
**Evaluation of the
Dual Language Bilingual Education Program
at Bedford Central School District**
Addendum to the Final Report

Dual Language and Multilingual Education

Center for Applied Linguistics

September 25, 2026



This addendum is intended to address questions and contextual observations raised during the presentation of the Final Report to the Bedford Central School District Board of Education. As such, it should be read alongside the Final Evaluation Report.

The questions and observations addressed below were raised by Board members following their review of the Final Report.

Program Continuation at Middle School

As students continue from the elementary DLBE program into middle school, the report notes that the DLBE offering is limited to World Language and Social Studies in grade 6, and a question was raised as to whether that is sufficient. A follow-up conversation raised a related question about the study's vantage point: whether sufficiency is being evaluated through a DLBE lens or through a larger lens of a middle school that serves other programs and competing interests.

This evaluation was commissioned to assess the DLBE program against research-based standards for effective implementation, as outlined in CAL's Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018). Through that framing, the current middle school offering is not sufficient. It is not a critique of the middle school's other programs or priorities, but a finding about what the research identifies as necessary to sustain a meaningful pathway for students to continue developing biliteracy.

The question reflects an important reality. This evaluation does not, and should not, prescribe a single solution. Any expansion of DLBE at the middle school must be designed in a way that respects and integrates with the full range of programs and student populations that Fox Lane Middle School serves. The FLEX house model has already created some flexibility, allowing the 6th grade social studies course to run, though that flexibility has not yet been extended to 7th and 8th grade.

Middle School Expansion

The Final Report states: "Teacher union resistance to changes in the teaming model were cited as a possible reason with the acknowledgement that there is tension between the desire to integrate all students and the need to maintain program integrity." Board members with historical knowledge of the program clarified that union resistance has not been their experience as a confirmed or broadly observed barrier to DLBE expansion and expressed concern that the current language might convey a stronger conclusion than the data warrants.

On review, union contract constraints were referenced in one listening session; this was not a widely shared theme across stakeholder groups. As such, the sentence on union resistance should be read as a single unverified reference rather than as a contributing factor identified by the evaluation.

Family Participation: Sampling and Representation

A concern was raised about the representativeness of the data given the lower-than-anticipated participation of native Spanish-speaking families in the listening sessions. As described in the methodology (p.4), four family listening sessions were scheduled, two in Spanish and two in English; the two Spanish-language sessions were consolidated due to low attendance. Direct participation by Spanish-speaking families was therefore lower than anticipated, with two Spanish-speaking parents represented in listening sessions and two of the thirty parent survey responses submitted in Spanish. Recruitment for all sessions was conducted by district staff through school communication channels, as is standard in external program review.

Themes related to Spanish-speaking family experience nonetheless converged across data sources. The perspectives captured in the consolidated listening session and the Spanish-language survey responses were consistent with those reported in student listening sessions, which included native Spanish-speaking students enrolled since kindergarten, and with educator and administrator accounts of Spanish-speaking family experiences. Additional sessions and data collection opportunities did not yield substantively new themes.

This convergence supports confidence in the findings reported here, though it does not fully substitute for direct family voice. The recommendations in Section 7 regarding sustained community outreach and structured family engagement speak to this need directly and strengthened outreach infrastructure would also support fuller participation in future program reviews.

Bilingual Professional Development and Co-Planning Time

An observation was raised that bilingual professional development has been available to staff, and that the findings in Section 6 could be read as suggesting otherwise.

That is an important clarification, and the report supports it. Section 3 (p.18) documents that the adoption of the ARC CORE ELA and SLA curricula is supported by a three-year implementation plan for 2024-2027 including program-specific, job-embedded professional development, with emphasis on bilingual bridging, translanguaging, and alignment of foundational skills. Educators also described working with multiple consultants, curriculum coaches, and district administrators, which reflects real and ongoing investment in professional learning.

The findings in Section 6 speak to a different question: not whether professional development was available, but how coherently it was organized and how consistently it was designed for a biliteracy context. Educators described competing messages from multiple sources and limited time to absorb new learning before additional content was introduced. Multiple educator groups also described literacy trainings that were designed for a monolingual context and therefore did not

address the distinct demands of developing reading and writing across two languages. This is a matter of instructional design rather than effort or intent, and it is a common challenge in dual language settings, where strong general literacy professional development does not automatically transfer to biliteracy instruction.

Accordingly, the recommendation in Section 6 is for a coherent, unified plan delivered from a single point of leadership and vetted through a bilingual lens, building on the investments already in place.

Two narrower gaps also remain: there is no formal professional development pathway for special education teachers working in the DLBE context, and the absence of a bilingual literacy coach has meant teachers adapting Spanish-language materials largely on their own. Coaching and consultant support have been present in the building, but not in a role dedicated to biliteracy development across both program languages.

Co-Planning

An observation was raised that co-planning time is available during the school day, and that a stipend is in place to compensate teachers for additional planning time outside the day.

The stipend was referenced in listening sessions but was not addressed in the Final Report, which focused on the structure of collaboration time rather than compensation. CAL appreciates the clarification. It reflects district recognition of what the report documents, which is that planning across two languages with multiple co-teaching partners carries demands beyond those of a typical co-teaching model.

On the availability of time during the school day, the report's finding is not that co-planning time is unavailable. Section 2 documents the time available to staff, including a 40-50 minute morning window and monthly grade-level planning days referenced by teachers. The finding is that this time is not contractually protected, is frequently absorbed by competing demands, and was described across educator groups as insufficient for the planning demands of a dual language co-teaching model. Participants also described the morning window as falling before the contractual school day and as dependent on individual choice rather than schedule design.

The recommendation in Section 6 accordingly concerns a complementary mechanism — protected collaboration time within the school day, structured so that co-teaching partners can plan together as a regular condition of the schedule rather than through individual initiative.

Program Goal

An observation was raised regarding the need for greater clarity about the program's goals and how success is defined, with proficiency in both program languages understood as the goal.

This observation is well aligned with the report and with CAL's Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education, 3rd Edition (Howard et al., 2018), which identify three core goals for dual language programs: grade-level academic achievement, bilingualism and biliteracy, and sociocultural competence. The Guiding Principles hold that these goals should be formally articulated and built deliberately into program design, and that success should be measured in both program languages.

Section 2 of the report found that the program does not have a written, broadly shared mission and vision statement. The three core goals are referenced informally but have not been formalized into specific goals or grade-level benchmarks, which has contributed to a lack of clarity.

The report's recommendations address this directly: formalizing a mission and vision through a DLBE advisory group, providing families with a written commitment describing the program's goals, and reviewing assessment data across both languages to monitor biliteracy development over time. Together, these would establish a shared vision of success grounded in both languages and a way to measure progress toward it.

Researcher Change

An observation was raised regarding the timing of the research team transition noted in the methodology.

The transition occurred after data collection was complete. The lead researchers conducted the site visit and classroom observations, facilitated nearly all listening sessions, and gathered the data on which the report is based. She was not involved in the subsequent analysis and report writing, which were completed by another CAL staff member.

To support continuity, the analysis drew on the full record of data collection. As noted in the methodology (p.5), all virtual listening sessions were recorded so that they could be replayed to ensure accuracy of understanding and classroom observations were conducted using the standardized CAL Instructional Observation Protocol (Appendix B). A draft of the report was also reviewed by district administrators for clarity and accuracy before the final report was developed.