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FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECONDARY  
DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN THREE SCHOOL  
DISTRICTS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS

by

María F. Gómez, M.Ed.

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ABSTRACT

FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECONDARY  
DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN THREE SCHOOL  
DISTRICTS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS

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Research has demonstrated that dual language education is the most powerful for school reform. Most of the research has focused on the outcomes of elementary programs. As dual language programs continue to expand from the elementary level to the middle school setting, more research is necessary to explain how these programs are being sustained at the secondary level. This qualitative study researched the factors that impacted the implementation of dual language programs at the middle school level in three Texas school districts. It presents a multiple case study with each school district forming a single case study. The participants included district personnel over the secondary dual language program, middle school campus administrators, a magnet coordinator, and dual language teachers. The findings describe factors that impacted the implementation of the dual language program at the middle school based on each participants' perspective in their current role within the school district. It also describes

the factors that support the continuation of their secondary dual language program and the challenges still being faced in order to sustain the program at the middle school level. The study also addresses implications for secondary dual language programs.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The United States is functioning within an increasingly global economy that necessitates improving the capacity of Americans to communicate via languages other than English in order to have rich linguistic and cultural exchanges (Wiley, Arias, Renn, & Bhalla, 2016). The population of children who entered schools in the United States and are growing up with two languages continue to grow exponentially. In 2014, more than 840, 000 immigrant students enrolled in schools across the United States, as well as more than 4.9 million English language learners (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). Learning environments for children from linguistically and culturally diverse families continues to be a major concern for public education systems. The number of students in kindergarten to twelfth grades increased significantly such that on average one of every ten students in the United States was identified as an English language learner (Wiley et al., 2016). It is time for American educators to embrace a multilingual approach towards educating America's children.

All children, regardless of their language background, need to develop bilingual skills to meet the communication challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (de Jong, 2018; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010). The key to globalization opportunities is linguistic and cultural competence for students (Hamayan, Genesee, & Cloud, 2013; Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, & Heiman, 2019). The current challenge is to improve the overall development of bilingual education through policies that focus on understanding the evolving research. Garcia and Frede (2010) state that the research informing the policy system affects dual language learners and all young children in the United States. Dual language learners refer to students who are learning more than one language, whether they are monolingual English students learning Spanish or English language learners learning English. The

fiscal, policy, and governance system has led to separate systems for serving dual language learners and English learners in kindergarten to twelfth grade classrooms (Castro, Garcia, & Markos, 2013). Along with changes to the way that researchers and practitioners approach the understanding of dual language learners' development and learning, there is a critical need for federal, state and local policies to directly address language development issues through curricular and instructional approaches that are specific for dual language learners (Espinosa & García, 2012).

Research has demonstrated that dual language education is the most powerful school reform for high academic achievement (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Dual language programs exist across the nation and vary in structure. Most of the dual language program research, particularly, two-way immersion, has focused on the outcomes of elementary programs (de Jong & Bearse, 2014). Two-way immersion programs are a bilingual program where two different groups of students who are native speakers of the languages of instruction are taught in an integrated class setting with the purpose of developing high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy, academic achievement, and cross-cultural competence (de Jong, 2016). There has been a growing interest for programs at the secondary level due to the additional value that bilingualism brings through participation in two-way immersion programs. Other supportive reasons for two-way immersion programs include the opportunities for future global employment, access to higher education, and the development of ethnic identity (de Jong & Bearse, 2014).

Two-way immersion for dual language learners is an approach to education that fosters global awareness in students by deeply immersing them in a new language and culture (Hamayan et al., 2013; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). To be classified as two-way, there should be at least one-third of the students who are English speakers in a class with native speakers of the partner language (Thomas & Collier, 2012). These

programs successfully educate native English speakers and English language learners within the same classroom and fulfill for both groups the goals of becoming fully bilingual and biliterate, developing grade-level academic achievement, and increasing multicultural awareness (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Two-way immersion program models integrate monolingual English-speaking and English language learners in the same classroom. This fosters linguistic and ethnic equity among children as the partner language becomes valued and respected (Thomas & Collier, 2012). The native language speaking peers for each language provide opportunities for interactive exchanges among the students while they explore and problem solve across curricular activities (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Dual language programs have shown support for literacy development in English for English learners while also supporting home language skills (Barnett, Yarosz, Thomas, & Blanco, 2006; Collier & Thomas, 2018; Garcia & Kiefgen, 2010; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Two-way immersion education affords students an opportunity to get a glimpse of the richness and breadth of the world's diverse cultures by fostering an appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity with firsthand experiences (Howard, 2002). The majority of two-way immersion programs in the United States are implemented at the primary level (85%) and about 90% of these programs reported in the Center for Applied Linguistics database use Spanish and English as the languages of instruction (de Jong & Bearse, 2014). Two-way immersion programs implemented at the elementary level tend to move toward a 50:50 model time allocation by the mid to upper grade levels, where instructional time is divided equally between the two languages (Thomas & Collier, 2012). The equal status of the two languages creates self-confidence for language minority students and an additive bilingual experience for both groups (Thomas &

Collier, 2012). The common goal of most of these programs is for students to perform on grade level academically, to develop high levels of language and literacy ability in their first and second languages, and to develop highly supportive cross-cultural exchanges that benefit both groups as they work cooperatively together (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2018; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

In many states—especially in Texas, New Mexico, New York, California, Washington, Illinois, and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area—dual language programs have expanded into many new schools (Collier & Thomas, 2004). At the elementary level, two-way immersion programs have been heralded as an effective way to create additive linguistic and cultural environments (Bearse & de Jong, 2008). The astounding effectiveness of dual language education extends beyond student outcomes, as high expectations and high outcomes in student performance are delivered through challenging curriculum in the two languages that lead to perceptions of this being a gifted program (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Research has also reported large scale studies that have shown that TWI students generally outperform non-TWI students on standardized academic achievement tests in reading and math (Bearse & de Jong, 2008, Collier & Thomas, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

In American public schools, students are often given the option to begin foreign language instruction in middle school (Kissau, Adams, Algozzine, 2015). Middle school students enrolled in Spanish as a foreign language course typically have no previous knowledge of the language. Classes for these students generally begin by teaching basic oral skills, everyday vocabulary, and linguistic structures that are organized according to an assumed sequence of difficulty (Bateman & Wilkinson, 2010). In some programs, students choose to complete the first half of Level I Spanish in seventh grade and the second half in eighth grade (Kissau et al., 2015). After successful completion of their

middle school language studies, these students then continue with more advanced foreign language studies at the high school level. Traditional foreign language courses are not a logical option for elementary dual language students who are transitioning into the middle school. By the time dual language students reach high school, they have taken all of the foreign language courses in Spanish available to them and have actually lost some of their bilingual abilities (Montague, 2005).

To address the formal study of Spanish at the secondary level for dual language learners, research must continue to examine more options at the secondary school level. Research on elementary two-way immersion programs has grown significantly while few studies have focused on secondary programs (Bearse & de Jong, 2008; Howard et al., 2018). Many times, secondary dual language programs are implemented as a strand within a school, but studies stress the need for whole-school approaches to educate our linguistically and culturally diverse student populations (de Jong & Bearse, 2014).

In North Carolina, there was a state initiative to expand foreign language education for English speakers in the elementary grades (Thomas & Collier, 2012). The dual language programs immersed English speakers in content-based curriculum taught through foreign language for a portion of the day (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). To evaluate the program effectiveness, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction contracted Wayne Thomas and Virginia Collier, research scholars of English language learners and dual language education. They conducted a longitudinal study between 2009 and 2010 (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Thomas, Collier, & Collier, 2010) and found that all North Carolina programs followed the two-way immersion implementation guidelines. Students achieved higher reading and math test scores compared to peers enrolled in other programs. In addition to the high achievement, students' average reading scores were higher than the statewide average scores in each grade and those above fourth grade



were close or higher to the average statewide scores of students in the grade level ahead of them in school.

In a study in the Chicago area, a study examined whether the two-way immersion programs benefit academic achievement in both minority and majority language students (Marian, Shook, & Schroeder, 2013). The reading and math standardized test scores from third, fourth, and fifth grade students were analyzed from students in various educational programs in one school district. The test performance of minority language student in a two-way immersion program was compared to that of minority language students enrolled in a transitional bilingual program. Comparisons were also made between majority language students in the two-way immersions program and students in English only mainstream. The two-way immersion minority students showed significant improvements across grade levels for both reading and math scaled scores. The two-way immersion majority students outperformed the mainstream classroom in math and both groups performed similar in reading. The results suggest that bilingual two-way immersion education is beneficial for both minority and majority language elementary students. The potential of two-way immersion program to close the achievement for English language learners and to provide both native English speakers and native partner-language speakers with access to a high-quality education with positive academic, language, and sociocultural outcomes is clear (de Jong, 2016).

There are many factors that impact the continuation of a secondary dual language program. To begin, the larger sociopolitical context of English-only and anti-bilingual education initiatives influence two-way immersion programs making it difficult to implement equal status of the two languages equitably (Amrein & Peña, 2000). The social pressures to communicate in English are experienced in many schools, especially at the secondary level. The dominance of English in the school-wide environment and its

use in the larger community makes it clear that two-way immersion programs have to work very hard to promote the status of the minority language (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003). As a result of two-way programs, some of these negative effects can be avoided while also taking advantage of the benefits of social interaction between the societal dominant language speakers and the minority language speakers (de Jong, 2018).

Student scheduling, language distribution, and curriculum resources are other reasons that make dual language programs at the secondary level difficult to implement (Collier & Thomas, 2018; de Jong & Bearse, 2014; Montone & Loeb, 2000). Students typically are scheduled for seven to eight courses at the secondary level. After participating in 50-50 model of two-way immersion programs at the elementary level, the percentage of Spanish, the minority language, instruction tends to decrease to 30% in middle school and about 10% in high school (de Jong & Bearse, 2014). Schools also have a difficult time finding quality Spanish resources for dual language students in secondary programs. The lack of appropriately leveled materials that are aligned to the grade level curriculum make the instruction challenging for dual language programs (Collier & Thomas, 2018; de Jong & Bearse, 2014). It also makes it difficult for teachers to integrate language and content subject areas since all the courses at the secondary level are taught separately. Furthermore, teachers are often assigned to content specific academic teams. It makes it difficult for dual language teachers to have a common planning time. Last, the issue of finding certified teachers at the secondary level is a challenge since teachers must have content and bilingual certification for a successful dual language program. All in all, if these challenges can be overcome, it would be beneficial to continue dual language programs for students to maintain their bilingual and biliterate skills in both the English and Spanish languages as they transition into secondary middle schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe the factors that impact the implementation of secondary dual language programs at the middle school level to determine how existing secondary dual language programs have overcome the challenges of implementation. This will help school districts take these factors into consideration for the dual language students transitioning from an elementary program to one in a middle school setting.

### **Statement of the Problem**

While research on elementary dual language programs have grown significantly over the past years (Hamayan et al., 2013; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012; Westerberg & Davidson, 2016), studies on secondary programs are scarce (Bears & de Jong, 2008). More studies on the transition into the middle school after participation in elementary dual language programs are needed. Maturation of elementary dual language programs have increased across many school districts. The district administrators must make decisions on the continuance of dual language programs into the middle school level for current elementary dual language students.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theory may be defined as a set of analytical principles or statements designed to structure observations, understanding, and explanation of the world (Nilson, 2015). Implementation Theory will be used in this study. This theory includes models and frameworks to gain insight into the mechanisms by which the implementation of a dual language program is more likely to succeed. Theories, models, and frameworks in implementation science identify three targets in their use which include describing or guiding the process of translating research into practice, understanding and/or explaining

what influences implementation outcomes, and evaluation implementation (Nilson, 2015).

Models are closely related to theory. A model is descriptive whereas a theory is explanatory as well as descriptive (Nilson, 2015). Nilson (2015) described models in implementation theory as being descriptive and/or providing a guide for the process of translating research into practice rather than a prediction or analysis.

For this study, the model used was the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education which was developed for the Center for Applied Linguistics by Howard et al. (2018). These principles include seven strands which reflected on the main dimensions of program design and implementation. The strands are listed in order from program structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability, staff quality and professional development, family and community, to support and resources (Howard et al., 2018).

Each of the seven strands has two primary components. The first includes a review of the relevant literature on research and best practices in dual language education. The research focuses on dual language programs considered to be effective in promoting language proficiency and academic achievement in English learners (Howard et al., 2018). The second component has a series of guiding principles for each strand, which contained several fundamental points. Additionally, each key point further explains the principle by pinpointing detailed fundamentals that can be studied for the alignment of each principle. Furthermore, in order to enable the use of this document for program consideration and preparation, each key point within the principles includes development indicators as follows: minimal alignment, partial alignment, full alignment, and exemplary practice (Howard et al., 2018).

The development indicators can be used to analyze an existing dual language program. The dual language framework implemented in a school district could be compared to the indicators. A framework describes a structure, system, or plan consisting of various descriptive categories (Sabatier & Weible, 2014). Frameworks do not provide an explanation but give descriptions of empirical phenomena by fitting them into a set of categories (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2007). In implementation theory, frameworks have a descriptive purpose of pointing to factors found to influence implementation outcomes (Nilson, 2015).

The framework in this study included the research by Thomas and Collier (1997, 2001, 2012), which reported that quality, long-term enrichment programs that are well implemented give English learners the best chance to succeed academically in English into the high school years. Their studies also demonstrated that students who receive at least five to six years of dual language instruction achieved parity in the second language (L2) by grade five or six and maintained that level of performance. For example, in the Houston Independent School District, students who attended the two-way dual language classes achieved above grade level in Grades 1-5, both in Spanish and in English, after following the same students longitudinally for the years 1996-2000, as measured by the norm-referenced tests Stanford 9 and Aprenda 2 (Collier & Thomas, 2004). This was true for Spanish-speaking students who were classified as English learners, as well as for monolinguals who started the two-way immersion program as English-speaking students. In this same study, Collier and Thomas (2004) reported that Hispanic, European-descent, and African American students, including those on free and reduced lunch, all scored on or above grade level.

Additional research findings from numerous studies demonstrated that the power of dual language programs enhanced students' performance in schools (e.g. Baker &

Wright, 2017; Hamayan et al., 2013; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012; Westerberg & Davidson, 2016). The general literature on bilingual education (e.g., Collier & Thomas, 2009; Cummins, 1978; Thomas & Collier, 2012) also provided a strong rationale for Spanish language instruction for Spanish speakers who are learning English.

### Questions

The current study addressed the following research questions:

- What factors impacted the implementation of a secondary dual language programs at the middle school level?
- Which factors supported the continuation of a secondary dual language program?
- Which factors were challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how were these overcome?

### Definitions

- Dual Language immersion: In the State of Texas, it is an approved bilingual program model in accordance with TEC 29.063.
- Dual Language immersion/One-way program: A bilingual/biliteracy program model in which students identified as English learners are served in both English and another language and are prepared to meet reclassification criteria in order to be successful in English-only instruction not earlier than six or later than seven years after the student enrolls in school. Instruction provided in a language other than English in this program model is delivered by a teacher appropriately certified in bilingual education under TEC, §29.061. Instruction provided in English in this program model may be delivered either by a teacher appropriately certified in bilingual education or by a different teacher certified in ESL in accordance with TEC, §29.061. The goal of one-way dual language immersion is

for program participants to attain full proficiency in another language as well as English. This model provides ongoing instruction in literacy and academic content in the students' primary language as well as English, with at least half of the instruction delivered in the students' primary language for the duration of the program. (Texas Education Code TEC Sec. 29.061).

- Dual language immersion/two-way: a bilingual/biliteracy program model in which students identified as English learners are integrated with students proficient in English and are served in both English and another language and are prepared to meet reclassification criteria in order to be successful in English-only instruction not earlier than six or later than seven years after the student enrolls in school. Instruction provided in a language other than English in this program model is delivered by a teacher appropriately certified in bilingual education under TEC, §29.061, for the assigned grade level and content area. Instruction provided in English in this program model may be delivered either by a teacher appropriately certified in bilingual education or by a different teacher certified in ESL in accordance with TEC, §29.061, for the assigned grade level and content area. The goal of two-way dual language immersion is for program participants to attain full proficiency in another language as well as English. This model provides ongoing instruction in literacy and academic content in English and another language with at least half of the instruction delivered in the non-English program language for the duration of the program (Texas Education Code TEC Sec. 29.061).
- Enrichment bilingual programs: This is an integrated model of two language groups studying curriculum through two languages that expands cross-cultural

ways of thinking by enriching both majority and minority students' learning and leads to high academic achievement for all students. (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

- English learner: A student who is in the process of acquiring English and has another language as the primary language. The terms English language learner and English learner are used interchangeably and are synonymous with limited English proficient (LEP) student, as used in TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter B. (Texas Education Code TEC Sec. 29.052).
- Middle school: For the purpose of this study, the term middle school was used for students in sixth to eighth grade.
- Secondary level- For purposes of this study, the term secondary was used for junior high and middle school educational levels for students in sixth to eighth grades after completion of an elementary level education.
- Transitional bilingual program: Programs that maintain and develop skills in the primary language while introducing, maintaining, and developing skills in English. The purpose of a transitional bilingual program is to transition the English learner to an all-English instructional program (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 10).

### **Limitations of the Study**

One of the anticipated limitations to the study was the limited number of secondary dual language programs. The researcher found three school districts with secondary dual language programs in the state of Texas in which to conduct the study. Due to this, the researcher had few school districts participate which may limit the generalizations of the findings.

With the limited school districts, another limitation was there were few individuals with secondary dual language experiences within each district to interview.



Additionally, participating in a study is voluntary. Not all individuals invited to participate may agree or consent to an interview. Some administrators did not respond to the invitation to be interviewed. Another individual also did not respond after being identified from an initial interview with a participant.

### **Basic Assumptions**

To avoid attrition of students transitioning into the middle school level, the researcher assumed that the three participating districts that continued a secondary dual language program made the decision to include any students who had participated in a dual language program whether it was one-way or two-way dual language. In one-way, students participate in a dual language program that only serves students identified as English language learners. This would ensure that a sizable number of students would form the secondary dual language programs for efficiency of operations.

The researcher assumed that the dual language programs were directed by a program director or coordinator at the district's central office level. District personnel who supervise the secondary dual language programs were invited to participate in the study.

It was anticipated that the campus administrators would identify teachers and parents who participated in a task force committee and influenced the decision to continue a dual language program after participation at the elementary level. It was anticipated that any individual identified through the initial interviews would agree to interview or to participate in a focus group interview.

Last, the researcher assumed that the participating school district had overcome the challenges presented by the existing literature since their dual language programs had continued into the secondary level in their respective districts. The factors that emerged

from the study would assist school districts in decisions to continue a dual language program into the secondary level.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Nationally, dual language programs continue to grow at a fast pace (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Gandara & Aldana, 2014; Lopez, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2012). For example, between the years of 2006 and 2012, California reported an increase of dual language programs starting from 201 and growing to 318; a total of 117 programs added during that time (Gándara & Aldana, 2014). The rising interest in these programs was also seen in the report by the Center for Applied Linguistics with 248 programs across 23 states reported in the year 2000 to currently 458 programs across 31 states (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2016). There may be other dual language programs in existence, however the Center for Applied Linguistics only reported those that are self-reported.

While the research on dual language programs has focused on studies for dual language at the elementary level, research has been limited on secondary level programs (Westerberg & Davison, 2016). With the growing interest for programs at the secondary level (de Jong & Bearse, 2014), the continuation of dual language programs has been highly recommended by dual language researchers (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2018; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Many existing elementary dual language programs have approached maturation and research is needed in order to support the development of students' bilingualism and biliteracy language skills in both languages well into the middle school level. The purpose of this study was to explore existing secondary dual language programs at the middle school level in three school districts in the state of Texas to determine the factors that impacted its implementation.

Due to some of the complexities in the organization of secondary schooling, the transition from elementary to middle school made the implementation of dual language programs challenging. In an earlier study, some of the difficulties reported included

curriculum, teacher preparation, scheduling, differences in student proficiency levels and motivation, and the absence of vertical articulation (Montone & Loeb, 2000). Given the limited studies on dual language programs at the middle school level, the review of the literature focused on the existing research at this level. The review of the literature was organized in the following manner:

- Evolution of Bilingual Education
- Overview of Dual Language Education
- Elementary Two-Way Immersion
- Middle School Dual Language Research
- Sustaining Middle School Dual Language Programs

### **History and Evolution of Bilingual Education**

Bilingual education programs have been in existence in the United States for several hundred years. They are linked to historical immigration and political movements, including civil rights, equality of educational opportunity, affirmative action, and assimilation policies (Baker & Wright, 2017). When the National Defense Education Act of 1958 was passed, it promoted foreign language learning at all school levels, which opened up educational opportunities for languages other than English. This led to Civil Rights movements in the 1960s for English language learners and towards bilingual education (Baker & Wright, 2017). English language learners (ELLs) are students whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may deny them ability to meet proficient levels of achievement on state assessments, the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate in society (Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA], 1965).

The Title VII Bilingual Education Act of 1968 addressed two purposes. One was to encourage states to recognize the needs of ELLs and the other was to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEA) that designed and implemented new public-school programs that would meet ELL needs (Baker & Wright, 2017; San Miguel, 1985). Even though financial support was one of the purposes of the Title VII, there was a lack of funding for several years (Mavrogordato, 2012). The Act also did not define bilingual education, nor did it require schools to use students' home language other than English (Baker & Wright, 2017). The emphasis was not on bilingualism but clearly on English proficiency (de Jong, 2016).

In 1970, J. Stanley Pottinger (1970) became the director of the Office of Civil Rights. He sent a memo that addressed school districts that had more than five percent National Origin-Minority group children. The memo was intended to clarify policy issues pertaining to school districts' responsibilities to provide equal educational opportunity to minority group children who were limited in English language skills (Mavrogordato, 2012). School districts had to address the educational equality by providing for the expense of hiring qualified staff, developing curriculum, and of purchasing new specialized teaching materials (Mavrogordato, 2012).

In 1974, the Supreme Court heard the *Lau v. Nichols* case. This lawsuit sued a public school in San Francisco due to concerns about whether or not the non-English speaking students were receiving equal educational opportunities when provided instruction in a language they could not understand (Baker & Wright, 2017). The court found the San Francisco public school system in violation of the federal regulations. The Supreme Court stated in *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 532 (1974) that the failure to provide a program that adequately addressed the students' linguistic needs was alleged to violate both the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment and Title V of the Civil Rights

Act of 1964. The ruling prompted several appeals until the Supreme Court finally accepted the case. Their verdict outlawed English mainstream programs for students who were not yet proficient in English. The Supreme Court ruled that there was no equality of treatment when students were provided the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum (Baker & Wright, 2017; Crawford, 2004).

The Office of Civil Rights then drafted the Lau Remedies in 1975. They outlined guidelines for teaching ELLs, including identification procedures, assessment of English language proficiency and stipulated that English as a Second Language (ESL) was not enough instruction for students (San Miguel, 1985). The guidelines required districts to create English acquisition programs when 20 or more language minority students enrolled in a particular school district. This all seemed like radical transformation; however, the Lau Remedies were never put into practice due to the fact that the Federal Register never printed the plan (Mavrogordato, 2012).

The Office of Civil Rights still made an effort to ensure compliance for school districts to follow the regulations otherwise they risked having their federal funding reduced. The Lau Remedies prompted schools to develop plans to serve language minority students across the nation (Crawford, 2004). As more schools implemented some form of special language instruction programs, federal funding also increased. However, since districts were also required to support cultural maintenance through the “growth of developmental maintenance bilingual programs” (Baker & Wright, 2017, p. 177), there was an increase on the controversy of bilingual education (Davies, 2007). The maintenance bilingual program taught through the students’ heritage language and through English for as many grades as the school system could provide (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Critics then started to question the effectiveness of bilingual education. There were discussions about the lack of evidence supporting that the bilingual programs were having a positive impact on ELL achievement (Danoff, 1978). The American Institute for Research released the first large-scale evaluation of bilingual education in the United States, which indicated that there was no evidence for the overall effectiveness of bilingual approaches in comparison with sink or swim instruction (Crawford, 2004). Sink or swim programs lacked systematic assistance for English language learners, thus making students to learn English on their own (Crawford, 2004) without regard to the necessary support for the second language acquisition process (Collier & Thomas, 2009). Several reports were also published by the Department of Education that criticized bilingual education. The Secretary of Education spoke in favor of English only methods for the instruction of English language learners and criticized bilingual methods given there was no evidence that children had benefited after seventeen years of federal investment and funding of \$1.7 billion (as cited in Mavrogordato, 2012). Thus, this gave rise to the English-only movements.

In the 1980s, there was a strong opposition to bilingual education in the United States. A rise of English only groups put pressure towards having English first in the United States. They believed that educational equality could be accomplished by teaching English early to assimilate language minority students into the mainstream culture (Baker & Wright, 2017). These groups sought to establish English monolingualism and cultural assimilation.

During this time, the additive model of bilingual education strongly re-established itself (de Jong, 2016) through the increase of bilingual supporters who thought that a student's native language should be used in school. These supporters believed that it was essential to develop students' communication and literacy skills in the primary language

before the English language was introduced (Baker & Wright, 2017). The transitional bilingual education programs started to be favored over maintenance bilingual programs. In transitional bilingual programs, the students' first language was used for a portion of the instructional time for a period of two or three years to help students meet grade level standards in the language they dominate (Thomas & Collier, 2012). As the students gradually acquired the English language, the first language was phased out as soon as possible. The purpose of the transitional bilingual programs was monolingualism in English.

In 1978, the United States Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which lifted the restriction on dual language programs. However, the debates continued, and transitional bilingual programs were still favored with the focus to have students reach English language proficiency in order to be mainstreamed in an all English curriculum. During the President Reagan and President George H.W. Bush administration, the right to early education in the minority language was not supported thus mainstream in English and transitional bilingual education continued to be favored by both Presidents (Baker & Wright, 2017). The debate started to settle in the early 1990s, when President Bill Clinton reauthorized the final version of the Bilingual Education Act of 1994 as part of the Improving America's School Act (Mavrogordato, 2012). This move for bilingual education came from the narrow focus on the language of instruction to the quality of education for language minority students. The Clinton administration saw language as a resource (Baker & Wright, 2017).

The reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act of 1994 did not have much support from Congress. Opponents resisted at the state level in disagreement of the federal government having a centralized role in education. Between the years of 1994 and 1996, a reduction of 38% in appropriations led to cuts in bilingual programs and teacher



trainings while reducing budgets for research, evaluation, and support (Baker & Wright, 2017).

Between 1998 and 2002, three states with a high number of ELL students voted to eliminate bilingual education and to allow instruction in English only (Mavrogordato, 2012). These states included California with Proposition 227, Arizona with Proposition 203, and Massachusetts with Question 2. The state of Colorado also tried to deny bilingual education through Amendment 31 but was defeated by advocates in favor of bilingual education (Escamilla, Shannon, Carlos, & Garcia, 2010). Due to the anti-bilingual legislation, many programs changed their bilingual program labels for the less politically charged label of ‘dual language’ or ‘immersion’ programs (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).

Congress reauthorized ESEA in 2002 with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which replaced the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of ESEA) with Title III of NCLB. It was titled, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Students and Immigrant Students. A program under Title III must be scientifically based research on teaching limited English proficient children that the district believes to be the most effective for teaching English (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002). The requirements included that school districts receiving federal funds submit an annual report that described the English language instruction program, the yearly progress in English proficiency by the ELLs, and the number and percentage of students exiting ELL status due to proficiency of the English language by the end of each school year (Baker & Wright, 2017).

Under President Obama, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 included \$44 billion in stimulus funding for education with over \$10 billion reserved for Title I schools (Baker & Wright, 2017). Additionally, the Race to the Top offered \$4.3 billion in competitive grants for educational reform activities at the state level (Baker &

Wright, 2017). With these reform efforts, the Common Core State Standards were completed in 2010 which were tied to accountability through high-stakes testing (Baker & Wright, 2017). Even though funding had increased, it still left many educators concerned since exams were not developed in other languages for English language learners.

In 2011, states were offered waivers of accountability mandates through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility. In order to meet the waiver principles, states had to adopt the Common Core State Standards or develop the standards for their own college and career readiness (Baker & Wright, 2017). States also were charged with developing their own English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and assessments to meet federal criteria. The Title III requirements still held states accountable for students reaching English proficiency.

During this time, California took the initiative to recognize bilingual skills as high school students graduated with a Seal of Biliteracy attached to their diploma. Students received the seal after studying and reaching proficiency in two or more languages by the time they graduated from high school (Seal of Biliteracy, 2017). The vision was to recognize the value of students' academic success and the tangible bilingual benefits. By 2015, almost 32,000 students from California had earned the seal (Baker & Wright, 2017). This spread quickly to the national level with support from the National Association of Bilingual Education and the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (Baker & Wright, 2017). Between 2011 and 2017, it was reported that 25 states and Washington DC had adopted the Seal of Biliteracy (Seal of Biliteracy, 2017). In June of 2013, the state of Texas adopted provisions to have a bilingual performance acknowledgement added to high school graduates' diplomas upon earning the required credits (Texas Education Code TEC Sec. 74.14). The Texas adoption went through a few

amendments and was finally effective August 27, 2018 (Performance Acknowledgement 43 TexReg 4190).

By 2015, President Obama signed into law Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which brought an end to the NCLB. It kept in place the accountability through testing of content and the proficiency of the English language. The ESSA gave states the flexibility to set achievement goals and to use multiple measures to assess students. This gave more realistic expectations for English language learners with more attention to their linguistic needs and greater support of bilingual education programs (Baker & Wright, 2017).

History showed the criticism and continued progress of bilingual education. Controversy from proponents of English immersion only programs also prompted the evolution of bilingual education programs from avid supporters of bilingualism. With all of the continual changes, the constant revisions of policies brought positive opportunities for progress toward bilingual education (Baker & Wright, 2017).

### **Overview of Dual Language Education**

In the early 1960s, bilingual education was restored in Dade County, Florida by Cuban exiles. They established the first dual language program given that they recognized the importance of an education in Spanish and English. The Coral Way Elementary school was started in 1963 and continues educating students as the Coral Way Bilingual K-8 Center (Soltero, 2016). In the Coral Way School, Cuban refugees established a private bilingual school which was in competition with public schools. Qualified teachers from Cuba who were proficient in Spanish taught academically (Thomas & Collier, 2012). The teachers taught in two languages with half the day of instruction in Spanish and the other in English. The students excelled by reaching mastery of grade level material in both languages (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Later, the

Spanish and English program became part of the public school system as more families were attracted to enroll their children in the program (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Interest grew for dual language from the Coral Way bilingual program after students demonstrated success of reaching reading grade level achievement in English for both groups, even though students received English instruction only half of the day (Thomas & Collier, 2012). With this approach, dual language began to spread to other public schools with most of the programs taught in Spanish and English. By 1968, dual language was provided in at least 56 locally initiated programs across 13 states (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Additionally, that school year, there were 76 bilingual programs in 70 different cities that received the first of U.S. federal funds for bilingual schooling (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

The less political label of dual language or immersion was positively received due to its enhanced, enriched, and more effective model for bilingual schooling (Collier & Thomas, 2009, Fortune & Tedick, 2008). The name changed to dual language started the transformation to minimize opposition concerning bilingual education. Dual language was the safer term that became increasingly more acceptable (Crawford, 2004). When the word bilingual was taken out of context, some public non-supporters of bilingual education failed to notice that minority children were part of these programs (Crawford, 2004). Even when noted, the advocacy of English-speaking parents often helped to counter negative perceptions since their children had the opportunity to learn another language (Crawford, 2004).

The names for enrichment dual language programs evolved out of the history of bilingual schooling (Thomas & Collier, 2012). Dual language education has a variety of names. These include dual immersion, dual language two-way immersion; bilingual immersion, one-way dual language, two-way bilingual immersion, two-way immersion,

two-way bilingual, developmental bilingual education, heritage language and language restoration (Crawford, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Through dual language programs, two languages are acquired by learning the content, developing literacy skills, and increasing culture awareness through the teaching of the curriculum (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). The goal is for students to meet or exceed the standardized academic tests in the core subjects of reading and math. Students are also required to acquire the ability to use the two program languages in academic and conversational languages to full proficiency levels.

Dual language programs have demonstrated that students are meeting the achievement and proficiency goals and participation has evolved into many more benefits. Researchers have reported that students experience cognitive and academic advantages, socially interact better with others of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, tend to have more employment opportunities, and have higher salaries (de Jong, 2016; Fortune, 2012; Soltero, 2016). Thomas and Collier (2012) also reported that dual language students have stronger cultural identity and high self-esteem, their overall interest in school is higher, and their school attendance is better. Dual language programs have a positive influence on the education system including parents, administrators, teachers and students.

As research continued to demonstrate the benefits of dual language education (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2012), these programs received more attention. Policies and standards evolved at the federal and state levels. According to Thomas and Collier (2012), the federal government adopted curricular and administrative standards that were developed by the Dual Language Education of New Mexico. These became federal standards for dual language schooling. In New Mexico and the State of Texas, specific legislation encouraged dual language

programs with state guidelines for implementation. In Texas, the primary goals of dual language programs are as follows (Texas Regulation 3822, 2012):

- A. Development of fluency and literacy in English and another language for all students, with special attention to English language learners participating in the program.
- B. Integration of English speakers and English language learners for academic instruction, in accordance with the program design and model selected by the school district board of trustees. Whenever possible, 50% of the students should be dominant English speakers and 50% should be native speakers of the other language at the beginning of the program.
- C. Promotion of bilingualism, biliteracy, cross-curricular awareness, and high academic achievement.

Dual language programs build capacity through language while capitalizing on the learning strengths of language learners (Lewis, Rivera, & Roby, 2013). Dual language programs offer the opportunity to develop bilingualism through value-added learning that no other programs can provide to students (Hamayan, Genesee, & Cloud, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Additive bilingualism also leads to greater flexibility in thought process and more problem-solving skills (Collier & Thomas, 2009). As more dual language programs grow, students' linguistic assets are being built with a response to creating students who are bilingual, biliterate and have cross-cultural competencies (Lindholm-Leary, 2012, Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Researchers have published their recommendation for non-negotiables for dual language programs. The common set of implementation guidelines for effective dual language programs that have emerged in this research (de Jong, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). These include the following:

- A minimum of six years of bilingual instruction;
- A focus core academic curriculum;
- High quality language arts instruction in both languages planned into thematic units;
- Separation of the two languages;
- Use of the non-English language for at least 50% of the instructional time;
- An additive bilingual environment that adds the new language at no cost to the students' first language;
- Support from administrators, teachers, and parents;
- High quality instructional personnel who is proficient in the language of instruction;
- PK/K-12 commitment (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

When consideration is made to these guidelines, dual language programs evolve into innovative programs that influence the whole community.

Understanding the history, evolution, and state and local policies of bilingual education is important in order to consider the significance of programs for students completing dual language instruction in the elementary years and entering the middle school years of their education. The continuation of dual language programs helps prepare students to become contributing multilingual and multicultural community members and true global citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

### **Elementary Two-Way Immersion Research**

Dual language immersion is typically started in the elementary school years. It is an educational approach for students to learn two languages in an instructional setting with integration of subject content presented in English and another language (Texas Regulation 3822, 2012). The program must be based on the instruction that adds to the

student's first language. The program models vary depending on the amount of each language used for instruction at each grade level. Elementary school language models vary from a 90% to a 50% of the minority language with most models at a 50% use of this language by the end of the elementary years (Genesee, 2008; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

At the elementary level, one-way dual language immersion is a biliteracy program model for students identified as limited English proficient (Texas Regulation 3822, 2012). The most popular program is the Spanish-English model. It provides instruction in both English and Spanish, or another language. Texas Regulation 3822 (2012), states that the instruction should be provided to English language learners (ELL) in a setting where language learning is integrated within the content of instruction. Academic subjects are taught to all students through both English and the other language (Texas Regulation 3822, 2012). The primary goal of this type of program is the same as the dual immersion program goals.

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs successfully educate native English speaker and English language learners within the same classroom and fulfill for both groups the goals of full bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and multiculturalism (Lindholm-Leary, 2005). These are distinctive feature of TWI programs. TWI is an approach to education that fosters global awareness in students by deeply immersing them in a new language and culture (Howard, 2002). Academic subjects are taught to all students through both English and the other language (Texas Regulation 3822, 2012).

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs replace the assimilation view and subtractive approaches of minority language speaker's language and culture with an additive approach to build on students' linguistic and cultural skills (Bears & de Jong,



2008). Additive and subtractive bilingualism are two opposing views in bilingual education (Garrity, Aquino-Sterling, Liew, & Day, 2016). Subtractive bilingualism is described when the primary language (L1) is lost while second language (L2) becomes more prevalent. In contrast, additive bilingualism embraces the primary language (L1) to build on the second language while maintaining the two equally. This is the main goal of dual language immersion programs. Thomas and Collier (2012) found in their studies that quality, long-term, enrichment bilingual programs give language minority students the best chance to succeed academically in English into the high school years.

Research of dual language programs reported student achievement that demonstrated that English language learners score significantly higher on state assessments as well as norm-referenced test in comparison to students in other language programs (Fortune, 2012; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2012). At a Chicago school district, Marian, Shook, and Schroeder (2013) completed a study to examine whether a two-way immersion program benefited academic achievement for both minority and majority language students in third, fourth, and fifth grade for reading and math standardized test scores. Their results suggested that the bilingual two-way immersion program was beneficial for both populations of students. In the minority language group, the reading and math scores increased across the grade levels where in the transitional program, the scores did not increase across grade levels (Marian et al., 2013). Additionally, they reported that the students in fifth grade outperformed the students in the transitional program in the area of math. The results were consistent with other research that suggests that two-way immersion programs can benefit reading and math performance in elementary school aged children.

It has been reported that students in dual language programs also develop high levels of proficiency in both languages. In Lindholm-Leary (2012), the results showed

that native Spanish speakers, as a group, experienced a subtle shift from slight dominance in Spanish in third grade to comparable scores in English and Spanish by the end of fifth grade. The students in the 90:10 dual language model had higher levels of Spanish proficiency over the 50:50 program. Furthermore, the English language learners were as or more likely to be classified by state assessments as proficient in English if they participated in dual language education programs than if they enrolled in English-only mainstream programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

Dual language programs became popular due to the consistent research that has documented success in promoting bilingualism and academic achievement for student participants (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Thomas and Collier (2012) stated that it takes six to eight years to reach grade level achievement in a second language. Given this long-time commitment, dual language supporters should advocate for kindergarten to twelfth grade programs.

### **Secondary Dual Language Programs**

Dual language programs are more common at the elementary level. There has been a growing interest and rise in programs at the middle and high school levels, however. All are driven by three universal goals which include bilingualism and biliteracy, high academic achievement, and cross-cultural competencies (Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Umansky and Reardon (2014) shared in their results that dual language immersion students showed a clear and large advantage over English immersion students throughout middle and high school. They also reported that English immersion students reached a plateau as they enter middle school, while students in dual language program continue to make progress once they enter middle school. By high school, Lindholm-Leary (2012) shared that compared to peers in English mainstream programs, dual language education students were as or more likely to be enrolled in higher level

math courses, to pass the high school exit exam, more likely to close the gap with native English speakers, and less likely to drop out of school.

A qualitative research study was conducted on dual language middle school students' engagement in a grade level math course and the use of their first (L1) and second (L2) language to access advanced math curriculum (Rubinstein-Avila, Sox, Kaplan, & McGraw, 2015). The students used both of their languages to be heard, to clarify and verify basic understanding of the information, to elaborate on concepts, to express their opinions, and to participate in tasks that required higher order thinking skills (Rubinstein-Avila et al., 2015). The teacher in the classroom acknowledged and valued the students as mathematical knowers and thinkers, encouraged students' full linguistic repertoires of practice in whatever language they were using, provided students with opportunities to solve non-routine problems, and promoted thinking collaboratively, creatively, bilingually, and expansively. The researchers recommend that teachers provide secondary language learners with challenging, active, and engaging math contexts for the development of biliterate and binumerate competencies through the use of the first and second language.

