

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 1
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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October 18, 2023
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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Eric Dinowitz, Chairperson of the
Committee on Higher Education

Rita C. Joseph, Chairperson of the
Committee on Education

COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER
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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 2

COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
(CONTINUED) :

Linda Lee

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Julie Menin

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Pierina Ana Sanchez

Althea V. Stevens

Sandra Ung

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 3

A P P E A R A N C E S

Mirza Sanchez-Medina, Chief of Multilingual Learners for New York City Public Schools with the Division of Teaching and Learning

Carolyn Quintana, Deputy Chancellor for New York City Public Schools' Division of Teaching and Learning

Alicia Maria Alvero, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Faculty Affairs

Dr. Tatyana Kleyn, Professor of Bilingual Education and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at City College

Adriadna Pavlidis-Sanchez, junior at CUNY Hunter College

Isabella Grullon, CUNY Hunter College student

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Education joint with the
4 Committee on Higher Education, recorded in Chambers
5 on October 18, 2023, by Nazly Paytuvi.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon and
7 welcome to the New York City Council hearings of the
8 Committee on Education jointly with Higher Education.

9 At this time, can everybody please
10 silence your cell phones.

11 If you wish to testify, please go up to
12 the Sergeant's desk to fill out a testimony slip.

13 Written testimony can be emailed to
14 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that is
15 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

16 At this time and going forward, no one is
17 to approach the dais. I repeat, no one is to approach
18 the dais.

19 Chairs, we are ready to begin.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: [GAVEL] Good
21 afternoon. I'm Council Member Eric Dinowitz, Chair of
22 the Committee on Higher Education. Welcome to our
23 joint hearing with the Committee on Education Chaired
24 by Council Member Rita Joseph.

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2 Today's oversight hearing is on the use
3 of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy in DOE high
4 schools and at CUNY. Additionally, we will be hearing
5 two resolutions which I have sponsored and which
6 express my views on the topic. Resolution 579 calls
7 on the DOE to ensure that the Seal of Biliteracy is
8 awarded in all New York City public high schools, and
9 Resolution 580 calls on CUNY to ensure that all
10 campuses award an appropriate number of college
11 credits to students who earn the Seal.

12 I don't know if you can tell, but there's
13 a big smile on my face as I'm giving my opening
14 statement because the original work on these
15 resolutions isn't from me. This was actually from two
16 students I had the honor of mentoring at Hunter
17 College who are actually here today who will actually
18 give testimony a little later. During the mentorship,
19 we had discussed public policy, a public policy that
20 will benefit people of New York City, and we started
21 talking about moving students beyond high stakes
22 exams, recognizing the rich diversity in New York
23 City and recognizing what it is we need in New York
24 City, and that's where we started coming across the
25 idea of the New York State Seal of Biliteracy, and,

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2 through this process, they researched it. They
3 actually drafted the two resolutions that are being
4 heard today. In fact, they drafted my remarks that I
5 gave on the floor of the City Council during the
6 Stated Meeting when I introduced it. So today is I
7 think really about, of course, something exciting,
8 that could be exciting for New York City but also
9 about what a good education system and what a good
10 city does. It uplifts very, very special, talented
11 individuals in our city and makes sure that their
12 voice is heard and that they can propose policy and
13 make real change here in New York City.

14 Let me offer some background about the
15 New York State Seal of Biliteracy, which I'm going to
16 refer to as NYSSB. The New York City metropolitan
17 area is the most linguistically diverse urban area in
18 the world. It is home to over 700 languages and
19 dialects. On CUNY campuses, students come from 211
20 countries and territories and speak 174 different
21 languages. A remarkable approximately 40 percent of
22 CUNY undergrads speak a native language other than
23 English. In such diverse settings, building trust and
24 understanding across the many language and cultural
25 groups often calls for multilingual communication

1 skills. Furthermore, multilingual communication
2 skills can be a critical element in enabling New
3 Yorkers of all backgrounds, all backgrounds, to
4 participate effectively in a global political,
5 social, and economic environment. Mastery of two or
6 more world languages makes an important contribution
7 to students' cognitive development, understanding of
8 diverse cultures, and preparation for future college
9 study and career opportunities. Students who have
10 significant skills in two or more world languages
11 including students whose first language is not
12 English and students who skills are in under-
13 represented languages can be awarded the New York
14 State Seal of Biliteracy. Established by New York
15 State legislature in 2012, the NYSSB recognizes high
16 school graduates who have attained a high level of
17 proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and
18 listening skills in English and in any other world
19 language, regardless of whether the language is
20 taught in the student's school district. This makes
21 it possible to support all students including
22 students from under-represented communities such as
23 indigenous communities whose language proficiency
24 cannot be demonstrated through any available
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2 standardized test. The NYSSB is earned by a student's
3 accumulating points in both English and another world
4 language through a combination of the student's
5 choice of projects, course grades, and/or exam
6 scores. Since the 2015 to 2016 school year, almost
7 18,000 New York State high school graduates have been
8 awarded the New York State Seal of Biliteracy. We
9 know that colleges in Illinois, Massachusetts, and
10 Minnesota, for example, award college credits to
11 students who earn their state's Seal of Biliteracy.

12 The Committees are interested in an
13 overview of how the NYSSB credential is honored on
14 CUNY campuses. The Committees also seek an
15 understanding of how NYSSB program can be expanded
16 and improved both in the DOE schools and on CUNY
17 campuses.

18 At our February hearing, I said that it
19 is not often in education we find a program that has
20 no downsides, no tradeoffs, no drawbacks. At the time
21 in another joint hearing with the Committee on
22 Education, I was talking about CUNY's College
23 Preparations Initiatives for middle and high school,
24 how they demonstrably improve the status quo for
25 everyone involved.

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2 At our April hearing, I said the same
3 thing about CUNY's nationally recognized Accelerated
4 Study in Associate Program or ASAP. From everything
5 that we learned at that hearing, I just don't see any
6 downside to ASAP and to the support it provides to
7 students. The cost of that program is the best
8 investment we could make in those students' future
9 both for them and for our city.

10 At the risk of sounding repetitive, I'm
11 going to say again today there are no downsides, no
12 tradeoffs, no drawbacks about the NYSSB. Recognizing
13 and appropriately rewarding the students' skills in
14 world languages is a win, win, win, win, win. That's
15 five wins. It's for students, their families, DOE
16 schools and CUNY campuses, and for the taxpayers of
17 New York City.

18 I'm looking forward to hearing the
19 details from our witnesses.

20 Now, I want to acknowledge my Colleagues
21 of the Committee on Higher Education who are present,
22 Oswald Feliz, Council Member Brewer, I saw Council
23 Member Barron was here as well.

24 I would also like to thank Adam
25 Staropoli, my Legislative Director; Jenna Klaus, my

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2 Chief-of-Staff; Sahar Moazami, the Committee's
3 Counsel; Regina Paul, the Committee's Policy Analyst
4 who also worked on the New York State Seal of
5 Biliteracy resolutions we are hearing today.

6 Now, I would like to invite Chair Joseph
7 to give her opening statement after which I will
8 swear in our witnesses.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you, Chair
10 Dinowitz, and thank you for inviting the Committee on
11 Education to join Higher Education for this very
12 important hearing topic.

13 I'm Rita Joseph, Chair of the Education
14 Committee. Thank you to everyone who's planning to
15 testify today. I am very much looking forward to
16 hearing your testimony. Chair Dinowitz covered a lot
17 in his opening remarks so I will be brief.

18 During the 2022-2023 year, approximately
19 43 percent or roughly 344,000 New York City Public
20 Schools students had a primary home language other
21 than English, and approximately 17 percent or roughly
22 134,000 students identified as English language
23 learners. In addition, last school year, ELLs
24 communicated in 150 different languages other than
25 English. With a school system as diverse as New York

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2 City Public Schools, it is clear that New York State
3 Seal of Biliteracy, NYSSB, has a place in each and
4 every New York City public high school. Yet, in 2021
5 to 2022 school year, only 62 of over 400 New York
6 City high schools offered the NYSSB program with just
7 over 1,000 graduating students earned the NYSSB,
8 despite the fact that there were over 40,000 ELLs in
9 grades 9 through 12 that year. I spoke briefly about
10 the importance of access to college at our last joint
11 hearing with the Committee on Higher Education.

12 College prepares both students intellectually and
13 socially for a thriving career and adult life. By
14 providing students with the option to potentially
15 earn college credits while in high school, students
16 save money and are encouraged to continue their
17 academic journey beyond high school, which should be
18 a goal embraced by New York City Public Schools.

19 At today's hearing, I'm looking forward
20 to understanding how the NYSSB currently operates in
21 New York City Public Schools. I'm also interested in
22 learning more about which schools offer NYSSB program
23 and how can it expand to all New York City public
24 high schools with graduating seniors. Lastly, I'd
25 like to know how New York City Public Schools and

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2 CUNY can continue to collaborate to ensure that we
3 make the transition between high school and college
4 as seamless as possible.

