



# IALAS QUARTERLY

To unify and cultivate educational leaders, serving Latinx communities, for the purpose of promoting equity & empowering all students.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear IALAS Familia,

Anyone who knows me knows that I am a storyteller. The power of storytelling has allowed me to reflect and get me in the space for any new challenge, encounter and especially for a new school year. Although there are many stories I can share that have occurred this year, the most important one is the one we are living now. It is up to us to make sure it gets its happy conclusion that this year deserves. We are experiencing something new, something no one has ever imagined or fathomed. We are living this story now. Years from now other educators and leaders will be reading about us in history. This is our chance to get it right. Everyone is looking at us now to get it right. It is our time to take on this moment as we spread our IALAS wings with confidence. Let us consider what we do know.

- We know there is uncertainty.
- We know there has been rapid change with decisions about going hybrid to going remote.
- We know it will be difficult.
- We know there is a crisis for mental health support for our families and especially our children.
- We know that our school communities are in need of a true belonging virtually.
- We know we are the right leaders at the right time.

Well-being check-ins will be crucial during this time. Not being able to address the uncertainties may cause us to have anxiety.

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However, leaders of your caliber will not let this occur. Because “YOU are the CALM”. Be the calm that they require. I had asked for advice from a mentor and she said, “Liz, as an educator you always want to be the knower, but now is not the time to be the knower. Now during the time of COVID and racial unrest is the time to be a learner. Embrace your learner self. Otherwise, you are in for a long haul.” I will hold on to her words throughout this year and I now share with you to reflect and share so we all put ourselves in the learner space. This will allow us to become innovative and take risks in our moves for our children and communities. It is our time to do the following and make sure we collaborate with other IALAS family members.

- Work with other educators, district leaders, IALAS family members so that we provide the necessary support for our students to make meaning of what is occurring right now.
- Understand the power of our educational roles in cultivating and sustaining the educational system in a different way.
- Reflect on the most inequitable injustices that have occurred so that we address them now.
- Make sure our students receive the right amount of content and standard coverage especially our diverse learners and emergent bilinguals.
- Consider the whole child as we provide instructional practices so that they see themselves in the curriculum.
- Begin creating the mental and psychological safety that is needed for creativity to occur.

I will now leave you with one final story. During our time of COVID, continued racial injustice and planning for remote learning, I have created a very structured schedule on my online screen time. I received an invite to share in discourse on zoom about the unrest in our city. I decided to get on the zoom call that was optional. This was rare because I have had excessive screen time since March and have been selective about any optional invites. As I got on, I noticed someone on the zoom that I recognized. The last time I saw her was about two years ago at an event. She sat at my dinner table with her husband and we conversed and had a great time. I decided to send her a private zoom message to say hello and wish her well. She responded that it was great that I reached out and we exchanged numbers. That weekend I received a call from her where she asked how I was. However, it was until I asked how she was that truly put all of this into perspective. She had lost her husband this May, a day after his birthday. This then caused her to fall into depression and not want to work. This August 8 would have been their 38th wedding anniversary. “How do you celebrate 38 years without your partner? How do you honor him and us?” She shared with me. She truly felt at a lost and disconnected with the rest of the world. And for some reason got on the same zoom invite as me. She said, “You don’t know how much it meant to me that you reached out” and allowed me to realize I exist and that I was seen. I tell you this because many times in school our children are feeling they do not exist or are not seen. Consider what may occur virtually. This goes for every one of us as well. Continue to reach out, ask one another how are you doing and Be the Calm that we need at this moment and I promise you we will have the positive outcome to our story we are living and others will read about us educators, IALAS family members, with pride on how we met the challenge.

Respectfully,

**Elizabeth Alvarez, Ph.D.**

**IALAS President**



## PROFESSIONAL BOOK NOOK

BY DAN SWARTZ, IALAS TREASURER

This summer, our district (Mundelein School District 75) took part in a book club offered to dual language schools throughout the area. The focus was reading and discussing Alexandra Guilamo's new book, *Coaching Teachers in Bilingual and Dual-Language Classrooms*. The book explores strategies and tools useful to bilingual, instructional coaches when working with teachers and teams, ensuring students from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds can succeed.