Umansky and Reardon (2014) shared reclassification data for the California Standards Test for English language arts in the analysis for linguistic instructional environments, English immersion, transitional bilingual, maintenance bilingual, and dual immersion. The findings showed larger reclassification of students in dual immersion at the middle and high school levels. The dual language immersion program showed thirteen percentage points more by the end of high school in comparison to students in English immersion programs. This study showed that fewer English language learners were meeting exit criteria to be classified as a proficient English speaker in comparison to

the higher number of students reclassified as proficient in English from the dual immersion program.

In a study in the Portland Public Schools with dual immersion programs, three quarters of the eighth grade students who had experienced the program since kindergarten scored at sublevel 4 (intermediate low) or above on the Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency exam (Burkhauser, Steele, Li, Slater, Bacon, & Miller, 2016). The proficiency levels are based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2012) for speaking, writing, listening, and reading language domains. The guidelines are divided into five broad levels for novice, intermediate, advanced, superior, and distinguished with each of the first three levels further divided into three subcategories for low, mid, and high (Burkhauser et al., 2016). The guidelines specify the amount of knowledge and skills necessary in order to move from one sublevel to another and include complex tasks that are required at each proficiency level. Specifically, the results for the eighth grade students showed them performing at nearly sublevel 6 (intermediate high) in reading, 5.6 (between intermediate mid and Intermediate high) in listening, at 5 in speaking, and 5.3 in writing, both in the intermediate mid-levels (Burkhauser et al., 2016).

Westerberg and Davidson (2016) investigated a transition for students moving into middle school. A task force that consisted of six parents, three teachers, the elementary dual language coordinator, the elementary principal, a middle school counselor and principal was created. The group visited other middle school programs, contacted secondary educators about their implementation plan, read and discussed articles on secondary dual language program, and looked into options to staff the middle school program (Westerberg & Davidson, 2016). Their research was in line with

Lindholm-Leary (2012) in that both indicated that moving into a middle school program could prove to be a challenge for the following reasons:

- Attrition (students moving or losing interest);
- Funding (a strand program that supports one-sixth of the total school population);
- Scheduling content and electives for students in dual language;
- Staffing (need teacher to teach the middle school content areas in Spanish);
- Pressure of standardized exams;
- Classroom configurations (dual language elementary students may want to expand their peer group);
- Community and staff perceptions (equitable concerns about devoting limited resources to a small number of students versus more time to teach English to minority language students);
- Leadership (knowledgeable about dual language expectations, obligations, and benefits to support, implement, and sustain a middle school dual language program).

The task force committee's planning came to fruition, however, the Spanish instruction decreased from 50% in fifth grade to 20% in sixth grade. Each year, their Spanish dual language courses offered changed since these depended on the teacher talent and schedule options. The planning committee recommended that boundaries for program design be flexible as it becomes difficult to maintain both languages at the secondary level.

In a study by de Jong and Bearse (2014), the impact of school organization on a middle school dual language program was considered. The study was conducted in the Northeast with a large Brazilian and Latino community. At the middle school level, two-way immersion students were enrolled with the general population of students for regular

education classes in English language arts, math, and science. The TWI students were grouped together for two courses, the Spanish social studies class and the Spanish language arts. Their findings indicated that linguistic equity was negatively impacted by the program's language allocation of only two out of seven classes taught in Spanish. Also, the separation of Spanish and English negatively affected the teachers' ability to provide a bilingual curriculum and encouraged TWI students to have English dominant perspectives. The lack of a common planning time for the Spanish TWI teachers, made it difficult to make interdisciplinary connections between the two Spanish courses offered. This study highlighted the challenges that may arise with having a strand of TWI at the middle school level.

Research at secondary schools demonstrated that at least two Spanish classes were offered to TWI students (Collier & Thomas, 2018; de Jong & Bearse, 2014; Montone & Loeb, 2000). For most of the TWI experience in elementary, the students had been together. However, in middle school, the TWI students were mainstreamed with other non-English language learners in core subject courses (Montone & Loeb, 2000, de Jong & Bearse, 2014). They were only together during the Spanish instruction, which will be a Spanish language course and possibly a social science core subject class (Montone & Loeb, 2000, de Jong & Bearse, 2014). The secondary schools have had to deal with difficulties that include staffing, scheduling, curriculum and materials, and parent involvement (Montone & Loeb, 2000). Furthermore, another challenge included systemic opportunities for English and Spanish language teachers to plan and participate in professional development for all teachers who work with TWI students (Collier & Thomas, 2018; de Jong & Bearse, 2014).

Howard et al. (2018) assisted the Center for Applied Linguistics in developing the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education. These principles included seven

strands which reflected on the main dimensions of program design and implementation. The strands included, program structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability, staff quality and professional development, family and community, to support and resources (Howard et al., 2018).

Each of the seven strands has two primary components. The first includes a review of the relevant literature on research and best practices in dual language education. The research focuses on dual language programs considered to be effective in promoting language proficiency and academic achievement in English learners (Howard et al., 2018). The second component has a series of guiding principles for each strand, which contains several fundamental points. Additionally, each key point further explains the principle by pinpointing detailed fundamentals that can be studied for the alignment of each principle. Furthermore, in order to enable the use of this document for program consideration and preparation, each key point within the principles includes development indicators which include the following: minimal alignment, partial alignment, full alignment, and exemplary practice (Howard et al., 2018).

### **Sustaining Middle School Dual Language Programs**

In order to sustain a secondary dual language program at the middle school level, the dual language implementation guidelines must be maintained. In a study by de Jong and Bearse (2012), the middle school structure challenged the two-way immersion program in maintaining equal status between the two languages and maintaining bilingual spaces and perspectives. In this case, linguistic equity was challenged due to the programmatic language allocation choices and the status of the Spanish language arts class. Linguistic equity in a dual language program has been listed as one of the factors in the success of a dual language program. The instructional time spent on each language was non-existent at this secondary school. The students went from a 50-50 elementary

program to 30% Spanish and 70% English in the middle school. The status of the Spanish language limited the students' access to Spanish language and literacy development.

In another case study by Lachance (2018), the results showed a severe shortage of dual language teachers at the middle school level. Dual language staffing was another important factor for a successful dual language program. The national dual language teacher shortage, especially at the middle and secondary levels, make it difficult for states to expand or even to sustain dual language programs (Thomas & Collier, 2014). Highly qualified middle level school dual language teachers are required to maintain the additive bilingual education theory and to guide academic language development in two languages (Wong-Fillmore, 2014). There was consensus among the study participants that biliteracy and academic language development with young adolescent dual language learners proved to be complex and contextual which requires specialized teaching models (Faulkner, Cook, Thompson, Howell, Rintamaa, & Miller, 2017; Zadina, 2014).

Both of these case studies listed challenges that impact the success of dual language programs. The Center for Applied Linguistics published the guide written by Howard et al. (2018) on the guiding principles for successful dual language implementation. The principles were organized into seven strands:

- Program Structure;
- Curriculum;
- Instruction;
- Assessment and Accountability;
- Staff Quality and Professional Development;
- Family and Community;
- Support and Resources.



## **Summary**

In summary, the history and evolution of bilingual education has impacted the lives of English language learners. Most recently, the education of English speakers was enhanced through dual language programs that provided an additive or enrichment opportunity to learn a second language. These programs included two-way dual language immersion programs. The majority of these programs offered Spanish and English language instruction to English language learners and native English speakers. Many elementary level schools that implemented these programs have reached maturation as students advanced to the middle school level and very few programs have provided a continuation of dual language programs after elementary schooling.

In our globalizing world, many educators and parents have become increasingly aware that bilingualism is a valuable skill for all students. Dual language programs not only provide bilingualism but do so in a more authentic and enriched manner in comparison to traditional foreign language course at the secondary level. As elementary students successfully complete dual language programs during their elementary years, there is a need for secondary programs that will continue their biliteracy language development in both languages. Given the limited studies that have been published for the continuity of dual language programs into the middle schools for dual language learners, more research is needed for secondary dual language programs. Successful dual language programs at the middle school level currently exist. It is important to explore the factors that impact the implementation of secondary dual language programs from districts that have continued dual language opportunities in middle schools and to find out how they have overcome the challenges.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### **Background Information**

Dual language programs stress the value of bilingualism including future employment, access to higher education, and ethnic identity development (de Jong & Bearse, 2014). Thomas and Collier (2012) found in their study that quality and long-term enrichment dual language programs give language minority students the best chance to succeed academically in English into the high school years. It is important to explore the factors for the continuation of secondary dual language programs for students who have participated in elementary dual language as these programs reach maturation.

The majority of dual language programs are found at the primary level (de Jong & Bearse, 2014). Most dual language studies have focused on the outcomes of elementary programs which give researchers a growing interest in programs at the secondary level. Some of the challenges that arise in dual language programs moving into middle school include attrition of students, funding, leadership, scheduling, target language and content area staffing, curriculum development, classroom configuration, and program articulation (Fortune, 2012; Westberg & Davidson, 2016). As existing elementary dual language programs approach maturation, research on factors that affect the implementation of dual language programs at the middle school level are needed in order to understand how programs have overcome challenges as they implemented the program into the middle school levels.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to explore existing dual language programs at the middle school level in the state of Texas to identify factors that impacted the implementation of the secondary program at the middle school setting. The identified districts continued a dual language program at the middle school level for students who participated in elementary dual language programs. These school districts overcame the challenges in the continuation of their dual language program transition to the middle school.

### **Research Strategy**

The researcher for this study conducted a qualitative study that included multiple case studies. Stake (2013) shared that a single case is meaningful to some extent in terms of other cases. In case study research, the researcher may include a detailed description of the case setting with contextual information (Yin, 2003). The single case study for each individual school district site was the best choice for conducting this study because it provided good insight for each of the school districts studied. For the research, contextual description for each site was provided. The contributing factors that were shared by each district to continue the secondary dual language program help us understand the complexities that were considered and how they were overcome in the participating districts. The factors that impacted the secondary dual language program also provided great insight on strengths and challenges in the programs. The researcher created a picture of the single school district case and then described the case for others to see. The single case study interacted with the other school district cases to bring a sense of history and future as part of the full picture for school districts presented with these programmatic decisions. The study provided an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This case study researched an issue through

exploration of multiple cases within a bounded system (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007). Therefore, the multiple case study research made the single case interesting because it is part of a particular collection of cases that are categorically bound together.

Individual case studies were used for each participating school district for a total of three case studies. The three case studies described factors that impacted the implementation of secondary dual language programs at the middle school level. These factors can help school districts consider the best ways to continue dual language learning for students transitioning from an elementary dual language program to one in a middle school setting.

### **Research Questions**

This research study addressed the following research questions:

- What factors impacted the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level?
- Which factors supported the continuation of a secondary dual language program?
- Which factors were challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how were these overcome?

### **Context of Study**

The school districts for this research study included three school districts in the state of Texas that were selected through purposeful sampling given they had provided dual language programs at the secondary level, particularly in their middle schools. Students in the middle school participated in dual language programs during their elementary school years. At one district, there were also some newcomers enrolled in the

dual language program at the middle school upon their enrollment at the school. All school districts and schools were provided pseudonyms.

### **Bertie ISD**

Bertie ISD was one of the participating school districts. The district had students with the following demographics: African American 12.6%, American Indian 1.7%, Asian 3.4%, Hispanic/Latino 72.3%, Pacific Islander 0.2%, two or more races 1.0% and White 8.7% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The report also demonstrated 75.5% economically disadvantaged students (as measured by eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch) and 39.2% English learners.

Bertie ISD had implemented dual language programs from the elementary to the high school levels. There were two middle schools that were approved to participate in the research study. Both of the middle schools provided a dual language program for students enrolled in sixth to eighth grade. For this study, the middle schools were referred to as Laurie Middle School and Arnold Middle School. The district also had two high schools that offered dual language programs.

### **Harley ISD**

Harley ISD was another school district that offered dual language programs at their middle school level. The district had students with the following demographics: African American 5.1%, American Indian 0.3%, Asian 6.5%, Hispanic/Latino 59.2%, Pacific Islander 0.0%, two or more races 2.0% and White 26.8% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). According to the report, the district also showed that 56.2% of the students were economically disadvantaged and 33.7% were English learners.

Harley ISD had implemented dual language programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. There were two middle schools that were approved to participate in the research study. For this study, the middle schools were named Parker Middle

School and Berny Secondary School. Parker Middle school served students in sixth to eighth grade. In Berny Secondary School, the researcher focused on the middle school level, even though the school had implemented the dual language program through twelfth grade.

### **Satchel ISD**

The third district that participated was Satchel ISD. This district had student demographics in the following populations: African American 24.0%, American Indian 0.2%, Asian 4.0%, Hispanic/Latino 61.7%, Pacific Islander 0.1%, two or more races 1.1% and White 8.8% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The report also showed that 75.0% of the students were economically disadvantaged and 31.5% of the students were English learners.

Harley ISD had implemented dual language programs for all levels, including elementary, middle, and high schools. For this study, three middle schools were identified to participate in the study. These schools were given the pseudonyms of Hal Middle School, Nickey Middle School, and Shay Middle School.

All three of the school districts were selected specifically for having a secondary dual language program in their district at the middle school level. These programs provided a dual language program into the middle school level for language minority students and language majority students. Some of the programs had extended into the high school levels.

### **Participant Sampling**

Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants based on the needs of the study. In purposeful sampling, the researcher chooses interview informants to discover, understand, and gain insight to learn the most about a topic (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For this study, dual language program directors and administrators, from the middle

school, were selected since they provided insights to their experiences and perspectives in working with a dual language program in the middle school setting. This researcher attempted to interview one program director for each school district, but only two participated. For each district, school administrators at the middle school with the dual language program were interviewed. The dual language elementary schools in the middle school's feeder pattern were initially included to be interviewed, but none were identified by the participants in the initial interview process.

Snowball sampling was a strategy used that involves locating key participants who meet the established criteria for participation in a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). From all of the initial interviews, other contributors were identified if they had pertinent information about their experiences with the secondary dual language program at the middle school level. The people identified through the snowball sampling strategy were contacted and additional interviews were scheduled to discuss their involvement with the dual language program. Teachers were identified in one of the initial interviews with a campus administrator. Another campus administrator also identified a retired director who had relevant contextual district information as well as significant involvement with the implementation of the secondary dual language program into the middle school.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Data collection started after Human Subjects forms were approved by the university and by the respective school district sites participating in the study. Informed written consent was provided to and collected from each participant (See the following appendices: Appendix A – Informed Consent to Participate in Research). Interview protocols were created for the different participant positions held in the school district including the program director or coordinator at the district level, the school administrators from both the middle and elementary levels, the dual language teachers

from both middle and elementary school levels, and for parents with children in the dual language program (See Appendix B – Dual Language Program Director Interview Protocol, Appendix C- Dual Language Program Middle School Principal Interview Protocol, Appendix D- Dual Language Middle School Teacher Interview Protocol, Appendix E- Dual Language Program Elementary Principal Interview Protocol, Appendix F- Dual Language Elementary Teacher Interview Protocol, and Appendix G- Dual language Parent Interview Protocol). The interviews were audio-taped with participants' consent and their responses were transcribed. The use of audio recording ensured the accuracy of the interviews being conducted. The researcher started with interviewing the dual language program directors/coordinators and campus administrators. It was anticipated that the interviews would be between one hour to one and half hours long in duration. They ended up being between thirty to fifty minutes long. After the program directors and administrators were interviewed, any others identified were contacted regarding their interest in participating in the study. These interviewees were also provided with their respective consent forms. Once the consent forms are collected, the researcher conducted the additional interviews. All interviews involved a member-check process during the analysis of the data to ensure that participants' views were accurately presented (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### **Interview Indicators**

Research and evaluations of dual language programs identified major factors that were essential to their success (de Jong, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). At the elementary level, these factors included duration of the instructional treatment, optimal language input and output, high-quality instructional personnel, separation of language for instruction, ratio of English to the non-English language use, an additive bilingual environment, positive school environment, and classroom composition (Montone &



Loeb, 2000). At the secondary level, other challenges arose and included attrition, funding, scheduling, staffing, and administrative leadership (Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Westerberg & Davidson, 2016). These factors were considered during the research conducted on this study.

### **Program Director Interviews**

Based on these indicators, interview protocols were developed by the researcher for the three participating district program directors or coordinators for the districts that continued a dual language program into the secondary middle school level. Some of the topics in the protocols included the investigation of the level of support provided by the school district for the dual language program, identification of the key stakeholders that influenced the continuation of the dual language program, and discussion from each participant's perspective regarding the level of support provided for the secondary dual language program. In each case study, the perspectives of each participant were critical in exploring the factors that related to the implementation of the dual language program at the secondary level.

### **Middle School Principals Interviews**

Interview protocols were created for the dual language school administrators at the middle schools. These interview protocols included questions asking about factors that impacted the secondary dual language program and how the mentioned factors had been addressed at their campus. The administrators were also asked how the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education had impacted the program in their school.

It was anticipated that elementary school administrators at the dual language schools that were part of the feeder pattern into the middle school would be interviewed to include their perspectives on the factors that contributed to continuing the dual

language program to the middle school level. However, during the data-gathering phase, elementary administrators were not identified in the initial interviews.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The case study research was a qualitative approach to explore multiple bounded systems through the gathered data (Creswell et al., 2007) that involved interviews from different school perspectives. The analytic strategy involved identifying patterns within each case and then looking for common themes across the cases (Yin, 2003). Since the study involved multiple case studies, the researcher replicated the analysis procedures for each case study. The overall intent of the data collection was to develop in in-depth understanding of each participant's perspective based on the context of their role in the secondary dual language program and to find the common themes across all of the participating school districts.

Data analysis procedures of the interview data that were collected included the constant comparative method, where the information collected was compared to emerging categories which was part of the grounded theory model (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The method compared one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences. The data was then grouped together on a similar dimension. The dimension was tentatively given a name until it became a category. These patterns were arranged in relationships to each other in the building of grounded theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

First, each case study was analyzed for developing patterns or themes from interviews conducted at each school district site. Member checks were conducted for each of the transcribed documents. The researcher sent each transcription to the appropriate participant via email to verify for accuracy. Clarification was also requested by email on any questions that the researcher had on the responses to the interview

questions. Once the individual case studies were completed and analyzed, the researcher analyzed the data of the multiple case studies by identifying the commonalities and patterns of the factors that were discussed throughout the interview process of all the participants who shared their knowledge and experiences about the secondary dual language program.

### **Validity**

Prior to conducting the interview questions, peer review procedures were used to ensure that the questions addressed the indicators supported by the research discussed and the research questions. Experienced peer reviewers in qualitative methodology were used to ensure the interview protocols addressed the research questions. The peer reviewers were comprised of a panel of dual language experts and qualitative researchers. Adjustments to the interview protocols were made based on the revisions and suggestions from the peer review panel of experts. After the audio-taped interviews and focus group sessions were conducted, the documents were transcribed. Member checking was used to assure accuracy of the information documented. The researcher used triangulation of the data, which included information from different perspectives to increase validity of the study. The researcher also consulted with an expert qualitative researcher in the field to review and verify the themes identified from the data collected to ensure validity during the data analysis process.

### **Ethical Concerns**

Prior to beginning data collection, approval was obtained from the University of Houston-Clear Lake Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) and the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) for each of the participating school districts. Ethical procedures were followed during data collection and data analysis of this research study. All participants were provided with an explanation of the research study and the

confidentiality to be followed for their participation. Each participant was provided a consent form to sign in order to participate in the study. It was explained that their participation was voluntary, and consent could be retracted at any time. In order to protect the identity of the study's participants, each participant and school district was provided a pseudonym. Since the study involved the collection of data from human subjects, high priority was placed on the confidentiality of each participant's information. Careful consideration was taken throughout the research process to ensure security of all data collected. All findings were reported ethically and truthfully.

## CHAPTER IV:

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the research study. For this study, the researcher used multiple case studies. Three Texas school districts that had expanded a dual language program from the elementary school level to the middle school level were identified to participate. Each school district forms a single case study that reflects the views from participants involved in the secondary dual language program at each of the school research sites. The results were presented as individual school district case studies for each respective school site with the data gathered from the participant interviews. The interviews for this study were conducted from July 2019 to September 2019. A total of 11 participants, including one retired secondary director, two central office dual language coordinators, two dual language specialists, three secondary dual language principals, one magnet coordinator, and two middle school dual language teachers were interviewed. Interview protocols for the director/coordinator, middle school principal, and middle school teacher were used for this research study (See Appendix B – Dual Language Program Director Interview Protocol, Appendix C- Dual Language Program Middle School Principal Interview Protocol, and Appendix D- Dual Language Middle School Teacher Interview Protocol). Pseudonyms were used for all participants, including the participating school districts and their respective school campuses. The pseudonyms were inspired by participants' inherent characteristics observed during the interview process.

#### **Harley ISD Case Study**

Harley ISD was one of the participating school districts with a dual language program in their secondary middle school level. This school district had the following demographics: African American 5.1%, American Indian 0.3%, Asian 6.5%, Hispanic/Latino 59.2%, Pacific Islander 0.0%, two or more races 2.0% and White 26.8%

(Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The district also showed that 56.2% of the students were economically disadvantaged (as measured by eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch) and 33.7% were English learners according to the report. Students in dual language programs participated from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. Harley ISD had secondary dual language programs at the elementary level, middle school, and had expanded into the high school level. Harley ISD had the fourth cohort of dual language students in their Senior class at the high school.

There were two middle schools that participated in the study, including the two administrators from each respective school. For this study, these two schools will be called Berny Secondary School, for sixth to twelfth grade, and Parker Middle School, sixth to eighth grade. One retired secondary director was identified, and that participant agreed to an interview. Two teachers from Parker Middle School were also identified in the initial interview with the school administrator and they both were interviewed. Three district personnel overseeing the dual language programs participated in a focus group interview.

The overarching themes that emerge in the following section include the following bulleted list:

- Theme 1: Responsive to Community Needs;
- Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs;
- Theme 3: Overcoming Challenges;
- Theme 4: Success and Celebrations.

### **Harley ISD Dual Language Program Contextual Information**

The contextual information in this section was written according to the data gathered from the different participants from Harley ISD. The dual language program idea initiated from one elementary school administrator at Sal Elementary in the early

1990s. At that time, no one had heard of dual language in Harley ISD. Not many programs existed. The principal at Sal Elementary had a spouse who was a pediatric neurologist. The principal and spouse had many conversations about the brain and human learning. This led the principal to start researching. Through that process, the benefits of dual language were discovered. The next step taken was to investigate the best programs. The principal put together campus personnel and parents to study dual language as a team. After a year of study, dual language was implemented in a multi-age classroom of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. It was the first cohort of twenty students. Each year this cohort moved up into the next grade level. As in many districts, there were no long-term plans for when the students reached fifth grade.

Once the students reached the end of third grade, the parents started to contact district personnel about the dual language program's continuity into the middle school. After initially falling on deaf ears, the parents' persistency prevailed for the fifth-grade dual language students to transition into a middle school dual language program. At that time, the transition was to a charter school within Harley ISD. The charter school provisions were amended to allow only twenty dual language students to go into Berny Secondary School each year from Sal Elementary. While other students had to go through a lottery selection to attend Berny Secondary School, the dual language students did not have to enter the lottery process. They were automatically enrolled at Berny Secondary School.

The dual language program in the middle school grades at Berny Secondary School included three courses that were taught in Spanish. These were math, science, and Spanish. One teacher taught the math to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Another teacher taught the science to students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. The Spanish teacher taught the Spanish courses.

As other elementary schools in Harley ISD saw the benefits of dual language, they started to implement more dual language programs at elementary schools. Two more elementary schools initiated the dual language programs. However, Berny Secondary School could not accommodate additional dual language students due to the constraints of the way the charter school was written. By this time, many stakeholders, district personnel and parents, recognized the importance of dual language. There was no argument to put together a task force to demand more programs at the secondary level.

Harley ISD took the information gathered by the task force and agreed to open two more dual language programs at existing middle schools to accommodate the additional fifth grade students transitioning into middle school. One of these middle schools was Parker Middle School. The task force also recommended and identified one high school where these two middle schools would feed into as the students transitioned from eighth grade to ninth grade. At Berny Secondary School, there were no changes to accepting additional dual language students from elementary schools. The district decided it would continue to only accept the 20 students because they were not providing additional staff. However, the dual language students interested in attending Berny Secondary Schools had to enter the lottery selection process since, by this time, there were three elementary schools transitioning students from elementary to middle school. In time, Berny Secondary School became an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. Additionally, Harley ISD had expanded the dual language program to twelfth grade at Berny Secondary School, and into another high school, grades nine to twelve, and had just graduated their third cohort of students.

The multilingual department was under the direction of a new director. The department's instructional coordinator described some of the work initiated by the previous director from her department. The previous director had used the Guiding



Principles for Dual Language Education published by the Center for Applied Linguistics (Howard et al., 2018) to align their district's core values to the guiding principles. This was in an effort to create a dual language program guide for Harley ISD. The instructional coordinator recalled it being a major undertaking assigned to their department but knew that it would align the entire school district. The previous director had taken the seven strands listed in the guiding principles to align them to the district's vision and the core values to create a program guide. There was a collaborative effort in the entire district with different central office departments, principals, and teachers in creating the dual language program guide. The newly created guide was presented to the school board and it was accepted. The instructional coordinator was appreciative of the support from the community, the superintendent, and the chief academic officer. Campus personnel were trained during the back-to-school staff development in the summer. A review of the program guide and "how the guiding principles were aligned to the core values" were discussed in the summer trainings with dual language program staff members.

Harley ISD had some unique middle school dual language program features. The first one was that fifth-grade students in their dual language program had to take a Credit by Exam (CBE) for Spanish I in order to be considered for the middle school dual program. They had to score a 70% or above to pass the exam. Upon passing the CBE, the students earned a Spanish I high school credit as an elementary student. This allowed them to enter sixth grade as a dual language student and ready to be enrolled in Spanish II. From there, the track was for the students to be registered for Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish in seventh grade and Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish in eighth grade. At the end of eighth grade, they would take the AP Spanish exam, which is an equivalent to

Spanish III for college credit. If they passed, the students earned college credit as eighth graders going into high school.

The other unique feature was that all dual language students had to be enrolled in pre-AP and AP courses in order to stay in the dual language program. Berny Secondary School started the implementation of the secondary dual language program with this requisition of high-level courses as part of the dual language program structure. When the other two middle schools were added, they also kept the same provisions. The secondary dual language program at the middle school was teaching dual language science and the Spanish language arts courses all in Spanish. It had gone through a change from prior years where they also had social studies in the dual language program in Spanish. The district had made a change and took the social studies out of the middle school dual language program.

### **The Crusader's Profile**

In order to maintain anonymity, this participant was given the name, *The Crusader*. The retired secondary director was identified through an initial interview with the administrator at Berny Secondary School. This participant held a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas, a master's degree from the University of Houston, and a doctorate degree from Texas A&M University. She was an elementary teacher for many years in first and third grades. Then became an assistant principal in Harley ISD. For seven years, *The Crusader* taught overseas in Germany on a military base. During her time abroad, she realized that "most people speak English in addition to their own language." This was *The Crusader's* first exposure to bilingualism, and she appreciated it. *The Crusader* returned to the states and taught in Harley ISD. She became an assistant principal at a new elementary school then she was asked by the principal to help open Sal Elementary, a new school in Harley ISD. After two or three years at the campus as an

assistant principal, the dual language program was started after it was initiated by the principal. *The Crusader* was an elementary assistant principal for a total of seven years. She eventually became the principal of Sal Elementary and held that position for one and half years. After serving on the task force to transition the elementary dual language program into middle school, she became the principal of Berny Secondary School. She opened the school from its inception and led it for eight years. She then moved into central office and became the director of secondary teaching and learning, still in Harley ISD. At the time of the interview, *The Crusader* had been retired for three years but was still involved in Harley ISD by “providing contract work for them.”

*The Crusader* could not stress enough the importance of having spent a year on the initial campus team in learning about dual language programs. She emphasized studying prior to implementation of anything including “researching what it is, what works, why you do it.” When she formed part of the committee that transitioned the first elementary dual language cohort, she became more interested when it was decided that Berny Secondary School would be a school for international studies for grades six through twelve. Since she had lived overseas, she “saw how important it was for us to understand other cultures” and at the time there were no other surrounding schools focused on international studies.

During her time on the committee for students transitioning from the elementary to middle school dual language program, *The Crusader* recalls sharing critical attributes of a secondary program,

curriculum was all Pre-AP. And so, these dual language kids in [Berny Secondary School] were in Pre-AP classes. So, they could spend part of their day in their regular Spanish class and they had math and science at the Pre-AP level in Spanish. And then the rest of their day, language arts was Pre-AP. It’s hard, but it

works. The parents of children of color and of poverty, their parents knew the value of Pre-AP and they wanted their children in Pre-AP. And so, when this committee was looking at what do we do with secondary dual language, I told them that. Plus, the fact that kids that are biliterate are smarter. They have more connections. They can handle it. But that's a hard leap for a lot of people.

Traditional people who think that Pre-AP is a lot of work and moves at a fast pace, they don't get it that it's different than that. It's the way you get them to think. And a lot of people can think that way you just have to show them.

Another variable shared by *The Crusader*, was that she didn't "think enough time was spent on those staff trainings." The staff did get training and they were taken to visit other schools. "They read about it, but it was foreign to them." She stated, "...the leadership has to be on board and really believe in it because you have to pay attention to it or it's not going to work just like anything else." Then there were also discussions around "these kids can't do Pre-AP." She worried about the staff being on board asking,

Did they really get what they were doing? Did they really understand it? I was worried about the enthusiasm and I don't know that they didn't [have it], but I don't know that they did. I think that it moved too quickly to implementation.

*The Crusader's Leadership Qualities (Strong Voice, Grows Leaders, Problem-Solver)*

*The Crusader* was selected to form part of the committee preparing to transition dual language students into the middle school. She was hesitant due to her lack of secondary school experiences. She questioned her participation. The superintendent at the time was the head of the committee. She shared that her question was answered by the superintendent as follows, "because you lead differently, and you are open-minded. We don't want this to be a typical secondary school. We need that voice." She agreed to

participate. She became the principal of Berny Secondary Schools and led it for eight years. She had a strong voice in the committee.

When Berny Secondary School opened its doors, it did not originally have the dual language program. When the elementary dual language students completed third grade, the parents started to contact *The Crusader* asking what was going to happen to the program. She directed the parents to contact district personnel. The parents reached out to the district but “they never got any answers.” *The Crusader* then went to the district and said,

We’ve got a problem. These parents want something, and no one’s ever answered them or no one’s providing them with anything. And I said they really don’t want to drop off when they get to middle school. And, so nothing ever happened. She figured out a way to take the fifth-grade dual language cohort of 20 students so that they could attend her school. *The Crusader* took the initiative on her own to research what a secondary dual language program meant “because there was nobody to help me...no one,” she said. She found another district with some “really good secondary programs” and she flew to visit the district on her “own dime and spent a day and a half with their people.” She remembered,

finding out that it really wasn’t going to be that hard and as you moved...at the high school level, the main thing was to find teachers that were biliterate. And that you needed to have staff that could teach any subject. Whatever they were teaching, that they could teach it in Spanish. And, one of the reasons that they had such a successful program is because most of their teachers were already bilingual. So, it was a no brainer.

They recommended,

...at least one or two courses taken in Spanish in addition to that strand of Spanish language courses. So very high levels of Spanish literature and language, but then always to have one or two content classes in Spanish and what those were did not matter so much.

For the middle school, she recalled the district stating that it was “critical that they continue their Spanish class.” The district that she visited taught the core content areas of math and science in Spanish in their middle school dual language program. *The Crusader* did not look at any other model. She decided to duplicate that district’s secondary dual language program structure at Berny Secondary School because she “didn’t know what else to do.” She presented the structure to the campus improvement team and they figured out a way to do it. Since the Berny Secondary School was an international school, there were no arguments from parents “because they had chosen to put their children there.” And as far as the staff, she added they, “had chosen to come there. Everybody valued language. We already valued learning of language.” Four languages were already offered at Berny Secondary School, which included French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Therefore, *The Crusader* was “able to accommodate those 20 students without adding additional staff.” She proved to be a true problem-solver.

After *The Crusader* led Berny Secondary Schools to “a very good place,” she felt it was time to pursue other leadership positions. Through this recollection, she demonstrated her ability to grow other leaders. She remembered the day she realized it was time for a change.

I was sitting at lunch. I always ate in the cafeteria dining hall. My leadership team would join me very often and we would eat together and have a meeting. And, one day we were all in there and an issue popped up and I started to offer my

opinion and I didn't need to because they were solving it without me, and I knew then it was time to go.

*The Crusader* demonstrated her passion for language in her journey not only to start a dual language program at the elementary, but well into the secondary level. Her educational career clearly showed an impassioned and sustained effort to bring about social change for the dual language community in Harley ISD. Even after being retired, she still continued to make an impact by providing consultation services to the district.

### **The Ardent Leaders**

A focus group interview was conducted with three district level personnel, an instructional coordinator and two instructional specialists. The interview began with one of the instructional specialists and the other two district personnel joined in shortly afterwards. The instructional coordinator mentioned that only first instructional specialists that started the interview had more experience with the secondary dual language and felt that it would be “more beneficial for him to be answering the secondary questions for the interview.”

**Instructional Specialist 1.** The first instructional specialist shared that he was originally from San Juan, Puerto Rico. He had majored in science, specifically biology and chemistry. He worked in Puerto Rico prior to coming to the United States three years ago. He took the alternative certification route to become certified for the state of Texas. He was hired to teach at a middle school in Harley ISD. He had taught as a dual language science teacher for three years and had recently become an instructional specialist for the dual language secondary program. He had only been in that position for a month.

**Instructional Specialist 2.** This instructional specialist started in [named school district] as a paraprofessional. At first, she said that “teaching was not something” that she was interested in. Then she started working with students and her interest grew. She

became a teacher in 2007. Her first year, she worked with English as a second language (ESL) and bilingual students. Then her principal asked her to transition to only teaching bilingual students. She prepared for the bilingual certification exam and became certified after passing the test. Since then, she has been working with bilingual students. While in [named school district] she also was a campus instructional coach. Then, she became a Response to Intervention (RTI) coordinator. She recalled seeing a different aspect at the kindergarten to fourth grade campus she was working at as it had about a 96% Hispanic population. She remembered it was an early exit bilingual program. Speaking of her educational journey brought to mind her experience of measuring where the students were and “the struggles they had when it came to language acquisition.” Then she moved to another district where she was an instructional bilingual coach part time for the district and the other part for a campus. She shared,

I was able to see another side of bilingual education because since I had gone from a Title one campus and now, I was at a non-Title one campus. It was very different. But nonetheless, I appreciated it, that experience because I was also able to see a different side of English learners where they may not get as much support as the ones at the Title one campuses because of the funding. But one of the great things that happened to me while I was there is that the district started to move towards dual language.

At this point, she stated that she began to learn more about dual language, its philosophy, the research, and the results. She said the parents, including non-Spanish speakers, in that area wanted a two-way program and that they were true advocates. That district ended up adopting a dual language program after the board approved it. The instructional specialist was still so excited and added,



So that was really great to see that it was wanted by the community. And just looking at the research as far as how it benefits the English learners, I went full in and I love it. And just in comparison with the early exit, I'm like, this is the way to go...definitely, dual language. It's the best for what our kids need. And so, I'm a complete advocate for it.

**Instructional Coordinator.** The other participant was the instructional coordinator for Harley ISD's multilingual department. She started in [named school district] as a bilingual teacher, not in dual language. She became an administrator in the same district where she taught. Then she moved to another district to work in their multilingual department. At the next district she became exposed to dual language at the elementary level. She had recently been named the instructional coordinator in Harley ISD. She stated that the previous year's focus had been on "working with elementary dual language campuses and also with the ESL campuses...on how to insert English learner (EL) strategies into the curriculum and going into classrooms and providing teacher support."

The first instructional specialist described several factors that he felt impacted the secondary dual language programs in Harley ISD. One was the district was "very reluctant to have students that were not at the Pre-AP or AP level to form part of the program. He thought that the elementary level dual language programs in the district were "very strong, super strong and well planned out." On the contrary, he also felt that it was "very difficult to have high levels of every single core class." Even though it would be ideal, some of the students entered middle school with very high language acquisition but average in mathematics. He went on to elaborate.

they [students] had to take all pre-AP or AP classes to be part of the program.

And that was a major issue with math for example, because students had to be at

the pre-AP math, Algebra for example. In middle school, we have that issue. In sixth grade, they had to be in pre-AP and mathematics, pre-AP language arts in English and be dual language for science....So the number started dropping.

The low numbers were also brought up as a challenge in Harley ISD by the instructional coordinator. She said,

We would like more participation, especially at the secondary [level] because we do have it offered at one of our high schools, but sometimes there's different factors that come into play with having their students attend that specific high school. So, it could be personal factors, just different factors that come into play.

The second instructional specialist added that it could be the “distance of the school” or that the students may have wanted to go to their zoned high school to attend with their neighborhood friends.

The first instructional specialist went on to describe some of the ways these challenges are being overcome through parent and district support.

I think that number one is having the conversation with their parents. And not only the native Spanish speakers, but with the native English speaker parents that see the benefit of being bilingual and bicultural. So, that's number one. So, the parents have been the best lobbyist ever. So, they [parents] really believe in the program and we've seen that parent involvement on a high level. Also, schools see that benefit in the scores. We see that the students at our dual language one way and two way have outperformed their peers. And we see that, that's correct math, that's known in education that dual language works very well. So, schools see the benefit, see the high scores, see that students are at meets or mastery in almost all STAARs in EOCs. So, they [schools] see the benefit also there.

The first instructional specialist shared an interesting point about dual language programs transitioning from elementary to middle school. He said,

in dual language at the secondary level is not segmented between one way and two way, it's smoother in the sense that it's only one classroom. So, we see that's easier for a lot of the students. But it's difficult for example, the two-way students that are in the same room now with one-way students. So, it's easy for some, but at the same time, it's a hurdle because they have to be at, this is hypothetically speaking, be at the same level of Spanish and English, both in sixth grade and onward to be successful in the program.

He felt that this was a “positive and a negative.” By the end of fifth grade, the students should have earned a level one Spanish credit. All of the students from both the one way and the two-way dual language program were expected to be on a similar level in Spanish, but he said that was “not always the case, but most of the time it is.” He went on to say that another positive was that most of the dual language students take a lot of the classes together and this helps to create community. The students become an extended family as they continue to work together. He added, “...they create a bond very similar to elementary schools, that connection,” continues to be developed as they move from grade level to grade level.

The second factor he listed was that “students had to start the program at a pre-kindergarten or kinder and continue on to high school.” He explained,

That was very difficult because a lot of the students that came [immigrated] to the United States [in] third, fourth grade could not form part of the dual language program at the secondary level, or well, the accepted was that they were in a similar program in another district. Yes. But if they wanted like to start and we had a lot of good students that came from Latin America or from Spain and other

countries that we knew were good candidates, but because they didn't have the requirement of starting in kinder or pre-kinder could not be part of the program. He felt it was unfortunate that high performing students moving to the United States from Latin American schools would not be accepted to be part of the middle school dual language program because they had not experienced the dual language program in the district since kindergarten. He knew it was a hurdle that needed to be overcome with some sort of evaluation process.

The instructional specialist went on to describe an option that had been discussed in the previous year to overcome the challenge of accepting newcomers into the middle school dual language program. They had talked about

creating a committee similar to the LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee) or the ARD (Admission Review Dismissal) equivalent for dual language to identify students with high proficiency in both languages that even though they didn't start the program at the elementary level, we can identify in the secondary level and work with them onward.

