both languages to identify and cross-reference patterns.
	20	Use longitudinal assessment data disaggregated by student demographics to inform program-level decisions, scheduling, and biliteracy instruction.
Staff Quality & Community	21	Protect structured co-planning time in the school schedule with clear role definitions for co-teaching in a DLBE classroom.
	22	Develop a formal PD pathway for special education teachers covering language acquisition, bilingual assessment, and IEP service coordination.
Family & Community	23	Create structured opportunities for families inside and outside the program to learn about it through classroom events, family ambassador programs, and early outreach.
	24	Continue creating opportunities for staff and families to share linguistic and educational practices and build home-school partnerships supporting biliteracy development.
	25	Continue hosting multicultural and multilingual events that celebrate families' linguistic and cultural heritages and promote sociocultural competence.

	26	Continue providing informational sessions about the DLBE program in both languages to DLBE families, including information about the middle school program.
	27	Continue community outreach efforts to gather input from the broader community about the DLBE program.
Support & Resources	28	Develop and adopt a district policy ensuring special education services for dually identified students are provided in an appropriate language and that IEP goals reflect the bilingual instructional context.
	29	Develop clear criteria for selecting and vetting external bilingual evaluators to improve quality and cultural responsiveness of outsourced reports until in-house capacity is established.
	30	Elevate program visibility by presenting outcomes data to the Board of Education annually and sharing program updates with the school community on a trimester basis.