

NABE launches its First in a Series of Regional Institutes

One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way. (Frank Smith)

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to NABE's first Regional Equity Institute: **Resisting Inequity: Language as Power & Right**, where we continued our theme for 2018 at this first Regional Equity Institute in Sacramento, CA on September 14 in partnership with Education Trust-West. The Institute provided a perfect opportunity to engage superintendents and other senior leaders in examining values-driven and research informed approaches for designing and sustaining powerful multilingual learning environments for English Learners. It provided a motivational and inspiring experience for thinking about the power of language as a vehicle for fighting inequity. In addition, it explored "bright lights" models, practices, and strategies that are getting positive results for English Learner academic, linguistic, and global success.

Among the keynote presenters were Bryonn Bain, Poet, Artist, Activist and Teacher who made a strong case justifying why preserving students' language is a key to the development of healthy identities and how engaging culture builds healthy communities and dynamic classrooms leading to the real value of multilingualism. Bryonn explored topics that lie at the heart of powerful, liberating and transformative education for today's youth. His engaging and inspiring message to educators was about the power to create environments of hope and success for all our diverse learners. The other lead presenter was NABE's national secretary and past CATE President and an English Learner educational expert. Francisca Sanchez honed in on the topic of decolonizing our classrooms while creating Counter-Hegemonic spaces that support English Learner excellence. She challenged the participants to be intentional and powerful forces for the good by designing English Learners programs based on transformative approach that values and builds on their languages, cultures, and past experiences that leads not only to high academic performances but also to the development of healthy and confident self identities.

Some of the other featured sessions included some special EL experts such as Elena Fajardo, Program Administrator for the California Department of Education's Language Policy and Leadership Office, and Gina Garcia-Smith, Education Program Assistant in the Language Policy and Leadership Office at the California Department of Education. They both provided an excellent overview of the new California English Learner Roadmap and the Global California 2030 Initiative. Cristina Alfaro, Professor and Immediate Past Chair of the Dual Language and English Learner Education Department in the College of Education at San Diego State University, led a session on the Role of Teacher Preparation and Efficaciousness in High Quality Pre-K-12 Dual Language Programs. Cristina made a very strong case justifying the

importance that all dual language teacher preparation programs must be of high quality and efficaciousness focus as undeniably vital components, now more than ever, due to the diverse pre-K student growth and the exponential rise of dual language programs. Rosa G. Molina, Director of the Association of Two-Way & Dual Language Education (ATDLE), focused on the unprecedented growth of Two-Way and Dual Language programs across the United States. She emphasized that it was imperative that district and site leaders fully recognize the obvious and hidden priorities outlined by these programs. She also outlined some fundamental components necessary to initiate and sustain successful TWBI/DL Programs in respective communities. Other dynamic presentations by Aldo Ramirez, Director of Continuous Improvement in the San Bernardino City Unified School District, focused on Case Study-Facilitation, Equity, Enrichment, and Continuous Improvement with a specifically designed college and career bilingual program that brought the community together to create an environment of success, and the key parameters that ensure that enrichment approaches translate to academic results. Yee Wan, Director of Multilingual Education Services Department with the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and a former NABE President (2015), led a very engaging session on Stakeholders as Partners in Developing a Culture of Respect in 21st Century Education by empowering student to become change agents by promoting a culture of respect and inclusiveness. This engaging discussion also included the My Name, My Identity National Initiative, a partnership between NABE and the SCCOE that provides a national platform for educators to commit to pronouncing student's names correctly in order to affirm their identities and for students to develop 21st Century global competence.

The final institute session included the Superintendents Roundtable with Ramón Zavala, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services in Morgan Hill USD who focused on aligning the local control accountability plan (LCAP) and English Learner Roadmap Alignment while engaging your community in designing transformative English Learner Master Plan. Isabel Cabral-Johnson, Superintendent of Hilmar USD shared her experience as the first district in Merced County to implement a Dual Language Immersion Spanish Language Program. Last year they began the first Dual Language Portuguese Immersion Program in California. Assistant Superintendent Bill Sanderson of the San Francisco USD shared his beliefs that access to a high quality education is an imperative civil right for all people. He has approached his career with passion, conviction, and the desire to give every young person the same opportunities he was fortunate to experience. The grand finale to the program was Superintendent Dale Marsden of San Bernardino City USD, California's 10th largest urban public school district. Under his leadership, the District has become a catalyst to lead the City of San Bernardino beyond bankruptcy to a community of excellence. His current efforts are working in tandem with Gallup Inc., to evaluate community-wide measures of Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being to ensure thriving schools and community.

The Santa Clara County Office of Education under the leadership of Superintendent Mary Ann Dewan was one of the key partnership sponsors of this first NABE

Regional Equity Institute. The SCCOE was one of only 5 districts in the state of California to have been awarded a newly created statewide equity initiative by the California Department of Education to narrow the achievement gap for students whose performance lags behind other groups. The Santa Clara County Office of Education received this innovative grant to focus on English Learners. The grant will allow the SCCOE to refine promising ideas that, if proven successful, can be shared with educators across the state.

Finally, the NABE Board of Directors extends its gratitude and deep appreciation to all of the participants, coalition sponsors and partners; especially the focused leadership of staff and national Board Secretary Francisca Sanchez and President Margarita Pinkos. We close this article with some very unique quotes and reflections shared throughout the Institute as the guiding principles for the success of this very robust Regional Equity Institute program as a fundamental reminder for all educators to ponder:

All of us in the academy and in the culture as a whole are called to renew our minds if we are to transform educational institutions—and society—So that the way we live, teach, and work can reflect our joy in cultural diversity, our passion for justice, and our love of freedom.

Bell Hooks

Let us put our minds together and see what kind of life we can make for our children.

Sitting Bull

The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible.

Arthur C. Clarke

The limits of my language are the limits of my world.

Ludwig Wittgenstein