They had discussed starting at the school level with counselors identifying high proficiency students to work forward from there. He said that the district was open to the idea of forming such a committee since they could see the benefits of dual language. He felt that when there are strict guidelines, they are not always enforceable.

From the teacher perspective, the first instructional specialist shared that 100% of his dual language students met the state's passing standard on the eighth-grade science STAAR state assessment. Even though math was not dual language, he celebrated that his students also reached the state standard of meets expectations, which shows the student is on grade level, and masters, which means that the student showed a strong understanding of the course content, levels on the mathematics STAAR state assessment.

He also shared that his dual language students in eighth grade had taken the Spanish AP test and once again all of them passed at 100%. The students earned high school credit as well as college credits as eighth graders. According to the instructional specialist, the dual language students who had three Languages other than English (LOTE) credits and an 80 or above in English language arts, whether as an eighth grader or as a senior, had a statement added to their transcript indicating that the student was bicultural and biliterate. Celebrations were held for students who earned this distinction on their transcripts. The instructional specialist felt that it “was a way to encourage not only dual language, but bilingual programs in our district and for students.” He also felt that it enticed students to earn the credits as it was “very powerful” when being considered for admission to the university level. He was excited to share, “It’s incredible to have that in your transcript. That the district and the state recognize that you’re bicultural and biliterate is incredible!”

One of the recommendations for successful secondary dual language programs made by the instructional specialist was to shelter the dual language students by having them in the same Spanish classes together, including the core content courses. He felt that has helped the students in Harley ISD to build a strong foundation and as a result they have seen high performance on district benchmarks and state assessments.

One of the struggles mentioned by the instructional specialist was the “district working on creating common assessments.” As a Professional Learning Community (PLC) district, benchmarks had been established. The struggle he mentioned was,

how can we leverage, and the same time have effective accountability and effective data from our dual language students? ...that’s a question. Do I test them in Spanish or in English? And the answer is maybe. Because before, before 2014, you could take the eighth-grade science STAAR in Spanish. That changed in

2015. That happened to me [as a teacher] when the new change came, I was like, "I can give assessments in Spanish, but the test is in English. So, what do we do? The district decided to continue teaching the science class in Spanish, but the major exams and the state assessment were administered in English. The instructional specialist felt that guidelines were needed in this major area.

He was very passionate about the assessments as it was brought up again. Based on the dominant language in a dual language elementary program, the students can take the state assessment in either Spanish or English. The LPAC reviews the data for each student and makes the recommendation. The Spanish assessment option was available up to fifth grade for reading, math, and science. At the secondary level, this option is no longer available. He felt that was a major mistake from the state of Texas.

The instructional specialist shared that due to this change, the influx of more than 1000 newcomers from Guatemala and Honduras did not have the option to take a high stakes assessment in Spanish. It had to be administered in English. He shared that a lot of the newcomer students were also Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). Additionally, he said,

I could see the benefit, not of the dual language concept in general, but a lot of the techniques that worked for dual language can be used with these kids. And not having the possibility of utilizing Texas assessments in Spanish for them, for me is horrendous. It's very negative.

The instructional specialist brought up an interesting point about the curriculum and resources. He stated that they did have a curriculum for Spanish for native speakers, but they needed more, including resources. He said, "It's a work in progress." He felt that the district was strong because they pushed the students "for a lot of gains." He shared that it was successful due to the PLCs and having "rigorous assessments." He added,

The success is not the language. The success is the rigor of the assessment and the level of instruction. That's my goal. If you know the material well at this level in eighth grade, if it were bilingual French and English or French and German, you should be able to answer a test in either language. Prove that to you as a Spanish speaking student can take an assessment in either language with the same level of rigor and being successful. If you have the CALP [Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency], the high level, the cognitive language, direct professional academic language at high levels in Spanish or in English, you should have no issue.

The instructional specialist believed that the rigor of the instruction must align with the rigor of the assessments regardless of the language of instruction.

This conversation led to a discussion about professional development. He spoke to his knowledge of some teachers teaching at a “very informal level.” He continued explaining,

We have some teachers that use very basic level of instruction, not rigorous, and we see the results. So, it happens. It's autonomous to the language. If there's high rigor, high use of vocabulary, students will be successful, and we've pushed those students at a high level.

Staff development was an area he mentioned to be “lacking and a lot.” The district had brought in Dr. Sandra Mercuri, a nationally recognized educational consultant for dual language education. Her professional development targeted mostly the elementary level. He shared that as a secondary middle school teacher, Dr. Mercuri had observed him, but he said, “At the same time, we need more.” It was not clarified if feedback was provided by the consultant.

The second instructional specialist had also made the same observation as far as lacking professional development for the secondary, specifically for middle and high

schools. She recalled that there was “a lot of PD last school year for elementary,” but also saw the need for secondary level personnel. She shared that during the current school year, they had added more staff development to the dual language teachers in middle and high school levels.

One of the ways the first instructional specialist planned to address staff development was through modeling. He felt it was the best type of professional development because teachers get nervous when they are observed. He believed in modeling for teachers in their classrooms. He described that in lecture style sessions “you always gain information from professional development,” but, in his opinion, lessons have to be modeled. Additionally, he felt that it was important that the person modeling had tenure and that it had to be someone with high proficiency in both languages. The instructional specialist was describing job embedded coaching in the classroom for the teachers’ growth and development. He thought the teachers needed more access to professional development at every level.

The instructional coordinator also added that the district was trying a new system called eBadging where the teachers received an eBadge for their email signature after completing a task that had to do with dual language curriculum or instruction. By displaying it on their email signature it would go out in every message letting others know, “Okay, they’ve completed that task.” The teacher had to complete a reflection or implemented a learned strategy in their classroom or on campus from their professional development trainings. The next step described by the instructional coordinator was creating, “...some sort of learners' promise for our teachers and our administrators to then show and to show basically the alignment with the guiding principles and our district and how they're implementing it on their campus.”



When asked if principals received professional development, the first instructional specialist could not recall if they did but felt that they too should be receiving dual language professional growth opportunities. It was explained by the other instructional specialist there had been trainings for elementary campuses the previous year. The training was titled Dual Language Essentials for Administrators or Simultaneous Biliteracy for Administrators. She went on to say that the training was not as extensive as the one for teachers, but more like a summary of the teachers' trainings. However, it was not specific for secondary administrators.

The next topic brought up by the first instructional specialist was dual language techniques used in the classroom. He had his blue and red markers to distinguish the target language, which is a common practice in dual language programs. He stated, a lot of the techniques that work for elementary do work for high school and middle school, but at the same time they do not because it's different. In elementary, most of the classes are sheltered, so it's easy. You see they have one teacher or two. So, it's very easy to see that the anchor charts are there, visual aids are there, procedures are in place.

In the middle school, he shared it is just one teacher teaching the science or Spanish for the dual language students in Spanish in addition to teaching the same subject matter in English for the other non-dual language courses. He was implying that it was easier for the elementary teachers to implement the anchor charts and visual aids since the classroom teacher only taught the dual language subject matter in Spanish; whereas, at the secondary level, the middle school teachers teach the subject matter in both English and Spanish to different groups of students. For these reasons and "having to teach knowing that your assessments and benchmarks and accountability is in English" were the major difference between secondary and elementary.

Family and community were another topic mentioned by the first instructional specialist. He felt that parents were “very proactive” and their largest advocates. During the expansion process of the dual language program to the secondary level, the parents were a major factor to continue it. They felt that stopping the program at fifth grade was detrimental for their children and they, along with dual language teachers, advocated for the expansion. The district also saw the benefits and that the two-way dual language students were outperforming students in other programs.

The instructional specialist believed that the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) played an important role in pushing a dual language program. At the time of the interview, they were looking for successful Latinos to participate in their career day events. The Hispanic Heritage events were underway, and they wanted the dual language students to see the benefits of bilingualism through the experiences of the successful Latinos brought into these events.

The first instructional specialist hoped that “other districts in Texas and the nation implemented a very similar dual language program.” He added,

I think that not only in Spanish, hopefully we have dual language programs in other languages because it doesn't necessarily have to be in Spanish. Because, for example, we have [a surrounding district] is one that's pushing Mandarin, for example, and hopefully they can expand. So, it's the idea bilingual students, bicultural students by far outperform everybody.

The first instructional specialist enthusiastically shared in the interview that he was a dual language fan and that it should be offered across the board. His passion and advocacy for dual language programs was evident throughout the interview process.

## **Berny Secondary School**

This secondary school has a minority-majority student population. The demographics for the school were as follows: 3.2% African American, 69.9% Hispanic, 18.6% White, 0.0% American Indian, 7.1% Asian, 0.0% Pacific Islander, and 1.2% with two or more races (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The school serves students in grades six through twelve.

**The Paradigmatic Leader.** The Berny Secondary School administrator shared her educational background information. She had been a teacher at both the elementary and middle school levels. She had a master's degree in counseling and had been a school counselor for both the elementary and middle school levels. Per the interview, the administrator shared, "I decided that wasn't for me." She went back to school and earned another master's degree in administration. She became an assistant principal and after six years, moved into the principalship in Harley ISD. She had been an elementary principal for ten years and was in her third year as the principal at Berny Secondary School. She had also earned her doctorate degree six years ago.

*The Paradigmatic Leader* talked about how the school had "gone through a lot of transition in the last five years." She shared that when the director that started the school moved into central office in Harley ISD, the next administrator who led the campus was there for two years. Then, that administrator left and the next one hired was only there for one year. Harley ISD then had an intern until they hired *The Paradigmatic Leader*. With all the changes, she stated, "I'm trying to establish that trust."

*The Paradigmatic Leader* described the dual language program at Berny Secondary School, as follows,

So, we do have Spanish language courses and then we have the science content area. So, every student who is in a dual language program has to take their science

in the dual language but that's only content the core content classes where they have the dual language. Math and language arts and social studies are not dual language.

Since Berny Secondary School went through twelfth grade, she stated that the high school students could also earn a bilingual diploma.

She also recalled that it was the parents who requested that the secondary dual language program be expanded from the elementary level. Her recollection follows,

They [the district] listened to the parents because they did see that the elementaries [sic] were doing a good job of creating the interest and kids were sticking in it and they weren't just dropping out and so they realized there's a need to go forward with it.

*The Paradigmatic Leader* formed part of the district committee and was able to see the process. She remembered the committee was made up of parents of children in the dual language program, central office personnel, campus administrators, and teachers. She said that they talked about basic things like “what’s the need and what would this look like.” Then, once the board approved it, there was an official task force created to look at the details and logistics. The new smaller task force consisted of “one parent representative, administrator of a school that’s not dual language, administrator of the campus that was dual language, and then the directors at the ad [administration] building at central office.” She recalled a five-year plan was created that included the required teachers and their certification, the materials, and the budget to cover the expansion of the dual language program into the middle school level and onto high school. She added that they also reviewed the selection process for the different feeder patterns of the schools that were selected to have the program. They had to ensure a “path for every student who was in the fifth grade in a dual language program to have the

opportunity to continue and not be shut out because of space.” Given Berny Secondary School was capped for enrollment because it was under the provisions of a charter school, the dual language students wishing to attend this school would have to enter the lottery process and be selected through its procedure.

When asked if any part of the process could be changed, what her recommendations would be, she responded,

I thought the timeline was still appropriate. They started early enough to give time to be thoughtful about it. I think the challenging part of it was, and maybe this answers another question, is how do you find the right certified teacher for it and then what oversight would there be you know like training, district support, how do we know that our program is doing well, you know. That's a big enough challenge in a bilingual department anyway.

This conversation led to the next topic of support in the form of continued training for professional development in secondary dual language programs. *The Paradigmatic Leader* talked about how new dual language programs start off with a lot of support and how it tends to taper off. Speaking on behalf of her campus, she added, “They [the district] feel like okay by now you should be able to fly on your own.” Then, she related the lack of support possibly to “all of the leadership changes.” She still challenged the notion of having received adequate training, stating, “I don’t know that that [training] really happened and that that support was there.” The campus still had the same teachers from the start of the secondary dual language implementation. *The Paradigmatic Leader* stated again that there was “a big need for the training piece.”

As the campus leader, she shared that they were trying to get training back on track because she felt that it had been lacking for the secondary dual language program.

With our teachers we're going kind of back to what are good instructional strategies. Do we really understand, and can we perform? And, what coaching do we need to put in place with the teachers because I think that's our weakest link is that these teachers just even if they were "gen ed" English only science teachers, they would still need that help.

She added that as she had completed walk throughs in classrooms that she had recognized that they could not get to deeper thinking until they worked to "strengthen the pedagogy in the instructional strategies of the teacher." Then she talked about how the next layer was to take teachers to observe at their successful dual language programs at their elementary campuses. She felt that they could learn some of the instructional strategies to carry over to their middle school program for a nicer transition. Later in the interview, she mentioned using the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education published by the Center for Applied Linguistics with the teachers to discuss in their professional learning communities, PLCs.

When discussing the factors that impact secondary dual language trainings, *The Paradigmatic Leader* mentioned several. She started with the teacher certification requirements. Since the dual language program was taught through the science core subject, she said, "We had to find science certified bilingual teachers and that seems to be kind of like a very small niche of teachers."

*The Paradigmatic Leader* described how they were overcoming this challenge.

So, I think with the certification piece it really was like 'hey, we find a certified teacher in science who is bilingual.' Can we get them to take the test to get that piece of certification? And vice versa like how can we help match a candidate who is good in, you know, had one thing but lacking the other? Then support them through that.

The next factor once again was training. Staying on the topic of science certified teachers, she shared,

Even if you were to find like say a teacher who's science certified but happens to be bilingual just by nature of their own language ability and then gets the certifications like how do you then train them in the instructional strategies and instructional approaches of making a strong dual language program, right? So, that training is what I'm more referring to. It seems like one or the other is usually present but the two are not in an individual right out of the gate. You have to train for that.

In a later comment she said, “Just coming in and speaking in two languages doesn’t mean that you are a dual language teacher.”

*The Paradigmatic Leader* also stressed the importance of having campus administrators trained. She stated,

What really matters is are the building leaders also trained so that they know how to support that teacher and how to oversee that the program itself too, which is something I found even at the elementary level. It does boil down to does the principal know what it takes to have a successful program and how can you know and are they trained enough to promote and support that.

When asked how the lack of training had been overcome, she shared that she did not know that it had been overcome. She felt that it had “been mitigated by the fact” that it was understood that it was an issue then attributed it to the district having a “very small bilingual department.” She added, “They do the best they can.” She stated that the district had provided some trainings early on during the inception of the program, such as, having brought in dual language experts. She felt the continuity of trainings had not been maintained when she said, “It just hasn't been sustained. So that sustainability was

dropped.” She added that it could be due to the financial hardships the district had gone through and that the bilingual department had “really been bare bones.”

The last factor listed was the lack of materials for secondary dual language programs. She shared that materials were hard to come by for the classroom. She felt that the committee had selected the science core content area for the program for the ease of translation. She added, it “might be easier to do a homegrown kind of thing when there's not ready-made materials to go out and search for” these resources. She did question this later, asking, “How do you really find the right materials for the class so that you're not burdening the teacher with having to do that [translate] as well?” She remembered that it was a huge hurdle for the task force as they had also noticed there were not any resources on the market. She said, “It was going to be left up to the teachers to decide what to use and how to use it.” One of the ways this factor had been overcome according to *The Paradigmatic Leader* was

by getting our hands on anything that was out there that could be used in a science class that was also in Spanish. Then a lot of the teacher-made kind of things.

Teachers made decisions or judgment over what to use.

When asked if there had been any factors that made the transition smoother from an elementary dual language program to one in middle school, she said, “The fact that we weren't starting it from scratch.” She added,

Kids weren't coming into sixth grade all of a sudden wanting to be in a dual language program. They had come from elementaries [sic] where they had been in it for six years and so they kind of knew what to expect. They knew how to operate within the classroom and understood the approaches. So, that was a plus.

She also stated that scheduling was another factor that made for a smooth transition into the middle school. She said that the master schedule made it easier to



schedule students into the science course give that was the content area chosen for the dual language program. She went on to describe the reason the master schedule expedited the scheduling of students into their courses.

So, when they [students] are with their other classes, here anyway, they moved together in a group, right, as opposed to a traditional comprehensive middle school or high school where everybody's schedules are all different. So, we knew that when sixth grade had science, there was a sixth-grade science dual language at the same time. So that made for a smooth transition as well.

Based on her experiences with the implementation of a secondary dual language program, she made some recommendations for schools transitioning from an elementary program. She realized that all dual language programs have their own structure for the implementation process.

There's a subtle difference, whether it's the percentage of time that you spend on language each year or whether it's the approaches that are being done or whatever the case like everyone kind of has their own way of doing it.

For secondary schools, she said that knowing the elementary feeder schools with dual language, it was necessary to know what kind of structure each one had in their program. Therefore, she added that having conversations between the dual language campus leaders from each elementary school and the middle school were important. She also brought up the point of understanding what good dual language program components are and what that meant for secondary dual language programs. Having been at both the elementary and the secondary level, she mentioned that there are slightly different approaches.

Probably the thing that I catch the most heat with my teachers is that [I'm told] you're elementary. Oh, that's so elementary! And, I'm like guys [teachers] if

you want to know how to reach kids, go into a kindergarten classroom and see how a teacher manages 25 five-year old's [students] while doing different things at different levels. Then you'll understand what I am talking about. It has nothing to do with the age of the kid. You have to change your teaching and you have to do it differently than the standing at the front of the room and delivering the standard delivery. But that's traditionally secondary approaches, right? So, that's a culture shift too. So, a leader who understands that can help those models be put into a dual language classroom or any classroom really and it's a tough battle.

*The Paradigmatic Leader* did not recall the district using the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018) as an evaluative tool for their dual language programs. She felt that they should be used. She was familiar with the guiding principles as they were “integral” to her study during her doctoral program. She said that most of their discussions were focused on...

How do you reach language learners in general not just English language learning? How does that happen? I think too, one of the things that is kind of taken for granted at the secondary levels is like they can do it already. Well, no they don't stop doing those things. They have to develop and have to develop deeper. So, you know not just content vocabulary but expressing yourself without just basic language. How do you get students to have deeper academic conversation than just responding to a question?

*The Paradigmatic Leader* demonstrated practical leadership practices based on her experiences. From this, she developed her own paradigms to form her own understanding of good qualities in dual language programs to support not only the program, but teachers too. At the end, she stated, “I mean I really think it starts with me

as a leader knowing what to look for and how to support teachers. And then how to hire for [secondary dual language] because that's important too.”

### **Parker Middle School**

The school has a diverse student population. The demographic composition of this campus was as follows: 16.6% African American, 40.4% Hispanic, 35.2% White, 0.3% American Indian, 3.8% Asian, 0.0% Pacific Islander, and 3.7% with two or more races (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The dual language program is structured to teach science in Spanish. The Spanish language arts has specifically been designed for dual language students and the course is taken as a Spanish II course for Spanish speakers. The campus administrator was interviewed at this school. He also scheduled for two of the dual language teachers to be interviewed. They both consented to participate by interviewing.

**The Protagonist Leader.** *The Protagonist Leader* was selected as a moniker for the administrator for his active participation in the dual language program. He not only shared his perspectives as an administrator, but also as a parent of his own children, who had participated in dual language programs.

*The Protagonist Leader* started his educational career in 2005. He taught eighth grade English at a junior high for two years. Then, helped open up a new high school in [school district]. While at the high school, he taught ninth grade English for one year. Then he taught juniors for one year until the school expanded to seniors. He taught seniors for six years. He taught for a total of six years and he also coached. His next position was at a high school in Harley ISD where he became an administrator in 2011. He described the school’s Hispanic demographics at 91% and low socio-economic. He then stated that he had the privilege to move to central office as the interim executive director of administration from January to June of 2016. In the following school year, he

stayed in central office, but the title of his position changed even though he stated he was still supporting school administrators. In June of 2017, he became the interim principal for two months for one of the high schools in Harley ISD. He was then placed at Parker Middle School and was starting his third year as the campus administrator.

*The Protagonist Leader* had two different perspectives that were evident throughout the interview. He had the perspective as a parent with children in the dual language program. The other perspective was from the central office experience where he stated he was “in charge of the entire process.” He oversaw the lottery selection process from setting it up to answering questions. Additionally, he was also the administrator leading the middle school campus, which had the dual language program. He stated,

I know the ins and outs as a parent. I know the ins and outs as somebody who's in charge at the district level. So, I could say, I believe, this is going into my 3rd year. But again, I have more of extensive knowledge than just a principal of the dual language program.

He shared that the middle school had three elementary schools with dual language programs for which Parker Middle School was the feeder campus. Two of the elementary campuses implemented a 50% Spanish-50% English program while the other elementary had used the 90% Spanish-10% English structure. He added that by fifth grade the students took a Spanish Credit by Exam (CBE) to a Spanish I high school credit. He said once they earned the credit, the dual language students then applied to be in the lottery where they had three middle school choices, one, Parker Middle School, two, Berny Secondary School, and then a third choice.

He recalled there being a need in the district for a secondary dual language program and that “parents wanted to have it.” He shared a district, personal, and familial perspective.

The district thought it would be another benefit because we do have various academies and programs to give our students different choices. And of course, you know living in Texas we know how important it is to be able to have people who are bilingual to be able to communicate with all parents just in general even just everyday life. As a parent, I felt it was important to give my kids that Spanish background because they're probably going to need it more than I needed it. He said the dual language program started at the elementary level and after the push for it, the district was committed to take it into the secondary level.

*The Protagonist Leader* shared his thought process about the task force, but he had not actually participated in it. He felt that they had tried to make the secondary dual language program an enrichment program. After leading and seeing the program as the campus administrator, he did not feel “that everything was done in the best interest of kids.” The task force had agreed that one of the requirements of the dual language program was that the students would have to be enrolled in all Pre-AP courses. He struggled with this requirement.

And to assume that because a kid has taken a dual language to force him into Pre-AP everything actually when you look at the research behind it, it's really not fair to the kids because there are kids who excel in math who may not excel in English. And so, we don't force those kids to take Pre-AP in everything. So, why would we force a kid who is taking a second language to take Pre-AP everything. This demonstrated a conflict in his ideals of a district plan versus the reality that was actually happening at his campus.

He went on to address this issue. As the campus decision maker, he said, Listen, I understand why this was written and I will go to bat with anyone who says it. I'm not trying to erase what we've done as far as how we got to here. But

too many times we do things because that's the way we've always done it. When we always have to ask the question, what's in the best interest of our kids? And, if our core value says every child will succeed and we have a moral compass, then morally it's not right to continue to do something that's setting kids up for failure instead of success.

He had not forced students in dual language to take Pre-AP courses with the exception of the science dual language Pre-AP course. The Spanish, he said, was also part of the dual language scope and sequence since the students were being prepared to take the AP exam when they completed the eighth grade. He stressed that as the campus principal, he did not make students take Pre-AP English just because they were a dual language student. He added, "That's not fair to the students. Now I also won't keep a kid from signing up if they want to but I'm not going to make any requirements because that's not what's in the best interest of kids."

Even though he had addressed this issue at the campus level, *The Protagonist Leader* felt that it had not been addressed at the district level. He stated that he had shared his views with different district leaders and had even shared with them his disagreement to the Pre-AP requirement for dual language students from his experiences as a parent. He wondered why students would be "boxed" into making them take all courses at the Pre-AP level. He felt that that multilingual department should look into the requirement and possibly change it. However, he said,

I'm not going to wait for you to tell me to do what's right. I have to make the decision for this campus and if I'm not breaking any laws and I'm not breaking policies, it's pretty much their [students'] schedule and you know at some point you do have to be the leader and make a decision to say I'm going to do what is in the best interest of our kids.

Later, he added that there had not been a conversation with district personnel where they had not been able to problem-solve and compromise. Part of it, he said, was that he knew the rules since he had experience from being in central office.

According to the administrator, at Parker Middle School, the students take science as their dual language course and it is taught in Spanish. The dual language students are also enrolled to take Spanish II in sixth grade, Spanish 3 while in seventh grade, and then they take Spanish 4 their eighth-grade year. When the eighth graders took the AP exam, the campus received their scores at the four and five levels which he said “was really good.” That news brought him excitement.

*The Protagonist Leader* then shared that the dual language program was “actually growing” and there was “a wait list for kids to get in.” Parker Middle School typically took in 25-30 students for their dual language program. He said that the previous year, he noticed that there were about 20 students on the wait list.

So, I said as the leader, if I've got 20 families who want to come in this group, they've listed it as their first choice because you can choose 1-2-3. So, I had 50 families to 55 families who listed Parker Middle School as their first choice. I did allow it and took 30 [students].

He had opened another section for sixth grade dual language science and Spanish. He added, “I don't want them not to continue because they couldn't get into the school.”

*The Protagonist Leader* felt that the families had selected Parker Middle School as the first choice, not only because of the dual language program, but because of the “campus in general.” He explained,

We have the most diverse campus in all of the [Harley ISD]. We've got over 20 different languages spoken here at this campus. And, so it is a mixture of different nationalities, different economic backgrounds, but we have a good climate where

every kid, every person feels welcome here. You don't feel like anyone is a second-class citizen. We promote the things that we celebrate in common and we don't highlight our differences. We learn to respect and appreciate differences, but we celebrate our commonalities. And, so when that permeates through the staff, the parents see it and you get that vibe here and people just want to come to [Parker Middle School] to be a part of that because you can't get that everywhere. So, they [students] chose to sign up to come to [Parker Middle School].

He shared that in the last four years their enrollment as a campus had grown by over 100 students and they had a wait list for students who wanted to transfer into Parker Middle School because they had heard good things. He stated that the Parker Middle School dual language program was more attractive to students because of the different choices offered and the school climate. He reiterated,

So, again when you make it a little more relaxed and make things kid friendly where you don't have to take Pre-AP, you can actually be a kid and learn at your pace, people want to be a part of that.

He went on to describe more of his developed ideals as a leader.

You need to be receptive to a change in the climate of everything you know. We have to gauge the temperature. And, instead of just saying this is who we are, you have to acclimate to us as a school. Schools need to do a better job to acclimate to our clientele.

He gave another example to confirm his idealistic belief of his responsiveness to student preferences through problem-solving strategies. Even though it was not about dual language, it shows the development of his flexibility and creativity as a leader.

We wear uniforms [at Parker Middle School] and one of the things that a lot of the young ladies and probably a lot of the adult ladies wear on the evenings or



weekends are like the yoga pants, the tights. Right? Well, because we have so many who have a lot so many who don't have a lot. If you just say, 'hey you [can] wear any tights.' You have some wearing Target. You have some wear athletic or Lululemon, so anywhere from \$5 to \$200. So, instead I had our PTA [Parent Teacher Association] come up with and develop a navy blue [Parker Middle School] PTA type [pants]. So, now the only tights students can wear are the ones that the PTA have that say [Parker Middle School] on them. But that levels the playing field. Again, it gives the kids something comfortable that they are used to wearing anyway. So, instead of saying 'no tights aren't allowed,' I just gave you the type that you can wear. So, again what is it that kids want? If you can still be in uniform, can still be in dress code but it is something that they want to wear anyway? It relaxes the environment.

He said this instance was just "a small example of the little things" done at Parker Middle School to make everyone feel welcome.

*The Protagonist Leader* then described the track for eighth grade dual language moving into one of the high school's in Harley ISD. He shared that due to the state of Texas' changed requirements, student earning their Spanish AP credit had recognition added to their high school diploma. This was in the form of an acknowledgement statement stating that the student was biliterate and bilingual. Most students earn this as juniors in high school. He stated that the students at Parker Middle School earned the statement for their diploma as eighth graders. He said that at this point, middle school dual language students complete the requirements of the program. He asked,

Do we still ask all the dual language kids to go to [High School] if they technically completed it [requirements] if they want to continue or can you [the district] develop opportunities for them [students] at their home campus to be able

to continue their Spanish growth in reading and writing since they technically met the requirements by the time we finished eighth grade?

This was a question he had for the Harley ISD and stated that is where they were as a district. He said that the high school had implemented the “dual language program for several years.” At the high school level, he shared that students continued into Spanish 5, Spanish 6, and Spanish 7. They also had added history for the other core content subject, which was taught in Spanish. These were the courses that were part of the dual language program structure at the high school level according to the Parker Middle School administrator.

When asked about factors that impact the implementation of secondary dual language programs, he started with the Spanish science dual language class. He shared that in eighth grade the students take a STAAR science state assessment and that it is administered in English. He added,

One of the things that people who are concerned about this [ask] are the kids taking dual language science able to understand and take their test in English? And really the answer is ‘yes.’ And, so we haven't had kids fail because they were in the science dual language they actually do well.

He added that “those same kids end up making the fours and fives on the Spanish AP test.”

The next impacting factor was when students were being allowed to start a secondary dual language program. The first question that he asked was, “Did they come from a program before?” He said that, “Some say, ‘oh you didn’t go to our elementary program, so you can’t be in it.’” *The Protagonist Leader* shared that he had students who had “grown up in Venezuela or somewhere else” or they had gone internationally. He added,

So, if the kid was able to pass the CBE just like all the other kids who are coming in, then they could start here in sixth grade with Spanish II and be a part of the dual language [program].

He went on to elaborate further,

What are your guidelines and how much flexibility do you have because at the same time we've had some kids who've come in from other countries who aren't proficient in English and it's more beneficial to put them in science into a dual language [class] with those kids than to force them into an all English class. It's more important that they understand the material and so hopefully it translates over to them and 90% of time those kids end up passing the testing anyway.

The policy was questioned given it had presented some limitations for students being allowed to enroll into the secondary dual language program.

So, at the core of every decision are you doing what's best for kids? Are you letting the rules and the policies dictate how kids learn? So, again those are some of the decisions of keeping it pure. Making sure that the kids can handle it. That you're not kicking someone out. So, there's the politics to it, but those are just things you have to consider.

The next factor discussed was the dual language students' course schedule. *The Protagonist Leader* described the schedule having seven class periods. He added that there are four core areas including, language arts, math, science, and social studies. He said that students also had to take physical education. With all of these five, that only left two electives. He said, "If I'm a student dual language, Spanish is going to take one of my electives. So now, I only have one other choice." As a middle school, he said that they offered the most electives compared to other middle schools in the district. He said

that his philosophy was to add more choices. “I’d rather offer more choices instead of saying, ‘Hey, we’ve got three and force you to do this.’” In the two years that he had led the campus, the following first four electives had been added in addition to the ones already offered previously.

- Dance
- Broadcast journalism
- Robotics
- Problem-solving
- Woodshop
- Home Economics
- Coding
- Theater Arts
- Choir
- Band
- Orchestra
- Athletics

He described the problem-solving elective as a “STEM-based class working on teaching kids how to take apart like a PlayStation and putting it back together and how this looks to boost that engineering piece.”

Since the dual language student schedule only allowed for one more elective, *The Protagonist Leader* said, “I had to be creative.” The science dual language teacher was also certified in physical education (P.E.), so his contract time hours were changed to offer P.E. for dual language students. He taught the P.E. curriculum before school from 7:20 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. The administrator said that the dual language students then got...

that elective time back in class so you don't feel like you're being penalized for trying to get ahead. That has boosted the morale of kids in the program where now they are getting involved in things other than just science dual language and one other elective. Now they feel like everyone else [with two elective choices]. They can be involved.

Due to the lack of funds to pay a teacher, he made just one slight schedule adjustment. By changing the teacher's contract time, the campus was able to offer P.E. before school to the dual language students.

You're talking about making a difference! Now, kids don't mind coming to go do P.E. early because they get to take the choir class or they get to take art or to get to take whatever. They get two electives just like everyone else instead of feeling sad. So, I know that is something that helps to transition. When your mindset is I don't mind going to school. I don't mind taking an extra class because I get something out of this.

One of the dual language group inclusion activities shared was for the eighth graders in the program to present their experiences to families considering the middle school dual language program. The administrator stated that t-shirts are made for the dual language students which show a way to identify with the dual language community. Additionally, he shared that he sets aside funds for the students to take dual language field trips that are set up by the parents. He added,

So that you feel like you're not alone. The parents also do all their back to school pool party or end of the year school party because you got kids coming from different campuses. So, anything to strengthen that bond.

He also talked about the parents setting up carpools since transportation was not provided to his school. He said that it helped the families to "get to know each other. They become

their own family.” He stated that was something that they embraced as they tried to help the families with the transitions of going into middle school.

The challenges in the dual language program were discussed next. He talked about the frustration of students not speaking enough Spanish upon entering the middle school. He felt it could be attributed to the concern of students passing the STAAR state assessments and because of that the delivery of instruction was heavier on the English language side. Students enrolled at Parker Middle School were shocked when the dual language teachers made them speak in Spanish. The students were told, “You are not going to get better in Spanish until you start speaking in Spanish.”

He brought up the challenge again about the Pre-AP requirement. He reiterated that he did not think that it was fair to students. He added,

You don’t say, ‘Hey, if you're going to play football, you need to run this fast.’ You don't say ‘If you’re in basketball, you need to be able to shoot this.’ ‘If you’re in band, you need to be able to be competing for first chair.’ You have some kids in first chair and you have some kids in tenth chair and kids who have never touched it [an instrument]. We don't put those requirements on them. So, someone who is learning to be bilingual and biliterate, why would we hold them to be in Pre-AP math and Pre-AP social studies? I just don't think that's in the best interest of the kids.

He thought the structure was designed to keep students out who didn’t need to be there, in other words, the program was for high-achieving students only. He then posed the question, “Ask yourself, why are you really doing things to begin with?”

The other challenge brought up was the lack of transportation for students attending Parker Middle School. Students at Berny Secondary School had established bus transportation for their students. He asked, “Why can’t you bring that for us?” He did

share that the school board had some transportation studies that showed that it may be feasible for the school district to provide it. However, he said, “I’m not privy as to why that doesn't happen.”

The last challenge in the program that *The Protagonist Leader* mentioned was the continuity path into high school given only one school was selected for the dual language program. He felt it was more of “hiccup for parents” based on his parent perspective. He still was not sure of the path students would take upon completion of eighth grade. He knew there was a clear path from elementary to middle school. His question was about the track for Spanish 5 to Spanish 8 and which campuses were offering the courses. He added,

Am I going to [high school] for dual language and everything else that comes along with it, all the clubs, the sports and everything else? Is that the place where I want the opportunity to be? Or have I made friendships and bonds with kids here who are all say going to [another high school] and now I have to leave them and now start all over at the high school level?

He was looking for an explanation on high school selections for the students so that if they chose to go back to their home campus that they could still refine their Spanish language development. He needed this clarification from the district, he said, so that this essential information could be articulated to all of his parents.

Later, he added that professional development and resources were two of the “biggest areas of growth” for the campus and as a district. He thought it was attributed as part of the next steps that the district needed to take to provide direction. He felt that had to be figured out first in order to have the professional development and resources built around the district plan. This in turn would help support the teachers. He added,

That's why we have to come back to the table. Then, build the resources to make sure students are exiting at eighth grade and that we have the support with the teachers to continue to develop them [students] if they choose to stay in it in high school.

When asked about any other successes and how they were being celebrated, he mentioned the students who had gone through the program. He said that high school students returned to the middle school to volunteer at times. They also translated for parents when presented the opportunity giving students the chance to practice their bilingual skills by “putting them into action.” He also added that upon graduation, students have been known to continue into college with double majors, including Spanish. They also return to tell the teachers what they have accomplished. He added, “So you know the effort and time you put in it into it has been worth it.”

He went on to describe the dual language leaders at Parker Middle School.

The two students who got the principal's award last year, which was voted on by the eighth grade teachers, one male, one female, were both dual language kids. So, they are contributing to this campus besides just taking Spanish. They're in student council. They're in National Junior Honor Society. They're natural born leaders and they're learning, and they've gotten four high school credits by the time they leave here. And, so, they are contributing to the overall success of this campus and we appreciate that. Do you have to be? No, that's just the pattern that has happened in the past couple of years.

One of his recommendations for districts transitioning into a secondary dual language program was “hiring the right people.” He felt that hiring was the most important factor. He said,



You can have the best curriculum in the world and even with all the hires I make here on this campus I see it all the time. Everybody's got a résumé. Everybody's got something that they are going to show you their best. But, what I look for is are you the best fit for this campus? Do you have a heart for kids? And, when you are starting that program is that person starting a program knowing that they're going to have kids from different backgrounds and different levels of speaking Spanish and understanding Spanish? And, are they willing to work with all of them to increase their love for the language instead of making them hate it? Because you don't want a kid to say, 'I hate Spanish. My teacher makes it hard. I'm just doing repetitive, repetitive, repetitive [work].' Or, am I falling in love with one of these languages of love? And am I learning to speak it? Am I listening to it? Am I learning to write it? And then, am I interacting with it? And, can a student see their growth in it because once the students see that they're getting some success, it makes them hungry to do more.

He continued to restate that having the right teachers that promote the program, those who taught engaging lessons, and involved parents were factors to be taken into consideration when hiring for a dual language program.

*The Protagonist Leader* went on to describe two of his dual language teachers that demonstrated these important qualities for a dual language program. He said that both teachers had been in the dual language programs since it had started in Harley ISD. They had taught in the program at the elementary level and currently were teaching at the middle school level. He shared that the teachers planned meetings for dual language parents in May and in August. The science dual language teacher called or emailed parents he said to give parents a positive, "Hey, your child did this today." He said the

frequent contacts made parents feel that the teachers were invested in their children. He added, “That’s not something you can teach. It’s either they have it or they don’t.”

The Parker Middle School administrator was given the pseudonym of *The Protagonist Leader* due to his active participation in doing what is best for students, not only for dual language students, but all students. The phrase, “best interest of kids” resonated throughout the interview. He demonstrated his values and purposeful leadership skills when he stated, “So, by knowing what is allowed and what isn’t allowed, I am able to find ways to create opportunities that keeps the teachers where they need to be and allows for more student to participate and be successful.”

**The Effectual Teacher.** *The Effectual Teacher* is the nickname for this Spanish Teacher. She can produce desired Spanish language levels from her students through her persistence and commitment to dual language programs.

*The Effectual Teacher* had taught in Harley ISD for 24 years. Her teaching certification areas included early childhood, general education through sixth grade, and secondary Spanish. She shared she was a bilingual teacher and had taught in dual language programs at both the elementary and middle school levels. The teacher had taught at Parker Middle School for 18 years. In her current position, she was teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. *The Effectual Teacher* stated that she was teaching Spanish I to seventh graders, Spanish II to eighth graders, and the dual language program to sixth graders. It was her sixth year in the dual language program at Parker Middle School.

*The Effectual Teacher* went on to describe the sixth-grade dual language class. She shared that it was Spanish II since it equated to a high school level Spanish course. She added that the students in this course were expected to have more advanced Spanish skills than students in a typical Spanish I course. She said,

It's much more advanced than my regular Spanish II students. The class is only taught in Spanish and I expect that I don't have to teach them the little basic vocabulary. I expect that they come with this and I can expand on that. So, it's an advanced Spanish II classroom and it's only taught in Spanish. So, it's like a Spanish II class for Spanish speakers.

This course, she added, was the beginning of the dual program at the secondary middle school. She described some of the skills addressed through the sixth-grade dual language Spanish II course.

My job, in the sixth grade, is to fix all the grammatical, the writing, some of the things that they didn't get right in elementary school, so that when they go to Spanish III and IV, they're more prepared to do projects, presentations, things of that nature.

*The Effectual Teacher* recalled when the dual language program started at Parker Middle School. She said that there had been a need for it because parents wanted more extracurricular activities for their children. The students were not offered those electives at the other school where the dual language program had been implemented, which was Berny Secondary Schools. She said the school could be considered like a magnet school and they did not offer extracurricular activities. The district opened up two more dual language middle schools and Parker Middle School was one of the campuses. The students then had the option to be involved in “sports, band, athletics, theater, and things like that.”