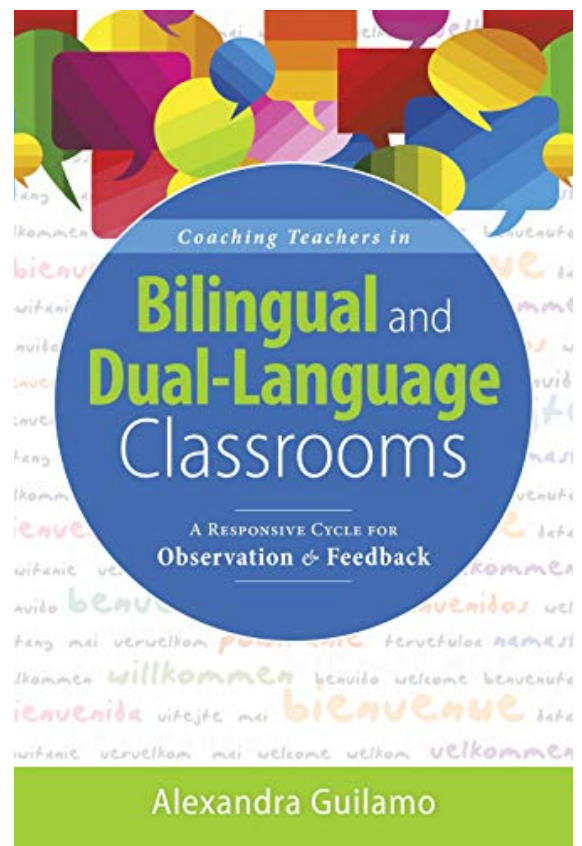
The book provides a framework for working with bilingual teachers. This framework is structured around 8 goals:

- **Ensure each encounter helps teachers improve**
- **Connect colleagues' successes**
- **Provide an outside perspective**
- **Use multiple observations to obtain concrete data on student progress**
- **Achieve equity**
- **Incorporate culture**
- **Gather accurate evidence during the observation**
- **Embrace best practices.**

The third pillar of dual language education is the foundation and conduit to pillars one and two. It allows language to be acquired, used, and leveraged. It will either serve as a lock or the key to accessing the learning community, the texts & rigorous content. Including it, therefore is the only socially just thing to do. How else will emergent bilinguals realize their dreams?--Alexandra Guilamo

In addition to the 8 goals, Guilamo focuses on ensuring coaches have a toolbox to provide support for teachers through effective feedback cycles while understanding the unique needs of multilingual learners and programs.

This book is a great read for those new to coaching teachers on up through program directors. It deserves a place on the professional bookshelf for everyone looking to improve teacher practice and student achievement in their district.





## Spring Conference Review

**BY MARY KASSIR, IALAS VICE PRESIDENT**

On May 1, in lieu of our regularly scheduled Spring Conference, the IALAS Board held its first Virtual Conference and IALAS StepsUp awards ceremony. We found ourselves in very unique times, holding a conference via Zoom, and managing our respective levels of leadership in unforeseen ways. As such, the Board responded by adding an additional recognition of those individuals nominated for their exemplary work in one or more of the following categories: Communicating to the Community, Supporting and Providing Resources to the Community, Supporting Teachers/Staff, and Engaging Students in Learning. We are proud to have recognized Ms. Kristina Davis of West Chicago District 33, Ms. Annaís Díaz of Mundelein District 75, Ms. Avelira González of the Technology Center of DuPage, and Ms. Susanna Melón of Glenbard District 87. Congratulations to this set of all female leaders for stepping up in the face of adversity.

The virtual conference also saw the swearing in of our new Board members, Dr. Elizabeth Alvarez as President and Mr. Humberto Ayala as Historian. We are excited to continue our work with their efforts. In their entrance, we bid farewell to Dr. Rafael Segarra, founding member and treasurer of our affiliate and to Mr. Rodolfo Hernández, who served as President for the past three years.