5 Thank you to the Committee Staff as well
6 as my own Staff for all the hard work they put in for
7 today's hearing.

8 I'd like to acknowledge my Colleagues
9 that are present today, Council Member Lee, Council
10 Member Menin, Council Member De La Rosa, Council
11 Member Feliz, Council Member Louis, Council Member
12 Avilés, Council Member Gutiérrez, Council Member
13 Hanks, and Council Member Hanif.

14 Now, I'll turn it over to Chair Dinowitz
15 to administer the oath. Thank you.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you, Chair
17 Joseph.

18 I would like to remind everyone who
19 wishes to testify in person that you must fill out a
20 witness slip which is located on the desk of the
21 Sergeant-at-Arms near the entrance to this room.
22 Please fill out a slip even if you have already
23 registered in advance that you will be testifying in
24 person today.
25

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2 To allow as many people as possible to
3 testify, testimony will be limited to three minutes
4 per person whether you're testifying in person or on
5 Zoom.

6 I'm also going to ask my Colleagues to
7 limit their questions and comments to five minutes.

8 Please note that witnesses who are here
9 in person will testify before those who are signed in
10 on the Zoom webinar.

11 Now, I'd like to call up our first panel.
12 Alicia Alvero, Tatyana Kleyn, Deputy Chancellor
13 Carolyne Quintana, and Mirza Sanchez-Medina.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'd like to
15 acknowledge Council Member Ung.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Now, according
17 to the rules of the Council, I will administer the
18 affirmation to witnesses from the City University of
19 New York and the New York City Department of
20 Education. Please raise your right hand.

21 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
22 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
23 testimony before this Committee and to respond
24 honestly to Council Member questions?

25 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Yes.

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DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Yes.

ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Yes.

PROFESSOR KLEYN: Yes.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. As a reminder to all of our witnesses, please state your name prior to your testimony for the record.

We'll begin with the Department of Education for testimony.

CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Good afternoon.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You can begin.

CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Good afternoon, Chair Dinowitz, Chair Joseph, and all the Members of the Higher Education and Education Committees here today. My name is Mirza Sanchez-Medina, and I am the Chief of Multilingual Learners for New York City Public Schools with the Division of Teaching and Learning. I am joined by Carlyne Quintana, our Deputy Chancellor for New York City Public Schools' Division of Teaching and Learning. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Seal of Biliteracy in New York City Public Schools.

Prior to leading the Division of Multilingual Learners in 2019, I was the founding principal of Manhattan Bridges High School. I opened

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2 the school in 2003 to address the linguistic and
3 cultural needs of English Language Learners. When the
4 New York State Education Department established the
5 New York State Seal of Biliteracy in 2012, Manhattan
6 Bridges was one of the first schools to offer it, and
7 our first cohort of students earned the Seal upon
8 graduation. As a principal, I believed it was
9 important to offer our students the opportunity to
10 attain the New York State Seal of Biliteracy as a way
11 to validate students' multilingualism as a skill and
12 officially recognize the work and effort required to
13 achieve proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking
14 in two or more languages at least and also the great
15 points of having it on their diplomas and
16 transcripts.

17 As the Chief of Multilingual Learners and
18 being multilingual myself, I continue to believe that
19 multilingualism is an asset. I know that Deputy
20 Chancellor Quintana and New York City Public Schools
21 leadership share this belief. This is why we are
22 committed to working toward creating pathways to
23 multilingualism that every New York City public
24 school student will be able to access that culminate
25 in their ability to attain the Seal.

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2 There are a number of ways students can
3 meet the criteria for the New York State Seal of
4 Biliteracy in New York City Public Schools. Many
5 students complete culminating projects in English and
6 one or more world languages to meet most of the
7 criteria. For these students, schools may either
8 incorporate these projects within existing courses-
9 for example, 12th grade English or advanced world
10 language courses, or designate a stand-alone time for
11 teachers to work with students on their projects.
12 Students who are enrolled in bilingual education
13 programs can use that experience toward the New York
14 State Seal of Biliteracy. Other students successfully
15 complete advanced world language courses or world
16 language assessments and use those towards the New
17 York State Seal of Biliteracy. Students who are newly
18 arrived to the United States can use their previous
19 coursework from outside of the United States that was
20 taught in languages other than English to meet the
21 world language criteria.

22 Our city's linguistic diversity means
23 that there truly is no better place than New York
24 City to become multilingual and multiliterate. During
25 the 2022 to 2023 school year, approximately 43

1 percent of students enrolled in New York City public
2 schools with a primary home language other than
3 English. Approximately 17 percent of those enrolled
4 in New York City public schools were identified as
5 ELLs. Our ELLs alone speak more than 150 languages
6 like the Chairs indicated. Over 60 percent of ELLs
7 are Spanish speakers, followed by students who speak
8 Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Bengali, Urdu, Haitian
9 Creole, Uzbek, French, and Ukrainian.
10

11 To successfully expand the number of
12 students who can access and attain the New York State
13 Seal of Biliteracy, New York City Public Schools is
14 focused on ensuring a clear and connected pathway
15 across our language learning programs so that all
16 students including English Language Learners,
17 Heritage Language speakers, and English Proficient
18 students can achieve biliteracy in English and one or
19 more world languages. To this end, the current New
20 York City Public Schools administration has
21 prioritized opening and strengthening existing
22 bilingual education programs to support a K through
23 12 continuum of high-quality bilingual education.
24 Last year, we opened 33 new programs, and this year
25 we supported 44 additional programs.

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2 In addition, through the implementation
3 of New York City Reads, we are strengthening core
4 instruction for the 80 percent of ELLs served in
5 English as a New Language only.

6 Finally, we are working with schools to
7 scale our world language course offerings, including
8 expanding Heritage Language course options.
9 Currently, New York City Public Schools offer world
10 language programs in 18 different languages citywide.
11 In addition, a small number of schools have begun to
12 pilot courses for Heritage Speakers in Spanish and
13 Mandarin to offer students who already have a strong
14 foundational knowledge of these languages more
15 rigorous and engaging language course options.

16 Because of the rigorous criteria required
17 to attain the New York State Seal of Biliteracy to
18 demonstrate proficiency in English and one or more
19 languages, it can be a useful indicator of the
20 strength of our language learning programs in
21 building students' language skills and literacy in
22 multiple languages.

23 New York City Public Schools has seen
24 steady year-to-year growth in both the number of
25 schools offering the Seal and the number of students

1
2 earning the Seal of Biliteracy. Between the 2021 to
3 2022 and 2022 to 2023 school years alone, there was a
4 26 percent increase in the number of students who
5 earned the New York State Seal of Biliteracy. In the
6 2022 to 2023 school year, 1,315 New York City Public
7 Schools students graduated with the Seal in 35
8 different languages, with six of these students
9 earning the Seal in more than one language. As New
10 York City Public Schools serves a large population of
11 ELLs, we are especially proud that 72 percent of our
12 New York State Seal of Biliteracy recipients, or 947
13 students total, were current or former ELLs. This far
14 exceeds the 26 percent of current or former ELLs
15 earning the New York State Seal of Biliteracy
16 statewide.

17 We recognize there's a lot more to do,
18 and I'm going to pass it now to Deputy Chancellor
19 Quintana.

20 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Thank you,
21 Chief Sanchez-Medina. Thank you, Chair Joseph,
22 Chair Dinowitz, and all the Members of the
23 Education and Higher Education Committees for
24 holding this important hearing. We are so grateful
25 to have former educators on the Council.

1
2 My name is Carlyne Quintana, and I
3 serve as the Deputy Chancellor of the Division of
4 Teaching and Learning. We are excited to talk to
5 you about the value of this effort and
6 acknowledge, as Mirza just mentioned, that we
7 still have a great deal of growth to do as well. I
8 believe that it's the diversity of the students we
9 serve in New York City that makes our system
10 beautiful. Because of this, we know how important
11 it is that this system affirms the racial,
12 cultural, and linguistic identities of each child
13 and prepares them to graduate with a plan and a
14 pathway to a rewarding career and long-term
15 economic security.

16 In response to that charge from our
17 Chancellor, I launched our updated citywide
18 instructional priority, call-to-action for our
19 school system. We've asked that every child have a
20 high-quality academic experience that leads to
21 deeper learning, and that includes our English
22 language learners, our multilingual learners, and
23 our immigrant students.

24 How do we expect to do this? We believe
25 we can achieve this kind of success if our teams

1
2 focus in on our three levers. Number one, schools
3 will facilitate mastery of core academic skills, and
4 teachers will demonstrate content expertise. Number
5 two, schools will facilitate pedagogy that
6 prioritizes critical thinking and problem-solving
7 skills. Lever three, schools will facilitate a sense
8 of belonging and inclusivity for all learners. The
9 task of meeting that citywide instructional priority
10 is necessarily motivation for principals to develop
11 the structures and capacities to offer the New York
12 State Seal of Biliteracy across their schools.

