

TEACHERS IN THE FIELD: **TESTIMONIOS OF NEW MEXICAN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATORS**



New Mexico's bi-multilingual educators create curriculum and give agency to those they serve, supporting the trajectories of multilingual students and fighting for the cultural and linguistic identities of their communities.

This paper uses the *testimonio* framework to share the stories of three diverse individuals working with Educators Rising New Mexico. Each multilingual educator wrote their own story in first person, charting their journeys within the New Mexican education system and detailing the ways they serve their respective communities today.

One of the core tenants of *testimonio* is to give voice to those who have been marginalized and oppressed (Huber, 2009) and have found power, knowledge, and purpose in their lives through the act of voicing their stories. The educators highlighted in this paper are, in essence, the testimonialistas of their students and communities. This resource was created as part of an 18-month planning grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation focused on using Educators Rising New Mexico to help create comprehensive and multilingual pathways to the teaching profession in New Mexico. The stories that follow are critically important to our collective work of providing a culturally and linguistically sustaining education for students statewide.

Testimonio is not only a methodology, but a pedagogy. The exchange of knowledge that happens through speaking and listening is an important piece of *testimonio* pedagogy, and the vitality of the exchange increases individuals' potential for growth (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Huber, 2009). For that reason, at the end of this document, you will find our challenge to stakeholders and two lesson plans that can be incorporated into an Educators Rising classroom.





Dr. Berlinda Begay

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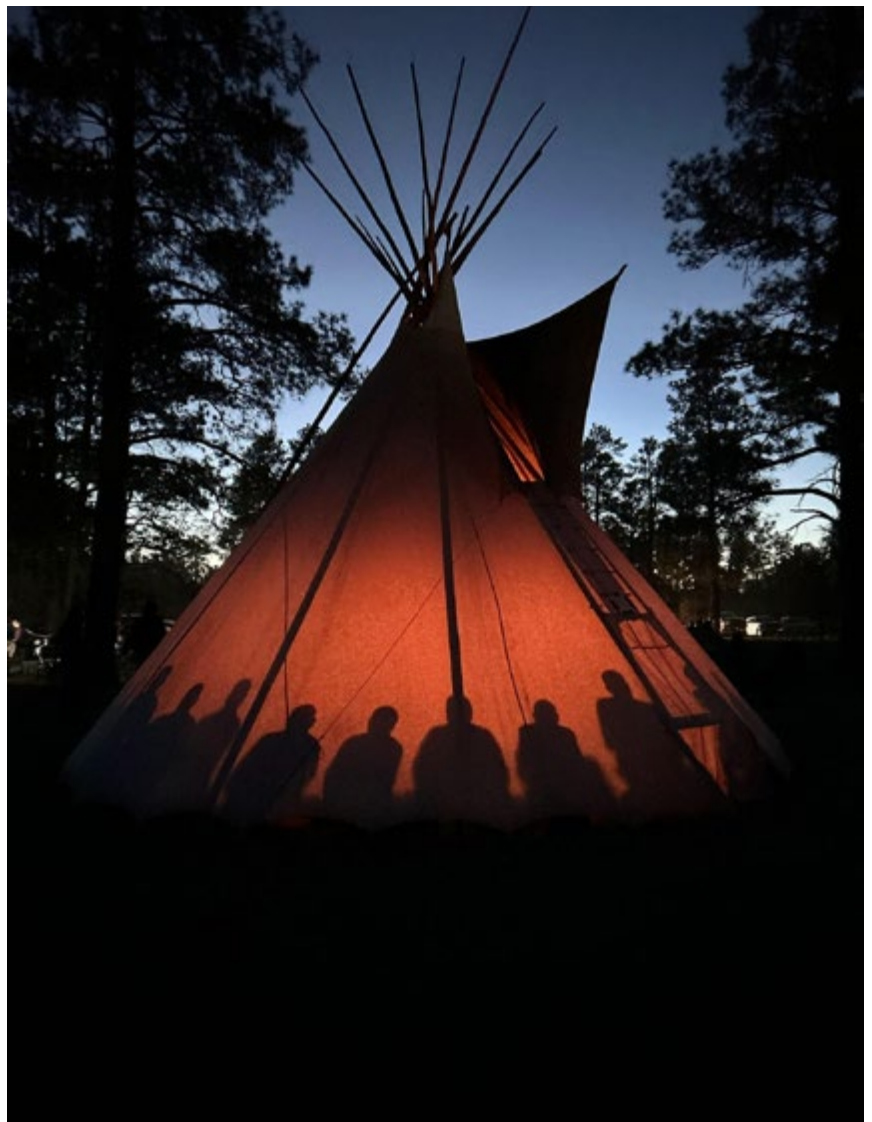
Dr. Berlinda Begay is a true leader in bilingual education, consistently and intentionally fighting for the language and cultural rights of her people. The *Martínez/Yazzie Consolidated v. State of New Mexico* lawsuit, a landmark court case in the state of New Mexico, demands Native American students have a culturally and linguistically rich educational space. That means providing them with teachers just like Begay.

Shiprock, New Mexico

Shiprock, and the land it stands upon in the northwest corner of New Mexico, holds immense significance for the Navajo people. The community is named for a towering volcanic plug that rises dramatically from the desert floor to a height of about 1,583 feet. Known as Tsé Bit'a'í, meaning "rock with wings" in the Navajo language, Shiprock is considered sacred. It holds a prominent place in Navajo mythology and is believed to be the petrified remains of a giant bird that transported the Navajo people to their current homeland. Shiprock serves as a focal point for Navajo ceremonies, prayers, and spiritual practices. Its majestic presence embodies the resilience, strength, and cultural heritage of the Navajo Nation.

Shiprock's importance extends beyond its cultural and spiritual significance. The demographics of the surrounding area reflect the predominantly Navajo population. The region is home to many Navajo communities, and the land around Shiprock is dotted with Navajo homesteads and hogans, traditional houses made of wooden poles, tree bark, and mud. The economy is primarily centered around agriculture, livestock farming, and small businesses that cater to the needs of the local population. Shiprock serves as a hub of educational, health care, and social services for the

surrounding Navajo communities. Despite the challenges faced by the region, such as limited access to resources and economic opportunities, Shiprock remains a symbol of resilience, cultural pride, and an enduring connection between the Navajo people and their ancestral land.



My beginning

I was born in Shiprock, New Mexico, but raised in a beautiful community called Rock Point, Arizona. I am a citizen of the Navajo Nation. My parents did not finish high school, so they wanted to have their children go as far as they could with Western education. College was the only option that they emphasized after high school.

My first language is Navajo. My parents spoke to us only in Navajo. As far as I remember, Navajo was the only language spoken within our family, extended family, community, and at events. In the schools, it was also primarily Navajo. This was during the early '80s to the early '90s.

Early education

The school I attended is called Rock Point Community School, Diné Bi'ólta' (the school of our people). This school was developed as part of the [Indian Self-Determination Act](#). There were five schools on the Navajo Nation that were part of this initiative. The school was created as a true Navajo bilingual bicultural education program. I entered this school as a kindergartener not speaking any English and with very little comprehension.