We also recognized our quarterly Spotlight Teacher, Jorge Moncada of Mundelein District 75 and our Spotlight Administrator, Mr. Doug Eccarius of IPSD 204. Last but not least, we presented two Wings to Success graduate level scholarships in the amount of \$2000 to Ms. Crystal de la Huerta of West Chicago District 33 and Ms. Alfonsita Jiménez of Cicero District 99. We are so proud of all of you and the respective fashion in which you embody the Mission and Vision of IALAS.

While we find ourselves in a similar position as the May conference with respect to social distancing measures, your Board is working diligently to find innovative opportunities for networking, mentorship, and overall educational opportunities for all. Our October mixer is scheduled for Friday October 16, 2020. Stay tuned for details on what is sure to be a unique and exciting event.

# **IALAS STRATEGIC PLAN BY MARIA BURGOS, SECRETARY II**

The IALAS Strategic plan provides our three year roadmap that outlines our organization's priorities and goals which are led by our vision and mission. We look forward to working closely with all of you to continue to strengthen our outlined priorities and meet our goals. As always, we thank you for your continued support!

## ***Mission:***

The Illinois Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (IALAS) commits to provide authentic, high-quality learning opportunities for students by building capacity among Latinx-serving educational leaders and by advocating for responsive, informed policy development.

## ***Vision:***

To unify and cultivate educational leaders, serving Latinx communities, for the purpose of promoting equity and empowering all students.

## ***Priorities:***

1. **Membership:** Develop an organization in which membership feels supported and proud to be a part of.
2. **Mentorship:** Support new educational leaders and identify future leaders who will support Latinos and their communities.
3. **Advocacy:** Advocate for policies that support the mission and vision of IALAS, ALAS and membership.
4. **Partnership:** Foster strong relationships with sponsors that support the IALAS mission and vision.



## **Goals:**

- Goal 1:** Increase membership by 5% each year.
- Goal 2:** Retain 80% of IALAS Members year over year.
- Goal 3:** Increase participation in the mentorship program by 25%.
- Goal 4:** Increase communication to membership regarding trends in education that impact Latino students and their communities, at least 4 times per year.
- Goal 5:** Maintain a presence at the State and National level where issues that could impact the education of Latino students are discussed.
- Goal 6:** Retain current partners and recruit 2 new partners each year through 2022.

## **MENTORSHIP BY MARY KASSIR, VICE PRESIDENT**

The purpose of the IALAS Mentorship Program is to increase the number of successful Latinx administrators, committed to closing the Latinx student achievement gap. We believe that one of the most effective ways to achieve combating the gap among Latino students is to provide mentoring opportunities to educational professionals in the field, which would foster their understanding and enhance their future career endeavors. We offer 1:1 mentoring services based on the needs of the mentee, but both parties will determine what this relationship will look like.

If you are interested in being a mentor, sign up [here](#)

If you are interested in finding a mentor to support your leadership growth, sign up [here](#)

## Connect with IALAS

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## ADVOCACY IN ACTION

BY DR. ELIZABETH ALVAREZ, PRESIDENT

### Current Advocacy in action

- Opening of our schools/districts safely and support for families during COVID-19
- Equity and Race that reflect whole child
- Diverse, responsive and reflective Curriculum
- Student voice
- Social Emotional Learning and self-care

This is not an exhaustive list and we ask that you reach out and provide resources or topics to Humberto Ayala, Historian ([hayala@ialas.org](mailto:hayala@ialas.org)), that you feel IALAS should consider. We thank you for all your advocacy and support during these trying times.

### Links to Articles

**[Pandemic outbreaks are inevitable. What should superintendents do when kids and teachers start getting sick?](#)**

**[UnidosUS Guiding Questions and S.A.F.E. Critical Action Items for School Reopenings](#)**

**[For students with disabilities, schools say they have to do better in the fall](#)**

**[Back to School Amid COVID-19](#)**

**[How deep coronavirus school budget cuts are expected to harm student achievement](#)**

**[Teachers need emotional support this school year](#)**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS**

October 16, 2020: Virtual Fall Mixer, Various Locations (TBD)