*The Effectual Teacher* went on to describe the dual language courses at Parker Middle School. She said that the classes had been designed “exclusively for our dual language students.” Therefore, she added, in sixth grade, the students entered from an elementary dual language program. Then, they moved into seventh grade, which was a

Pre-AP Spanish 3 class. In eighth grade, she said, that the students take an AP Spanish 4 class. At the end of eighth grade, the students took the AP exam.

*The Effectual Teacher* described some historical information next when she recalled when the dual language program was implemented six years ago. She said they had offered the Spanish language arts, which she taught through Spanish II. Then she added, that the secondary dual language program also originally had the core subject areas of science and social studies, which were taught in Spanish. She stated that the district had made the decision to only have one other content area and they kept the science. The dual language students were scheduled in the Spanish II and science dual language.

*The Effectual Teacher* then shared some historical information about the initial start of the dual language programs in the district. She recalled teaching at Sal Elementary, which she said it was their “premier elementary school” that had started the dual language program 22 years ago.

There was a need that parents saw for their child to start in kindergarten or pre-K with a second language. We didn't really have a program that started two languages as early as preschool and kindergarten. So, the parents, it was really parent led and teachers, several teachers who had children, wanted their children to be bilingual. The bilingual classes that we offered were really not bilingual. They were all taught in Spanish, all the content, all day long, the children were in Spanish, or if they were in the regular English classes, they were all day long in English. So, we did not have a program that would make your children bilingual in both English and Spanish and half and half.

She added that the parents wanted a program where their children could begin acquiring a second language early to continue its development through “core classes in English and

Spanish.” She stated, that they could see that when students “start a foreign language in seventh or eighth grade, kids are not retaining that Spanish.”

*The Effectual Teacher* stated that the superintendent had approached Sal Elementary about starting a dual language program given they had demographics for it. The school community had a “large Hispanic population and a smaller non-Hispanic.” They had the population to start a classroom “with the idea of 50% Spanish speakers and 50% non-Spanish speakers.” The program was initiated at Sal Elementary.

Once the dual language students from Sal Elementary reached fifth grade, Berny Secondary School was the “only school that had the possibility of moving from fifth to sixth grade.” *The Effectual Teacher* reiterated that it was “sort of a magnet campus” where they had different programs, including an International Baccalaureate (IB) program. They offered different languages, which gave students “different alternatives to regular education.” The district felt that Berny Secondary Schools would be the “best fit for our dual language students,” she said.

When asked about the process used to discuss the transition from elementary to middle school, *The Effectual Teacher* replied that a task force was put together when the dual language students were in third grade. Questions arose like, “What are we going to do with these kids when they get to sixth grade? What are we going to do?” She said that they knew it would be a process that would “take longer than one year or one semester.” The committee included “teachers, parents, principals, and assistant principals.” She added that it was only these staff members mentioned from Sal Elementary that formed the initial task force. She added that the school board took input from the task force. She said the committee provided reasons to support moving the program forward. Since it had been successful at Sal Elementary after four years, the school board was provided with data from that campus. She shared that she participated on the task force the first year it

was created but did not continue into the second year. She did assume that in the second year the administrators from Berny Secondary School were involved since the program was being designed to move to that school.

When the Spanish teacher was asked if any of the process could be changed, what process should be considered and why, she felt that creating the task force was a “good idea.” *The Effectual Teacher* thought,

The fact that we started early on, instead of waiting until fifth grade, or even the end of fourth grade, was what really made it successful. I find that having parents, teachers, and administrators involved in the task force was really helpful also, because they could get our perspective.

She also recalled that there were several teachers who had their “children in the program or wanted to have children in the program.” The teachers also showed a vested interest for the continuation of a dual language program from the elementary level to the secondary level. She felt that the task force “really worked well,” and she did not have any recommendations for any changes. She said, “We wanted it to continue and so there was a big push. It was a passion of people on the task force.”

When asked about the factors that impact secondary dual language program, *The Effectual Teacher* started by sharing the level of Spanish students had when they entered the dual language program at the middle school.

We see children come to us in sixth grade with not a lot of Spanish, a lot of Spanish, in between Spanish. They're kind of all over the place. And by the time that we see them exit eighth grade, we've seen amazing results on the AP tests. We've seen amazing growth in their level of Spanish, as well as their level of English.

She also talked about the dual language students performing at higher levels “in all their other classes.” She added,

It's been proven, obviously, that when you're handling two languages and you're being taught in two languages, a lot of times you're using a higher level of thinking. And if you look at our eighth-grade students, you will see that most of them are performing in the higher levels in their other classes, as well as in Spanish.

Then, *The Effectual Teacher* shared some of the high-performance results of the dual language students. She said that in science, the students had passed the STAAR state assessment at 100% each year that the program had been at the campus. As far as the Advanced Placement (AP) exams, she stated that they had a passing rate of about 95-97% on all of the AP tests. She also added that they had “very good, high results” on the Spanish AP exam with students earning fours and fives. She shared,

So, we've seen the growth. We know it works. All three of us that teach in the dual language program are passionate about dual language, are passionate about being bilingual, bi-literate, bi-cultural. So, I think that is an important factor. And we've seen the children grow from that.

She also added that the student recognized the importance of the dual language program. She said, “They see themselves being above their peers in both Spanish and in other classes. And so, it gives them a sense of pride like, ‘Whoa, look, I can speak Spanish.’”

She emphasized the sense of pride the program brought to the students.

*The Effectual Teacher* added, “They also excel in a lot of our extracurricular activities.” She attributed the students’ involvement to the parents being “very involved.”

She stated, “We see the growth and when children and teachers are passionate and parents are passionate about something, we’ve seen the growth in children.”

The teacher then explained some of the challenges she had seen in the dual language program. She started with the different levels of Spanish that the dual language student had when transitioning into the middle school level from an elementary program.

A lot of times, at the middle school level, we feel that these children should be coming to us at a higher level of Spanish. Having been in a dual language program since kindergarten or first grade, some of them since pre-K, we feel that they should be coming here with a higher level of Spanish.

*The Effectual Teacher* added that they could tell that the students had some knowledge of Spanish but felt that some of the elementary schools were not asking the students “to speak or respond to them in Spanish, or use Spanish, or speak Spanish in the classroom.” Students had a hard time understanding why the secondary teachers were “forcing them to speak Spanish.” She described how they also saw students write “grammatically incorrect sentences in English and in Spanish.” She felt that was their “greatest battle and greatest challenge.”

One of the ways the campus was trying to overcome this challenge was that from the beginning of the school year, students were asked to speak Spanish.

So, what we start doing from day one is when you cross the threshold of my classroom, we’re always speaking Spanish. Every time you talk to me, you’re speaking Spanish. We expect them to speak Spanish even to themselves. Even things like, “Hey, can I borrow a pencil? Hey, what was number two,” or whatever they’re doing. We expect them to use Spanish. And that is very, very difficult for the kids, because they’re not used to using Spanish. And so, what we



do is, we remain firm, we're consistent. And the three of us who teach the sixth-grade dual language are very consistent and very committed to being consistent. *The Effectual Teacher* reiterated that all three of the sixth-grade dual language teachers were committed to speaking only in Spanish to the students.

So, when I'm speaking only in Spanish, they look at me like, 'Oh, you weren't kidding. You really are speaking Spanish.' When they come up to me and start speaking to me in English, and I just completely ignore them. And so, we force them to speak Spanish. I think it's just a big commitment of us from day one. From telling them from the threshold of our door, as soon as you walk in here, it's all in Spanish. You need to speak to me in Spanish. You need to answer me in Spanish, you need to speak to your partners in Spanish. And so, it's a commitment on our part. And that's how we feel we get the best results, because I can teach them Spanish all day long. I can teach them to write Spanish all day long. I can teach them the grammar all day long. But if they're not using it in small, teeny conversations and communication, it's not going to grow.

*The Effectual Teacher* was asked if there were any factors that contributed to a smoother implementation of the program. She stated that a positive factor again was that there were teachers "committed to the program." She continued to talk about that commitment.

I believe that we still have committed teachers at our campus and the other campuses, where we hit the ground running and we know what we're coming with. You know, there might've been some struggles or bumps the first year, but we know where we're coming from and where we're going since we've seen the growth. It was a little more difficult the first year since we hadn't seen the growth and it was worrisome. And even the second year, but even from the first year to

the second year, sixth to seventh grade, we saw such growth in these students that we knew we were doing something right.

*The Effectual Teacher* thought that it went back to the “passion that the teachers have to being committed to the program.”

When asked if any of the factors could be changed, *The Effectual Teacher* spoke to the elementary programs making students speak more Spanish. She felt that if that were changed, the students “would be soaring, blowing the top off the roof.” She believed students could excel more if elementary teachers spoke more Spanish and if the students were expected to respond in Spanish. She thought that the teachers had spoken to the students in Spanish, but they had not asked the students to respond in Spanish. She added,

I taught elementary. I know that they've got a thousand things to do. I know and I know how difficult it is. But if we could make that one change, because I can fix the grammar. I can fix sentence structure. I can fix all that. But that one thing would make these kids just be so far above sure where they are now.

Success of the program was discussed again. The teacher mentioned the growth of the dual language student from sixth to eighth grade as far as having seen “very high scores on the AP test” with fours and fives, both for Hispanics and non-Hispanics. She added,

By the time that they've gotten in eighth grade, these students, we can see that they are more than just bilingual. They're bi-cultural. They're bi-literate. They have a different sense of the world than their peers do in eighth grade. So, we feel like we've raised [and] given these kids an opportunity that all these other kids haven't been given an opportunity. That we've shown them different parts of the

world. We've shown them that different parts of the world do things differently.

So, they feel that and we've seen that success.

She felt receiving the students Spanish AP scores was one of the “biggest celebration” they had, especially when the parents received this information.

*The Effectual Teacher* felt that the district should be celebrating more of the accomplishments of the dual language students. She added that the parents had tried to get a special stamp on the students’ diploma or transcripts, but that it had not been attained.

We have not been able to get them [district] to recognize that these kids have made a commitment. And, these parents have made a commitment, since kindergarten all the way through twelfth grade. The district hasn't given them any kind of recognition above and beyond what they give all the other children.

*The Effectual Teacher* did add that the previous year, the district had given students recognition after passing the Spanish 3. She said that a sentence was added to the students’ transcripts stating, “You are biliterate and bilingual.” She went on to say that the dual language students in middle school pass the Spanish 3 while in seventh grade. Additionally, she said that it was a Pre-AP Spanish 3. “The rest of the kids in the district, even if they take grade level Spanish 3 in 10th or 11th grade, they're getting the same sentence or endorsement on their transcripts.”

She said that the dual language parents were “really not happy with it.”

There had been an additional change made by the district to celebrate the dual language students who had completed the program through eighth grade. The teacher shared that the district had organized a ceremony at the end of the eighth-grade school year. She said, it was not at the campus level, but at the district level. During the ceremony, the dual language students received a certificate. She felt that this was still not

what the dual language parents were looking for and she said she could “see their frustration having been committed to this program for so long.”

As we moved into the recommendation for schools that were transitioning into a secondary dual language program from an elementary program, *The Effectual Teacher* reemphasized that schools need “people who are committed to a dual language program.” She elaborated,

You need people who are going to maintain Spanish, who speak Spanish. When I say that, I mean, I would love to have native Spanish speakers in the dual language classes. That's not always possible, but we need people who know the culture, have lived the culture, feel the culture, and can speak Spanish very well. I hate to say some of our secondary Spanish teachers and language teachers are not always native speakers, and that's wonderful that they're teaching, but a lot of them aren't using Spanish correctly, or they haven't lived the culture. We can't always have native speakers, but more than anything, we need somebody who's committed to maintain the program and maintain that when you come in, this is Spanish, Spanish, Spanish, and you don't falter, because it's very tiresome. It's very easy to fall back on English because it's so much easier and they [students] could understand me. A lesson could go so much smoother. We need people who are committed. I think that if someone was looking at building a middle school, they would have to find teachers who were very committed to believing that if I teach only in Spanish, these kids will eventually start using Spanish, will start understanding me in Spanish, and it will grow from there, because it is a commitment. Because at the very beginning, it's very, very difficult. I could teach any lesson in half the time, if I could do it in English and just translate it for them.

But since it's not, there's a lot of hand motions. So more than anything, people that are committed.

She also suggested to districts considering an expansion of a dual language program to the secondary level that they visit or study other elementary and middle schools with these programs. She added that they had also visited other middle school in the United States and that they had attended dual language conferences.

*The Effectual Teacher* also recommended that elementary dual language teachers move up to the middle school level with the students. She felt that looping with the students would be optimal since they would know where the students' learning levels were for continued growth. She also felt that this would give teachers the perspective of knowing how the program started from the elementary level as consideration was made to teach at the secondary level.

Having taught at the elementary level and now at the middle school level, *The Effectual Teacher* supported her recommendation. She felt that the experience had given them a "good sense of the program" because she had been there from the beginning. She had taught it at the elementary level and had assisted in growing it to the middle school.

She talked about one of her teaching partners. The teacher partner had not taught at the elementary level. She was however, described as being "very committed as far as making sure she speaks only in Spanish, maintaining the language, making sure that these kids are growing in their language and culture." She added that the partner teacher was "very big about culture" which was a big part of the AP exam.

*The Effectual Teacher* added that you may not be able to get all the recommendations she had made for a program transitioning into the middle school level. However, she felt that it was attainable.

“You can get all of those things as long as the teacher is committed to maintaining, teaching them Spanish, to maintaining Spanish and visiting other schools.”

Then, we talked about the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018) published by the Center for Applied Linguistics. The teacher felt that finding resources for the dual language program had been a struggle. She recalled when she taught at the elementary level as a bilingual teacher it also was a struggle. She added, “Anytime you're using a language that's not English, [it] is a struggle, because we have to go out of our way to find other resources.” She said that the district has helped by providing textbooks and other resources available to them. She had also noticed the resources had grown over the years especially since having taught bilingual education. She remembered that while in bilingual it felt like they were “reinventing every wheel and basically translating everything.” She said that students now had Spanish books to read; whereas before, they did not.

*The Effectual Teacher* did feel that the current struggle on resources was more on “looking constantly for authentic resources.” She added, “Mainly for authentic resources that are at a middle school level. We can find a lot of authentic resources that are more of a high school level.” She said that those type of resources were difficult to explain to a sixth-grade parent. “With a sixth-grade child, I can't read a love poem. I can't read or show them the news necessarily, because it's too much for them.” She said the parents would be upset and included herself if these were the type of resources provided to the students. She added that she could not let the students read some of the articles due to the content. She described one particular textbook that had been provided by the district.

Absolutely not, we're not using this textbook, because the readings were so difficult. Difficult in the sense of things that sixth grade children don't deal with, divorce, boyfriends, girlfriends. There was sex and there was [sic] things that I don't want to be talking with my sixth grader.

The teacher also discussed that assessments were also “a bit of a struggle.” She said that they had all the assessments that were needed in a foreign language program. She added that even though they had the resources to teach from, she could not use it with the dual language students.

I don't want them just to fill in the blank. I don't want them to conjugate a verb. I don't want them to give me a T-chart. I need them to do presentations. I need them to speak. I need them to have interpersonal communication. So that's also a struggle for us making our own assessments, because we feel like we have to invent everything. We have to make our own assessments. We can't use what's just there, because it would be unfortunate to give them [students] what we have for just the regular Spanish classes.

She went on to say that there is also a need for someone to be “willing to search out those resources and assessments.” However, she said that person had to be knowledgeable about the resources that align to their specific curriculum or it would not make the students grow in the secondary dual language program. She added, “I think, as you teach it, the longer you teach it, the more you have and the easier it gets. I believe we have a good structure and I believe that structure is important.”

The teacher felt that a secondary dual language program goes back to the commitment she had mentioned over and over and the structure of the program. She said,

If we know what we're doing in sixth grade and what we're going to do in seventh grade, and we have the structure of the program and we've seen the end result, then I think you'll have a good program.

When asked about the staff development provided by the district, the teacher stated that unfortunately there had not been a lot. She said they had to look outside of the district for professional development. She felt that as a district, they were still growing the program. She felt that at Parker Middle School and Berny Secondary School there was a good program. She believed that it was because the teachers had moved from the elementary level to teaching the middle school dual language classes. She said they “knew the program and were familiar with it.” She added that they “knew the struggles of finding resources.” She felt that since there were so few dual language teachers at the secondary level, that the district maybe did not feel that they needed to provide staff development for them. She added that during the first three years, the district had brought in Dr. Sandra Mercuri, a scholar in dual language, and that had been helpful.

The teacher said that some collaboration existed among the secondary dual language teachers and with other districts. She added that collaborating helps them discover other resources. *The Effectual Teacher* felt that it was still “hard to connect as they were all on different campuses.” And, “When you only have very few teachers on a campus, or even in the district, then we have to have collaboration between us.” She said that they connected “three to four time a year” with the teachers at the other campuses. She recapped the essentials of a dual language program from her perspective. She said that you must have “People who are committed, parents who are committed, who will then commit their children, because children aren't always very committed, and the backing of administration.” *The Effectual Teacher* added that dual language programs are not always fortunate to have an administrator who has had two of his own children in the



program. She said that he had seen the program and knew how it worked in order to support them as teachers. She demonstrated her commitment to growing the dual language students' Spanish skills to reach a desired effect and this is why she was given the pseudonym of *The Effectual Teacher*.

**The Ingenious Teacher.** The pseudonym, *The Ingenious Teacher*, was given to this teacher for his originality, resourcefulness, and cleverness in executing (Merriam-Webster, 2019) his teaching abilities in a secondary dual language program. He taught science in the dual language program for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade.

*The Ingenious Teacher* had lived in Bogota, Columbia his first eleven and a half years of his life. He immigrated to the United States at a very young age. He shared a personal note about his life experiences as a young immigrant student in the United States and how that helps him relate to students and families.

I grew up in Columbia in the '70s where there was no English. We went to Colegio Nueva Granada, which was an English school that did English and Spanish, kind of like a 50-50 program. Then understanding what life is like as a 12-year-old coming to the United States, I can relate to a lot of my students from a personal perspective, and then I can also relate to them as their teacher.

He had a bachelor's degree of science in kinesiology with a minor in Spanish from the Sam Houston State University. He also held a master's degree in bilingual dual language from the University of St. Thomas. He shared a personal note about how he took the bilingual education teaching route in his educational journey.

Even though I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and could have been a coach, I went into bilingual education, got emergency certified, got my certification through that. I had PE certification first from K through 12. When I got bilingually certified, back then you automatically got the same

amount. So, I had life certification with my PE when I graduated. When I got certified in bilingual/ ESL, it automatically made it life as well. All level because I was all level PE when I first started. Then, I believe I have all this experience in bilingual dual language, but I really don't have the paper [degree]. That's why I wanted to get a Master's in dual language to show that I understood the philosophy and the evolving of it.

His teaching certifications included bilingual education kindergarten to twelfth grade, health fitness kindergarten to twelfth grade, and generalist fourth through eighth grade. He had taught for 26 years. He started teaching third through fifth grade in bilingual and dual language programs. He said that for 17 years he was at the elementary level and the rest of the years he had been at the middle school. His teaching experience included structures in self-contained, departmental, and multi-grade all at the elementary school level. He had also taught science in English while in a dual language program.

He mentioned that at Sal Elementary, the dual language program had implemented a 90-10 structure where 90% of instruction was taught in Spanish and 10% in English. By the time the students reached fifth grade it was 50-50. He said his partner teacher taught the math and history in Spanish, and he taught the language arts and science in English.

At the middle school, he explained that there was an 80-20 structure, 80% English and 20% Spanish. He said that two classes were taught in Spanish. He was currently teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth grade science, which included different objectives for each grade level. He had been teaching these grade levels for the past seven years.

The teacher explained that even though he was certified to teach bilingual kindergarten to twelfth grade, the district had him get another certification to teach content courses. He said had he only taken the science middle school exam and history

were to be added to the dual language program, he would not be able to teach history because he would only have the science certification. He took the fourth to eighth grade generalist exam to teach any content area at the middle school level. This, he said, “opened up all areas as opposed to just one” subject area.

The teacher shared that he had learned that the “best type of dual language program” was one that included multiple disciplines. The one at Parker Middle School, where he taught, was only science. He said that when they had started the program seven years ago, they had three courses in Spanish, which included Spanish language arts, history, and science.

He added that Berny Secondary School, which also had a dual language program, used block scheduling. Due to this type of scheduling, they had to integrate the history and Spanish and felt that it was not fair that Parker Middle School had history, science, and Spanish language arts on a regular schedule. Staff at Berny Secondary School felt that Parker Middle School students received more hours of dual language instruction. The unfairness according to the Berny Secondary School was when comparing AP scores to Parker Middle School. Therefore, Harley ISD decided to take history out of the secondary dual language structure.

His recommendation was for sixth graders to have a science course. Then seventh graders to be taught history and then the eighth graders to receive science instruction. He added, “That way you could get different academic vocabulary in the different language and broaden out the dual language program as opposed to keeping it one [content area].”

The difficult part, he stated, was that there were already “very few teachers who wanted to teach Spanish at the secondary level.” Typically, bilingual teachers only teach through fifth grade since most bilingual programs end at fifth grade. Therefore, he said, there was “a very high demand and very few people are certified” to teach at the middle

school level. Then, he added, middle school teachers were asked to get additional certification for the content areas selected for the dual language program structure. He said, “Most people are probably not going to do that.”

The teacher then described the elementary dual language program at three of the schools. Two of the schools had a 50-50 program while the third one had a 90-10 program, which was at Sal Elementary. He added that Sal Elementary had implemented the program for over 20 years already.

When asked the reasons for the secondary program initiation, he shared that originally it was at Sal Elementary and Berny Secondary School. There were only “20 to 24 spots” at Berny Secondary School for students graduating from the fifth grade from Sal Elementary. These students automatically were enrolled at Berny Secondary School. Then other elementary schools started dual language programs phased into each grade level from kindergarten to fifth grade.

When those two schools had fifth grade students graduating, you didn't have enough room for 24 spots at [Berny Secondary School]. So, they had a panel of teachers and parents decide as far as proximity, which schools would be the best benefiting of where they would be locally placed. Parker Middle School and another middle school were selected to accommodate the graduating fifth grade classes.

One of the challenges mentioned was the lack of transportation for dual language students attending the program at Parker Middle School. He stated that parents had “to find their own way” there and back home. He added that even with this challenge, Parker Middle School was “probably the largest campus of dual language.”

He went on to describe some of his experiences at the elementary level. He had taught primarily in a bilingual program or in one-way dual language. He shared,

Bilingual existed as the exit of Spanish. Then, I guess bilingual had gotten placed as a bad term, so they moved bilingual to dual language and then hushed it with one-way. Right? If you've to say, 'My child's in dual language,' and you leave it at that, it sounds like, 'Oh, that's very nice.'

He described the changes in the history of bilingual education when bilingual changed to the less politically charged term of dual language.

Since the teacher demonstrated knowledge of the panel's process that transitioned the elementary dual language program to the middle school, even though he had not been asked to participate, he felt it need to be revisited.

Like any good program you'd want to revisit. What is the current standing? If you are on the cutting edge and everyone is watching you, then you should be doing everything possible that you can to make sure you're doing the best things for children. We are still doing the exact same thing that the original panel, eight years ago, decided to do and we haven't changed anything.

He shared the program director was over dual language and bilingual. He added, If your dual language kids are passing state exams by 80 to 85% but your one-ways are passing with 40%, where's your focus going to be? It's going to be on the one-way. That's where you're going to pull all your resources to get those scores up. Typically speaking, my dual language students are the top 5% of the school.

He believed the focus was on the one-way dual language program due to the lower performance scores. Since the dual language students at the middle school were high performing, he felt that the district had less focus for that reason.

The teacher then described the benefits of having taught science at Parker Middle School. He said,

I have the same kids. I loop with my sixth graders, with my seventh graders, with my eighth graders. I know them inside and out. I know how to get their best Spanish from them. So, we do [teach] sixth grade in Spanish, seventh grade in Spanish, eighth grade in Spanish, and take the English STAAR [state assessment]. Every single year we've had 100% pass in the English STAAR test.

He added that knowing the students' deficiencies as they move into each grade level was beneficial as he was the only science teacher for the middle school dual language students.

A lot of times my personal belief is you can pass a test if you have the belief that you can, if you have the self confidence that you can. It's hard to develop self-confidence when you have three new teachers. But if you have one teacher who can build your confidence over a period of three years as opposed to one year, and then doubt yourself the next two years, you don't have that because you have the same teacher all three years. So, I think self-confidence is a very large part of the state exam. If I'm able to tell my eighth-grade students, 'Look, we've had 100% every single year. If you don't believe in yourself, can you believe in me that I can give you the information?' Once they believe that I can provide the information for them, that naturally transfers to them in doing well in their program. So even though when they don't think they can do it, they can. Last year our eighth graders had 94.8% pass in the AP exam with a three or higher.

Later in the interview, he elaborated about getting to "foster those relationships" with the students.

You get to see the struggles, and the struggle may not be overcome in one year. As a teacher of having a child for only one year, that's a deficiency. Whereas where I get to loop with my kids, I get to maybe see their overcoming halfway

through seventh or halfway through eighth and we've worked on it the whole time; whereas, other teachers might not get that same opportunity.

*The Ingenious Teacher* not only boosted the students' self-confidence, but he provided them with the necessary skills to be successful on the AP exams. He shared that he video-taped all the students' presentations.

My students have a soft presentation every grading period that's worth a test grade, and I record the presentation. The reason I do that is because all of my students know that I give rubrics with presentations. I control the discipline of my class and then I watch the videos and grade it by the rubric. So that if a student says, 'I think I presented this correctly,' we can meet after school or before school, re-watch the presentation and they can critique it themselves as to did you or did you not?

Then he shared that he kept the video all three years while the students were in middle school. He said that at the end of the third year, he saved the videos on a flash drive for the parents. He added that this gave a true measure of the students' progress and growth of their Spanish language development. The digital portfolio not only showed the changes in the students' physical appearance each year, but it also gave parents memories of their children's Spanish language progression.

*The Ingenious Teacher* elaborated on how he increased the students' oral language in science. The seventh-grade students were learning about "an analogy between either an animal or a plant cell and a non-living object."

They have to know the membrane, the cellular membrane, the ribosomes, the vacuoles, lysosomes, the mitochondria, the cytoplasm. They have to know what those are. They have to be able to compare it to a non-living [object]. But I prefer them to not write hardly any words because it requires them to present what they

know. On the AP exam, one of the parts of the AP exam is that they have to speak for two minutes. So, whatever they tell you, you get to write down notes and then you have to talk for two minutes.

So, if I can get them to talk about science, about whatever topic for a minute or a minute and a half, two minutes as a piece of cake for them to be able to have that conversation. If we do that in sixth grade, seventh grade, eighth grade, while it's in front of your class and a video camera, when they give you the tape recorder, you're going to be like, 'Ah, it's a tape recorder; it's easy.'

He added that the students' confidence level increased as well as building of the whole student with his encouragement.

From the teacher point of view, he said that looping with the students was "crazy." He talked about having to create lesson plans for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade with all different objectives for each grade level. He said that most teachers created academic and Pre-AP lessons for one content area; whereas, he had to plan for three.

I have to know my content area, I have to know what needs to be done, how to organize it, and then when they're done in 45 minutes, two and a half hours later, I'm uploading it to each one of the different three. The difficult part of it is having to do it through so many different grade levels and sometimes it becomes exhausting. Then, if you also coach, so you get home even later.

The teacher talked about a presenter at staff development from the beginning of the year. He said that if students enter the classroom and they are comfortable, then the classroom may not be "set up exactly right." He added that students should enter a classroom and "be a little uncomfortable."

When you're uncomfortable, that's when the most learning is happening, right?

The trick is, how do you have that climate in your classroom that is



uncomfortable but low risk? That's the key. That's how you have to try to manipulate that. By being an elementary school teacher and a middle school teacher, I can bring everything that I know all together and then just merge it.

He then talked about his experience as a football coach and how this relates to the dual language program. He coached seventh grade football and the eighth-grade girls' soccer team.

The longer I'm at a campus, many of my students that I have in sixth grade, I've already had their older brothers and sisters. The fact that I can be known by so many, it also helps the dual language students to see that they're a part of Parker Middle School's climate as well as their own climate.

He then talked about how they get parents involved with the dual language program. He said that between him and the two other Spanish teachers in the program four meetings are scheduled with the families. Two of the meetings are formal with all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade families and these were held on campus. The other two meetings were social gatherings and were held off-campus. "So, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade parents can talk to each other."

The previous two years he had invited a couple of high school families to "encourage parents to intermingle." He said one of the high schools had a dual language program and the other did not. However, the high school without the dual language had students enrolled in Spanish 4, Spanish 5, and Spanish 6.

I invited those parents and those children to come to a reunion so that kids could talk with kids, and kids could talk with parents about what their struggles were with the transition between eighth and ninth grade, so that they could get an overview of that. So, there's a very homey type environment for parents that we encourage, [and] that we foster here. I believe that that's one of the draws is the

fact that we will have that communication with our parents. We're very transparent.

He mentioned several factors that were impacting the secondary dual language program. Once again, he reiterated the lack of transportation for students attending Parker Middle School. He shared that elementary parents really wanted to have their children attend the school given they still had to provide transportation to and from school.

If I'm a working single mother or working single father, I have to be connected.

That's why we developed to make sure that there's a parent liaison for grade level and dual language and teachers to have connections to say, what do we need to do to try and make you successful and allow your child to come here?

He added that students must put forth the effort to attend Parker Middle School. He reminds us that the students are enrolled in a Pre-AP science class. "If you don't pass, you can't stay in science Pre-AP, you have to go to science academic. There is no science academic dual language." He emphasized the effort from everyone involved.

You have to put forth the effort, and say, I really want to do this. We'll stay after school, we'll come before school, we'll do lunch, we'll do whatever it is that you want to do to make sure you want to do this, but it takes extra work on behalf of the parents, the child and the teacher to make the program a success.

The teacher said that the principal had opened a second sixth grade dual language class due to the dual language family requests to attend Parker Middle School. In his opinion, this became a scheduling problem.

If you opened it up to more students, then you have people that are in advanced theater or are in symphonic band, or in honors band. Honors band is one period. My science class is one period. If they land on the same period, you can't be in both. If you're zoned here by transfer, then you can't drop dual language.

Sometimes kids who are in honors band have to be in symphonic band and be in dual language.

He added that there was “a lot of learning going on about how the world works and how the system works.” He did not feel that the scheduling was “conducive to help empower those kids to be the best that they can [be].”

Later in the interview, he elaborated on additional scheduling challenges as students completed the middle school program and moved onto the high school.

I've had students tell me that they want to do FFA in high school, but they can't because they have the one dual language class. That's the difficult part. Being able to maneuver, what is your desire? And then, does everything fit? If I've done FFA for my whole life and I've done dual language and then they both land on the same period, which one do I pick? There's a lot of bumps in the road, but I think that's okay, and the parents have agreed with me in the sense of, there's a lot of things that we plan out in life that for whatever reason it doesn't work out. Then, we have to make a decision one way or the other as to what we're going to do with it.

The teacher shared that they are in “constant contact with the high school” counselors about what the transition looked like for the students transitioning from the middle school. The counselors communicate to the students what the expectations are for each high school that they opt to attend. He said, “All of the kids know.”

We're like I said, very transparent, which is one of the positivity of our program. And you have to be, because you want that transition to be as smooth as possible, and the only way it's smooth is through knowledge.

He shared that the “worst-case scenario” was the first eighth-grade cohort of dual language students because they did not know. He added that after a few years, they had found out how to make for a more effective and smoother transition.

*The Ingenious Teacher* shared a personal experience from his parent perspective, which had impacted his relational practice with families in the dual language program.

Because I'm a parent of a [Harley ISD] child and my child was a very bright, well-behaved child, I received very little phone calls or very little messages as to what she was doing out of her comfort zone. It did not allow me to praise her as maybe other parents were able to do that with children who had more difficulties. So, one of the things that I try to encourage myself is to call all of my parents at least twice a grading period for good things, so that these parents can also feel the empowerment of congratulating their kids and showing how proud they are of them. Then by fostering that type of culture and that type of environment allows them to foster a relationship with us and with them, which develops a whole different climate.

He shared that when he first started this practice, some of the parents would ask, "So this is a good thing?" Or, they would not believe that he was their child's teacher. He recounted one particular experience of a parent who did not believe the good things his son was doing in school.

No, I don't believe [it]. And I'd go, 'okay, let's hang up the phone. This is my secretary's number. You could have her answer it. She can transfer the call to me. We can continue having this conversation.' And we actually did that. Then, that father actually told me, in all the years that my son has been in school, this is the first time I've ever had a phone call about something good for him.

The teacher expressed that it was “heart crushing because a lot of our good kids work just as hard as anybody else.” He said that the students “deserved to be recognized for their work.” He added,

A lot of the parents, the eighth-grade parents, the seventh-grade parents, would talk to the sixth-grade parents or the fifth-grade parents and say, look, you're going to have teachers call home about good things. And they never believe it until the conversation actually happens. Then, parents are just shocked that people will take the time to make that conversation.

The teacher said that parents want to have those conversation with their child's teacher. He went on to describe his belief for having a relational partnership with families.

For me, if you believe I'm there for your child, you will do anything to help me be a partner to help your child. If you only think I'm going to call you because it's something bad, there's no partnership there. A lot of people say, ‘well, it's a lot of work.’ It's a lot of work at the beginning. But after a while, parents don't automatically say, ‘what did my son, or what did my daughter do?’ They're like, ‘oh, I want to hear what's going on.’

He added that making those connections with families was the positive part of the practice.

*The Ingenious Teacher* then talked about where the dual language students were exceling. He shared that some of his previous elementary students who attended Berny Secondary School had “graduated in the top 5% of their class” from the high school. He added that the students were “number one and number two of their graduating class” at the high school. He said that the students received automatic admission to an A&M [university]. He was also proud of the flags displayed in his classroom from colleges

where students had not only attended, but that had graduated from those schools. Some of the university flags on display included the following:

- Sam Houston State University
- Texas A&M University
- University of Alabama
- University of Houston
- University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
- University of St. Thomas

In addition to these universities, students had also graduated from Rochester Institute of Engineering and from St. Edward's University. He added that these graduates had gone through the dual language program and that they were now businesspeople. He also added that the graduates not only felt proud of their success stories, but that they too were proud of having participated in the dual language program.

There were other success stories that the teacher shared about the dual language students. He talked about the high school debate team winning multiple awards. Three of the students on the team were dual language students that had participated in the program through their middle school years. The team won national awards the previous year.

They get the confidence of; I can make an impact through where I'm at. Not to say that they wouldn't have done that anywhere else, but we don't know. So, I think the dual language program just encourages students here to be themselves and to help them grow to their best possible person they can be.

Later in the interview, he shared that these high school students do not forget their teachers or having been in the earlier dual language program. He said that when they have social meetings, high school students will also attend. "They'll come talk to the parents and they'll come back and talk to the students about what works, what didn't,

what they liked and what they didn't." He added that they "build a type of relationship that fosters beyond the middle school walls."

The other success story the teacher shared was of the eighth graders taking the Spanish AP exam. He shared that the campus had "94% [of students] pass the AP national test." He added that the previous year five to six students had earned "fives on the AP exam as eighth graders."

And those AP people, they don't know. You're just a number. You don't say how old you are or what grade you're in. They got to grade you by your speaking, by the rubric. So, it says a lot about how well the program is working.

The teacher had other success stories about the dual language students. He shared that students excel in other areas outside of dual language.

So, majority of our students are in advanced theater. Most of our students are in honors band or honors orchestra. It lends itself to that type of intelligence. Usually when you're able to maneuver two or more languages, there are other areas of multiple intelligence that you also excel at.

He also talked about how students are excelling in sports. During football, they had an undefeated season where some of the dual language students also formed part of the team. The previous year, he shared that the eighth-grade girls' soccer team had been co-champions with another middle school in the district. Once again, he said that there had been dual language girls on that team, too.

He added, "There's just a really good integration of kids that are zoned here and transfers coming together, working together to be the best that they can." He also spoke about the fine arts area. He said that the orchestra, band, and choir had also won sweepstakes awards with the University Interscholastic League (UIL). These programs also included "dual language and non-dual language students."

When asked for recommendations for schools transitioning into a secondary dual language program from the elementary, he said to consider the demographics. He also added to take into consideration “what the parents are able to do and what they aren’t able to do.” He recalled his first sixth grade class consisted of nine students. Currently, his sixth-grade class had 28 students.

If you develop a program and it doesn't initially start out well, that doesn't mean that we're only serving nine students. Well, those nine can talk to everybody else. I've had siblings of students who aren't zoned to this school decide that they want their children to come to this school because of the program that we have [here].

He added that the climate of the program was also important. “Are you doing what's best for children? Are you doing what's best for their growth, not only academically, but socially and physically? The sports, the arts.” He also talked about students who had participated in Future Farmers of America (FFA).

We have students who participate in FFA as younger children and are also here. They get awards through the FFA programs. A lot of times students will feel that they are empowered to continue their passion and dual language. Then of course when teachers show up it also helps.

When we discussed how the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018) had influenced the secondary program, he started with program design. He stated that they were restrained by the program design developed by the school board in that science was the content area where dual language was taught. He added that they follow the program by what was best for the campus. He shared that when he collaborated with the other dual language teachers and the campus administrator that they “all work very well together to do what’s best for children.” He added, “We



don't necessarily follow these steps, but we do everything that we can to do what's best for the whole child.”

For program structure, he said that was the curriculum. “In science we follow the TEKS [Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills]. So, the TEKS are in English.” For each grade he taught, he had the TEKS displayed on the board with the English in blue and the Spanish in red. Using a designated color for each language is a common practice in dual language programs. He stated, “You have to know what the TEKS are and that's what drives our instruction.”

One of the district initiatives was to provide students with Chromebooks on a one-to-one basis. Each student would be receiving one. They were also moving into an online learning platform. The teacher felt that it would provide a soft assessment as he checked for the students’ understanding of the material covered in class. He believed it empowered the students to take ownership in their learning.

He described the online learning platform. He said that teachers would add tasks and homework on it as well as test. All the information would be accessible to the student from anywhere.

One of my students is going to San Diego for a week because her brother, which was one of my students in fifth grade, I must say, just graduated from boot camp from the Marine Corps. So, they're going to go out to San Diego. They're going to watch him graduate and she won't miss anything from my class because everything's on [named the online platform].

All this student had to do was get on her computer, review the information posted by the teacher, and do the assignments. This would help the student to stay on track.

As far as instruction, he said that was “dependent on the understanding of my students.” If the students did not understand, he had a table to work with them in a small

group. He did not have assigned seats for the students, unless, he said, they “abuse the English policy.” When the students entered the science classroom, the teacher expected to “hear as much Spanish as possible.” He had expectations on his wall in both English and Spanish and they included:

- Speak Spanish as much as possible
- Give your best effort,
- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Pay attention
- Complete assignments on time

He stated that his goal was to improve the students’ Spanish in one or more domains on the language proficiency test. The exam measured the growth of student’s proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. His goals were to see progression on each domain for each student, to “pass the end of year exam in science and then for eighth graders to pass the science STAAR exam.” He added,

Those are my goals. Those are my expectations. And, they're my own philosophy to help students recognize that they have the ability to be successful in anything that they attempt. They know that this is here [pointed to the posted expectations] so that they know where I stand. And that's what drives my instruction with my students.

When asked about professional development (PD) that was provided from the district level, he stated that they had received PD. He mentioned that Dr. Mercuri, a college professor from the University of Texas, has spoken to them for “five or six years.” Then he said that he had “professional instances” with one of his professors from the University of St. Thomas.

He had also presented at different conventions. He shared that his presentations were on his “understanding of the English learner aspect.” He added,

You really can't present too much about secondary dual language because there's very few secondary dual language programs. So, you're not going to have a large audience of that. But if you address it from the English learner perspective, you'll have a huge audience.