Rock Point Community School is a K-12 school teaching Navajo literacy from kindergarten and English as a second language. It made sense to introduce Navajo literacy, as a majority of the students were fluent speakers with the exception of the children of the non-native staff. These students also became highly proficient in the Navajo language during their time at the school. The school board consisted of elders who did not have any formal Western education; they were educated in the Navajo ways. They ensured that the Navajo language and culture was embedded into the curriculum. The school developed traditions such as ensuring that middle school promotions and senior graduations included speeches in Navajo and English. They also valued parent voices and input. I remember parent-teacher conferences where close to 90% of parents were participating in our education.

In middle school, students experienced the validation of their culture by making their own Navajo clothes in home economics and wearing them for any event they chose. I saw, heard, tasted, listened to, and touched the cultural

knowledge and skills of my people, family, and community embedded into the instruction. It was wonderful to experience.

The school also had a journalism program at the secondary level that created a monthly newspaper written in Navajo and English. The journalism courses were taught through the Applied Literacy Program (ALP). We learned how to do interviews, catalog them, transcribe them, type them, and put a newspaper together. The courses also helped us learn how to do research for writing our articles. Through ALP, a media program was developed. We learned how to use media equipment to do presentations and create our own stories that were recorded. The community invested in having a television station called The Purple Cow. The station showed videos created by the students and also showed documentaries.

The videos were in Navajo and English. The school also took part in the Navajo Nation Spelling Bee at the secondary level. I remember being asked by my Navajo language teacher in 8th grade to attend the spelling bee. I was so excited because I would be traveling with high school students. I beat all the high school students and took home the champion trophy. It was such a great experience.

Leaving reservation life

I excelled academically at Rock Point Community School and was looking for challenging and rigorous coursework, so I was given an opportunity to attend a college preparatory school in Colorado or Rhode Island. My father did not want me going far away, so he agreed to the school in Colorado. Attending this school was a culture shock in my first year. I experienced racism for the first time and became aware how money was viewed differently by the students who attended this school. They did not appreciate what they had and took it for granted. For me, receiving \$20 from my father was a lot. I also got a job as an assistant librarian and babysat for faculty to earn my own money. The coursework was rigorous and foreign as I took classes like British literature and Western civilization, only covering two pages of Native Americans in U.S. history. I really questioned myself because it was hard

to retain the information. I later realized that it was because I am an English learner and I learn uniquely. These classes had no connection to me and who I was, so I shifted to a survival, sink-or-float mode. I remember the class that I loved was Native American literature. I excelled in that class because I could connect to the context and content.

At my previous school, Rock Point, students excelled academically because their classes included their language and cultural identity. It was embedded into the curriculum. It took a year to become adjusted to the environment at my prep school, but once I learned survival skills, my academic challenges became easier. It took me and my resilience to ensure that I would not sink. I continued to remind myself that I would not be broken. I found ways to implement my Navajo prayers and smudging by using an iron, burning cedar and going out in the early mornings to make my prayers. I also made weekly calls to my father from my adviser's office, and I wrote home in Navajo to ensure that my language was still in practice. I say this because in my first year, I had the opportunity to go home during Thanksgiving break and my parents had a protection prayer done for me. For protection prayers, you must repeat after the medicine man, and it was hard to repeat after him. I had been away from home for four months and speaking English only during that time. My language had started to get fuzzy.

Back at school, I taught myself a lot of study skills to learn the content and it paid off. I got on the honor roll! The school did provide me opportunities that I would not have received at Rock Point Community School. I skied a lot. I also took French and traveled there for an exchange with a family who was financially well off. They had a sailboat, and they were able to take me to Spain. They bought designer things that I would never think of buying in my lifetime. They exposed me to aspects of European culture that were uncomfortable for me, such as the kisses on each cheek when you meet people, the topless bathing suits, and the multiple-course dinners with a lot of drinking during one sitting. At my school, I also made a lot of good friends from many ethnicities who I am still in contact with today. I had very close friend circle — a Latina from East L.A. and two Navajo girls from Arizona. We were each other's support systems to survive this school. I became aware that some of the other students at the school were also down-to-earth and did not flaunt their wealth, but were very open-minded. Acceptance was important in

my first year, but once I reevaluated, I was able to recenter myself in my Navajo language, prayers, and teachings.

Western higher education

When I graduated high school, I was accepted to University of Colorado-Boulder, but my father felt that I needed to come home and “reconnect with my identity” as he thought I had become too assimilated. I attended Diné College in Arizona for one year and then transferred to Fort Lewis College in Colorado.

I was trying to major in computer science for all the wrong reasons and it showed. The math and computer classes were hard and I had no connections to them. Eventually, I failed, and my scholarships were taken away. I would have had to pay my way to go back to school and I could not do that, so I had to find a job. I was given an opportunity to work at Rough Rock Schools as a curriculum developer. I was using my knowledge and skills as a Navajo-fluent speaker, reader, and writer. I really enjoyed that work and the school started to have me substitute teach the Navajo language. That was when I realized that what I was doing was what I enjoyed. It made sense to me, and most of all, I made connections to what I was doing. So, I took advantage of a grant that paid for classes and I completed my Navajo language endorsement courses at Diné College. I attended class in the evenings. Then I started to pursue my education to become a teacher. I found a program called the Navajo Nation Teacher Education Program. The program supported full-time employees to finish their undergraduate teacher preparation classes on weekends, and they paid for everything.

At that time, I was also a mother of twins, so this pathway worked for me. This program was developed specifically for our Navajo people to teach Navajo students. The courses were specific to teaching to those demographics and to retain students long-term on the nation. I was promoted to be an educational assistant, specifically teaching the Navajo language while I completed my degree. My husband had also completed his courses for his associate degree, and he wanted to pursue his bachelor's degree, so we moved to Durango, Colorado, with our 9-month-old twins. I also did my student teaching there. I was given an opportunity to teach Navajo and some cultural education to

my students in Durango. It was a very positive experience.

In 2001, we both completed our bachelor's degrees and we immediately moved to Tucson, Arizona, for me to begin my graduate degree in bilingual multicultural education. I completed the program in one year. The program I was part of was made specifically for full-time teachers, so the classes were offered in the evenings. I had the opportunity to teach in a local school district while I was in this program. That experience allowed me to experience multiculturalism, as I had seven languages and cultures represented in my class. Not only were my students learning about Navajo, but I was learning about their languages and cultures. It was a very rewarding experience. Our twins also experienced being in a multicultural academic setting. When I completed my degree program, I needed to go home as living in a city became uncomfortable, especially for our twins. Overnight, we packed and moved home to the reservation. My husband stayed to complete his master's program. He would eventually come home on weekends, or we would go visit him.

A career in intercultural education

When I moved home, I started my early childhood education career as a kindergarten teacher at a local public school in my home community. I spent 10 years there and an additional two years as a middle school teacher. I incorporated Navajo bilingualism as a choice for my instruction as that was what I knew, and the students loved that implementation of their heritage as part of their learning.