13 While there are a number of ways for
14 students to develop and demonstrate proficiency in
15 two or more languages, including taking an Advanced
16 Placement World Language course and scoring a 4 or 5
17 on the exam, we believe that the New York State Seal
18 of Biliteracy stands out as a comprehensive and
19 official credential to recognize the hard work and
20 effort that students put forth to achieve
21 multilingualism and multiliteracy.

22 We know we have more work to do to
23 increase the number of students earning this
24 distinction upon graduation, particularly our English
25 language learners, and we are committed to growing

1
2 the number of schools that offer the New York State
3 Seal of Biliteracy, languages in which the New York
4 State Seal of Biliteracy is offered, and students
5 pursuing the New York State Seal of Biliteracy as a
6 part of their academic program, including English
7 Language Learners and our monolingual students.

8 To support these goals, we will continue
9 to focus on collaborating with district teams to
10 raise awareness about the New York State Seal of
11 Biliteracy among school leaders, staff, students, and
12 families and supporting our English Language Learners
13 in accessing and attaining the Seal. We'll focus on
14 coordinating with the New York State Education
15 Department to ensure that schools have the resources,
16 guidance, and support they need to offer the Seal,
17 and partnering with our colleagues at CUNY to explore
18 diverse options to leverage students' work to attain
19 the Seal to support their success in their
20 postsecondary studies.

21 Once again, we appreciate the opportunity
22 to speak with you about the New York State Seal of
23 Biliteracy in New York City Public Schools. We look
24 forward to answering any questions you have. Thank
25 you.

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CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

Before moving on to CUNY, I want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Members Stevens, Krishnan, and Sanchez.

ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Good afternoon, Chair Dinowitz, Chair Joseph, Members of the City Council Higher Education Committee, and Members of the Committee on Education. I also want to say kudos to Isabella and Ariadna for your work on these resolutions, a testament to the power of a CUNY education. I am Alicia Maria Alvero, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Faculty Affairs. I am joined by my colleague from City College, Professor of Bilingual Education and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Dr. Tatyana Kleyn.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about ways CUNY can explore translating New York State's Seal of Biliteracy into college credit. As a home to students representing more than 160 languages, 174 according to your opening remarks, Chair Dinowitz, CUNY is committed to expanding opportunities to benefit our diverse student population.

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2 Earlier this month, CUNY's Chancellor
3 announced the distribution of personalized
4 Welcome-to-CUNY letters to all NYCPS high school
5 seniors who are on pace to graduate in 2024. He
6 affirmed CUNY's commitment to increase the number
7 of college-bound students and combat the systemic
8 inequities that are so prevalent within higher
9 education admissions. Today's hearing spotlights
10 opportunities for biliterate students who
11 represent a tremendous asset to our university and
12 city.

13 CUNY's Credit for Prior Learning
14 policy, or CPL, is a mechanism that is well-suited
15 for considering awarding credit for the Seal of
16 Biliteracy. CPL, also known as Prior Learning
17 Assessment, is an academic process that provides
18 students with the opportunity to earn college
19 credit for college-level learning acquired
20 outside of the traditional classroom. CUNY
21 approved its CPL policy in 2020, emphasizing the
22 value of recognizing all college-level learning as
23 a means to support diverse pathways toward degree
24 attainment. This policy aligns with CUNY's mission

1
2 of offering affordable and excellent higher
3 education to all New Yorkers.

4 The CUNY policy establishes nationally-
5 normed, university-wide standards and criteria,
6 providing both consistency and flexibility for
7 local implementation at CUNY colleges. Faculty at
8 each CUNY college are responsible for determining
9 CPL equivalencies and credit awards.

10 The policy ensures that CPL credit, once
11 recorded at one CUNY college, is transferable on
12 the same basis as credits earned through regular
13 study at that institution.

14 This policy also serves as an equity
15 lever as national data shows that students who
16 earn CPL credit are more likely to persist,
17 graduate, and save time and money.

18 CUNY's CPL policy allows colleges
19 considerable autonomy to develop CPL programs that
20 reflect their priorities and their strengths.
21 However, as part of ongoing CPL implementation
22 efforts, CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs is
23 currently working to establish flexible,
24 centralized review mechanisms for key learning
25 experiences that will strengthen CUNY-wide

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2 partnerships, address labor market needs, and
3 enhance CPL's role as an equity lever.

4 The City Council's resolution comes at an
5 opportune moment for CUNY's CPL work. Over the past,
6 the Office of Academic Affairs has been exploring the
7 Seal of Biliteracy's potential for CPL credit through
8 conversations with both CUNY faculty and the New York
9 City Public Schools' Division of Multilingual
10 Learners and research into the Seal's criteria and
11 rigor. Quite simply, the Seal of Biliteracy stands
12 out as a perfect example of a learning experience
13 that should be evaluated in this system-driven
14 manner. It has clear potential to strengthen
15 partnerships with NYC Public Schools, create
16 pathways for biliterate teachers and healthcare
17 workers in NYC, and increase opportunities for
18 first-generation students, immigrants, and under-
19 represented populations.

20 New York State's Seal of Biliteracy is
21 also significant for equity reasons because it can be
22 earned in any language in contrast to the language
23 proficiency exam programs named in CUNY's CPL policy,
24 which encompass only a limited number of languages.

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2 For all of these reasons, the University
3 is prepared to move forward in partnership with NYC
4 Public Schools to deliver upon the intention of the
5 City's resolution, which rightly acknowledges the
6 diversity of languages used across New York City and
7 the breadth of potential for recognizing the Seal
8 with college credit.

9 CUNY has designated a portion of the 50
10 million transformational funds provided by the State
11 of New York for faculty engagement related to the
12 evaluation of credentials for CPL credit. This
13 funding will support the evaluation of several
14 important credentials, including the Seal of
15 Biliteracy, by CUNY faculty from multiple colleges.

16 The City Council's resolution calls for
17 the awarding of college credits to students who
18 earned the Seal of Biliteracy in high school and,
19 where required, to accept the Seal as fulfillment
20 of any foreign language requirement. It is
21 important to note that the specific alignment of
22 NYSSB with curriculum will be determined by the
23 faculty. This may yield different results than
24 specified exactly in the resolution, but the
25 intention of the evaluation process is to arrive

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2 at a credit recommendation in the best interest of
3 qualified students. The Office of Academic Affairs
4 is developing a roadmap to inform the faculty
5 evaluation process and will work closely with
6 participating faculty to ensure that appropriate
7 equivalencies and credit awards are determined and
8 made available to CUNY students who have earned the
9 designation.

10 Additionally, CUNY will explore ways to
11 attract and support biliterate students interested
12 in pursuing degrees in fields that require language
13 skills such as teaching and healthcare. A Memorandum
14 of Understanding with the New York State Department
15 of Education for 2023 to 2028 outlines CUNY's
16 commitment to developing outreach campaigns for high
17 school and college students, including biliterate
18 students, to enter teacher education programs.

19 CUNY will also use the evaluation of the
20 Seal of Biliteracy as a stepping stone for broader
21 consideration of the Global Seal of Biliteracy, which
22 is available to any individual, not just high school
23 students, to demonstrate language proficiency,
24 potentially offering more New Yorkers the
25

1
2 opportunity to enter CUNY with CPL credit for
3 language skills.

4 Thank you for your attention and
5 consideration. I will now pass things along to
6 Professor Kleyn.

7 PROFESSOR KLEYN: Thank you, Vice
8 Chancellor Alvero.

9 добрый день, good afternoon, and buenos
10 dias, Chair Dinowitz, Chair Joseph, and Members of
11 Higher Education and Education Committees. My name
12 is Tatyana Kleyn, and I greet you today in three
13 languages, Russian, which is my home language,
14 English, a language I learned as a child refugee to
15 the United States, and Spanish, a language I started
16 learning as an adult working in Honduras. These
17 three languages and the cultures and places
18 connected to them have all played a significant role
19 in my life. They have also led me to my position as a
20 professor of Bilingual Education and Teaching English
21 to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at CUNY's
22 flagship college, The City College of New York.

23 I am honored to speak about the New York
24 State Seal of Biliteracy and Resolution 580 today.
25 My path to today's hearing began when I worked with

1 the New York State Association for Bilingual
2 Education where we successfully advocated for New
3 York to become the second state to pass the Seal of
4 Biliteracy into law. Now I've gone from advocacy to
5 implementation. Recently, I have been supporting
6 five New York City high schools to implement the Seal
7 of Biliteracy through B-SEAL, a grant program
8 funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

10 There are many important advantages of
11 this recognition for our students. For those of
12 immigrant origin, it validates their identity and
13 communicates that their home language is something
14 positive, a strength rather than a problem. The
15 Seal of Biliteracy rewards students for their
16 language learning journeys and all of the effort
17 they've put into being bilingual and biliterate,
18 but they also need recognition in terms of their
19 academic progress toward their degree. As Associate
20 Vice Chancellor Alvero explained, CUNY
21 administration supports giving students college
22 credit for earning the Seal of Biliteracy.
23 Alternatively, students might be waived from
24 language requirements. So how could this work in
25 practice for CUNY colleges and for our students?