He recalled that TESOL [Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages] was one of the organizations that they had a presentation. He had also attended a conference, such as, NABE, National Association for Bilingual Education.

When he talked about resources, he said that it was what he had created when he first started at the middle school level. He added, “You just had to modify the resources to whatever you could create.” He then pointed to several different resources all around the classroom that had been created by the students in his classes. He added, “One of the philosophies in my classroom is, if you fail a test and you don't do well, make a project and present it. It's a nice show. Student-created.”

*The Ingenious Teacher* demonstrated his strong relationships with students and parents throughout the interview. He shared, “All of my students, all my seventh and eighth grade parents, [and] students, I'm on their cell phone and they have my cell phone. They know that they can call me about anything, anytime.” His last statement described the teacher's passion, support, and commitment to ensure students' success. “When you develop that type of relationship, then there's that level of confidence that exudes the sky's the limit.”

### **Summary of Emerging Themes for Harley ISD**

In Harley ISD, there were some themes that emerged from interviewing the different participants and from capturing their perspectives based on the position they

held in the district. The participants included a retired secondary director, three central office personnel, two different school administrators, and two teachers from the same campus and from the campus of one of the administrators. The emerging themes will be presented from the district level to the specific campuses.

### **Theme 1: Responsive to Community Needs**

Some of the participants in Harley ISD shared instances that represent their responsiveness to the needs of the community. To begin with, *The Crusader* shared that parents started to contact her as the dual language students reached the end of third grade to ask what was going to happen to the program at the middle school level. She spoke to her supervisor stating, she was

thinking about running it through our campus improvement team and letting those twenty [dual language] children come [to Berny Secondary School]. That I had figured out a way that I could let them in and it wouldn't change the program.

As the elementary programs grew, Berny Secondary Schools was not able to accommodate all of the students transitioning to the middle school. *The Crusader* added, "There weren't enough middle schools to accommodate the kids coming out of elementary and the district added more staff. The public was demanding it. The parents were demanding it and [so were] the kids." *The Protagonist Leader* shared that "there was a need for it [secondary dual language program] and parents wanted to have it." He added another example of his responsiveness to the community needs.

I had like 20 [students] on the wait list and so I said as the leader if I've got 20 families who want to come in this group, they've listed it as their first choice 'cause you can choose 1-2-3. So, I had 50 families, 55 families who listed [Parker Middle School] as their first choice and now I did allow it and took 30. I just opened up the second section. So, we've got two sixth grade dual language

science, two sixth-grade dual in Spanish because I said I don't want them not to continue because they couldn't get into the school that they want to go to first and a lot of that doesn't necessarily have anything to do with just dual language. It has a lot to do with just our campus in general.

*The Paradigmatic Leader* shared that parents

were excited about putting their children in the program in the elementary years but then after fifth grade they're like 'well now what?' I know we just had 6 years of it but there's nowhere to go. So, the district expanded that and opened up two more middle schools that have the secondary dual language program and then two high schools.

*The Effectual Teacher* mentioned that "the parents in dual language wanted a schedule [at the secondary level] where their kids could also do extracurricular activities." Harley ISD was responsive to this request and added two middle schools that accommodated the dual language program.

In summary, these examples demonstrate the district's responsiveness to the needs of the dual language community. Some of the specific responses involved the transition of a dual language program from the elementary to the middle school level, expanding the middle school dual language program to other campuses, opening additional sections to accommodate more students interested in the program, and having extracurricular programs for secondary dual language students.

## **Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs**

Most of the participants shared some of the challenges that they had experienced in implementing the dual language program. To begin with, *The Crusader* mentioned that "the staff that are implementing it [dual language] at a campus, it can be a little bit isolating because nobody understands what they are doing at the campus." *The*

*Paradigmatic Leader* had other challenges that included teacher certification, training, district support, and program evaluation. She asked,

How do you find the right certified teacher for it? And then what oversight would there be you know like training, district support? How do we know that our program is doing well? That's a big enough challenge in a bilingual department anyway.

With science being the Spanish content area for the dual language program at her campus, she said that finding “science certified bilingual teachers” was difficult because “that seems to be kind of like a very small niche of teacher.” She also spoke to the training needed for teachers stating that “there’s a big need for the training piece.”

Even if you were to find like say a teacher who's science certified but happens to be bilingual just by nature of their own language ability and then get the certifications like how do you then train them in the instructional strategies and instructional approaches of making a strong dual language program, right? So, that training is what I'm more referring to it seems like one or the other is usually present but the two are not in an individual right out of the gate, you know, you have to train for that.

She went on to add that materials were also “very hard to come by.” She added,

That was a huge hurdle. I remember in the cohort or the group when we were looking into this there were not materials on the market for anything and it was going to be left up to the teachers to decide what to use and how to use it.

*The Protagonist Leader* also mentioned professional development and resources as the “biggest areas of growth for us as a campus and as a district.” At the same campus, *The Effectual Teacher* had a different challenge and mentioned that students were at many levels of Spanish. She stated, “We see children come to us in sixth grade with not a lot of

Spanish, a lot of Spanish, in between Spanish, they're kind of all over the place.” She continued,

At the middle school level, we feel that these children should be coming to us at a higher level of Spanish. Having been in a dual language program since kindergarten or first grade, some of them since pre-K, we feel that they should be coming here with a higher level of Spanish. And, what we have found is that they're not coming here with a high level.

*The Ingenious Teacher* talked about a different challenge. It was a negative impact at his school in regard to dual language students attending Parker Middle School. He shared, “A lot of times people refuse to send their kids here because transportation is not available.” He stated that the dual language students were not provided with transportation if they lived outside of the school’s attendance zone. He added,

We don't have transportation and your child can't take a late bus. We have a late bus here. We have a 4:30 late bus and we have a 5:30 late bus, but only to kids who are zoned to our school. What do you do with your child who needs to stay after school for tutorials and dual language, but you can't go pick them up?

In Theme 2, there were several challenges mentioned that had to do with implementing a secondary dual language program in Harley ISD. These included the feeling of teaching in isolation for teachers, the requirements of teacher certifications for secondary dual language programs and finding the teachers adequately certified, the need for professional development, the scarcity of secondary dual language materials to teach from, the low levels of Spanish skills for incoming middle school students, and the lack of transportation for dual language students not zoned to the school.

### **Theme 3: Overcoming Challenges**

The participants in Harley ISD not only mentioned the challenges they were facing in their secondary dual language program, but they had attempted to overcome them as well. *The Crusader* shared that

There needs to be someone at the district that is supporting those principals and those teachers and bringing them together to problem solve. Before I retired, that was happening. I don't know about now, but that has to happen because when you are one or two people, maybe three teaching in this way is just isolating. And, that's not good for teachers. You need to be able to share ideas.

She added, "They need to have continued staff development and do whatever the best practice is as more and more research comes out." *The Paradigmatic Leader* shared how she was overcoming the challenges of finding certified teachers to teach in the secondary dual language program. She shared,

So, I think with the certification piece it really was like 'hey, we find a certified teacher in science who is bilingual. Can we get them to take the test to get that piece of certification?' And vice versa like how can we help match a candidate who is good in, you know, had one thing but lacking the other then support them through that?

As far as the materials, she felt that they had overcome this challenge

by getting our hands on anything that was out there that could be used in a science class that was also in Spanish and then a lot of the teacher-made kind of things, teacher made decision or judgment over what to use.

*The Effectual Teacher* talked about taking students "from almost a novice level and get them to such a high [Spanish] level in eighth grade." This is accomplished by having the student expectation to speak in Spanish from the first day of school upon entering the classroom. She stated, "We're always speaking Spanish." She added that the dual



language teachers remain firm and are “very committed to being consistent.” She continued,

I can teach them Spanish all day long. I can teach them to write Spanish all day long. I can teach them the grammar all day long. But if they're not using it in small, teeny conversations and communication, it's not going to grow.

*The Ingenious Teacher* shared how they have attempted to overcome the lack of transportation for the dual language students. He talked about parents having to be connected. They had a parent liaison for each grade level and teachers “to have connection to say, what do we need to do to try and make you successful and allow your child to come here?”

For Theme 3, these were examples given from the participants on how they are overcoming some of the challenges mentioned previously. These ranged from facilitating collaboration among secondary dual language teachers and administrators, staying up to date on best practices as research is publicized, supporting teachers through certification intricacies, having high expectations for students to speak in Spanish, and by having parent liaisons to connect families to families and teachers to families.

#### **Theme 4: Success and Celebrations**

The fourth theme that emerged in Harley ISD were the successes that secondary dual language students had experienced and how these were celebrated. *The Crusader* recalled when the “original group of twenty children graduated from high school, I had known them since they were in Pre-K. So, that in it and itself is a celebration.” She added,

I mean, the level of Spanish when they (graduated) was just incredible and they are still doing it. I mean, one of them is an attorney and she is able to practice law in English and Spanish. I mean, it just gives me chills.

She related the success and celebration to the last scene in the movie, *The Right Stuff*, where

There's this music playing and there's a show on stage, but each of them [astronauts] look at each other because they were the only ones who knew what they had really been through. And, that's how I would say it. These kids knew how special they were, and nobody really had to tell them, but they would celebrate with each other. And, they weren't cocky about it either. They were just, this is awesome.

One of the *Ardent Leaders* spoke about his experience as a teacher and the success of the students' science state performance. He had 100% of the eight grade dual language students pass the STAAR assessment in English while the delivery of instruction was in Spanish. He also had 100% of the students pass the Spanish AP exam with "at least three, four, or five" scores. These students also earned college credits in Spanish for passing the Spanish AP exam in eighth grade. He also added that high school students were given a bilingual acknowledgement statement for earning a bilingual endorsement upon graduation. *The Effectual Teacher* also spoke about "very high scores on the AP test, fours and fives, of children that were not Hispanic." She added that "at the district level, they invite the dual language students from eighth-grade, and they give them a certificate" upon completion of the grade level. *The Ingenious Teacher* talked about other areas that the dual language students were successful in stating,

So, the majority of our students are in advanced theater. Most of our students are in honors band or honors orchestra. It lends itself to that type of intelligence. Usually when you're able to maneuver two or more languages, there are other areas of multiple intelligence that you also excel at.

He added that two of their students were on “the debate team that won national accolades.”

Theme 4 showed many celebrations that were shared by the participants from Harley ISD. These included graduating dual language students from the high school, high student performance on state assessments and Spanish AP exams, students earning the bilingual acknowledgement on their high school diploma, and other extracurricular areas that dual language students are excelling in.

Several themes emerged from the data collected in Harley ISD. These included the following:

- Theme 1: Responsive to Community Needs
- Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 3: Overcoming Challenges
- Theme 4: Success and Celebrations

### **Satchel ISD Case Study**

Satchel ISD was another participating school district from the state of Texas. The school district showed the following demographics: African American 24.0%, American Indian 0.2%, Asian 4.0%, Hispanic/Latino 61.7%, Pacific Islander 0.1%, two or more races 1.1% and White 8.8% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2019). The report also showed that 75.0% of the students were economically disadvantaged and 31.5% of the students were English learners.

### **Satchel ISD Contextual Information**

From Satchel ISD, one campus coordinator agreed to an interview for the research study. One campus administrator from another school consented to be interviewed study. Multiple attempts were made to schedule interviews to no avail with central office

personnel and other campus personnel between July 2019 and September 2019. In the following section, the data collected demonstrated the two emerging themes.

- Theme 1: Change Leaders
- Theme 2: Challenges for Secondary Dual Language Program

### **Shay Middle School**

Shay Middle School was one of the participating schools in the study. The school's demographic population demonstrated the following subpopulations: African American 8.4%, Hispanic 74.1%, White 14.5%, American Indian 0.3%, Asian 0.9%, Pacific Islander 0.2%, and two or more races 1.6% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). Students who attended Shay Middle School were in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade.

**The Intricate Leader.** The Intricate Leader was in her eleventh year in the field of education. She stated that she started in corporate America first before transitioning into a career in education. In corporate America, she was an international sales representative. She said that she used the Spanish language “all the time.” She became a fifth-grade bilingual teachers at [City] Independent School District. She taught in a traditional bilingual school. She then moved to a different city where she taught for “three years as a dual language fifth grade teacher.” After her teaching experiences, she shared that she became a reading specialist at an elementary school. At this elementary school, she stated that a dual language program was implemented and was “still functioning today.” She was at the elementary for one year. Then, she said she transitioned to the middle school with her previous principal. She was in her fourth year at Shay Middle School. She had recently earned her master's degree in educational leadership.

She had been in charge of the dual language program at the elementary level for the one year that she was there. At the middle school, she was starting the fourth year of overseeing the dual language program.

When asked why the secondary dual language program was initiated, she stated that it was “parent request at the middle school level.” She went on to provide some historical campus data that is important to note. She shared that the previous principal had put together a “turnover team” to help turn the school over. She said that the school was not in a “school of choice neighborhood.” She added that many parents would send their children to the local elementary school, “which was very strong.” Then, parents would send their children to a private school or a magnet school for middle school.

The principal and the turnover team took over Shay Middle School in 2015. The total student population was at 742 students. At the time of the interview, she said they had “about 1060” students. She added that they had grown the school “enormously” and attributed the growth to the parents. She said that the parents did not want to send their students to magnet schools. “They wanted to stay” at Shay Middle School mostly because their children were “on the bus for over an hour.”

*The Intricate Leader* shared that some of the families zoned to Shay Middle School had attended a dual language program at [school] in Satchel ISD. She added that she knew the families “because they used to have their children at the dual language school where I was the teacher.” She added that the parents had “moved there because they were not happy with that dual language program.” The move was to [school] mentioned previously. The [school] she added was a PreK-eighth grade and the “middle school is very, very small.”

When they saw what was going on here [Shay Middle School], the leaderships that was here, they reached out and approached the principal to see if we were

interested in starting a dual language program. So, they wanted a dual language [program], but they wanted a comprehensive middle school. So, they want the best of both worlds. So, we said ‘yeah.’ And also part of it was because when we started the elementary, the dual language program in the elementary, the previous principal and I, we were like ‘well there’s nowhere for these kids to go once they are done with elementary. There’s not really any sustained like good dual language programs’, so we said, ‘Why not that be us?’

She added that it would also be “another way to capture the parents.”

She described a “comprehensive middle school” as one where students have “access to other electives and other extra-curricular activities.” She then talked about the school program structure.

We are actually an international baccalaureate world school and that is actually one of the things I am over. So, part of being an IB world school is that they [students] have to have eight classes, four are core and four non-core. So, it really did fit in with IB. Since we are an IB school and a requirement of IB is that they have to have a language, we do offer three languages. We offer French, Spanish and German. We figured dual language could fit into that nicely. They have to take a language class, they have to take a PE class, they have to take a visual and performing arts class, and they have to take a design class. So those are eight classes total. Then obviously the extra-curriculars, we have all the sports and clubs and things like that available.

She added that a smaller campus like [school], she thought there was only one sixth grade class, one seventh grade class, and one eighth grade class for dual language. She described the dual language program like a strand of the middle school. She added, “And parents were like, well we’ve been here [at the elementary dual language program] for so

long, let's get more of a well-rounded [experience]. Here at [Shay Middle School] we have everything.”

After they agreed to implement the dual language program, she said that they contacted the multilingual department for guidance in developing a plan. They helped Shay Middle School determine which Spanish courses to offer. They were also told that in order for the school to follow a dual language program, three classes should be offered in Spanish. The program structure was English language arts one day and Spanish language arts the next. They also added history and Spanish I for their third dual language course. The Spanish courses would move the students up to the Spanish AP. She added that due to the “high Hispanic community at [Shay], that was the culminating thing.” The Spanish AP course was “another carrot for the parents.”

The coordinator added, “Every student on our campus does leave with a language high school credit it could be in French, German, or Spanish.” She said that the dual language students earned two high school credits in addition to the college credit.

The coordinator shared that since the school was in a decentralized district, there was not a committee formed to discuss the implementation structure of the dual language program for Shay Middle School. She said, “It was really just us.” After they contacted the multilingual department for guidance, she added...

...that was really the end of that because they don't fund it. They didn't give us any resources for it. They don't have any resources for middle school. They were super excited for us to do this. They gave us a banner to put outside, but in the end, with the drastic budget cuts that happened in the district about two years ago, there was no money to help support [the dual language program].

The dual language program at Shay Middle School had been implemented for three years in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The dual language program had been

phased in each year starting in sixth grade in the 2016-2017 school year. The cohort of students moved into seventh grade and a new group was started in sixth grade. Then, the first cohort moved into eighth grade and both sixth and seventh grades had dual language cohorts too. In the current school year and its fourth year, the coordinator stated, “We phased it out this year, so we don’t have a new class.” It was fully functioning in all the grade levels for the three years only. In the 2019-2020 school year, a new sixth grade group was not started. The dual language program at Shay Middle School only had seventh and eighth graders enrolled in its program. The coordinator added, “So, next year will be the last year.” Once the eighth graders graduated from the middle school, the dual language program would be fully phased out of Shay Middle School.

*The Intricate Leader* was asked about the factors that impacted the implementation of the dual language program. She listed three factors.

- Scheduling
- Hiring
- Budget

The coordinator elaborated on each of the factors. This gave a better understanding of the impact the dual language program had on Shay Middle School.

We are an IB world school, so we do have to adhere to all of those content areas. So, it got tricky because if you are in sixth grade world cultures by dual language, that is only offered one time. And so, you have to be placed in that class. We started to get a lot of push back because parents want their kids to have all the options all the time. So, it became a lot of requests of customized to each child. We tried to explain that if this is the program, these are the sacrifices you’re going to have to make to be part of this program. We were kind of just at a standstill with that. They were ‘well, I want my kid in orchestra.’ Well orchestra was not offered for



that time, for that level, and that day. A good majority of our dual language kids are our high performing students, they are also in all the high school level classes. So, scheduling became a complete nightmare. Hiring is very hard, so you have to find the right person. It's hard enough to find the right teacher in middle school, let alone a dual language teacher in middle school with no curriculum. So, they [dual language teachers] have to create their own curriculum. So, it really was burn out for the dual language teachers. Then, they would see these kids twice a day. It was just a lot 'cause the program is not the whole school it's just these cohorts, one group per grade level. So, if there was an issue with a teacher, that child had that teacher for 140 minutes because we are on a 70-minute block schedule. Then also there's maybe some like 27 kids in that class when that's taking up a spot where there's all these other students that need to go into a language because of the IB curriculum. So, we are paying for a teacher to service 60 kids when I need them to service 120.

Given that she mentioned curriculum as a factor that impacted the program due to the lack of it and that the dual language teacher had to create it, the researcher noted curriculum as another factor impacting the program.

*The Intricate Leader* continued to discuss the challenges being faced with scheduling. She added that she did not know...

where to put these kids that need Spanish, French, or German. It takes up that spot. So, my non-dual language classes were getting filled up. My non-dual language classes like Spanish and French were getting filled 30 plus [students], while this [dual language] teacher had like 22 kids.

Next, *The Intricate Leader* did list curriculum as an impacting factor for the dual language program at Shay Middle School. She said that it was a lot of preparation for the teachers.

Then she stated, “Reality is they [students] weren’t coming prepared.” She continued,

Their written and reading and spoken Spanish was not strong enough. So, it was kind of a shock to parents when the teachers were like they are not getting good grades. Then, they weren’t ready for the AP course because they just weren’t coming prepared for it.

*The Intricate Leader* added that past history had shown that the native Spanish speaking students were the ones who performed well on the Spanish AP exam. She said, “It’s our non-native speakers that struggle.”

The challenges mentioned for the dual language program had not been overcome. *The Intricate Leader* said that the decision to phase out the program had already been made and communicated to the parents. She said that the parents were not happy with the decision. The parents were told that due to lack of funding, having to hire specialized dual language teachers, and not having the physical space for the program, Shay Middle School was phasing the program out. The parents offered to find the money for the program. The coordinator said,

But that is really not how it pans out. And then it would also be the push back of well I also want my kid in this, and I also want my kid in that, instead of just saying well you are here for the dual language program. It just became too much for us manage for 60 kids when we have a 1000 some [students] to service.

*The Intricate Leader* was asked if there were any factors that may have contributed to a smoother transition from the elementary to the middle school. She replied, “No” and added,

Middle school is just a whole other beast. And there’s so many other things that go into middle school. At [Shay] we are an IB world school with a STEM magnet, plus we added dual language. It was just too much.

The coordinator then explained an educational experience in support of the decision to phase out the dual language program.

It’s like when teachers are like there’s all these initiatives, pick one so we can get good at it. We decided we need to really get great at our IB curriculum. We put our focus there and our STEM magnet because we get paid for our magnet students. Dual language is just something we added for fun. Like at [school], where they just have sixth, seventh, and eighth grade class, obviously it’s a smoother transition because it’s already their students.

The coordinator was asked if any of the factors could be changed, which ones should be considered and why. She responded that “the biggest thing” was having more support in curriculum. She said that there was not any curriculum and that the teachers had to create it. Additionally, she stated that finding resources to align with the curriculum would have been beneficial. She said, “I think that would be a huge help for the burn out piece of teachers.”

*The Intricate Leader* also added that she wished money and time could also be changed. She said, “We don’t have any funding for it.”

When you are looking at the budget and saying, I’m paying this much for a teacher to service 60 kids and this teacher the same price. They’re servicing 120, or more because they are single blocked. It comes down to a business decision.

Our other students shouldn't have to be in a class with 35 to get their beginner Spanish class. It's not fair to them either.

*The Intricate Leader* then talked about the students in the dual language cohorts. She said that the "group was in every class together." She expounded,

In middle school again, there are so many little idiosyncrasies that come into play that because they had to be scheduled first into those classes, they naturally fit into their other classes together, like their math class, their reading classes and things like that.

Since the dual language program was only at the seventh and eighth grade levels, the coordinator did not feel that the challenges mentioned had been overcome. She said, "There's nothing really we can do about it now. We are just going to wait to phase it out."

*The Intricate Leader* mentioned that some native Spanish speakers had been placed into the middle school dual language track by others. She said, "I didn't think that was a good idea." The students had not been in a dual language program. She added, "One of the requirements for getting a dual language transfer from me is that you have to come from a dual language program." The coordinator talked about the initial start of the middle school program, when only two other elementary schools were transitioning students for a "natural feed" to Shay Middle School. At that time, those were the only two schools that were sending students to sixth grade.

*The Intricate Leader* added that about six years ago, the superintendent of schools had a push for dual language programs. More dual language programs were added across the school district. The students from those programs were now in fourth and fifth grades. She stated that she received a lot of calls from parents to enroll their dual language child at Shay Middle School.

But then how do I manage who I take? We are all about being fair and equitable to students. I don't think that was really fair because then I'm cherry picking who I want. That's why I like the lottery system that magnet has because they just go in the lottery. All middle schools in [Satchel ISD] have a lottery.

Next, she talked about some of the success stories that they had experienced with the dual language program. She said that the students had high Spanish AP scores. Some, she said, earned "3's and we get some 4's every once in a while. We get like 80% at a 3 or higher, which I took of course as a junior in high school." The student also earned two high school credits. She added that some of the students test out of Spanish in high school.

*The Intricate Leader* discussed an interesting point about parents and the students' earned language credits. She said, "The parents want them to be waived so they don't have to take a language in high school. Parents will call me and say, "well don't they see that they have already did two years of high school." She explained that the if the student enrolled at an IB high school, they have to continue to take a language course. She added, "It's a requirement of IB that they take language." She shares this information with the parents and lets them know that the student also has the option to take any another language, such as, German or French. Usually, she said that the parent will not want the child to "try a different language."

This led to the discussion about the continuation of the program from the students' standpoint. *The Intricate Leader* stated that this was an additional factor. Students tend not to continue the dual language program into high school.

While there had been an extensive discussion about the small student-to-teacher ratios in the dual language classes, the coordinator did list small class sizes during

instruction as a “success” of the program. Even though, she stated that “teacher-wise” it had been a struggle.

*The Intricate Leader* went on to discuss the teacher turn over that they had experienced at Shay Middle School. She said that they were on the third teacher as a dual language teacher in their fourth year. She mentioned that parents had left the program because they were not happy with that teacher.

*The Intricate Leader* said that one teacher taught the eighth graders in “some high school credit classes.” There was another teacher that had started the previous year. She had taught the sixth-grade history class and was currently teaching the seventh-grade Texas history course. The two dual language classes that were taught in Spanish were history and the Spanish courses.

The coordinator added that the district originally wanted Shay Middle School to have math in the dual language program structure. She added,

It’s hard enough to find effective math teachers, let alone do it in Spanish. And, that’s a tested content area. They wanted to do it because it’s a universal language. However, it’s also a high need [area] to try to get teachers in there. So, trying to find a dual language teacher, let alone a math teacher, let alone a dual language math teacher. And then, the test is in English. I am sure that they could translate, but we didn’t go that route.

*The Intricate Leader’s* recommendations for schools transitioning to a middle school dual language program from the elementary level was to have active recruitment. She added, “Having the right teacher in place and the supports to support that teacher.” The coordinator also felt that a dual language program may “work better in a school that doesn’t already have so many programs going on.”

When asked how the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018) had impacted their dual language program, she stated, “I think these would impact any program. I would say program structure is the hardest part and staff quality.” She also added resources since they didn’t “have many resources available.”

*The Intricate Leader* also included that they had a lot of family and community engagement at Shay Middle School “because of our IB world school.” She felt that was a natural fit to their program. She added, “We are a community school, so we do a lot of programming. In two weeks, we have our Hispanic Heritage program that will be done, and our PTA puts all of this up.”

*The Intricate Leader* then shared that they had an open-door policy for the parents. She stated,

And, I think that is kind of what burnt us out. That small percentage of dual language parents were taking up a lot of our time to make sure we’re making them happy, which of course we want them to be happy. But also, not realizing that we have a lot of other students that we need to make sure have their special ed services, have their dyslexic pull outs, things like that. We need to put our money to make sure we have a dyslexic person on staff. We were trying to help them see a bigger picture and that didn’t necessarily go over well with time. It’s a very involved community which is great. Which is great! But kind of trying to explain that the decision that they made to put their child in a dual language program means that they can’t have everything else all of the time.

The coordinator then described how they were overcoming the phasing out of the dual language program through scheduling. She explained an example.

If a student is coming from a dual language school, what we are doing is we are saying we are not dual language, but we can service your dual language student in

this way. We can run a report in our system if they came from a dual language school. So, they will get a full year native sixth grade Spanish. Then, in seventh grade, they will still all be grouped together. They will get native speaker 1, 1a, 1b. Then in eighth grade, they will get AP, if they make it or native speaker 2a, 2b.

She described this scheduling as a hybrid. Then she added, “We are not saying we are not doing dual language.”

*The Intricate Leader* also explained a different example for students who chose not to pursue the dual language route or for other students who had not participated in dual language programs. She called this type of sequence “the taster” since students were exposed to different languages in the sixth grade to help them decide which one to pursue through the eighth-grade.

In sixth grade for IB is semester 1 semester 2. So maybe they get French semester 1 [and] Spanish semester 2 in sixth grade. Then, in seventh grade, all year they will have French. Then in eighth grade, they get their high school credit class in French. So that’s how the sequence goes for a traditional sixth grader.

Even though Shay Middle School had difficulty resolving the challenges of continuing the dual language program at the school, *The Intricate Leader* demonstrated many complex thinking strategies that interrelated in providing dual language students with the opportunity to continue developing their Spanish language skills. It may not have been through a dual language program, but the students had the options to pursue Spanish in their middle school and to earn the Spanish AP credits as eighth graders.

### **Hal Middle School**

The other middle school from Satchel ISD that participated in the study was Hal Middle School. The school had the following demographics: African American 36%,



Hispanic 47.7%, White, 12.1%, American Indian 0.1%, Asian 2.2%, Pacific Islander 0.1%, and two or more races 1.8% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The campus also had 61.9% of the students as economically disadvantaged and 14.3% of the student population was reported as English learners. From Hal Middle School, only the campus administrator was interviewed.

**The Emboldened Leader.** The campus administrator was given the moniker of *The Emboldened Leader* for instilling boldness and courage (Merriam-Webster, 2019) in reimplementing a dual language program at Hal Middle School after it had been announced that it would no longer be implemented. As the new administrator, he had phased the dual language program back into the school for sixth and seventh grade. In the 2019-2020 school year, the program was into the third year of reimplementation and the students were entering the eighth grade.

According the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (2019), the school administrator held an early childhood to twelfth grade principal certification. *The Emboldened Leader* also held two teaching certificates. He was certified to teach Spanish bilingual and English as a Second Language and elementary self-contained for pre-kindergarten to sixth grade.

The school administrator shared that he had started as a bilingual teacher in Harley ISD. He had worked at that elementary school for four years before transitioning into another elementary school as a technologist. After a couple of years at that elementary school, he stated that his principal “decided to implement the dual language program there.” He added that he had the opportunity to “see the program implemented from the ground up beginning with kindergarten.”

During his continued stay as the elementary school, he “became the dual language magnet coordinator and continued the implementation up to sixth grade.” He then worked

on a proposal to have the dual language program implemented kindergarten to eighth grade. The proposal was presented to the school board and it was approved. During the summer after the school board approval, he said that he had transitioned to another elementary school that had an International Baccalaureate program. Therefore, he did not oversee the seventh and eighth grade dual language implementation.

*The Emboldened Leader* then transitioned into a position at another elementary school as its principal. He was the principal of that school for six year before becoming the principal at Hal Middle School. He had been at this campus for two years.

At Hal Middle School, the dual language program had been implemented in grades, sixth, seventh, and eighth. He recalled that a former superintendent had “tasked many elementary schools with implementing dual language programs.” At the time, he said, Hal Middle School was one of the few middle schools that offered a dual a language program. He believed that many of the elementary schools that implemented a dual language program still existed and students were “entering fourth and fifth grade.”

Hal Middle School was still one of the few middle schools with a dual language program in the school district. The school administrator thought that the number of middle schools offering the program was small considering the number of elementary schools that had implemented dual language programs. When the students were “ready to transition into middle school” he asked, “Where are all the other kids going to go?”

When asked about the duration of the dual language program at his campus, *The Emboldened Leader* was not sure. He shared that he had started in May of 2017 at Hal Middle School. He had the opportunity to transition into the school at the end of the school year “while the outgoing principal was still” there. When he arrived, he had asked “about the dual language program” and was “told that it was going away.”

So, I wasn't sure why or how it got to that point. I was not able to get a very clear understanding. But, when I got here, the entire language department had already submitted [student] transfer requests to other schools. When I met with the coordinator of the dual language program, who was also a teacher in the program, and asked why, she shared that the program from her perspective was not being supported. They were not actively recruiting. They had a partnership with the International Spanish Academy that they had dropped and so they felt like the program was being phased out. Then, I spoke to the teacher and shared that now that it was on me to either continue that process of phasing it out or to keep it. I wanted to keep it. Having seen that a dual language school, having seen the power of kids [who] are bilingual and biliterate and bicultural, I wanted to continue the program here at the school. So, her response to me was I wish we'd known before we had all submitted for transfers. She thought the program with on the way out. So, I had to in essence start to try to rebuild the program having lost all my teachers.

*The Emboldened Leader* later communicated that they also had to “reset the passion” in the community and inform the families that a dual language program would be continued at Hal Middle School.

A partnership with the International Spanish Academy (ISA) is through the Ministry of Education of Spain. The ISA is part of a network of committed schools in the United States and Canada that implement Spanish immersion programs (International Spanish Academy, 2019). The campus administrator had asked for a reprieve so that the partnership was not taken away, but to give the campus an opportunity to rebuild the program. He added, “So I know we’re kind of on hold with them, but they know that we’re working right now on making sure we’re running this program with fidelity.”

*The Emboldened Leader* added that he had a conversation with the other campus administrators and the teachers and shared that he “just saw an opportunity here.” He also talked to the district’s multilingual department. He was told, “It’s on you if you want to continue the program and wanted to revitalize it. So, I decided I did.” He hired new teachers and stated that he was “still in the process of trying to grow the program back to where I need it to be.” He added again, “It’s a great opportunity for our campus.”

The dual language program at Hal Middle School was taught in history and through the Spanish courses. The teacher who had been teaching the history courses was also the coordinator for the dual language program had just resigned to teach English overseas. *The Emboldened Leader* said he was “left looking for a new dual language teacher and coordinator for the program.” He had just hired a new dual language teacher. He felt that he had found a “great one.” The new teacher would be teaching eighth grade history. The previous teacher had taught world cultures and Texas history in Spanish respectively to sixth and seventh grade students.

*The Emboldened Leader* shared that he had worked with the teacher at one of the previous elementary campuses where he had been a principal. He added, “We coached him and groomed him to be a standout teacher.” He said that the teacher was “impressively bilingual and biliterate.” He was the first teacher he thought of when he was looking for a teacher and coordinator for the secondary dual language program. He said the teacher “jumped at the chance” to work with *The Emboldened Leader* again.

He [the teacher] was excited about the opportunity of being able to actually help grow a program. And, he wants to be able to see the continuum of kids entering sixth grade and where they're going to be when they leave eighth grade. He's also a teacher that likes to track his students. He wants to keep up with them after elementary where do you go to middle school. After middle school with your high

school are you being successful in what you're doing? So, I definitely do think that I've got the right person with the right mindset in place now.

The administrator believed that he had overcome the challenge of finding a quality staff member through the hiring of the dual language teacher. He added, "I know where his heart and his passion are and they're what we need in this program to continue to grow." He said the teacher was also excited to work for him for other reasons.

Because he knows where my priorities and my goals are when leading a school and working with children. And, that this is a passion for me having come from a dual language background at the elementary school level. And now trying to build it here at the secondary level.

The campus administrator explained that the students' schedules were on a block schedule with alternating days. He described the dual language students' history schedule.

So, on the days that they are required to go to their history class the dual language students will go...the sixth-grade students will go to World Culture and they will receive all of their instruction in Spanish. All of it. For our seventh graders, when it's their day to go to history, then they will be taking Texas history in Spanish and again all of it will be in Spanish. And this year, we are going to implement eighth grade history, so that again will be completely in Spanish.

He added that the eighth-grade students would be taking the STAAR state assessment for history in English even though the course was taught in Spanish.

When asked about the factors that impact the implementation of the secondary dual language program, *The Emboldened Leader* stated that resources were one of the big ones.

There's not anything out there, that I am aware of, for dual language programs at the secondary level that will be able to provide the students with the appropriate material in content materials in Spanish that the teachers will need and consistently need in order to access content. So, our teacher will have to be doing a lot of either translating or just doing a lot of research in time to find materials that address different learning objectives that are required by the state.

Another factor mentioned by the administrator that was impacting the secondary dual language program was that "some of these students were coming out of transitional bilingual programs." Transitional bilingual programs are described as programs that serve limited English proficient students with the purpose to transfer students to English-only instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 10). The administrator also added that some of the students were actually newcomers from other Latin American countries. He said that newcomer students with "little to no English" were placed in a dual language class "simply so that they could get at least one course content area in their native language, while they were still acquiring English skills through the other content." He felt that this practice was "not implementing the program with fidelity."

*The Emboldened Leader* believed that the newcomer students could receive better services through an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. He shared that he had "created a position specifically for the teacher to work with newcomers." However, he had push back from other campus administrators to keep enrolling newcomers in the dual language program. He felt strongly about stopping this type of practice.

If we're going to have this be a successful dual language program, we got to run it with fidelity. We can't be dumping kids in there simply because they don't know any English when Spanish is their permanent language. That's not the goal and

the purpose of a dual language program. It's to continue to foster the skills that they should have come in with from a dual language elementary school.

The campus administrator added that scheduling was impacted by the practice of adding newcomers to the dual language program.

We have a lot of kids coming in with little to no English and they were trying to find a way to schedule kids into courses without overwhelming the ESL teacher. So, I felt like if that's the challenge, then we need to do a better job of finding other teachers to help teach these kids English and provide them with ESL curriculum. By dumping them into dual language classrooms just because it's taught in Spanish, it's not really going to help. It won't help the program and it's not going to help the kids. That was one of the factors of implementation I think was to scheduling kids. Making sure that we are closely monitoring kids that are actually ready and able to function inside of a secondary dual language program. He thought that the campus was doing a "much better job" identifying students that were "truly bilingual, so that the language is not the barrier."

*The Emboldened Leader* also shared that the students who had participated in an elementary dual language program do not struggle academically. He stated that they "appear to be doing better academically." He added that the students also have "very strong skills" including strong communication skills. He elaborated on this.

Which is not something that may be explicitly taught if you are monolingual and going through the schooling process, but it does seem like the kids that are going through a dual language program when you get to the secondary level are really great communicators.

Another factor that *The Emboldened Leader* felt was impacting the dual language program was the fine arts program. He believed that students were interested in participating in the fine arts program at the campus.

[The program] is helping draw more kids into our program because if you are coming in as a dual language student, you are still going to be able to take a fine arts elective from some of the best teachers in our district and I think that's helping with the implementation of our program.

*The Emboldened Leader* then talked about the factor of marketing the dual language program. He said that as they recruited for their fine arts program, that someone also needed to promote the dual language program for his campus. They had realized that families did not know that Hal Middle School had a dual language program.

You know few people know about our dual language program unless you're actually working in dual language school and they are aware of where the schools are that offer it. But, I think our recruiting has definitely gotten better and more people are becoming well aware of the fact that we have a dual language program but not everyone is necessarily aware of what it entails. Parents think that it is a school where you can come start to learn Spanish and start to become bilingual and so we are having to do a lot of educating of the parents letting them know it's not for beginners. You actually have to be bilingual to be successful in this program or you are not going to make it.

Later, *The Emboldened Leader* added that parents needed to be informed about “what a dual language program is and what it is not.” Additionally, he felt that the district should be more involved in informing the community of the dual language locations at the secondary levels including the feeder pattern for each elementary program. He suggested that information session could be scheduled and added, “just find a way to



bring us all together with the community and those parents and let us discuss our programs.”

If the campus administrator could change any of the factors, *The Emboldened Leader* stated that it would be “finding more resources that are applicable to our being able to teach history in Spanish to address objectives that are required by the state.” He thought that was the biggest challenge. He also added other factors that included “just us becoming better at recruiting [students] and also promoting our program.”

*The Emboldened Leader* then shared a personal note. He said that he was very invested because his young son was currently enrolled in a dual language program at the elementary level. His son had started the program in pre-kindergarten and was starting fourth grade.

I’ve seen the benefit for my son who is going to fourth grade and what it's doing for him. So, I guess on the selfish level, I'm kind of trying to lay the groundwork. Making sure I’m building up an outstanding program here at the middle school level because my plan is to eventually bring here when he is ready for middle school.

One of the recommendations the campus administrator made for schools transitioning from an elementary dual language program to one in the middle school was for “a very strong support system from the district.” *The Emboldened Leader* felt that the multilingual department had “done a great job supporting elementary” schools with the dual language programs, but he said, “I honestly haven’t felt that level of support has been here at the secondary level.” He felt “disconnected to the multilingual department” and added that there had been a lot of transitions at the central office administration level. He knew that the district was trying to improve on it.

I've not felt that level of support from the district at the secondary level. It's almost an afterthought it feels like to me. So, I would suggest that districts looking to do this that they really have a strong support system in place. And [that they] have really thought out the continuum of what they expect to see from kids in a dual language program assuming that you're going to have kids and parents that want to go from kinder all the way on up to high school.

*The Emboldened Leader* also added that professional development for teachers was a missing piece for the secondary dual language program. This was another factor impacting the program at Hal Middle School.

We give lots of opportunities for math, science, reading, social studies, etc. but I just at the secondary level don't see development opportunities for dual language teachers. Even when I see email come out from the district office is about dual language PD for elementary campuses. I've even asked if this in any way benefit secondary teacher and I've been told 'no.' So, I think that is a big missing piece and just being able to provide some sort of a professional development for secondary dual language teachers because there just doesn't seem to be any. He desired more district support in the form of professional development and a clear vision in the alignment between elementary to middle schools.