At that time, I wanted a change for all the wrong reasons, so I left that wonderful school and my relatives in my home community to work at a Bureau of Indian Education school. I always tell myself that it was karma for me to leave a wonderful job for the wrong reasons because the experience at that next school was toxic and horrible due to the leadership. I only stayed and finished out the year because the students kept me there. At the end of the year, I was given an opportunity to begin a doctoral program and begin my teaching at a Navajo immersion program in Shiprock, New Mexico.

The immersion program was a 90/10 model and in its third year. The first year was very rocky as

there were many new teachers in the program. The intent of the immersion program was good. However, the program was not administered using the second language development and language learning methodologies of the Navajo people. The leaders did not know much about the immersion model and its methodologies. All they told us was to speak Navajo. There was turnover in the bilingual multicultural education department and no reliable leadership. I was only able to make changes thanks to my fellow teachers and the confidence that my supervisor placed in me.

I had to do practicum hours as part of my doctoral program, and my supervisor made me a lead teacher and leader for the immersion program. As part of my tasks, I had to ensure that our teachers were supported, so we did a needs assessment and that is how we started a weekly professional learning community (PLC). The weekly PLCs were a lifesaver because it gave us the time and space to vent, discuss our challenges, collaborate on solutions, and plan for our program. I created materials and ensured that we were all on the same page with the themes that we taught.

The most challenging part was that each year another grade was added and we needed certified teachers. The solution, which I disagree with up to this day, was to forcefully transfer unwilling teachers that had bilingual endorsements to teach in the immersion program. When the school leaders did this, the teachers were forced to do something they didn't want to have anything to do with — teaching Navajo language and culture — and it clearly showed up in their classrooms as we saw the students playing or on the computer the entire day with the teacher sitting at their desk. Eventually, one resigned, which was a relief, and the other teacher eventually started to understand the importance of the Navajo language. I had taken her to several language conferences, and she began to take in the philosophy of the program. She became one of our lead teachers who promoted the program with pride.

The program eventually became a 50/50 one-way immersion model and it thrived. We were becoming well-known. We had colleges and other schools coming in to observe, we received an award, and we were also featured on one of the local New Mexico news stations. Our parents were all supportive and involved. The program became a home and a second family for many of our students. Our students were also outscoring

the core content students. Our program thrived for several years.

Becoming a district leader

The practice of the district administration at that time was to take people out of positions and place them elsewhere to use the current resources they had to fill in the vacancies. When I completed my doctoral program, I was placed in the position to take care of the state Bilingual Multicultural Education Program (BMEP) — overseeing, managing, and implementing Title III to support our district's English learners and the language program in the district. I took on this task, and it was challenging for a while as I had to force myself to learn overnight all about BMEP. I also found that we had been red-flagged by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) at that time. I was not aware of this until I started working with the Language and Culture Bureau at NMPED. I began to see that our district was out of compliance with state regulations, and with support of the superintendent and data department we overhauled our BMEP. It was a huge initiative that took a lot of people, including our district secretaries and others at the district level, to help. With that cleanup, we put some processes and procedures in place that we continue to utilize today.

I was then approached by the superintendent to take care of the Indian Education, Johnson O'Malley, Impact Aid, and state Indian Education grants. I took on this challenge and uncovered that our Johnson O'Malley programs were out of compliance with the Indian Education Committee. We went through a tough period with that situation to get it resolved. Overseeing, managing, and implementing eight grants became extremely challenging with a staff of three. I was the only fluent Navajo speaker at the administrative level, so I was asked to do a lot of additional duties, such as serving on the district political team that involved frequent travel to Santa Fe, especially during a time when our district was almost taken over by the state due to financial issues. The long hours affected my health and my family time. With the high turnover of superintendents and directors, I requested additional positions. Three additional positions were created, and that was a lifesaver for me.

The Indian Education grants and the Navajo

dual-language portion of the BMEP is what I am overseeing now. I collaborate with two other colleagues on the BMEP as they take care of the English learner (English language development) part, but we collaborate on the Spanish and Navajo languages that are part of the BMEP. I also oversee Title VI Indian Education and Impact Aid. With my focus primarily on Indian Education, this position has been a struggle. The biggest challenge is that we have a high turnover of superintendents and directors who are non- Native/Navajo. Their mindset comes from a Western way of thinking, and they do not have background on Indigenous language reclamation, decolonization, tribal critical race theory, intergenerational trauma, and social-emotional wellness and balance from a holistic perspective. These non-Native colleagues push their Western perspectives and academia on our primarily Navajo-enrolled students. They are respectful; however, they do not fully realize the importance and value of our Navajo language and culture. They lack the connection to the culture and teachings that are needed to truly serve the Navajo people.

Our language and culture is still in existence today; however, it is not deemed important. We have social-emotional learning (SEL) initiatives, but they are from a Western perspective. We try to incorporate indigenous holistic perspectives, but we get pushback because they are deemed religious by people with no knowledge of how holistic healing works. And my own people, who have been strongly influenced by Western denominations and who were not blessed to be raised with Navajo language and cultural knowledge, agree with the Western mindsets of our non-Native administration.

Adopting a 'language warrior' perspective

It has been a blessing that I have remained in this position for this long. What drives me every day is the fact that my own children attend school in this district, which makes me a stakeholder. I know the efforts that were put into this language and culture program, and how to advocate for it to become stronger. As an English Learner myself, English is still foreign to me, and I am still challenged by it when I speak and write it. Navajo will always be my first language, and it's where reading and writing comes easy and naturally to me. I strongly advocate for our

Native American English Learners because I am one and I was physically beaten to make me learn English in school. I only use English to communicate and work. It is not part of me, I keep it separate for those purposes. When I use the English language to translate from Navajo, the meaning and purpose gets lost, the Navajo meaning loses its spirit, so some things are better left said in Navajo. Today our children speak a Navajo English, Navalish, social English they get from mainstream media and society. The holistic connections we have to our language and culture are very much part of our identities. Our children today may not speak Navajo as their first language, but they have connections to the language and their cultural identity in so many ways, and that is what they identify with. I will not apologize for speaking English differently than what someone else expects of me, with my Navajo accent. I am proud of it.

I consider myself a language warrior as a fluent speaker, reader, and writer of Navajo. I feel that it is up to us, to sustain our language and cultural identity for our younger generations, but sadly our fluent speakers choose to speak English as many share that there is no place for the Navajo language today because our Navajo societies revolve around the English language. That may be the case, but many of us language warriors choose to carry on this big responsibility because our cultural identities lie within our language through our oral histories, creation stories, ceremonies, songs, prayers, knowledge, methodologies, paradigms, and spirituality.