1
2 At CUNY as at other universities,
3 curriculum matters require the approval of the
4 faculty who would have to learn about CUNY's Credit
5 for Prior Learning policy and the Seal of Biliteracy.
6 Once faculty have the information they need
7 regarding this proposal, a transparent and
8 consistent process for evaluating and awarding
9 CUNY-wide credit could be adopted. Faculty
10 involvement and input will ensure that the Seal
11 policy aligns with the instructional academic
12 programs and curriculum and maintains the
13 educational integrity of the offerings.
14 Additionally, collaboration and communication
15 between faculty and administration will be key to
16 successfully implementing a system for accepting
17 New York State Seal of Biliteracy college credits.

18 If these steps are taken, we can then
19 consider the impact on our students who are Seal
20 recipients. At my home institution of City College,
21 our students have different world language
22 requirements based on their area of study. Whether
23 they earn credits toward major requirements,
24 toward elective credits, or are exempted from
25 world language requirements, students with the

1 Seal of Biliteracy would have a head start in
2 their program. It would also provide an avenue of
3 financial relief as students work toward their
4 undergraduate degree.

5
6 The Seal of Biliteracy could open up
7 opportunities students hadn't previously
8 considered such as the possibility of being a
9 bilingual teacher. This would be especially useful
10 given the fact that we continue to have a shortage
11 of bilingual teachers. In general, the New York
12 State Seal of Biliteracy highlights the
13 importance of bilingualism and biliteracy and can
14 bring to students' attention that there are many
15 careers where their language practices are needed.

16 Спасибо, y gracias por su tiempo. It is
17 my pleasure to explore ways that CUNY can strengthen
18 the impact of the New York State Seal of
19 Biliteracy and can help make New York City not only
20 the Big Apple, but the Big Multilingual and
21 Multiliterate Apple.

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for
23 that. I always say bilingualism is a superpower, not
24 a deficit. Thank you for that as a former ENL
25 coordinator, well, forever educator.

1
2 I'd like to acknowledge Council Member
3 Stevens.

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: First, I will
5 say thank you and since we're in this mode
6 (INAUDIBLE). Did I do right? Okay, great. I was very
7 nervous the whole time.

8 I'll start with CUNY. How many students
9 come into CUNY with the Seal of Biliteracy?

10 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO:
11 Unfortunately, we do not know. The information that
12 we receive from the public schools, the data we
13 receive on the students does not have an indicator to
14 say which students earned the Seal.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Why? I'm
16 interested to know. There's a lot of data sharing
17 between DOE and CUNY, and why is the Seal of
18 Biliteracy not one of the data metrics that's
19 included in this data sharing?

20 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: I think
21 that's an area of improvement for us, absolutely, and
22 one that we are happy to partner with CUNY to talk a
23 little bit more about. The Seal currently is a State
24 designation. It goes on a child's diploma, and so
25 it's about having better data systems for us and

1
2 thinking about how we actually do transcript
3 transfers so that they receive that designation as
4 part of the information that they receive as well.

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: When you receive
6 a diploma, do you know whether or not that student
7 has a Regents Seal on that diploma, whether or not
8 it's a Regents diploma?

9 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Yes.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You do? Can you
11 talk a little bit about the difference between the
12 Regents Seal. I had it on my diploma. I think every
13 high schooler (INAUDIBLE) but I assume that
14 information is shared but that's also a seal on the
15 diploma, right?

16 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Right.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So I guess the
18 question, that's a seal that's shared so seals can be
19 shared, or data related to the seals can be shared,
20 and so what differentiates a Regents Seal from a New
21 York State Seal of Biliteracy?

22 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: That's not a
23 question I feel prepared to answer, but it is one
24 that I'm going to go back immediately and look into.
25 In particular, this is a very important one for us,

1
2 right, because we just talked about all the reasons
3 that we want multilingualism to be an asset. We also
4 have other seals, and now I'm wondering if CUNY even
5 finds out about those, right, so certainly I'm going
6 to take back. If it's as easy as adjusting the way
7 that we do transcript transfers to have that
8 information on it, I'll make sure that we look into
9 that right away.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I mean it sounds
11 like a very easy step to take in order to start the
12 process, the testimony was wonderful saying we do
13 want to start valuing the Seal of Biliteracy along
14 with other Seals New York State provides, but that I
15 guess leads to my next question. It's along the same
16 lines. I imagine that you give students either credit
17 or waive certain core classes based on Regent scores.
18 Do you do that at CUNY?

19 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: I am
20 not prepared to answer that question. I do not think
21 so. AP credit, we do, but I am not certain that we do
22 for Regents scores.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Let's talk about
24 the AP credit. You give credit based on a 4 or 5 on
25

1
2 an AP exam. Does that go through the CPL process as
3 well?

4 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Yes.

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, so if you
6 get an AP exam, although a third party that we trust
7 validated that a student is proficient, it still has
8 to go through this process of the credit transfer?

9 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: It does
10 originally. What each campus does is, for example
11 with the AP credit, faculty in the particular
12 department evaluate, make a decision and can create a
13 policy by which any student moving forward when the
14 credit comes in, it doesn't have to be each
15 individual student for something like the AP credit,
16 and so that's exactly what we'd be exploring for the
17 Seal is to have faculty evaluate the credential
18 itself and make a recommendation. Once we have that
19 recommendation made by the faculty at a particular
20 college, they can make a decision that moving forward
21 it's an automatic credit grant.

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Where are you on
23 that timeline? It has to be done at all campuses
24 separately or can CUNY Central sort of evaluate and
25 say this is State seal...

1
2 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Because
3 CUNY Central is not an accrediting institution, it's
4 each individual campus is accredited, the decision
5 has to be made within each individual institution.
6 Now, what CUNY Central does do is facilitate those
7 conversations, and where things stand regarding the
8 Seal is we are in the midst of forming a committee of
9 experts across CUNY in the world languages and
10 convening them to evaluate. Once they have their
11 recommendations, then CUNY Central would send that
12 out to the campus leadership and ask them to convene
13 their faculty and make a decision, and, once they
14 have that decision, then we can formalize it in a
15 more standardized way so it could be automated.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay. I
17 certainly look forward to the automation of it,
18 although I will say it almost seems like more work
19 than you have to do given that the State made the law
20 and they made the criteria and, through these
21 criteria, you have teachers and counselors and people
22 already evaluating it, but it is good to see that
23 these steps are being taken to provide students
24 potentially college credit for this.

1
2 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: I just
3 want to add we did do a little bit of research to see
4 which colleges across the state automatically award,
5 and what we were able to determine is that Marist
6 College, students receive retroactive credit for the
7 Seal after completing the next level world language
8 course at the college, and then SUNY Empire, we
9 reached out to them, and they confirmed that there's
10 no formalized, so according to the website, New York
11 State awarding the credit, Marist College was the
12 only one so we're actually excited to be one of the
13 early adopters of the Seal.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Wow. Well,
15 they're on the right path. Just to be clear, you have
16 no data related to that, and that's because the DOE
17 doesn't send it. That's it.

18 I'm going to turn it over to Colleague,
19 Chair Joseph, for the next round of questions. Thank
20 you.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you, Chair
22 Dinowitz.

23 Question is does the DOE have a goal of
24 offering New York State Seal of Biliteracy in every
25 high school? If not, why not? It's needed, and this

1
2 would also create a pipeline for your shortage in
3 bilingual educators.

4 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you, Chair
5 Joseph, for that important question. Yes, we do have
6 a plan. We have a goal to ensure that every single
7 high school offers the Seal of Biliteracy. We already
8 have high schools in every superintendency offering
9 the Seal of Biliteracy. In addition to that, we want
10 to make sure that every student who wants to take the
11 Seal in whatever language that child wants to take
12 the Seal has that opportunity. We are honoring
13 multilingual learners who come with a home language.
14 We also want to honor monolingual students who want
15 to learn a new language. We also wanted to ensure
16 that students have an opportunity to have a strong
17 resume and then on their essay be able to add this
18 distinction. We also want to make sure that schools
19 understand that by offering the Seal of Biliteracy it
20 increases their college-readiness index so schools
21 also benefit from students receiving the Seal. One of
22 the pieces that we want to ensure that schools see is
23 that middle school families who are looking at where
24 do I place my child, which schools I select for my
25 child, are looking at that index, and many families

1
2 are also looking is my child going to learn another
3 language so we are committed. We already have put a
4 plan in place. We've hired the person at the Central
5 level that coordinates with every single district
6 point and provides professional learning for these
7 district points in superintendency so they can also
8 work with each high school. We provide the resources
9 that they need, we ensure that the resources are
10 translated, we support schools in building that
11 committee that you spoke about, the English as a
12 second language, a new language teacher, the home
13 language teacher, the English language arts teacher,
14 the guidance counselor, and that administrator that
15 needs to be part of that committee. We work with the
16 State. As a matter of fact, last January we invited
17 the State to come at a citywide conference that we
18 had with world language teachers to talk about the
19 Seal and to talk about the benefits so they can then
20 go to the schools and turnkey so we're ensuring that
21 districts are informed of what they need to do, that
22 we provide the resources to schools, and that we also
23 provide orientations for families and students.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Currently, how
25 many schools offer?