The next recommendation *The Emboldened Leader* made was in hiring "the right people, who have been trained on dual language methodology and philosophy so that they can actually implement the program with fidelity." He said that not having the right teacher teaching in the dual language program "could really hurt the program" and that it would be a disadvantage to the students.

*The Emboldened Leader* also recommended that secondary schools reach out to elementary schools with dual language programs.

Making sure that they [elementary schools] are aware and that they're working hopefully to building up strong relationship with their secondary campuses so that they can build a pipeline from elementary school up to middle school. And that there be plenty of research to share that with parents and community members about how this benefits not just the kids, but eventually it is going to benefit the community as a whole if we are able to produce this product of kids that are coming out of a dual language programs. You know they are going to be academically very strong and again be functioning as biliterate, bilingual citizens which I think is a huge advantage to any community.

*The Emboldened Leader* was bold and courageous in his position as the administrator at Hal Middle School. He also demonstrated commitment to rebuilding the dual language program at his campus. He was glad to have participated in the research study. He thought there was "a huge opportunity here to help it [research] grow dual language programs at the secondary level."

### **Summary of Emerging Themes for Satchel ISD**

There were a couple themes that emerged from the interviews conducted in Satchel ISD. The perspectives from two staff members were captured through the interview process. The participants were from two different campuses. One of the participants was an International Baccalaureate and magnet coordinator at a middle school. And, the other was a principal from another middle school. The data presented in this section demonstrated the following emerging themes:

- Theme 1: Change Leaders
- Theme 2: Challenges for Secondary Dual Language Program

### **Theme 1: Change Leaders**

In theme 1, both participants demonstrated characteristics of motion leadership that caused positive movement forward (Fullan, 2011) for the dual language programs at their campus. *The Intricate Leader* shared that she had been selected as part of a turnover team with the purpose to turn the school around. The team had increased the school enrollment.

*The Intricate Leader* talked about how the dual language program came to be at her school sharing that parents wanted dual language program at a comprehensive middle school. She described a comprehensive middle school as one where students had “access to other electives and other extra-curricular activities.” She said that the parents wanted the “best of both worlds” for their children. The campus was able to accommodate the parents’ request by adding a dual language program and took it to the implementation stage.

*The Emboldened Leader* learned that the dual language program had been taken away after he was named principal for his campus. He shared that he had spoken to his school staff about his decision to rebuild the program, including the hiring of new teachers. Later in the interview he talked about a new dual language teacher he had just hired for the program. He said that the teacher was excited to work with him because of his priorities and goals in leading a campus and working with students.

The campus administrator also had a personal investment in the secondary dual language program. He had a son who had participated in an elementary dual language program was in fourth grade. He added that on the selfish side of him, he was trying to lay the groundwork for his son by “building an outstanding program” at the middle school.

In summary of theme 1, these examples show how both the magnet coordinator and the campus administrator were learning confidently, which is one of the essential

competencies to leading change through practice and experience (Fullan, 2011). The magnet coordinator was part of a team that helped to turn around a school and to implement a dual language program. The campus administrator was rebuilding a dual language program at his school after the families had already been told that it would no longer exist at his school.

## **Theme 2: Challenges for Secondary Dual Language Program**

Theme 2 for Satchel ISD mentioned specific challenges for each of the participants' school campuses. The challenges shared were different and unique for their particular campus programs. The biggest challenges mentioned by *The Intricate Leader* were budget, scheduling dual language students into courses, and hiring qualified teachers for their dual language program. She elaborated on the scheduling challenge and the push back from parents when conflict arose with electives.

*The Intricate Leader* went on to talk about the challenge of hiring teachers for the dual language program. She said, "Hiring is very hard, so you have to find the right person. It's hard enough to find the right teacher in middle school, let alone a dual language teacher in middle school with no curriculum." Then she added, "So they have to create their own curriculum. So, it really was burn out for the dual language teachers."

*The Intricate Leader* also shared they were experiencing a conflict with IB requirements and the dual language courses as far as the number of students being served. She said, "We are paying for a teacher to service 60 [dual language] kids when I need them to service 120." She did not know where to place the students for their foreign language credits.

*The Intricate Leader* also added that students were not entering the sixth-grade dual language program with strong Spanish skills. She said that the students' "written, reading, and spoken Spanish was not strong enough." So, it was a shock to parents when

they were contacted by the teachers about the students not getting good grades. The students were also not ready for the Spanish AP course due to the Spanish language deficiencies. She stated that the native Spanish speaker performed well on the Spanish AP exam. Then added, “But it’s our non-native speakers that struggle.” Due to the many intricate challenges at this campus, the decision had been made to phase out the dual language program. The campus had not started a new sixth grade cohort. The dual language program was only functioning at the seventh and eighth grade levels and would completely be phased out after a couple of years.

*The Emboldened Leader* shared some challenges in rebuilding his dual language program. He shared, “Having to replace all my teachers and having to make sure we reset the passion and let the kids know that we would be continuing this was a bit of a challenge.” Another challenge he mentioned was the lack of resources. He said that he had not found any materials for the secondary dual language program.

The other challenge that was particular to *The Emboldened Leader’s* school was the promoting of the dual language program at his campus. He shared that the campus marketed for the fine arts offered at his school, but that no one was promoting the secondary dual language program. Families did not realize that one even existed at his school.

*The Emboldened Leader* also mentioned a third challenge, which was about hiring the right staff members for the dual language program. He said his challenge was “making sure that I’ve got people in place and that will be here for several years to really help the growth of the [dual language] program.”

*The Emboldened Leader* also mentioned that scheduling had become an issue too. However, the conflict for the administrator was students being enrolled into the dual language program “with little to no English and they were trying to find a way to

schedule kids into courses without overwhelming the ESL teacher.” He added, “That was one of the factors of implementation I think was to scheduling kids by making sure that we are closely monitoring kids that are actually ready and able to function inside of a secondary dual language program.”

In summary, theme 2 demonstrated distinct challenges each campus was facing in their dual language program. Scheduling of students was a factor for both campuses. Budgeting was another challenge for one campus due to teachers serving a lower student population in the dual language program in comparison to the whole student campus population needing be enrolled in a foreign language for the IB requirements. The campus did not have spaces for students in the IB program to take their required foreign language course due to the dual language classes offered. The lack of curriculum for the dual language program also caused burn out of the teachers for one campus. Additionally, the students had low Spanish skills, especially the non-native Spanish speakers in the dual language program at one campus. To the contrary, the other campus mentioned the lack of English skills for students being scheduled into dual language programming. The lack of resources was a struggle for both campuses. One administrator also mentioned that the promotion of his dual language program needed improvement. Last, both campuses mentioned the difficulty of hiring teachers for the program that were highly qualified and certified to teach in a dual language program.

### **Bertie ISD Case Study**

Bertie ISD was the third participating school district in the research study. This school district reported the following populations: African American 12.6%, American Indian 1.7%, Asian 3.4%, Hispanic/Latino 2.3%, Pacific Islander 0.2%, two or more races 1.0% and White 8.7% (Texas Academic Performance Report, 2018). The report

also demonstrated that their overall student population had 75.5% economically disadvantaged students and 39.2% English learners.

From Bertie ISD, several attempts were made to schedule interviews with different personnel who were leading the dual language programs in the school district. The researcher made an effort to make contact with the administrators from the two campuses approved to participate in the research study, to no avail. One other central office employee was also contacted and scheduled to interview. However, due to a couple of scheduling conflicts on the staff members' behalf, the interview did not come to fruition. Only one participant responded and consented to an interview. This participant was a central office staff member and interviewed by phone. The emerging themes that developed in the following section included:

- Theme 1: Expansion of Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 3: Factors that Impact Smoother Transitions into Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 4: Professional Development Opportunities



### **Bertie ISD Dual Language Contextual Information**

Bertie ISD had dual language programs from elementary to the high school level. At the elementary level, some schools had two-way dual language and the others had bilingual early exit programs. It was stated that in the past, the bilingual program had been dual language and had changed to the early-exit model. The district was in the process of transitioning the early exit programs to a one-way dual language program in all of the elementary schools that were not already two-way dual language. At the middle school level, there were two schools with dual language programs. There was also one high school that had implemented a dual language program. The high school program had already graduated three dual language cohorts. The fourth cohort were in their senior year the fall of 2019.

**The Viable Leader.** *The Viable Leader* had been an educator for 23 years and had been employed by Bertie ISD for 15 years. For the last nine years, she stated that she had been the secondary dual language and ESL coordinator. She had previously worked in Puerto Rico as a teacher. She said that she had a background in bilingual education and held a master's degree for bilingual and dual language.

The coordinator had started by overseeing the elementary and secondary programs. Five years ago, she "had the opportunity to just concentrate on secondary." She had been working with several programs at the secondary level, including ESL, dual language, and Language other than English (LOTE).

When asked why the secondary dual language program was initiated, she shared that the district started exploring possibilities of continuing the program to the middle school. The exploration started when the "students were going into sixth grade."

She added that a lot of parents also requested the expansion into the middle school level. According to the coordinator, the parents were saying, "We already spent six years

in a two-way program.” The parents wanted their children to continue in dual language and questioned how there were not any plans to continue the students “bilingual literacy” instruction into the middle school. She said that the parents had petitioned to the school board. The board approved the expansion for the middle school level. When the students were moving into the high school level, the coordinator “came on board” to help develop the dual language program for “one of the high schools.”

The coordinator shared that a parent advisory committee was formed during the discussions to expand the dual language program to the secondary level. She added that “parents were very interested in their students to continue building” their bilingual skills. She added that students were on the committee, too. At some point, she shared that Southern Methodist University had also assisted the advisory committee. She said that teachers helped to move the process forward.

Additionally, during the interview, the coordinator shared they had the principals join in the effort. They were taken to visit other school districts “to see what they were doing and how we could mirror some of their successes in our district.” She added that it was teamwork that made the secondary program possible. She added that the principal had to buy in to the program too. “If they don't buy into it and they don't understand, it's going to be hard to implement such a program, especially at the secondary level.”

*The Viable Leader* said that once the middle school program was designed that they had explained to the families the advantages of taking a level four class in Spanish. The families’ interest grew more when they realized that in eighth grade, the students would be ready to take the college board exam and earn college credit through dual language Spanish sequence courses leading up the Spanish AP course.

The secondary dual language program was described as being content based given students “need to complete certain credits in certain areas.”

Depending on the grade level, for example, sixth and seventh grade is social studies and social studies is taught in Spanish, completely in Spanish. And then, they take a Spanish language class. Then, in eighth grade, they take Spanish AP. When they move up to high school, they have to complete four courses that are dual language approved. So, we offer World Geography in Spanish, we offer Health, Speech, and Theater Arts. Then, we also have a Spanish course called Spanish Seminar which is kind of building them to go into the literature class the following year. So, they just need to complete four courses out of all of those throughout their four years in high school.

The coordinator further elaborated on the middle school courses that were offered as part of the dual language program structure.

The sixth-grade social studies is integrated with the Spanish so basically what happens is that it's double blocked. So, the students are 90 minutes with the same teacher. What they do is they integrate the learning of the Spanish language, the grammar and the writing and the reading comprehension through the social studies content. There are close to 90 minutes of target language instruction. That's the sixth grade. Then seventh grade, they take another social studies and Spanish, which is Texas history, and then they take Spanish III AP. Then in eighth grade, they take the Spanish AP.

The coordinator was asked what factors were impacting the implementation of the secondary dual language program. She started with a challenge with the incoming fifth graders going into sixth grade.

They [students] need to take three STAAR tests, and that accountability gets a little bit in the way in the sense of when second semester rolls around. Campuses wants to really make sure the kids are ready to perform at a level that meets the

state standards. So, some of the Spanish content, the Spanish language is lost in the sense of that they concentrate to make sure the students are ready to take that science test in English, that math test in English, that reading test. So, when they go to sixth grade some of them might have lost a little bit of the language in the sense of the academic level one.

*The Viable Leader* said that teacher try to overcome this challenge by transitioning the students “pretty quickly” to their “90 minutes of target language instruction in the first few weeks of school.” She said that the non-Spanish speakers struggle the most. However, she said, they “need to continue to listen and hear that language in order to feel comfortable with it.”

The other challenge the coordinator mentioned was the lack of elective choices that the dual language students are offered due to being enrolled in the program.

The Spanish language course in sixth and seventh grade take the place of one elective. They [students] have to understand that one of their elective periods is taken away by that Spanish. So, they only have one additional choice, which most of the time they have to do either the fine arts or the PE because they're requirements.

*The Viable Leader* shared that after explaining this to parents and students, the “majority of our students and parents support the program, so they stay even though they get one less choice” of electives. She added that “they see the value of it [the dual language program].”

Another challenge mentioned was the lack of resources. The coordinator listed this as one of their biggest challenges. *The Viable Leader* said that the middle school teachers were in need of “authentic Spanish resources” for their history courses. She said that even though the dual language teachers were bilingual and could translate the

materials, “it's not the same when you translate than when you have that authentic resource.”

When you're teaching world cultures, you really want to make sure that you have the right materials, that they're really exposed to what world cultures are in Spanish. They also do a lot of novel reading based on what other teachers are talking about. So, they do better instruction through that, [but] just having the resources on the level for the teachers of the students.

The coordinator thought the parents were their biggest advocates in helping them overcome challenges. She said, “As long as the parents understand the benefits and they can talk to their kids, because in middle school you can still influence the way your children make decisions in a sense.”

*The Viable Leader* added that they had some parents that during the students sixth and seventh grade years, wanted to leave the program. She said, “What we do is we sit down with them and we meet with them. We talk to them and refresh their minds on the importance of continuing a program of such value that they're like, ‘Oh, okay.’”

*The Viable Leader* also talked about the other advocates in the program. She said that they not only get parent support, but that the counselors also play a big role in supporting the secondary dual language program. She added that with district and campus support along with all the other advocates that they were “able to overcome those challenges.”

The coordinator then talked about some of the factors that contributed to a smoother transition into the secondary level. She started with describing “an orientation night in the spring” semester. This orientation helped families “experience a little bit of what the secondary program is like.” The families had the opportunity to speak to the

teachers and to other fellow students that were more advanced in the dual language program at the secondary level. She said this created excitement among the families.

*The Viable Leader* went on to describe a strength in the program and that was in the teachers that were teaching in the dual language program.

I'm going to say that we've been very lucky with the sixth-grade teachers that we have, so they make the transition very smoothly for the students. It's already a challenge to move from elementary to secondary, to middle school, but they are very good. They're very engaging. They keep those classes very engaging and very fun for them [students] to help with the transition. So, I think that that's a key factor.

She added that the quality of the teachers was important. She said that teachers have to know the program well and must have buy-in to continue to build a commitment to the program for the students.

One of the big successes for the program that the coordinator talked about was the scores in the eighth-grade students' Spanish AP exams. *The Viable Leader* said, "We have years that we over passed the Spain and the National [levels] and there are years where we've been similar to it." The students earn college credit as eighth graders.

From the high school, the coordinator shared that from the first cohort of dual language students that graduated, "the Valedictorian was a part of the dual language program." She added that dual language graduates "get accepted to all universities with great scholarships."

The students were celebrated through recognitions. They received biliteracy recognition. The district also gave the students additional recognition "during their senior award "ceremonies. The dual language students received a letter of support from the district recognizing them for "their commitment to the program" and for graduating with

the additional bilingualism and biliteracy recognition. They also received a pin with the dual language logo and the district's name. *The Viable Leader* added it was "so just a little memento to remind them of the hard work, the twelve years they been working hard to be where they are at. Not only graduating, but also having that additional skill under their belt."

The coordinator had some recommendations for schools that had programs transitioning into a secondary dual language program from the elementary level.

They definitely need to have a task force together, put together a task force that includes teachers, as well as parents, even students, and then of course your literacy team members so they can start building on. Depending on what the board goals are and the district missions are. You need to have a pretty good group of people that will help in the whole development program, the implementation process. Then make sure that you do meetings with the rest of the parents and get counselors on board as well. It's a team effort, it's not a one-person effort. You need to have good people in place and people that actually believe in the program. Because all you need is the advocates, you don't need anybody to be negative. But you always also need that little negative to see what else needs to do better, but you definitely need a strong team of people and do some research. Help them understand the benefits and all of that so they can advocate for it.

*The Viable Leader* shared that they used different research-based articles and research on dual language programs. She shared that when the district had started their program the renowned authors of dual language studies, Thomas and Collier, had been brought into the district. She said that the district had reached out to the scholars during the initiation of the elementary two-way dual language program and then again when they started the secondary program. They had returned once more during the summer.

She said, “They came back again and we had them talk to our principals.” She also shared that they had also talked to the community in the past, including the dual language parents.

*The Viable Leader* added, “We have been following all their research through many, many years.” She also shared that they also used the guiding principles from CAL [Center of Applied Linguistics] through developer programs. She stated that they want to “make sure that what we're doing is what's best for kids and what's research supported.”

*The Viable Leader* also shared that the Texas Education Agency had published a literature review recently on the effective practices in bilingual education program model implementation (Kennedy, 2019). The district personnel had studied the review, too. She added, “We try to keep ourselves as a department up-to-date on everything that is going on out there, but we also bring it to our admin, different admin teams so they are up-to-date.”

*The Viable Leader* shared that a couple of years ago, they had also completed a book study on *Teaching for Biliteracy* by Beechman and Urow (2013). This year, she said, they had brought it back to go through a book study with the second-grade teachers. She said that they needed the teachers to “understand what the guiding principles were and why we do what we do.” She added that everyone needed “to be all on the same page because of fidelity.” She said that was the key. “If your programs are not followed to fidelity, then it's not going to be as successful as we wish.”

The coordinator shared that as a district they had a “very comprehensive professional development plan.”

As a department we continue to support the teachers in what those practices are and good instruction looks like for our non-Spanish speakers as well as our Spanish speakers. We do pay a lot of attention to that and making sure teachers



are getting what they need in order to be successful in the classroom. Everything else curriculum wise, we provide support, we provide scaffolds to the regular content curriculum, so the teachers are able to have what they need in order to successfully teach their students.

*The Viable Leader* earned her pseudonym for her leadership in keeping the dual language program working, functioning, and developing adequately (Merriam-Webster, 2019). She demonstrated knowledge and appreciation in keeping the secondary program sustained through the various supports and professional development opportunities offered to dual language staff members. She also knew that staying updated on current research was going to continue to favorably impact the secondary dual language program.

### **Summary of Emerging Themes for Bertie ISD**

In Bertie ISD, there was only one participant who interviewed for the research study. The secondary coordinator for the dual language program provided responses based on her leadership perspective at the district level. In the following section, some of the emerging themes will be described. The data collected in this school district had the following emerging themes:

- Theme 1: Expansion of Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs
- Theme 3: Factors that Impact Smoother Transitions into Secondary Dual Language Programs

### **Theme 1: Expansion of Secondary Dual Language Programs**

In Theme 1, a description of how the dual language program expanded into the middle school level was explained. *The Viable Leader* shared that the school district had been “exploring the possibility of continuing the program in middle school.” She added that parents were also commenting that their children had spent six years in the program

and wanted them to continue into the secondary level. The school board had approved the request to transition the program to the middle school. She stated that the district had two middle schools with a dual language program. She also shared that the dual language program had expanded into the high school level.

The coordinator also shared that there was “a lot of parent involvement.” She said that parent advisory committees were formed that included students, too. She added, “Parents were very interested in their students to continue building” dual language skills. She continued, “The whole two-way dual language program in our district started because of parent interest.”

In summary, Theme 1 described the expansion of the dual language program into the middle school. It was already being explored by the school district. Then, parents requested a program for their children who were completing a dual language program at the elementary school level. After going to the school board, the program transition from the elementary to the middle school was approved and continued into the secondary level. Strong parental involvement was key for the implementation of dual language programs, along with “teachers moving it forward.”

## **Theme 2: Challenges in Secondary Dual Language Programs**

In Theme 2, *The Viable Leader* shared some the challenges being faced in their school district. One of the challenges was that some of the sixth-grade students “have lost a little bit of the [Spanish] language in the sense of the academic level one.” She explained the lack of the Spanish language possibly came from the elementary teachers teaching in the English language to prepare students for state assessments.

She also added that in the Spanish listening domain, the non-Spanish speakers struggled during the first few weeks of school. She said that the students received about 90 minutes of targeted Spanish language instruction to address this concern.

The next challenge the coordinator mentioned was the Spanish dual language course being in competition with other programs or elective choices. She said that of students wanted to stay in the program, they had to understand that one of their elective periods was taken away by the Spanish course. They only had one additional choice, which most of the time they have to do either the required fine arts or the PE.

The coordinator also mentioned that one of the biggest challenges was finding resources for the secondary dual language program. She added that the specific need was for authentic Spanish resources.

In summary of Theme 2, the challenges mentioned by the secondary coordinator included the low Spanish skills sixth graders have in the language domains of speaking and listening. The competition of the required dual language Spanish course taking one of the two elective choices for students in the program. Last, the lack of authentic resources at the secondary level was also a challenge for the dual language program.

### **Theme 3: Factors that Impact Smoother Transitions into Secondary Dual Language Programs**

For theme 3, the secondary coordinator shared several factors that impacted a smoother transition into the secondary dual language program. She shared that they do an orientation night in the spring. So, they come in and they experience a little bit of what the secondary program is like, especially middle school, and talk to the teachers and talk to other fellow students that are more advanced in the program and they get excited. That's a good transition because they start looking at what the secondary program looks like and the more comfortable [they feel] they get into [it].

Another factor she shared was having sixth-grade teachers that made the “transition very smoothly for the students.” She added,

It's already a challenge to move from elementary to secondary, to middle school, but they [teachers] are very good. They're very engaging. They keep those classes very engaging and very fun for them [students] to help with the transition. So, I think that that's a key factor.

She added that teachers in the classroom should know the program well and have buy in “so they can continue building that in the students.”

The next factor that assisted with a smoother transition was communication “with the administration team, the counselor team, even the students.” *The Viable Leader* talked about reminding the counselors about the list of students she provided to them. It listed students who had been in the program since kindergarten and which specific courses the students needed to be enrolled in to continue in the dual language program. She also said,

We go out and talk to the students about what they can expect and what courses they should be taking if they want to continue the track [of the dual language program], and show them that when they graduate from twelfth grade they get a letter from the district recognizing their effort and they get a little cute pin that says [School District] Dual Language.

Theme 3 showed factors that helped the secondary dual language program have a smoother transition. The district has a spring orientation night for incoming dual language sixth-grade students so they can see how the secondary program operates at the middle school level. Engaging sixth-grade teachers was also mentioned to have assisted in students having a smoother transition to the middle school. Last, strong communication with counselors, campus administrators and students showed to be a factor for a smooth transition from the elementary to the middle school level.

#### **Theme 4: Professional Development Opportunities**

In theme 4, *The Viable Leader* talked about the professional development opportunities provided to teachers and administrators in dual language programs. She said that they “use different research-based articles” and other research. She mentioned that when they started the dual language program, they had invited the dual language researchers, Thomas and Collier, to the district to help them initiate the two-way program. She added,

Then when we started the secondary [program], [we] brought them back again. And actually, this summer, they came back again, and we had them talk to our principals. And [they have] talked to our community in the past, talked to our parents. We have been following all their research through many, many years. *The Viable Leader* also shared that they “definitely use the guiding principles from CAL [Center of Applied Linguistics] through developer programs and to make sure we’re doing what’s best for kids and what’s research support.” She added that they had also “done some studies on the literature review” by Barbara Kennedy who was from the division of English learner support services with the Texas Education Agency. The coordinator also talked about having completed a book study on the book, *Teaching for Biliteracy*. She said,

We are back this year with our second-grade teachers also doing that book study, so they can understand what all these guiding principles [are] and why we do what we do. All this to be all on the same page because of the fidelity because that is kind of the key.

The coordinator shared that the district had “a very comprehensive professional development plan.” She added,

As a department we continue to support the teachers in what those practices are, and [what] good instruction looks like for our non-Spanish speakers as well as our

Spanish speakers. We do pay a lot of attention to that and making sure teachers are getting what they need in order to be successful in the classroom. Everything else curriculum wise, we provide support, we provide scaffolds to the regular content curriculum, so the teachers are able to have what they need in order to successfully teach their students.

In summary of Theme 4, professional development seems to be a priority in this district. They use research-based practices and have even had dual language researchers provide district guidance in the implementation of their dual language programs. The professional development opportunities are evident at the district level, with administrators, and teachers in an effort to stay up-to-date on the most recent research that impacts dual language.

### **Summary of Themes across all Case Studies**

All of the themes that emerged in all of the case studies were summarized to include data collected from all the participants in the research study. There were three themes that were identified across all of the school districts with several subthemes for each. These will be discussed in detail. The following table gives an overview of identified themes and subthemes for this study.

Table 1:

*Table of Identified Themes and Subthemes*

Theme 1: Factors that Impact the Implementation of a Secondary Dual Language Programs at the Middle School Level				
	Harley ISD	Satchel ISD	Bertie ISD	Research
Subthemes				
1. One Size Does Not Fit All	<i>-The Crusader</i> <i>-Ardent Leaders</i> <i>- Protagonist Leader</i>	<i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018); Guiding Principles Howard et al., (2018); U.S. Department of Education (2015)
2. Change Leaders	<i>-The Crusader</i> <i>-Paradigmatic Leader</i> <i>-Protagonist Leader</i>	<i>-Emboldened Leader</i>		Fullan (2011); Collier & Thomas (2018)
3. Competition for Elective Course Choices or other Programs	<i>-Protagonist Leader</i> <i>-Ingenious Teacher</i>	<i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas, (2018); Faltis & Ramirez-Marin, (2015)

4. Successful Biliteracy Outcomes in Secondary DL	<i>-The Crusader -Ardent Leaders -Protagonist Leader -Effectual Teacher -Ingenious Teacher</i>	<i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018); Howard et al. (2018); Soltero (2016); Thomas & Collier (2014, 2017)
5. Positive Relationships Impact Campus Culture	<i>-Protagonist Leader -Effectual Teacher -Ingenious Teacher</i>			Howard et al. (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
6. Practices Beyond Middle School Walls	<i>-Ingenious Teacher</i>			Howard et al. (2018)
<b>Theme 2: Factors that Support the Continuation of a Secondary Dual Language Program</b>				
	<b>Harley ISD</b>	<b>Satchel ISD</b>	<b>Bertie ISD</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>Subthemes</b>				



1. District Support	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i> - <i>The Protagonist Leader</i>			Howard et al. (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
2. Choice in Secondary Dual Language Programs	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>The Protagonist Leader</i>	- <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018)
3. Scheduling facilitated by content area selected	- <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
4. Elementary DL Experiences	- <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
5. Teachers Commitment to the Program	- <i>The Effectual Teacher</i>			Collier & Thomas (2018)
6. Transparency of Secondary Dual Language	- <i>The Ingenious Teacher</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in

Program Experiences				research during the study
<b>Theme 3: Challenges for Sustaining Secondary Dual Language Program</b>				
	<b>Harley ISD</b>	<b>Satchel ISD</b>	<b>Bertie ISD</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>Subthemes</b>				
1. Lack of Authentic Resources for Middle School Dual Language Programs	- <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i> - <i>The Effectual Teacher</i> - <i>The Ingenious Teacher</i>	- <i>Emboldened Leader</i> - <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Howard et al., (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
2. Unexpected Spanish Language Levels	- <i>The Protagonist Leader</i> - <i>The Effectual Teacher</i>	- <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
3. Professional Development for Secondary Dual Language Programs	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>Ardent Leaders</i> - <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i>	- <i>Emboldened Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Howard et al., (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)

	<i>-The Effectual Teacher</i> <i>-The Ingenious Teacher</i>			
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### **Theme 1: Factors that Impact the Implementation of Secondary Dual Language Programs at the Middle School Level**

In Theme 1, the responses from different participants addressed the first research question: *What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level?* All three participating school districts in the research study identified factors that were impacting their secondary dual language program. These factors will be compared to the research in *Transforming secondary education: Middle and high school dual language programs* (Collier & Thomas, 2018) and to the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018). The factors will be described as subthemes that show supporting examples.

#### **Subtheme 1: One Size Does Not Fit All.**

In the theme, one size does not fit all, there were several factors related to program structure across the different school districts that were mentioned by participants. Program structure is the foundation for all other strands in the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018). It includes the clear commitment to the vision and focus in dual language program goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence. Dual language program designs vary from program to program. It is emphasized that two courses in the partner language be offered as a minimum for a secondary program to be considered a dual language program

(Collier & Thomas, 2018) with one of the courses focused on language or literature (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

*Harley ISD.* In Harley ISD, the program structure required students to be enrolled in all Pre-AP and AP courses at the middle school level. *The Crusader* initiated this structure when she led Berny Secondary Schools. She said the “curriculum was all Pre-AP.” Collier and Thomas (2018) mentioned that students who have participated in elementary dual language programs are experiencing cognitive benefits of bilingualism. They added that these students are ready for AP courses because they are among the highest performing students.

At one of the campuses in Harley ISD, there was a conflict with the Pre-AP program structure requirement for all of the students. The campus administrator shared that from his perspective he did not agree in forcing students to take Pre-AP courses just because they were enrolled in the dual language program. Later in the interview, he came back to the same point said that this practice did not seem to be “in the best interest of kids.” This is a clear example of how one size does not fit all program structures from the district level to the campus level.

One of the district personnel in the focus group interview also mentioned that the district was “very reluctant to have students that were not Pre-AP or AP level to take and form part of the program.” He said that “they [students] had to take all Pre-AP or AP classes to be part of the program. He shared how this was a challenge for students that were required to take an Algebra course for their Pre-AP math. This explanation of the required Pre-AP structure was similar to the previous example shared by the campus administrator. Not all of the dual language students were at an academic level to take Pre-AP courses for all of the content areas.

*The Ardent Leader* also added that students had to have participated in an elementary dual language program from prekindergarten or kindergarten to continue in the secondary program. He said it was difficult for the students that had immigrated to the United States during their elementary school years, because they were not allowed to enroll in the secondary dual language program. In this example, the instructional specialist was describing newcomer students. Thomas and Collier (2018) state that newcomers belong in the dual language course because the students speak Spanish, the partner language of this program. They add,

For these students, it is important to receive schooling in their mother tongue, keeping them on grade-level in the development of the subject knowledge while they work on fully mastering English. This opportunity will accelerate their academic growth faster than any other strategy. Yes, they should also receive excellent ESL content courses for half of the academic work, but more English is not better. In fact, more English tend to lessen their long-term achievement. (p. 4)

Once again, this example demonstrates how one size does not fit all when it comes to research and district requirements. The research shows that newcomer students should be enrolled in dual language programs if they speak the partner language that is being taught in the program.

*Satchel ISD.* In Satchel ISD, the magnet coordinator formed part of a turnover team for a school and also implemented a dual language program at an already existing IB world school program. She described how the program structure of the dual language program fit into the IB program. The dual language program courses included the Spanish language arts and a Spanish history course.

The dual language program at this campus was implemented for three years and went across all middle school grades including sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

However, due to challenging factors discussed previously in Satchel ISD's single case study, the dual language program was being phased out. Scheduling conflicts were one of the major issues. Collier and Thomas (2018) stated that scheduling conflicts can quickly terminate a dual language program at the secondary level.

*Bertie ISD.* In Bertie ISD, the secondary coordinator described the program structure of their dual language program at their middle school level. She shared that their program structure included an integrated Spanish language arts course and social studies, which was taught in Spanish. This was the description of the dual language courses taught in Bertie ISD.

In summary, one of the similarities noted was that all of the eighth-grade students participate in the Spanish AP exam for high school and college credits. There were many differences on the program structures across the three school districts. Some of these differences included students required to be enrolled in Pre-AP course to continue a secondary dual language program, the IB program accommodating a dual language program, and the integration of Spanish language arts into a social science content area. These differences show that each secondary dual language program is unique not only to the district, but to the campus as well. One size does not fit all program structures in secondary dual language programs.

### **Subtheme 2: Change Leaders.**

In the next theme, some of the participants demonstrated change leader characteristics that were impacting the secondary dual language programs. Fullan (2011) describes a key insight of an effective change leader as being someone that actively participates through learning and helps an organization improve. He wrote that the creative premise of the change leader is to not think outside of the box, but to get outside of the box by taking intelligent memories and putting them together with other practical

boxes for discovery purposes. This theme was evident across two of the participating school districts and details were provided in the following section.

*Harley ISD.* In Harley ISD, *The Crusader* was questioning her skills in taking part on the committee that was researching secondary dual language programs. At the time, she only had elementary level experiences. The district's superintendent was leading the committee. She was described by her superintendent to "lead differently" and to be "open-minded." According to the director, he said, "We need that voice." She agreed to serve on the committee and became the first principal of the secondary "school for international studies" and it was implemented for grades six through twelve. Once she knew it would be a school with international studies, she said,

Then I got interested, but because I had lived overseas and I had traveled so much of the world, and I saw how important it was for us to understand other cultures and of all places in this city to have a school like this and that time there was not another school in [the area that] focused on international studies.

This is an example of a change leader who took her traveling experiences and learning about other cultures to start a new program to improve the education of students.

Another example of a change leader was demonstrated in the data collected for *The Paradigmatic Leader*. She knew there was a need for training for teachers to improve on the instructional strategies being implemented at the secondary level. She explained that "just coming in and speaking in two languages doesn't mean that you are a dual language teacher." She recognized the need to develop and strengthen the dual language pedagogy and the instructional strategies being used in the classroom. The campus administrator was using her elementary experiences of evaluating strong instructional practices when observing the delivery of instruction in classrooms. She was planning to have secondary teachers observe in the elementary dual language classrooms to improve

teacher instruction and learning for students at the middle school level. This is another example of a change leader taking action to get outside the box to improve the dual language program at her school.

*The Protagonist Leader* also showed characteristics of a change leader. He shared that the district had offered funds to some schools to pay for a teacher to “do a zero-hour period.” He said, “They didn’t offer me that money. So, I had to be creative.” He shared that his science dual language teacher was dually certified in P.E. The administrator changed the teacher contract time so that P.E. could be offered to the dual language students before school. This adjustment gave the dual language students an elective choice during the school day. This is another example of an administrator taking action to provide equitable elective choice opportunities for students participating in dual language program. The impact of the schedule change provided for an inclusivity focus for the dual language students to have the same number of elective choices as the other students not enrolled in the dual language program.

*Satchel ISD:* In Satchel ISD, *The Emboldened Leader* demonstrated essential leadership competencies of a change leader when he decided to re-establish a dual language program as the new administrator at the middle school. Upon taking lead of the middle school, he became aware of the dual language program had been dismantled and this information had already been shared with the families. The district gave him the choice to rebuild the program. He saw an opportunity for the community and was in the third year of the dual language program implementation. This is another example of how a change leader was driven by his experiences as a leader of dual language programs and was using those practices to rebuild a secondary dual language program.

All the examples provided demonstrate how the participants in the research study were using actionable practices to be change agents for dual language in their current



positions. Fullan (2011) reminds us that practice must be deliberate and purposeful, reflective, and action oriented. All of the participants' examples showed all three of these practices. Additionally, these examples also align to the support and resources strand in the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard, et al., 2018). They shared that one of the components of this strand was a school site showing advocacy for the dual language program by devoting focused attention on promoting acceptance of the program by all stakeholders. This was evident in the participant's responses. Furthermore, Collier and Thomas (2018) stated that as dual language program grow, the campus staff should discuss and negotiate changes to original plans to ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of students and that they are research-based.

### **Subtheme 3: Competition for Elective Course Choices or other Programs.**

In subtheme 3, several of the participants mentioned the competitiveness of the dual language program courses required for students compared to elective choices or other programs. Some campuses had limited choices of electives and others offered a multitude of choices. Collier & Thomas (2018) recommend that dual language programs keep the needs of young adults at the center of their program decisions when it comes to electives, since at the elementary level the students did not have elective choices as they do at the middle school level.

*Harley ISD: The Paradigmatic Leader* talked about the attrition of dual language students to her campus due to the choices of electives offered at her school. She said that elective play a big part in the decisions that students must make at the middle school level. These decisions impact whether or not the students continue into the secondary dual language program. The students at this campus had limited elective choices. One of the teachers at another campus mentioned that this school did not offer the extra-

curricular electives nor the sports, which is typically an area that students prefer to pursue at the secondary level.

At the campus lead by *The Protagonist Leader*, the students had many elective choices from which to select from based on their area of interest. These are listed in detail in the data collection section. At this campus, the dual language students had one less elective choice due to the Spanish dual language class being one of the two choices. However, the campus leader was creative in adjusting one of the teacher's schedules to teach the P.E. elective before school so that the dual language students could have an elective choice during the day.

*The Ingenious Teacher* talked about the competition between dual language courses and students pursuing activity choices into high school. He said that some students have participated in other programs, such as FFA. The acronym FFA stands for Future Farmers of America. When they get to the high school, they have to make the difficult decision to continue their interest in other programs or stay the course with the dual language program. These are difficult choices for students who may have "participated in FFA as younger children."

*Satchel ISD*: In Satchel ISD, *The Intricate Leader* how the parents had requested the implementation of a dual language program at her school due to it being a "comprehensive middle school." She described, "a comprehensive middle school is that they [students] have access to other electives and other extra-curricular activities." Students had three language choices, including French, Spanish, and German. They also had to take a "visual and performing arts class and a design class" to meet the IB requirements. They also had "the extra-curricular choices, sports and clubs" available as choices for students. However, due to scheduling conflicts, the campus had difficulty

honoring the elective choices students were selecting to pursue. She said that “scheduling became a complete nightmare.”

*Bertie ISD:* In Bertie ISD, *The Viable Leader* also shared that students only had one elective choice after the Spanish dual language course was added to the schedule. She said that it limited the students’ choices given they also had to take a required fine arts or P.E. elective. Even with these limits, she said that the majority of our students and parents support the dual language program. She added that the parents and student saw the value of the dual language program. She said that the families, “understand that it's probably a better choice for me at this moment.”

These are examples from the different school districts and from different perspectives of the competition caused by the dual language program courses and the electives choices at the secondary level. It is recommended that schools offer course selections that consider students’ academic experiences as well as future goals in order to promote students’ enthusiasm and success in secondary dual language programs (Faltis & Ramirez-Marin, 2015). Even though some of the campuses had few selections and others had more, the dual language families were still interested in pursuing a dual language education for their children.

#### **Subtheme 4: Successful Biliteracy Outcomes in Secondary Dual Language.**

In the subtheme 4, the participants shared the many outstanding performances of their dual language students in each of the school districts. Students were meeting the dual language goals of becoming fully bilingual and biliterate (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2018; Soltero, 2016) as evidenced in the results of the exams in both languages that were shared by the participants.

*Harley ISD:* *The Crusader* shared the success of high school students graduating with an IB bilingual diploma. She said that the dual language students had acquired high

levels of Spanish by the time they were juniors and seniors at the high school level. She added that they could graduate not only with an IB diploma, but with an IB bilingual diploma. She said, “It was really impressive!” She recalled when the “original cohort of twenty” dual language students “graduated from high school.” She added “the level of Spanish when they [graduated] was just incredible and they are still doing it. I mean, one of them is an attorney and she is able to practice law in English and Spanish. I mean, it just gives me chills.”

One of the participants from the focus group shared that “schools see the benefit in the scores” of the dual language programs. He shared that the students in their dual language one-way and two-way programs had outperformed their monolingual peers. He also recalled as a dual language science teacher that “100% of his dual language kids passed” the STAAR state assessment. He added that in math a lot of the students also scored on-grade level or higher at the “meet and mastered” levels. The math course was taught in English and the students were also excelling in this area. Additionally, he said “My kids specifically, they also take the AP Spanish test in the eighth grade and all 100% of them passed.” The dual language students had “100% [score] at least three, four, or five, which gave them at least six to nine Spanish credits in the university.”