Growing our own'

Western academia content continues to be prioritized even after the *Martínez/Yazzie Consolidated v. State of New Mexico* lawsuit, which ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. The reason for the lawsuit was that the linguistic and cultural identities of Wilhelmena Yazzie's children were not validated or supported in their school district or by the state of New Mexico. It seems that our non-Native administrators do not know how to address our Navajo children's linguistic, cultural, and socio-emotional needs because they lack the connections and background. We have had four education laws — New Mexico Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, Black Education Act, Indian Education Act, and the Hispanic Education Act — in place in New Mexico since the 1970s, but they have not been adhered

to. This lawsuit by the Yazzie and Martínez families helped people to wake up and see the demographics and instructional styles in schools with primarily Indigenous populations. Although some people may have become aware of the laws, many are still ignorant. I do not think that ignorant people take it seriously. The need to learn culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies still needs to happen.

For these reasons, we need strong-minded Indigenous individuals advocating and speaking on behalf of our Indigenous populations in the schools. It may be political, but it is advocacy. A major disparity on many Indigenous nations is the retention of teachers in our school systems. Due to our schools being in rural areas, the teachers who teach as outsiders stay for an average of three years or less. These teachers are usually Teach For America teachers, J1 foreign teachers, and those that are part of programs to have their loans forgiven if they teach in rural Title I schools. The teachers who do stay in the schools longer than 10 years are from local communities or are non-Natives who married into the nation and have spouses from the community or surrounding communities. There has been research done showing that teachers from the community stay in their schools longer.

For these reasons, our district has been investing in and supporting Educators Rising, a Grow Your Own organization to provide opportunities in the teaching profession while students are still in high school. We have one active Educators Rising chapter in our district and they have grown interest in the teaching field. This school is located in one of the rural areas of the district. I became involved in this organization because I found value in the emphasis on giving back to the community through teaching. Other rewards include having employment near their home — they would always have a job as teaching is tremendously needed, especially long term and especially if they become Navajo language and culture teachers.

We support our Educators Rising students by funding them to attend student leadership conferences to build skills and knowledge for advocacy, as well as conferences focused on language and culture, so they can see that their Navajo identity is deeply needed in today's Navajo classrooms. The students really embraced the Navajo language and culture conferences, and they began incorporating their cultural identity into the projects needed to fulfil their

practicum hours. They also incorporated their language and culture into the state and national competitions. With this feedback, we began working with the graduate profile coordinator at our school and established a rough draft of a dual-credit pathway for teaching. Unfortunately, this person resigned, but the school's chapter sponsor for Educators Rising and I felt we needed to complete the work of incorporating a Navajo pathway that included courses, curricula, and projects specific to the students' Navajo cultural identity. It is important for our students to see the relevance and value of their language and culture because our Navajo heritage knowledge is no longer being passed on to the younger generations. These types of pathways can encourage and stimulate thought and advocacy for Navajo language reclamation. We hope this

pathway, with the assistance of Western New Mexico University, will become a reality.

I speak my language and identify myself as a Diné woman as part of decolonization. My people were abused in so many ways to take our linguistic and cultural identities from us, but they failed. We are resilient and we continue to follow Navajo Chief Manuelito's message to future generations that our skin color does not make us unique, our language is what makes us unique. I am very proud to be Navajo; to have a Navajo accent; to live on the reservation and to be called "rez;" and to know who I am, who I come from, why I am here, and where I am going. Most of all, I am so blessed that my parents spoke to me in Navajo and that I can speak, read, and write my language fluently.

Educators Rising New Mexico task force members, including Dr. Berlinda Begay, Dr. Minea Armijo Romero, and Sandra Lundt-Hill, discuss Grow Your Own initiatives during the annual New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education Conference. (Inset) Dr. Berlinda Begay with colleagues from the Bilingual Multicultural Education Advisory Council present at the state capitol for the 50th year of bilingual education in New Mexico.





Maria Gomez

Educators Rising Bilingual Teacher

Hatch Valley Public Schools

Maria Gomez is the teacher leader of the nation's only bilingual chapter of Educators Rising at the secondary school level. Her story reveals the possibilities for bilingual chapters for middle and high school students. Gomez is the epitome of GYO. She is the product of Hatch Public Schools and the universities of southern New Mexico. Gomez works tremendously hard to serve

her students, families, and the larger community. The support she has received in return is inspirational.

Hatch, New Mexico

Hatch, located in southern New Mexico, holds a special place in the hearts of both locals and visitors as the Chile Capital of the World. This small agricultural community is renowned for its flavorful and iconic Hatch chile peppers, which have gained international recognition for their distinctive taste and heat. The fertile land and climate of Hatch provide optimal conditions for growing these prized chiles, making the region a hub for chile production and culinary tourism. The annual Hatch chile festival draws in thousands of visitors who come to savor the spicy delights.

In terms of demographics, Hatch is a tight-knit community with a population that is predominantly Hispanic. The town's rich cultural heritage is deeply rooted in its agricultural traditions, with farming and ranching playing a central role in the local economy. Hatch peppers not only contribute to the region's agricultural sector but also drive tourism and support small businesses, such as restaurants and roadside stands that offer a variety of chile-infused products. The community takes great pride in its chile heritage, and the cultivation and harvesting of the peppers fosters a sense of unity and identity among its residents. Hatch, with its fiery flavors and warm community spirit, has become synonymous with the vibrant chile culture that

is cherished by locals and chile enthusiasts alike.

Beyond the gift of chilies red and green, Hatch Valley offers a solution to growing our own bilingual teachers in New Mexico and possibly even the United States.

In Hatch Valley, 83.8% of the population is Hispanic, 15.7% of the population is white, and 0.5% are American Indian. The overall population of this beautiful town is 1,678. Many of the teachers and other public servants in Hatch live in Las Cruces and travel to Hatch to work. According to Superintendent Michael Chavez, the schools struggle to attract and retain the teachers who are needed to work with the bilingual community. He believes that Gomez's classes are the solution to that struggle.



Mi familia

My family is originally from Gomez Palacio, Durango, Mexico. I have two older brothers, two older sisters, and a younger sister. My family came to Hatch back in 1992 looking for a better quality of life. The only job available for my family was working in the fields, and with a high economic need both my parents and siblings worked day and night to sustain our family.

While living in Hatch, my siblings were able to enroll in school and receive a free education. Like any other children, they would go to school during the day, but during the evenings they had to work in the fields to help my parents. Like many immigrants that come to the United States from Mexico, my siblings struggled at school not knowing English. It was hard for them to adapt to this new school environment where their native language was not spoken.

When I was born in 1994, my older sister, Raquel, decided to drop out of school to take care of me and help with housework while my parents worked. I must say my older sister was my biggest supporter throughout my education. She had to sacrifice her own schooling for me to take advantage of the free education that was later afforded to me.

Compared to my older siblings, I had a wonderful childhood. I was given more opportunities when it came to my education. My family made school a priority. They didn't want me to suffer the same way they did, but they still taught me how to work in the fields so I could value every opportunity that was offered to me. My mom always told me that it was important for me to learn how to work and to have a good work ethic. My mom has this saying: "*Nunca sabes qué vida te va tocar, hay que aprender a trabajar en todo para que el mundo nunca se te cierre y salgas adelante.*" It means, basically, you never know how life is going to turn out. You need to learn a lot of different skillsets so that you can take advantage of opportunities whenever they arise.