1
2 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Over 1,300
3 schools, and I think one of the things that stood out
4 to us is that since we have moved from, right now
5 it's an opt-in process, and when we moved from simply
6 allowing schools to be informed and opt in to
7 actually having conversations with superintendents to
8 have the superintendents really encourage principals
9 to opt in, we increased the number by 26 percent and
10 so this year we're working very closely with
11 superintendents to provide that kind of information.
12 I was just at a meeting yesterday where I was able to
13 share. I asked how many were already offering the New
14 York State Seal of Biliteracy and, in a district of
15 over 40 schools, only five raised their hands, and so
16 we have a lot of work to do. However, after I
17 provided them with information and reminded them that
18 this is actually good for their school data as well
19 as wonderful for our students and their well-being
20 and their post-secondary experiences, we were able to
21 get a lot more enthusiasm and folks took notes and
22 they're ready for Mirza's team to come in and talk
23 more about it so that's the approach that we're going
24 to take is district by district. We want to increase
25 it. This year alone, we've added an additional 89

1 schools, and they have until November 20th to sign up
2 so we're hoping to increase that number as well.

3
4 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you for
5 that. How are high school students informed of the
6 opportunity to earn a New York State Seal of
7 Biliteracy? Is the information also available in
8 multiple languages?

9 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: I (INAUDIBLE)
10 high school for 31 years. Part of what we want to do
11 is ensure that high schoolers are informed of their
12 options so we developed the agency so our job is to
13 inform them and those who provide guidance so we work
14 with the guidance counselors who are crucial, pivotal
15 in the work that happens, not just at the high school
16 level but also at the middle school. We use many of
17 the resources that the State provides for guidance
18 counselors and administrators, but we also develop
19 resources for the middle school guidance counselors
20 and teachers. World language teachers are also a
21 great lever for us to communicate as they're building
22 students' knowledge and understanding of language,
23 they're also working with them to let them know by
24 the way now that you're in high school, you can
25 obtain the Seal of Biliteracy so we work the world

1
2 language teachers. We have a network of world
3 language teachers and also through the professional
4 learning that we provide teachers who are teachers of
5 English as a new language, content area teachers, we
6 talk to them about the opportunities that our
7 students have. We announce this in as many forms as
8 possible. For example, we were in Albany with the
9 Puerto Rican Angelo Del Toro PR/HYLI, and those
10 students were able to work towards the Seal by doing
11 an extension of that project.

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'm always big on
13 how do you involve parents in this journey as well,
14 and is language also available for them engage in
15 this decision?

16 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you. I'm a
17 strong believer that we need to develop parents',
18 family's advocacy muscle so we do that, I want to
19 first stop and thank this Council for providing us
20 with funding so that we can provide communication to
21 families in multiple languages, so part of the work
22 that we do and need to do better is communicating
23 with families about all these opportunities that
24 their children have so they can also advocate at
25 their schools and we need to provide them information

1 so we provide information, we have informational
2 sessions, we have websites. We understand that
3 website doesn't always work, but we have the website
4 in multiple languages, and the State also has flyers
5 for families to understand and learn about the Seal
6 of Biliteracy. In every event we have, we have a
7 table where we also talk about the Seal and
8 opportunities so that's one of the areas that we
9 continue to see as an opportunity to improve the work
10 that we're doing to ensuring and, again, developing
11 the advocacy muscle for families to feel very
12 comfortable and say I want my child to earn the Seal
13 of Biliteracy in this particular language. I want to
14 know what the school is going to do about that work,
15 and it is our work as a central office to support the
16 districts and the school to do so.

18 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: What form of media
19 do you use to communicate that other than website and
20 a paper? Let's say I don't read and write, and we
21 have parents that speak two languages may not read
22 neither/nor, so how do I engage that family to make a
23 decision for my child?

24 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you. We speak
25 about it in multiple languages, and, again, it is

1
2 definitely an area that we need to figure out how we
3 can do better at communicating in ethnic media and
4 other areas that would speak to families. We've seen
5 team members go to where the families are events and
6 share. We had a nice event at the Intrepid. It was a
7 family event on a Saturday, and we spoke to the
8 families too about the Seal of Biliteracy and other
9 opportunities, but it is definitely an area that we
10 could do better. It's an opportunity.

11 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you. I'll
12 pass it back to Chair Dinowitz.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I just have like
14 two more questions then I want to turn it over to
15 Colleagues. I think we have at least two Colleagues
16 who have questions.

17 I just want to get a little more I guess
18 the incentives, and one of the big things for
19 students is CUNY granting credit or, in this case not
20 granting credit but hopefully that changes soon, that
21 would entice the students to pursue the Seal of
22 Biliteracy. Are there other incentives that either
23 CUNY or DOE is providing to students to pursue the
24 Seal of Biliteracy beyond pride and a nice seal,
25 which has value no doubt.

1
2 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: I think most
3 of that motivation is for the schools themselves.
4 Sorry, I mentioned 89, 89 schools total who are
5 offering it, and that is because...

6 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: 89 additional
7 schools?

8 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: No, 35
9 additional. I said 89 additional, but it's 89 total.
10 The reason it's a benefit to the school is the school
11 actually gets to increase their college and career
12 readiness indexes and so it improves their data.
13 Through that, because it is not, I think you said at
14 the beginning, Chair Dinowitz, during your
15 introduction, right, there's no barrier, there's no
16 downside, it's five wins, right, and so with five
17 wins leading the way, there's not anything additional
18 that schools are being asked to do other than to
19 provide mentorship for a student to complete a
20 project, and that mentorship, if a school does not
21 have the bandwidth to do that, we can help with the
22 district support. In fact, if the school doesn't
23 offer the language that the student wants to pursue,
24 we have offered this New York State Seal of
25 Biliteracy in 15 additional non-traditional languages

1
2 so that there is no reason not to do this because we
3 want to make sure that everybody has access to it so
4 we're willing to provide support as a central office,
5 there are folks who will provide support at the
6 district office. It would be fantastic to keep
7 working with CUNY to make that happen, and I think
8 part of that is making sure that we can let you know
9 when the students have received that Seal so that you
10 can grant credit in whatever way possible, but we
11 will do whatever is necessary to ensure those courses
12 pass that CPL criteria. We want this to be more of a
13 motivation. We do know already that students qualify
14 for scholarships, that it helps with employment.
15 We've heard feedback that colleges actually pay
16 attention to it in terms of the student profile. Our
17 Office of Student Pathways convenes institutes of
18 higher education to elicit feedback from the
19 institutes of higher education, and they will often
20 talk about these students' entire profile, and in
21 that profile, that New York State Seal of Biliteracy
22 actually really elevates it, and so that's important
23 in that way too.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Just to clarify,
25 89 schools total offer the Seal.

1

2

DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Yes, 35

3

additional this year, so far.

4

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So far? I like

5

that. I do have to say I'm really glad that you're

6

including non-high-stakes test data in school

7

evaluations because that's really important for

8

schools and principals and teachers to know that

9

there's work outside the Regents exam that can help

10

that school data, and I think a result of that is it

11

helps the kids.

12

Lastly, are you targeting any specific

13

districts? For instance, districts that have a high

14

number of ENL students. All of us spoke about how the

15

cultural responsiveness of this and this type of

16

teaching and how it speaks to all the languages, so

17

are you targeting specific districts that you see in

18

the data that have a high number of ENL students,

19

high number of immigrant population?

20

DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: For the New

21

York State Seal?

22

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: For offering the

23

service of the Seal or are you offering sort of a

24

broad-based here's what it is, go for it?

25

1
2 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: We're targeting in
3 the sense that we're making sure that all schools
4 know that this is an opportunity for all students so
5 for English language learners and for monolingual
6 students as well, it is important that all students
7 know this is an opportunity for them to learn another
8 language so it's like multilingualism for all.