*The Protagonist Leader* shared that the eighth-grade students at his campus had scored “fours and fives” on the Spanish AP exam. He added that by the time the dual language students had completed eighth grade, the students had earned “four high school credits by the time they leave here. And, so they are contributing to the overall success of this campus and we appreciate that.” He also talked about the science dual language course being taught in Spanish and that the eighth-grade students had to take a state assessment in English. He did not have an issue with this and stated that his students do well on the tests. He also added that they have high performance the Spanish AP exams.

The dual language students were performing at high levels in the program in both languages, Spanish and English as shared by the campus administrator.

*The Effectual Teacher* also spoke about the success she had observed in the dual language students. She shared that they had “very good high results, with fours and fives, every year.” She added that all three of the dual language teachers were passionate about dual language and about being bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural. She thought that was an important factor to the growth they had seen in the students.

She also shared that the students had passed the state assessment at “100% every year that we’ve had it [dual language].” She added they had “probably a good 95-97% passing rate in all the AP tests.” Students in Harley ISD are required to take Pre-AP and AP courses in English. She said that most of the students were performing at a higher level in all their other classes. The teacher had observed the students performing at high levels not only in the dual language program, but also in other English courses.

*The Ingenious Teacher* also shared some successful observation he had made in the dual language students. He said from the year the students had started taking the eighth-grade state assessment, they had 100% of the dual language students pass the English STAAR test even with them receiving instruction in Spanish. He also shared that the previous year, the “eighth graders had 94.8% pass in the AP exam with a three or higher.”

*Satchel ISD:* In Satchel ISD, *The Intricate Leader* commented on the Spanish AP scores, too. She said, “We do have a high AP scores with students that come out with 3’s and we get some 4’s every once in a while. We get like 80% at a 3 or higher.” She added that “some of the kids will test out in high school. They leave here with two high school credits.” Students at the IB school also demonstrated great achievement on the Spanish AP exam.

*Bertie ISD:* In Bertie ISD, the students were also experiencing the same success on the Spanish AP exam. *The Viable Leader* shared that their biggest successes had been ratings on the Spanish AP exam in eighth grade. She said that the students perform very well. They had experiences years where the student scores surpassed the Spain and the National ratings. In this district, they were comparing their high performing dual language Spanish AP ratings to national and international ratings.

Dual language programs require that students be assessed with multiple measures in both languages to determine the progress of meeting bilingualism and biliteracy goals (Howard et al., 2018). In all these examples, the participants shared that the dual language students in all three participating districts were demonstrating high levels of success on the Spanish AP exam. Some of the participants shared the high performance on English state assessments even when the instruction was in Spanish. Research by Thomas and Collier (2014, 2017) showed that secondary dual language students are very capable of learning Spanish content and testing in English. The districts that participated in the research study, have shown that their students are meeting the bilingual and biliterate goals of dual language programs.

### **Subtheme 5: Positive Relationships Impact Campus Culture**

Effective programs have welcoming school environments for families and there is a sense of belonging for students and their families (Howard et al., 2018). In subtheme 5, one particular campus demonstrated how positive relationships impacted the campus culture by creating a welcoming school environment.

*Harley ISD:* At one of the campuses in Harley ISD, the administrator shared several examples of how his leadership was impacting the culture of his school. In sharing his ideals he said that individuals need to be receptive to a change. He added that schools need to acclimate to their communities. This gave an insight into his leadership style as he led the campus and the dual language program.

The first instance that he shared was a personal experience. He had two children who had participated in dual language program. He shared that living in Texas, it was important to be bilingual in order to communicate with others in Spanish, such as, bilingual families within families or just in general with parents of dual language students. He felt it was important to give his personal kids a Spanish background. From his parent perspective, he was providing a sense of belonging for his own children by having them participate in a dual language program.

The next example he shared was his disagreement in a district practice to have all dual language students enrolled in Pre-AP and AP courses. He said, “If our core value says every child will succeed and we have a moral compass then morally it’s not right to continue to do something that’s setting kids up for failure instead of success.” He was not forcing students to take the Pre-AP courses outside of the dual language program. His decision-making skills were based from his perspective, “in the best interest of kids.” He continued,

I have to make the decision for this campus and if I'm not breaking any laws and I'm not breaking policies, it's pretty much their schedule, at some point you do have to be the leader and make a decision to say I'm going to do what is in the best interest of our kids.

Later he added that when you make the environment “a little more relaxed and make things kid-friendly where you don't have to take pre-AP, you can actually be a kid and learn at your pace, people want to be a part of that.” This decision helped students feel more comfortable about continuing the dual language program knowing that they were not going to be required to enroll in Pre-AP courses.

His next example was about students being on a wait list and waiting to enroll in the dual language program at his campus. He said, “I had like 20 [students] on the wait list.” As a leader, he felt that if there were 20 families who wanted to enroll at his campus, then he needed to respond to the community needs. He “opened up the second section” for dual language at his campus. This decision demonstrates his willing to welcome more dual language families to his school.

He continued and shared a decision that impacted the entire campus, in particular the females at this school. Part of the dress code policy was for students to wear uniforms. He talked about the young ladies wearing “yoga pants the tights,” but these did not adhere to the dress code. He had the PTA design navy blue tights with the school logo so that the students could wear these to school. He added that it “leveled the playing field” and gave students something comfortable that they could wear to school. That was an example of the little things that he did at his campus to make it welcome for all.

In his next example, he shared about newcomers enrolling at his campus. He shared that some people say that newcomers should not be enrolled in secondary dual language programs if they had not been in an elementary program. Some of his



newcomers had immigrated from Venezuela and other areas. He had these students take the Spanish I CBE. If they showed proficiency, he allowed them to enroll in the dual language program. He shared that it was more beneficial to put the newcomers in the dual language science than to expect them to be in an all English class. It's more important that they understand the material. He added, that they had "a good climate where every kid every person feels welcome." Spanish courses for newcomers are usually appropriate (Collier & Thomas, 2018) at the secondary level. Newcomer students at this school also felt a welcoming environment in the dual language program.

The campus administrator summed up the relationships being exemplified at his campus when he said that they celebrate commonalities instead of highlighting differences. They had learned to respect and appreciate differences. He said that when that permeates through the staff, the parents see it. He added that people just wanted to attend school at his campus to be a part of that because you can't get that everywhere. The leader demonstrated how building positive relationships with all stakeholders makes an impact on the school culture.

One of the dual language teachers shared that her dual language colleagues were "passionate about dual language" and about "being bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural." She stated that they had seen the students also grow from their passion. She added that the students saw the importance of the dual language program. In her description of the students she said, "They see themselves being above their peers in both Spanish and in other classes. And so, it gives them a sense of pride." She also added that the dual language students were very involved and attributed that to the parents also being involved. She said, "We see the growth and when children and teachers are passionate and parents are passionate about something, we've seen the growth in children." This

clearly demonstrates how the teachers, students, and parents felt welcome at the school and resulted in the students' growth.

She also added that she felt supported by the campus administrator. She said that the administrator "has had two children in the program. So, he's seen it [dual language program] and he knows that it works." She said that they were "very fortunate and lucky to have the backing of an administration." She added, "you really need someone to be there for you, supporting you, and saying, 'Hey, that's awesome.'" In this example, she described how the campus administrator make her feel appreciated as a dual language teacher.

The other dual language teacher shared an experience about developing students' self-confidence in learning the state assessment content in his science class. He related this to the opportunity he had in teaching the dual language science class in all the middle school grades. He said it was "hard to develop self-confidence when you have three new teachers" during the middle school years. He added that it is better to have "one teacher who can build your confidence over a period of three years as opposed to one year." He said, "Once they believe that I can provide the information for them, that naturally transfers to them in doing well in their program." He shows how developing a positive learning environment and supporting the students helps boost their self-confidence.

The teacher also shared his experience as a coach and how that had impacted the school climate. He had coached football and the girls' soccer team. He said the longer he was at the campus the more students he came to know. He added, "Many of my students that I have in sixth grade, I've already had their older brothers and sisters. The fact that I can be known by so many, it also helps the dual language students to see that they're" part of the school's climate "as well as their own climate." The teacher described how he built a rapport with students through the sports that he coached.

Due to the diverse population, the teacher shared another example of families seeking to be part of the school. He shared that they had families “from Iraq, Iran, Syria, Asia, Africa, and the central and South American countries.” The campus was composed of many nationalities. He said that was an attraction for parents since it resembled “an international public school.” He added that parents would say, “I would want my child to be part of that, to be a part of that climate.” This shows how welcoming the school was toward families of different nationalities.

The teacher also shared areas where the students had excelled after leaving the middle school. He said that some of the dual language students had “graduated in the top five percent of their class” and the top two students had participated in the dual language program. He shared that the students felt “very proud that they went through the program and they’re success stories.” He added that three of student on the high school debate team had won multiple awards, including national awards, and they also been in the dual language program. He said the students had the confidence to make an impact through wherever they were at. He felt that the dual language program “just encourages students here to be themselves and to help them grow to their best possible person they can be.” This example shows how the dual language program made a lasting impact in the lives of students even at the high school level.

In summary, these instances demonstrate how the campus was creating positive relationships to impact their campus culture. The dual language program was more attractive to families because of the positive climate at the school. It was evident that overall campus administrator had built relationships with students, teachers, and parents. The teachers also had a positive rapport with the administrator, the students, and their parents. The passion they shared about the dual language program was instilled into the students which created a sense of belonging for all the dual language community.

### **Subtheme 6: Practices Beyond the Middle School Walls**

One of the features of effective programs is when family engagement activities are incorporated with a school (Howard et al., 2018). One of the dual language teachers demonstrated practices beyond family engagement and the middle school walls. These will be shared in following section.

In the first instance, the dual language teacher implemented a practice in his classroom. This practice involved him calling the students' parents "at least twice a grading period for good things, so that these parents can also feel the empowerment of congratulating their kids and showing how proud they are of them." One parent told the teacher, "In all the years that my son has been in school, this is the first time I've ever had a phone call about something good for him." He felt heart-broken to hear this from the parent because students "deserve to be recognized for their work." With this practice, the teacher was creating a partnership with the parents to help their child. Teachers calling parents twice a grading period is not a common practice at the secondary level.

In the next example, the teacher talked about scheduling meetings for dual language families at a restaurant instead of at the school. He said dual language students at the high school level will also attend these meetings. He shared that the students will talk to the parents and students about "what works, what didn't, what they liked and what they didn't." The teacher said that they foster a relationship "beyond the middle school walls." This is a practice that extends the typical family engagement activities.

The teacher also shared that he had "constant communication with the students" and because of this, he had built a "relationship with the parents." He said that all of the seventh and eighth grade students and their parents had his cell phone number. Most teachers generally do not share their personal cell phone number and prefer to communicate from the school. He added, "They know that they can call me about

anything, anytime.” The teacher felt that when you “develop that type of relationship, then there's that level of confidence that exudes the sky's the limit.”

In the last instance, the teacher described social gatherings where families of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade came together. He said that he encouraged “parents to intermingle.” In the last two years, he had also invited students from a couple of high schools. One school had the dual language program while the other did not, but that school offered Spanish IV, V, and VI. The high school students share their experiences “with the transition between eighth and ninth grade” so that the middle school students can get an overview of their upcoming transition.

In summary, these instances shared by the teacher demonstrate that he goes beyond typical family engagement. These practices also show that he has built a positive relationship with the families, including the students and their parents.

## **Theme 2: Factors that Support the Continuation of a Secondary Dual Language Program**

For Theme 2, the second research question was addressed: *Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program?* Several factors were shared from the different perspectives of the participants from Harley ISD only. These will be shared in the following section from district to campus level in subtheme 1, to campus level in subthemes 2 and 3, and to the classroom level in subtheme 4. Refer to Table 1 for an overview of the subthemes to be addressed in the following section.

### **Subtheme 1: District Support**

Collier and Thomas (2018) state that support for teachers and administrators should exist in dual language programs. Howard et al. (2018) state that strong administrative support should come from school districts, school boards, and state

policies. They add that all of these supports can facilitate a dual language program or hinder its progress toward implementation.

*Harley ISD.* The secondary director, *The Crusader*, listed district support as a factor that contributed to a smoother transition of secondary dual language program. She added,

I think that fact that the district was supporting this. They heard from the families and they knew that it was a value in the community, to a part of the community.

And, they felt a commitment to those students. That was number one. We gave it to the students in elementary school, but we're not going to let you continue it?

So, they knew that they were committed to providing it to that group of students.

The director's shared perspective was from an administrator who started the secondary dual language program at her campus and from the district level as the director of secondary programs.

*The Paradigmatic Leader* spoke about the lack of district support for her campus. She shared

The training I don't know that we've overcome it. It's been mitigated by the fact that we understand that that's an issue, but with a very small bilingual department here in our district, they do the best they can. The district has provided early on some dual language [training], you know, they brought in some experts and things like that to present training. So, that was I think one way they tried to overcome that. It just hasn't been sustained so that sustainability was dropped. That department [district bilingual department] has really been bare bones and it's been difficult.

While the support of dual language started strong at the initial start of the program, the district has not provided the needed continuity to support the campus administrators or

the teachers. For this campus, the lack of district support was impeding the progress of the dual language program.

When *The Protagonist Leader* shared his disagreement with a district practice to have all dual language students enroll in Pre-AP courses, he shared “there hasn’t been anything that I haven’t had a conversation with someone at the district level that we haven’t been able to work out.” This showed the district support of his leadership at the campus level while he made decisions that were “in the best interest of kids.”

These examples show the impact that district support can make on a campus. The first example shows how the district supported the implementation of a secondary dual language program. In another instance, the campus administrator felt supported by the district in having conversations which led to consensus on decision that were based on the needs of students. Another campus administrator spoke to the lack of district support for her dual language program due to the district’s possible financial constraints. Whether the support is positive or negative, district support still impacts a secondary dual language program.

## **Subtheme 2: Choice in Secondary Dual Language Programs**

Collier and Thomas (2018) shared that secondary school believe that program choices should be innovative to appeal to the community. During the data collection process, the term choice came up multiple times with different participants. Choice was discussed in different contexts. These will be explained in the following section.

*Harley ISD:* The secondary director mentioned that in Harley ISD, the district believed in “offering lots of choices to families.” She talked about the district having “two charters” and that these were choices for families. She added that enrolling in the dual language program was a choice saying, “It wasn’t for everybody, but there’s no one program for everybody. So, this segment of our community values this and we [district]

are going to make a long-term commitment.” The families had the choice to attend two charter schools with the school district. The dual language program was also an option for families.

*The Protagonist Leader* also talked about choices that were offered at his campus. He shared that at his school they “offer the most electives out of any other middle school.” He added that offering choices was part of his philosophy. He said, “I’d rather offer more choices instead of saying, ‘Hey, we’ve got three and force you to do this.’” In the two years at the campus, he had added dance, broadcast journalism, robotics, and problem-solving to name a few electives. The complete list was discussed in the data collection section. In addition to adding options to the elective list, he had also made a schedule change to one of his teacher’s schedules so that dual language students could have one elective choice without it conflicting with a required P.E. elective. He also talked about families having the choice of three middle schools with dual language programs.

*Satchel ISD:* In Satchel ISD, *The Intricate Leader* talked about the parents looking for “more of a well-rounded” experience for their dual language children transitioning into the middle school. In particular, they were wanting more extra-curricular activities and elective choices for their children. The families were attracted to the IB world school and the electives they had to offer.

*Bertie ISD:* The secondary coordinator talked about the high school requirements when middle school students were in the transition process. She dual language students had to make a decision on the track they wanted to follow in high school. The selection they make “hinders or give them more choices” for dual language at the high school level. She continued, “If they select the CTE program, the students have to choose between the CTE track or the bilingual track.” The choices for the high school level



become complex for dual language students, given they must meet graduation requirements, while also trying to pursue their interests.

All of the participating school district had different perspectives that were shared on choices at the secondary level. Some listed the choice of schools with dual language programs, while others listed the choice offered within the school. One participant also discussed the complexities of choice when the dual language students transition to the high school level.

### **Subtheme 3: Scheduling Facilitated by Content Area Selected**

*The Paradigmatic Leader* also shared that having previously selected the content area for the dual language program provided a smoother scheduling process in the master schedule. She stated that having selected the science content area for their dual language structure, the scheduling with the master schedule was. She added that the students moved together as a group as opposed to a traditional comprehensive middle school or high school the students' schedules are all different. So, it was known that when the sixth graders had science, there was a sixth-grade science dual language at the same time. She said that it made for a smooth transition as well.

### **Subtheme 4: Elementary Dual Language Experiences**

*The Paradigmatic Leader* shared that students were enrolling in the dual language program from elementary programs. She added, "they had been in it for six years and so they kinda knew what to expect. They knew how to operate within the classroom and understanding the approaches. So, that was a plus." For the students, the dual language experiences from the elementary program transferred to the secondary dual language program as observed the campus administrator.

### **Subtheme 5: Teachers Commitment to the Program**

*The Effectual Teacher* mentioned that one of the positive factors when they started the secondary dual language program was that the teachers had a strong commitment to the program. She added that the teachers collaborated frequently from day one. When they saw the growth in the students, they felt that they were “doing something right,” as teachers. She thought it went back to the passion that the teachers had, to being committed to the program and hitting the ground running.

The teachers’ commitment to the program was a factor that she felt “contributed to the success of this program.” Collier and Thomas (2018) state that teachers’ commitment positively impact dual language programs. This example also supported a smoother transition to the secondary dual language program.

### **Subtheme 6: Transparency of Secondary Dual Language Program Experiences**

*The Ingenious Teacher* talked about being transparent with the dual language families. He said that they were in constant contact with the high school counselors so that students knew what to expect when they transitioned from the middle school. The students had two high school choices after completing the middle school level and they wanted all the students to know about the process for the transition. He said that the only way a dual language program is going to be smooth is through knowledge. He said transparency added to the “positivity of the program.”

In another instance, he coordinated reunions for middle school families so that “kids could talk with kids, and kids could talk with parents about their struggles.” He added that this created a very homey type environment for parents. He felt that one of the draws to the campus was “the fact that we will have communication with our parents. We’re very transparent.”

The data shared from the interviews conducted in Harley ISD created subthemes to support the factors for the continuation of secondary dual language programs. District support, choices, and transparency made the largest impact on Theme 2.

### **Theme 3: Challenges for Sustaining Secondary Dual Language Program**

Theme 3 addressed the third research question: *Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how are these overcome?* The subthemes will be addressed by the factors that impacted all of the participating school districts, to the campus level, then to the campus administration level, and finally to the classroom level. Refer to Table 1 for an overview of the subthemes to be addressed in the following sections.

#### **Subtheme 1: Lack of Authentic Resources for Middle School Dual Language Programs.**

The largest factor that was impacting the secondary dual language programs in all of the school districts that participated in the research study was the lack of authentic resources that were grade level and age-appropriate for students. In the book, *Transforming Secondary Education: Middle and High School Dual Language programs* (Collier & Thomas, 2018), all of the authors agreed that locating high-quality curricular materials in a partner language was a big challenge for secondary dual language programs regardless of the content area selected for the program structure. All of the participating school districts provided examples of their struggles in finding authentic resources for their dual language programs.

*Harley ISD:* One of the campus administrators shared that “materials were very hard to come by” for their dual language program. She added that it may be easier to do a homegrown resource when there are not any ready-made materials. She felt that was a huge hurdle. She remembered that while being in the planning group, there were not

materials on the market for anything and it was going to be left up to the teachers to decide what to use and how to use it.

This is one example of a campus struggling to find just content resources in Spanish for their science dual language courses.

One of the dual language teachers also mentioned that finding resources was a struggle. She shared that even when she taught in an elementary bilingual program it was a struggle back then. Anytime you're using a language that's not English, it is a struggle to find resources. She added that the secondary dual language resources had “grown over the years.” However, still felt that they were struggling and looking constantly for authentic resources for the secondary dual language program. This teacher was not only looking for authentic resources but also for age-appropriate topics to use with the respective grade levels in her classroom.

*The Ingenious Teacher* shared that when he started teaching in the secondary dual language science class, he had to create his resources. He modified any resources he was provided. He also had students create resources for his science classes. For this teacher, the lack of resources was not a barrier. He started by creating his own resources and each year added student created resources. The researchers observed quality student created resources around the room from bound books on El Sistema Respiratorio (The Respiratory System) and Las capas de la tierra (The Earth's layers), graphic pictorial drawings of sea life, 3D hand-made models of volcanoes, and a tri-fold poster with very detailed drawings comparing an animal cell to an airport.

*Satchel ISD*: Both participants from Satchel ISD identified resources as one factors that was impacting their dual language program. *The Emboldened Leader* shared that he had not been able to find any resources for the secondary dual language program at his campus. Teachers had translated the materials or had taken the time to search for

materials that addressed the different learning objectives that are required by the state. Later in the interview, he added, “If I could change, if I could do something it would be definitely finding more resources that are applicable to our being able to teach history in Spanish to address objectives that are required by the state.”

*The Intricate Leader* also commented about the lack of resources at her campus. She said, “they [the district] don’t have any resources for middle school.” The teachers at her campus did not have a curriculum for the dual language courses they taught. She said, “So, they [teachers] have to create their own curriculum. So, it really was burn out for the dual language teachers.” The magnet coordinator added, “We just don’t have many resources available.”

Both campuses had struggled to find resources for their dual language programs. The campus administrator was looking for Spanish resources in the content area of history for his middle school. At the other campus, the teachers were described as having experienced burn out due to having to create the curriculum and resources for the dual language courses.

*Bertie ISD:* In Bertie ISD, *The Viable Leader* shared that one of their biggest challenges was finding authentic Spanish resources. Even though the dual language teachers could translate the resources, she said, “it’s not the same when you translate than when you have that authentic resource. So, that’s definitely a challenge.” She believed that students need to be exposed to Spanish world cultures. The struggle in Bertie ISD was finding authentic resources in Spanish. The teachers were using novels to overcome this challenge.

Having access to authentic resources in secondary dual language programs proved to be a challenge in all three participating school districts. This is not a new challenge for dual language programs; however, it does complicate the implementation of secondary

dual language programs. Books of different genres and materials in both English and Spanish are required, including culturally authentic literature (Howard et al., 2018). Authentic Spanish literature is not translated. It is an essential component of upper-level language arts courses (Collier & Thomas, 2018) in secondary dual language programs.

### **Subtheme 2: Unexpected Spanish Language Levels**

Several of the participants in the study mentioned that the sixth-grade students were not at expected Spanish language levels. These instances will be discussed in the following section.

*Harley ISD:* In Harley ISD, one of the campus administrators shared that at the elementary level, some of the parents get frustrated that “kids are not speaking enough Spanish.” He thought this was because of the concern that students need to pass the “STAAR test that they [teachers] do more instruction in English than we think that they should be doing.” He said that it was “almost a shock when the teachers” at his school told the students that they had to “start speaking in Spanish.” The dual language Spanish teacher also said that the students were coming to the middle school in sixth grade “with not a lot of Spanish, a lot of Spanish, in between Spanish...they're kind of all over the place.” At one particular campus, both the administrator and the Spanish dual language teacher mentioned that incoming students did not have adequate Spanish level language skills.

*Satchel ISD:* In Satchel ISD, the magnet coordinator said that the students were not coming prepared to the middle school level with a strong Spanish language. She said, “Their written, and reading and spoken Spanish was not strong enough.” She said that parents were shocked when the teachers contacted them about the students “not getting good grades.” Her campus experienced the lack of student preparedness in the area of the Spanish language skills.

*Bertie ISD:* The secondary coordinator also talked about fifth graders going to sixth grade not having adequate Spanish. She said, “the Spanish language is lost in the sense of that they [teachers] concentrate to make sure the students are ready to take” the state assessments in English at the elementary level. She felt that the sixth graders had “lost a little bit of the language in the sense of the academic level one.” She also mentioned that the teacher not speaking in Spanish was a challenge for non-Spanish speakers. She said they “need to continue to listen and hear that language in order to feel comfortable with it.” The continual exposure to the Spanish language also develops the students’ language in the listening domain.

All of the school district had experienced students entering the middle school dual language program with a deficiency in their Spanish language skills. The instances were shared by a campus administrator, a teacher, a magnet coordinator, and a secondary coordinator of dual language programs.

### **Subtheme 3: Professional Development for Secondary Dual Language Programs**

For subtheme 3, professional development was another factor that was brought up across all of the school districts. All of the participants discussed professional development from their perspective. Most of them believed that more was needed. One described many professional development opportunities implemented in her school district. Dual language programs need continued professional development for administrators and teacher to sustain programs (Howard et al., 2018).

*Harley ISD:* When discussing the transition process of the dual language program to the middle school level, the secondary director thought that not “enough time was spent on those staff trainings.” She said that teachers received training when the program was initiated, and that they also visited other schools prior to implementation. She added, “They read about it, but it was very foreign to them.” She added, “They need to have

continued staff development and do whatever the best practice is as more and more research comes out...just to keep it [dual language program] alive and nourished.”

From the focus group interview, one of the instructional specialists stated that there had not been any training provided for the secondary level. She said that elementary dual language administrators and teachers were provided with dual language trainings. The program coordinator added that during the beginning of the school trainings, the dual language department had reviewed the district created program guide with all campus to show “how the guiding principles were aligned to the district’s core values.” They were starting a process where teachers completed task or showed an exhibit that aligned between the district developed guiding principles and the curriculum or an instructional practice implemented in the dual language program.

One of the administrators mentioned that training from the district level was a concern. The lack of training had been mitigated by their understanding that it was needed. She mentioned that teachers needed training in instructional strategies and instructional approaches. She said that initially, the district had provided some professional development by having dual language experts present trainings. However, the continual trainings had not been sustained.

One of the dual language teachers mentioned that the “district unfortunately had not provided a lot of staff development. We've had to look outside of the district for professional development” She stated that for the first three years, the district had brought in a dual language expert to help them set professional goals. She added that they had also collaborated with other school districts as well as with other secondary dual language teachers in the district. The other dual language teacher talked about earning his master’s degree in dual language for his professional development. He maintained communication with one of the dual language professors. He had also presented about his



understanding and experiences at English learner conventions and had also attended bilingual conferences.

In Harley ISD, the participants shared a need for more secondary dual language professional development. In order to sustain the secondary program, the director recommended using recent research to improve their practices. Others sought out their own professional development opportunities.

*Satchel ISD:* The campus administrator talked about professional development being a missing piece in their secondary dual language program. He said opportunities were offered for content areas but at the secondary level he did not see “development opportunities for dual language teachers.” He had even asked if the secondary teachers would benefit from the dual language professional development offered for the elementary campuses and was told, “No.” The campus administrator was looking for more training support from the district level for his teachers.

*Bertie ISD:* In Bertie ISD, the secondary coordinator described many professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators, and district personnel. She said that the district had a comprehensive professional development plan. She said that they stayed up-to-date on recent dual language research and shared it with administrators. They also conducted book studies among themselves and with teachers on best practices for dual language programs. She added that they supported teachers with those practices and what “good instruction looks like” for non-Spanish speakers and for the Spanish speakers. She said that the district ensured that the teachers were “getting what they need in order to be successful in the classroom.”

In summary, two of the districts were requesting additional support for teacher professional development. The other district stated that professional development

opportunities were provided district wide. Ongoing professional development for dual language is critical for successful secondary implementation (Collier & Thomas, 2018).

### **Summary of the Findings**

In order to understand the factors that impacted the implementation of secondary dual language programs, three questions were created for this study. There were three school districts that participated in interviews during the data collection phase. A triangulation of the interview data across the three school districts and their different perspectives supported the following themes identified and presented in this chapter.

- Theme 1: *Factors that Impact the Implementation of a Secondary Dual Language Program at the Middle School Level*
- Theme 2: *Factors that Support the Continuation of a Secondary Dual Language Program*
- Theme 3: *Challenges for Sustaining a Secondary Dual Language Program*

In the following section, a summary of the data collected will be shared for each research question in this study, including the subthemes that emerged for each theme.

**Research Question 1:** What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level?

Several factors were mentioned by the participants that aligned with Theme 1, *Factors that Impact the Implementation of a Secondary Dual Language Program at the Middle School Level*. These factors had impacted the implementation in all three school districts' dual language programs at the middle schools. The following bullets highlight and summarize the subthemes that emerged.

- Subtheme 1: One Size Does Not Fit All. The data collected from the different school districts showed that all dual language program designs vary in content structure. Even with the different structures, all of the districts upheld the

goals of the program for bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence. Additionally, they had incorporated a minimum of two Spanish courses into the dual language students' schedules.

- Subtheme 2: Change Leaders. In two of the school districts, two administrators shared instances that gave an insight into their leadership styles. Both leaders were reflective on their experiences to improve the dual language programs at their respective campuses. Their practices were in alignment with characteristics of change agent leaders.
- Subtheme 3: Competition for Elective Course Choices or other Programs. In all the school districts, the participants shared the how electives and other programs competed with the dual language program. In most districts, the secondary dual language program structure impacted the number of electives dual language students could add to their schedule. Some of the campuses had a few elective choices while others had many options from which to choose from based on the students' interest areas.
- Subtheme 4: Successful Biliteracy Outcomes in Secondary Dual Language Programs. All of the school district participants shared successful outcomes of dual language students' Spanish AP exam results. Some shared the high performance in state assessment scores which are taken only in the English language. The outcomes demonstrated that students were meeting the biliteracy goal of dual language programs.
- Subtheme 5: Positive Relationships Impact Campus Culture. At one campus, the positive relationships that had been created with all stakeholders positively impacted the school culture. The instances described in detail the relational strength between the administrator, teachers, students, and families.

- Subtheme 6: Practices Beyond Middle School Walls. One dual language teacher shared multiple instances that demonstrated instances beyond family engagement. He was bringing the dual language community together even after the students had transitioned into the high school level.

**Research Question 2:** Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program?

For this question, only the participants from Harley ISD shared factors that supported the continuation of the secondary language program. The subthemes for Theme 2, *Factors that Support the Continuation of a Secondary Dual Language Program*, will be highlighted in the following bullets.

- Subtheme 1: District Support. In one of the school districts, three different perspectives were captured when they mentioned district support as a factor impacting their dual language program. Programs are impacted whether the support is positive or negative.
- Subtheme 2: Choice in Secondary Dual Language Programs. In all of the school districts, the term choice was mentioned by the participants. The data ranged from the choice of schools with dual language programs to the choices offered within a school.
- Subtheme 3: Scheduling Facilitated by Content Area Selected. One campus administrator talked about the master schedule facilitating the scheduling process due to the dual language content area selected for the program structure at her campus. It proved to make for a smoother transition for the secondary dual language program.
- Subtheme 4: Elementary Dual Language Experiences. A campus administrator shared that elementary dual language students brought program

experiences to the middle school. These experiences transferred to the secondary dual language program.

- Subtheme 5: Teachers Commitment to the Program. A teacher talked about how dual language teachers' strong commitment to the program was a factor that contributed to the success of the program transition from the elementary level to the middle school.
- Subtheme 6: Transparency of Secondary Dual Language Program Experiences

**Research Question 3:** Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how are these overcome?

The subthemes that emerged from the participants' responses aligned to Theme 3, *Challenges for Sustaining a Secondary Dual Language Program*. The following bulleted list summarized the data regarding the challenges the school district were facing in order to sustain the secondary dual language program.

- Subtheme 1: Lack of Authentic Spanish Resources for Middle School Dual Language Programs. The lack of authentic Spanish resources was the biggest factor impacting all of the school districts' secondary dual language programs. The data included the need for grade-level and age-appropriate content materials.
- Subtheme 2: Unexpected Spanish Language Levels. In all the school districts, participants from district personnel to campus administrators and teachers mentioned the unexpected Spanish language levels that incoming middle school students were bringing to the secondary level. All of the instances talked about the deficiency of the Spanish language skills.
- Subtheme 3: Professional Development for Secondary Dual Language Programs. All the school districts mentioned the professional development

factor in their interviews. A couple of the districts were requesting support dual language teachers. In one district, a professional development plan already existed.

Overall, the factors shared by the participants positively impacted the secondary dual language programs in the participating school districts, with the exception of one campus where the program was being phased out. The school districts had at least two middle schools with a strand of dual language programs implemented in sixth to eighth grade. All the school districts had sustained dual language programs at the middle school level. All of them had even transitioned the dual language program into the high level and had graduated a few dual language cohorts. In Chapter V, a summary of the research will be provided with limitations of the study, contributions to the literature, implications of the research, and considerations for future studies.

## CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of three school districts in the state of Texas that had implemented secondary dual language programs at the middle school level. The factors that impacted each school district were examined, including the factors that supported the continuation of the program and the factors that continued to be a challenge. After a summary of the findings, the identified limitations of the study will be discussed. The chapter concludes with the implications of the findings for future research and practices for dual language programs at the secondary level.

### **Statement of the Problem**

While research on elementary dual language programs have grown significantly over the past years (Hamayan et al., 2013; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012; Westerberg & Davidson, 2016), studies on secondary programs are scarce (Bears & de Jong, 2008). More studies on the transition into the middle school after participation in elementary dual language programs are needed. Maturation of elementary dual language programs have increased across many school districts. The district administrators must make decisions on the continuance of dual language programs into the middle school level for current elementary dual language students.

### **Summary Finding**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the factors that impact the implementation of secondary dual language programs at the middle school level to determine how existing secondary dual language programs have overcome the challenges of implementation. Interviews were conducted in three school districts that had implemented secondary programs in the middle school setting. The findings in this study demonstrated the factors that impacted the implementation of secondary dual language

programs at the middle school level from the view of each of the participants. The following Table 1 gives an overview of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the data collected. A detailed discussion can be found in Chapter IV.

Table 1:

*Table of Identified Themes and Subthemes*

<b>Theme 1: Factors that Impact the Implementation of a Secondary Dual Language Programs at the Middle School Level</b>				
	<b>Harley ISD</b>	<b>Satchel ISD</b>	<b>Bertie ISD</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>Subthemes</b>				
1. One Size Does Not Fit All	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>Ardent Leaders</i> - <i>Protagonist Leader</i>	- <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018); Guiding Principles (Howard et al., 2018); U.S. Department of Education (2015)
2. Change Leaders	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>Paradigmatic Leader</i> - <i>Protagonist Leader</i>	- <i>Emboldened Leader</i>		Fullan (2011); Collier & Thomas (2018)
3. Competition for Elective	- <i>Protagonist Leader</i>	- <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas, (2018); Faltis &



Course Choices or other Programs	<i>-Ingenious Teacher</i>			Ramirez-Marin, (2015)
4. Successful Biliteracy Outcomes in Secondary Dual Language	<i>-The Crusader -Ardent Leaders -Protagonist Leader -Effectual Teacher -Ingenious Teacher</i>	<i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018); Howard et al. (2018); Soltero (2016); Thomas & Collier (2014, 2017)
5. Positive Relationships Impact Campus Culture	<i>-Protagonist Leader -Effectual Teacher -Ingenious Teacher</i>			Howard et al. (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
6. Practices Beyond Middle School Walls	<i>-Ingenious Teacher</i>			Howard et al. (2018)
<b>Theme 2: Factors that Support the Continuation of a Secondary Dual Language Program</b>				
	<b>Harley ISD</b>	<b>Satchel ISD</b>	<b>Bertie ISD</b>	<b>Research</b>

<b>Subthemes</b>				
1. District Support	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i> - <i>The Protagonist Leader</i>			Howard et al. (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
2. Choice in Secondary Dual Language Programs	- <i>The Crusader</i> - <i>The Protagonist Leader</i>	- <i>Intricate Leader</i>	- <i>Viable Leader</i>	Collier & Thomas (2018)
3. Scheduling facilitated by content area selected	- <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
4. Elementary DL Experiences	- <i>The Paradigmatic Leader</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
5. Teachers Commitment to the Program	- <i>The Effectual Teacher</i>			Collier & Thomas (2018)
6. Transparency of Secondary Dual Language	- <i>The Ingenious Teacher</i>			*** Unique factor not discussed in

Program Experiences				research during the study
<b>Theme 3: Challenges for Sustaining Secondary Dual Language Program</b>				
	<b>Harley ISD</b>	<b>Satchel ISD</b>	<b>Bertie ISD</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>Subthemes</b>				
1. Lack of Authentic Resources for Middle School Dual Language Programs	<i>-The Paradigmatic Leader</i> <i>-The Effectual Teacher</i> <i>-The Ingenious Teacher</i>	<i>-Emboldened Leader</i> <i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Howard et al., (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)
2. Unexpected Spanish Language Levels	<i>- The Protagonist Leader</i> <i>-The Effectual Teacher</i>	<i>-Intricate Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	*** Unique factor not discussed in research during the study
3. Professional Development for Secondary Dual Language Programs	<i>-The Crusader</i> <i>-Ardent Leaders</i> <i>-The Paradigmatic Leader</i>	<i>-Emboldened Leader</i>	<i>-Viable Leader</i>	Howard et al., (2018); Collier & Thomas (2018)

	<i>-The Effectual Teacher</i> <i>-The Ingenious Teacher</i>			
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### **Limitations of the Study**

One of the limitations was the limited number of secondary schools in the state of Texas that have implemented a secondary dual language program. The researcher originally had a different school district to include in the study and discovered the dual language program only expanded to sixth grade. Another district had to be found in order to complete the multiple case study research. The researcher found one school district that met the criteria for the study, only to discover they were not accepting external research studies. There are very few school districts that have transitioned dual language programs from the elementary into the secondary level.

The data collected provided in depth information based on the experiences and perspectives of the participants. Although efforts were made to include the views of several individual with secondary dual language experiences within each case study, only one school district had representation from central office personnel, campus administrators, and secondary dual language teachers. Other participants were contacted multiple times by email and phone calls to invite them to participate to no avail. Other individual identified in these districts from the initial interviews were also contacted and the researcher did not receive responses. Even though, the participation was voluntary, the lack of participation from the individuals that did not responded contributed to the limitation of more staff members being interviewed for the study.

### **Contributions to Literature**

This study contributes to the literature by describing the experiences and perspectives of secondary dual language school district personnel, campus administrators, and teachers. Their experiences provide an insight on the factors that impact secondary dual language programs within their dual language role in the program.

The study supported prior research in secondary dual language. The study completed in the Portland Public Schools with dual immersion programs demonstrated that three quarters of the eighth grade students who had been in dual language program since elementary had scored at sublevel 4 or above on the Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency exam (Burkhauser, Steele, Li, Slater, Bacon, & Miller, 2016) as measured by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (2012). From the data collected in the research study, all of the three school districts shared that students had high performing scores on the Spanish AP exam in eighth grade. This correlates to the Burkhauser et al. (2016) study given both eighth grade groups demonstrated high scores on the Spanish language when assessed on proficiency levels.

In a study that investigated a transition for students moving into the middle school, researchers indicated factors that could be challenges (Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Westerberg & Davidson, 2016) that included the following:

- Attrition (students moving or losing interest);
- Funding (a strand program that supports one-sixth of the total school population);
- Scheduling content and electives for students in dual language;
- Staffing (need teacher to teach the middle school content areas in Spanish);
- Pressure of standardized exams;
- Classroom configurations (dual language elementary students may want to expand their peer group);
- Community and staff perceptions (equitable concerns about devoting limited resources to a small number of students versus more time to teach English to minority language students);

- Leadership (knowledgeable about dual language expectations, obligations, and benefits to support, implement, and sustain a middle school dual language program).

In the research study, there were three factors that were part of the data collected from the participants in two of the school districts that aligned to the bulleted challenges. These included funding, scheduling, and staffing. In Satchel ISD, one dual language program was being phased out due to financial constraints at the campus. The financial issue overlapped with staffing for dual language teachers. The campus had an IB world program that required students to take a foreign language course. The magnet coordinator at this campus shared that the foreign language classes were overfilled with 30 or more students, while the dual language teacher only had 22 students. This impacted the next factor, scheduling, as there was no other class sections to schedule students for foreign language courses.