Mis años de temprana edad

Growing up, getting good grades, and being a good student were my priorities according to my parents. When I started Early Head Start, I fell in love with school! I would wake up early at 5 a.m. to get ready. I remember the little princess pink

alarm my mom bought to assure me I would wake up on time for school.

Each fall when it was time to go back to school, I would always get so anxious the night before, which made it hard for me to sleep. The excitement of going to school was really special to me. My sister Raquel helped me get dressed and combed my hair. Don Mariano, my bus driver, always complimented my hair thanks to the beautiful braids my sister made.

At a young age, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I enjoyed helping others and I was always ready and excited to learn. My first year in school was the best. I have wonderful memories that I will forever cherish. My teachers, Mrs. Stroik and Ms. Rodriguez, were so caring and lovely. I remember them making a home visit to my house and taking me a toy tea set to play with for my birthday. The fact that my teachers remembered my birthday meant so much to me. Now that the years have passed, Ms. Rodriguez is now the secretary of the high school I work in. I have so much respect for her because she was one of the first teachers that impacted my life.

As an English language learner, I had my struggles. When I was in kindergarten, I clearly remember I had a teacher who would get mad at me for speaking to my classmates in Spanish. However, I didn't do it intentionally; it was hard for me to communicate with others in English. Not being fluent in English made me feel insecure about myself. I was afraid to speak up in class and I would second-guess myself. I remember I was afraid to ask to go to the restroom because I didn't know how to say it in English. It was terrifying! No child should experience that kind of trauma. There were days I begged my mom to let me stay home. My passion for school was not there anymore. I felt discouraged because I didn't know how to speak English. I must say kindergarten was a nightmare for me.

During my 1st and 2nd grade elementary years I was not in a bilingual class, but I had two wonderful teachers, Ms. Perry and Mrs. Franzoy, who helped me with my English. Even though my teachers didn't speak in Spanish, they made me feel special for being able to speak two languages. From that time on, my love for school continued to grow. I had a great relationship with my teachers. They cared for me, offered me their help and support, and made me feel included. I felt I

was a part of my classroom. When I was young, I was afraid of not being able to speak English. But knowing that I was special for knowing both English and Spanish made me feel more confident about myself. Ms. Perry, my 2nd grade teacher (now the principal of Hatch Middle School) always encouraged me to stay positive and to give my all in school.

My 4th grade teacher, Mr. Gonzalez (Mr. G), was another teacher who impacted my life. He didn't speak in Spanish at all, which made it challenging for me, but he was so outgoing and made me feel included. It wasn't until my 4th grade year that I started to speak more English. Mr. G really pushed me to the extreme and encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone to speak and read more in English. It wasn't perfect but I felt confident enough to have a full conversation in English.

Mi camino a la docencia

Mrs. Duran (now Trujillo) was a great high school teacher. I took all her classes at Hatch Valley High School (HVHS): child development, fashion design, culinary arts, college prep, and the pre-teaching class. During my junior year, I talked to her about wanting to go to college and become an elementary teacher.

Observations during the pre-teaching class made me realize I did not want to teach elementary grade levels, but I still wanted to teach. Mrs. Trujillo let me observe a high school teacher and do a field experience with Ms. Moncada in culinary arts. I talked to Mrs. Trujillo about teaching classes like these, and she introduced me to Family and Consumer Science Education (FCSE). I was 100% sure that I wanted to study this, so I wrote FCSE as my major when I applied to college. I have enjoyed my career so much!

When Ms. Moncada found out I was going for a FCSE degree she promised she would wait until I graduated college so I could take over her job at Hatch Valley High School. She kept her promise. She waited until I graduated college in December 2016, and by the start of the new school year in August 2017, I was working at HVHS as the new culinary arts teacher. I was excited to work at my high school and be able to serve my community, but most importantly I was honored to be able to work with my favorite teacher Mrs. Trujillo who really helped and guided me into this career.

During my first year of college at New Mexico State University (NMSU), I learned the importance of self-advocating and speaking up. I had no clue what to expect or what to do, but God put wonderful people in my path to help me get through college. My adviser, Dr. Sharon Bartely, (Dr. B) helped me so much and guided me through my college career. I was part of CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program) as my family had always worked in agriculture and I was the first generation in my family to attend college. In my freshman year I was part of the CAMP Student Council. During my sophomore, junior, and senior years, I served as vice president of the Association of Family Consumer Science. During my sophomore year, Dr. Bartley nominated me to be an ambassador for the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at NMSU and I was accepted.

Dr. B also nominated me to attend a 2014 Leadership Honors Bootcamp in Washington, D.C., to represent NMSU. I earned a scholarship to cover the cost of attendance. It was my first time traveling out of state and on an airplane. I had to travel alone, and honestly it was the best adventure of my life. I met wonderful people from around the nation and made long-lasting friendships. During my college years I was also part of TRIO Student Success, a federally funded program that supports first-generation college students. TRIO, along with CAMP, helped me through college by providing me with a tutor and resources for my classes.

Descubriendo Educators Rising

During my second year of teaching at HVHS as a culinary art teacher, the late Dr. Karen Trujillo came and asked me to serve as a judge for Educators Rising. I had no clue about this organization. I was only familiar with Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). When I volunteered as a judge for the first EdRising competition, I realized how similar it was to FCCLA and I loved it. Dr. Trujillo asked me if I was willing to start a chapter at my high school. I have always supported the education field, and I wanted to bring back the pre-teaching course to our high school because it helped me to prepare myself for college and understand what it takes to become a teacher. In a heartbeat I told Dr. Trujillo that I would love to start the program at HVHS. I had no clue what I was getting myself into, but I was willing to take the risk. My students

needed to be more involved in careers and organizations and they needed to be exposed to different activities where their knowledge would be expanded.

The first year I did EdRising, I was scared. I had no clue what I was doing, but I tried my best to teach the course without having any type of curriculum. That first year in 2018-19, I had seven students participating, and two of them placed in state competitions for Bilingual Children's Literature and Impromptu Speaking. It was just a wonderful experience for my students. We were able to go to nationals in Dallas, Texas. For my students, it was the first time they had ever traveled out of state, and it was their first time on a plane. Asking our district board for permission to attend nationals was frightening. Educators Rising wasn't well known yet, and we didn't know if our district would support us. However, our board was excited for our students, and they wanted them to take advantage of this opportunity. They helped us pay travel expenses, but we still had to fundraise to cover additional expenses. In a small community like Hatch fundraising has always been challenging, but my students and I worked so hard to make it happen. And we couldn't have done this without the support of my students' parents.

In my second year doing EdRising (2019-20) I had a total of 13 students participating, with three male students on the team. It was such a great year. We did community service and helped out at school events. For state, I had five students qualify for nationals, but unfortunately, we couldn't attend due to the pandemic. It was heartbreaking for my seniors since it was their last year, but I was so proud of them for all of their hard work.