9 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: The one thing
10 I will add to that though in Chief Sanchez-Medina's
11 testimony in the beginning, one of the things that
12 was mentioned was coursework that students have taken
13 in another language that qualifies according to the
14 criteria the State has put forward can count for them
15 as well, and so it's important for us to consider our
16 newly arrived New Yorkers often come with a foot in
17 the door and so why not take advantage of that as a
18 school to be able to help move them forward in those
19 ways.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: THANK YOU. I
21 want to call on Council Members for questions. First
22 is Council Member Hanif.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Thank you, Chairs
24 Dinowitz and Joseph, and thank you so much for being
25 here. This is one of my favorite topics, huge fan and

1 supporter of the Seal of Biliteracy. I grew up
2 speaking Bangla at home and traveled to Bangladesh to
3 learn how to read and write the language, and now as
4 we're seeing the emergence of Bangladeshis as one of
5 the fastest growing Asian ethnic communities, more
6 and more first-generation kids are learning the
7 language, but also we've got programs, cultural
8 institutions that are setting up space to be able to
9 learn our mother tongue, and also, earlier this year,
10 I visited Hillcrest High School where I met with the
11 Bangladeshi students who earned a Seal of Biliteracy,
12 and it was very inspiring. I went in time for the
13 celebration of our Mother Language Day which is
14 February 21st annually and so for them to see a
15 Council Member who has gone on to using our language
16 to do good and transformative work in our city is
17 very, very important so I would love to know two
18 things. One, what languages are offered for the Seal
19 of Biliteracy, and then for our friends at CUNY,
20 could you share what career pathways exist for
21 students who are going into the language pipeline, of
22 course, aside from faculty which is incredibly
23 important and, of course, language preservation work
24 and archival work is important as we know that many
25

1
2 languages are at risk of being extinct or completely
3 lost, but are we also doing work to share that
4 there's a pipeline for languages spoken and we have
5 agencies here like MOIA who are hiring language
6 specialists, that this is a field that can be a very
7 enriching career? Thank you.

8 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: The New York
9 State Seal of Biliteracy, I think part of the beauty
10 of it is that whatever language the student wants to
11 pursue, we will find the resources necessary for the
12 child to be able to complete the requirements in that
13 language. In fact, we offered it in 35 different
14 languages, 15 of those are home languages that are
15 not taught in our schools. They were Amharic, Dutch,
16 Dzungkha, Fulani, Hausa, Hungarian, Mandinka,
17 Mongolian, Nepali, Filipino, Punjabi, Senegalese,
18 Soninke, Tibetan, Twi, Uzbek, Vietnamese, and Wolof.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: That's amazing. All
20 of them should be at City Hall so that we could
21 celebrate, but that's an incredible list of
22 languages. Wow.

23 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: And that goes
24 back to what Chief Sanchez-Medina was saying about
25 student agency. Students brought these languages

1 forward, families brought the languages forward, and
2 we were able to provide the resources necessary for
3 them to complete the requirements. One of the things
4 that I'm really glad that you were able to celebrate
5 with students, not only the language but the culture,
6 we want to make sure as someone who grew up in the
7 '70s and '80s when assimilation was a big deal and we
8 were told not to speak languages, to present as much
9 as possible as American and my family refused, I
10 think it's incredibly important that we honor
11 people's languages, that we don't let culture and
12 language die, and that we let folks know that they
13 are bringing with them an asset and it brings value
14 to our city and so I think it's beneficial for us to
15 continue to do this work like this.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Thank you.

18 PROFESSOR KLEYN: I just want to say I was
19 at Hillcrest recently, and we met with some of the
20 students that got the Seal of Biliteracy in Bengali,
21 and their pride was immense and the program is really
22 one of the strongest ones.

23 In terms of career pathways and
24 pipelines, I think within education it's very clear.
25 We have bilingual teachers, especially with the

1
2 influx of immigrant students we're receiving so
3 students can continue learning in their home language
4 while they're also learning English. We have world
5 language teachers, but then there are fields where
6 bilingual isn't in the title, but bilingual is
7 important, it's critical. I'm thinking of nurses. I
8 know at one point we were bringing in nurses from
9 other countries and instead of teaching them English,
10 we were teaching them Spanish because that was the
11 language that was needed in the hospital so these are
12 skills we have within our students, and, with the
13 Seal of Biliteracy, we can continue to forefront
14 that, and that they continue to take that into their
15 career. I think almost any career there's space for
16 bilingualists and multilingualism. It's an advantage,
17 and what I would say is English is no longer enough
18 in almost any career. Of course, translation is
19 important, not just translating word for word but
20 being a cultural ambassador and a cultural broker so
21 all those things, it's not just language but what
22 comes along with the language and the speakers of the
23 language.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: I really appreciate
25 that, especially within the framework of our public

1
2 schools and the need for bilingual educators and also
3 for their own pipeline, making sure that these
4 bilingual folks are also becoming our assistant
5 principals and principals and really making their
6 voices heard within the leadership of the DOE so
7 really grateful to hear this, and we'll continue to
8 champion the Seal with the support of my Colleagues
9 here. Thank you.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Next is Council
11 Member Brewer.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very
13 much. I think I share everyone's interest in people
14 speaking as many languages and being honored for it,
15 but let me just give an example. Yesterday, I got a
16 call from a principal because he has migrant students
17 who speak Arabic. I found him somebody he can hire to
18 be a para, but he had no idea what to do, and he
19 happens to be a good principal so I just think in
20 general we have to make sure that a) language is
21 honored as you know, you're all speaking so
22 articulately to that, but somehow make it clearer to
23 the Department of Education staff where they can go
24 to get assistance. He had no clue. Just to give you
25 one example of help.

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2 The second thing is just recently I met
3 with the African Communities Together, a group that
4 I've known for a long time, and they launched, I was
5 there that night, a worker co-op, you probably know
6 about them, but it's of all of the African, Pan-
7 African languages are now in one co-op, and this
8 group of people, I happen to know that community very
9 well, it's called Afro Lingual. They just got started
10 like a month ago, and that's the kind of support I
11 would think that DOE and CUNY might like because
12 those languages may be or may be not on your list, I
13 don't know, have the need to be translated and yet
14 often DOE or CUNY don't know that they exist or
15 somebody to help. I just want to know that. I
16 probably know (INAUDIBLE) same group of many
17 different Spanish-speaking, it's not just one type as
18 you know, so the issue is, again, they're both doing
19 the same thing, it's worker related, it's experts
20 coming together, so I'm just wondering, my question
21 is very simply how do you, CUNY and DOE, reach out to
22 some of these organizations that are helping to
23 literally do the same thing you're doing which is
24 spread the word that language is important and we
25 need to honor it?

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2 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you for that
3 question. We do partner with organizations and they
4 actually help us with lower incident languages. For
5 example, the National African Language Resource
6 Center, we partner with them, and we will look at the
7 other ones that you mentioned. It's extremely
8 important.

9 Part of the work that we do is that we
10 provide resources to schools on how to work with our
11 New Yorkers. We provide information from the intake
12 to placement to programming students to organizing
13 their schools around working with new migrants and
14 working with students who are learning a new
15 language, teachers they need to hire. They can ask
16 for us to revise their funding, and all of the
17 supports that they need. We do this normally through
18 the superintendents but principals can directly
19 contact us to ensure that they have all the supports
20 that they need. As a principal of an all ELL school,
21 I know how important it is for schools to have those
22 (INAUDIBLE) supports in place and also to work with
23 all teachers who are going to work with those
24 students to ensure that the instruction happens so
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1
2 later I would like to have that information so I can
3 support that principal directly.

4 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: The support
5 also happens at the district level so the
6 superintendent's office is designed to provide all of
7 those principals with support so we've been working
8 very closely with each superintendent's office to
9 provide them with resources, with training. What's
10 wonderful about the organization as well is that it's
11 not just the Division of Multilingual Learners who is
12 providing these kinds of supports. The Office of
13 School and Youth Development, particularly for those
14 students in temporary housing, are offering workshops
15 through superintendencies where they're convening
16 groups of principals to talk about ways to welcome
17 our newest New Yorkers, recognizing that many of our
18 schools were not used to having English language
19 learners and so we're providing supports on what that
20 looks like, both in terms of the environment and in
21 terms of those pedagogical practices that teachers
22 will need in their schools. Principals should always
23 reach out to their superintendent's office and then
24 we can absolutely provide that.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: They call me
3 first.

4 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: That's great.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah, well,
6 sometimes. The other question is social workers. We
7 need social-emotional. I'm a big supporter of social
8 workers. I can't get DOE, however, to get there
9 because a lot of times the social workers do speak
10 multiple languages, particularly if they come, for
11 instance, from Hunter or some of the other CUNY
12 campuses, but there's always the challenge of having
13 enough social worker students because then you can
14 have that multilanguage opportunity. I'm just telling
15 you it's often a barrier to get DOE to support the
16 opportunities to be supervised in order to get the
17 students who are multilingual. Maybe you don't know
18 that, but I'm telling you we're having troubles. You
19 have to find other places, if I may suggest, even
20 though all the good things you're doing to get the
21 language into the schools because, even though you're
22 telling the superintendents and telling the
23 principals, it is not filtering down. May I say that.
24 Thank you.