In Harley ISD, one campus administrator mentioned the difficulty of staffing secondary dual language teachers. She talked about having to find science certified bilingual teachers for her secondary dual language program and how small this pool of teachers was to begin with. In their search, she said that they had to support teachers in getting additional certifications in order to teach in the secondary dual language program. This was the case when a science certified teacher was bilingual. The teacher had to add bilingual certification. In contrast, if the teacher already had the bilingual certification, the content certification had to be added to the teaching credentials.

Both of these instances aligned partially to the possible challenges indicate in research. One campus faced all three challenges, funding, staffing, and scheduling. The other campus faced challenges in staffing for the secondary dual language program.

### **Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice**

The transition of dual language programs from an elementary to a secondary level continues to grow. The findings in this study will provide educators facing similar transitions with factors and insights to consider for their secondary dual language programs based on the data collected in the three participating school districts.

The implications presented will be framed using the constructs of Implementation Theory. Implementation Theory includes models and frameworks to gain an insight on the likeliness of a program to succeed based on the structures used during the implementation of the program (Nilson, 2015). Research has described secondary dual language programs in *Transforming secondary education: Middle and high school dual language programs* (Collier & Thomas, 2018) that can be used as models for other programs transitioning into the secondary level. Also, a framework, in the form of guidelines, has been developed in *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard et al., 2018) to ensure a solid foundation is implemented in dual language programs. The guidelines include seven strands, from program structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability, staff quality and professional development, family and community, to support and resources.

The following section will identify factors based on the findings presented in Chapter IV that align to the research on secondary dual language models (Collier & Thomas, 2018) and to the framework in the guiding principles (Howard et al., 2018). Recommendations will be included for secondary dual language programs to take into consideration at their schools.

### **Models and Framework of Secondary Dual Language Programs**

The researcher included a question towards the end of the interview on how the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard et al., 2018) had impacted the



secondary dual language program. Two of the participants indicated that they were not familiar with the guiding principles but indicated that they would impact any program, not just dual language. Most of the participants had discussed several of the strands in the guiding principles during the interview, without realizing the actual strands in the guiding principles until the question was asked toward the end. One school district had taken the guiding principles and aligned the district's vision and core values to create a program guide for the dual language programs. Another school district used developer programs to align their practices to the recent studies by the dual language researchers, Collier and Thomas, as well as, the guiding principles to ensure that best practices were research support. It is recommended that secondary dual language program leaders become familiar with recent research and practices in order to sustain secondary dual language programs. To begin, the book *Transforming secondary education: Middle and high school dual language programs* (Collier & Thomas, 2018) has many stories shared by leaders of dual language programs. These can serve as models for secondary programs. Also, dual language leaders and teachers should become familiar with the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018), as these are the foundation of dual language programs.

### **Alternating Secondary Dual Language Content Taught**

All of the school districts were following the requirement of having a minimum of two courses taught in the partner language to be considered a dual language program at the secondary level (Collier & Thomas, 2018). One the dual language teachers recommended that instead of secondary programs focusing on one content area for the three years at the middle school level, the contents should be alternated. In this school district, the content area selected was science for the secondary dual language program. He gave an example. In sixth grade, the dual language students took science. In seventh

grade, the content could switch to history. And, in eighth grade, it could rotate back to science. This would expose students to different academic vocabulary in the partner language. A generalist teacher certification would be required for the alternating of the content areas in the dual language program.

### **Creating Authentic Spanish Resources**

The largest factor impacting the secondary dual language programs in all the school districts was a need for authentic resources. While this is not new in the research, the lack of high-quality curricular materials in the partner language (Collier & Thomas, 2018) is compounded for secondary dual language programs, regardless of the content area. The secondary coordinator in one school district shared their need for authentic Spanish literature for world cultures. As an administrator of a trilingual campus, the researcher had a teacher that created authentic Spanish resources based on the experiences and observations of the students in his classes. This practice increased the student engagement in the classroom as students knew the stories were about their classmates. The researcher recommends inviting parents to share about their cultures given dual language programs have a diverse population and many families have immigrated from other countries. Some non-Spanish speaking students may have started their bilingual journey as infants with Spanish speaking nannies providing for their care. With the recent increase of immigrants from Latin America, newcomers would also contribute rich stories about their country. All dual language students could contribute to the creation of authentic resources. These stories would create a unique and authentic resource about the families in the dual language programs within each school and classroom. The sharing of the family experiences could turn into an integrated writing assignment to form a collection of rich authentic resources that would build from year to year. This practice overlaps with many guiding principles for dual language including,

family and community, curriculum, instruction, and resources (Howard et al., 2018). Additionally, newcomers would quickly become part of the school and dual language program as recommended by Collier and Thomas (2018). It would also create positive teacher-student interactions within a learner-centered environment (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2018). These positive interactions would go beyond the classroom and impact the parent-child and student-student interactions while also impacting the sociocultural goal of dual language programs (Collier & Thomas, 2018; Howard et al., 2018; Lindolm-Leary, 2005; Soltero, 2016).

### **Building Capacity of Dual Language Educators**

Throughout Chapter IV, participants mentioned the lack of professional development opportunities for secondary dual language programs. Building teacher capacity is seen as valuing of teachers as professionals (DeMatthews, D. & Izquierdo, E., 2016). All educators have a core belief that professional learning is a key component that ensures success for all students. There are many recommendations that could be made that would require years of research for the development of training opportunities for secondary dual language. In order to address this concern more immediately, the researcher recommends building capacity by visiting other successful secondary dual language programs or observing other dual language teachers within the school district and the campus itself.

For a bigger impact, the leaders could organize structured learning walks for dual language teacher or administrators. In one of the chapters in *Transforming secondary education: Middle and high school dual language programs* (Collier & Thomas, 2018), had created a list of areas that needed improvement and ranged from refinement of sheltered content instruction with a focus on literacy, vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment across and within grade levels, to culturally responsive practices. In an effort

to hold each other accountable to the list, they participated in regular learning walks to observe the development of the areas listed. Teachers created a “problem of practice” that was connected to any area on the list. Then, teachers and administrators visited classrooms after a schedule had been created to observe in a non-evaluative manner while taking note of observations. They discussed the data and determined their next steps. It was reported that teachers found it extremely powerful to participate and collaborate while also refining their own teaching practices.

The researcher observed the same powerful impact as an administrator overseeing an early childhood program. Consultants had been hired by the district to improve instructional practices at pilot campuses through a coaching model. Early childhood pre-kindergarten programs were added to the consulting services. There was one consultant from a local university that work directly with identified pre-kindergarten teachers. The researcher noted that the consultant started by trying to build a relationship with one bilingual teacher to have a more effective coaching experience. She had the teacher create a list of goals to address throughout the coaching sessions. Limitation were observed and included that the consultant was not bilingual, nor did she have the foundational knowledge of the bilingual curriculum. During the classroom observations, other teachers were invited, as well as, campus interventionists and administrators. The interactions had to be translated for many of the observers, as all the students were Spanish speakers. A debriefing session was held at the end of each observation where everyone shared what they noticed, what they liked, and asked the teacher clarifying questions. The consultant coached the teacher all year and though there were limitations to the full impact of the coaching experience, due to the differences in language spoken, the teacher demonstrated tremendous growth. In the last session, the bilingual teacher received affirmations of her growth based on the notes shared by the observers. When she reviewed the goals, she had

set at the beginning of the year with the consultant, they had all been met. This is another example that could be implemented to build teacher capacity. Consultants would not need to be hired for this practice, but district personnel or campus administrators could replicate a similar model at their schools or districts. Even though, implementing learning walks may take some time to organize, they could positively impact instructional practices as they create job-embedded professional development opportunities with educator colleagues with whom teachers and administrators are already working and collaborating with at their schools or within a district.

### **Digital Portfolios at the Secondary Level**

Creating portfolios to demonstrate student growth is a common practice at the elementary level. Some classroom teachers gather student work samples throughout the year to show how a student has made progress. Portfolios are not a typical practice at the secondary level. However, they could make a huge impact in demonstrating students' growth in Spanish oral language proficiency.

During the interviews, one dual language teacher was recording students' presentation in their science class. Students had to give a Spanish presentation at every grading period. Rubrics had been created that included the required criteria for each presentation. The recording gave the students an opportunity to critique the presentation if there were any questions regarding the grading based on the rubric. He kept the videos for three years while the students were in middle school. He then saved the videos on a flash drive to give to the parents. The teacher stated that this was a true measure of the students' progress and growth in the development of the Spanish language. He had implemented this practice not only to show the students' progress, but to also prepare them for the Spanish AP exam.

In the technological world we live in, what a practical way to implement technology while helping students develop language skills and preparing them for language proficiency exams. While in this instance the teacher was handling the entire process, students could also be charged with parts of it. With students now a day being technologically savvy, they could be involved in the gathering of digital portfolios. Or, a technology elective could be created for students to create digital portfolios of the dual language program to increase or maintain the interest at the secondary levels.

### **Critical Consciousness**

Dual language programs share three common core goals including, academic achievement, bilingualism and biliteracy, and sociocultural competence (Howard et al., 2018). In a recent study, critical consciousness has been recommended to be added as a fourth goal for dual language education (Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, & Heiman, 2019.) Friere (as cited in Palmer et al., 2019) defines critical consciousness as the ability to “read the world.” Palmer et al. (2019) add that “reading the world” is recognizing one’s role in the dynamics of reflectively distinguishing between power and privilege rooted social relationships that structure inequalities and tend to shape the relevant conditions in our lives. They describe four critical conscious elements for dual language which include:

- Continuously interrogating power- ongoing efforts to interrogate and transform existing power structures at every level including district, school, and classroom;
- Historicizing schools- deconstructing mainstream explanations of the past and foregrounding individuals’ and communities’ local histories;
- Critical listening- seeks to engage students, educators, and families with others for meaningful and transformative connections;

- Engaging with discomfort- the three previous elements create necessary discomfort, when embraced and used for critical reflection, it can move people to action.

Examples of each element will be discussed from the data gathered during the research study.

At one of the schools, the campus administrator demonstrated the element of interrogating power when he shared his disagreement with the district practice to enroll all dual language students in Pre-AP courses at his campus. Some the students were not at an academic level to enroll into these courses, and he refused to set them up for failure. He was not enforcing this practice at his school.

He also mentioned another district practice that kept newcomer students from enrolling in secondary dual programs. Only students who had participated in elementary dual language programs since kindergarten were allowed to transfer into the secondary dual language program. He disagreed with this practice. He made the decision to enroll the newcomers after passing a Spanish Credit by Exam. He believed that it was more beneficial for the student to be in a Spanish dual language science course than to struggle in an all English science course.

The campus administrator at another campus showed that he was interrogating power after learning that the dual language program had been taken away from his school. He questioned the district about the decision and never received an explanation on the reasoning for the removal. The district did give him the authority to rebuild the program. He saw an opportunity for the dual language community and decided to start the program back up at his campus. He was in the third year of implementation.

These three examples so campus administrators' efforts to interrogate and transform existing power structures at their campuses. One example interrogated the power at the district level.

The newcomer instance described above also supports the second element, historicizing schools. Palmer et al. (2019) remind us of the racially charged civil rights history that bilingual education has experienced, which led to the development of dual language programs. They add that the original intent of the dual language programs was to provide home language instruction and equity for English learners. The administrators' decision to allow the newcomers into the secondary dual language program related with the original intent for English learners to participate in program.

Critical listening is the third element and is fundamental to building positive relationships. One dual language teacher was building relationships beyond the middle schools by having social gatherings with dual language families at local restaurants. Having meetings outside the school walls create a more relaxed environment for families and students to interact. He encouraged parents to talk to other parents and student-student conversations at the social meetings. High school dual language students were also invited to share their experiences with the middle school parents and students. They discussed experiences in their transition from the middle school to the high school, so that families would know what to expect. Additionally, he would also invite high school students that were not in high school dual language programs, but in higher Spanish level courses, to practice their Spanish skills outside of the school setting.

Using the same example as above, the families and teachers sometimes experienced discomfort when discussing some of the topics. The students and parents talked about strengths and struggles within the dual language program, which sometimes caused discomfort. Engaging in discomfort is the fourth element of critical



consciousness. The fact that the dual language families discussed uncomfortable topics at the social gatherings showed the transparency in their communication. Being transparent, dissipated fear and concern among the dual language community.

All of these examples demonstrate that the four elements of critical consciousness are already being implemented into practices in dual language programs and communities. One campus in particular demonstrated all four elements. The researcher agrees that critical consciousness should be added as a fourth goal of dual language education.

### **Summary**

Based on the findings in Chapter IV, there is a need for growing and sustaining secondary dual language programs. Research studies can provide models for programs, while guiding principles can give foundational frameworks. Visiting and learning from successful secondary program can provide practical practices being utilized in existing programs. All dual language programs vary and have unique characteristics based on the educators' (directors, coordinators, administrators, and teachers) experiences and the dual language community.

### **Considerations for Future Studies**

The data collected from the participants during the interview process provided a detailed explanation of their dual language perspectives and experiences. The participants' perspectives demonstrated many similarities, while each shared a unique experience that was specific to their role at the time. A more comprehensive study with additional teachers, parents, and students should be considered for future research. The addition of more roles within the community and schools would allow for more perspectives to enrich the study.

There are many gaps still in the research for secondary dual language programs. There have not been any studies that compare the secondary dual language students' academic performance and Spanish proficiency levels, between Spanish speakers and non-Spanish speakers. Secondary dual language educators could benefit from this type of an informative study.

### **Conclusion**

The interviews that were conducted in this study provided rich data about the participants' secondary dual language perspectives and experiences. They shared factors that impacted the secondary dual language program from within their role in the program. Supporting factors for the continuation of the program and challenges still being faced were discussed in detail. In all participating school districts, students were experiencing success for bilingualism and biliteracy as evidenced by assessments in both languages. Secondary dual language schools have been described as a “sleeping giant” in Thomas and Collier (2018). The data collected demonstrated that results of effective secondary dual language programs become evident when implemented with fidelity and combined with passionate advocates.

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## APPENDIX A:

### INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are being asked to participate in the research project described below. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or you may decide to stop your participation at any time. Should you refuse to participate in the study, or should you withdraw your consent and stop participation in the study, your decision will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may be otherwise entitled. You are being asked to read the information below carefully and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

**Title: Factors that Impact the Implementation of a Secondary Dual Language Program**

**Student Investigator(s): Maria F. Gomez**

**Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Laurie Weaver, Ed.D.**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to research the factors that impact the implementation of a dual language program at the middle school level in the State of Texas.

#### **PROCEDURES**

The research procedures are as follows: The participant will participate in an interview regarding questions about the dual program in the district. The interview will be conducted either face-to-face or by phone. The interview will be audio-taped with participants' consent and their responses will be transcribed. It is anticipated that the interview will be between one hour to one and half hours long in duration. All interviews will involve a member-checking process during the analysis of the data to ensure that participant's views are accurately presented. This will require additional communication as researcher shares views captured in the initial interview.

Additionally, if the director or the principal interviews identify teachers and/or parents for having contributed to the decisions for the transition into the middle school dual language program, they may be recruited to interview as part of the study. Individual teacher or parent interviews may be conducted. If several teachers and parents are identified, then focus groups will be conducted at the respective participating school districts. These teachers and parents should be ones that contributed to the decision to continue a dual language program into the middle school.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

The total anticipated time commitment will be approximately one semester with one main interview and any follow up to ask for clarification or to answer any further questions pertaining to initial interview.

**RISKS OF PARTICIPATION**

There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this project.

**BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECT**

There is no direct benefit received from your participation in this study, but your participation will help the investigator(s) better understand the factors the impact the implementation of secondary dual language programs in the State of Texas.

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. The data collected from the study will be used for educational and publication purposes, however, you will not be identified by name. For federal audit purposes, the participant's documentation for this research project will be maintained and safeguarded by the Faculty Sponsor, Dr. Laurie Weaver, for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. The participant's information collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed for future research studies. After the three years, the participant's documentation may be destroyed.

**FINANCIAL COMPENSATION**

There is no financial compensation to be offered for participation in the study.

**INVESTIGATOR'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PARTICIPANT**

The investigator has the right to withdraw you from this study at any time.

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**

The investigator has offered to answer all your questions. If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Student Investigator, Maria Gomez, at phone number 713-502-4814 or by email at [gomezm5514@uhcl.edu](mailto:gomezm5514@uhcl.edu) or [mgomezrocque@gmail.com](mailto:mgomezrocque@gmail.com).

The Faculty Sponsor, Dr. Laurie Weaver, Ed.D., may be contacted at phone number 281-283-3594 or by email at [Weaver@UHCL.edu](mailto:Weaver@UHCL.edu).

## **SIGNATURES:**

Your signature below acknowledges your voluntary participation in this research project. Such participation does not release the investigator(s), institution(s), sponsor(s) or granting agency(ies) from their professional and ethical responsibility to you. By signing the form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been allowed to ask questions and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You have been told who to contact if you have additional questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Principal Investigator or Student Researcher/Faculty Sponsor. You will be given a copy of the consent form you have signed.

Subject's printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items listed above with the subject.

Printed name and title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE (UHCL) COMMITTEE FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS HAS REVIEWED AND APPROVED THIS PROJECT. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UHCL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (281-283-3015). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT UHCL ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. (FEDERALWIDE ASSURANCE # FWA00004068)**



## APPENDIX B:

### DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR INTERVIEW

#### PROTOCOL

#### **Dual Language Program Director or Coordinator**

#### **Dissertation Interview Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your educational background.
2. How long have you been in charge of the dual language programs at the elementary level? At the secondary level?
3. How many elementary campuses offer dual language programs? How long has the dual language program at the elementary level been implemented?
4. Why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. Tell me about your secondary dual language program
  - a. How many schools in your district are implementing a secondary dual language program?
  - b. How long has the dual language program at the secondary level been implemented?
  - c. At what grade levels are students participating?
  - d. Tell me what factors impacted the implementation of your secondary dual language program.
  - e. Were any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones and how were these overcome?
  - f. Did any of the factors contribute to a smoother transition? If so, which ones? What made these factors contribute to a smoother transition?
  - g. If any of the factors that could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?

7. What challenges are still being faced in the secondary dual language program?  
How are you addressing these challenges?
8. What successes are being experienced at the secondary dual language program?  
How are these being celebrated?
9. Having experienced the implementation of the secondary dual language program, what are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning into a secondary dual language program from an elementary dual language program?
10. How have the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education published by the Center of Applied Linguistics impacted your dual language program? (Program Design and Implementation – Program Structure, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, Staff Quality & Professional Development, Family & Community, Support & Resources)
11. Is there anyone else that contributed to the implementation of the secondary dual language program? If so, who and what were their contributions?
12. Is there anyone else that should be considered for an interview that has pertinent information about your secondary dual language program? If so, who?
13. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?

APPENDIX C:  
DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW  
PROTOCOL

**Dual Language Middle School Principal**

**Dissertation Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your educational background.
2. How long have you been leading the dual language programs at the secondary level?
  - a. Who was in charge prior to you?
3. How many elementary campuses that have offered a two-way immersion programs feed into your middle school?
4. Why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. Tell me about your secondary dual language program
  - a. How many schools in your district are implementing a secondary dual language program?
  - b. How long has the dual language program at the secondary level been implemented?
  - c. At what grade levels are students participating?
  - d. Tell me what factors impacted the implementation of your secondary dual language program.
  - e. Were any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones? How were these overcome?
  - f. Did any of the factors contribute to a smoother transition? If so, which ones? What made these factors contribute to a smoother transition?

- g. If any of the factors that could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?
- 7. What challenges are still being faced in the secondary dual language program?  
How are you addressing these challenges?
- 8. What successes are being experienced at the secondary dual language program?  
How are these being celebrated?
- 9. Having experienced the implementation of the secondary dual language program, what are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning into a secondary dual language program from an elementary dual language program?
- 10. How have the Guiding Principles for Dual Language published by the Center of Applied Linguistics impacted your dual language program? (Program Design and Implementation – Program Structure, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, Staff Quality & Professional Development, Family & Community, Support & Resources)
- 11. Is there anyone else that contributed to the implementation of the secondary dual language program? If so who and what were their contributions?
- 12. Is there anyone else that should be considered for an interview that has pertinent information about your secondary dual language program? If so, who?
- 13. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?

## APPENDIX D:

### DUAL LANGUAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

#### **Middle School Dual Language Teacher**

#### **Dissertation Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your educational background.
2. How long have you been teaching in dual language programs at the middle school level?
  - a. What are your teaching certifications?
  - b. What grade levels and subjects do you teach?
3. How many middle school campuses offer dual language programs?
  - a. How long has the dual language program at the middle school level been implemented?
  - b. At what grade levels are students participating?
  - c. What courses are offered in the minority language?
4. Why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. Tell me about your secondary dual language program experiences.
  - a. Tell me what factors impact your secondary dual language program.
  - b. Are any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones and how are these being overcome?
  - c. Do any of the factors contribute to a smoother implementation? If so, which ones and what make these factors contribute to a smoother implementation?
  - d. If any of the factors could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?

7. What challenges are still being faced in the secondary dual language program?  
How are these being addressed?
8. What successes are being experienced at the secondary dual language program?  
How are these being celebrated?
9. Having experienced teaching in a secondary dual language program, what are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning into a secondary dual language program from an elementary TWI program?
10. How have the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education published by the Center of Applied Linguistics impacted your dual language program? (Program Design and Implementation – Program Structure, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, Staff Quality & Professional Development, Family & Community, Support & Resources)
11. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?

## APPENDIX E:

### DUAL LANGUAGE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

#### **Elementary Dual Language Principal**

#### **Dissertation Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your educational background.
2. How long have you been leading the dual language programs at the elementary level?
3. How many elementary campuses offer dual language programs?
  - a. How long has the dual language program at the elementary level been implemented?
  - b. At what grade levels are students participating?
4. Are you familiar with the reasons to extend the dual language program into the middle school level? If so, why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. If you participated in the planning process for the implementation of the secondary dual language program, tell me about that experience.
  - a. Tell me what factors impacted the implementation of the secondary dual language program.
  - b. Were any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones? How were these overcome?
  - c. Did any of the factors contribute to a smoother transition? If so, which ones? What made these factors contribute to a smoother transition?
  - d. If any of the factors could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?
7. What are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning from an elementary dual language program into a secondary dual language program?

8. How have the Guiding Principles for Dual Language published by the Center of Applied Linguistics impacted your dual language program?
9. Is there anyone else that contributed to the planning process for the implementation of the secondary dual language program? If so, who and what were their contributions?
10. Is there anyone else that should be considered for an interview that has pertinent information? If so, who?
11. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?



APPENDIX F:  
DUAL LANGUAGE ELEMENTARY TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Elementary Dual Language Teacher**

**Dissertation Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your educational background.
2. How long have you been teaching in dual language programs at the elementary level?
  - a. What are your teaching certifications?
  - b. What grade levels do you teach?
3. How many elementary campuses offer dual language programs?
  - a. How long has the dual language program at the elementary level been implemented?
  - b. At what grade levels are students participating?
4. Why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. If you participated in the planning process for the implementation of the secondary dual language program, tell me about that experience.
  - a. Tell me what factors impacted the implementation of the secondary dual language program.
  - b. Were any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones? How were these overcome?
  - c. Did any of the factors contribute to a smoother transition? If so, which ones? What made these factors contribute to a smoother transition?
  - d. If any of the factors could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?

7. Having experienced teaching in a dual language program, what are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning from an elementary dual language program into a secondary dual language program?
8. Are you familiar with the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education published by the Center of Applied Linguistics? If so, how have the Guiding Principles for Dual Language impacted your dual language program? (Program Design and Implementation – Program Structure, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability, Staff Quality & Professional Development, Family & Community, Support & Resources)
9. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?

## APPENDIX G:

### DUAL LANGUAGE PARENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

#### **Dual Language Parent**

#### **Dissertation Protocol**

**Research Questions: What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual program and how are these overcome?**

1. Tell me about your experience with dual language programs.
2. What grade levels has/have your child(ren) participated in dual language programs?
3. How long have you been involved with the dual language programs at the elementary level? At the secondary level?
  - a. In what capacity are you involved in the dual language program?
  - b. Why are you involved with your child's dual language program?
4. Why was the secondary dual language program initiated? (Parental request, district need, funds provided...)
5. What process was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school?
  - a. If any part of the process could be changed, what part should be considered and why?
6. Did you have any contributions for the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school? If so, tell me about that experience.
  - a. Tell me what factors you feel impacted the implementation of the secondary dual language program.
  - b. Were any of these factors a challenge? If so, which ones and how were these overcome?
  - c. Did any of the factors contribute to a smoother transition? If so, which ones? What made these factors contribute to a smoother transition?
  - d. If any of the factors could be changed, which ones should be considered and why?
7. If you are a secondary dual language parent, what challenges are still being faced in the program? How are these challenges being addressed?

8. If you are a secondary dual language parent, what successes are being experienced in the program? How are these being celebrated?
9. Having experienced an elementary or secondary dual language program, what are your recommendations for schools that are transitioning into a secondary dual language program from an elementary TWI program?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to share that I may not have asked?

APPENDIX H:  
TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW SAMPLE

Transcript - Retired and Former Director of Secondary Schools

August 6, 2019

SPEAKER 1: Today is August the 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. I just want to start with the research questions. And, there are three questions. What are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level? Which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program? Which factors are challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how are these overcome? The first question is tell me about your educational background.

SPEAKER 2: I was an elementary teacher for many years in first and third grade, then I became an elementary assistant principal. I taught in a lot of different places. I think seven years of my fifteen years of teaching were overseas in Germany on a military base. And it was just an interesting point, you know, that's when I realized that people all over the world. Most people speak English in addition to their own language. So that was my first exposure to that, so I appreciated it. I did not learn German because I worked with Americans all day. So that's just a little history. But anyway, when I came back to the states, I went to [Harley ISD] and taught in a very wealthy school. And then I helped open an elementary school in a high poverty area. And, the principal there, actually she's my mentor, and we still see each other. She opened the school and asked me to start the school with her. So, we were there two or three years and it was her idea actually to begin dual language. No one had ever heard of it in the district. Very few people anywhere were doing it. But her husband was a pediatric neurologist and both of them had lots of conversations about the brain and human learning. So, she started on her own, before she said anything to anyone, researching and discovered the benefits of dual language. Then,

she started investigating the best programs and long story short, we spent a year studying it with our campus team and parents and implemented it there in Pre-K K in a multi-age classroom. And we had this little cohort of twenty children, and they were just moving up and everything was going great! But had we not spent that year, I cannot stress that enough, with our stakeholder groups, researching what it is, what works, how to implement, why do you do it, etc., why you do all those things, you know that from implementing anything. You have to study it. Then she went on to retire from public ed and became the head of the lower school in Kincaid. And then I became the principal. But I was only a principal for a year and half. Then I got a call. We had done a lot of innovative things, multiage, in addition to dual language, and brain-based teaching. This was in 1993 when we opened the school. So, we did a lot of brain-based things and we're known to be innovative. I'll put it that way. So, I say that because the district was beginning to investigate charter school and that's when charter school began to take off in the state and the nation. They had two empty facilities that had been closed in the 60s. So, one opened and then I was asked to be on this other committee to look at what could go at another school. They knew that it was going to be a secondary school or two schools or three schools. And, they were gutting the facility and rebuilding it with part of it for middle school and part of it for high school. And so, they asked me to be on this committee and they had parents and district people. I said, I don't know anything about secondary. Why do you want me on that committee? He was my supervisor and the head of the committee. He was the area superintendent and said because you lead differently, and you are open minded, and we don't want this to be a typical secondary school. We need that voice. I said okay. So, I got on that committee and we again spent, oh gosh, months looking at all kinds of different charter schools, back to basics, Arthur Andersen accounting academy. I don't know. All of these different ones, but one of the ones we

looked at was in Arizona and it was a school for international studies. And, so that one we settled on it would be a school for international studies and it would be one school grades six through twelve. And then I got interested, but because I had lived overseas and I had traveled so much of the world, and I saw how important it was for us to understand other cultures and of all places in this city to have a school like this and that time there was not another school in the area focused on international studies. I didn't put my name in the hat because I didn't know anything about secondary. And I felt very insecure about that and it's sort of like when you are an elementary teacher and you meet high school teachers. It's sort of like, you know what I am saying?

SPEAKER 1: Yes

SPEAKER 2: But finally, I was encouraged to interview, and I did and then I got the job. So, I was an elementary principal for a year and half. I had been an AP for seven years. And I was opening the school. Wow! I wish I would have written a book. So that's a whole other subject. But that's my background. I was at [Berny Secondary School] for eight years and I got it into a very good place. And I felt like it was time for me to go. I don't believe in leaders staying too long. I think that's a mistake and that's a personal opinion. Not so short of a time and not too long of a time. So, it was time for me to go. I remember the day that I realized that. I was sitting at lunch. I always ate in the cafeteria dining hall. My leadership team would join me very often and we would eat together and have a meeting. And, one day we were all in there and an issue popped up and I started to offer my opinion and I didn't need to because they were solving it without me and I knew then it was time to go. I had done what I needed to do and so then I applied and got the position, which is hilarious given my background and my fear of secondary, but I became executive director of secondary teaching and learning. So, there you go.

That's my background. Then, I have a doctorate from A&M and a masters from U of H main campus and a bachelors from UT Austin.

SPEAKER 1: Ok, wow you've done a lot! So, you mentioned that you were in charge of the dual language program for eight years at the academy, right?

SPEAKER 2: Well, yes, but I need to give you a little bit of history of how it came to be there because that original cohort of twenty parents they were so vested in their children's dual language program. And, they started coming to me, that group was like in third grade maybe. And, those parents began to contact me towards the end of their third-grade year saying, what's going to happen to them. And, I said well that's not really my call. That's the district's call and you need to contact so and so and so and so. And they did and they never got any answers. Then I went to the district and said, we've got a problem. These parents want something, and no one's ever answered them or no one's providing them with anything. And I said they really don't want to drop off when they get to middle school. And, so nothing ever happened. And so, I figured out a way. Now I had a charter that limits the enrollment and describes the program even though it is part of the school district. There is a charter that says you can have 120 kids in each grade level, you know, really very specific guidelines about what was to be offered and how to teach, what to teach, etc. These parents were desperate, and they also wanted their children at my school. So, I began to think about it, and I talked to my then boss who was kind of like a community leader for schools. And I told her that I was thinking about running it through our campus improvement team and letting those twenty children come. That I had figured out a way that I could let them in, and it wouldn't change the program. And it would be very little impact. I wouldn't cost the district any money and I thought that I could figure it out. But I needed to do a little bit more research to find out what this meant at a secondary dual language program because there was nobody to help me, no one. So, she



said okay, I think that sounds good. So, well, that was all I needed. So, I began to look around and ask questions and found out that Ysletta district, had some really good, secondary programs. And, so I flew out there on my own dime and spent a day and a half with their people. Now this was in about 2002, a long time ago. So my memory is about sketchy on all of it, but 2002-2003 maybe. And, these I remember finding out. That it really wasn't going to be that hard and as you moved. This is what I was told at the time and I'm sure a lot has changed but that like at the high school level, the main thing was to find teachers that were biliterate. And that you needed to have staff that could teach any subject. Whatever they were teaching, that they could teach it in Spanish. And, one of the reasons that they had such a successful program is because most of their teacher were already bilingual. So, it was a no brainer. And, at the high school level, the students sort of dictated their program and that they would decide, and it really didn't matter what courses as long as they had at least one or two courses a year taken in Spanish in addition to continuing that strand of Spanish language courses. So very high levels of Spanish literature and language, but then always to have one or two content classes in Spanish and what those were did not matter so much. That's what they said. And at the middle school, not that different. It was critical that they continue their Spanish class. And then that they had...they did out there math in Spanish and science in Spanish. And that's what I decided to do. I didn't look at any other model. I didn't know what else to do. So, I came back and I met with our campus improvement team and we figured out a way to do it. And, I will say that because we were a school of international studies, the argument for this was nothing to these parents because they had chosen to put their children there. Our staff had chosen to come there. Everybody valued language. We already valued learning of language. We offered four languages at that time. We offered French, German, Italian, and Spanish. And so, I was able to accommodate those twenty students without adding

additional staff, and physically I had no room. So that's what happened. So, we wrote it. We amended the charter that allowed the only twenty to come in each year. And, they would automatically get in from the elementary school. And that ended up being a problem for the district, because then at the same time that this was happening, two other elementaries started dual language. And so, as the years ticked by, those parents wanted something. And, there were two things, they wanted the dual language to continue and they wanted their children at [Berny Secondary School].

SPEAKER 1: Oh goodness.

SPEAKER 2: We could not expand, so by that time, I was executive director over secondary. And by that time more people at the district at the central office level, everywhere, parents, everyone. All stakeholders valued and saw the importance of dual language. And so, it was not an argument to get this task force started for demanding that we need to have more programs.

## APPENDIX I:

### SAMPLE TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING

Interview with Campus Administrator  
July 22, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

SPEAKER 1: OK so I want to just go over the research questions. And the first question is what are the factors that impact the implementation of a secondary dual language program at the middle school level...so, just looking at this next level from the elementary to middle school? And then the 2nd question is which factors support the continuation of a secondary dual language program and which factors have been challenges for the continuation of a dual language program and how have these been overcome? Alright, so let's just get started with just telling me a little bit about your educational background.

SPEAKER 2: So, it started off as a teacher. I've been at the elementary and middle school level as a teacher. After that I moved. I got my first master's in counseling and so I start as counselor. I've been a school counselor in elementary and middle school level. And then I decided that wasn't for me, so I went back and got another master's in administration and became an AP. I was an AP for 6 years and then made my way into the principalship when I came here to [Harley ISD]. So, I've been an elementary principal for ten years and this is my third year as a secondary principal. *<Educational background of participant*

SPEAKER 1: OK

SPEAKER 2: And got my doctorate at six year ago now *<Educational background of participant*

SPEAKER 1: Wow! OK.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah that's why they call it a terminal degree. You never wanna go back again and I love school.

SPEAKER 1: Yes you're always a lifelong learner, right?

SPEAKER 2: Yes

SPEAKER 1: So how long have you been leading the dual language program here?

SPEAKER 2: At the at this level yeah so two full years. I'm starting my third and prior to me the school has...this school has gone through a lot of transition in the last 5 years. So, when the director who began the school left to take a central office job here in the district, there was one director here for I think two years. And then she left, and they hired another one who was only here for one year. And then they had an interim and then me. So, there has been a lot of like quick turn around. So, I'm the one that I don't plan on going anywhere. So, I'm trying to establish that trust that you know. So, the campus has been in flux so to speak in the leadership area for about 5 years. *<Historical campus data*

SPEAKER 1: Well it's great you are here for the longevity, right?

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Get that program established and going. So, how many elementary campuses that have offered a two-way or dual language program feed into your middle school.

SPEAKER 2: So ,all of the ones in the district. Are you familiar with our district?

SPEAKER 1: I'm not.

SPEAKER 2: OK, we have several elementaries. I believe there are four that have two-way dual language programs and we were...Our school was the first school to offer the dual language program period. But then what we noticed at the district was all of these elementary who had the program there wasn't a place for them to go in secondary and *<district program structure concern* the reason why was because there was only so many seats that our school had to offer through the lottery 'cause we're not just an open enrollment school or a neighborhood school. *<Historical campus data and reason to expand to other secondary schools*

SPEAKER 1: Sure

SPEAKER 2: So, parents started to you know. They were excited about putting their children in the program in the elementary years but then after fifth grade they're like well now what? I know we just had 6 years of it but there's nowhere to go. So, the district expanded that and opened up two more middle schools that have the secondary dual language program as well and then two high schools. *<Historical district data and reasons expanded*

SPEAKER 1: Oh OK. Nice.

SPEAKER 2: So that way they had some way to matriculate not just our school.

SPEAKER 1: Super! So, then it is extended all the way to the high school?

SPEAKER 2: It is.

SPEAKER 1: Nice, great!

SPEAKER 2: But only through this science. I guess we can get to that later but really science is the only subject or content area that we have the dual language program through middle school for sure and through high school but so they can also do it as a bilingual diploma here. So, they can do it through the Spanish language through advanced courses. *<Historical campus/district data*

SPEAKER 1: OK, so when you say the science is that where the Spanish courses come in.

SPEAKER 2: No, they are taught separate. So, we do have Spanish language courses and then we have the science content area. So, every student who is in a dual language program has to take their science in the dual language but that's only content the core content classes where they have the dual language. Math and language arts and social studies are not dual language. *<Historical campus data*

SPEAKER 1: OK, so, just science is the dual language. And then the language arts is all in English, so one content area, science.

SPEAKER 2: Correct

SPEAKER 1: So, why was the secondary dual language program initiated?

SPEAKER 2: Yeah, *parental request for sure so. Reasons to expand*

SPEAKER 1: Then the district, you said, saw a need.

SPEAKER 2: Well, they [the district] listened to the parents because they did see that you know the elementaries were doing a good job of creating the interest and kids were sticking in it and they weren't just dropping out and so they realize there's a need to go forward with it. *Reasons to expand*

SPEAKER 1: So, what processes was used to make the decision to extend the dual language program into the middle school? Was there a committee formed?

SPEAKER 2: Yeah and as a matter of fact because I was doing my dissertation work on a dual language program in elementary, I was part of that committee that did do this.

So, I gotta see a lot of that process but it started with kind of a focus group...right...made up of parents in the program whose children were in the program and administrators or like principals. I think there were teachers and then there were also central office leaders. And so, they talked a lot about you know kind of the basic things like what's the need and what would this look like that kind of thing and then it then once it was determined and the board approved there to be I guess it's an official task force into you know looking at the details and the logistics of it then it went to more of a smaller cohort and in that cohort it was one parent representative, administrator of a school that's not dual language, administrator of the campus that was dual language, and then the directors at the ad building at central office. And so, we looked at everything from kind of in a five-year plan view of how it would be implemented over the course of five years. What teachers and certifications would be required, what materials would be required, and then what the budget would look like to cover all of that so that the board could then make a determination over the total cost and then finally approve. *Decision making process for secondary dual language program*

SPEAKER 1: Sure

SPEAKER 2: Oh and then also like selection process right because with the different feeder patterns and the different schools that were selected to have the programs they needed to make sure that there was a way or a path for every student who was in the fifth grade in a dual language program to have the opportunity to continue and not be shut out because of space. *Decision making process for secondary dual language*

*program* So, our school was the only exception because again our enrollment is capped and so it was you know the only campus in it. So, is the only campus where we have this number of seats and that's it. So, to be accepted you just have to be pulled in the lottery.

*<Historical campus data*

The other campuses can accept all the rest, it just stays open. *<Historical district data*

SPEAKER 1: So, having been part of this process is there any part of it that if it could be change that you would recommend changing it?

SPEAKER 2: Um, that's a good question 'cause I thought the timeline was still appropriate they started early enough to give time to be thoughtful about it. I think the challenging part of it was and maybe this answers another question is how do you find the **right certified teacher** for it and then what oversight would there be you know like **training, district support, how do we know that our program is doing well you know.** That's a big enough challenge in a bilingual department anyway. *Strengths and challenges task force should have considered*

SPEAKER 1: Sure

SPEAKER 2: But when you have a fledgling startup kinda like this where you know like a lot support...and maybe back then and I wasn't here then maybe there was a lot of support and then it just kind of tapered off because they feel like ok by now you should be able to fly on your own but as a campus here I can only speak to the fact that with all of the leadership changes I don't know that that really happened and that that support was there. *Strengths and challenges task force should have considered* I know that this is going to be confidential right?

SPEAKER 1: Oh yes absolutely.

SPEAKER 2: I know that we have the same teachers that were hired when this started, and I think there's a big need for the training piece. So, I don't know if that was a budget consideration that never got enough to cover what was needed or was it simply something that dropped off the mark because the leadership changes...like what was the cause of that. So, we're trying to kind of put some things back on track because I don't think that's it been good. *Strengths and challenges task force should have considered*

SPEAKER 1: It's good that the reflection piece is there though like how do we move forward to ensure that it's still being successful.

SPEAKER 2: Right