In 2020-21, I had five participants for EdRising. It was really challenging since it was during the pandemic. However, I had one student qualify for nationals. Even though nationals were virtual, I was proud of the amazing job my students did. During the pandemic, it was difficult keeping students engaged. I was very proud of my students for not giving up. We worked closely with 21st Century, a youth program from NMSU, and participated in virtual activities with elementary schools. This was also the first year we existed as an official bilingual chapter. Dual Language Education of New Mexico sponsored me to get my bilingual endorsement making this possible. I couldn't have done this without the support and guidance of our EdRising director at

the time, Crystal Chavez.

In 2021-22, we were slowly trying to get back to our normal routine. Competitions resumed face-to-face, and students were extremely excited to participate and network with other students. We had four national qualifiers on the team, and we were able to compete in nationals in Washington, D.C., with the help of our school district and students' parents. Since I had a large number of students graduating this particular year, my younger students stepped up and recruited other students interested in teaching or working with young children to join the chapter.

The school year 2022-23 was a mind-blowing year. My whole chapter placed at the state level with the majority of them placing first in multiple competitions. Our school district noticed the positive impact Educators Rising made on our students. For the fifth year, my EdRising students had the wonderful opportunity to compete at the national level. This is an experience they will never forget due to their hard work and dedication being recognized and the long-lasting relationships they created by being part of this chapter.

For the first time in five years, Hatch Valley High School's Educators Rising bilingual chapter placed in the top 10 at 2023 Educators Rising national competitions in three distinct categories. This was a great accomplishment for my students and has only fueled them to do better next year.

La necesidad de apoyo para bilingual Educators Rising

Given all my struggles as an English language learner, which most of my students can relate to, being part of an organization where students feel comfortable competing in their native language is extremely satisfying. Seeing my students experience new opportunities, succeed in their competitions, and have their parents' support through this journey are the most rewarding parts of being the teacher leader for EdRising. I have built a relationship with the students and their families while running this program. It's a special bond where parents feel comfortable to reach out to me when their children are struggling in school or in college. I let them know I am a resource they can use and tell them to never feel scared to ask for help. I might not know

the answers to all their questions, but I will help them find their answers because their children's education is so valuable to me.

When I started to teach my bilingual career and technical education (CTE) course, I had no type of curriculum. I am currently teaching on the 50/50 dual-language module where 50% of instruction is given in Spanish and the other 50% is given in English. It is a challenge teaching these bilingual classes without resources. It takes me more time to prepare for my classes to ensure I meet my students' needs. We have many students who are bilingual and not only in Spanish but also in other languages. Our goal is that students feel comfortable as part of a bilingual chapter where their native languages are valued.

There's a high need for mentoring bilingual teachers, especially in our state. It is important for our students to be able to speak and perform in their native languages. However, I know the challenges many teachers face while trying to earn their teaching license or alternative certification, which might make them feel forced to leave the education field due to the lack of support or resources. There were times where I felt like leaving the education field because I couldn't pass my state exams. I really struggled with passing the math portion of my exam, but I knew what I was capable of doing when it came to my profession. I don't think an exam

will determine what I know about my profession. After four years of teaching under a substitute license, I was able to pass the exam and obtain my level I teaching license. It was a struggle, but I was blessed to say I finally did it.

I share my experience with my students because I know they will face many challenges in life. I care for my students, and I have a high desire to see them succeed and help them achieve their goals. I couldn't just give up. As a teacher I continue to learn, and my mind continues to expand. Every year is different and new adjustments are made to my courses and lessons.

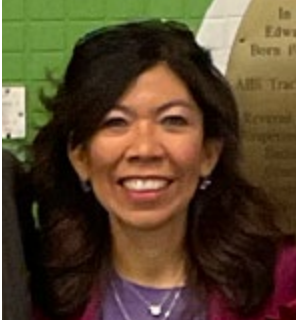
Every teacher has a story about their teaching journey. I would like to continue mine as a teacher and as a student. I would love to pursue a doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction. I would like to make a difference and learn more in-depth about curriculum and instruction and what can be done to support bilingual education.

I hope my Educators Rising bilingual story encourages other chapters to be proud of their identities and native languages. I hope it makes them feel special for who they are, without apologizing for having an accent or for forgetting how to say a word in English. I hope it helps them to be transparent and have pride in the wonderful work they do in these competitions.



Maria Gomez presenting at the annual New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education Conference in 2023 about her work with Bilingual Educators Rising.





Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela

Assistant Professor of Bilingual/TESOL Education and
Co-Advisor of Educators Rising Collegiate Chapter
Rio Rancho New Mexico Highlands University

Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela is a leading voice in the state's bilingual education community. As director of the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (NMABE), Valenzuela continuously educates and challenges lawmakers, stakeholders, and community members regarding the need to support bilingual education for Indigenous and Spanish-speaking communities. Her collegiate bilingual Educators Rising chapter has done much to support bilingual programs in central and northern New Mexico.

Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Rio Rancho, situated in central New Mexico, is a rapidly growing city known for its suburban charm and scenic beauty. The city is nestled along the banks of the Rio Grande and offers stunning views of the Sandia Mountains. As one of the largest cities in the state, Rio Rancho attracts residents and visitors alike with its modern amenities, recreational opportunities, and strong sense of community. The demographics of Rio Rancho reflect a diverse population, with a mix of families, professionals, and retirees choosing to call the city home.

One notable institution that contributes to the fabric of Rio Rancho is New Mexico Highlands University. While the main campus of the university is located in Las Vegas, Rio Rancho is home to one of its satellite campuses.

The presence of New Mexico Highlands University in Rio Rancho provides residents with access

to higher education opportunities and a range of academic programs. The university offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in various fields, including business administration, social work, criminal justice, psychology, software systems design, education (including early childhood, elementary education, special education, and educational leadership), and more. This satellite campus serves as a hub for learning and intellectual growth, promoting educational advancement and workforce development within the Rio Rancho community.

Overall, Rio Rancho's combination of natural beauty, thriving community, and educational resources makes it an appealing destination for individuals and families looking for a balanced lifestyle and opportunities for personal and professional growth.



Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela celebrates with family after receiving her master's in bilingual education.



Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela presents on the importance of incorporating translanguaging pedagogies in teacher preparation spaces at the First Translanguaging Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2023.

From México to the U.S.

I was born in Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico, in September 1974. For the first five years of my life, I lived in Mexico with my mother, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. In October 1979, my parents decided to emigrate to the United States. My father had been a migrant worker since the 1960s; he had traveled throughout the southwest region of the United States. Upon my mother's request and to provide a "better" life and opportunities for their daughters, my parents decided to emigrate to the United States. From my hometown of Torreón, Coahuila, we traveled 10 hours by car, north to the border city of Ciudad Juárez. There we spent a week with some friends of my father from his hometown of Yermo, Durango. In Ciudad Juárez, a 27-year-old woman who was eight months pregnant, "La Güera," was hired to help us cross into El Paso, Texas. According to my mother, my uncle Ramon drove us to the Chamizal Park in Juárez, where my mother, father, my little sister Mercedes, and I embarked on the task of crossing the Rio Bravo into El Paso, Texas. In El Paso, we spent another week until one fall night we boarded a small plane that flew us from El Paso to Los Lunas, New Mexico, a city just outside Albuquerque.