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2 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: We've been
3 joined by Council Member Lincoln Restler, welcome.
4 Council Member Avilés.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you, Chairs,
6 and thank you all for this important hearing and the
7 work that you're doing. Obviously, I think we have a
8 lot of cheerleaders in the room underscoring how
9 important this work is. Just recently, a parent in my
10 District was asking very specifically around the
11 local high school whether there were actually
12 bilingual pathway programs for these children exactly
13 to be able to do this work and to introduce them
14 beyond just having maybe a bilingual teacher but to
15 making them clearly aware that this is a career that
16 they are well-positioned to move into so I guess I
17 was curious beyond the Seal if DOE is also engaging
18 in a very explicit programming for students to inform
19 them about these career pathways, and I would add
20 absolutely education, absolutely healthcare, and
21 absolutely government. In my District office, we
22 actually conduct zero business in English. My English
23 happens here in City Hall. In the Commissioner, 100
24 percent of my Staff are doing Spanish, Mandarin,
25 Russian, French all day so add government to that

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2 list because we absolutely need these students so I'd
3 like to hear about the particular programs around
4 introducing these pathways for bilingual students and
5 also would love to know what, if any, schools in my
6 District have the Seal, are pursuing the Seal, and
7 then more specifically, you mentioned resources are
8 provided, but I'd like to hear more specific like
9 what are the resource allocations to make sure that
10 this grows and meets those targets and then are
11 schools in addition to being provided with PD and
12 that kind of broad support, are they getting
13 additional resources to make sure that there is
14 someone who is really dedicated to moving things
15 forward and not just an additional thing to their 50-
16 million-hour day. Thank you.

17 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: I think there
18 are lots of parts to the question so if we miss any
19 part, just let us know and we'll come back to it.

20 I heard you ask about resources and what
21 we do to support schools so that they can provide
22 this pathway or rather the New York State Seal of
23 Biliteracy. The idea is that it shouldn't be one more
24 thing that you're adding but that it is something
25 that fits within what already exists at the school.

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2 What we did was actually put someone at the central
3 level to work with the district so the districts know
4 how to support the schools very specifically, but the
5 committee that a school puts together should consist
6 of teachers the school already has in place, a world
7 language teacher, an ENL teacher, a school counselor
8 so that there are folks who are meeting around what a
9 student would need to complete to graduate anyway and
10 making sure that they have those pieces in place. I
11 think for schools who don't offer world languages
12 beyond one that a child may already have or not be
13 interested in, that's where we would need to provide
14 very specific resources in the form of an advisor, a
15 connection to a different school, or we even have
16 virtual classes that are available, and that's
17 whether they want to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy or
18 not. Virtual language classes are made available in a
19 range of languages so that if schools don't offer
20 those at their own school, kids can actually enroll
21 in this class and take it from the space of their
22 school at any time and earn the credit that way as
23 well so that's in terms of resources that way. We
24 know that some schools have actually put together
25 pots of funding to offer the committees additional,

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2 essentially what we call overtime, right, but
3 procession funds to do that kind of work and put
4 together entire plans for their students. It's not a
5 requirement for it and, certainly if schools can do
6 it, it's a good use to motivate teachers to be part
7 of that process and engage more students in that
8 work.

9 The schools are mandated to offer world
10 languages anyway. Kids actually need two credits to
11 graduate, and so this is part of what you should be
12 doing to get kids to that point of graduation anyhow.
13 What we would like to do is to begin that work
14 earlier in the middle school years because we know
15 that true multilingualism requires more than just the
16 two years of exposure, and so we really want to be
17 able to begin this work much, much earlier so that
18 kids have an opportunity to build that language
19 fluency.

20 As far as pathways, I'll let you answer
21 some of that, and I think maybe even talking a little
22 bit about PR/HYLI.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Before you jump
24 into that, in terms of the procession, where schools
25 are able to do that of course, the immediate thing I

1
2 hear is there's an equity issue there and there are
3 families who can't do that. How does DOE ensure that
4 there is equity inserted into this whole equation and
5 that those schools that maybe can't do additional
6 procession or can't fundraise outside because they
7 don't have the networks, how do we make sure that
8 they get the support they need?

9 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: The support
10 is offered from the central and the district office
11 regardless so the inequities shouldn't exist there
12 except as an incentive. Otherwise, again, the world
13 language is a requirement across all schools. The
14 committee is a committee made up of people who
15 already work in the school and certainly could be
16 done as part of their Circular 6 or as part of a
17 different professional period and so there are ways
18 that a school can do that without requiring
19 additional funding. I go back to what Council Member
20 Dinowitz had said is that there is no barrier,
21 there's no reason not to, and, in fact, all it does
22 is really improve the data of a school anyhow, so
23 that shouldn't be a barrier to that, particularly
24 because we want schools that have large percentages
25 of students who are coming in from other places who

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2 speak another language and they're often students of
3 color, we absolutely want to make sure that
4 regardless of geography, of demographics that you
5 have the opportunity to pursue.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Right, so no
7 barrier to entry but potentially growth or wanting to
8 do more than that, that's where..

9 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: We support the
10 schools to really think about how can we do this.
11 Sometimes you have to see different perspectives and
12 go to visit other schools in terms of what do other
13 schools do to ensure that they have this program and
14 offer other courses that they might not offer there
15 but how do we ensure that the students are able to
16 take the coursework.

17 You mentioned the piece about pathways
18 and the Office of Pathways is working very diligently
19 to ensure that there are pathways for teachers, and
20 part of this work, we're working and partnering even
21 more in terms of the Seal of Biliteracy to ensure
22 that these students that are earning the Seal of
23 Biliteracy see a pathway to becoming bilingual
24 teachers as well. I would add I was a bilingual
25 teacher recruiter for Puerto Rico to come here to New

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2 York City to be a chemistry bilingual teacher, and I
3 always ask the question why go so far to find a
4 teacher, and that's part of what drives me. I want to
5 make sure that as many teachers that we can produce
6 in New York City, we're able to do that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you. This
8 parent, in fact, put together a workshop herself in
9 this new high school for all these children that are
10 bilingual to make sure they're getting explicitly
11 asked and shown those opportunities.

12 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: That's
13 fantastic, and I'll take that actually as feedback as
14 additional work for us to do is to really emphasize
15 that if the pathway is available, whether it's in
16 technology or nursing or the current pathways that
17 exist, that we have it available with bilingual
18 options, and so I appreciate that mostly in what ways
19 we can think about or we can actually begin to
20 develop those opportunities.

21 The one thing that Mirza had mentioned
22 since you mentioned government was PR/HYLI. I don't
23 know if you want to talk a little bit more about that
24 because that is an absolute...

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2 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: We have the Puerto
3 Rican Hispanic Institute where, I probably butchered
4 the order of the words, that our students study for
5 six months government and parliament and everything
6 that happens in these Chambers and at Albany, and one
7 of the learnings for us was because we had so many
8 students who already are multilingual, we decided to
9 add an extension to the project so they too graduate
10 with the Seal of Biliteracy, and we're doing that
11 even more. That's one of the learnings we received,
12 and also absolutely add the Seal of Civics so we're
13 looking at what are the multiple ways to ensure that
14 our students are receiving what they need to be
15 successful.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah. That's
17 excited. Thank you so much. I'd love to know which
18 schools in my District are participating in the Seal
19 so I can follow up with you.

20 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: I would love
21 to know the school that you mentioned so we can
22 follow up with the school and that parent too.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yes, thank you.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Gracias

25 (INAUDIBLE) I'll end with one more question, which is

1 alluding to what Council Member Brewer said before.

2 Everyone here recognizes the value of being

3 multilingual, especially now, especially with

4 everything going on in our city right now, and you

5 are a City agency. Do you work with or communicate

6 with other City agencies and express to them what

7 this Seal is, letting Small Business Services know or

8 letting any of our agencies that when you see a kid

9 with this Seal on their diploma, with this on their

10 resume, that it means that they have undergone a

11 rigorous assessment process and you can count on them

12 to speak really any language that they say they speak

13 with their certification, with their Seal?

14 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Not

15 officially. We've only done that with institutes of

16 higher education, not with City agencies, but I think

17 that this is really good feedback and that it is an

18 easy thing for us to do to reach out to..

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Easy made me

20 laugh.

21 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Right, but

22 how do we begin to promote what that means and what

23 the Seal actually stands for so I appreciate that and

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I wonder if we can start to, you want to say something else?

CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: No, no. I completely agree.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I think one of the main points is that without data sharing, without data sharing with CUNY, it's really tough not just to provide credits and other forms of value for the students themselves but to really evaluate the effectiveness of the Seal of Biliteracy and the impact it has on student achievement in CUNY, but once that data is shared, which should be done, could be done I imagine very easily, probably more easily than contacting the other City agencies in fact, once that's done, I think you're able to have a much better grasp on how valuable this Seal really can be for our City and for our students and really provide them with something tangible like college credit for earning this Seal.

I want to thank all of you for testifying today and thank you all so much for your work, both in the DOE and at CUNY on behalf of our students.

PROFESSOR KLEYN: Thank you.

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2 ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR ALVERO: Thank
3 you.

4 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR QUINTANA: Thank you.

5 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you. We left
6 stickers around to support the..