Immediately upon our arrival to Albuquerque, my sisters and I were enrolled in school. My older sister was at the local elementary school, and Mercedes, and I were in a preK class. From October 1979 until spring 1986, I lived as an undocumented immigrant child. It was not until December 1987, after obtaining our temporary residency (due to the amnesty given in 1986), that I finally returned to Mexico to see my grandparents and extended family.

Bilingual life

My bilingualism emerged, developed, and expanded when I started school in the United States. Although I did not attend a bilingual education program during my preK through 12th grade schooling, my ability to communicate in Spanish and English was a necessity for living in this country as an immigrant child. I was fortunate to grow up bilingual and surrounded by parents who only spoke Spanish. I listened to Mexican music and watched television shows and telenovelas from Mexico as well as learning English and American culture from sitcoms, cartoons, movies, and school.

My schooling experience resembles that of many bilingual students, whose bilingualism is not valued or acknowledged and often is seen, framed, and evaluated through a deficit perspective. Throughout my elementary and middle school years, I was constantly reminded that my reading level was not at grade level — this is the reason why I was placed in the Title I reading program until sixth grade. What my teachers and the school system never acknowledged or understood is how I leveraged my bilingualism, cultural ways of knowing, and literacy practices to learn what was taught in school. Moreover, the funds of knowledge and transnational experiences that I obtained through living and traveling between Albuquerque and Torreón during my teenage years allowed me to see, name, and understand the world from various perspectives.

My knowledge about reading, writing, science, social studies, and mathematics was shaped by my lived experiences and ability to navigate life in two different countries — bilingually. Having had the opportunity to grow up bilingually between Albuquerque and Torreón has allowed me to anchor my teaching and pedagogy in the immense cultural and linguistic assets that my students bring with them to the classroom. It has ignited my curiosity about my students, their families, and communities, and spurred me to think how to leverage those life stories to foster learning and to counter the deficit narrative of emergent bilingual students that is so prevalent in our public schools.

Why EdRising?

I first learned about Educators Rising in the Fall of 2019, when I was hired as an assistant professor of bilingual/TESOL education at New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU). The NMHU EdRising collegiate chapter had been established in spring 2019. With the support of another faculty member at NMHU, I learned about EdRising by attending a monthly meeting conducted by ECHO Teacher Pipeline. As we became familiarized with EdRising, we began to recruit students from our teacher education program. This was not an easy endeavor, but I was lucky that in the spring of 2020, I hired one of our bilingual elementary education students through work-study. With her help, by fall 2020, we had 10 students participating in our weekly EdRising meetings. Most of them were getting their minor in bilingual education.

Our EdRising collegiate students were tasked with establishing contact with high school teachers to present to high school students about the need for bilingual teachers — to inspire them to become educators. Our EdRising students also attended and participated in various professional development opportunities offered through our School of Education, served as student interns as well as helped facilitate at the Student Leadership Institute at the La Cosecha Conference in November 2020 as well as presented at the New Mexico Educators Rising State Conference in 2021.

Mentoring the next generation of bilingual educators

For me, the mission of NMHU's bilingual Educators Rising collegiate chapter is to cultivate and guide the next generation of bilingual educators to understand the historical and political implications of teaching and being a bilingual educator in New Mexico. The NMHU bilingual EdRising Collegiate Chapter has supported students in understanding how the work they do has shaped their development and identity as future bilingual educators within New Mexico. Also, it has created a space within EdRising based on familia, carino, respeto, and convivencia that supports them in their academic, professional, and personal endeavors. Lastly, it has promoted opportunities for our EdRising bilingual students to develop, expand, and enhance their leadership skills and potential.

Our bilingual education teachers are often challenged by the many demands of the teaching profession; this coupled with the deficit framing of our bilingual students contributes to stress and frustrations during the first years of teaching. Therefore, mentoring the next generation of bilingual educators, for me, is deeply connected to my commitment to ensuring that bilingual students and families have well- prepared bilingual teachers in their communities. Committed bilingual educators will advocate for their students' cultural and linguistic rights. Lastly, our bilingual educators need and want mentors who they can relate to and see themselves reflected in through cultural and linguistic ways for knowing and understanding the world.

What I want others to learn about our bilingual EdRising collegiate chapter is that our bilingual students and families are at the center of the work that we engage in. The collegiate bilingual students during an interview discussed the impact of familia within their group during their time at NMHU and how Educators Rising crafted a space for them to grow and learn together en comunidad. We center the lived experiences of our bilingual students, families, and communities. We take every opportunity to affirm the cultural knowledge, bilingualism, and history of our bilingual students, families, and communities as valuable. I want them to know that the bilingual EdRising collegiate chapter at NMHU seeks to foster greater equity for our bilingual/multilingual students through practices grounded in social justice. We want to ensure a multilingual and multicultural legacy for New Mexico.



Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela visits Albuquerque High with her collegiate Educators Rising students.

Conclusion

Dr. Berlinda Begay, Maria Gomez, and Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela are exemplary bilingual educators in the state of New Mexico. We are fortunate to have their voices and their stories. They work tirelessly to serve their communities and to lead through example.

The creation of this resource was made possible through an 18-month planning grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation focused on creating bilingual pathways to the teaching profession in New Mexico. According to Cindy Cruz (2012), “the work of testimonio demands that listeners acknowledge” (p. 468) the experiences shared through this process. With that in mind, we hope stakeholders in New Mexico will read these stories and reflect: How can you support bilingual teacher pathways in our state? How can you advocate for linguistic and cultural equity and inclusion in our public education systems? How can you center the lives of culturally and linguistically diverse students in your pedagogies,

policies, and practices? And how can we, as New Mexicans, make it clear that we want teacher pathways that include our unique linguistic and cultural identities?

This work has always been so that our children may be seen and heard as their most authentic selves and that they may learn the lessons, stories, and songs of their ancestors in their own languages, as well as in English. We hope, too, that the bilingual pathways we seek in New Mexico will offer today’s aspiring educators what they need to provide a unique cultural and linguistic education for the next generation.

There is much work yet to be done. Listen to the stories around you; lift the voices that may not have been heard; and make a change — a change that incorporates our rich languages and cultures as we build a place for all our children and for our children’s children.

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GETTY IMAGES

Lesson Plan Topic

Narrating our *Testimonios*: Multilingual Educators in the Making

Learning Objectives

- Students will read and analyze the genre of *testimonio* as a teaching pedagogy.
- Students will use self-reflection to write their own *testimonios* as they begin to explore the bilingual education field.

Essential Questions

- What is my linguistic journey?
- What is my family's linguistic journey?
- What has been my educational journey?
- What do the labels bilingual learner, emergent bilingual learner, and English language learner mean to me and to the educational system?

Lesson Title & Overview

Multilingual Educators: Personal Testimonios of Educators Rising

Rising educators will be able to use the stories of New Mexican multilingual educators to explore multilingual teacher identity, multilingual education, and how language manifests in educational pathways as their identity as a multilingual educator is developed.



Lesson Plan Topic

Narrating our *Testimonios*: Multilingual Educators in the Making

Procedure

Today's lesson will further support students in developing their testimonios through language portraits as they proceed in their linguistic journey.

Day 1: What are linguistic journeys?

Students will create a [language portrait](#). They will draw themselves and use linguistic descriptions to talk about language and their identity. This activity can take one class period of 45-60 minutes. Students will share their language portraits. The teacher can choose a variety of groupings/tasks to do this.

Day 2 and day 3: Who are multilingual educators in New Mexico?

Rising educators will read and listen to stories from bilingual teachers in the field. They will discuss the passages and reflect with a personal response.

- Language portraits
- (30-45 minutes) Students will [Jigsaw](#) the *testimonios*
- (15-25 minutes) Students will then create a visualization in small groups about the linguistic identities of the bilingual teachers they read. Use the following guiding questions: (1) What emotions do you feel when you are reading this *testimonios*? (2) What are some citations from the readings that provoke your emotions? (3) How do these *testimonios* support your understanding of your own identity?
- (Five minutes) Formative assessment: Whip around. Share one to two words about this activity and reading

Extension/challenge

- [Testimonios: Understanding Ourselves](#) First What are testimonios? Read and create a collective understanding and application of how *testimonios* work in the educational field. Use the following questions to guide this knowledge: (1) Why should we know who we are when working with children? (2) What does the knowledge of self-awareness and self-worth bring into the field of education? (3) How do I develop a reflective practice?

Educators Rising Cross-cutting Theme(s) Alignment

Cultural Competence

Fairness, Equity, and Diversity

Reflective Practice

Ethics

Collaboration

Social Justice and Advocacy

Self-efficacy

Lesson Plan Topic

Narrating our *Testimonios*: Multilingual Educators in the Making

Educators Rising Standard(s) Alignment

- I: Understanding the Profession
- II: Learning About Students
- III: Building Content Knowledge
- IV: Engaging in Responsive Planning
- V: Implementing Instruction
- VI: Using Assessments and Data
- VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice

Resources

- Teachers in the Field: *Testimonios* of New Mexican Multilingual Educators
- Materials for document creation

Teacher Leader Notes

Common misconceptions

- Educators only need to be aware of who the students are in their classroom.
- Identity is a simple construction of self.

Academic language

- *Testimonios*
- Identity
- Sociocultural competence
- Language



GETTY IMAGES

Lesson Plan Topic

Interviewing Cooperating Teachers: What makes a Multilingual Teacher?

Learning Objectives

Rising educators will be able to use observation, questioning and reflective techniques to learn more about cooperating teachers.

Essential Questions

What makes a multilingual teacher?

- Who is your cooperating teacher and where do they call home?
- What is the path of this teacher's educational and linguistic journey?
- How has the teacher's language and culture impacted their work and educational philosophy?

Lesson Title & Overview

Day 1: Pre-interview

Rising educators will create a project rubric that incorporates and evaluates aspects from each day of the lesson. Rising educators will use their five senses to learn more about a cooperating teacher in their own school building and record their findings in a sketch.

Day 2: Interview Planning

Rising educators will read *Teachers In The Field: Testimonios of New Mexican Multilingual Educators* and discuss the essential questions in small groups using both to create 5-8 specific interview questions for the cooperating teachers that require expanded response.

Day 3: Interview

Rising educators will interview a cooperating teacher using the interview questions generated in class and recording responses on an audio device.

Day 4: Seminar

Rising educators will bring analyzed data from maps and interviews to a Socratic seminar to answer the question "What makes a bilingual educator and which of those qualities do you see in yourself?" Submit interview notes, maps, seminar notes, and reflection.

Lesson Plan Topic

Interviewing Cooperating Teachers: What makes a Multilingual Teacher?

Procedure

Day 1:

- Teacher mindfully observes class space for artifacts that speak to philosophy and finds teachers willing to be interviewed.
- (5) Students will examine the space using all five senses and take notes.
- (15) Students and teacher will work together with a base rubric template to fill in the goals, criteria, and timeline for the project and how it will be assessed.
- (25) Students will share their observations of the space and relate what they observed to the teacher's philosophy. As students share, the teacher will use input to model the map. Students will observe to create their own map in or out of class as time allows.
- (5) Formative assessment: Students will create a map of the space they observed noting the aspects discussed in class.

Extension/challenge: Create multiple maps of classes the student has during the day with permission of the teacher.

Day 2:

- Prepare text. Establish group roles and assign groups if applicable.
- (20) Students will read the first section of the text following group roles and take notes.
- (5) Students will follow group roles to create two to four interview questions.
- (20) Students will read the second section following group roles and take notes.
- (5) Formative assessment: Students create two to four more interview questions and submit all questions and notes.

Extension/challenge: Research interview questions often asked of educators online. Record four to eight questions and cite your sources.

Day 3:

- Prepare an interview question list based on group work. Ensure all students have an audio recording device. Confirm interviews with cooperating teachers. Prepare graphic organizer for audio analysis (optional).
- (5) Students review interview questions and expectations.
- (40) Students conduct interviews and record teachers.
- (5) Formative assessment: Students submit a graphic organizer analyzing the interview.

Extension/challenge: Schedule and conduct additional interviews independently.

Day 4:

- Teacher prepares student-submitted materials to return for seminar, Socratic seminar guidance, and observation documents.
- (5) Students reflect on their interview experience by reviewing notes and highlighting responses they can use to answer the seminar questions.
- (40) Students conduct Socratic seminar while teacher observes and takes notes.
- (5) Formative assessment: Students will submit all documents and be evaluated by teacher using standard seminar documents.

Extension/challenge: Respond to "What is a multilingual educator?" with any verbal, visual, or aural media you choose. Provide a self-evaluation.

Lesson Plan Topic

Interviewing Cooperating Teachers: What makes a Multilingual Teacher?

Educators Rising Cross-cutting Theme(s) Alignment

Cultural Competence
Fairness, Equity and Diversity
Reflective Practice
Ethics
Collaboration
Social Justice and Advocacy
Self-efficacy

Educators Rising Standard(s) Alignment

I: Understanding the Profession
II: Learning About Students
III: Building Content Knowledge
IV: Engaging in Responsive Planning
V: Implementing Instruction
VI: Using Assessments and Data
VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice

Resources

- *Teachers In The Field: Testimonios of New Mexican Multilingual Educators*
- Information on Socratic Seminar as needed (for example: <https://www.chompingatthelit.com/socratic-seminar/>)
- Materials for document creation

Teacher Leader Notes

Common misconceptions

- The teachers' experiences with language and culture are irrelevant in the classrooms.
- Socratic seminar is too challenging for high school students and must be conducted in English only.

Academic language

- *Testimonios*, educational philosophy, Socratic seminar, graphic organizer, rubric