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Oh, yes, I was
8 told I'm now you're..

9 CHIEF SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Everyone take one.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: By the way,
11 every hearing I say CUNY how come you don't advertise
12 better. It seems DOE has got one up on you. They're
13 giving me stickers.

14 The hearing is not over. We do have
15 witness testimony so the hearing is not over quite
16 yet, and I will call our next panel up in a moment.

17 Before I call the next panel, I will
18 remind everyone here that if you want to testify, go
19 to the back table and fill out a slip to testify.

20 For our fist panel, I'd like to call up
21 Ariadna Pavlidis-Sanchez and Isabella Grullon.

22 You may begin when ready and make sure
23 the microphone is on before you begin your testimony
24 and, of course, please state your name for the record
25 before you begin your testimony.

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2 ISABELLA GRULLON: Buenas tardes a todos.
3 Hi, everyone. My name is Isabella Grullon, and I'm
4 here to urge for the implementation of the two
5 resolutions as a graduate of New York City Public
6 High Schools and also a CUNY Hunter College student.
7 Walking around in New York City, I'm sure it's not
8 hard to tell for most of you that we live in a city
9 with great diversity. Like the Chair said, according
10 to the newyorkcity.gov and studies, there are over
11 700 languages and dialects spoken across the city. In
12 order for us to build trust across these many
13 different communities and diverse communities, it is
14 critical for us to promote multilingual skill in our
15 education system. New York City Public High Schools
16 that have AP and IB only offer 10 languages at most.
17 That is 690 languages and dialects that students
18 cannot receive fluency recognition for. Our diverse
19 city does not fit the rigid box of 10 languages and
20 is doing a disservice to our communities if we do not
21 fully enforce the Seal and promote multilingual
22 skills. Standardized testing is also holding back our
23 city from breaking cultural barriers (INAUDIBLE) New
24 Yorkers and the Seal offers students an opportunity
25 to learn and conduct a project, volunteer work, to

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2 work with communities, and also build a connection
3 that they can't with the standardized test, but for
4 the full promotion of multilingual communication it
5 is critical for CUNY to offer college credit to
6 students who earn the Seal to incentivize bilingual
7 skills. Through my research, I found it shocking to
8 find that Illinois offers college credit for students
9 with the Seal but not CUNY, one of the most diverse
10 higher education institutions in the world and that
11 serves the backbone of the city, immigrants. As an
12 English and Spanish speaker, this program, if it was
13 implemented when I was a student in high school, this
14 would've helped me tremendously and helped me be a
15 more competitive candidate when applying for college
16 and also internships and I could've received college
17 credit. At CUNY, there are over 174 languages spoken
18 across their campuses and, as a student, I am aware
19 that there's a common story amongst most of our CUNY
20 students who work and they take classes and they
21 struggle to graduate on time, and, if CUNY were to
22 offer college credit for the Seal, it can expand
23 opportunities for students and also save students
24 time and money in their academic career. At this time
25 with the influx of migrants entering the city, it is

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2 clear there is a lack of multilingual speakers to
3 best serve these individuals, and I urge for the
4 implementation of these policies because it is time
5 New York City honors the diversity of our students
6 and better serves our multilingual communities. Thank
7 you.

8 ARIADNA PAVLIDIS-SANCHEZ: Hello,
9 everyone. My name is Ariadna Pavlidis-Sanchez, and
10 I'm a junior at CUNY Hunter College studying public
11 health and education policy. I'm grateful for the
12 opportunity to speak at this hearing to discuss two
13 important resolutions on the Seal of Biliteracy. I
14 also want to thank my mom, who is watching the
15 livestream right now. She was a Spanish and ESL
16 teacher for many years, and she inspired my passion
17 for this legislation.

18 Like many students across the city, I am
19 the daughter of immigrants. I'm proudly multilingual,
20 and I'm fluent in both Spanish and Greek. My ability
21 to communicate in other languages is a point of pride
22 and has served me greatly in my academic,
23 professional, and personal life. I'm originally from
24 Long Island where I attended high school on the North
25 Shore. The Seal of Biliteracy program was a popular

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2 program in the Language Department and offered an
3 opportunity for students who spent years learning
4 languages such as Spanish, French, and Mandarin
5 Chinese to get official recognition for their
6 language skills. Through class presentations and
7 projects, students were able to verify their literacy
8 in a language besides English and, in turn, receive
9 official academic credit for it. While this program
10 was incredible for the hardworking language students,
11 the district was home to few heritage bilingual
12 students. In a city and public school system such as
13 New York City, the most linguistically diverse city
14 in the world, the implementation of the Seal of
15 Biliteracy program in public schools would be an
16 opportunity to place tangible academic value on a
17 skill that most New York City public students already
18 come in with. Students will also be able to further
19 engage with their communities using their language
20 skills. Providing college credit for these students
21 will only further this notion. Once young New Yorkers
22 enter the workforce, employers can more easily verify
23 potential employees by literacy, which will allow
24 businesses to better serve clients and customers,
25 affirm the value of diversity, and make our students

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2 more competitive candidates for these jobs. I urge
3 the Council to pass and fully implement these
4 resolutions to honor the rich diversity of our city
5 and empower students to proud of the languages they
6 speak at home. Thank you.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: (INAUDIBLE) and
8 gracias.

9 I want to touch on a couple of things
10 that came up in your testimony. You had mentioned
11 that a lot of college students have jobs, paying
12 bills is really tough. Canu talk a little bit more
13 about what it might mean with testing versus this
14 project-based assessment and how that impact
15 someone's wallet, the funds they have?

16 ISABELLA GRULLON: If students are able to
17 earn the Seal of Biliteracy and CUNY were to offer
18 college credit, they can save money because they
19 won't have to pay for a Spanish course and they will
20 have proof that they completed their language
21 requirement and they fulfilled it, and they can no
22 longer have to take more classes. Also, there's a
23 barrier already within the current programs that are
24 offered in New York City, the AP and IB exams. AP
25 costs about 97 dollars to do the testing and also IB

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2 cost is I think 114 dollars per exam, and so that's a
3 financial barrier for students, and this alleviates
4 that. We have no-cost alternatives with the Seal of
5 Biliteracy, and, most importantly, I think this is
6 important for students to connect with their
7 communities, especially when we have a city that's
8 growing in diversity with the influx of migrants.
9 Students will be able to connect with individuals in
10 their communities in ways that they never have before
11 standardized test just prepares you to have these
12 skills to take a test under a certain amount of time,
13 but it doesn't teach us how to connect and break
14 those cultural barriers with people who from
15 different beliefs and cultures and countries.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You two are
17 currently CUNY students, and I think you said 174
18 languages at CUNY so in talking to your friends and
19 your colleagues in school, what do you think it would
20 mean to them for their biliteracy or their diversity
21 to be valued in a new way given that I think you said
22 only 10 standardized exams for various languages out
23 of 174. What do you think it would mean for them
24 emotionally and you mentioned cultural barriers I
25 think your testimony?

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2 ARIADNA PAVLIDIS-SANCHEZ: I think any way
3 we can bring more attention to diversity of cultures
4 in school is really important. I'm also in the
5 student government as Cultural Affairs Commissioner
6 so I interact a lot with students of different
7 backgrounds from our Muslim Student Association to
8 our Uzbek Club so it's very clear that students from
9 different backgrounds exist, and having a tangible,
10 something on a diploma that shows that these
11 different languages exist and should be represented
12 in a school is super important.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you so
14 much.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: What was the
16 language, I probably missed it coming from another
17 hearing, your biliteracy diplomas?

18 ARIADNA PAVLIDIS-SANCHEZ: For me
19 personally, I actually didn't receive the Seal of
20 Biliteracy in my high school because of COVID
21 restrictions, but, if so, I would've received it in
22 Spanish.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: She also speaks
24 Greek.

25 ARIADNA PAVLIDIS-SANCHEZ: And Greek.

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CO-CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: There you go. So you're here advocating for students to have the same opportunity. New York City Public Schools, are you listening? CUNY? I think the relationship between the two should do a lot more talking so that you guys are on the same page because New York City Public Schools is the pipeline to CUNY and especially with the new announcement that the Chancellor has made so I think you should work hand-in-hand and, of course, advertise, advertise.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Isabella, Ariadna, I want to thank you so much for your testimony, and I encourage CUNY and DOE, talk to these very, very special young women.

I want to announce names to make sure that they're not here to testify. Clementina Jose, Norma Gonzalez, Lupe Hernandez, Lacress Tato (phonetic).

Is there anyone on Zoom that we may have missed? If you are on Zoom, please use the raise hand function.

I want to thank everyone for coming to this hearing. Biliteracy, being multilingual is so critically important for the development of students

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but also for the development of our city, and
recognizing that with the Seal of Biliteracy and
providing real incentives from CUNY in order to
ensure that our students engage in the Seal of
Biliteracy is critically important for their future
and for the future of our city.

This hearing is adjourned. [GAVEL]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date October 27, 2023